



# Indian Majlis in Danish society (IMDS)

(A non-religious, non-profit and non-political association)

Address: c/o Nayeemoddin Khaja Esromgade 15, 3. 1317. 2200 København N

Website: [www.imds.dk](http://www.imds.dk) Email: [info@imds.dk](mailto:info@imds.dk)

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## Applying for Danish citizenship: The process explained

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**We provide an explanation of applying for citizenship in Denmark, including an overview of the rules, a guide to the application process and useful extra information.**

Danish citizenship can only be granted to foreign nationals via legal nationalisation: your application must actually be approved by a parliamentary majority. Accepted applications are normally processed in parliament twice yearly, in April and in October.





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This means that to be granted citizenship, you must apply to the Ministry of Immigration and Integration for the eye-watering fee of 3,800 kroner (at the time of writing).

Citizenship entitles you to a Danish passport and gives you the right to vote in parliamentary elections, as well as providing a permanent basis for residency in the country.

You must, of course, meet a number of closely-defined criteria and requirements in order to be eligible for citizenship by naturalisation. These fall into six broad categories, all of which will be set out in further detail below.

- Give a declaration of loyalty to Denmark
- Fulfil prior residency criteria
- Have no criminal convictions
- Be free of debt to the public sector and be financially self-sufficient
- Meet criteria for Danish language skills
- Pass a citizenship test and demonstrate knowledge of Danish society

For children, stateless people born in Denmark, people whose previous Danish citizenships have lapsed and citizens of the Nordic countries, special rules apply. These will not be addressed in this article.





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## Declaration of loyalty to Denmark

Being given Danish citizenship means making your loyalty to Denmark and its society official. You must also declare that you will obey Denmark's laws, including the constitution, and respect the fundamental principles of Danish democracy.

How do I do this, you might ask? The answer is, digitally. You sign the declaration online as you file your application on the Borger.dk website (more on this follows below). You also reiterate the declaration when you attend the ceremony which confirms your citizenship, once you have been accepted for it.

## Prior residency criteria

At the time of your application, you must already have a permit for permanent residency in Denmark and be registered as living in the country, and have lived in Denmark for a specified number of years (see below).

Living in the country means just that: you live permanently in Denmark and are registered at a Danish address (where you live) on the national civil registry (Det Centrale Personregister, CPR).

**READ ALSO: [Is life in Denmark impossible without a personal registration number?](#)**





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Permanent residency is granted via a number of different routes, depending on the way in which you originally made Denmark your home.

## *EU free movement*

If you are a citizen of an EU country or the family member of an EU citizen, you can be granted permanent residency in Denmark after five years' legal residency in the country under EU free movement rules. For this, you must make an [appointment](#) to hand in your [application](#) in person to the Danish Agency for International Recruitment and Integration (SIRI). SIRI has branch offices in Copenhagen, Odense, Aalborg, Aarhus and Aabenraa.

## **READ ALSO:**

- [EU citizen? Here's how your free movement rights apply in Denmark](#)
- [What the Brexit Withdrawal Agreement means for British citizens in Europe](#)

## *Non-EU citizens*

If you are not a citizen of an EU country, the path to permanent residency, and thereby citizenship, is longer. To qualify for a permanent residency permit (*permanent opholdstilladelse*), you must have been legally resident in the country under a limited





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residency permit (*tidsbegrænset opholdstilladelse*) for at least eight years (in some cases four years, and exceptions can also apply, for example for persons aged 18 or 19 and people with Danish ancestry).

There are also a number of stringent requirements related to criminal convictions, debt to the state and self-sufficiency, employment history and language skills. These will not be covered here, since they are superseded by the requirements for citizenship itself, but you can find more detail on the official 'New to Denmark' [website](#).

## *Length of stay*

Normally, you must have lived in Denmark for nine consecutive years (without living elsewhere for more than three months) in order to qualify for citizenship. This period is reduced in some cases: for refugees it becomes eight years, citizens of Nordic countries need a two-year stay and people married to Danes qualify after 6-8 years, depending on the length of the marriage.

Other exceptions are made for those who have taken a significant portion of their education in Denmark, who may qualify after five years. If you moved to Denmark before your 15th birthday, you can become nationalised after you turn 18.





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In certain cases, exemptions from residency duration requirements are made, for example if a Danish spouse has worked abroad or due to the applicant being stationed abroad while working for a Danish employer.

## **Criminal convictions**

If you have committed and been convicted of a crime in Denmark, you can expect your chances of citizenship to be scuppered. Most prison sentences mean you can never become a Danish citizenship, while milder punishments such as fines can result in a suspension from applying for a period of at least four and a half years.

You must declare while applying for citizenship whether you have committed a crime. If authorities later find (a two-year check is carried out) that you have not disclosed any criminal activities, your citizenship can be revoked.

## **Public debt**

Overdue repayments to the state, in the form of repayable social welfare payments, child support, excess housing support (*boligstøtte*), payment for daycare, municipal loans for paying deposits on rental housing, and unpaid taxes and fees can all result in rejection of a citizenship application.

## **Self-sufficiency**





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Meanwhile, you will also be required to prove that you provide for yourself. That means, for example, documenting that you have not received state social welfare support such as the basic unemployment support, *kontanthjælp*, or the welfare benefits provided to those granted refugee status (*integrationsydelsen*), within the last two years.

