

The ebb and flow of the relationship between the institutional and authority of the directorate general of immigration and the directorate of general legal administration

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Abstract

Since the beginning of independence, the authority to handle citizenship in Indonesia has experienced dynamics closely related to the scope of duties and functions of immigration. This study analyses the institutional relationship and authority between the Directorate General of Immigration and the Directorate General of AHU in handling citizenship in Indonesia. The research method used in this article is normative legal research, or doctrinal legal research. Interview techniques support the exploration of thoughts, views, and opinions related to the research topic. The results of the study indicate that the authority to handle citizenship is always closely related to the duties and functions of immigration, so that the roles of the Directorate General of General Legal Administration (Ditjen AHU) and the Directorate General of Immigration cannot be separated, even though they are administratively separate. However, the institutional relationship between these two institutions continues to face challenges, including weak coordination, overlapping authority, and inefficiencies exacerbated by their placement under different ministries. These issues have led to low operational effectiveness, poor oversight, and unsatisfactory public service delivery, as evidenced by numerous complaints about procedural clarity and fairness. Addressing these challenges requires strong leadership commitment to foster synergy and minimise sectoral interests, with regulatory reform a crucial step toward integrating administrative and field oversight functions for more efficient, accountable, and citizen-oriented management of civic affairs.

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Introduction

Every modern country needs a structured legal system and effective institutions to regulate the dynamics of society and maintain national order. In Indonesia, the Ministry of Law and Human Rights (MLHR) strategically shapes, implements, and oversees the national legal system. Within the ministry's structure, two directorates general hold important positions and have close functional ties, namely the Directorate General of Immigration (DGI) and the Directorate General of Legal Administration (DGLA). Both carry out essential tasks in government affairs, particularly those related to immigration and general legal administration, including citizenship issues, legalisation of legal documents, and legal entity certification (Syadani et al., 2025; Arifin et al., 2024).



Historically, these two directorates general have fundamentally different institutional backgrounds and developments in terms of authority. The Directorate General of Immigration has a long history that is inseparable from the dynamics of Indonesia's journey as a nation. The roots of immigration date back to the Dutch East Indies Immigratie Dienst, which laid the foundation for the national immigration system. It changed the Japanese occupation and entered a new phase after the Proclamation of Independence on August 17, 1945, and the revolutionary period of 1945–1949. A significant milestone was recorded on January 26, 1950, when, following the transfer of sovereignty on December 27, 1949, the Immigration Service was officially handed over to the first Head of the Indonesian Immigration Service, H. Joesoef Adiwinata. From here, the embryo of the Directorate General of Immigration developed through various phases of institutional change under several departments and ministries, until it finally came under the Ministry of Law and Human Rights. By 2025, the Directorate General of Immigration will have existed for 75 years since the establishment of the Indonesian Immigration Service (Kleinschmidt, 2021).

Meanwhile, The Directorate General Legal Administration (DGLA) has a younger institutional history compared to the Directorate General of Immigration, with its establishment dating back to the administration of President Abdurrahman Wahid through Presidential Decree No. 136 of 1999, which established the Department of Law and Legislation as a result of the transformation of the Directorate General of Law and Legislation (DGLL) under the Ministry of Justice. This change brought about adjustments to the vision, mission, and organisational structure, which then gave rise to two first-level units, namely the Directorate General of Law and Legislation (DGLL) and the Directorate General of General Legal Administration (DGLA), based on Ministerial Decree No. M.03-PR.07.10 of 1999. Since then, the Directorate General of AHU has officially stood as an important part of the Ministry of Justice's structure, and by 2025, it will have existed for 26 years.

Historically, the institutional and authority relationship between the Directorate General of Immigration (DGI) and the Directorate General of Legal Administration (DGLA) has undergone significant dynamics. Some authorities previously held by the DG of Immigration were transferred to the DG of AHU, and vice versa, in line with the state's legal, political, and administrative needs. These shifts in authority were influenced by regulatory changes, bureaucratic restructuring, and the government's policy orientation in addressing global challenges, including cross-border population mobility, legal protection for citizens, and alignment with international legal standards.

