

COUNTRY PROFILES

Denmark

Denmark is generally in favour of reinforcing European cultural cooperation. Its experience in cooperating with international cultural institutes has led Denmark to consider combined European and/or worldwide networks of European cultural institutes a potentially extremely useful instrument for European cultural policy.

It considers the CICEB (a conglomerate of cultural institutes from ten countries including Denmark, based in Brussels) a model for such European cultural cooperation. Some Danish actors (Halm, 2003) argue that the strengthening of cooperation at European level should focus on cultural production because cultural production is becoming an increasingly important part of the global economy. The stimulation and enhancement of cultural coordination and cooperation at European level should thus contribute to increasing the focus on culture as a trade with a huge branding and export potential.

M i n i s t r y o f C u l t u r e a n d M i n i s t r y o f F o r e i g n a f f a i r s

The overall responsibility for international cultural policy is shared by the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with the former as the dominant organisation. Danish cultural cooperation with other countries is characterised by many players, some of which are wholly or partly funded by the government, while others are artists and private enterprises.

The task of both ministries is restricted to formulating the general strategy, assigning priorities and facilitating government organisations that are the effective actors of Danish international cultural policy. Government organisations enjoy a considerable autonomy in defining their own policies. The two most important government organisations are the Danish Secretariat for International Cultural Relations (which in fact is part of Danish Arts) and the Danish Centre for Culture and Development. The Danish Secretariat for International Cultural Relations was jointly established by the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2000. Its task is to coordinate and implement Denmark's official international cultural policy. Since July 2003, it is part of Danish Arts, which also includes the Danish Contemporary Arts Foundation, the Danish Literature Centre and the Danish Music Information Centre. The Secretariat also operates the secretariat of the Danish Arts Council, which was established in 2003, and integrates the Danish Music Council, the Danish Theatre Council, the Danish Council for Visual Art and the Danish Literature Council.

The Danish Centre for Culture and Development was established by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order to promote cultural cooperation between Denmark and developing countries in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America and the Middle East. Furthermore, the Ministry of Culture established the Danish Cultural Institute in 1940. Its mission is to further international understanding by arranging cultural exchanges and providing information about Denmark. With regard to multilateral cooperation, Denmark is very active in the northern geographical hemisphere. Cultural cooperation and the promotion of Nordic and Baltic culture respectively have been core components of intra-Nordic cooperation. Denmark is also a member of the Council of Europe and UNESCO.

P o l i c y f o c u s

Policy objectives, seen reflected in the work of all the structures mentioned above, are to:

- promote knowledge of Danish arts and culture abroad;
- promote knowledge of Denmark and its policies;

- support Danish artists in making an international career;
- encourage the presentation of important foreign art in Denmark;
- foster cultural exchange in order to strengthen the development of Danish arts;
- increase the export potential of Danish art.

G e o g r a p h i c a l f o c u s

Denmark's geographical focus claims to be on EU and neighbouring countries particularly Nordic and Baltic countries including Russia.

This can be seen reflected in the fact that eight Danish Cultural Institutes are housed within EU countries: Belgium (servicing the Benelux partners), Hungary, Poland, Germany, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the United Kingdom and one is housed in neighbouring Russia.

Denmark actively participates in the Nordic Council (formed in 1952), the Nordic Council of Ministers (formed in 1971) and Ars Baltica. Denmark is also a member of the Barents Euro-Artic Council.

Furthermore, Denmark maintains cultural relations with the United States, Canada, Asia and the Middle East

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F u r t h e r b a c k g r o u n d r e a d i n g

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Background to structures, competencies and institutes in the field of cultural cooperation.

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