

Welcome to Denmark

- an introduction to working and living in Denmark

The Danish welfare society is characterised by high economic growth and a high standard of living. Its citizens are financially secure, for instance when it comes to sickness and old age. You can also benefit from these welfare services when you pay tax on your wages to Denmark.

Danish companies offer excellent working conditions, modern facilities and high quality technical equipment. Competence development is given high priority and most workplaces offer continual in-service training to their employees.

As a foreign national, you will get along fine without having to speak Danish at the beginning. In general, the Danes speak several foreign languages and are happy to get the opportunity to use them.

Content

In this introduction, you will find information that may be relevant if you have come to Denmark to work and take up residence. You can read about:

- Work and job seeking
- Social security
- Tax
- Banks
- Unemployment insurance
- Approval of foreign educations/qualifications
- Danish language courses
- Family
- Housing
- Transport

Information on the things that you should remember *before* you travel is available on the website workindenmark.dk, under the section "Know before you go".

Work and job seeking

As a rule, you must have a *residence and work permit* in order to work in Denmark. The rules governing staying and working in Denmark depend on where you come from.

You can find more information on the rules governing living and working in Denmark at: www.workindenmark.dk, in a printer-friendly version.

In the Danish labour market, employment and wage conditions are normally regulated via *collective agreements* that have been reached between trade unions and employer associations. It is, for instance, the various players in the labour market that set working hours, the minimum wage and rules governing termination.

However, other areas of employment are also regulated by law, including the rules relating to holidays, recruitment and equal treatment of employees.

The trade unions play a central role in the Danish labour market, and they are very highly organised since many employees are members of a trade union. A trade union offers help with matters such as wage and working conditions and can also help in cases of industrial injury and rehabilitation etc.

As an employee in Denmark, you are entitled to take 5 weeks holiday in every holiday year. The holiday year runs from 1 May until 30 April. It is also a minimum legal requirement that, no later than one month after commencement of employment, employers must draw up a contract of employment, a letter of appointment or another form of written account of the working relationship between employer and employee.

If you have come to Denmark without having a job lined up or you wish to change jobs while you are staying in the country, you can refer to a Work-in-Denmark centre, or to one of the country's job centres who will be able to help you further. The Work-in-Denmark centres can be found in Copenhagen, Odense and Århus respectively, and it is their job to facilitate contact between Danish companies and foreign jobseekers. You can ring them up, send them an e-mail or call at one of the centres in person.

Social security

Denmark has a well-developed public health service which, for instance, includes doctors, specialists, hospitals, home-care, healthcare and child dental care. The health service network is based on the principle of equal access to the services offered by the health service for all citizens. Social security is financed by taxes. In order to gain access to this service, you must have a CPR (Civil Registration System) and a health card.

How to obtain a CPR number and a health card:

- Apply in person to the Citizen Service office in your municipality of residence and bring along your:
 - Residence and work permits
 - Passport
 - Marriage certificate and children's birth certificates, if applicable

You can read more about the social security system at: www.workindenmark.dk

And you can find information on your local Citizen Service office at:

www.borgerservice.dk

Tax

If you work in Denmark, you must pay tax on your wages to Denmark. Via your taxes you are paying into the Danish welfare system which you will also benefit from through, for instance, education, elderly care, medical treatment and hospitals. How

much you pay in tax depends on, for example, the kind of work you do and how much you earn.

In order to pay tax you must be issued with a *tax card*. Contact your nearest tax centre for further information on the application procedure.

You can locate your nearest tax centre at: www.skat.dk

You can read more about your tax obligations at: www.workindenmark.dk

Banks

If you work in Denmark, it is advantageous to have a *Nemkonto*. Nemkonto is a public payment system which enables the authorities to make payments to you. This could, for instance, be in the form of a tax rebate, wages from the authorities or maintenance payments etc. Contact the individual bank to find out the possibility of converting your wage account to a Nemkonto.

You can also open an account with a Danish bank.

How to open a bank account:

- Apply to a bank in person and take with you:
 - Your passport or ID card
 - Documentary proof of your address in Denmark

If you are paid wages by a Danish employer, it is possible to have your wages transferred from a Danish bank to a bank account abroad. The transfer may take a couple of days and some banks charge a fee for the transfer. For further information, contact the individual bank.