Initially, the overlapping scope of duties between the two directorates was complementary. The Directorate General of Immigration coordinated with the District Courts, and later with the Directorate General of Law and Legislation (DGLL), before the Directorate General of AHU was officially established in 1999. Since then, citizenship administration has involved the Directorate General of AHU, while the Directorate General of Immigration continues to play a role in the substantive aspects of citizenship related to immigration functions. Until the early 1970s, the citizenship process was entirely under the jurisdiction of the District Court, with the DGLL playing a role in preparing general legal administration before court decisions were issued.

Challenges faced by the Directorate General of Immigration include low knowledge, lack of operational funds, lack of public participation in reporting the existence of foreigners, weakness of coordination with other law enforcement agencies, and obstacles from legal factors (Sihombing, 2019). The legal structure and law enforcement agencies have a strategic role in finding solutions to various agrarian/land issues in Indonesia, highlighting the need for sound governance principles in the management of land certificates and other matters related to land (Damanik & Damanik, 2024; Mujiburohman et al., 2023; Rachman et al., 2020).

Significant changes occurred after the enactment of Law No. 12 of 2006 on Citizenship, which placed the management of general legal administration related to citizenship under the Directorate General of AHU. However, there remains a connection with the Directorate General of Immigration, for example, in determining the immigration status of foreign nationals who

are being processed for citizenship, managing children with dual citizenship status, issuing travel documents as proof of citizenship, and restoring citizenship for Indonesian citizens with problematic status.

The dynamics of this relationship have become increasingly complex since 2024, when the two directorates were placed under different ministries through Presidential Regulation No. 139 of 2024, followed by the establishment of the Ministry of Law through Presidential Regulation No. 155 of 2024 and the Ministry of Immigration and Corrections through Presidential Regulation No. 157 of 2024. Normatively, authority in the field of citizenship is placed under the Ministry of Law, managed by the Directorate General of AHU in accordance with the Organisational Structure and Work Procedures (SOTK) of Minister of Law Regulation No. 1 of 2024, with an emphasis on general legal administration. Nevertheless, the functions of the Directorate General of Immigration related to citizenship remain relevant, as citizenship and immigration intersect in service delivery and oversight.

Regarding Indonesia's legal and administrative framework, the Directorate General of Immigration and the Directorate General of Legal Administration both play significantly important responsibilities. On the other hand, there are situations in which their authorities overlap, resulting in inefficiency and conflict. There is, for instance, a degree of overlap between Immigration Civil Servant Investigators (PPNS) and police investigators when it comes to the treatment of criminal offences relating to immigration, which makes the enforcement process more complicated (Mashdurohatun et al., 2025).

Suboptimal results are produced as a consequence of the absence of a process that is both transparent and integrated for the purpose of synchronising and harmonising legislation and regulations amongst these several directorates. On the other hand, the National Legal Development Agency and the Directorate General of Legislation are dealing with comparable problems, suggesting that Indonesia's legal structure is experiencing a more widespread and systemic difficulty (Syahlan, 2021).

The responsibility of guaranteeing legal certainty and conformity with laws about electronic information and transactions falls under the purview of the Directorate General of Legal Administration, which oversees the registration and dissolution of corporate entities (Suryokumoro & Susmayanti, 2021). Both administrative and legal issues may arise as a result of this function's intersection with the immigration directorate's role in managing the legal status of individuals, which includes the management of refugees and asylum seekers (Alvi Syahrin et al., 2018).

However, separating the Directorate General of Immigration into a new ministry does not necessarily eliminate its connection to citizenship matters. This is evident in several immigration functions that remain substantially related to citizenship aspects. For example, in determining the immigration status of foreign nationals who are in the process of obtaining citizenship, managing children with dual citizenship status in the registration process or declaration of citizenship choice, issuing Indonesian travel documents as proof of citizenship, restoring citizenship status for Indonesian citizens who are unregistered or illegal, and investigating crimes of fraudulent marriage committed for the purpose of obtaining citizenship. Quoting the views of Sarno Wijaya and Alif Suaidi, it can be said that discussions about citizenship are almost always related to immigration, but discussions about immigration are not always directly related to citizenship.

