



Ad-Hoc Query on Transliteration of Foreign Names

Requested by CZ EMN NCP on 18th January 2010

Compilation produced on 9th March 2010

Responses from Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Hungaria, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom (22 in Total)

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1. Background Information

In regard of the prepared amendment of the Act on the Residence of Foreign Nationals, we would like to raise question on how you deal with foreigners' names and surnames when issuing a residence permit in situations where a foreigner's name and surname contain such characters that are not possible to write in your language system.

For example, Czech name Jiří Kovář (with caron above "r" and acute accent above "i" and "a") or Hůlka (ring above "u").






In cases when Czech Republic issues birth certificate or marriage certificate to a foreigner, his/her name is transliterated to such documents so it is recognizable in our systems. Such name is then used e.g. in his residence permit and it can be different from the one in his/her passport.

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It would be very much appreciated if we could receive your answers by the **4th of February 2010**.











2. Responses

		Wider Dissemination?	Query No. 1. Does your country transliterate names of foreign nationals so that the form used in residence permit and similar documents differs from the form used in passport, or, does your country keep the form used in passport?
	Austria	No	This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that their response is not disseminated further.
	Belgium	Yes	<p>For asylum seekers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transliteration of Cyrillic alphabet: since a couple of years the English transliteration is used: this is to avoid discrepancies between the Dutch and the French community and because Russia itself uses the English transcription when writing names in Latin characters on passports. When there is a passport with names written in Latin characters and this is not in accordance with the correct English transliteration, the information on the passport is used • No strict rules for Arabic: this is often also complicated because vowels are often not written (same problem in Nepali, Farsi, Hindi, Chinese,...): here we trust on our interpreters... • for characters not used in our languages, e.g. the ñ in Spanish or ß in German, we use the nearest equivalent (ñ becomes n or nn en ß becomes ss) <p>For visa applications: No standard rules</p>
	Bulgaria	Yes	Bulgaria does not transliterate the names of foreign nationals and keeps the form used in the passport on the base of the Latin alphabet.
	Czech Republic	Yes	In cases when Czech Republic issues birth certificate or marriage certificate to a foreigner, his/her name is transliterated to such documents so it is recognizable in our systems. Such name is then used e.g. in his residence permit and it can be different from the one in his/her passport.
	Estonia	Yes	<p>1. In case of Estonia we try to keep the transcription the same as in foreigner's passport, but we must pay attention to Names Act. In Estonia the orthography of personal names is written down in Names Act accordingly:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A personal name shall be written using Estonian-Latin letters and symbols and, if necessary, the transcription rules for non-Estonian personal names shall be used. 2. The spelling of an Estonian personal name shall be in accordance with the rules of orthography of the Estonian language. The spelling of a non-Estonian personal name shall be in accordance with the rules of orthography of the relevant language.

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			<p>A personal name shall be applied:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) on the basis of the name entered in the source document according to the transcription rules for non-Estonian personal names; 2) in the absence of the possibility specified in clause 1) of this subsection, by the transcription of the non-Latin name entered in the source document with Estonian-Latin letters, which shall be done according to the transcription rules for non-Estonian personal names or, in the absence of the rules, on the basis of the recommendation of the Office of Onomastic Expertise. <p>The list of Estonian-Latin letters and symbols used upon assigning and application of personal names and the transcription rules for non-Estonian personal names shall be established by a regulation of the Government of the Republic.</p> <p>According to the Names Act a personal name assigned or applied in a foreign state shall be applied:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) upon issue of an Estonian passport or alien's passport or identity card on the basis of the person's birth certificate of the foreign state, marriage certificate of the foreign state or divorce certificate of the foreign state or a court judgment regarding the person; 2) in a vital statistics office or court of Estonia if the marriage of a person contracted in a foreign state is divorced. <p>The requirements of this Act regarding personal names upon assigning the personal names shall be complied with upon commencement of use of personal names assigned or applied in a foreign state and:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) at the request of a person, the personal name assigned or applied to him or her in a foreign state shall be preserved if the personal name is written in Estonian-Latin letters; 2) personal names may be restored in the form preceding the assigning or application of personal names by a foreign state; 3) in the case of a divorce, the personal name of a person which was last borne before marriage or last borne before first marriage may be restored in the form used in Estonia.
	Finland	Yes	The main rule is to use the form/spelling used in the person's passport. If there are any deviations, this is attempted to be rectified at a later stage.
	France	Yes	<p>In France, the prefectures are responsible for issuing residence permits. In situations where a foreigner's name and surname contain characters that can not be written in French, the prefectures rely on authorized/accredited translators to transliterate the name and surname of the foreigner. In that case, the name used in the residence permit can be different from the one on the passport.</p> <p>Sometimes, the name which appears on the passport has already been transliterated in an embassy by accredited translators too. In that case, the prefectures take the transliterated name to copy it out on the residence permit. Then, the name is the same in the residence permit and in the passport.</p> <p>For example, if a foreigner has a passport with a name written in the Cyrillic alphabet (such as Russians, Ukrainians, or Byelorussians), all the information (name, surname, nationality, date of birth) is transliterated into Latin characters.</p> <p>In the case of Latin alphabet with characters that do not exist in French, like Jiří Kovář or Hůlka, then the signs that are above the letters are deleted. Therefore, there is no need for a translator since the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs relies on a directive to do so.</p>
	Greece	Yes	The name of TCNs on their residence permits must be exactly the same with the name written on their passports in Latin alphabet. In addition, Ministry of Interior, Decentralization and e-Government has issued a circular clarifying that all Greek authorities that deal with TCNs must issue the documents using their names as these are indicated on their passport in Latin.
	Hungary	Yes	The general rule is that Hungarian authorities try to stick to the form indicated in the passport. However, when such characters do not exist in the Hungarian alphabet and it is not possible to keep the same form due to technical reasons, the authorities use the appropriate









