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Handbook for accompanying spouses and partners of  
foreign researchers and specialists working and **living in Denmark**

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### **Welcome to Denmark!**

The overall purpose of this handbook is to give support and guidance to accompanying spouses and partners of foreign researchers and specialists who have moved to Denmark.

In this guide, you will find practical information that will help you settle down in Denmark and integrate into your local community. You will also find information on specific topics that can help you if you would like to find work, study, start your own business or apply for a research fund.

During 2011, there will be a variety of courses offered in Zealand (Sjælland), Jutland (Jylland) and Funen (Fyn) about work culture, studying in Denmark, job search, starting your own business or how to apply for a research fund.

We hope that this handbook and the courses offered in 2011 will help you get a better understanding of the Danish lifestyle, work culture and the opportunities that you can enjoy during your stay in Denmark.

The partners behind this project are the universities in Denmark in collaboration with Vestas and Spousecare. The project is financially supported by The National Labour Market Authority (Arbejdsmarkedsstyrelsen).

## 2.1 About Denmark

Denmark consists of the peninsula of Jutland (Jylland) and approximately 407 islands of which 79 are inhabited.

The largest and most densely populated islands are Zealand (Sjælland), Funen (Fyn) and Bornholm. The capital Copenhagen (København) is situated on the east coast of Zealand.

Administratively, the country is divided into 5 regions (regioner) and 98 local municipalities (kommuner).

Towards the end of the 10th century, Denmark was united as a single kingdom. It has been an independent country ever since, and is thus one of the oldest states in Europe.

The form of government is a parliamentary democracy with a royal head of state.

## 2.2. Registration & CPR number

Once you have received your residence permit\* you can get registered at your local municipality. In order to receive a CPR number (social security number) and a health card you need to:

- Apply in person at the Citizen Service Office (Borgerservice) in the municipality where you live and take with you your:
  - Residence permit and work permit
  - Passport
  - Marriage certificate and children's birth certificates, if applicable.

*\* In the cities of Copenhagen, Aarhus, Odense and Aalborg, you can also go to the **International Citizen Service Office** to get both your residence permit and a CPR number.*

It is important to get the CPR number and the yellow health card which will ensure that you can get free medical help, open a bank account, allow registration at the tax authorities, use public libraries, and many more services. You need to present your CPR number at almost all official offices and banks in Denmark.

It is very important that you have the original documents from your home country (birth certificate, marriage certificate, driver's licence, medical file, professional certificates, diplomas, etc.).

Also, remember that if you want to extend your residence and work permit, you have to apply for an extension by submitting your application no sooner than 2 months **before your original residence permit expires**. It is crucial that you submit your application for an extension before your current residence permit expires, otherwise you will be considered as residing illegally in Denmark. Read more [here](#).

Please remember to put your name on your door or mailbox so that the postman can deliver your post!



### 2.3. Health Care in Denmark

Once you have received your CPR number and the yellow health card, you are covered by the Danish public health care system.

We call the yellow health card “Sundhedsskort” in Danish.

On your yellow health card, your name, address and CPR number are written as well as the name, telephone number and address of your doctor/GP (general practitioner). A GP is called “læge” in Danish. You can contact your GP during their office hours (usually in the morning) to make an appointment. Some GPs are members of an online appointment booking system: [www.min-laege.dk](http://www.min-laege.dk) (in Danish). You can also search for GPs in your area through this website. You are free to choose your GP among all the ones that work in your municipality. In case you later want to change GPs, this can be done once a year (some municipalities charge a fee to replace the yellow health card).



#### Emergency

In acute life-threatening emergencies such as fire, grievous bodily assault and acute illness, call 112.

#### In case of emergency call 112

#### Doctors on Call (“Lægevagten” in Danish)

If you need to get in touch with a GP outside office hours, you can call “Lægevagten” which is a service line where you can talk to a GP who can help you decide how to proceed. If needed, the GP can

send a prescription directly to one of the pharmacies that are open 24/7, where you will be able to pick up the medication.

The “Lægevagten” service is open from 4 p.m. to 8 a.m. on weekdays and 24 hours on Saturdays, Sundays and on holidays. **Remember to have your CPR number ready when you call.**

#### Here are the telephone numbers of the Doctors on Call in your area:

Copenhagen Region (except Tårnby and Dragør)	44 53 44 00
Frederiksberg, Tårnby and Dragør	70 13 00 41
Former Frederiksborg Amt	48 25 00 41
Bornholm	56 95 22 33
Mid-Jutland Region	70 11 31 31
North-Jutland Region	70 15 03 00
Zealand Region	70 15 07 00
South-Denmark Region	70 11 07 07

#### Police

If you need to contact the police, you can call 114. You will be connected to the police station nearest you. However, in any emergency, it is still better to call 112.

#### Having a baby

Ask your GP about the pregnancy programme. Your GP will offer to enrol you in the public pregnancy programme in Denmark.

#### Dentists

Dental care is free for children under 18. For adults, dental care in Denmark is not free but still subsidised by the government.

## 2.4 Banking, NemKonto, NemID and e-Boks

### Banking

It is necessary to have a Danish bank account when living in Denmark. In most cases, you need it to receive your salary as well as other supplements from the municipality which are paid directly into your bank account, such as child benefit (which is usually paid to the mother) and pensions. Once you have your CPR number, you can go into any bank and open an account. Once you have a bank account, you can arrange to have your bills paid automatically from your account by direct debit (Betalingsservice). This service is free whereas banks usually charge a service fee of at least DKK 20 if you pay your bills in person at the bank.

When you open a bank account, the bank will issue you with a Danish debit card which you can use to withdraw money at your bank, at the bank's cash point machines/ATMs and at most shops. Your bank might charge a fee for withdrawing money from other banks' ATMs so ask your bank before doing so. The most common debit card is the "Dankort" which is valid for payments all over Denmark. You can use the card to withdraw money and to pay for goods in most shops as well as for internet shopping. You will be sent a PIN code which you will need in order to use the card at cash point machines and in shops. Some shops require a signature instead of a PIN code.

You can use your debit card to withdraw cash in supermarkets. Typically, before you pay, the cashier will ask you if you want to pay the exact amount by saying "på beløbet." You can ask for any extra amount, thereby using your debit card to withdraw money.

Many banks offer a combined Visa/Dankort card. With a Visa card, you can pay for goods and services and withdraw money in most parts of the world.

"Netbanking" is widely used in Denmark and many banks offer this service in English. Please ask your bank for further details.

Most shops and other service providers have the right to impose a surcharge for transactions made with foreign credit cards. This surcharge varies between 2% and 5% and is determined by the individual store or chain.

### NemKonto

Most residents in Denmark occasionally receive payments of some kind from the state. These payments can be tax refunds, child subsidies, pensions, student loans, unemployment benefits, housing support or social welfare payments.

Everybody in Denmark – citizens and companies alike – must have a designated NemKonto Easy Account, which is basically the bank account where you receive your salary. You must choose one account as NemKonto if you have several bank accounts. Read more about NemKonto Easy Account [here](#).

If you are in doubt whether you have a "NemKonto" or you do not know which one of your accounts it is, then ask your bank and they will let you know.

## NemID

NemID is the new digital signature that all residents in Denmark have received in 2010. The purpose of NemID is for all residents to have one internet login for all public and private services.

The way you log in will always be the same, whether you are accessing your online banking, e-Boks or the local public authorities' self-service, or whether you are checking your insurance or retrieving your tax return from the Danish tax authorities, SKAT. Read more about NemID [here](#).

## e-Boks

[e-Boks](#) is your personal digital mailbox. You can choose to have documents from governmental institutions delivered in your e-Boks such as your pay slip, documents from ATP, SKAT (tax), banks, insurance, labour unions, etc. In addition, you can scan your birth certificate or other personal papers and save them in e-Boks. Unless you erase them yourself, your documents in e-Boks will be kept for an unlimited period whether you move, get another job or change e-mail address. Through the internet, you always have access to your documents, and you do not have to organize and file your documents.

## Privacy and security

e-Boks is connected to your CPR number, i.e. only you have access to your personal documents. All the information sent to you will be encrypted so that nobody else can see it. Furthermore, e-Boks is using an approved certificate, which is your guarantee that you communicate with the right receiver i.e. e-Boks. All content is placed and stored in one of Denmark's most secured servers at KMD. To log

on to e-Boks, you need to have NemID. Unfortunately, the English guide on how to open an e-Boks has not yet been updated.

## 2.5. Insurance

In Denmark, two types of insurance policies are compulsory:

- Car insurance
- Third party liability insurance for dogs.

### Car Insurance

If you buy a car in Denmark, you must take out Third Party Liability Insurance as it is compulsory in Denmark. The insurance covers liability for claims resulting from the car being used as a vehicle. In addition, you may choose to take out comprehensive car insurance which will cover any damage to your car and loss in case of theft.

You can take out insurance with or without deductible. If you take out insurance with deductible, your yearly fee will be lower than insurance without deductible but the deductible amount will apply to each and every claim.

### Third Party Liability Insurance for Dogs

Owners of dogs must take out third party liability insurance covering damage or injury caused by the dog.

