Maps of the world can be drawn in several ways. Generally, area measurement is used and, represented in this way, the kingdom of Denmark - excluding the Faroe Islands and Greenland - with its 43,098 square kilometres is smaller than many of the individual states of the United States.

However, if measured by the share of the annual product spent on development assistance, Denmark is placed very high internationally. The same applies if the yardstick is the number of Danish police and military forces sent out on peacemaking and peacekeeping missions or the results in a sport such as men’s and women’s handball. Considered from these – albeit unusual – angles, the miniature state momentarily assumes superpower status.

The Danish model

Denmark is often called the Welfare State Denmark. Another expression often used is the Danish Model. What do they mean? In a way, it all started in the world of poetry. The clergyman, author and politician N.F.S. Grundtvig (1783-1872) wrote in a song about Denmark that a country has progressed far when “few have too much and fewer too little”. This is precisely the formula for the Danish welfare state. With the taxes as a tool, an equalisation of income is achieved so that everyone has the necessary material framework for living a reasonable life.

As a result, Denmark has less economic inequality than any other OECD country. Moreover, there is a fair amount to share, for Denmark has found a fine bal-

The Viking Age depicted on a tapestry by the artist Bjørn Nørgaard. Today, a millennium later, the Danes still retain their Viking spirit. They have conquered many of the world’s export markets and their country has become one of the ten richest in the world.
ance between, on the one hand, private capitalism, which allows people with ideas and ambition to flourish freely and, on the other, a social safety net, which catches those who cannot keep up in the race of free enterprise.

The model means that a third of the taxes is paid back to the citizens as transfers and benefits. Nevertheless, there is no spirit of revolt against the tax burden in Denmark, although it was 48.9% in 2007 and thus one of the highest in the world.

The people notice that they are getting something for their money — in addition to the transfer income, also virtually free education and free medical and hospital services. Moreover, the ideological debate about whether the public sector should become smaller or larger in relation to the private sector has almost disappeared.

Nonetheless, the political parties fear that the tax burden may tempt the best people to seek jobs abroad. A lower tax pressure is also expected to produce more enterprises to adjust to changing market trends at very short notice. This allows the companies to adjust to changing market trends without suffering losses. Moreover, entrepreneurs are encouraged to try their luck, as they can easily get rid of employees if the project fails. If an idea is to be tested, Denmark is therefore the ideal place to do so, as the population also has purchasing power. The great mobility of labour is also demonstrated by the average length of service in a job in Denmark, which is just 4.8 years — the lowest in OECD. Those losing their jobs do not suffer either, as the state suddenly appears — now with unemployment benefit, which is not as much as wages, but enough to live on.

Moreover, the unemployed have a good chance of finding another job quickly, as Denmark invests heavily in further education and retraining. The good retraining opportunities — probably the best in the world — also mean that industries which are short of labour or new industries do not have to wait a long time for the necessary workers.

The unions are aware of Denmark’s position as an export nation. Their wage demands on behalf of the members are reasonable, so as not to jeopardise the exceptional competitiveness of Danish goods.

The employment rate for women is exceptionally high, perhaps the highest in the world: 73.7% in 2007 as against 79.8% for men. In other words, as a rule both husband and wife have full-time jobs in Denmark. This enriches the labour market with a lot of talent and initiative, which would otherwise have remained in the kitchen and nursery. The massive female employment has become possible through the equality of the sexes and the public childcare system which allows both parents to work a full working week of 37 hours without worrying about who will look after their children.

Foreigners who find work in Denmark say that with this system it is possible to “be a complete person” and “make one’s family life cohere”. Denmark is regarded as a good employer. Concepts such as flextime are common. The great adaptability of the companies, without affect-

The answer contains several elements:

● Danish workers are among the most highly organised in the world — 75% belong to a union. As the employers are equally highly organised, the labour market enters into agreements without state involvement. It also disciplines itself through a specially developed labour law system. This ensures robust agreements, which moreover cover several years, and few working days are lost due to conflicts.

● A unique and crucial point is that Danish employers can dismiss employees at very short notice. This allows the companies to adjust to changing market trends without suffering losses. Moreover, entre-

Flexicurity – a magic formula

When foreigners speak about the Danish Model, they are often thinking mainly of the Danish labour market, which many see as having a magic formula. In itself, the situation is indeed curious. Workers and other employees in Denmark enjoy good wages and social benefits. Nonetheless, Danish companies in many industries are among the most competitive on the world market. How is that possible?

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The borders on pages 2-19 show the Royal monograms, four Ministry logos and the coats-of-arms of Denmark’s 98 municipalities.

Kongeriget Danmark - The Kingdom of Denmark
Form of government: Constitutional monarchy
Area: 43,098 sq. km
Population: 5.5m inhabitants
Population density: Approx. 128 inhabitants per sq. km
Average life expectancy: Men 76.0 years, women 80.5 years
Capital: København (Copenhagen), 1,175,411 inhabitants in the metropolitan area
Major cities: Århus (302,618), Odense (187,929), Aalborg (196,292)
Language: Danish
Religion: 82.1% belong to the National Lutheran Church
GDP per capita: $57,260 (2007)
Currency: Danish krone (DKK)
ing the employees’ social security, has been nicknamed flexicurity. Foreign delegations often visit the country to study the model.

**Denmark's geography**

Denmark is located in Northern Europe between the North Sea and the Baltic. Denmark also includes the Faroe Islands and Greenland in the North Atlantic.

The bulk of Denmark is the peninsula Jutland, which juts up from the European continent and has a border with Germany of just under 68 km. The rest of the country consists of 406 islands, 78 of which are habited. This gives Denmark a total coast line of 7,314 km, corresponding to a sixth of the globe’s circumference.

The highest point is 170.68 m above sea level. No one in Denmark is more than 50 km from the sea. The climate is temperate coastal climate. January and February are the coldest months with an average temperature of 0.0°C and August the warmest with an average temperature of 15.7°C.