Furthermore, you may not have received benefits of this type for more than a total period of four months within the last five years.

Other types of state benefit, such as the state student grant (*statens uddannelsesstøtte*, SU) and state pensions do not exclude you from qualifying for citizenship.

Unemployment insurance, parental leave and sick leave payouts (*dagpenge*) received over a total period of over four months will be added to the two years in which you must document that you were not supported by the state. Therefore, these types of benefit (which are partially self-funded) do not preclude you from applying for citizenship, and you can be in receipt of them at the time you apply.

## Language proficiency

In general, you must have passed the national *Prøve i Dansk* 3 language test, the final exam in the national Danish language school system. As such, you will be comfortable with speaking, reading and writing in Danish at the time you apply for citizenship.

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## READ ALSO: [Danish: Is it really so hard to learn?](#)

There are certain exemptions from the language requirements. Residents of Greenland and the Faroe Islands, as well as Swedish and Norwegian speakers, do not need to document Danish proficiency. Dispensation can be given for applicants with certain types of illnesses and disabilities, and different rules apply to children.

## The Danish citizenship test

Since 2015, the Danish citizenship test (*indfødsretsprøven*), held twice annually, has consisted of 40 multiple choice questions on Danish culture, history and society. The pass mark is 32. You'll need to attach a certificate showing you've passed when you submit your application.

## READ ALSO: [I took the Danish citizenship test today. What was it like, and why did I do it?](#)

The citizenship test requirement is subject to similar exemptions to the language proficiency requirement. You can find those rules in more detail on the Ministry of Immigration and Integration's [website](#).

It should be noted that dispensation from many of the requirements can, in theory, be given if you have spent the "majority of your formative years in Denmark and still live in the country," according







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to the ministry's [website](#). But The Local has previously reported that, in practice, things can be more complicated.

**READ ALSO: ['I was born in Denmark, but my post-Brexit Danish citizenship application was rejected'](#)**

*New Danish citizens attend a celebratory event at Christiansborg in 2015. File photo: Linda Kastrup/Ritzau Scanpix*

**– Where to apply –**

Applications for citizenship are made via the [borger.dk](http://borger.dk) citizens' self-service website, where you must initially log-in using the Nem-ID system. You will then be guided through each step of the application and prompted to upload documentation. Applications can be saved in the system for up to a month. After this, you'll have to begin from scratch.

You'll be asked to confirm whether you are using legal representation for your application, then asked to fill in identity information. Some of this – your personal registration number and address, for example – will be automatically filled in. You will also be required to upload a photo of your passport.

A slightly tricky part of this section is the request for 'Person-Id' and 'Udlændingenummer'. These can be found on your existing residency documentation.





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*Screengrab: Borger.dk*

*An example of residency documentation showing Person-ID and Udlændingenummer. Photo: The Local*

You will then have to confirm information about your current citizenship, marital status and whether you have any children, before entering information about your current residency in Denmark and uploading documentation in the form of a permanent residency permit.

*Screengrab: Borger.dk*

Next, you will be required to register all of your travels outside of Denmark within the last 12 years after moving to the country. This could take a while: everything must be listed, according to information provided to The Local. That includes short weekend trips, holidays, family visits or time abroad due to family illness, exchange programmes related to education, foreign placements with work and stays abroad related to a partner's work.

After making a declaration as to whether you have committed any crimes in Denmark or abroad, the next step is to document your educational history. This means supplying school leavers'





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certificates and certifications of higher education and other professional qualifications you've gained in other countries.

The final steps of the digital application form require you to add information about any social welfare benefits you may have received, as well as outstanding debt to the public sector.

Once you have completed these sections, you will be able to continue to the digital declaration and signature.

Given the hefty application fee, it is important to make sure you have everything in your application correct. It is beyond the scope of this article to cover the many different ways in which personal circumstances and history might affect a citizenship application, but there are options for seeking advice.

You can contact the Ministry of Immigration and Integration for guidance on citizenship rules between 9am and 11am on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. Their contact information (including an email address) can be found [here](#).

You also have the option of seeking legal advice. [Copenhagen Legal Aid](#) offers such advice to everyone living in Denmark (not just in Copenhagen), and the service is free (depending on your income). You can contact them in person or by telephone.

– *What happens next?* –





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Once your application is submitted, it's time to play the waiting game. As of January 2019, the processing time for applications is 20 months, [according to](#) the immigration ministry.

If all goes well and your application is approved by the ministry, you will receive a letter notifying you that you can expect to be accepted for citizenship at the next round of parliamentary procedure, provided you still fulfil the requirements at that time.

Once the new law making you a citizen comes into force, you will be sent a declaration that you have been accepted for citizenship with one final condition: you attend a ceremony, declare that you will uphold Denmark's laws, values and principles, [shake hands with an official](#) and become a citizen.

**READ ALSO: [Denmark officially ushers in dual citizenship in 2015](#)**

Sources: *Udlændinge- og*

*Integrationsministeriet* [\(1\)](#) [\(2\)](#) [\(3\)](#), [Borger.dk](#), [Nyidanmark.dk](#)

