

Country Profile - Denmark

Job market

What are my chances of getting a job?

There is an increasing need for foreign labour in a large number of industries in Denmark, although competition from Danish graduates may be high. Your chances of finding graduate employment may be increased if you are a skilled worker and/or have some knowledge of Danish. The Danish labour market is known for its flexibility and Denmark is considered by many to be one of the best places to be employed in Europe, as far as employee welfare is concerned.

- **Typical problems encountered:** employers may prefer Danish graduates as they are often fluent in more than one language.
- **How to improve your chances:** relevant work experience may increase your chances of being hired. It may be a good idea to gain this experience before moving to Denmark.
- **Language requirements:** the majority of the population speaks English, but knowledge of Danish is very useful when looking for employment or studying. For some specialised fields, such as science and technology, it may not be essential to speak Danish, but in most others it will almost always be required. Some employers may appoint graduates with relatively little knowledge of Danish, but they will probably expect you to learn Danish once you have arrived. The Danish Immigration Service provides free [Online Danish](#) courses.

Where can I work?

- **Major industries:** metals, pharmaceuticals, furniture and wood production, food processing, shipbuilding, chemicals, machinery and transportation equipment, textiles and clothing.
- **Recent growth areas:** wind turbine industries and manufacturing for global export.
- **Shortage occupations:** engineers, various medical and social work professionals, biotechnology, pharmaceuticals and IT occupations.
- **Major companies:** Maersk (transportation), Danske Bank, TDC (telecom services), Novo Nordisk (pharmaceuticals), Carlsberg, Jyske Bank, Danisco (food), H. Lundbeck (pharmaceuticals), Lego, ALK-Abelló (pharmaceuticals), Sydbank, TORM (shipping), FLSmidth & Co (construction and engineering).
- **Search for more companies:** [Kompass](#) is a worldwide business directory searchable by country and product/service. The [Danish-UK Chamber of Commerce](#) has information on Danish companies which operate in the UK. For additional information, check the [Danish Yellow Pages](#).
- **Major cities:** Copenhagen (capital and largest), Aarhus, Odense and Aalborg.

What's it like working in Denmark?

- **Average working hours:** normally 37 hours a week.

- **Holidays:** statutory minimum of five weeks' annual leave entitlement. The 'holiday year' runs from 1 May to 30 April. There are 12 official public holidays around the major Christian festivals and many workers also take Constitution Day (5 June) off.
 - **Tax rates:** Denmark is one of the highest taxed countries in the world. It has a graduated taxation system, meaning the more you earn, the more tax you pay. There is, however, a tax ceiling of 51.5% to state, county and municipality. Key employees and researchers may benefit from a 26% tax band.
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Applying for jobs

Citizens from the European Union (EU) and European Economic Area (EEA) can go to their nearest job centre in Denmark to look for work. In addition, the [Work in Denmark](#) website and three service centres in Copenhagen, Odense and Aarhus can also help you to find work in Denmark.

The typical method for applying for a job in Denmark is via a covering letter and CV. The letter should be approximately one sheet of A4. Relevant education certificates and references from former employers are also usually sent with the application. Try to direct your application to a specific person at the company to which you are applying.

A Danish CV should be in a similar format to a UK one. After your contact information and education, include your language and IT skills as well as positions of responsibility, particularly leadership. Then include your employment history/work experience with an emphasis on skills. See [Eurograduate, Denmark - Sample CV](#) for an example.

Application procedures can vary and will be included in the job details.

The interview process is similar to the UK. Candidates are invited for interview and questioned about their professional competence, personality and motivation. Employers will assess if you fit with the culture of their organisation. They will expect you to have a good understanding of their business. Psychometric and aptitude tests are increasingly popular, particularly with larger companies.

Will my UK qualifications be recognised?

Contact the [UK NARIC \(National Recognition Information Centre for the United Kingdom\)](#) or visit the [ENIC-NARIC](#) website for information on comparability of academic qualifications. To compare your professional, vocational or technical qualifications with Danish qualifications, you can consult the [UK National Reference Point for Vocational Qualifications \(NRP\)](#).