The average wind force across the year is 7.6 m per second, which helps explain why Denmark is the world’s largest exporter of wind turbines. 62% of the total area is cultivated, the highest percentage in Europe. 56% of the land is used for growing corn, 20% for grass, 4% for roots and 4% for seed.

**From superpower to miniature state**

The country has probably been periodically inhabited for more than 120,000...
In Roskilde – Denmark's tenth largest city with 42,000 inhabitants, located 30 km west of Copenhagen – past and present intersect. Roskilde Cathedral from the 1170s (photo), which is included in UNESCO's World Cultural Heritage list in 1995. The city also placed itself on the world map with the 1971 launch of the Roskilde Festival, inspired by the Woodstock music festival in the USA. Since then, it has been held for four days every summer and attracted over 100,000 visitors in its best years. Furthermore, Roskilde inspired the authors Gustav Wied (1858-1914) and Lise Nørgaard, b. 1917. In his satirical novels, Gustav Wied revealed the misanthropy and depraved lifestyle of his contemporaries. The setting is the city of Gammelkøbing – a pseudonym for Roskilde. In the more recent TV series "Matador" ("Monopoly"), the main author Lise Nørgaard and the director Erik Balling (1924-2005) set an epic family saga about narrow bigotry and female emancipation in Roskilde – now under the alias Korsbæk. The 24 episodes of the series have been broadcast in several countries. Roskilde has also attracted international attention for a topical reason which the city could probably have done without – Roskilde Bank was the first Danish financial institution to fall victim to the international economic crisis due to over-optimistic loans and too generous bonus systems for its management. Photo: Roskilde Lejre Tourist Office.
on the throne. In 2007, the couple had a
daughter, Princess Isabella.

In 1995, Prince Joachim married Alexan-
dra Manley, born in Hong Kong in 1964.
They have the sons Prince Nikolai, b.1999,
and Prince Felix, b.2002. The couple
married a commoner and she now has the
title Countess of Frederiksborg. In 2008,
Prince Joachim married Marie Cavallier,
born in France in 1976. In spring 2009,
the couple had a son, whose name will be
revealed at his christening.

The Queen was born a week after Den-
mark’s occupation during the Second
World War and already through the time
of her birth became a bright spot for the
population, just as the family, with the two
sisters Princess Benedikte, b.1944, and
Princess Anne Marie, b.1946, came to be
seen as the model family par excellence. As
queen since 1972, Margrethe has adopted
an open style and further increased the
popularity of the monarchy with her infor-
mality, charm and artistic gifts.

As a creative artist, she has, among
other things, created several chasubles and
designed the ballet “Et folkesagn” (“A Folk
Tale”) at The Royal Theatre in Copenha-
gen and the ballets “Tommelise” (“Thum-
belina”), “Fyrstøjet” (“The Tinderbox”) and
“Snedronningen” (“The Snow Queen”) for
the so-called peacock stage in the amuse-
ment park Tivoli.

The two princes have received demand-
ing academic educations and military
training. Images treasured by the Danes
include the two Princes freefalling during
their time in the air force and the Crown
Prince on a four month sledge journey in
the polar frost on Greenland.

The Danish population
Denmark has a population of 5,511,451
(1 January 2009), distributed on 2.5m
households and the number is almost con-
stant these days. Immigrants and their
descendants now constitute 9.1% of a pop-
ulation which is otherwise very homoge-
neous and therefore highly coherent. The
population density is high – 128 per sq. km.

“Estelle Mærsk” (photo) from the shipping com-
pany A.P. Møller-Mærsk – launched in 2006 –
ploughs through one of the oceans. With its
length of 397 metres, it and seven similar sisters
constitute a fleet of the world’s largest container
ships. The ship is shown here as a symbol of the
entrepreneurial spirit and good investment cli-
mate in Denmark. Like many other well-known
Danish companies, such as Danfoss, Lego and
Grundfos, A.P. Møller-Mærsk started on a tiny
scale, but has long since reached world format
and now the second generation has taken over
with great skill. The Danish Government wants
to develop Denmark into a leading entrepreneur-
ial nation. Newcomers do not have to look
abroad for role models.
The language spoken is Danish. It has many vowels – including the special letters æ, ø and å – and many significant glottal stops, which make it difficult for foreigners to learn Danish. Although the distance from the west coast of Jutland to the capital in the east is less than 300 km, there is a distinct division into dialects with associated alleged character differences – from the taciturn Jutlanders in the west through the garrulous natives of Funen in the middle to the Zealanders in the east, whose broad and drawling dialect calls to mind the fat lands owned by their ancestors. The metropolitan population speaks a flat and rapid language, suggesting that here the pace is fast and people do not put up with anything.

For every three marriages, there is a divorce. Thus, in 2007, there were 36.0 marriages per 1,000 unmarried men over 18 years of age and 12.0 divorces per 1,000 married men. Registered partnerships between same-sex persons have been allowed since 1987. In many respects, the arrangement has the same legal and financial implications as traditional marriages. In 2008, there were 601 registered partnerships. The free and respected position of women was among other things demonstrated by their getting the vote in 1915 and already in 1908 for local elections. The latest constitutional amendment in 1953 introduced female succession to the throne, although a prince will always precede his sister even if he is younger than her. Efforts are being made to remove this differential treatment by a referendum in 2009 and subsequent amendment of the Act of Succession.

Gender Equality, Association Life and the Media

Denmark has still to experience a female Prime Minister. 38% of the members of the parliament, the Folketing, are women. Equal pay has to a considerable extent been achieved. Gender discrimination in job advertisements is prohibited. The public childcare system enhances women’s opportunities to pursue a career outside the home. Around 96.1% of all children aged 3-5 are looked after in daycare institutions.

82.1% of the Danes belong to the Lutheran National Church. Moreover, church and state – politics and religion – are strictly separated in Denmark. The second-largest religious group is the Muslims, who constitute about 5% of the population. There is no differential treatment in the education system. Muslim free schools receive public support in line with Danish schools.