Thus, the working relationship between these two institutions in handling citizenship, both from an administrative perspective and in terms of implementation in the field, is an interesting topic for further research. International experience shows that overlapping institutional authority often leads to forum shopping, where certain parties choose the most advantageous institution to resolve an issue (Henneberg & Plank, 2020; Hofmann, 2019; Mskhvilidze, 2023). This situation has the potential to trigger competition over authority or even conflicts between agencies, which could ultimately weaken the clarity of task distribution and reduce the legitimacy of the state (Abbott & Faude, 2022; Kwon, 2024; Reinsberg & Westerwinter, 2023).

Therefore, a study on the working relationship between the Directorate General of Immigration and the Directorate General of AHU is crucial to trace the roots of institutional issues and formulate recommendations for building better coordination with clear, efficient, and accountable authority distribution. This study examines the ups and downs of the relationship between the two institutions from an institutional and legal authority perspective. The results of this study are expected to provide a more comprehensive picture of the extent to which changes in authority support the effectiveness of legal governance and public services, while offering solutions to strengthen inter-institutional synergy within the framework of the national legal system.

Method

The research method uses a normative legal approach known as doctrinal legal research. This method focuses on studying legislation, official documents, and relevant legal literature to understand the principles, structure, and implementation of authority between the Directorate General of Immigration (DGI) and the Directorate General of General Legal Administration (DGLA). Normative research was chosen because the studied issues relate to institutional relationships and legal-formal authority, making analysis of written legal materials very important.

The secondary research data sources include Law No. 6 of 2011 on Immigration, Law No. 12 of 2006 on Indonesian Citizenship, Presidential Regulations related to ministries and directorates, ministerial regulations, and publicly accessible internal documents of the Ministry of Law and Human Rights. In addition, this research also utilises primary and secondary legal literature, such as books, scientific journals, and legal articles related to immigration and citizenship administration.

To complement the doctrinal analysis, this study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to systematically, factually, and accurately describe the dynamics of institutional relations and authority between the DGI and DGLA. The data collected is analysed through content analysis, which examines legal documents and literature to find patterns, principles, and shifts in authority between institutions. In addition to documentary studies, this research uses semi-structured interview techniques to obtain perspectives from competent parties. Interviews are conducted using a prepared guide, including a list of questions and relevant indicators, to ensure that the information obtained supports normative legal analysis. The key informants for this research consisted of:

1. Director of State Administration and Head of the Sub-Directorate of Citizenship, Directorate General of AHU;
2. Director of Residence Permits and Immigration Status, Directorate General of Immigration;
3. Senior Immigration Analysis Experts, on behalf of Sarno Wijaya, S.H., M.H., and Drs. Alif Suaidi;
4. Parties who witnessed the discussion of regulations or policies related to citizenship at the former Ministry of Law and Human Rights, as well as the new Ministry of Law and the Ministry of Immigration and Corrections.

The information from these interviews was analysed thematically, focusing on understanding the roles, authorities, coordination, and challenges that arise in citizenship management. The results of the analysis of legal documents and interviews were then combined to produce an understanding of the institutional and authority dynamics between DGI and DGLA and formulate relevant recommendations for improving inter-agency coordination effectiveness.

Results and Discussion

Legislative Framework and Role of the Directorate General of Immigration (DGI)

Since independence, citizenship management in Indonesia has been dynamic, with the Directorate General of Immigration (DGI) and later the Directorate General of General Legal Administration (DGLA) playing important roles. The origins of immigration regulations date

back to the Dutch East Indies era through the Immigration Commission Secretariat Office (1913), which later became the Immigration Service (1921). After independence, the government took over immigration policy and established the DGI to manage and implement it.