Unemployment insurance

As a rule, you must be able to look after yourself and your family if you live and work in Denmark. However, in Denmark you have the option of insuring yourself against unemployment – even if you are a foreign employee.

In order to gain access to unemployment insurance you must be a member of an unemployment insurance fund, called *A-kasse*. The *A-kasse* can advise you on and help you in getting unemployment benefit payments if you should become unemployed. You must be actively seeking work and be prepared to accept a job offer if you are in receipt of unemployment benefit.

If you are an EU citizen and wish to insure yourself against unemployment via an *A-kasse*, you must register no later than 8 weeks after your unemployment insurance in your home country ceases.

How to register with an A-kasse:

- Use the relevant registration form in the *A-kasse* in question
- Bring along your personal identification

You can find further information on unemployment insurance at:
www.workindenmark.dk

You can also read more about it on the National Directorate of Labour's website:
www.adir.dk.

Approval of foreign educations/qualifications

If you are looking for work in Denmark, it may be helpful to get an assessment from the state authority, Ciriuz. This assessment can make it easier for a Danish employer to understand your foreign education/qualifications. It will tell them which level of education your foreign education corresponds to in Denmark. If possible, the assessment also tells an employer which Danish qualification your qualification is similar to.

Authorisation

If your profession is regulated by law you do not need to ask for an assessment, but instead apply for authorisation. This rule applies if, for instance, you work with various hazardous materials, fork-lift trucks and a number of healthcare professions.

If you are a citizen of an EU/EEA country and only work occasionally in Denmark for short periods, for some professions it is enough to send a report to the relevant competent authority.

On Ciriuz' website you can find out whether or not your profession is regulated by law in Denmark, and if it is, how you can obtain permission to work within your profession.

Read more at: www.ciriuzonline.dk

Danish language courses

As an employee in Denmark, you have the opportunity to take Danish language courses. In some cases, you will get your instruction partly or wholly paid for you.

This is what you do

- Contact the Citizen Service office or a job centre in your municipality. Here, you can obtain help and further information on the opportunities available for learning Danish in your municipality, and the opportunities available for getting financial support for your instruction.

You will find contact information for Citizen Service offices or your local job centre at: www.borger.dk.

Read more about the other educational opportunities available to foreign nationals at: www.workindenmark.dk

Family

If you wish to bring your family with you to Denmark, various rules apply, depending on where you come from and the citizenship of the family member/s in question.

You can find more information on the opportunities available to your family and the various application requirements and procedures at: www.workindenmark.dk.

At workindenmark.dk, you will also find information on the many childcare opportunities and schools for your children. You can also read more about the international schools available in Denmark.

Furthermore, you can find information on cultural and leisure activities in Denmark, for instance, on Danish associational life, which is very widespread. You can also read more about the networks you can use for establishing contact with Danes and other foreigners. You can also find information on the things your spouse can do to find a job.

For more information on life in Denmark, visit: www.workindenmark.dk.

Housing

Most foreigners who come to Denmark choose to rent a home. However, there are also other forms of housing available.

Read more about the types of housing available and find inspiration for your housing application at: www.workindenmark.dk

Transport

In Denmark, the collective transport system is well developed and very efficient. There is also ample opportunity for cycling. It is also possible to bring your own car. Read more at: www.workindenmark.dk

The Work-in-Denmark centres

In the 3 Work-in-Denmark centres, specialists in international recruitment are ready to help jobseekers and companies alike. You can ring them up, send them an e-mail or call at one of the centres in person.

The Work-in-Denmark centres offer the following services to jobseekers:

- Advice on workindenmark.dk's CV and job bank
- Advice and support on looking for work in Denmark, including which types of employee are in demand, good advice for job interviews etc.
- Advice on foreign jobseekers finding a job in Denmark, including, for instance, registration certificates, residence and work permits, tax, public health insurance, CPR numbers etc.
- Polish hotline where Polish-speaking applicants and employees can obtain information about everything from job opportunities to rules, working conditions and living conditions. The hotline is manned by Polish-speaking employees.
- Information in English