Danes form associations whenever they spot a sensible or enjoyable reason for doing so. Every third Dane has attended at least one association meeting within the last month. Association life is also training in democracy.

The Danes are newspaper readers. In the past, every major provincial town had a newspaper for each of the four main parties. The introduction of television led to many newspaper closures, but there are still 36 daily newspapers and many district weeklies and trade papers.

A fresh threat to the traditional newspapers is the internet, where news is now reported almost as it is happening. This has made the newspapers themselves establish contact with their readers through the internet and at the same time restructure the printed editions to provide more opinion and background material. To achieve higher overall advertising revenue, the large newspaper groups also publish household or street distributed free papers.

There are several public and private radio and television stations, including a 24 hour news channel. On average, Danes watch television for 2 hours 33 minutes a day.

The personality of the Danes

Common to all Danes is their tendency to take the ups and downs of life with a touch of irony, often self-irony. Foreign spouses in mixed marriages often complain that they find it difficult to understand what their partners really mean because they tend to say the opposite of what they think, in keeping with the nature of irony.

The Danes’ inalienable rights include freedom of worship and freedom of speech and writing. These rights are not only deeply rooted in the Danish minds, but also laid down in the Constitution. Freedom of speech and Danish humour in its crudest form collided with the Muslim world, when a cartoonist in September 2005 depicted the prophet Mohammed with a bomb in his turban in a Danish paper, thereby offending many Muslims all over the world. The result was riots and demonstrations in several countries. In retrospect, Minister for Foreign Affairs Per Stig Møller says: “We believe in respect to condemning or insulting either people or their religion. As we have said many times: It is the differences between cultures and religions that enrich the world”. However, he did not add that Denmark will introduce restrictions to the freedom of speech.
Since the Mohammed crisis, Denmark has added a new dimension to its foreign policy, called Public Diplomacy. The intention is to make Danish attitudes and intentions known beyond narrow government circles. At the same time, Denmark is strengthening its links with G8, ASEAN, ASEM, The Arab League, The African Union and the Organization of American States.

The tone among Danes themselves is relaxed. Almost everyone is addressed by the informal “du”. The formal “De” is rarely used and only when speaking to an older, distinguished person. In the schools, the pupils are on first-name terms with the teachers. With an open economy and great dependence on what is happening in the surrounding world, the Danes have benefited from their open and international attitude. Thus they consistently support maximum free trade in the world.

Over the years, there have also been traces of local insularity, snobbery and conformity. It was best not to be different. “The Ugly Duckling” of the fairytale writer Hans Christian Andersen (1805-1875) is given a hard time because it is unusual.

The Danish-Norwegian author Aksel Sandemose (1899-1965) invented the concept “Janteloven” (“The Jante Law”)
Several Danish architects are world famous. Jørn Utzon’s opera house in Sydney is included in new lists of the Seven Wonders of the World. Arne Jacobsen’s college buildings in Oxford, England, are sensitively adapted to the historical environment. Henning Larsen – master of the new opera house in Copenhagen – has designed landmarks in many parts of the world. In addition to the Saudi-Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which was built in Riyadh in 1984 (small photo), the company recently designed the Massar Children’s Discovery Centre in Damascus, Syria (large photo), which is in the course of construction. Local culture is brilliantly reflected in the subtle shape of a Syrian rose – an artistic and highly sustainable design, which adds a fairytale element to the forthcoming adventure of discovery.

with the bigoted rules he felt dominated his birthplace, a provincial town in Jutland. The (fictitious) rules include: “Do not imagine you are anything special” and “Do not imagine you can teach us anything”.

**The “free town” of Christiania**

Occasionally, there are clashes involving motorcycle clubs, autonomous groups and second generation immigrants. A conflict between young people in Copenhagen and the local authorities concerning the right of ownership of a youth centre also resulted in clashes. In such situations, the police avoid using water canon. Knives above a certain length and hoods have been prohibited.
Denmark in words and figures

The gross domestic product per capita was $57,260 in 2008, which places Denmark in the top fifth of the EU countries. In addition to the state-funded welfare and security, Danes are materially well-off – also in terms of their own means.

Out of 100 Danish households in 2008, 60 owned a house or flat, 80 a washing machine, 65 a dishwasher, 75 a microwave oven, 44 a flat screen television, 29 a video camera, 92 a CD-player, 84 a DVD-player, 88 a home computer, 95 a mobile telephone, 83 had internet access and 32 GPS navigation. There is also free internet access in all libraries.

Traditionally, Denmark has been placed high on international barometers of quality of life. The welfare system pushes it up. However, it is pulled down by the average life expectancy of 76.0 years for men and 80.5 for women, which is lower than in Denmark’s neighbouring countries. The experts attribute this to rich food, too little exercise (although many jog) and too much smoking. However, the health authorities act with campaigns on every front and in the past five years or so, the life expectancy has improved considerably.

Life in Denmark cannot be entirely healthy when the average height of the conscripts rose from 168.4 centimetres in 1896 to 180.6 centimetres in 2006. In 2006, there were 15,053 legal abortions, corresponding to 12.2 per 1,000 women aged 15-45.

In 2007, 20 persons died of aids-related illnesses. Some 250 drug-related deaths are registered annually. Abortion was legalised in 1973. In 2006, there were 15,053 legal abortions, corresponding to 12.2 per 1,000 women aged 15-45.

In 1967, the ban on written pornography was lifted and in 1969, Denmark was the first country in the world to legalise picture pornography.

The political system

Until 1953, Denmark had a bicameral system. After the abolition of the Landsting, the Folketing remains. The voting age is 18. The election period is four years, but the Prime Minister may call an election at any time. If the Folketing passes a vote of no confidence in the government, it must resign or call an election.