In the early years of independence, citizenship regulations were governed by Law No. 3 of 1946, which was later updated by Law No. 6 of 1947, establishing citizenship classifications based on the principle of automatic law (Harijanti et al., 2020). Government Regulation No. 5 of 1947 became the implementing regulation that provided a mechanism for individuals who doubted their citizenship status to submit an application for determination to the District Court, with the right to appeal to the High Court within 14 days (Sunu, 2023).

Determining citizenship status is one of the Indonesian government's top priorities as part of state governance, in accordance with its constitutional mandate to protect all its citizens (Dwijayanti & Edwinarta, 2023; Habibah, 2025; Sihombing et al., 2024). Clarity of citizenship status is an important foundation in the relationship between the state and its citizens. However, the implementation of this policy faces significant challenges due to the independence revolution and Dutch military aggression, which made it difficult to identify who had the status of citizen and resident of the Republic of Indonesia (Van Klinken, 2018). To address these difficulties, the government issued Law No. 8 of 1947 on the Extension of the Deadline for Submitting Declarations of Indonesian Citizenship, which was followed by Law No. 11 of 1948 on the further extension of the deadline for submitting declarations of citizenship (Mahmudah et al., 2023).

During the revolutionary period of 1945–1949, immigration authorities dealt with fundamental issues such as determining entry and residence permits for foreigners, registering foreigners, and determining the status of Indonesian citizens and residents (Hill, 2022). Selective immigration policies emphasised that entry and residence permits would only be granted to foreign nationals who contributed to the welfare of the nation, did not threaten public security and order, and had a clear intention to reside in Indonesia Click or tap here to enter text.(Gunawan et al., 2023; Wiharma et al., 2024).

A crucial issue faced by the Immigration Office after the delegation of authority was how to implement legal reforms, establish institutions, and innovate, particularly in immigration law, in a manner that served the national interest (Sande, 2020). In addition to the laws and regulations that have been issued, citizenship issues during this period were also marked by various bilateral agreements and citizenship selection processes, including citizenship denials. One example is the Agreement on the Division of Nationality between the Government of Indonesia and the Kingdom of the Netherlands in the Charter of the Agreement on the Division of Nationality (PPPWN), which is further regulated in Government Regulation No. 1 of 1950 concerning the implementation of voting rights and the right to refuse Indonesian citizenship for individuals prior to the transfer of sovereignty to the Netherlands.

In addition, the issue of dual citizenship also arose between the Republic of Indonesia and the People's Republic of China. This was regulated by Law No. 2 of 1958, which addressed the resolution of dual citizenship issues for Indonesian citizens of Chinese descent. This agreement was ratified on January 11, 1958, and confirmed the procedure for choosing citizenship for citizens of Chinese descent who have dual citizenship, considering that China's nationalist citizenship policy since 1929 has used the principle of *ius sanguinis*, which states that all Chinese people, wherever they are, are Chinese citizens.

To implement this agreement, the government issued Government Regulation No. 20 of 1959 as the implementing regulation of Law No. 2 of 1958 on dual citizenship (Hakim, 2020). Immigration authorities play an important role in ensuring the clarity of the citizenship status of Indonesian citizens of Chinese descent who have dual citizenship. This legal certainty is supported by Emergency Law No. 14 of 1959 on Travel Documents of the Republic of Indonesia, as well as Government Regulation No. 54 of 1954 and Minister of Justice Decree No. JM.2/17/2 dated June 1, 1954, which requires the reporting of changes in civil status due to the acquisition of Indonesian citizenship.

Follow-up processes, such as applying for Indonesian citizenship, renouncing foreign citizenship, or deciding to remain a Chinese citizen and thereby relinquishing Indonesian citizenship, are the responsibility of the Head of the Immigration Office at the local immigration office. Through this mechanism, the government ensures legal certainty while enforcing clear immigration administrative procedures for Indonesian citizens of Chinese descent.