### Household Contents Insurance

A very useful insurance available in Denmark is the Household Contents Insurance - the Comprehensive Family Insurance. It covers loss of and damage to personal effects, furniture and other household contents resulting from fire, theft, burglary and water damage. It also covers your personal liability and when you are travelling, your luggage is covered.

Bicycles are only covered when they are locked with an approved lock. The lock certificate must be kept as proof and must be presented to the insurance company in case of theft. You also have to state the frame number of the bicycle.

### **Buildings Insurance**

The Buildings Insurance/House Insurance covers:

- Fire and damage to buildings
- Attack by dry rot, fungi and insects
- Broken glass and sanitary fixtures
- Extended piping/cable insurance

Insurance cover is provided on the basis of full rebuilding value provided that the house is sufficiently maintained. If you live in a rental apartment or house the owner of the property is responsible for the building insurance.

### **Personal Accident Insurance**

The insurance covers accidents. Cover is normally provided if you become more than 5% permanently disabled.

### **Travel Insurance**

Remember that you are not automatically covered if you travel with your partner on business. Check with your insurance company what cover applies to you.

## **2.6 Childcare and Schools**

### **Small Children**

In Denmark, most parents work and they place their children in a nursery, day care or kindergarten during the day. Once the parental

leave is over (6-12 months), children go to day care or nursery until they are 2 years and 10 months old. After that, most children go to kindergarten or preschool (“børnehave” in Danish) until they start school at around 6 or 7 years old.

Depending on which city you live in, you should expect waiting lists for childcare so you should get organised and apply early.

For more information, please see: [CitizenInDenmark](#) or contact your local citizen service office.

### **Children at School**

Most Danish children who have reached school age (approx. 6) go to the public school nearest their home. The school year starts in August and ends at the end of June. In general, children start school in the calendar year when they have their sixth birthday. As a general rule, there is a space for your child in the school that is nearest to where you live. However, if there are places available in other schools, you have the right to choose.

If you would like your children to attend a Danish public school, you can contact your local citizen service office. They will inform you about which schools in your municipality offer enrolment in special classes for children who do not speak Danish. In Danish, we call these classes “modtagerklasser,” which literally means “reception classes.”

If you are looking for an international school, there are 17 international schools in Denmark. You will find them [here](#).



There are also 15 international upper secondary schools, which primarily offer the International Baccalaureate (IB) and you will find them [here](#).

After school hours, there are a number of caretaking possibilities depending on which city you live in. Most schools have an after-school “club” for children. You need to pay separate fees for these clubs. The caretaking and youth school activities are typically located at or near the children’s school.

## 2.7 Transportation

### Trains & Metro

There are several railway companies in Denmark. DSB is the biggest one and is owned by the Danish Ministry of Transport. DSB trains cover the whole country and DSB S-tog cover all suburban rail services in the greater Copenhagen area.



**DSB Customer Centre: (+45) 70 13 14 15.**

The welcome message is in English and the staff can speak English. Here you can book or buy tickets, get information about train services or other information about DSB.

In Copenhagen, you can also use the METRO. For further information, click [here](#).

To read more about public transportation in Copenhagen, click [here](#).

### Buses

There are a lot of different bus companies operating all over Denmark. However, very few of them have an English website. In Frederiksberg, Roskilde and Copenhagen, the buses are run by a bus company called HUR.

### Children

A child under the age of 12 travelling alone must pay the child fare (until age 16), which is approximately half the price of an adult fare. Up to two children under 12 years old can travel free when accompanied by an adult with a valid ticket or travel card. Up to four children under the age of 12 can travel together on one adult ticket.

### Timetables

You can see the timetables at the bus stops, at the S-stations and online:

S-trains: <http://www.dsb.dk/>

Buses: <http://www.moviatrafik.dk/Pages/home.aspx>

Enter the bus number under "Find din køreplan" (Find your timetable). Note that there are different timetables for weekdays, Saturdays and Sundays/Holidays.

### Planning Your Trip

Go to <http://www.rejseplanen.dk/> and plan your trip from A to B including a list of all changes and number of zones. This site is in Danish, English and German.

### Bicycles

Most Danes own a bicycle and Danish children learn to cycle at a young age. 36% of commuters go to work by bike in Copenhagen. Cycling is widely practiced across the country due to the many cycle lanes that provide a safe and secure environment for cyclists. You may notice that a large number of cyclists wear helmets. Doing so is not compulsory (yet) but it is strongly advised especially for children.

For more information about cycling in Denmark, click [here](#).

### Cars and Motorcycles in Denmark

When driving a car or motorcycle in Denmark, you always need to carry with you a valid driver's licence. Seatbelts are compulsory for all passengers including the driver and if you have young children in the car (under 135 cm), they must always use an approved child seat or booster seat which is appropriate to the child's age, size and weight. To learn more about the Danish traffic rules, click [here](#).

When you drive a car in Denmark, it may be necessary to have your foreign driver's licence exchanged for a Danish one. Read about the rules [here](#).

If you are bringing a vehicle to Denmark, you need to register it. Read about the rules [here](#).

## 2.8 Learning Danish

Every newcomer who is registered at the National Register of Persons (Folkeregistret) and who has a residence permit and CPR number has the right to take Danish language lessons for 3 years. Your local municipality (kommune) is responsible for coordinating Danish classes, either by organising them on their own or by referring people to private language schools.

There are many courses and schools where you can learn Danish. There are day courses and evening courses at all levels. Once you have received your CPR number, you are free to join classes that are offered at language centres located nationwide for a small fee per module. The three Danish language courses are divided into six modules and are completed by passing a final Danish proficiency test. This must take place within a three year period, which can exceptionally be extended in certain cases such as pregnancy or long leave of absence.

If you have not yet moved to Denmark, or if you do not have a CPR number, you can try some of the online Danish courses. Read more about this at [www.newtodenmark.dk](http://www.newtodenmark.dk).

You can find a short vocabulary to get you started in section 7.

### Supermarkets in Denmark:

Here are the most common supermarkets in Denmark:

- Aldi, Lidl – the cheapest discount supermarkets
- Fakta, Netto, Rema1000 – discount supermarkets

- Føtex, Superbrugsen, Kvickly, Superbest – some of these supermarkets have bigger branches where they sell fresh fish, have a bakery and a butcher
- Irma – the most expensive supermarket chain with lots of specialised products.

## 2.9 Tax in Denmark

The tax system incorporates many rules and laws and even though you do not need to know all of them, you will inevitably need to know the basics about the tax system.

Almost all young people and adults living in Denmark pay tax, irrespective of whether they have a job, are students or unemployed or whether they receive money from the state or a municipality. Twice a year, everybody receives a letter from the Danish tax authority – SKAT – asking them to check and approve figures. It is therefore useful to know a little bit about the tax system and what your responsibilities are.

### Why Pay Tax?

The Danish welfare state is, among other things, based on the concept that residents should have equal access to the different services paid for by taxes. Everybody must be able to get help in difficult situations, for example, in case of unemployment or serious illness. In these situations, residents must be able to obtain financial assistance, medical help, hospital treatment, etc. All children are required to attend ten years of schooling and have the possibility of getting higher education, all paid for by the state. The tax rate is one of the highest in the world as Denmark has a very large public sector that offers many services that people in other countries often have to pay for.

To help you get to grips with taxes in Denmark, you might find the following links helpful:

In Denmark, it is possible to deal with tax electronically. You can read more on the e-tax card [here](#).

Between 10 March and 15 April each year, SKAT will send you an annual tax statement and an information card. You must check the figures on your annual tax statement and report any changes or additions. You can read more [here](#).

SKAT has a special tax scheme for researchers and key employees recruited from abroad. You can read more [here](#).

You can obtain tax deductions if you travel to work by car or public transport, depending on the distance travelled. Read more about which rules apply [here](#).

If you are looking to register your own car in Denmark, you can read more [here](#).

At [workindenmark.dk](http://workindenmark.dk), you can read more about [advice on taxation from experts](#) and you can also find more information about tax [here](#).

## 2.10 Understanding Your Payslip

### How to Read Your Danish Payslip

Payslips vary in appearance, but will usually contain the same information: How much you have to pay in tax, different pension contributions and what your net salary is.

Here are explanations of some of the Danish terms on your payslip:

#### **Løn / Pay:**

It can also be stated as “Honorar” (fee) or “indtægt” (income). Your gross pay is usually stated at the top of the payslip. At the bottom of the calculation, the following is usually stated: “Løn til udbetaling” (Pay for disbursement), showing the amount of your net pay that will be paid directly into your account.

#### **(ATP) Arbejdsmarkedets tillægspension / Labour Market Supplementary Pension Fund:**

All employees between the age of 16 and 66 pay to this pension scheme. The amount is deducted from your gross pay before your tax is calculated. Your employer will equally have to pay a monthly amount to your ATP account.

#### **Arbejdsmarkedsbidrag / Labour Market Contribution:**

All working citizens must contribute to a labour market fund at a rate of 8 percent. The contribution is deducted from your gross pay after ATP has been deducted and before other allowances are deducted. Then, your tax is calculated.

#### **Fradrag / Allowances and Deductions:**

Your allowances corresponding to the pay period are deducted before tax is calculated. On your tax card, your employer can see your allowances and deductions which are, for example, interest on loans, transportation allowances, etc.