Elections are by proportional representation. 135 seats are allocated on a constituency basis, which ensures an even distribution across the country, with a small advantage to sparsely populated areas. 40 supplementary seats ensure that parties with perhaps more dispersed support also have a chance of being elected. If a party cannot obtain 2% of the votes, it will not be represented in the Folketing. This minimum percentage is low in an international context. For the last 20 years, the turn-out has varied between 82% and 88%.

Since 1909, no party has had an absolute majority. That is why the legislation is compromise-led and centre-seeking, which has given Danish politics the name “collaborative democracy”. Since 1955, the Folketing has after every election nominated an Ombudsman, who may criticise the administration by the central and since 1998 also the local authorities.

Around 200 new acts are passed every
The Folketing after the general election in 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>% of the votes</th>
<th>Seats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Social Democrats</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Social-Liberal Party</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Conservative People’s Party</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Socialist People’s Party</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Danish People’s Party</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Christian Democratic Party</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark’s Liberal Party</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Alliance</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Unity List</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, two members are elected on Greenland and two on the Faroe Islands. The turn-out was 86.6%.

Since the election, there has been some transfers between parties and New Alliance has changed its name to Liberal Alliance.

The present political situation

The Government and Folketing are not leaning back comfortably to admire the robust welfare state they have created. They are aware that action is needed to protect the welfare at a time when the demographic development will result in more and more elderly people with fewer and fewer working age people to support them.

In addition, Denmark has fully accepted globalisation as the new condition of life and working principle for the nations of the world. The reforms to protect the welfare state are therefore in quick succession followed by initiatives to turn Denmark into a leading growth, knowledge and enterprise society, which also aims to be a world leader in relation to green growth.

On this background, it seems natural that Denmark was chosen by the UN as the venue of the 2009 Climate Summit, which is intended to extend the groundbreaking Kyoto Agreement of 1997.

The reforms described below support each other, for instance the labour supply to finance the welfare state is increased through tax reforms that reduce the tax on labour in favour of green taxes aimed at reducing exhaust gas emissions. The green taxes also promote the development of new energy technologies, which may prove to be profitable exports.

Let us take an overview of the many ongoing reforms:

- Global green leadership: Since 1980, the Danish economy has grown by approximately 80%, while energy consumption has remained almost constant and CO₂ emissions have been reduced. Many countries have achieved increases in their energy and CO₂ efficiencies, but the Danish increase is one of the highest in the OECD area and Denmark is today among the top ten industrialised countries in the world in terms of producing wealth with minimum emission of greenhouse gases. The Danish government continues this policy with new building regulations further emphasising the importance of energy-efficient buildings, a long-term energy deal that paves the way for new investments in large offshore wind turbine facilities and an ambitious plan for making farming in Denmark even more sustainable.

- Denmark already produces far more wind energy per capita than any other country in the world and wind energy accounts for almost 20% of Danish electricity. Danish industry is the world leader in terms of wind energy, which also constitutes a major source of income and jobs. The Danish government remains committed to green growth, using cleaner technologies as a way of fighting climate change as well as of creating sustainable and long-term growth.

- Tax reform: When it came to power in 2001, the Anders Fogh Rasmussen Government introduced a tax stop, which has been in force ever since. A comprehensive redistribution between tax types has now been initiated. Heavier taxation of energy consumption and the removal of various tax allowances make it possible to reduce income tax, which until now could take DKK 0.63 of the last earned krone. From now on, 70% of all Danish income-earners will only be taxed at 42%. The reform is expected to increase the labour supply by the equivalent...
of almost 20,000 full-time jobs. It will be accompanied by several initiatives to kick-start the economy to get Denmark out of the stagnation of the recession. The initiatives include early release of pension capital and state grants to private individuals wanting to refurbish their houses.

- **Welfare reform:** Efforts are also being made to increase the labour supply by changing certain elements of the welfare policy. From 2019, the early retirement age will be raised from 60 to 62. Over the years 2020-2024, retirement age will increase from 65 to 67 and then continue to increase concurrently with the average age. Efforts are being made to strengthen the integration of immigrants and their descendants in the workforce. A green card system is aimed at attracting useful labour from abroad and all kinds of experts, from business people through researchers to football players, are offered tax relief. They have to be capable of earning a monthly salary of at least DKK 70,000 and can then choose between paying 25% income tax for three years or 33% for five years. Students are encouraged to finish their studies more quickly.

- **Infrastructure reform:** Considerable public investments will remove bottlenecks in both road and train transport. Increasing queue formation on the roads costs working hours and road tolls are being considered.

- **Labour market reform:** Although the flexicurity model has great advantages – and is often studied by other countries – it is not beyond criticism. Among other things, a reduction of the current four year unemployment benefit period is being considered.

The reform programme is implemented on the basis of a national economy which is one of the strongest in Europe. Denmark for instance fully complies with the EU requirements in relation to economic health in the countries that wish to be part of the economic union, i.e. conditions applying to inflation rate, interest rate, public debt and currency stability. As a striking example, Denmark had foreign debts every year from World War II until 2006, but has been debt-free since then.

Due to this robust background, Denmark has found it easier than some other countries to withstand the impact of the international financial crisis. An attempt by international speculators to provoke a Danish devaluation was thus very quickly rebuffed by the Danish National Bank.

Of course Denmark, with its extensive exports, will also be hit by the recession. The gross domestic product growth of
0.5% in 2008 is expected to change to a decline of 1.4% in 2009 and an increase of 0.6% in 2010. Increased unemployment is also on its way, but Denmark’s starting point was an unemployment rate of just 2.8% - the lowest in Europe. Another European minimum record is inflation at just 2% a year.