The Immigration Office plays a crucial role in managing dual citizenship, particularly for Indonesian citizens of Chinese descent during the early post-independence period. Those who chose to retain their Indonesian citizenship and renounce their Chinese citizenship were recorded by the Immigration Office, while individuals who chose to renounce their Indonesian citizenship and remain Chinese citizens were prepared for repatriation or deportation (Sitabuana, 2015). Moerwati added that, together with immigration officers and related officials, they were tasked with sending Hoa Kiau Chinese from East Java through the newly established Jember District Immigration Office. According to her, *"I established the Jember District Immigration Office with only three employees, plus a typist and a driver."*

According to observers, there are significant advantages to this management system. Since the arrival of foreigners in the Dutch East Indies, all data, including the history of first arrival and dual citizenship status, has been managed centrally by a single agency, from the Immigratie Dienst to the Immigration Office. This makes sense, given that information technology was not available at the time. This centralised management made administrative processes more efficient, faster, and cheaper, while also maintaining data accuracy because it did not need to go through bureaucratic stages in various agencies.

Currently, the Directorate General of Immigration (DGI) operates under a clear legislative framework. The DGI carries out its duties in accordance with Law No. 6 of 2011 on Immigration as the main legal basis, as well as Presidential Regulation No. 157 of 2024 on the Ministry of Immigration and Corrections, which regulates the organisational structure and duties of the DGI. The authority and functions of the DGI include the formulation and implementation of policies and technical standardisation in the field of immigration. Its main functions include the formulation of policies related to immigration law enforcement and security, the provision of immigration services and facilities, the management of border crossings and foreign cooperation, and the development of information technology in the field of immigration.

Legislative Framework and Role of the Directorate General of General Legal Administration (DGLA)

The Directorate General of General Legal Administration (DGLA) also plays an important role in Indonesia's legal administration system. Prior to 1999, DGLL, which later became known as DGLA, carried out various tasks regulated by Ministerial Decrees and other regulations, including the formulation and implementation of policies and technical standardisation in the field of general legal administration.

The legal framework in Indonesia has various agencies tasked with the synchronisation and harmonisation of laws and regulations. The National Legal Development Agency and the Directorate General of Legislation are pivotal in these procedures. The National Legal Development Agency concentrates on the planning and drafting phases, whereas the Directorate General of Legislation manages synchronisation and harmonisation during the creation of draft legislation (Syahlan, 2021). The lack of a definitive mechanism and the disjunction of processes between these two institutions have resulted in subpar outcomes regarding the quality of laws and regulations generated.

The Directorate General of General Legal Administration (DGLA) is chiefly responsible for the administrative oversight of corporate entities in Indonesia. This encompasses the registration, licensing, and dissolution of business companies, including *Commanditaire Vennootschap* (CV), partnerships, and civil partnerships (Suryokumoro & Susmayanti, 2021). The DGLA functions in accordance with rules, including Permenkumham Number 17 of 2018, which oversees the registration of these businesses and guarantees legal certainty via the General Legal Administration System (Suryokumoro & Susmayanti, 2021).

The DGLA was officially established on April 5, 2000, through Ministerial Decree No. M.03-PR.07.10 of 1999 on the Organisation and Work Procedures of the Ministry of Law and Legislation. This establishment aimed to strengthen the position of the Ministry of Law and Legislation as the national legal centre while improving legal services to the public. At that time, the term "general legal administration" was the primary focus, encompassing civil, criminal, and state administrative matters. This role continued under the Supreme Court of the Republic (MLHR), and as outlined in MLHR Regulation No. 28 of 2023 on the Organisation and Procedures of the Ministry, the functions of the DGLA now encompass business entities, civil and criminal law, dactyloscopy, central authority and international law, state administrative law, and legal administration information technology.

Following its transformation into the Ministry of Law pursuant to Presidential Regulation No. 155 of 2024 and in accordance with Minister of Law Regulation No. 1 of 2024 on the Organization and Work Procedures of the Ministry of Law, the Directorate General of Legal Affairs (DGLA) is responsible for formulating and implementing policies related to general legal administrative services in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. Currently, the functions of DGLA encompass areas such as business entities, civil and criminal law, pardons, amnesties, annulments, rehabilitation, fingerprinting, investigations of civil servants, central authority and international law, constitutional law, citizenship and nationality status, political parties, and information technology for general legal administration.