**A-skat / A tax:**

This is the tax which is charged on your A income, i.e. your ordinary income. Your employer will calculate your A tax based on your withholding rate.

**Ferie / Holiday:**

All employees are usually entitled to holiday pay. This means that in addition to your pay, you will receive on a monthly basis 12.5 per cent of your gross salary which is deposited into a holiday account and paid out to you when you go on holiday. Every time you receive your payslip, you should check that the figures are correct. You should also save your payslips until the end of the tax year and until your tax for the year has been calculated (on the annual tax statement). Your payslips are proof that you have paid tax.

**Holidays and Holiday Pay**

All employees in Denmark are entitled to five weeks' holiday during every "holiday year." The holiday year runs from 1 May to 30 April.

If an employee has worked for an entire calendar year prior to commencement of the holiday year, he/she has earned the right to five weeks' paid holiday from his/her employer, either in the form of paid salary during the holiday or a holiday allowance.

If the employee has only been employed for a short time, 2.08 holiday days are earned per month of employment.

If the employee has not earned the right to five weeks' paid holiday, he/she still has the right to take up to five weeks' non-paid holiday.

- You earn paid holidays in the calendar year from 1 January to 31 December
- You earn 2.08 paid holidays per month of employment
- You take paid holiday in the subsequent year (vacation year) from 1 May to 30 April.

*Example:*

You started employment on 1 April 2010.

You earned 2.08 days \* 9 months = approx. 19 days of paid holiday in 2010. You can take 19 days of paid holiday from 1 May 2011 to 30 April 2012. In case you want to take more holidays (up to 25 days), you will have to pay for these yourself by taking a pay cut.

**Planning Holidays**

Normally, holiday dates are mutually agreed between the employer and the employee. All employees have the right to three weeks' uninterrupted holiday between 1 May and 30 September (primary holiday). Notice of this holiday must be given 3 months in advance; notice of other holidays must be given 1 month in advance.

**2.11 Public Holidays**

In addition to the work holidays described above, Denmark has a number of public holidays (bank holidays) every year. Some of the days vary from year to year. Below you can find a list of the public holidays for the next 4 years. Please note that Constitution Day (5 June) and Christmas Eve (24 December) are not always considered bank holidays at private companies.

	2011	2012	2013	2014
New Year's Day	1 January	1 January	1 January	1 January
Maundy Thursday	21 April	5 April	28 March	17 April
Good Friday	22 April	6 April	29 March	18 April
Easter Monday	25 April	9 April	1 April	21 April
General Prayer Day	20 May	4 May	26 April	16 May
Ascension Day	2 June	17 May	9 May	29 May
Constitution Day	5 June	5 June	5 June	5 June
Whit Monday	13 June	18 May	19 May	9 June
Christmas Eve	24 December	24 December	24 December	24 December
Christmas Day	25 December	25 December	25 December	25 December
Boxing Day	26 December	26 December	26 December	26 December

*Please note that most shops, banks, restaurants and museums are closed on these days.*

### 2.12 Leisure Activities

Denmark is a country with many clubs and associations. There are many activities that you can enjoy in your spare time.

We recommend that you join a club or an association of your interest as this is also a great way to meet Danes. Check with your local municipality and explore the options.

If you wish to join a network to meet other expats, we recommend Expat in Denmark [www.expatindenmark.com](http://www.expatindenmark.com). They organise events all over Denmark and they are the national Danish network for expats and their families living and working in Denmark.

Other networks for foreigners are:

- [Spousecare](#) – events in the Copenhagen Area
- [LINK](#) – Ladies International Network in Copenhagen
- [Worktrotter](#) – a network by expats for expats
- [International Community](#) – a network for expats in Aarhus

### 2.13 About Your Household

#### Drinking Water

All tap water in Denmark is clean drinking water: in restaurants, cafés, shopping centres, stores, private homes, offices and even in public restrooms. Dirty/contaminated water is very rarely encountered anywhere in the country.

#### Cleaning

The water in Denmark is very hard, in other words it contains a large amount of calcium and can leave a white residue most noticeable on bathroom tiles and faucets. To remove this limescale residue, you will need a cleaning liquid containing a special type of vinegar suitable for cleaning, called “eddikesyre” in Danish.

There are also cleaning products designed specifically for bathroom tiles, toilets, coffee machines and electric kettles. All these products are available at all supermarkets.

These are the products that you should use for the following:

- **Dishwashers:** To avoid limescale clogging your dishwasher, make sure that you use rinsing aid (“afspændingsmiddel” in Danish) to prevent your glasses and plates from streaking. A common brand is Neophos but there are also other brands. There is usually an indicator in the dishwasher letting you know when to fill up the rinsing aid container. Special salt must also be added periodically in the dishwasher to keep dishes and glasses free of limescale. It is called “Salt til opvaskemaskiner” in Danish
- **Washing machines:** Special tablets can be bought for the washing machine to keep the machine free of limescale. They are called: “Minus kalk” in Danish
- **Electric kettles/Coffee machines:** Put in 1 to 3 – vinegar/water in the kettle and boil (white vinegar is recommended). Let it stand for an hour, then empty and boil a fresh kettle of water. Discard the boiled water and the kettle is ready to be used again
- **Water fixtures:** If the water from the tap does not flow smoothly, the tap may be clogged by limescale. Unscrew the bottom part of the tap and put it in cleaning vinegar for an hour. The limescale will then dissolve and the bottom fixture can then be screwed back on
- **Toilets:** Calcium residue may show where the water level is stationary in the toilet. All toilet cleaners contain limescale remover and is normally called “WC rens”



### 3.1 In General

Denmark is a small country. The Danish population stands at 5,511 million and the language spoken all over the country is Danish. The vast majority of the population is baptised into the established protestant church and Denmark has for centuries both nationally and culturally been a very homogeneous society.

### Welfare

The Danish welfare system is based on the concept of residents having equal access to the various public services paid for by taxes. Everybody must be able to get help in difficult situations, for example in case of unemployment or serious illness. In these situations, residents must be able to obtain financial assistance, medical help, hospital treatment, etc. Therefore it is free to go to the doctor for all residents in Denmark and children below 18 also receive free dental care. Older people who become frail but who wish to stay in their own homes can get access to cleaning services and other kinds of assistance. When the time comes that they are no longer able to support themselves, the government provides a place for them at a retirement home. All Danes receive a retirement pension from the state from their 65th birthday.

The Danish state also believes that all children should have the same opportunities to get an education. All children are required to attend ten years of school and are given the option to pursue higher education, all paid for by the state.

In addition to receiving free education, students at upper secondary schools, business schools, universities and graduate schools also receive a monthly allowance from the age of 18 and for as long as they are studying. This is called “SU” (Statens Uddannelsesstøtte = State education support). You will need to apply for SU yourself as it is not granted automatically. The amount granted is dependent on the parents’ level of income as long as the student lives at home.

Another important area to mention is the Danish child care system. In order to make it possible for both men and women to have a career, Denmark has a well developed child care system with professional nurseries and kindergartens taking care of preschool children aged 6 months to 6 years. The state pays a large part of the monthly fee, allowing parents to have an active working life. When the child starts school, each school has an after-school centre (in Danish SFO for “Skole Fritids Ordning”) where the child is taken care of in the afternoon, typically until 3rd or in some cases 5th grade.

The tax rate is one of the highest in the world as Denmark has a very large public sector that offers many services that people in other countries often have to pay for themselves, including the services mentioned above. Despite the high level of taxes, Danes are generally satisfied as the many benefits are considered good value for money. Actually, year after year, Denmark ranks no. 1 in studies showing the level of happiness in different countries. See, for example, the CBS report from the programme “[60 minutes](#).”

### **Equality**

Equality is a key concept in the overall Danish mentality. You may have heard about “Janteloven” (Jante Law) which is a set of principles that comes from a novel written in 1933 by the Norwegian/Danish writer Aksel Sandemose titled “A Fugitive Crosses His Tracks.” Though written many years ago, the “Jantelov” principles can still be found today in Denmark. One of the principles says “never assume that you are better than others” and you could argue that the whole concept of equality is the essence of “Janteloven.” The Danes value the equality in their everyday life where children of craftsmen go to school with children of executive directors. The Danish working culture is defined by its flat structure where there is equal respect for the receptionist and the CEO.

Moreover, equality between men and women is highly valued. Since 1 July 1999, Denmark has had a Minister for Gender Equality. The current minister is Ms. Lykke Friis who is also the Minister for Climate and Energy.

The political debate is often about how to get more women in top positions and also how to make sure that men and women are equally paid for the same job.

Danes value their democratic state that is based on the Danish constitution of 1849, a constitution which has been amended throughout the years. In 1915, for example, women were granted the right to vote and in the latest amendment in 2009, the order of royal succession was changed to be the first born child inheriting the throne and no longer the first born son.

The current constitution dates from 1953 and contains the fundamental rules relating to how the state is to be governed and ensures that residents have a number of basic rights and liberties. The Danish constitution guarantees the right of private ownership, the freedom to practice any religion, the right to form associations, the right to demonstrate, and freedom of expression whether it be in written, oral, or any other form.

### **Freedom of Speech**

Denmark is known to be one of the least corrupt countries in the world. In fact, Denmark ranks #2, right after New Zealand in the “Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index of least corrupt countries in 2009.” This might have to do with our democratic state and freedom of speech act. Any attempt of bribery and corruption will be reported in the press. The Danish press is not afraid to write revealing articles about prominent politicians or public business professionals. If there is an indication that something is not right, it is investigated and described in the press in minute detail. Nothing and nobody escapes the Danish journalists!

In Denmark, freedom of speech means that a person is free to publish whatever they feel and think. With due regard, however, to the courts and legislation in general. You can be prosecuted for offending a person’s honour or for addressing others in a threatening or degrading manner, for example, on account of their beliefs or ethnic origin.

### **Meeting the Danes**

Joining a club or an association is something very typically Danish. Denmark is one of the few countries in the world where the majority

of its residents are members of an association where people who share a common interest meet regularly. This may be an interest of an academic, political or cultural nature. Also, many children join a club after school where they play sports or attend music lessons.

If you want to better integrate and meet Danes, joining a club or an association of your interest is highly recommended. Danes are often described as reserved and not the easiest people to make friends with, however many foreign families say that joining a club has been a great way to establish a local social network.

Danes might not be the most outgoing people but if you ask for help or guidance, they are very helpful and kind, as long as you are ready to make the first move. Once you have made the effort to approach them first, they are more than willing to return an invitation, for example, or lend a helping hand.

Most foreigners are surprised that practically all Danes speak English. All Danish children are taught English at school and since so few people in the world speak Danish, it is necessary for them to learn a foreign language to communicate with the countries around them. Many Danes also speak and understand some German, Swedish and Norwegian.

Another typically Danish concept is the notion of “hygge” (which is best translated as “cosiness”). Home is central to Danish life and Danes tend to put a lot of effort and money into making their homes comfortable and “hyggelige” (cosy). “Hygge” can best be described as enjoying good company and the simple things in life, such as being comfortable, spending quality time with family and friends and just having a nice time.



**Leigh Unger is Canadian and tells us about her experience here so far:**

*I have been in Copenhagen, Denmark for just about a year now. My husband, Simon and I took a giant leap of faith and moved our family halfway across the world from Vancouver, BC, Canada. Simon was offered a job that we couldn't turn down so we packed up almost everything we owned and brought ourselves, our two kids, Emma and Evan, and our little dog, Rylee, to settle here in Copenhagen.*

*We arrived during one of the coldest winters on record. We had never travelled to Europe before, so this was a brand new experience for all of us. It has been full of adjustments and challenges, some good and some bad. We are fortunate that most of Denmark already speaks English which has made it much easier to cope with the lifestyle change. I have rarely come across a Danish person who isn't thrilled to practice their English with me when I approach them in my day-to-day errands and activities.*

*All in all, everyone has been quite friendly and helpful. Mind you, only if I am the one to initiate conversation. Danish people tend to be a bit shy, reserved and prefer to keep to themselves. That being said I have had some of the best experiences with warmth, caring and kindness by most of the locals. I would say one of my biggest challenges so far, is creating a "home" feeling for my children. I am a stay-at-home mom so I have had a lot of time to make Emma and Evan feel comfortable in their new surroundings. The hardest part for them is new friendships. English isn't taught here in public schools until grade 2. So being out on the playground and not being able to make playmates has been difficult.*

*Evan has started in a børnehavn (Danish kindergarten) and it has been by far the best experience for him. He has started to make friends (even with the language barrier) and warmed to his teachers wonderfully. Emma is in an international school. She has made some close and lasting friendships with kids of all different cultures. Simon is loving his new job and I have found great friendships and become a part of things I never thought I would do. (Example: Bollywood dancing and the bicycle riding culture).*

*While there have definitely been some difficult times, this has been the best experience of our lives and I am now happy to say that Copenhagen, Denmark has become a second home to us.*



### 3.2 The Danish Work Culture

When asked, one of the first things foreigners mention about the Danish work culture is the work-life balance. The fact that most employees work from 9 to 5 and then return home to be with their families or to take part in activities organised by some of the clubs and associations, is something that many of the expat families value when moving to Denmark. Leisure time is important to the Danes and many Danish families make an effort to spend as much time with their children as possible.

As already mentioned, Danish companies are known to have a very flat structure and in nature also a **low power distance**. The Dutch sociologist Geert Hofstede describes cultures with a low power distance as cultures where people expect and accept power relations that are more consultative and democratic. People relate to one another as equals regardless of job titles and formal positions. Also there is a **high level of trust** in Denmark. We say “a deal is a deal” and we trust that the other party will meet the agreements made. In fact, the flat structure in the work culture is primarily built on trust. Managers do not check on their employees all the time to make sure that they are doing their job well. They trust that this is the case.

Another keyword that can describe the Danish work culture is “**independence**.” Danes actually do not like to be led, but prefer to work independently, and employers like the fact that employees are responsible and able to work independently. The relationship between the employer and the employee is built on trust and mutual respect. The employer trusts that the employee will speak up if there is a problem.

For some expats, this can be a problem if you come from a culture that is very top-bottom-driven, but in Denmark, we believe in the saying: “There are no stupid questions, only stupid answers.” So do not hesitate to ask your employer how to move on. Asking questions or giving critical comments is considered showing your **commitment** and taking **responsibility**.

There is also a tradition of **teamwork**. As an employee, you are part of a team which involves group evaluations and team discussions. At the same time, you can achieve your responsibilities independently, in your most efficient way. This way of working together is again based on trust. Your team members or your manager will not check on you to see how you are getting along. They trust that the work will be done as agreed unless informed otherwise.

Some foreigners also describe the work culture as being very **informal** compared to what they are used to. Managers and employees address each other by their first names and most decisions are discussed in forums where all employees have an equal say. At lunch, you will find managers and employees sitting at the same table talking openly about their private lives with their colleagues. The conversation often revolves around family life, holidays and what they do in their spare time. Although the workplace culture varies from company to company, the general office dress code is relatively relaxed for both men and women, smart casual being the norm. At first business meetings, Danes will generally introduce themselves by their full name and with a handshake and expect you to do the same. You should not expect to be introduced to people by others. You should take the initiative. This is also the case at private social gatherings outside work.

To see some comments from expats who have already been working in Denmark for a while, we recommend that you have a look at: “Living and Working in Denmark.” You can download it [here](#).

### 3.3 The Danish Labour Market

Standard full-time employment is 37 hours a week in Denmark. As an employee, you earn the right to 5 week’s paid holidays a year, and both men and women have the right to parental leave up to a total of 52 weeks for both parents. Sick days are paid by the employer.

The Danish labour market is known for its collaboration between two parties, the trade unions and the employer’s own associations. They negotiate the terms of “collective agreements,” which cover issues such as wages, working hours, competence development, maternity and paternity leave, child care days, pension schemes, etc. This is also called collective bargaining and the Danish system allows large businesses to choose and define all the issues that they wish to negotiate. There is no limit to the scope of the issues discussed and the terms are usually agreed without interference from the government. The government will only intervene if the two parties cannot reach an agreement for the coming period.

The collective agreements cover the larger part of the labour market which means that in many industries, employees cannot negotiate their own wages, holidays, pension schemes, etc, as they are already set. However, in many private companies, wages and other contractual terms can be negotiated on an individual basis.

Most commonly, these contracts are made on the basis of the so called “**Funktionærlov**,” translated into English as “Consolidation Act on the Legal Relationship between Employers and Salaried Employees.”

One of the most important issues of the ‘Funktionærlov’ is probably the terms for terminating an employment contract, which can only take place after prior notice as described below.

If the employer terminates the employment contract, the employee must be given at least:

- One month’s notice to expire at the end of a month during the first six months’ employment
- Three months’ notice to expire at the end of a month after six months’ employment
- The notice period will then subsequently increase by one month for every three years of service subject to a maximum of six months

If the employee terminates the employment contract, he or she must give the employer one month’s notice to expire at the end of a month. Notice must be given in writing no later than on the last day of the month from the end of which the period of notice begins to run.

This law and other relevant employment laws can be read in English in their full length on the website of the Ministry for Employment: Click [here](#) to go to the website.

**Flexicurity** is an expression used to describe the Danish labour market as it is both very flexible and provides a high level of social security. Provided that you have been employed and have paid for unemployment insurance at least 12 months in advance, you will in case of unemployment receive a monthly unemployment payment of up to 80% of the minimum wage (in 2010 app. DKK 16.000/month). In addition to this, an active labour market policy gives the unemployed a right and a duty to participate in activities that will contribute to help them find a new job quickly.

**Unemployment insurance** is voluntary, and you are not automatically insured against unemployment. An unemployment insurance policy is taken out from an unemployment insurance fund, also known as an “A-kasse.” These are private associations that collaborate with trade unions and other professional organisations.

Most unemployment insurance funds are affiliated to specific trade unions but there are also a number of cross-industrial unemployment insurance funds. It is possible to become a member of an unemployment insurance fund without being a member of the associated trade union.

#### 4.1 Different Ways to Find a Job

In this section, we have gathered information to help you find a job in Denmark and you will also find a short guide if you would like to start your own business.

If you are looking for a job, we can give you tips on how things work in Denmark. One thing is for sure, though. There is no simple answer to the question: “What is the best way to get a job in Denmark?” Just like everywhere else, you need to go through a certain process to apply for a job.

We will use the term CV as it is the one most commonly used in Denmark when referring to a “résumé” or “curriculum vitae.”

As in all other countries, finding a new job is a challenge but you must also decide whether you want to learn Danish as an extra asset or if you prefer to find a job in English. There are of course jobs where Danish is not required but there are many more jobs where Danish is necessary so we would strongly advise you to start learning Danish as soon as you arrive in Denmark. This will increase your options immensely.

##### Job search websites

Here is a list of job sites where you can find ads for jobs in English:

[www.top1000.dk/en](http://www.top1000.dk/en)

[www.cg2denmark.com](http://www.cg2denmark.com)

[www.jobsincopenhagen.com](http://www.jobsincopenhagen.com)

[www.denmarkjobs.com](http://www.denmarkjobs.com)

[www.workindenmark.dk](http://www.workindenmark.dk)

[www.workindenmark.dk/highly-skilled](http://www.workindenmark.dk/highly-skilled)

[www.ec.europa.eu/euraxess](http://www.ec.europa.eu/euraxess) (primarily for researchers)

[www.ofir.dk/en](http://www.ofir.dk/en)

[www.offentlige-stillinger.dk](http://www.offentlige-stillinger.dk) (primarily jobs in the public sector) - click on “Jobs in English”

When it comes to finding jobs in Danish, there are many sites and the most popular ones are:

[www.jobnet.dk](http://www.jobnet.dk)      [www.stepstone.dk](http://www.stepstone.dk) (some in English)

[www.jobindex.dk](http://www.jobindex.dk)      [www.jobworld.dk](http://www.jobworld.dk) (IT – some in English)

[www.jobzonen.dk](http://www.jobzonen.dk)      [www.job-i-staten.dk](http://www.job-i-staten.dk) (jobs in the public sector)

At [www.job-guide.dk](http://www.job-guide.dk), you can find an almost complete list of all job sites, recruiters, temp agencies, etc.

There are different ways of looking for work and it is worth mentioning that in the private sector, jobs are not always advertised. About 60% of positions in the private sector are filled through internal connections and personal references. Many companies go through their employees’ networks to find candidates or they simply hire a headhunter.

There are four ways to look for work:

- 1) Responding to a job advert that you find in the paper or on the internet
- 2) Sending unsolicited applications to all the companies that interest you
- 3) Registering your CV at some of the many job databases, that will contact you once they find potential matches;
- 4) Establishing a professional network and making it known that you are looking for work which may lead to good contacts and eventually a job



Depending on the kind of position you are looking for, you need to decide which route is the best one for you. If you are looking for a position in the public sector, then you should answer job ads as all positions must be advertised publicly. All public organisations, such as Universities, are obliged to post vacant positions. However, if you want to work in the private sector, you need to expand your professional network and try many different venues to make sure that you are noticed by the companies that you are interested in.

### **CV & Application Letter**

Once you start your job search, make sure that your CV is updated. In Denmark, a CV should always include your full name and address, contact details like e-mail and phone number, as well as personal details such as your date of birth and marital status. In general, you can divide your CV into the following areas: Personal data, Work experience and results, Education & Courses, and Other such as language, IT-skills and personal interests. When you list your work experience, start with your last job first. Your CV can be 2-4 pages but no longer.

The application letter or cover letter should be a maximum of one page. The application letter is supposed to be an “appetizer” that entices the recruiter and makes them want to meet you in person and take the application one step further.

Many candidates tend to send a standard CV and a standard application letter to all companies but if you wish to enhance your chances of being called for a personal interview, we advise you to target your CV and application letter to show in the best way possible that you are a perfect match for the job.

### Danish Agency for International Education

The Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation has established an international office – the Danish Agency for International Education – where you can get an assessment of your educational background. They assess non-Danish degrees, diplomas and certificates and give information on international recognition of qualifications. They will give you a brief statement saying what your foreign qualification corresponds to in Denmark. The service is free and you can read more [here](#).

### 4.2 Starting Your Own Business

Starting your own business in Denmark is fairly straight-forward. In fact, Denmark was placed as the best country for entrepreneurs in a survey of 71 nations in September 2010, according to a new comprehensive study on entrepreneurship in 71 countries, performed by some of the world's leading researchers in entrepreneurship from the George Mason University, USA.

However, in order to get started, you need to fulfil a few basic formalities. We advise you to seek help and information from your local “Erhvervscenter” (business centre) so that you start on the right foot and get a good grasp of the local laws and regulations. The business centre should also be able to give you free advice on several aspects of your business such as marketing, accounting, pricing, recruitment, etc.

Below are some useful links to help you get started.

[110 svar](#) (110 answers): website for entrepreneurs with information in Danish, English and Arabic.

[www.virk.dk/English](http://www.virk.dk/English) - Information for foreign entrepreneurs on national rules and regulations. Here you can find the basic requirements to start your own business along with an alphabetic list of lines of businesses and forms to fill out in English.

[Startvækst](#) – a portal for entrepreneurs operated by the Danish Enterprise and Construction Authority in cooperation with a number of public and private partners (scroll down and find the address closest to you). At Startvækst, you can also download a template in English for your business plan and various contracts in English. Click [here](#) for more information.

[The Copenhagen Business Center](#) (Københavns erhvervscenter) – If you live in Copenhagen, you can go to the Copenhagen Business Centre where they organise information meetings on starting a business in the Copenhagen area. Their business advisors also offer free advice on any topic regarding your initial set-up.

[SKAT](#) (Tax) - the official English website for the Danish Tax and Customs Administration.

In Danish, the word “skat” means both tax and “treasure” (such as the public treasure) and Danes use the term affectionately when they want to call someone a “sweetheart” or “darling.” Not to be confused!

### Registration of Your Company

To register your new business, go to [www.webreg.dk](http://www.webreg.dk).

You will be asked to complete an application form by filling in your personal information, your type of business and within which section you want to operate, such as retail, wholesale, production, etc.

*Please note that the registration form is in Danish. An English version should be coming soon.*

By registering your company, you automatically register for VAT and you will be given a CVR (Central Business Register) number. This service is free of charge and you will receive your registration papers in the post within the next two weeks.

### When to Register Your Business

You must register your business if:

- your annual turnover exceeds DKK 50,000
- you pay wages
- you import goods for distribution

Being an employee or a student is no hindrance to starting a business. However, if you are unemployed, you must contact your unemployment insurance fund to check whether or not you are allowed to start a business. You must then figure out, along with your unemployment insurance fund, a way to run your business as a sideline.

If you set up a limited company (private or public), you must also register it with Erhvervs- og Selskabsstyrelsen at [www.webreg.dk](http://www.webreg.dk).

### Tax and VAT

You need to understand the basics of the Danish VAT and TAX system before starting your own business. Denmark only has one rate of VAT which is 25 percent.

You can read about the Danish tax system under section 2.9.

Once you register your company, you are required to report your VAT. In Denmark, companies can deduct VAT on purchased goods and most costs incurred. The difference between “VAT receivable” and “VAT payable” is the amount of VAT that is due and that must be paid to the Central Customs and Tax Administration via a declaration. This declaration can be done online through the SKAT website and all payments can also be done online.

If you need any further advice on taxes and VAT, you can call or visit the SKAT office. They should have employees who speak English and who can explain the whole system in detail.

**Isabelle Valentine is starting an international preschool**

Isabelle Valentine and her family enjoy their life in Denmark. They moved to Copenhagen from London in 2008 when Luke got a job in a Danish-based computer game company.

**Starting over in a new country**

Isabelle is half French and half Filipino. She grew up in Canada and has an MBA in International Business. She followed Luke to Copenhagen with their two children and she has not been idling.

**Setting up an English preschool**

Realising a personal dream of hers, Isabelle has started her own company. She imports children's books in English and sells them at

book fairs organised at international schools, churches, organisations and markets. She is actively involved in a number of networks and was a participant of the Q-Entrepreneur programme organised by the Copenhagen Business Centre (Københavns erhvervscenter), which helps foreign female entrepreneurs get their businesses up and running. Through the programme, she won a financial grant that allowed her to develop further her idea and help her to do the initial start-up. As a result, Isabelle is starting Montessori International Preschool, an English language preschool based on Montessori principles – something that, according to Isabelle, is lacking in Copenhagen.

**The importance of a strong network**

Isabelle explains that “having a strong network is essential to start a business in Denmark because you will need all the help you can get. The Danes are very open to referring you to people who can either help you or give you invaluable advice. Do not hesitate to follow up on these referrals and talk to as many people as possible about your ideas, issues and questions as there will always be someone out there who can help.” Isabelle believes that the Danes are very receptive to entrepreneurs and new business ideas which is very encouraging and makes it a good place to start a business.

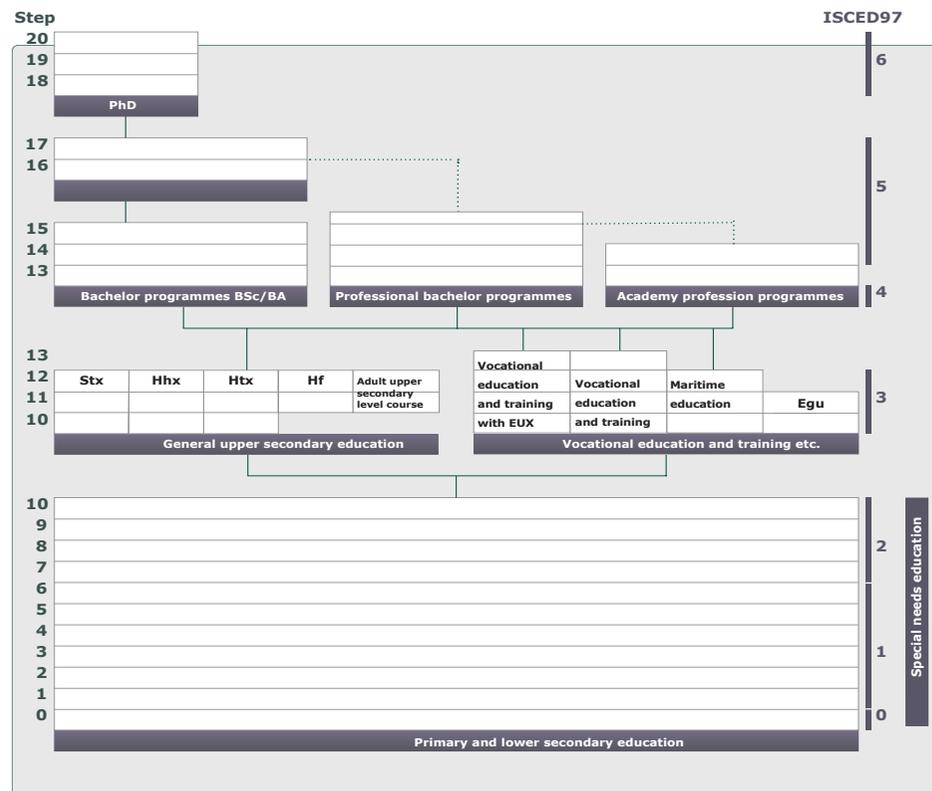
## 5.1 Studying in Denmark

In Denmark, there are many opportunities to study in English at Bachelor, Master's or PhD level. You can also study a single subject.

Throughout the years, many foreigners have been very satisfied with their studies in Denmark. "This is a unique place in the world and it has endless opportunities," says a former student. Read some of the testimonials [here](#).

### 5.1.1 The Danish Education System

The picture below will help you understand the Danish Education system:



There are two different ways to study in Denmark and there are different admissions requirements. (See also: 'Admissions Requirements' below):

- **Undergraduate and Graduate Studies – Full-time:**  
Bachelor and Master's degree
- **Continuing Education:**  
Master's degree and PhD

### Study Programmes

Programmes taught in English:

- Bachelor, Master's, PhD or an Academy Profession (AP) degree

### Summer schools:

- The programmes give you the opportunity to increase your skills and knowledge inside and outside of your usual area of study and a chance to work with Danish and international students. If you are considering studying in Denmark, a summer school is a great introduction.

Full degree student:

- International students can apply for admission to all study programmes - from undergraduate to PhD level

PhD Fellowship:

- Undertake independent research in Denmark

MBA Programmes:

Check out the different options at:

<http://studyindenmark.dk/study-programmes>

Master's programmes:

Study programmes taught in English leading to a Master's degree:

<http://studyindenmark.dk/study-programmes/programmes-in-english/masters>

Bachelor programmes:

Study programmes taught in English leading to a Bachelor degree:

<http://studyindenmark.dk/study-programmes/programmes-in-english/bachelor>

Check out a list of many more study programmes available in English:

[www.ug.dk](http://www.ug.dk)

### Single Subjects

Studying single subjects is a way to upgrade your academic qualifications. Courses are organised as part-time studies and usually take place in the afternoon and evenings. Studying single subjects gives you a very flexible study experience, which can easily be combined with a full time job. All single subject courses charge tuition fees. For a list of available single subjects and details on admission, please refer directly to the higher educational institution or university.

### Single Subjects - Examples

#### IT University of Copenhagen

A single subject course can be of 7,5 or 15 ECTS–points and run for a term with tuition 1-2 days a week. You should spend approximately 8-10 hours per week on a course of 7,5 ECTS, including preparation.

### Cost:

Price of courses of 7.5 ECTS: DKK 10.625

Price of courses of 15 ECTS: DKK 21.250

Prices for non-EU/EEA citizens:

Price of courses of 7.5 ECTS: DKK 18.800

You can read more [here](#)

### Admissions Requirements

International students wishing to complete a Danish degree should be aware that admissions requirements vary from programme to programme.

### Full-time Undergraduate and Graduate Studies:

#### Undergraduate programmes

- You are eligible to apply for admission to an undergraduate programme if you hold a qualification comparable to a Danish qualifying examination

#### Master's programmes (typically 120 ECTS–points)

Admissions requirements for Master's programmes (candidatus programmes) are:

- an internationally recognised Bachelor degree of good standard or equivalent
- proof of proficiency in English
- proof of proficiency in Danish if the programme is taught in Danish

### PhD programmes

The general admissions requirements for PhD studies include a:

- Candidatus/Master's degree or equivalent (comparable to the Danish two-year Candidatus/Master's degree)
- In some areas, a four-year PhD programme is offered to students who have completed a Bachelor qualification and one year of study at postgraduate level

### Continuing Education:

#### Master's programmes (typically 60 ETCS–points)

- Appropriate short, medium or high education + typically 2 years of relevant work experience.

The Danish Agency for International Education also provides general information on assessment of foreign qualifications for admission to the Danish higher education programmes. You can read more [here](#).

### 5.1.2 Recognition of Foreign Qualifications

The Danish Agency for International Education provides assessments of non-Danish degrees, diplomas and certificates and information about international recognition of qualifications. The assessment is free of charge, but does not include translation of documents. You can read more and get an application form [here](#).

### 5.1.3 Tuition Fees

#### Undergraduate and Graduate Studies

Higher education in Denmark is usually provided free of charge for all EU/EEA students.

Those who are also exempt from payment of tuition fees are:

Students with a permanent residence permit (“Permanent opholdstilladelse” in Danish) and students with a temporary residence permit with the possibility of achieving a permanent residence permit (“Midlertidig opholdstilladelse mmf varigt ophold” in Danish). Read more at: [www.studyindenmark.dk](http://www.studyindenmark.dk)

### Continuing Education

Prices for the Master's programmes vary according to the institution or university. You can find more information at: [www.ug.dk](http://www.ug.dk) or contact the specific university or institution.

### Example

**Name:** Master's in Information and Communication Technologies, mICT

**Type:** Master's programme

**Duration:** 2 years on a part-time basis

**European transfer credits:** 60 ECTS-points

**Entry Requirements:** Relevant bachelor degree, e.g. in computer science, and 2 years of professional experience

**Tuition fee:** DKK 90,000

**DQF:** 7

**At:** Aalborg University

### 5.1.4 Where to Study

#### Institutions

The Danish higher education sector consists of universities, university colleges and academies of professional higher education.

Higher education institutions in Denmark can be divided into three main categories:

- Universities or university level institutions offering research-based undergraduate and post-graduate programmes (Bachelor, Master's and PhD)
- University Colleges ("Professionshøjskoler" in Danish) offering 3-4½ years undergraduate programmes (Professional Bachelor programmes)
- Academies of Professional Higher Education ("Erhvervsakademier" in Danish) offering 2 - 2½ years Academy Profession programmes and joint Bachelor programmes in cooperation with university colleges. You can read more [here](#)

### 5.1.5 How to Apply

#### Undergraduate and Graduate Studies

We recommend that you contact the admissions office of the institution with questions such as: "How do I apply for a programme?" or "Where is the application form?" You can find links to institutions on each programme description. You may also download an application form [here](#).

#### Continuing Education

You have to contact each university/institution to get the application form or you can find it on their website.

#### List of Universities:

IT University of Copenhagen

[www.itu.dk](http://www.itu.dk)

[International students](#)

University of Southern Denmark

[www.sdu.dk](http://www.sdu.dk)

[International students](#)

Aarhus University

[www.au.dk](http://www.au.dk)

[International students](#)

Aalborg University

[www.aau.dk](http://www.aau.dk)

[International students](#)

University of Copenhagen

[www.ku.dk](http://www.ku.dk)

[International students](#)

Technical University of Denmark

[www.dtu.dk](http://www.dtu.dk)

[International students](#)

Copenhagen Business School

[www.cbs.dk](http://www.cbs.dk)

[International students](#)

Roskilde University

[www.ruc.dk](http://www.ruc.dk)

[International students](#)

**Other Useful Information:**

[www.studievalg.dk](http://www.studievalg.dk) (“studievalg” means “study choice”)

This is a public website in Danish, but at Studievalg, they can counsel you in English about all kinds of higher education opportunities in Denmark. They can help you with all sorts of questions.

Studievalg has 7 departments in Denmark which you can find on their website, and they will be happy to answer your questions either by mail or by phone.

**5.2 Research Funding****General Information**

In Denmark, there are 12.000-14.000 Danish foundations with an estimated total of over 400 billion Danish kroner from which you can seek grants in case you need funding for research projects, etc. The foundations’ boards of directors and administrations award grants based on the foundation’s aims and principles and the annual yield of their fund.