**An environmentally aware country**

Here are some details of the country chosen by the UN to host the Climate Summit in December 2009:

Already before the decision to make Denmark a green pioneer, the Danes demonstrated their environmental awareness. The water consumption has been reduced by almost 10% over 30 years. Cars run on unleaded petrol. An agreement concerning Denmark as a pilot country for electric cars is ready. An electric car can run 160 km on a battery and a network of battery exchange stations will be established from 2011. More than 6% of the arable land is farmed biodynamically. 66% of all waste is recycled. Environmental awareness is on the increase and is now also used for public relations purposes. The amusement park Tivoli in Copenhagen has thus announced that all its energy supply – for rollercoasters, merry-go-rounds, concert hall, etc. – will come from one of the marine wind turbines being erected in Copenhagen as landmarks for the UN Climate Summit. The Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries monitors all food shops and restaurants. The customer is informed of the result by smileys – with five levels from elite to unacceptable. Denmark is also a clean country in other respects. In corruptibility lists, Denmark almost always appears as snowy white. Animal welfare is also given a high priority. Unit trusts increasingly avoid investing in companies with a questionable working envi-

_Århus is the second-largest city in Denmark. Of course there is some rivalry with the capital, Copenhagen. However, the citizens of Århus can temper their jealousy with the knowledge that many of the highest positions in the capital and in Danish politics are held by people from Jutland. Århus itself is bubbling with initiative as a city of business and culture. An annual festival week, launched in 1965, has developed into a European cultural event with dance, theatre, exhibitions, concerts, etc. Every year, it focuses on a special theme, in 2007 movement in time and space. The photo shows the Town Hall designed by the architects Arne Jacobsen and Erik Molit, which will be illuminated in red when a red route trails through the city during the festival week._

**Denmark and the world**

During the history of Denmark, the image of the Danes has changed completely. The barbaric Viking has been replaced by the Danish UN soldier with a child on his arm in Kosovo or Eritrea.

The war against terrorism, peacekeeping, dissemination of democracy and support of developing countries are among the objectives given top priority in Danish foreign policy.

Among other things, this is achieved through membership of the UN (Denmark was a co-founder in 1945), NATO (since 1949), the Nordic Council (since 1952) and the EEC/EU (since 1973). In the European Commission, the Danish member, Mariann Fischer Boel, is Commissioner for Agriculture.

**Danish participation in international actions**

Measured by population, Denmark has sent out more soldiers and policemen than any other country in the world – over 87,000 between 1948 and 2007 – to undertake peacemaking, peacekeeping and humanitarian tasks for the UN, NATO and OSCE and as EU monitors.

So far, Denmark has reserved its posi-
tion with regard to participation in the EU’s military task force. Naturally, this is not a result of cowardice, but the general deliberations about the extent of Denmark’s participation in EU.

By contrast, Danish troops are very active when Denmark itself is involved or goes into action as a member of NATO. Already in 1999, Danish fighter planes took part in NATO’s Kosovo action. After the terrorist attack in the US on 11 September 2001, Denmark spontaneously and unconditionally supported the international reaction. From day one, Danish troops took part in the initially US-led and now NATO-led action in Afghanistan against the Taleban and Al Qaeda, and the presence was stepped up in 2007.

In Iraq, Danish troops participated in the action against Saddam Hussain’s rule and the subsequent effort to prevent a civil war. In Afghanistan, the Danish troops are stationed in the particularly war-torn Helmand province, which has claimed so many victims that Denmark is the country with the greatest loss of life measured by population.

The development is reminiscent of Shakespeare’s play “Hamlet”, which is of course set in the Danish castle at Elsinore. Initially the Danish prince Hamlet hesitates for a long time, but when it comes to the crunch, he acts decisively.

**The Danish development assistance**

Denmark contributes large amounts to developing countries and has for many years complied with the UN request that a developed country should give at least 0.7% of its gross domestic product as development assistance. Moreover, Denmark abstains from demanding full export opportunities for the assistance. Thus almost half the money is handed over to the UN and similar organisations for administration.

Through its own direct development assistance, which goes for instance to 16 selected programme cooperation countries (ten in Africa, four in Asia and two in Latin America), Denmark seeks to benefit the poor, the women and the environment of the recipient country.

The former random aid projects have been superseded by a sector policy, so that...
Strong and sure is a support to the national economy in Europe and the opening up of the EU to, among others, Central and Eastern Europe so that it does not become "a club for the rich".

Above all, Denmark from the beginning advocated that the Baltic countries should be allowed to join the EU as soon as possible. In the EU, Denmark has likewise championed that the 20% of the Union’s energy consumption must come from renewable sources by 2020 – a target adopted in March 2007. Denmark has signed the Schengen Agreement, which came into force in 2001 and allows completely free passage between a number of European countries.

**The Danish reservations in relation to the EU**

The Danish population has always regarded the EU as an excellent forum for economic cooperation, but has only reluctantly accepted political integration.

As a result, the Maastricht Treaty of 1992 with its chapters on increased integration was only accepted at a Danish referendum in 1993, after the so-called Edinburgh Agreement had allowed Denmark to take a step back from the cooperation in four areas.

This manifested itself in reservations on the final phase of the European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and the euro, the defence political cooperation, an extension of the legal cooperation and union citizenship.

In 2000, a referendum was held to test if the population was prepared to abandon one of the reservations – the change from krone to euro. The answer was no by 53.2% of the votes.

On the other hand, many Danes now regard the defence reservation as absurd. They find it inconsistent that their country participates in the war against terrorism or peacekeeping actions when UN-led or NATO-led, but not if the uniform happens to say EU.

The present Government will work towards the removal of the four Danish reservations, but will not call a referendum on the issue until it is almost certain that the Danes will say yes.

In 2008, Denmark was the tenth EU country to ratify the Lisbon Treaty. The Treaty includes elements of the Danish flexicurity model, which among other things makes it easy for employers to fire people, who are then maintained by a social safety net while waiting for another job.

A political majority is opposed to uncontrolled immigration and experience a conflict between this attitude and the EU rules concerning free mobility of labour.

**Denmark and the euro**

Despite the rejection of the euro, many Danish companies are prepared to trade in euros if their trade partner so wishes. Many shops also accept euros and prices are often displayed both in kroner and euros. The voters did not reject the euro in 2000 because they feared that Denmark could not meet the standards of economic health required of a Eurozone member.