Do I still need to pay UK tax and National Insurance?

If you are planning to live and work in Denmark, check your UK tax and National Insurance position with [HM Revenue & Customs \(HMRC\)](#) to ensure that you are not losing any UK pension rights.

Vacancy sources

Job websites

- [Jobbank](#)
- [JobsInCopenhagen](#) - job opportunities with English as the main working language.
- [Job Index Denmark](#)
- [Jobnet Denmark](#) - official website for Danish jobseekers and employers, with contact details for job centres by area (in Danish only).
- [Karriere Vejviser](#)
- [Monster \(Denmark\)](#)
- [Stepstone \(Denmark\)](#)
- [EURES - European Job Mobility Portal](#) - provides job vacancies and a CV-posting service for jobseekers, as well as information on living and working conditions and labour markets in Finland.

Recruitment agencies

Recruitment agencies handle all types of work. Contact details are available from the [Danish Yellow Pages](#).

Newspapers

In Denmark, most job adverts appear in the Sunday editions of the newspapers.

- [Berlingske Tidende](#)
- [Copenhagen Post](#) - English weekly paper.
- [Dansk Industri](#) - a weekly Danish-language industrial sector publication.
- [Jyllands-Posten](#)
- [Politiken](#)

Find various regional Danish newspapers via the [Kidon Media-Link](#).

Other sources

- Danish libraries and telephone directories will give details of appropriate companies to approach with speculative applications.
- The [Copenhagen Business School Library](#) is an academic library which holds information on the accounting, advertising, banking and finance, computer science, foreign trade, law, marketing, statistics and social sciences sectors.

Hidden vacancies

A significant number of job vacancies are not advertised and are filled via personal contacts, so it can be worthwhile sending speculative applications to employers in the field you're interested in. Send a CV and covering letter expressing your interest in the company and your goals in coming to Denmark. Networking with other professionals can also help to uncover opportunities.

Work experience

Work placements and internships

Search for apprenticeships and traineeships in Denmark on the [Arbejdsgivernes Elev-og Praktikpladsforum \(AEP\)](#) (in Danish only).

Placements can also be arranged through organisations in the UK such as [AIESEC \(Association Internationale des Etudiants en Sciences Economiques et Commerciales\)](#), [IAESTE \(The International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience\)](#) and the [International Voluntary Service \(IVS\) in Britain](#).

It may also be a good idea to send speculative applications to relevant companies asking for work placements.

Exchange programmes

The [Erasmus](#) programme gives students studying at UK universities the opportunity to spend 3-12 months either studying at a university or training at a job in Denmark or another EU/EEA country. A growing number of Erasmus placements in Denmark take place in English. Successful applicants receive a subsistence grant to help towards travel and accommodation costs. The Erasmus programme also funds [Erasmus Intensive Language Courses \(EILC\)](#) in Denmark. This gives you the opportunity to study Danish for three to eight weeks at the host university before starting your exchange.

The [Leonardo da Vinci Programme](#) offers exchange opportunities for students to carry out work placements in another European country. Like the Erasmus exchange, it is organised through registered universities or colleges, and placements are an integral part of a final university qualification. The European Commission provides additional funding to cover costs such as travel.

Teaching schemes

You can learn about opportunities to teach in Denmark by going to the [Danish Agency for Universities and Internationalisation](#) website.

Volunteering

Volunteer opportunities in Denmark can be found on the [Volunteer Abroad](#) website.

Casual work

There may be opportunities for seasonal or summer work in hotels, restaurants and pubs in Copenhagen and other major cities. Some knowledge of Danish may be required. Additionally, Denmark has a large agricultural industry which employs casual labourers. The main fruit harvests (tomatoes, apples, cherries and strawberries) are between July and September. [Seasonal Work Denmark](#) is the country's official website for agricultural opportunities.

