



Residency Permits

Danish residence cards promised to 'no surname' foreign nationals



Michael Barrett - michael.barrett@thelocal.com

Published: 15 Jun, 2022 CET.

Updated: Wed 15 Jun 2022 16:21 CET



A detail from a Danish residence card. Photo: Michael Barrett/The Local

A number of foreign residents of Denmark have not been issued residence permit cards despite having legal status in the country, due to a technical issue related to the printing of their names.

The Danish Agency for International Recruitment and Integration (SIRI) confirmed to The Local



backlog of unissued residence cards.

The issue can affect foreign residents including people from regions of south India where naming conventions can mean a last name or family name is not given. As such, a significant number of legal residents of Denmark are currently without the correct documentation.

“I have lived in Denmark for more than six years, obtaining my PhD here too,” Raghavendra Selvan, an assistant professor and Computer Science researcher at the University of Copenhagen, told The Local.

“I am originally from south India, where a large portion of us do not have a last name or family name,” he said.

Get updates in your inbox

Stay on top of the stories that matter most to you.

[Go to newsletters](#)

“We mainly have a given name and in some cases use the first name of our fathers as the last name. For instance, my given name is Raghavendra and my last name is my father’s given name ‘Selvan’. However, in my passport the field for last name is empty,” he explained.

“All my official records in Denmark now explicitly state this. So, my name is ‘Raghavendra Selvan *Ej Efternavn*’ [“no surname” in Danish, ed.],” he said.

A Statistics Denmark search shows over 500 Danish residents with their last name registered as *Ej Efternavn*.



SEARCH

CLEAR

Searchresults	2021	2022	Difference
Men and women with the surname 'EJ EFTERNAVN'	455	505	50

A screenshot showing a search for "Ej Efternavn" ('No Surname') in Denmark's national statistics base.

SIRI confirmed to The Local that technical problems had prevented residence cards from being produced in cases in which surnames are not stated on passports.

However, SIRI said a solution had now been found and that residents who remain without cards will be issued with them “as soon as possible”.

“There has been challenges with issuing residence cards to foreigners with no surname,” SIRI said in a written statement.

“SIRI has now in cooperation with our supplier, Thales, found a solution, which is currently being implemented,” the agency said.

No specific timeline was given by the agency for delivery of residence cards to those affected by the issue.

“Due to a backlog, we still expect some further delay before all cards can be ordered, printed and issued,” SIRI said.

“In cooperation with Thales, we will do our best to ensure that all cards will be issued as soon as possible,” the agency told The Local.

The issue with the residence cards means affected persons are required to apply for a re-entry permit whenever they leave Denmark, which can complicate travel.



decision and about 20 months since the application itself,” Raghavendra Selvan said.

“I am now having to apply for a re-entry permit every three months to be able to travel outside Denmark,” he added.

“Having to get a re-entry permit every three months is annoying, and traveling outside Denmark when the re-entry permit is about to expire is extremely stressful,” he said.

The computer science researcher said that he had previously been advised to change his name in his passport in order to fix the issue.

“While I understand it is uncommon to not have a last name... asking all of us to change our name is not the best solution to this problem. This also reflects poorly on how Denmark is unable to accommodate diversity in names into its systems,” Raghavendra Selvan said.

MORE [#RESIDENCY PERMITS](#) [#VISAS](#)

COMMENTS

SHOW 

SEE ALSO



Over 100,000 expected in Copenhagen for historic abdication



Today in Denmark: A roundup of the news on Friday



How Denmark's incoming Crown Prince Christian brings teenage energy to monarchy



How will Denmark's Queen Margrethe hand over the throne on January 14th?



Get daily news straight in your inbox

EXPLORE NEWSLETTERS

By signing up you agree to our [Terms of Use](#) and [Privacy Policy](#). We will use your email address to send you newsletters as well as information and offers related to your account.

2024 The Local, All Rights Reserved.

[Privacy Policy](#) • [Terms & Conditions](#) • [Cookie Settings](#)