On the contrary, Denmark has for many years been better qualified than many of the current members.

The stable economy is primarily attributed to Denmark’s change in 1982 from frequent devaluations to a fixed exchange rate policy. This tied the krone rate to the German mark. Now it is tied to the euro with a central rate of 7.46038 and an allowable fluctuation of 2.25% on either side. As one of its first actions, the Anders Fogh Rasmussen Government I in November 2001 confirmed its determination to plan economic policy, etc. so that
the fixed exchange rate policy can continue.

Given its position outside the EMU and the euro, Denmark can no longer expect the same support as before from EU-partners in cases of assaults on the krone exchange rate by international speculators. That is why Denmark has to lead an economic policy which is even healthier and more stable than if it had joined Euroland.

Trade, industry and exports

From the mid 1960s, industrial exports exceeded agricultural exports. A thousand-year old farming and fishing country was thus rapidly changing into a fully developed industrial nation, where airplanes, cars and heavy weapons are among the very few items not produced. However, farming has by no means ceased. It still feeds 15 million people, corresponding to for instance the total populations of London and Tokyo.

The rapid industrial development may seem baffling, as Denmark’s only natural resources worth mentioning are oil and natural gas and these were only discovered recently, in the 1960s. However, the Danes have managed to extend the natural resources concept. Instead, milk, sugar beets, eggs and meat from the farms were used as natural resources.

They became the basis of a production of powdered milk, sugar, cakes, tinned meat, etc. Large-scale beer and aquavit production was likewise based on agricultural raw materials. For the processing, machines were needed, so the Danes also started producing – and exporting - these.

The export goods needed transport - this started a shipbuilding industry. The ships needed painting, so a paint and varnish industry developed. The goods needed to be kept cold during transport. This created a refrigeration industry. And so on and so forth.

Seen from outside, this colossal industrial growth and constant ramification into new types of production may appear random, but in fact there was – as shown above – a strong, logical, inner coherence.

Danish export companies

International market leaders among Danish companies include firms producing pharmaceutical products (such as insulin and psychopharmaca), medical equipment, enzymes for food production, detergents and bio-ethanol to replace petrol, cement-making machines, wind turbines, pumps, thermostats, skylights and other glass elements for building purposes, water purification equipment, hearing aids, toys (including toy bricks), draught beer fittings and much more.

The transformation into a post-industrial information society is already far advanced. Proofs of this include a large software export and the fact that service provision (public as well as private) has become by far the largest occupation, employing 35.4% of all workers.

An export branch that is becoming increasingly visible in the balance of pay-
While other countries may base their hot meals on rice or pasta, Denmark favours potatoes. As the Danes travel extensively, for instance on package holidays, they bring back ideas from foreign cuisines, so Danish food is now markedly international. However, open sandwiches (photo) remain a traditional staple, mostly enjoyed at lunchtime. They consist of a slice of buttered rye bread with various toppings, often pickled herring on the first slice, followed by elaborate structures of for instance egg and shrimps and to finish usually cheese. Most people eat hot dinners. Traditional dishes are lamb at Easter, rice pudding and roast goose on Christmas Eve and boiled cod on New Year’s Eve. The most traditional hot dinner consists of roast pork with red cabbage, followed by stewed fruit with cream. Danes enjoy challenging foreign visitors to pronounce the name of an example of this dish (made with redcurrants): “rødgrød med fløde”. Most fail. The successful ones are admitted to a warm fellowship. Photo: J. Buusman.

ment is culture, including films such as the groundbreaking so-called Dogme films, bestseller books such as Peter Høeg’s “Frøken Smillas fornemmelse for sne” (“Miss Smilla’s Feeling for Snow”) and music successes such as the percussion duo Safri Duo and the pop duo Junior Senior.

The genesis of Danish companies
Danish companies have their own genesis. They have often sprung from a good idea or a small invention, which the inventor starts producing using his own savings. In this way, industry has become dispersed all over the country.

If the inventor is in luck and has found a niche in the world market which has not previously been intensively cultivated by others, the small workshop in the village or provincial town can grow into an international corporation. This has been the development so far for companies such as Danfoss (thermostats), Grundfos (pumps) and Lego (toys).

Denmark actively participates in globalisation. The flexicurity model, which ensures that dismissal and change of job is no disaster for the Danish worker, has created a positive attitude in the population towards globalisation and its frequent job relocation to other countries. Many Danish firms buy foreign companies and foreign investors are welcomed in Denmark, where the low company tax (28%) is among the attractive factors. In 2008, Danish companies had 4,148 subsidiaries abroad. Conversely, foreign companies had established 3,066 subsidiaries in Denmark with a total of 228,000 employees (2003). The industrial development benefits from the excellent Danish infrastructure. As an island country, Denmark has needed to build bridges between the regions. The engineers have created aesthetic master-works such as the Faro and Great Belt bridges and Danish bridge-builders are now in demand for instance in the Far East.

A bridge-tunnel link between Denmark and Sweden at Copenhagen and Malmö was opened in 2000. This is creating a regional force field, which will be particularly attractive to pharmaceutical companies from many countries. The name Medicom Valley is already being used.

From adscription to cooperative movement
Nonetheless, the full explanation of how
the farming and fishing country Denmark has turned into a fully developed industrial nation without the help of natural resources perhaps still eludes us! The last part of the explanation is the high quality of the Danish workforce combined with the above-mentioned flexicurity model on the labour market.

In the 18th century, the Danes were a cowed people. The farm workers were serfs and not allowed to move from the landowner's property. For fear of evil powers and the dark of night, the farms were placed in a protected cluster, far from the fields.

Through farsighted political efforts during Absolutism, adscription was abolished and the peasants liberated in 1788. This created a type of free farmer who dared to place his farm at the point of production. The same free-born attitude spread to the workers in the towns when industrialisation emerged.

The spirit of N.F.S. Grundtvig, father of further education for young people, especially from the country – the so-called folk high schools, the first of which opened in 1844 – where the young learned to value and use the spoken word and freedom of thought.

