



Denmark – an attractive study destination

How to attract and retain talent from abroad

9. april 2014

Vision

Danish businesses and Danish research are to be among the best in the world. This will only come about if we are able to attract and educate the most talented people from all over the world. And it will only come about if we are able to retain them and they can find work in Denmark.

Talented young people with international insight and an international outlook help to sharpen up our learning environments. And they help our businesses to cope well in the face of international competition.

It is highly beneficial to the national economy to attract and retain talented young people from all over the world. Analyses indicate that even when international students benefit from the Danish students' Grants and Loans Scheme (SU), they still contribute to Denmark's national economy.¹

The government has therefore set ambitious goals for attracting and retaining talent from abroad. The government will reinforce its focus on attracting tuition fee paying students from countries outside the EU/EES – especially the new growth markets. At the same time, the government will work towards encouraging international students to remain and work in Denmark after completing their studies.

Attracting the most capable international students will boost the pool of talent in Denmark's institutions of higher education, and enhance the international outlook of Danish students as well as their understanding of how other cultures learn and collaborate. This will enhance the benefit individual students derive from their education and, in turn, it will benefit their future employers.

In order to harness this great potential, it is important for us to target the most talented international students. And we need to do better when it comes to receiving and integrating international students into Danish student life.

We must recruit the most talented young people from all over the world

An increasing number of young Europeans are choosing to undertake an entire study programme in Denmark. This is positive, but unfortunately fewer and fewer young people from countries outside Europe are choosing to study in Denmark.

This means we are losing access to international talent, which is why we need to do better when it comes to recruiting students from all over the world. We must not judge the success of this simply by whether we manage to attract more students, but by whether these international

¹ Model calculation undertaken by DREAM for the Danish Ministry of Higher Education and Science, 2014.



students contribute to the internationalisation of Danish study programmes and subsequently to the Danish labour market.

We must do better at retaining international students

Many international students who undertake an entire study programme in Denmark are employed in Danish businesses after completing their studies. However, we can and must do even better at retaining international graduates in Denmark after they have completed their studies; we need to target their transition into the labour market. Three years after graduating, only slightly less than one-half remain in Denmark. Thus, we are losing thousands of skilled young people who have spent a number of years in Denmark, and who could be contributing to Danish society. We can and must do better here.

International talent helps to attract international businesses

The Danish population is highly educated. But the Danish talent pool cannot stand alone, and businesses find that Denmark does not have enough highly specialised workers.²

Highly-educated foreign labour is beneficiary for Denmark in monetary terms. In a survey, the Confederation of Danish Industry notes that a highly-educated foreign national adds value corresponding to just under two extra jobs; this is supported by a number of other research results.

For this reason, the government is launching a reform of international recruitment to secure a better-qualified workforce for Denmark. The reform seeks to make it more straightforward and easier for businesses to recruit the workforce they need, while a number of simplifications of residence schemes must facilitate the transition into the Danish labour market for international students.

Compared to other countries, Denmark attracts relatively little foreign investment.³ Therefore, more needs to be done to ensure that foreign businesses perceive Denmark as an attractive country for investment. It is vital, too, for Danish businesses to remain in Denmark and to maintain and develop their production, research and development departments here. This is why it is crucial to ensure access to a highly-educated workforce with relevant skill-sets, as well as access to research environments of elite international caliber.

A new ranking from the World Economic Forum puts Denmark in 19th place in an evaluation by business leaders of Denmark's ability to attract and retain highly-educated foreign nationals. This position is costing us jobs. On the other hand, an INSEAD survey indicates that Denmark is among the very elite globally when it comes to the prerequisites for attracting international talent. Only Switzerland and Singapore are in a better position. We have what it takes, but intensified efforts are needed to achieve our potential. Thus, Denmark occupies 27th place out of 103 countries as regards access to well-qualified foreign labour, and 17th place as regards intake of international students.⁴

"Denmark – an attractive study destination" is the government's view of how Denmark attracts and retains talent from abroad.

² "Danmark som videnmagnet: Sådan får Danmark tiltrukket flere forskningsinvesteringer" ("Denmark as a knowledge magnet: how Denmark can attract more research investment"), DI, 2013.

³ "Danmark i arbejde – redegørelse om vækst og konkurrenceevne 2012" ("Denmark at work – statement on growth and competitiveness, 2012").

⁴ "The global talent competitiveness index", INSEAD, 2013.



Denmark – an attractive study destination: Objectives and measures

This presentation is the second part of a two-part action plan for internationalisation of higher education in Denmark. Whereas Part one – Øget indsigt gennem globalt udsyn (“Enhanced insight through global outlook”), from June 2013 – was focused on strengthening the international skills of Danish students and international learning environments at Danish institutions, Part two is about attracting and retaining the most talented international students.

The government has set two clear objectives for realising the vision of Denmark as an attractive study destination:

- Denmark must attract the most capable international students
- International graduates must be retained in Denmark

In order to assess whether these objectives are met in 2020, they are broken down into five tangible measures. A total of 24 initiatives have been designed in order to reach these measures for recruitment and retention of talent from abroad.

This fact sheet presents a summary of the five measures and 24 objectives in the action plan.

Objective 1

Denmark must attract the most capable international students

Measure 1.1

All components of study programmes and the study environments at institutions of higher education must have a significant international dimension.

