



Universities Denmark – a brief presentation

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Universities Denmark in brief

Universities Denmark is the association of the eight Danish universities and works to ensure the best possible conditions for the sector regionally, nationally and internationally. The universities offer Bachelor, Master and PhD-programmes, whereas the vast majority of danish vocational programmes are offered outside the university sector.

- Public R&D spending in Denmark reached 1 % of GDP in 2010
- Overall spending on R&D reached 3 % of GDP in 2009 and has stayed above 3 % since then.
- 2011 saw the highest number of university graduates in Danish history: 14,228 Bachelors, 13,695 Masters and 1,525 PhDs graduated from the Danish universities.
- All in all 46 % of all Danish tertiary graduates in 2011 graduated from a Danish University.



On behalf of

Universities Denmark acts as the coordinating body when the universities wish to address issues of concern to the sector as a whole. Universities Denmark also facilitates cooperation between the universities at the administrative level.

The eight Danish universities

- University of Copenhagen
- Aarhus University
- University of Southern Denmark
- Roskilde University
- Aalborg University
- Technical University of Denmark
- Copenhagen Business School
- IT-University of Copenhagen

Almost half of all higher education and most publically funded research in Denmark are concentrated at the universities. The eight universities differ substantially in terms of budget, research and education profile and in number of staff and students.

The Danish universities have a common overall mission as set up in the university act. Accordingly, a university shall "...conduct research and offer research-based education at the highest international level in the disciplines covered by the university (...) ...and disseminate knowledge of academic methods and results. "The university act also states that the universities "...must exchange knowledge and competences with society..."



Jens Oddershede, spokesperson of Universities Denmark since 2007

Universities Denmark in practice



Universities Denmark has two main tasks:

1. *To be a forum for co-operation among the universities*

The universities in Denmark are faced with many common challenges, simply because they share national legislation and terms of financing. Hence it is relevant both for rectors, for university directors and for the chairmen of the university boards to meet regularly to discuss problems and to find common solutions.

The Danish universities cooperate through Universities Denmark at many administrative and management levels. The aim is to give key persons the opportunity to share knowledge and experience and thus ensure constant development of the entire sector at all levels through knowledge exchange.

2. *Dialogue with policy-makers and stakeholders*

The universities in Denmark compete with each other – as well as with universities abroad. However, the universities also share common national interests. Therefore, Universities Denmark strives to formulate common policies and engage in dialogue with stakeholders such as ministries, politicians, interest groups and organisations.

Annual university statistics published by Universities Denmark have increased transparency in the sector and are widely used as an authoritative source of information.

Universities Denmark: Main priorities

Each of the Danish universities has its own unique characteristics and interests. However, all share common challenges regarding framework conditions and globalisation of research and education.

Building on these common interests the political agenda of Universities Denmark focuses on the following issues:

- Funding of research and higher education
- Governance and university autonomy
- Framework for higher education
- Quality assurance
- Framework conditions for innovation and collaboration with companies
- Statistics and data collection
- Cross institutional cooperation
- Internationalisation of research and of higher education.



International cooperation

Universities Denmark cooperates with other national university associations and is an active member of Nordisk Universitets Samarbejde (NUS), a forum for Nordic universities, and the European University Association (EUA).

Universities Denmark is also in close dialogue with the Danish Ministry of Science, Innovation and Higher Education when it comes to national preparation of university-related negotiations in the European Union, e.g. Horizon 2020 and Erasmus for All.

Building Stronger Universities in Developing Countries

The Danish universities collaborate with universities in developing countries with the objective of strengthening their research capacity. The initiative is funded by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Danish universities. The collaboration is organised in four thematic platforms where the Danish universities have strong expertise:

- Environment and Climate
- Growth and Employment
- Human Health
- Stability, Democracy and Rights.

See www.bsuud.org for more information.

Science without Borders (SwB)

In October 2012, the Danish universities signed an agreement with the Brazilian Federal Agency for Support and Evaluation of Graduate Education (Capes) on SwB, a program offering scholarships to PhD students and post-doc fellows wanting to spend time at a Danish university. Universities Denmark is the contact point for Capes and the universities, and the Danish universities will see to the implementation of the agreement in the years to come.