Short-term opportunities

One of the main British camping agencies operating in Denmark is Eurocamp. It is preferred that you can speak another European language well, as the job involves welcoming and interacting with a range of visiting nationalities. For details see [Holiday Break Jobs](#).

Gap year opportunities

A number of au pair agencies operate throughout Europe or have associated agencies abroad that can help you find au pairing vacancies. Try [Childcare International](#) and [Au Pairs by Avalon](#) for more information. Placements range in length. Although you are often required to stay for a year, Childcare International offers some two- to six-month stays. To become an au pair in Denmark you should normally be aged between 17 and 29. Other information on casual, short-term and gap year opportunities can be found on [The Backpacking Site](#) and [Europa - Volunteer Exchanges](#).

Postgraduate study

How does the higher education system work?

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

- universities or university-level institutions offering research-based undergraduate and postgraduate programmes (Bachelors, Masters and PhDs);
- university colleges (professionshøjskoler) offering three- to four-and-a-half-year undergraduate programmes (professional Bachelors programmes);
- academies of professional higher education (erhvervsakademier) offering two- to two-and-a-half-year academy profession (AP) programmes and joint Bachelors programmes in cooperation with universities.

Each institution has its own admission requirements so it is very important you check all the details with the institution you wish to apply to.

What courses are available?

Danish Masters degrees are two-year courses. Denmark also offers candidatus philologiae (male) and candidata philologiae (female) degrees which are roughly equivalent to a Masters degree but require a four-year (as opposed to a three-year) Bachelors degree. A PhD is awarded after three years of supervised postgraduate study following the successful completion of a Masters degree.

Several courses are available in English. For more information, go to [Study in Denmark](#).

Where can I study?

A list of universities in Denmark is available at [Universities Worldwide](#).

Applying for postgraduate study

For Masters programmes, you need an internationally recognised Bachelors degree of good standard or equivalent as well as proof of proficiency in English (or proof of proficiency in Danish if the programme is taught in Danish).

General admissions requirements for PhD programmes include a Masters/candidatus degree or equivalent (comparable to the Danish two-year Masters/candidatus degree). In some areas, a four-year PhD programme is offered to students who have completed a Bachelors qualification and one year of study at postgraduate level.

Each institution is responsible for their own admission and further information about entrance qualifications, additional tests and potential credit transfer can be obtained at the institutions' admissions offices. However, the 'Recognition' section of the [Danish Agency for Universities and Internationalisation](#) website also provides general information on assessment of foreign qualifications for admission to the Danish higher education programmes.

If you wish to study at a higher education institution in Denmark, you should enquire about entry qualifications, additional tests and potential credit transfers from the admission office at the institution where you wish to study. The deadlines for the different programmes vary and you should therefore always contact the relevant institution for further information.

Fees and scholarships

Higher education in Denmark is normally provided free of charge for EU/EEA students including all students participating in an exchange programme. All other students have to pay a tuition fee. Average monthly living expenses are estimated to be £635 - £850. This includes accommodation fees.

A variety of scholarships are available for study in Denmark - see [Study in Denmark - Tuition Fees and Scholarships](#).

Are there any exchange programmes?

Most exchange students come to Denmark through an institutional exchange agreement, an international exchange programme such as Erasmus, or a governmental bilateral agreement. Contact your own educational institution to find out about the possibilities of studying in Denmark as an exchange student.

Will my qualification be recognised in the UK?

Denmark is a member of [ENIC-NARIC](#), a network of national centres that aims to improve academic recognition of diplomas and periods of study in EU member states, EEA countries and associated countries in Central and Eastern Europe. The website includes information on current issues in international academic and professional mobility and on procedures for the recognition of UK (and other European) qualifications.

Visa and travel information

Visa requirements and applications

Most EU nationals do not need a visa or work permit but citizens of non-EU countries may be required to have these documents. However, you must apply to the local regional state administration for a registration certificate within three months of entry, and provide proof of employment or income. If you are looking for a job, you are required to apply for a registration certificate within six months of entry.

