

SIGN FOR CHANGE!

- your help is needed

Have you had bad experiences with an interpreter during your stay in the Danish asylum system?

The Interpreting Committee of the Association of Danish Authorized Translators and Interpreters needs your help to get an overview of the scale of the problems with interpreters in the Danish asylum system.

If you have had a bad experience with interpretation, please share it with the Interpreting

Committee. They are fighting to put pressure on relevant politicians, and the more examples from you and other asylum seekers - the bigger the pressure for better interpreters.

Fill out the questionnaire, sign it and send it to the Interpreting Committee at mail@translatorforeningen.dk.

You can also send it to New Times (newtimesdk@gmail.com) and we will hand it over to the Interpreting Committee.

NOTE

The Interpreting Committee needs to know your real name, but if you do not want anyone else to know about your story, you can be anonymous. Mark this by writing "Anonymous" under your real name at the end of the document. Then your real name will be taken out of the statistical report that will be published later on.

DEAR USER OF INTERPRETING SERVICES

The Interpreting Committee of the Association of Danish Authorized Translators and Interpreters is making a national survey of the implications of inadequate interpreting assistance. Therefore, we ask you to help us collect stories about bad experiences with interpreting assistance in healthcare, social or legal settings.

If you have experienced a situation with bad interpreting assistance, please let us know by filling in the attached questionnaire and sending it by email to the Association of Danish Authorized Translators and Interpreters at mail@translatorforeningen.dk.

If you know of other users of interpreting services who have had bad experiences with interpreting assistance in healthcare, social or legal settings, please feel free to reforward this request to them.

THE REASON FOR OUR REQUEST

The Interpreting Committee aims to improve the general quality of interpreting services in the Danish public sector. We are worried about the fact that most of the interpreters in healthcare, social and legal settings have no formal interpreting or language training and have not passed exams in interpreting or languages. Our concern is shared by lawyers, judges, social workers, doctors, nurses and many other professionals who have told us that they often have bad experiences with interpreters.

Here in Denmark we do not know the full impact of bad interpreting assistance. But foreign studies have revealed that bad interpreting assistance may have huge consequences for individual users of interpreting and may also be very costly to society, for example because patients get the wrong kind of treatment and have to be hospitalised for longer periods of time, or because court trials are prolonged or have to be postponed.

In order to remedy the situation and ensure proper interpreting services in Denmark, the Interpreting Committee recommends that the Danish authorities set up an interpreter accreditation scheme, create a national register of public service interpreters and establish a

university programme in public service interpreting.

For the past two years we have taken various steps aimed at making our politicians assume responsibility for the interpreting situation in Denmark. In March 2012, we organised a public hearing on interpreting services in the Danish public sector. During the winter of 2012-2013, we presented our recommendations to members of three Standing Committees of the Danish Parliament (Folketinget): the Social Affairs Committee, the Health Affairs Committee and the Legal Affairs Committee.

The purpose of collecting experiences from situations with bad interpreting assistance is to gather further proof of the extent of the problem

so that we can persuade our politicians of the urgent need for action. We therefore hope to receive input from very many different users of interpreting services in Denmark.

Kind regards,
The Interpreting Committee

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QUESTIONNAIRE:

Describe the setting in which the interpreter was asked to assist you (**where** and **when** did you experience bad interpreting assistance, **who** was present, **what** was the purpose of the meeting/appointment/hearing):

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Describe what made the interpreting go wrong:

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Describe the consequences of the bad interpreting assistance in the actual situation and/or subsequent or later consequences:

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Name:

Position:

Place of work/reason for stay in Denmark:

