

## The President of Poland granted me Polish citizenship ❤️ 🇵🇱 ❤️



### Introduction

*"In order to get to my current level of proficiency, where I'm able to live and work among Poles naturally, I used what I call the 'total immersion' method when I first came to live here. I had lessons, took exams in Polish, read Polish newspapers, listened to Polish language podcasts and watched Polish TV, and I also deliberately separated myself off from other foreigners in Poland so that I didn't get too comfortable'.*

Patrick Ney is married to a Polish girl (Maja), who he met in Warsaw in 2012 when they were both working at the British Embassy. They have a daughter (Zofia, age 13 years old), who they want to bring up bilingually. Maja and Patrick got married in a wedding ceremony that was conducted in both English and Polish. He first visited Poland in 2007 and after meeting a Polish girl Maja from Wrocław, he moved to Poland permanently in 2010. He came without any great plan and began teaching English like most Brits end up doing. Later, he got an internship at the British Embassy in Warsaw and ended up running a team of people helping to promote British business links in Poland – as well as meeting his future wife there!

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5 years ago, today one of the most amazing moments of my life happened, the President signed an order to grant me Polish citizenship.

It marked the end of one journey – and the beginning of something far bigger.

The journey began in 2007 with a flight to Wrocław. It led to learning the language, travelling the country, and telling stories about Poland's heroes – some of whom I've had the honour to meet.

When I found out the President had signed the order, I was overwhelmed. More than 50 Poles had written letters on my behalf. Reading them brought tears to my eyes then. It still does.

To each one of you – thank you.

But citizenship is not just a privilege. It's a responsibility. I swore that day to honour my duty to Poland and the Polish people. I hope I have kept that promise.

Choosing to become a citizen is different from being born one. It's not just paperwork. It's a decision. A commitment. A declaration of belonging.

I still am English and glad to be English, but now I am English Polish. I love England still, though I'm sad at how the country is turning out since I left. But I have a new home now.

Poland is my home.

I chose it because I love this country. I've been welcomed, challenged, inspired. And though I was not born here, I have become a part of it.

That's the heart of my upcoming book *Polska: A Love Affair*.

Voting, having a say, being accountable – these things matter more to me than medals, titles, or money.

I believe it is possible to become Polish. Not just on paper, but in spirit. That idea might seem strange in Britain, but in Poland, I have lived it.

To every Pole who helped me on this journey – you are my family.

This is a golden age for Poland. And I'm proud to stand beside you as a citizen.

Thank you,

**Author:** Patrick Ney

**Introduction:** Danuta Piotrowska