Whether you seek funding from a private or a public foundation, they will in most cases have as criteria that the research project is somehow promoting Danish research. This means that you as a foreign researcher should expect to do your research in Denmark.

When searching for funding, it is important to direct your search to the correct foundations covering your specific field of research. You should be aware that the competition in getting research grants is tough. In general, only 20-25% of applicants get funded, so finding the right foundation and writing an excellent application is crucial.

**5.2.1 Finding Research Foundations**

A total listing of Danish foundations (not only foundations aiming at supporting research) called: ‘Vejviser til legater og fonde,’ written by Per Billesø og Berit Jylling is made yearly. It is published as a book as well as a CD-ROM, both aiming at guiding you to the foundations that are relevant to your project. It can be purchased via this [link](#).

If you are studying or working in a research department at a Danish company or university faculty, they might have the book/CD-ROM for you to borrow or you can ask your local library if they have it.

You can also find a list of some of the large public and private foundations on the website of The University of Copenhagen (KU). Click [here](#).

Finally, a good piece of advice is to read scientific magazines within your area and see who is listed in the acknowledgements. Companies/foundations funding similar projects might also support you!

## 5.2.2 Danish Public Research Foundations



- The Danish Council for Independent Research (Det Frie Forskningsråd)
- The Danish Council for Strategic Research (Det Strategiske Forskningsråd)
- The Danish Council for Technology and Innovation (Rådet for Teknologi og Innovation, RTI)
- The Danish National Research Foundation (“Grundforskningsfonden”)
- The Danish National Advanced Technology Foundation (“Højteknologifonden”)

### The Danish Council for Independent Research (Det Frie Forskningsråd, DFF)

The Danish Council for Independent Research funds specific research activities, within all scientific areas, that are based on the researchers’

own initiatives and that improve the quality and internationalization of Danish research. Danish Council for Independent Research strengthens the dissemination and application of research findings and it participates in international research collaboration.

The Danish Council for Independent Research is comprised of a Board of Directors and five scientific research councils:

- Medical Sciences (FSS) covers all aspects of basic, clinical and socio-medical research geared towards human health and disease
- Natural Sciences (FNU) awards grants to researchers investigating basic scientific issues in the natural sciences, computer science and mathematics where the aim is pure, but not necessarily applied research
- Humanities (FKK) covers basic research within all aspects of culture, aesthetics, language, history and awareness disciplines
- Technology and Production Sciences (FTP) covers basic research within technology and production science, focusing on application-oriented solutions to problems or new ways of meeting the needs of society
- Social Sciences (FSE) covers the following main disciplines: economics, sociology, political science and jurisprudence, as well as the societal aspects of a number of interdisciplinary areas (e.g. development studies, gender studies and cultural geography)

Calls for proposals are issued by each of these scientific research councils. Most of the proposals must be submitted around 1 September and 1 March and the calls for proposals are published approximately 3 months in advance.

All calls for proposals are published in English. You can find a list (in Danish only) [here](#). Read more [here](#) (in English).

### **The Danish Council for Strategic Research (Det Strategiske Forskningsråd, DSF)**

The Danish Council for Strategic Research seeks to ensure that strategic research in Denmark is organised to meet the challenges facing Danish society. The aim is to ensure Denmark's position as a global front runner regarding welfare, wealth and science in the short and long term.

The Danish Council for Strategic Research wishes to promote international cooperation in research, including cooperation with the new high-growth countries. The Council wants to strengthen the interaction between publicly financed research and the rest of society, such as privately financed research, private organisations, public institutions and the corporate world.

In 2010, most proposals had to be submitted around 1 May. All calls for proposals are published in English. You can find the list [here](#). Read more [here](#).

### **The Danish Council for Technology and Innovation (Rådet for Teknologi og Innovation, RTI)**

The objectives of the council are to promote:

- 1) Collaboration and dissemination of knowledge between researchers, research and educational institutions, advanced technology groups, knowledge institutions and enterprises

- 2) Innovation, development, diffusion, use and commercialisation of new research and technology, and knowledge of organisations and markets
- 3) Flow and development of knowledge and technology based enterprises
- 4) Innovation and input of capital and expertise for knowledge and technology based enterprises
- 5) International collaboration on the utilisation of knowledge and technology

Furthermore, The Danish Council for Technology and Innovation administer a number of initiatives whose purposes are to promote innovation and dissemination of knowledge between knowledge institutions and enterprises.

You can find the list of calls for proposals [here](#). Read more [here](#).

### **The Danish National Research Foundation (Grundforskningsfonden)**

The Danish National Research Foundation is an independent foundation established in 1991. The foundation works to strengthen Danish basic research within all research fields. The foundation's primary working method is to set up and fund research centres of highest international standing. In addition to the centres, the foundation has initiatives designed to further internationalisation of the Danish research communities by attracting foreign top-level researchers. Furthermore, the foundation funds a collaborative initiative on bioinformatics involving research groups at three Danish universities.



The foundation is funding research schools and a number of PhD students are trained at all of the foundation's Centres of Excellence.

The Danish National Research Foundation is usually not highly relevant for single applicants outside universities or industry. Read more [here](#).

### **The Danish National Advanced Technology Foundation (Højteknologifonden)**

The Danish National Advanced Technology Foundation is an independent body within the government administration that offers grants in the form of co-funding for high-technology research and innovation initiatives and projects.

Each initiative or project must meet three criteria:

- 1) Obvious commercial potential
- 2) Technology transfer
- 3) Collaboration between public sector research institutions and private sector companies

The Board of the foundation has the full competency, within the framework of the law and the rules of the European Commission on state aid, to fix the specific funding profile, including which initiatives and projects will be awarded funding. All grants are awarded on the basis of an assessment of professional quality and commercial relevance.

The proposals must be submitted in January. For further information read [here](#).

### Danish Private Research Foundations

Depending on your field of research, some of the more well-known Danish private foundations are:

- [Carlsbergfondet](#) (for information in English, click [here](#))
- [Lundbeckfonden](#)
- [Novo Nordisk Fonden](#)
- [Villum Kann Rasmussen Fonden](#)
- [The Danish Cancer Society](#)

It is important, however, not to automatically discount smaller and less well-known foundations, as it may turn out that these support exactly your field of research.

### 5.2.3 EU Foundations

Funding can also be applied for under EU's Seventh Framework Program (FP7).

The overall aim of the FP7 is to strengthen European research and support the aims of the Lisbon strategy for growth, competitiveness and employment in Europe. FP7 is the largest framework so far and the annual budget is, on average, twice as large as that for FP6. Over 50 billion Euros will be awarded between 2007 and 2013.

FP7 primarily supports research conducted in a number of European countries (minimum three) and besides grants to excellent state-of-the-art researchers (through the European Research Council) and mobility-grants (through the Marie Curie scheme), the FP7 is typically not relevant for single applicants. Furthermore, applications for FP7-grants are highly professionalised and comprise a huge load of work within the researcher's consortium.

Calls for proposals are published in September and proposals must be submitted within the following 3-7 months. You can read more details about the FP7 [here](#).

If you have questions regarding FP7, you can also contact EuroCenter, part of The Danish Agency for Science, Technology and Innovation. The staff at EuroCenter can clarify whether your project idea fits with a call for proposals, assist in writing a project proposal and give advice regarding the legal and financial rules for participation in a project under FP7. For more information read [here](#).

### 5.2.4 General Advice

#### Know the Foundations

As mentioned earlier, it is important to direct your search to the correct foundations covering your specific field of research.

When considering sending an application for a specific foundation, you should therefore start by investigating it thoroughly and knowing its grant terms in advance. A good place to start is on the website of the foundation. Here you can find detailed information, such as which kind of research is funded by the foundation, time of the calls, any special demands linked to the application, particular enclosures requested, etc.



### **What Does the Specific Grant Cover?**

Not all grants cover the same topics and hardly any of them will cover everything. Once again we can only urge you to investigate thoroughly:

- What does the foundation support?
- Salaries? And if so, for whom?
- Equipment/travels/running costs?
- How much per year?

Remember: Only apply for the kind of funding the foundations actually grant! If not, you risk ending up with no funding at all.

### **Calls for Proposals**

#### **Where to find the calls?**

The Danish Agency for Science, Technology and Innovation is an institution under the Danish Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation. On their [website](#) you can find a list of calls for proposals covering especially the public foundations and the EU 7th Framework Program (FP7) including application deadlines and the necessary application forms.

As for the private foundations, the calls, deadlines, etc. can be found on the websites of the individual foundations.

**Who can apply?**

The specific call for proposals will state who is eligible to receive funding. In general, you should have a PhD degree or alternatively, have obtained similar qualifications.

Make sure that your project actually qualifies for the specific grant.

Foreign researchers are normally welcome to apply, but the project applied for should in most cases somehow promote or strengthen Danish research.

**When to apply?**

Grants are most often being awarded once or twice a year. The deadlines will always be given.

It is of the utmost importance that you send in your application by the stated deadline. Being just 1 minute late would result in your application not being processed nor evaluated at all!