Rules for Danish visas, work permits, or residence permits are very clearly organised and precise. Applications for work permits must be initiated and submitted only through

Danish diplomatic missions (embassies or selected general consulates) in either the home or legal country. From 20 May 2012, all residence cards for third-country citizens (non-EU, EEA, Nordic or Swiss nationals) will contain biometric features (signature, photograph and fingerprints), which will be obtained on application.

It is important to note that Greenland and the Faroe Islands are part of Denmark but not part of the EU, so a work permit will be required for employment in these areas. Information is available from [The Danish Immigration Service](#), the [British Embassy in Denmark](#) and the [Work in Denmark](#) website.

If you are from a non-EU country, contact the Danish embassy in the country where you are currently residing about how to obtain visas and work permits.

You might also find it helpful to contact your ministry of foreign affairs (or your embassy if you are not living in your home country) to ask whether there are any issues to be taken into account when considering working in Denmark.

Permanent residency

You can apply for a permanent residence permit if you are a foreign national over the age of 18 and have held a temporary residence permit in Denmark for at least four years. Applications should be made through [The Danish Immigration Service](#).

Help in an emergency

The [British Embassy in Denmark](#) can provide a range of help for UK citizens who find themselves in emergency situations.

Healthcare facilities in Denmark are of a high standard and British nationals are covered for emergency treatment whilst they are in Denmark. You should obtain a [European Health Insurance Card \(EHIC\)](#) before leaving the UK.

The emergency contact number for police, fire and ambulance is 112.

Travel advice

Find the latest travel advice and a traveller's checklist on the [Foreign and Commonwealth Office \(FCO\)](#) website.

Country overview

Geography

- **Full country name:** Kingdom of Denmark
- **Population:** 5.5 million (The World Factbook, 2012)
- **Border countries:** Germany
- **Climate:** temperate; frequently humid, overcast and windy. Summer temperatures average around 20°C and winter temperatures average around 0°C.
- **Terrain:** low-lying peninsular with rolling plains and numerous islands, many of which are uninhabited.
- **Natural hazards:** flooding can be a threat in some parts of the country.

Living in Denmark

- **Cost of living:** the price levels for accommodation, food, transport and entertainment are all fairly high in Denmark compared with many other countries. However, the wages are also relatively high and the Danish welfare system means that many services, such as medical assistance and education, are free.
- **Internet domain:** .dk
- **Health:** Denmark has a well-developed public health service which is based on principles of equal access to health services for all citizens.
- **Laws and customs:** Denmark has a long tradition of liberal thinking. The Danes are highly tolerant towards other people, regardless of creed, colour, political or sexual orientation. The personal freedom to choose how to lead your life within the limits of Danish society is seen as a fundamental right.

Economy and finance

- **Currency:** Danish krone
- **Type of economy:** western, capitalist
- **Health of economy:** Denmark has a modern market economy, an extensive welfare system, and its fiscal position is still one of the strongest in the EU. However, recessions in 2008 and 2010-11 have affected the country and have led to a higher unemployment rate and slowed economic growth.
- **Unemployment rate:** 8% (Eurostat, 2012)
- **Main exports:** machinery and equipment, pharmaceuticals, meat, dairy and fish, windmills, furniture and ships.

Culture

- **People:** the majority of the population are ethnic Danes (96%). Others include Faeroese, Inuit, German, Turkish, Iranian and Somali.
- **Major religion:** Evangelical Lutheran
- **History:** see [BBC Timeline: Denmark](#).

Politics

- **Type of government:** constitutional monarchy
- **Major political parties:** Venstre (Liberal Party of Denmark), Conservative People's Party, Social Democrats, Danish People's Party, Red-Green Alliance, Liberal Alliance and the Socialist's People's Party.

More information

- [Embassy of Denmark, Great Britain](#)
- [BBC Country Profile: Denmark](#)
- [The World Factbook](#)
- [XE Universal Currency Converter](#)

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