The Directorate General of General Legal Administration (DGLA) operates based on various laws and regulations, one of which is Minister of Law and Human Rights Regulation No. 29 of 2015 on the Organisation and Work Procedures of the Ministry of Law and Human Rights of the Republic of Indonesia, which regulates the organisational structure and duties of the DGLA.

The DGLA has the primary task of providing legal services to the public in various fields of law. The civil law field covers notary affairs, legal entities, and cooperatives. The criminal law field includes the registration and appointment of Civil Servant Investigators (PPNS). In addition, the DGLA also handles the fields of state administration and international law and manages information technology to support effective legal services.

Interaction and Relationship between DGI and DGLA

Although DGLA and the Directorate General of Immigration (DGI) are under the Ministry of Law and Human Rights, they have different but interrelated focuses and authorities. DGI focuses on regulating and implementing policies in the field of immigration, while DGLA focuses on providing general legal services to the public. The following are the intersections and relationships between immigration and general legal administration:

Before 1999

The intersection and relationship of authority or working relationship between Immigration and General Legal Administration, if traced back to the 1970s, dates back to when the latter was still under the Directorate General of Law and Legislation. Sarno Wijaya stated that, "Although citizenship handling falls under the authority of the DGI, the naturalisation process is carried out through the District Court and then submitted to the Minister of Justice for a decision. The establishment of DGLL in the early 1970s resulted in the administrative and substantive examination of naturalisation applications submitted by the District Court to the Minister of Justice being handled by DGLL."

The author examines the evolution of the organisational structure and work procedures after the 1980s. Prior to the establishment of DGLA in 1999, the responsibilities related to general legal administration were managed by DGLL. According to the Decree of the Minister of Justice Number M.05-PR.07.10 of 1984, this directorate was assigned to carry out part of the Department of Justice's core duties in the area of law and legislation. Later, under the Decree of the Minister of Justice Number M.02-PR.07.10 of 1989, its role was reaffirmed to implement certain key functions in the field of law and legislation, based on policies established by the Minister.

The authority to carry out citizenship functions based on the Decree of the Minister of Justice Number M.05-PR.07.10 of 1984 and the Decree of the Minister of Justice Number M.02-PR.07.10 of 1989 is carried out by the Directorate of State Administration, with the scope of duties including citizenship (Naturalisation), Dual Citizenship, and Citizenship. Sarno Wijaya added, "The handling of citizenship is actually more focused on the naturalisation process, the series of processes of which begins from the District Court and is forwarded to the Minister of Justice. This means that the Minister of Justice, in this series of processes, delegates to the Director General of Law and Legislation to process naturalisation applications, namely conducting administrative and legal examinations and reviews in order to obtain further decisions from the Minister of Justice" (Antikowati et al., 2023).

The authority outside the naturalization process during this period for the confirmation of citizenship status is still handled by Immigration, and is traced through the organizational structure and work procedures of the Immigration Office in the Decree of the Minister of Justice Number M.03-PR.07.04 of 1991 concerning the Organization and Work Procedures of the Immigration Office which regulates the structure of the Immigration Status Section and oversees the Immigration Status Review Subsection and the Immigration Status Determination Subsection, whose function is to confirm a person's citizenship status whether Indonesian or foreign. According to the author, Immigration continues to play a role due to its longstanding involvement in managing the status of citizens and residents since the early days of independence. This is also reinforced by the continued enforcement of Law Number 2 of 1958 on the Agreement Between the Republic of Indonesia and the People's Republic of China Regarding Dual Citizenship, along with Government Regulation Number 20 of 1959 as its implementing regulation. These legal instruments produced administrative documents, namely Forms I to VI, which serve as official proof of a person's citizenship status.