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			Hungarian character (eg. instead of ř only r or instead of ů only u).
	Ireland	Yes	On Irish residence cards all names are in the English or Irish alphabet. EEA nationals are not required to register in Ireland.
	Italy	Yes	In cases where the ID documents of a foreign citizen contain diacritical marks typical of other languages and not used in Italian languages, the names and other particular information are transliterated into Italian documents issued by the registry offices or into residence permits issued by the police. At the present there is no a unique informative system applied to all Italian public administration offices for the use of proper signs of other languages.
	Latvia	Yes	In accordance with the Immigration Law one of the conditions for an alien to get right to enter and reside in the Republic of Latvia, is to have a valid travel document. The travel document is valid if it is recognised in the Republic of Latvia. In the Cabinet Regulations No 215 (adopted 29 April 2003) "Procedures for Recognition of Travel Documents of Aliens" is determined that the documents shall be recognised as valid for entry into the Republic of Latvia if the information therein is specified in the original language and English or French. So, in the residence permits used the form of aliens name and surname used in passport (in English or French).
	Lithuania	Yes	In residence permit (also in birth certificate or marriage certificate) foreigner's given names and surname are inscribed using Latin characters in accordance with the data in his/her passport (using letters of the basic Modern Latin alphabet).
	Luxembourg	Yes	In Luxembourg the names of foreign nationals in resident permits have the same form as the one used in passport.
	Malta	Yes	The Office of the Refugee Commissioner in Malta and the Department for Citizenship and Expatriate Affairs, register the names of foreign nationals as written on the passport, whilst the names which appear on the passports are those as registered on the birth certificate at the Public Registry in Malta. Names in the Public Registry are registered in the normal characters. Details can be hand-written on the observation page of the passport so as to match details as appearing on their original documents if the client requests this.
	Netherlands	Yes	In general the Netherlands does not transliterate names of foreign nationals. It is legally obliged to use the authentic information as is given in the birth- or marriage certificate, also when there are any diacritic signs in the foreign names. The Dutch system is capable to recognize most of the diacritic signs. Except when this is not the case, the name is transliterated so it is recognized in the Dutch system.
	Portugal	Yes	The identification elements contained in the residence permit are taken from the passport holder.
	Slovak Republic	Yes	The Slovak Republic does not transliterate the name and surname of the foreigner in the residence permits. The form of the name in residence permit is always identical with its form in the travel document or birth certificate of the foreigner.
	Slovenia	Yes	In line with the first paragraph of Article 74 of the Aliens Act (Off. Gaz. RS no. št. 71/08 – consolidated versions) an alien residing in the territory of the Republic of Slovenia has to use his/her personal name that he/she has under the regulations of his/her country unless the law or the international treaty stipulates otherwise. The second paragraph of the above Article furthermore provides that in case the name recorded in the birth certificate is not identical to the personal name indicated in the alien's passport, it is the name as it is written in the alien's passport that should be entered in the formal records kept by the Republic of Slovenia. It is however necessary to consider the available sets of letters and signs in order to record the name the personal name in line with the regulations governing subscriptions in the Civil Register (CR). The selection of letters used to make entries in CR is an annex to the Rules on implementing the Civil Registry Act (Off. Gaz. RS, no. 40/05). In case the alien's personal name contains a letter or a sign that the formal selection of letters does not contain this letter or the sign should be rewritten in line with the ICAO 9303 standaqrđ - Machine readable travel documents.