Self-aware as they now were, they became able farmers, who also respected their neighbours, so that they could join together in groups on a cooperative basis around production, breeding and export with equal voting rights for all irrespective of the size of their land or herd.

The folk high school concept and the cooperative movement have both been imitated in many countries and are among the offers to countries receiving Danish development assistance.

The labour market

Apart from what has been said above about the flexicurity model, the following points are worth noting:

Danish workers are mainly organised according to industry, rarely religion.

Denmark opposes abuse of children, which sometimes occurs in connection with child labour in developing countries, but in fact many children in Denmark work, as 26% of the 7-14 year old have spare time jobs. However, this is entirely on their own initiative, in order to earn money for fashionable clothes, mobile phones, CDs, etc.

Some of the latest collective bargaining decisions have been an increase of the annual holiday entitlement from five to six weeks at some workplaces, an increased proportion of the wages set aside for pensions and increased access to further education. In the new agreements in 2007, many industries introduced three weeks' paternity leave on full pay. Women already have four weeks' pregnancy leave and 20 weeks' maternity leave.

Education

School attendance is not compulsory in Denmark, but nine years of education are. As a result, 13% of the children are taught outside the state school system in private independent schools, which may receive up to 70% government subsidy.

The elementary and lower secondary school is comprehensive, i.e. the children are not divided on the basis of ability or social background.

The average percentage of bilingual children, especially children from immigrant families, is 8.2%, but in some boroughs in large cities it can reach a third.

Formerly, pupils wanting to continue in upper secondary school had to be vouched for by the school they were leaving. This changed in 2001 – now the pupils decide themselves.

For the cultural area, a catalogue – the so-called canon – has been created of important Danish works through the ages within literature, painting, music, architecture, etc. It is not compulsory, for instance for school children, to know all the works, but the list is intended to guide and inspire both young and old. The official cultural canon has since been supplemented with more or less authorised canon publications for literature, history, democracy and design.

The 24 volumes and 160,000 articles of the national encyclopaedia – “Encyklopædien” – is now available free on the internet under the title “Den Store Danske” (“The Big Danish”). Interested parties are welcome to contribute updates on an ongoing basis.

Almost all education is a free benefit as part of the welfare system. From the age of 18, young people receiving education may obtain public support, the so-called State Educational Grant SU (Statens Uddannelsesstøtte), of up to DKK 2,574 per month for young people living at home and 5,177 for those who have left home, so that no one is precluded from further education because of social or economic status.

As part of the efforts to increase the workforce, the state educational grant will be adapted to encourage quicker completion of studies.

Local authorities and political educational associations offer extensive evening education opportunities for adults.
The social system
The social system acts as a fine-meshed safety net under the Dane from birth to death. The many individual benefits include maternity and parent leave, which the parents may choose to share. It is regarded as an advantage – both for the individual and the exchequer – if people weakened by illness or age remain in their own homes as long as possible. Here, elderly people can receive home help from the local authority. If that is not sufficient, they are offered protected housing or nursing home accommodation.

The welfare system does not escape criticism. Hospital hygiene has been criticised and improved. Treatment guarantees have been issued for life-threatening illnesses such as cancer and heart disease, but nonetheless waiting lists do occur. Patients who cannot be treated in the public hospital system in Denmark within the guaranteed time-limit of ideally one month are now offered treatment at a private hospital or at a hospital abroad at the public expense. From 2011, the arrival of an ambulance or helicopter can be expected within 15 minutes in the case of acute illness or an accident.

Science
The Danes have made their contribution to solving the mysteries of the universe, nature and the human body.

As examples may be mentioned that Ole Rømer (1644-1710) calculated the speed of light, that Niels Stensen (1638-1686), among other things, founded geology as a science and made important anatomical discoveries, that H.C. Ørsted (1777-1851) discovered electro-magnetism and that Niels Bohr (1885-1962) was one of the theorists who had a decisive influence on quantum mechanics and among other things made the development of nuclear weapons and the exploitation of nuclear power possible.

Thomas Bartholin (1616-1680) discovered the human lymphatic vessels and Niels Finsen (1860-1904) proved that rays of light have a healing effect on skin diseases. In addition, Henrik Dam (1895-1976) discovered vitamin K and Johannes Fibiger (1867-1928) demonstrated that cancer can be caused by external factors, such as contact with tar products.

Literature
The Danish-Norwegian comedy writer and philosopher Ludvig Holberg (1684-1754) is often described as Denmark’s counterpart to France’s Molière. He introduced the European Enlightenment in Denmark and his plays with their jovial-ironic exposure of prejudices and conceit are still performed today on both Danish and foreign stages.

The fairytale writer Hans Christian Andersen (1805-1875) probably remains the best-known Dane in the world. It is well-deserved that one of the characters who sprang from his imagination, the Little Mermaid, has also become the symbol of the Danish capital, Copenhagen. Cast in bronze, she gracefully receives visitors to the city from her wet stone in Copenhagen harbour. In 2005, the bicentenary of his birth was celebrated all over the world.

The philosopher Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855) sowed the seeds of Existentialism and is being read more and more. Danish Nobel Prize winners include the author Johannes V. Jensen (1873-1950), whose book “Kongens fald” (“The Fall of the King”) in 2000 was chosen by the population as the best Danish 20th century novel.

Karen Blixen’s (1885-1962) memoirs of Africa became an international success, both as a novel and a major film.

Contemporary names such as Klaus
Risbjerg, b. 1931, and Peter Høeg, b. 1957, also stand out.

**Music, film and ballet**
The composer Carl Nielsen (1865-1931) is becoming increasingly popular in concert halls all over the world. So is the recently discovered Rued Langgaard (1893-1952).

In the world of jazz, the violinist Svend Asmussen, b. 1916, belongs to the world elite and the double bass player Niels-Henning Ørsted Pedersen (1946-2005) was in great demand internationally.