The sector at a glance

Education

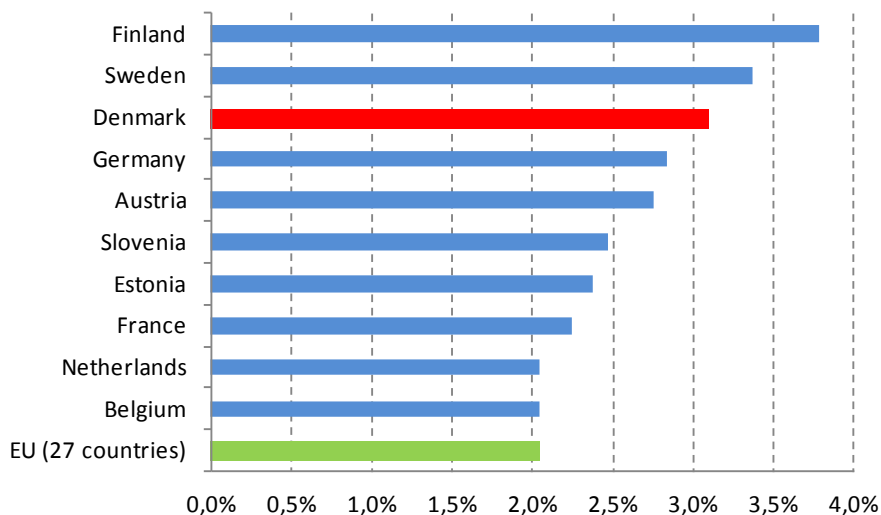
The eight Danish universities all offer Bachelor, Master and PhD programmes in different academic areas. Five universities are multi-faculty universities whereas three are specialised universities.

In the wake of the Bologna process all the Danish universities have adopted the Bachelor/Master degrees as the norm. This means that it takes 180 ECTS to obtain a Bachelor's degree and 120 ECTS to get a Master's degree. Having obtained the Master's degree it is possible to apply for a research position and study for a PhD.

Research

In 2006 almost all national research institutions and laboratories merged with the universities. This has created a stronger foundation for research at the universities, and today most publicly funded research in Denmark takes place at the eight Danish universities.

Chart: Research funds* as percentage of GDP, EU top ten, 2010



Source: EUROSTAT. *Public and private funds

Public research funding is granted as basic funding to the universities as well as through competitive funds. The latter are administered by various ministries and the research councils: The Danish National Research Foundation, The Danish Council for Independent Research, The Danish Council for Strategic Research, The Danish Council for Technology and Innovation and The Advanced Technology Foundation.

All in all Denmark will spend 20.2 billion DKK (2.7 billion EUR) from public funds on research in 2013. This is roughly 1.07 % of Denmark's overall GDP. In 2010 the total (public and private) funding of research in Denmark reached 53.7 billion DKK (7.2 billion EUR) which corresponded to 3.06 % of Denmark's GDP.

Innovation and collaboration with private companies

The universities have an important task in advising the ministries and the government on new solutions and in assisting in their implementation. Thus the universities work closely with the ministries and other public institutions and thereby disseminate their research-based knowledge.

Technology transfer (Techtrans.dk) is a web portal created to promote research results, new knowledge and technology interplay with commercial business opportunities.

Research collaboration with private companies plays an increasingly important role for the universities. Usually such collaboration is organised as joint initiatives. The universities are building still more efficient and competent technology transfer offices with the aim of commercialising and ensuring that research results are brought to the market.

Many universities also have student incubators to be able to teach more and more students how to start and run their own companies. Several of the universities' student counselling offices are engaged in getting more students and graduates to work in small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs).

Organisation

Universities Denmark consists of a number of conferences, committees and working groups. The spokesperson for Universities Denmark since 2007 is the chairman of the Rectors' Conference, Rector Jens Oddershede, University of Southern Denmark.

The Rectors' Conference:

The Rectors' Conference gathers the rectors of the Danish universities and formulates common policies. The Rectors' Conference regularly meets with the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Higher Education as well as other key stakeholders to discuss the role of the universities in the Danish society.

The Chairmen's Conference:

The Chairmen's Conference consists of the chairmen of the university boards and meets regularly with the Danish Minister of Science, Innovation and Higher Education. Currently (2013) Michael Christiansen, Chairman of Aarhus University, is president of the conference.

Presidium:

The Presidium is composed by the chair and vice-chair of the Chairmen's Conference and by the chair and vice-chair of the Rector's Conference. It discusses the strategic initiatives and the budget of Universities Denmark.

University Directors' Committee:

The University Directors' Committee comprises the university directors, who are in charge of administrative functions at the universities. At present (2013), Jørgen Honoré, University of Copenhagen, is chairman of the committee.

The secretariat:

The secretariat supports the conferences, committees and working groups of Universities Denmark and is headed by Secretary General Susanne Bjerregaard.

More information about the members of conferences, committees and working groups is available on our homepage: www.dkuni.dk.

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Universities Denmark is
the association of the
Danish universities.
It strives to nourish the
Universities' cooperation
and the visibility and
impact of the sector in
Denmark and abroad.



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