After 1999-2006

At the time of the initial establishment of DGLA through Decree of the Minister of Law and Legislation Number M.03-PR.07.10 of 1999, the fundamental divisions and relationships of authority or working relationships remained the same as in the previous period before 1999. This investigation can be conducted on DGI's SOTK through a series of Ministerial Decrees up to 2005. These include the Decree of the Minister of Justice and Human Rights Number M.01-PR.07.10 of 2001 on the Organization and Work Procedures of the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights of the Republic of Indonesia, the Decree Number M.04-PR.07.10 of 2004 on the same subject, and the Regulation of the MLHR Number M.03-PR.07.10 of 2005 concerning the Organization and Work Procedures of MLHR, which regulate the organizational structure of the Directorate. Immigration Status (Ditstatuskim), one of whose functions is to provide services and information in the field of residence permits, immigration status changes, citizenship and nationalisation status checks, as well as immigration certificates and special/emergency residence permits (Djufri, 2022).

This situation persisted until the enactment of Law No. 12 of 2006 concerning Citizenship of the Republic of Indonesia, which revoked Law No. 62 of 1958 and comprehensively updated Indonesian citizenship policy. This marked the beginning of a new chapter in Indonesian citizenship, as well as a new shift in the handling of citizenship within the government bureaucracy.

Referring to Law Number 10 of 2004 concerning the Formation of Legislation, it can be observed that the technical guidance products produced in 2006 after the enactment of Law Number 12 of 2006 consisted of 2 (two) technical regulations, namely Regulation of MLHR Number M.01-HL.03.01 of 2006 and Regulation of the Minister of Law and Human Rights Number M.02-HL.05.06 of 2006, while for 2007 it consisted of 2 technical regulations, namely Government Regulation Number 2 of 2007 and Regulation of MLHR Number M.80-HL.04.01 of 2007. The issuance of the SE Menkumham respectively Number M.09-IZ.03.10 of 2006 dated November 20, 2006, Number M.81-HL.03.01 of 2007 dated February 19, 2007, and Number M.HH-40.AH.10.01 of 2009 dated October 15, 2009 are substantially very immigration in nature, which are basically recognized as technical and urgent needs that accommodate

"unregulated, the existence of left-behind substances, and/or sociological developments at that time", which were initiated by Immigration to the Minister who then signed it.

The author was a witness and also the direct implementer of MLHR Circular Letter Number M.HH-40.AH.10.01 of 2009 dated October 15, 2009 when carrying out duties as Head of the Legislation Sub-Division (2008-end of 2011) who at that time was faced with the problem of children subject to limited dual citizenship as subject to Article 4 letter c, letter d, letter h, letter l, and children who were recognized or adopted as referred to in Article 5 who were not yet 18 (eighteen) years old or not yet married, who had registered to obtain Citizenship of the Republic of Indonesia as regulated in Article 41 of Law Number 12 of 2006 concerning Citizenship of the Republic of Indonesia, but had not yet received a Decree of the MLHR concerning the Acquisition of Citizenship of the Republic of Indonesia while their immigration permit had expired, thus requiring legal certainty that would not be detrimental to the child subject of dual citizenship. Previously, in the Circular Letter of MLHR of the Republic of Indonesia Number M.09-IZ.03.10 of 2006, it was facilitated by granting a suspension of immigration permits for a maximum period of 90 (ninety) days. In its development, the suspension of immigration permits for 90 days was exceeded and the Decree of MLHR concerning the Acquisition of Citizenship of the Republic of Indonesia had not yet been stipulated by the Minister, the process of which was carried out by DGLA. Based on this, the Circular Letter of MLHR Number M.HH-40.AH.10.01 of 2009 dated October 15, 2009 relating to the substance of re-immigration.

Strategy for Strengthening Coordination and Integration of Citizenship Services

One clear example of the challenges posed by weak coordination between the Directorate General of Immigration (DGI) and the Directorate General of General Legal Administration (DGLA) can be seen in the management of dual citizenship status. Administrative processes involving these two agencies are often hampered by differences in procedures and unintegrated information systems. For example, in the case of children born to mixed marriages, the DGI is responsible for citizenship registration, while the DGLA handles legality and legal status aspects. These procedural differences often cause delays and confusion for applicants in meeting the necessary requirements (Setyawan, 2023).