The pianist Victor Borge (1909-2000) was a much-loved entertainer all over the world. His philosophy of life was that a smile reduces the distance between people.

Danish cinema had a golden age during the silent film period, among others with Carl Th. Dreyer’s (1889-1968) film about the passion and death of Joan of Arc.

In this new millennium, the spotlight is again sweeping over Danish cinema, with several directors winning Oscars and Golden Palms, including Bille August, b. 1948, and a new generation of directors headed by Lars von Trier, b. 1956, charging ahead with their so-called Dogme films.

Danish actors are receiving offers from Hollywood. Iben Hjejle, b. 1971, appeared in “High Fidelity” and “Dreaming of Julia”. Viggo Mortensen, b. 1958, among other things played Aragon in “Lord of the Rings”, and Mads Mikkelsen, b. 1965, is the villain in the James Bond film “Casino Royale”.

Another Danish strength is television Copenhagen's status as a city of culture is ever-expanding. In 2008, the Danish Broadcasting Corporation inaugurated a new concert hall (photo) designed by the French architect Jean Nouvel. The auditorium, with its unique acoustic, has attracted international stars from day one. The concert hall is part of a new trinity with The Royal Theatre's Opera and new playhouse, which are only a few years old. The last two were designed by Danish architects and are spectacularly situated opposite each other at either side of Copenhagen harbour. Copenhagen also offers mass audience entertainment. Thus both Madonna and Bruce Springsteen have appeared at the sports and event centre Parken. Famous international stars visiting Denmark do not only go to Copenhagen. In regional cities such as Århus, Horsens and Herning, considerable stage facilities have been exploited by, among others, Leonard Cohen, Elton John, Jimmi Hendrix, Pink Floyd – and Bill Clinton. Photo: Bjarne Bergius Hermansen.
Drama series. They have won Denmark Emmy Awards for series such as “Nikolaj og Julie” (“Nikolaj and Julie”), “Rejsesholdet” (“The Flying Squad”), “Ornen” (“The Eagle”) and “Unge Andersen” (“Young Andersen”).

Danish humour flourishes in film series such as “Olsen Banden” (“The Olsen Gang”) and television series such as “Matador” (“Monopoly”), which have many viewers also outside Denmark as do many Danish films for children.

Within ballet, August Bournonville (1805-1879) as ballet master at The Royal Theatre raised Danish ballet to an international standing that has not faded.

Visual arts
Danish painters from the first half of the 19th century, the so-called Golden Age, are experiencing an international renaissance. Over the years, painters have often joined together regionally. Groups such as the Skagen Painters and the Funen Painters now have their own, well-attended museums. Asger Jorn (1914-1973) co-founded the international COBRA group (named after Copenhagen, Bruxelles and Amsterdam).

Major contemporary names include Bjørn Nørgaard, b.1947, who, among other things, has designed tapestries featuring the history of Denmark as a birthday present for Queen Margrethe, and Per Kirkeby, b.1938. The sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen (1770-1844) preferred to work in Rome, where his marble statues are seen for instance in St Peter’s.

Design, applied art and architecture
The Danes are world famous for applied art and design within a broad spectrum of fashion, furnishing fabrics, furniture, silverware, porcelain and jewellery.

The silversmith Georg Jensen (1866-1935) created magnificent hollowware and cutlery.

The architect Poul Henningsen (1894-1967) explored the effects of light and designed lamps which are outstanding in terms of lighting technique and aesthetics. Jacob Jensen, b.1926, designs radios and televisions, telephones, cars, etc., and some of his works have been exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

The multimedia artist Olafur Eliasson, b.1967, who among other things is a master of lighting, is represented in collections all over the world.

The Lego toy bricks familiarise the Danes with appealing design already in the nursery.

Together with deeply quality-conscious craftsmen, furniture designers such as Hans J. Wegner (1914-2007) have made Danish furniture synonymous with sophisticated design and comfort. Thousands of international customers include the UN Security Council.

The sense of design also benefits less obvious products such as industrial machinery, public signage and much else.


Another architectural masterpiece by Henning Larsen is the new opera house on the waterfront in Copenhagen, which was sponsored by the shipping magnate Mærsk McKinney-Møller.

The firm of architects 3XN Arkitekter has designed the highly acclaimed new Danish embassy in Berlin and an entire quarter in Copenhagen for UN institutions.

Sports
The Danish national sport is football and Danish players are often to be found in the line-up of great European clubs, such as AC Milan, Chelsea, Inter, etc.

Other strong Danish disciplines, for instance at the Olympics, include women’s handball, yachting, rowing, swimming, cycling and badminton.

With Ulrik Wilbek as national coach, Denmark has won international handball championship medals, first for women and later for men.

Victor Andersen
Journalist, cand.polit.

Further information
Denmark’s official website
www.denmark.dk

Udenrigsministeriet
(Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark)
Asiatisk Plads 2
DK-1448 Copenhagen K
(+45) 3392 0000
www.um.dk
um@um.dk

Folketinget
(Danish Parliament)
Christianborg
DK-1240 Copenhagen K
(+45) 3337 5500
www.folketinget.dk
folketingset@folketinget.dk

Visit Denmark
(Danish Tourist Board)
Islands Brygge 43
DK-2300 Copenhagen S
(+45) 3288 9900
www.visitdenmark.com
contact@visitdenmark.com

Kunststyrelsen
(Danish Arts Agency)
H.C. Andersen Boulevard 2
DK-1553 Copenhagen V
(+45) 3374 4500
www.danish-arts.dk
info@danish-arts.dk

Danmarks Statistik
(Statistics Denmark)
Sejrøgade 11
DK-2100 Copenhagen Ø
(+45) 3917 3917
www.dst.dk
dst@dst.dk

Klima- og Energiministeriet
(Danish Ministry of Climate and Energy)
Stormgade 2-6
DK-1470 Copenhagen K
(+45) 3392 2800
www.kemin.dk
kemin@kemin.dk

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