SE EMN Ad-Hoc Query: Transliteration of foreign names















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	Spain	Yes	<p>Foreigners' personal details are taken from a passport, applying international regulations on machine readable travel documents (MRTD) of the International Civil Aeronautical Organization (ICAO) as regards characters to be included in the machine readable zone (MRZ) information line (capital letters, without accents, special characters or those specific to a country), applying, therefore, the same criteria when registering surnames and names in the Database on Foreigners and, as a result, for residence cards (capital letters, without accents or special characters except Ñ and Ü which are innate to our language).</p> <p>On the other hand, for certain consultations of the Database concerning surnames, a transliteration of our own which does not take into account any specific criteria, whether phonetic in nature or otherwise, applies.</p>
	Sweden	Yes	Yes, the names of foreign nationals are transliterated in official documents. Sweden use the standards set by ICAO when producing stickers which means that the information in the machine-readable zone in the passport corresponds with the text in the sticker.
	United Kingdom	No	This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that their response is not disseminated further.

		Wider Dissemination?	Query No. 2. (if applicable) Do you have any information that foreigners experience problems during checks on borders that they have passport and residence permit which contain different names and surnames?
	Austria	No	This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that their response is not disseminated further.
	Belgium	Yes	Residence-permits are delivered by local Belgian administrations, it is possible that the name on the residence-permits will be slightly different than the one on the passport, bit this usually doesn't cause any problem during border checks. Problems can occur when there are very clear differences between the information on the passport and the residence permit (differences not caused by transliteration) or when there is a total different name (e.g. when a woman started using the name of her husband)
	Bulgaria	Yes	We are not aware of such cases. But the rule determines that the person has to submit an official certificate for identity of his names.
	Czech Republic	Yes	Problems caused to foreign nationals by the different form of name in passport and residence permit were already reported.
	Estonia	Yes	Yes we have, but border control checks always the electronic system (in case the residence permit is issued by Estonian authority), for double-checking.
	Finland	Yes	Finland is not aware of any problems. According to the Border Guards, machine-readable passports compliant with the ICAO-standard do not pose any problems, as the passport-reader application includes a transliteration feature. Therefore a different transliteration of a persons name in for instance a residence permit compared with the passport is not a problem.
	France	Yes	France has not been faced with such an issue. However, if such problem happened, the officers in charge of the control would check on central computerized files of foreign nationals.
	Greece	Yes	We do not have official information about that, however we assume that since their personal data it is obligatory to be the same (on the

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			passport and the residence permit) they do not face such problems. In addition, in case there is a change in their personal data (i.e. due to marriage or baptism etc.) they are obliged to inform the authorities about that and apply for the issuance of their permit with the new data.
	Hungary	Yes	No problems have been reported so far.
	Ireland	Yes	No particular difficulties have been identified.
	Italy	Yes	See answer No. 1
	Latvia	Yes	If it is possible to identify the person, there is no problems during checks on borders if the alien has passport and residence permit which contain different name and surname.
	Lithuania	Yes	No.
	Luxembourg	Yes	Not applicable.
	Malta	Yes	The NCP has not received any information that foreigners encounter such problems during checks on borders while the Public Registry has so far never received any such complaints.
	Netherlands	Yes	Regarding this topic, there are no problems experienced by the border control.
	Portugal	Yes	The rule for inclusion in the national registry is done without putting any stress card, except in cases of consultation within the international systems (SIS / INTERPOL) in which it is consulting both from the keyboard allows.
	Slovak Republic	Yes	No we did not have such a case so far.
	Slovenia	Yes	No such complains or problems have been reported to MoI.
	Spain	Yes	See answer No. 1
	Sweden	Yes	We have no information suggesting that foreigners have encountered problems of this sort when controlled at the border.
	United Kingdom	No	This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that their response is not disseminated further.