To address these issues, strategic measures are needed, including regulatory harmonisation, information system integration, and human resource capacity building in both institutions. Inter-ministerial and inter-agency cooperation must also be strengthened through regular and effective coordination forums (Citrawan & Nadilla, 2019; Heniarti et al., 2025). These forums can facilitate communication and collaboration between different government bodies, ensuring that policies and practices are aligned and consistent. By working together, agencies can share resources and expertise, leading to more efficient and effective implementation of policies. Ultimately, these efforts will help to improve overall governance and service delivery for the benefit of the public.

Harmonisation and institutional reform efforts focus on data integration between Immigration and DGLA. This step is a follow-up to a study conducted by the Legal and Human Rights Research and Development Agency, in accordance with its authority. Based on Articles 1100–1101 of MLHR Regulation No. 29 of 2015, the study was conducted to establish regulations regarding the integration of the Immigration Management Information System and the Electronic Citizenship Application System.

Some of the recommendations proposed include:

1. Integrating the Immigration Management Information System with the Electronic Citizenship Application System to provide excellent service to the public while preventing potential abuse in the issuance of passports and determination of citizenship status;
2. Issuing MLHR regulations as the legal basis for the integration of the two systems;
3. Conducting outreach and education on MLHR regulations related to information system integration to ensure understanding and compliance by all relevant parties.

The results of this study were presented by the Head of the Legal and Human Rights Research and Development Agency in letter No. PPH.2.LT.01.01-233 dated April 12, 2018,

regarding the urgency of establishing regulations on the integration of the Immigration Management Information System and the Electronic Citizenship Application System. The initiative to integrate and connect citizenship data between the Directorate General of Immigration (DGI) and the Directorate General of Legal Affairs (DGLA) began in 2018, as revealed in an interview with Sarno Wijaya, who previously served as Director of Immigration Information Systems and Technology at the DGLA.

Thus, this study concludes that strengthening coordination, data integration, and regulatory harmonisation are essential to enhance synergy, reduce sectoral egoism, and improve the quality of public services in the field of citizenship. The participation of individuals in the management cycle of services, such as the provision of water and sanitation in rural areas, has the potential to result in improved development outcomes (Kasri & Wirutomo, 2018; Rahajoeningroem & Rufiyanto, 2018; Yulian et al., 2024). It is important to view citizen participation as a relationship between the structure, culture, and process aspects of social life. Increasing the autonomy of villages through the implementation of legal reforms, the building of institutions, and the active participation of citizens can help to foster inclusive governance. It is crucial to have transparent administration and planning that is driven by the community (Mukhlis et al., 2025; Yulian et al., 2024).

Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, the institutional and authority relationship between the Directorate General of Immigration (DGI) and the Directorate General of General Legal Administration (DGLA) has shown significant dynamics since the beginning of independence until now. Although these two institutions have been administratively separated into different ministries, they remain substantially interconnected in matters of citizenship, particularly in terms of oversight, issuance of state documents, and public services. However, this study found fluctuations in institutional relations, overlapping authority, and a lack of data integration and coordination, which have impacted operational efficiency, weak oversight, and suboptimal public services. The high number of public complaints regarding procedural certainty and service quality highlights the need for improved inter-agency synergy.

The implications of these findings emphasise the importance of strengthening coordination and harmonising authority between DGI and DGLA. These efforts can be realised through more formal inter-agency communication mechanisms, integration of data systems and operational procedures, enhanced human resource capacity, and revision of overlapping regulations. With these steps, it is hoped that authority conflicts can be minimised, synergy between the two directorates strengthened, and citizenship-related services become more efficient, accountable, and focused on public interest.

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Disclosure Statement

The authors declare that no conflicts of interest exist that could be construed to influence the content or conclusions presented in this manuscript. The authors confirm that they have no financial, personal, or professional relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest. The submitting author confirms that all co-authors have reviewed and approved this statement and have disclosed relevant interests as appropriate.

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