

Memdeklaro – An Introduction

<https://memdeklaro.org>

Memdeklaro empowers people to self-declare their own identity without third parties, supporting freedom of name, freedom of belief and freedom of association.

Public domain

Contents

Self Declaration of Identity.....	3
The Problem.....	5
The Solution.....	9
Alternatives.....	13
Disclaimer.....	14
Further Reading.....	16
Public Domain Dedication.....	18

Self Declaration of Identity

Memdeklaro is a philosophical project that empowers people to **self-declare their own identity** - without third parties such as birth parents, birth cultures or birth countries.

Memdeklaro positions itself as a **humanitarian alternative** to the exclusionary state monopoly on identity and supports the three freedoms: freedom of name, freedom of belief and freedom of association.

Memdeklaro supports a world where people are judged only on their character, beliefs and actions, not on where they were born, who they were born to, or what their birth culture was. A world where individuals have power over their own lives - the power to leave corrupt governments, hostile cultures and abusers, and thrive in a self-chosen community.

"Self-declaration of identity gives people the power to decide their own fate, and creates a world where actions and beliefs matter more than arbitrary circumstances of birth."

The Problem

Millions of people worldwide have no access to government ID. Nation-states routinely refuse to issue birth certificates, national ID cards and passports to people, most often due to the circumstances of their birth, rather than due to their own actions as an adult. This group may include stateless people, refugees, people who weren't registered at birth, and people who escaped from child abuse, domestic abuse or cult abuse.

As government ID is increasingly required for employment, housing, healthcare, education, travel and daily life necessities, this leaves people at best on the edge of society or at worst criminalized for existing. In this situation, cash in hand jobs and informal apartment rentals are an essential lifeline, but

as the state cracks down on the gray market economy, exclusion from the state monopoly on identity could mean life or death.

“You may think economic exclusion — banned from employment, housing, healthcare, education, banking, travel, contracts, mail, sim cards and more — would be a punishment for only the most severe of crimes. But for stateless people, refugees, victims of abuse and people who weren’t registered at birth, it is a punishment for being born.”

In an ideal world, everyone would be granted a legal identity at age 18, without requirements and without needing permission from birth parents or the birth country. Or there would be a way to earn a legal identity as an adult, or receive an identity based on fingerprints and a photo. Or at least a way to get a stateless passport in order to be allowed to apply for a work, marriage or humanitarian

visa in a different country. An adult would be able to independently legalize themselves through their own efforts, regardless of the situation that they were born into.

However, the United Nations no longer issues Nansen Passports (despite that they saved thousands of lives), the Red Cross rarely issues Emergency Travel Documents, and nation-states generally refuse to issue stateless passports, even though these exist by law. Access to asylum procedures, stateless determination procedures, delayed registration of birth, child protective services or witness protection is often denied, or in the worst case, the victim is forcibly returned to the abusers against their will.

"It's a vicious circle, where it's illegal to not have ID, but no jurisdiction agrees to print ID for you."

Furthermore, the collectivist concept of

citizenship can be dangerous. For example, if someone does not identify with their birth culture, they should not be forced to follow it for life. Instead, they should be free to dissent against this culture and leave this culture's jurisdiction. Even worse is conscription - the cruel system where a nation-state can force someone against their will to kill or be killed, just because they happened to be born inside a certain territory.

In the current system, birth countries become cruel captors, without a way to earn release or seek freedom under a different culture or jurisdiction. Your personal beliefs, actions and efforts do not matter. Your inherent humanity and personhood is denied. There is no way to prove your worth or defy the circumstances of your birth.

The Solution

Memdeklaro takes the power away from the state monopoly and empowers people to define their own name, culture and personal ties.

"The blood of the covenant is thicker than the water of the womb."

The **self-declaration of identity** is a self-printed CR-80 plastic card or paper business card (85.6mm x 54mm). It is not stored in a central database, does not require a third party's permission and does not need to be issued by an authority. You are the authority over your own life.

The self declaration is written in Esperanto, an anational language of peace, built on freedom of belief and freedom of association. It features artwork of a peace dove in the sky.

The self-declaration includes the text:

- Title: Self-declaration of identity (*Memdeklaro de identeco*)
- Location: Esperanto community (*Esperantujo*)
- Issuer: EPO (*ISO code for Esperanto*)
- Quote: One world, one humankind (*Unu mondo, unu homaro*)

The self-declaration of identity contains:

- Self-chosen first name (*Antaŭnomo*)
- Self-chosen surname (*Nomo*)
- Birth date (*Naskiĝdato*)
- Photo (*35mm x 45mm*)
- Signature (*Subskribo*)
- Notes field (*Notoj*)
- Example note: “The holder is a conscientious objector” (*Portanto estas*

konsciencia objêtanto)

- Arbitrary ID number (*Numero*), issuance date (*Eldondato*), expiry date (*Limdato*), issuer (*Eldonisto*), MRZ

The self-declaration of identity does not contain:

- Place of birth (*To allow people to cut ties with hostile environments and self-define their culture, beliefs and personal ties*)
- Citizenship or stateless status (*To allow people to cut ties with hostile governments or cultures, and exist as an individual instead of as property of a state that they did not choose*)
- Parents' names (*To allow victims of child abuse to cut ties with abusers*)

To make your own:

- Use the generator on <https://memdeklaro.org>

- Or download the template from Github: <https://github.com/memdeklaro> and add your text and photo using an image editor
- Print it out as a business card (85.6mm x 54mm), or order a CR-80 plastic card from a printing service, or use it digitally

"The choice of your own name and renunciation of your circumstances of birth is a liberating act of individualism, where your ideals, actions and efforts matter more than the situation that you were arbitrarily born into."

Alternatives

- World Passport:
<https://worldcitizengov.org/what-is-the-world-passport/> It is possible to apply for a World Passport using only fingerprints. An existing government ID is not required.
- Digitalcourage ID:
<https://shop.digitalcourage.de/gadgets/lichtbildausweis-mit-selbst-waehlbaren-daten.html> You can get a Digitalcourage ID under a self-chosen name. An existing government ID is not required.

Disclaimer

ID requirements do more harm than good and should not be seen as a viable solution for trust or authentication.

Requiring a government-assigned identity only began in recent decades. For most of human history, self-declaration was the norm and caused no issues.

People did not need a signed certificate from the King in order to live their lives. People could travel from place to place without hindrance, with the goal of finding somewhere to belong, where they could prove their worth, work hard and build a good life.

For most transactions, it should be enough to simply introduce yourself with your self-chosen name, use vouches or a web of trust, use a password, code or physical key, use an escrow, cash deposit or mediator, or pay in a

bearer instrument like cash or Monero.

The world would be freer and more prosperous if people could build a reputation based on their actions and personal beliefs, rather than be condemned to their circumstances of birth, without a way to earn freedom as an adult.

Further Reading

For further reading about identity:

- Passports Were a “Temporary” War Measure - Speranta Dumitru
- During World War II, we did have something to hide - Hans de Zwart
- The Little-Known Passport That Protected 450,000 Refugees - Cara Giaimo
- With each person left living on the streets, we are losing as a society - Petr Baroch
- The rarely discussed dangers of KYC and what you can do about it – Anarkio
- Exclusion and identity: life without ID - Privacy International
- Proving who I am: the plight of people in

detention without proof of legal identity

- Vicki Prais

- Establishing identity is a vital, risky and changing business - The Economist
- What's in a name? The case for inclusivity through anonymity - Common Thread
- True Names Not Required: On Identity and Pseudonymity in Cyberspace - Der Gigi

Public Domain Dedication

This is free and unencumbered software released into the public domain.