

Europe

# Spain naturalises expelled Sephardic Jews' descendants

8 hours ago Europe



The Spanish government calls the expulsion of tens of thousands of Jews in 1492 a "historic mistake"

# Spain has granted citizenship to 4,302 people whose Jewish ancestors were expelled five centuries ago during the Inquisition.

A new law allowing dual citizenship for the descendants of those forced out in 1492, known as Sephardic Jews, **was passed in June**.

It came into force on Thursday.

Friday's move, however, follows a government decision to fast-track those who had applied for citizenship under a previous law.

The older law had required them to relinquish their other nationality.

Most of the group are from Morocco, Turkey and Venezuela, Spain's Federation of Jewish Communities said.

Justice Minister Rafael Catala said the decision had been made so they would not have to file another application.

Those seeking citizenship under the new law need to have their ancestry checked by Jewish authorities.

#### Who are the Sephardic Jews?

- Jews have lived in Spain since Roman times
- Sephardic comes from the Hebrew word Sepharad, which means Spain
- · Originally used to refer to descendants of the Jews from Spain
- They are scattered around the world in Israel, Turkey, the US, South America, Greece, Bulgaria, France, the UK and elsewhere

#### **Top Stories**

### Obama: Russia strikes 'strengthen IS'

US President Barack Obama says the Russian bombing campaign in Syria in support of President Bashar al-Assad is "only strengthening" Islamic State.

2 hours ago

## Weapons haul found with Oregon gunman

24 minutes ago

Fifa sponsors say Blatter must go

2 hours ago



### Features & Analysis



**Emergency nursery** The mothers and babies seeking shelter in haze-hit Indonesia



Why I gave up my baby Made to feel ashamed for being a single mother

· Sephardic Jew is now a wider term, and can refer to Jews of Oriental, Asian and African origin

They must also demonstrate basic knowledge of Spanish, pass a test about Spanish culture and prove a modern connection to Spain.

Tens of thousands of Jews were expelled in 1492 during the Spanish Inquisition, which the government has called a "historic mistake".

Those who remained had to convert to Catholicism or risk being burnt at the stake.

The citizenship programme was first announced in 2012.

Share this story About sharing

### More on this story

Spain passes citizenship plan for descendants of Jews exiled centuries ago 11 June 2015

Portugal to naturalise descendants of Jews expelled centuries ago 29 January 2015

Sephardic Jews invited back to Spain after 500 years 6 March 2013

### **Related Internet links**

Spanish Federation of Jewish Communities (in Spanish)

rockets

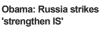
The BBC is not responsible for the content of external Internet sites

#### Europe





4 hours ago | Europe



2 hours ago Middle East





SPORT Fifa sponsors say Blatter must go

2 hours ago Football



13-day window When are mass shooters most likely to inspire copy-cat killings?



I'm Welsh! Why I can never support the England rugby team



**Bad practice** The patients subjected to intimate examinations - without consent



Liquid renewal Can a bowl of soup help transform British cities?



**Diesel in spotlight** Putting your car emissions to the test



More Videos from the BBC

Didcot power station explosion caught on camera



Prince William 'told off' by Battle of Britain veteran Recommended by Outbrain

Elsewhere on BBC



Thirsty leopard gets head stuck in pot in India



Woman given life term for child sex abuse



Theatres in Dublin pay tribute to Brian Friel



Unruly behaviour Can a president whip his people into shape?



One week on Aleem Maqbool tweets on Hajj stampede repercussions