



European Council: Denmark

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1 General Information

The Kingdom of Denmark is deemed to be Scandinavia's gateway to Europe and vice versa for centuries. So trade and transit and therefore good international relationships have always been important for Denmark's significance in European history. The Danish Kingdom, a parliamentary monarchy, consists of Denmark itself, the Farøer islands half way between Scotland and Iceland, and the island of Greenland. The latter two form sovereign entities with local governments and legislation.

All three parts of the Kingdom are part of UN and founding members of NATO, only the Danish mainland is part of the European Community since 1973, but the Danish people did not opt to be part of the Euro zone and to keep the Danish Crown as their currency.

With only 5 million inhabitants and an area covered slightly bigger than Switzerland, but with GDP ranking 52 in the world and even 11 by GDP per capita, Denmark is one of the most industrialized and developed countries in the world. The population density in most parts of the countries is still relatively low, due to 86% of all Danes living in cities or urban areas, most of them, almost a fifth of the whole population, around its capital Copenhagen.

2 Economy

Due to the strong industrialisation, almost 75% of Denmark's exports are manufacturing respectively heavy industries goods, although this sector only makes up around 25% of Denmark's GDP, accordingly employing about 25% of the Danish workers. Almost the entire percentage left to the service sector, GDP- as employment-wise, only 2 to 3% each are contributed by agriculture. Despite these low numbers, Denmark is still an important producer of agricultural goods as pork, dairy and grain for Europe.

So not surprisingly Denmark's most important trade partners are European countries, first and foremost Germany, Scandinavia, France, the Netherlands and Poland. Denmark's most significant trade partners in the rest of the world consist of the classical trade powers United States, Red China and Japan.

3 Energy and Natural Resources

Although Denmark is relatively poor regarding natural resources, only some minerals such as chalk and limestone can be found on the main land, extensive oil and gas fields in the North Sea are exploited since the 1970's. Additionally, climate change opens new ways to access huge amounts of fossil resources located in Greenland's Arctic regions. This made Denmark, being heavily dependent on oil until the first oil price shock of 1973, an exporter of energy by the 21st century.

After '73 Denmark furthermore pioneered the "energy transition" by resigning from setting up any nuclear installations, but systematically installing considerable wind power over the years,



Fig. 1: Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen, who represents Denmark in the European Council. He is also the party leader of the market-liberal centre-right *Venstre* party.

which contributes more than 40% of the country's electricity. This number is to be raised to over 60% by the mid of the century.

4 Immigration

Denmark doesn't see itself as a society traditionally relying on immigration, moreover people emigrated from the country until the 1950's. This only changed with the 1960's economical boom, when, similar to Germany, thousands of foreign workers from southern Europe and the Balkan were hired. In recent years although, after the need for foreign workforces declined, like in other countries, and the problems arising from that, and especially during the recent events of 2015's refugee crisis and the following times, Denmark set up one of the most restrictive immigration legislations in Europe. This resulted in a to this day very homogeneous picture of the society. The percentage of people with an immigration background lays only around 12%, where of about the half of that come from Western European countries, where as the rest originates from different cultures such as Eastern Europe, the Levant or Africa.

5 Defence

Although Denmark contributes since 1962 to the long time only multinational NATO corps, the Multinational Corps Northeast (MNC NE), together with Germany and since 1999 Poland, too, the government resigned in 2017 from taking part in the PESCO (Permanent Structured Cooperation), which most other European countries joined subsequently.