Measure 1.2

Greater numbers of talented, tuition fee paying students.

Measure 1.3

The drop-out rate among international students must be brought into line with that of Danish students.

Objective 2

International graduates must be retained in Denmark

Measure 2.1

Larger numbers of international students must remain in Denmark after completing their studies.

Measure 2.2

International graduates who remain in Denmark must have the same employment to population ratio as Danish graduates.



Summary

Initiatives to ensure that Denmark attracts the most talented international students

1.1 Talented international students from the new growth countries, for example, help to create a high-quality international learning environments and contribute their unique skills to the Danish business community. With this in mind, the government wants to introduce a new grant programme for talented students from non-EU/EES countries.

1.2 There is great potential for private foundations and businesses to contribute more than they currently do by way of providing scholarships or grants to attract skilled international students to Danish study programmes. The government will enter into dialogue with private foundations and businesses regarding this.

1.3 A significant source of knowledge on Danish educational institutions is studyindenmark.dk. The government will therefore expand and target this website.

1.4 The Top Talent programme has successfully marketed Danish study and career pathways to Chinese and Brazilian students. The government is therefore expanding this programme to include India in the future.

1.5 Summer school courses are an obvious recruitment platform where educational institutions can spot talented international students. The government will therefore work towards summer schools being used more often.

1.6 Grants for courses in Denmark under the Cultural Agreements Programme serve to introduce international students to the Danish educational system and Danish society. The government will therefore work on targeting these agreements on countries outside Europe to a greater extent.

1.7 Online courses are an obvious option for giving international students outside Denmark a taste of how a Danish study programme operates. The government will therefore work to disseminate and develop digitalisation of study programmes.

1.8 Inflexible pricing of study programmes may restrict the options of educational institutions in the education market. The government therefore wants to give the institutions scope for more strategic and flexible pricing of study programmes.

1.9 At present, converting and assessing international students' examination results and subjects can be an inefficient process. Accordingly, the government wants to involve the educational institutions in looking at ways of increasing quality and effectiveness in processing the qualifications of international students.

1.10 Compliance with existing Codes of Conduct for the provision of Danish study programmes for international students is required. The government will ensure this through increased supervision and dialogue with the institutions.

1.11 Spouses not settling well in Denmark is often cited as one of the most significant reasons why highly-educated international employees leave Denmark. The government will therefore



work towards offering more guidance to spouses/partners of academic staff at Danish educational institutions.

1.12 Denmark's ability to attract and retain international talent depends on factors such as the Danish authorities and educational establishments communicating in English. Therefore, the government will work towards getting the Danish authorities and educational institutions to communicate better in English, going forward.

1.13 To make it easier and quicker for students outside the EU/EES to apply for a student residence permit, the government will digitalise the application process for student residence permits.

1.14 At present, a number of private providers of study programmes in Denmark do not have the option of recruiting students from outside the EU/EES. The government will therefore set up clear rules in relation to residence permits for students from outside the EU/EES who wish to undertake private study programmes.

1.15 International students on study programmes with a mandatory work experience placement period currently have to apply separately for a permit for this placement. The government will ensure that students are also granted a permit for a work experience placement when they receive their residence permit and work permit.

1.16 Students on an Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees (JMDs) currently have to apply for a residence permit for each component of the study programme undertaken in Denmark. The government will change the rules so that students on an JMD are granted a residence permit for the entire prescribed study period.

1.17 Current rules make it difficult for the universities to screen applicants for PhD programmes when the applicant is from outside the EU/EES. The government will therefore adjust the rules in this area so that potential PhD students who are to participate in a screening process are exempt from the requirement for a work permit for up to three months.



Summary

Initiatives to retain international graduates in Denmark

2.1 Welcoming, integrating and guiding international students is vital in relation to whether they subsequently wish to stay in Denmark. Therefore, the government will work towards improving these aspects and thereby to make Denmark a more attractive country to live and work in after completion of a study programme.

2.2 Careers guidance encourages people to apply for jobs in Denmark. Therefore, the government will work towards giving international students more and better guidance on job and career prospects in Denmark.

2.3 A connection with the labour market while studying is a key factor in determining whether international students remain in Denmark after completing their studies. Therefore, the government will work towards enabling more international students to get relevant student jobs and work experience placements while studying.

2.4 International students from third countries are currently allowed to work 15 hours per week, and full time in June, July and August. Danish students can work approximately 20 hours per week before any of their earnings are offset against the SU grant. The government will therefore ensure that international students are also allowed to work 20 hours a week, going forward.

2.5 Flexible PhD programmes and links with businesses can help to retain international PhD students in Denmark after they have completed their studies. Therefore, the government will work towards recruiting talented international PhD students early and strengthening their ties with the Danish labour market.

2.6 Currently, non-EU/EES students graduating with a master's degree from Danish educational institutions have to apply for residence on a par with everyone else. In order to retain more of the most highly-educated international graduates, the government will introduce an establishment pass which gives graduates with a master's or PhD from a Danish study programme access to take up work in Denmark for two years with no requirements as to income level and which also offers them the opportunity to start their own business.

2.7 PhD students from non-EU/EES countries are currently subject to differing conditions depending on whether they are employed by an institution or in a private enterprise, for example. The government will ensure that all fully-fledged PhDs are granted a six-month job-seeker's residence permit, and the rules for applying for a residence permit will be simplified, going forward.