**How to apply?**

In the call for proposals, guidelines for application will be stated. Read the instructions carefully and make sure that your application meets all criteria.

Some foundations, like for instance Lundbeckfonden, have their own electronic application system accessible via their website. In such a case, it is of course a must to use their system and fill out the form as specified in the system, attaching any required documents such as budget, project description, endorsements from supporting professors or other.

Always keep in mind that foundations receive a very large number of applications of which only a few will receive grants. You obviously want to have the best chances to be a grant recipient so make sure that your application is not rejected due to administrative errors.

**The application – how to write it?**

The following items will normally be requested in the calls for proposals:

- Project description – introduction
  - What is the problem?
  - What do you want to accomplish?
  - What is new/innovative in your project?
  - What are the scientific and societal perspectives?
- Feasibility – description of resources, infrastructure, etc. that will ensure a successful completion of the project
- Anticipated results
- Disseminations – describe how you will disseminate new knowledge e.g. via publications in relevant review journals
- Work plan and timeline including defined milestones
- Any ethical issues? Discuss if relevant
- Remember to include a realistic and detailed budget
  - Include all necessary budget items for the project
  - A project most likely needs a different budget over different years (do not divide the total equally)
  - Use exact numbers
  - Provide an explanation of the budget items
  - Use budget templates whenever available
  - State any other funding from external sources
  - Only include costs that are supported by the fund

**Other tips and tricks from the experts**

- SELL your project and provide your reader with background, objective and perspective/gains of the project
- Your application should be readable, also to non-specialists. It is a good idea to start your application with a layman abstract - a simplified description of your scientific project understandable to a person who is not an expert within your scientific field
- Use figures to capture your reader
- Prove that you have the necessary expertise (or how you will get it) – describe current state-of-the-art and cite key references
- Profile your own competence and knowledge in the research field, also with regards to methods used
- Refer to statements from acknowledged professors supporting your project
- READ the instructions of the call for proposals carefully and make sure that ALL criteria of the call are met including signature, total number of words, etc.
- Avoid spelling mistakes and consider a proof-reading service for applications in English if English is not your mother tongue
- Attend courses in how to write good applications for funding. Courses are offered by e.g. [EuroCenter \(FI\)](#) and the Danish universities (check the website of the relevant university in your region)

**Good luck with your research application!****We wish to thank the following experts for their valuable input on the content of this section:**

**Anne Marie Engel**, Director of Research, Lundbeckfonden

**Allan Hegelund**, Head of Section, Centre for Science and Infrastructure, The Danish Council for Independent Research

**Kristina Edfeldt**, Research Coordinator at Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Copenhagen

**Michael Winther**, International Centre, Aarhus University

This handbook has been written and edited by the consultants of Spousecare. We have tried to put together practical information and facts that will help you get a better understanding of the Danish way of life, both in general and in regards to the local work culture.

Much of the information gathered has not only come from our own experience but also from some of the many articles and websites already written.

### [New to Denmark.dk](#)

This is the official portal for foreigners covering the topic of integration. It is run by the Ministry for Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs (aka the Integration Ministry) and the Danish Immigration Service, which is a department within the Integration Ministry. Here you can also find:

- [Citizen in Denmark](#)  
Information for new citizens about Danish society
- [Informationguide](#)  
Here you can find more information about tax, legal issues, housing, finding a job, learning Danish, healthcare, banks and insurance, salary, pensions and working conditions, education, cost of living and Danish culture, norms and values

### [Denmark](#)

Denmark.dk is Denmark's official internet representative. It is hosted by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

### [Expat in Denmark](#)

Expat in Denmark is the country's official network for foreigners. The Expat in Denmark network is jointly run by the Danish Ministry of Economics and Business Affairs and a consortium made up of the Danish Chamber of Commerce (Dansk Erhverv), The Copenhagen Post newspaper, and the Danish Bankers Association (Finansrådet).

### [Spousecare](#)

Spousecare is focused on assisting and helping accompanying spouses and partners to settle down in Denmark. They also organise various events and activities throughout the year and send out a monthly newsletter with general cultural information.

### [Living and working in Denmark](#)

A booklet on work life in Denmark, from an expat perspective.

### [Skat.dk](#)

The official English website for the Danish Tax and Customs Administration – SKAT.

### [Work in Denmark](#)

Workindenmark.dk is the official website in Denmark for international recruitment and job seeking. It is supported by a number of Danish government authorities. The Danish Labour Market Authority developed the site and is responsible for it.

### [CPH International Service](#)

The Copenhagen International service office is specialised in helping foreign knowledge workers, researchers, students and their families to get settled in Copenhagen.

**A few Danish words to get you started**

Yes	Ja
Yes, please	Ja tak
No	Nej
No, thanks	Nej tak
Perhaps/maybe	Måske
Never	Aldrig
Always	Altid
Thanks	Tak
Thank you very much	Mange tak (or "Tak skal du ha")
Hello / Hi	Hej
Goodbye (Bye)	Farvel (or just "hej")
See you later	Vi ses
Sorry	Undskyld
Where is the nearest pharmacy?	Hvor er det nærmeste apotek?
Police	Politi
Hospital	Hospital
Doctor	Læge
Hi, my name is _____	Hej, jeg hedder _____
I am from _____	Jeg kommer fra _____
I am 30 years old.	Jeg er 30 år.

**Weekdays (ugedage) week = uge:**

Sunday	Søndag
Monday	Mandag
Tuesday	Tirsdag
Wednesday	Onsdag
Thursday	Torsdag
Friday	Fredag
Saturday	Lørdag

**Time = tid**

One hour	En time
Half an hour	En halv time
A ¼ of an hour	Et kvarter
One minute	Et minut

**Months (måneder) month = måned**

January	Januar
February	Februar
March	Marts
April	April
May	Maj
June	Juni
July	Juli
August	August
September	September
October	Oktober
November	November
December	December

**Seasons (årstider):**

Spring	Forår
Summer	Sommer
Autumn	Efterår
Winter	Vinter

**FOOD (MAD)****Beverages (drikkevarer)**

Beer	Øl
Chocolate – hot / cold	Kakao – varm / kold
Coffee	Kaffe
Coffee with milk / cream	Kaffe med mælk / fløde
Juice	Juice
Milk	Mælk
- Skimmed milk	Skummemælk
- Low-fat, 2% (semi-skimmed)	Letmælk / Minimælk
- Full fat milk	Sødmælk
- Buttermilk	Kærnemælk
Soft drinks <sup>1</sup>	Sodavand, saftevand
Tea	Te
Water	Vand
Water, sparkling	Danskvand

**Fruit & Vegetables (frugt og grøntsager)**

Apples	Æbler
Bananas	Banuner
Blackberry	Brombær
Blackcurrant	Solbær
Blueberries	Blåbær
Broccoli	Broccoli
Cauliflower	Blomkål
Cucumber	Agurk
Fig	Figen

Garlic	Hvidløg
Lemon	Citron
Lettuce	Salat(blade)
Mushroom	Champignon
Onions	Løg
Oranges	Appelsiner
Grapes	Vindruer
Peach	Fersken
Peas	Ærter
Peppers: red, green, yellow	Peberfrugt, rød, grøn, gul
Raspberry	Hindbær
Strawberry	Jordbær
Tomato	Tomat

**Herbs & Spices (urter og krydderier)**

Basil	Basilikum
Chives	Purløg
Curry	Karry
Ketchup	Ketchup
Mustard	Sennep
Oregano	Oregano
Paprika	Paprika
Parsley	Persille
Pepper	Peber
Remoulade	Remoulade
Salt	Salt
Sugar	Sukker

<sup>1</sup> Please note that you pay a deposit on most bottles and cans in Denmark. The deposit is returned when you return the bottles or cans to the store where you bought them. In many cases, you put the bottles into a machine which gives you a voucher that can be exchanged for cash at the checkout/cash register.

**Meat & Poultry (kød & fjerkræ)**

Beef	Oksekød
Chicken	Kylling
Duck	And
Ham	Skinke
Lamb	Lam
Meat	Kød
Pork	Svinekød, flæsk
Sausages	Pølser
Steak	Bøf
Veal	Kalvekød

**Fish (fisk)**

Codfish	Torsk
Herring	Sild
Mackerel	Makrel
Perch	Aborre
Salmon	Laks
Shrimps	Rejer
Tuna	Tun

**Cheese & Desserts & Chips (ost & desserter & chips)**

Apple pie	Æbletærte
Biscuits	Kiks, småkager
Cheese	Ost
Cookies	Småkager
Crisps	Chips, Franske kartofler
Goat's cheese	Gedeost
Ice cream	Is
Pie	Tærte

**Bread**

Bread	Brød
Buns	Boller
Crisp bread	Knækbrød
Bread rolls	Boller, flutes, rundstykker
Rye bread	Rugbrød
Baguette	Franskbrød

**Miscellaneous (øvrige)**

Butter	Smør
Chocolate	Chokolade
Cold Cuts	Pålæg
Cream	Fløde
Eggs	Æg
Liver paste/paté	Leverpostej
Margarine	Margarine
Pasta	Pasta
Pickles	Syltede agurker
Potatoes	Kartofler
Rice	Ris
Yoghurt (curdled milk products)	Yoghurt, (Surmælksprodukter)