

Background Information: Higher Education System in Denmark



DZHW
Deutsches Zentrum für
Hochschul- und Wissenschaftsforschung

eurostudent.eu
★★★★★



Contributors

DZHW, Germany

Ministry of Science, Innovation and Higher Education, Denmark

Higher Education System in Denmark

I. General Characteristics

Population	
Total population (1.1.2013) (million) ¹	5.60
Population density (2013) (persons per square kilometre) ²	130.8
Population Structure (2013) (share of total population %) ³	
0-14 years	17.4
15-24 years	12.8
25-49 years	32.8
50-64 years	19.1
65 years and older	17.9
GDP	
GDP per capita in PPS (2013), EU 28 = 100 ⁴	124
GDP year-on-year growth rate (2013) ⁵	- 0.5
Education (2012) (All levels) ⁶	
Enrolment	
Total (ISCED 0-6)	1,499,628
Tertiary Level of Education (ISCED 5-6)	275,009
Tertiary Education	
Population aged 25-64 years with tertiary education (2012) (%) ⁷	35.0
Population aged 30 – 34 years with tertiary education (2012) (%) ⁷	43.0
Public expenditure on tertiary education (percentage of GDP) (2011) ⁸	1.8

2. Types of Higher Education Institutions

Higher education in Denmark is provided by eight universities, seven university colleges, nine academies of professional higher education⁹, and university level arts and maritime educational institutions. The different types of higher education institutions and their programmes fall under the Ministry of Higher Education and Science, the Danish Ministry of Culture, and the Ministry of Defence.

¹ European Commission. (2013). *Eurostat Compact Guides: Basic Figures on the EU, Winter 2013/2014 Edition*. Luxembourg: Publications office of the European Union.

² Eurostat. (2013). *Population density*. Retrieved from <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tps00003&plugin=0>

³ Eurostat. (2013). *People by age group*. Retrieved from <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/refreshTableAction.do?tab=table&plugin=1&pcode=tps00010&language=en>

⁴ Eurostat. (2013). *GDP per capita in PPS*. Retrieved from <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=teco0114>

⁵ Eurostat. (2013). *Real GDP growth rate*. Retrieved from <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=teco0115>

⁶ Eurostat (2014). *Students by ISCED level, age and sex*. Retrieved from http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=educ_enrlrt&lang=en

⁷ OECD. (2014). *Education at a glance 2014: OECD Indicators*, pp. 44. Retrieved from <http://www.oecd.org/edu/Education-at-a-Glance-2014.pdf>

⁸ OECD. (2014). *Education at a glance 2014: OECD Indicators*, pp. 232. Retrieved from <http://www.oecd.org/edu/Education-at-a-Glance-2014.pdf>

⁹ Eurydice. (2013). *Denmark: Types of Higher Education Institutions*. Retrieved from: https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Denmark:Types_of_Higher_Education_Institutions

Universities in Denmark mainly focus on academic research. Of the eight universities, five offer courses in a wide range of subject areas such as arts and sciences including medical sciences, humanities, law, and social sciences and the remaining three universities focus on engineering, sciences, and business. Danish universities offer long cycle programmes as well as degrees in first (Bachelor), second (Master), and third (Doctoral) cycle qualifications.

Danish university colleges have a strong applied focus at an international professional level. These offer professional Bachelor programmes in subject areas such as teacher training, social work, or nursing. The university colleges in Denmark offer first cycle qualification as well as medium cycle programmes. All programmes at the university colleges include a compulsory period of practical training. The academies of professional higher education in Denmark offer first cycle qualification and short-cycle academy vocational/professional degree programmes in finance, computer science, marketing, or design.

A number of university level arts institutions, regulated by the Danish Ministry of Culture, offer first, second, and third cycle qualifications in visual arts, music, cinematography, theatre, and performing arts.

3. Study Structure

Denmark has fully implemented the Bologna three-cycle structure consisting of Bachelor, Master and Doctoral programmes. Higher education attainment and student's performance are measured in credit points compatible with the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS).

First cycle qualifications (Academy Profession and Bachelor)

- The first cycle qualifications in Denmark include Academy Profession (AP) and Bachelor degrees.
- The workload associated with Academy Profession degrees is 90 to 150 ECTS credits spread over a period of two to two and a half years.
- The workload associated with a Bachelor degree is generally 180 ECTS credits, with study duration of about three years.
- At a university college 180 to 240 ECTS credits are required for a Professional Bachelor degree, spread over a time period three to four years.

Second cycle qualification (Master)

- The second cycle qualification includes Master programmes, with study duration of two to three years.
- A Master degree at a Danish university is awarded upon obtaining 120 ECTS credits.

Third cycle qualification (Doctoral)

- A Doctoral degree is awarded after obtaining 180 ECTS credits and a final examination. Completion of Doctoral studies, at minimum, requires three years of studies.

4. Admission Requirements^{10 11 12}

The higher education entry requirements can be either general or specific and vary by programme. The general requirements for all first cycle programmes including short cycle programmes is the successful completion of one of the upper secondary level qualifying examinations which can be either the upper secondary school leaving examination (*studentereksamen*), the higher preparatory examination (HF), the higher commercial examination (HHX), the higher technical examination (HTX), or in some cases the completion of vocational education and training (EUD). The specific requirements could include passing in subjects on a high level, minimum grade, admission test, or interviews.

The admission requirements for a Master programme at Danish universities generally include a relevant Bachelor degree or other education at the same level; further admission requirements are set by the universities. An applicant without any of the above mentioned qualifications can be admitted to a Master programme if he or she has a corresponding professional qualification and the university presumes that the applicant will be able to successfully complete the programme.

In order to be admitted to a programme leading to a Doctoral degree, a completed Master degree is required. In a few programmes, it is possible to enter a Doctoral programme before completing the Master programme. However, in such cases the students are required to finish their Master programme during the course of the Doctoral studies.

5. Enrolment Levels

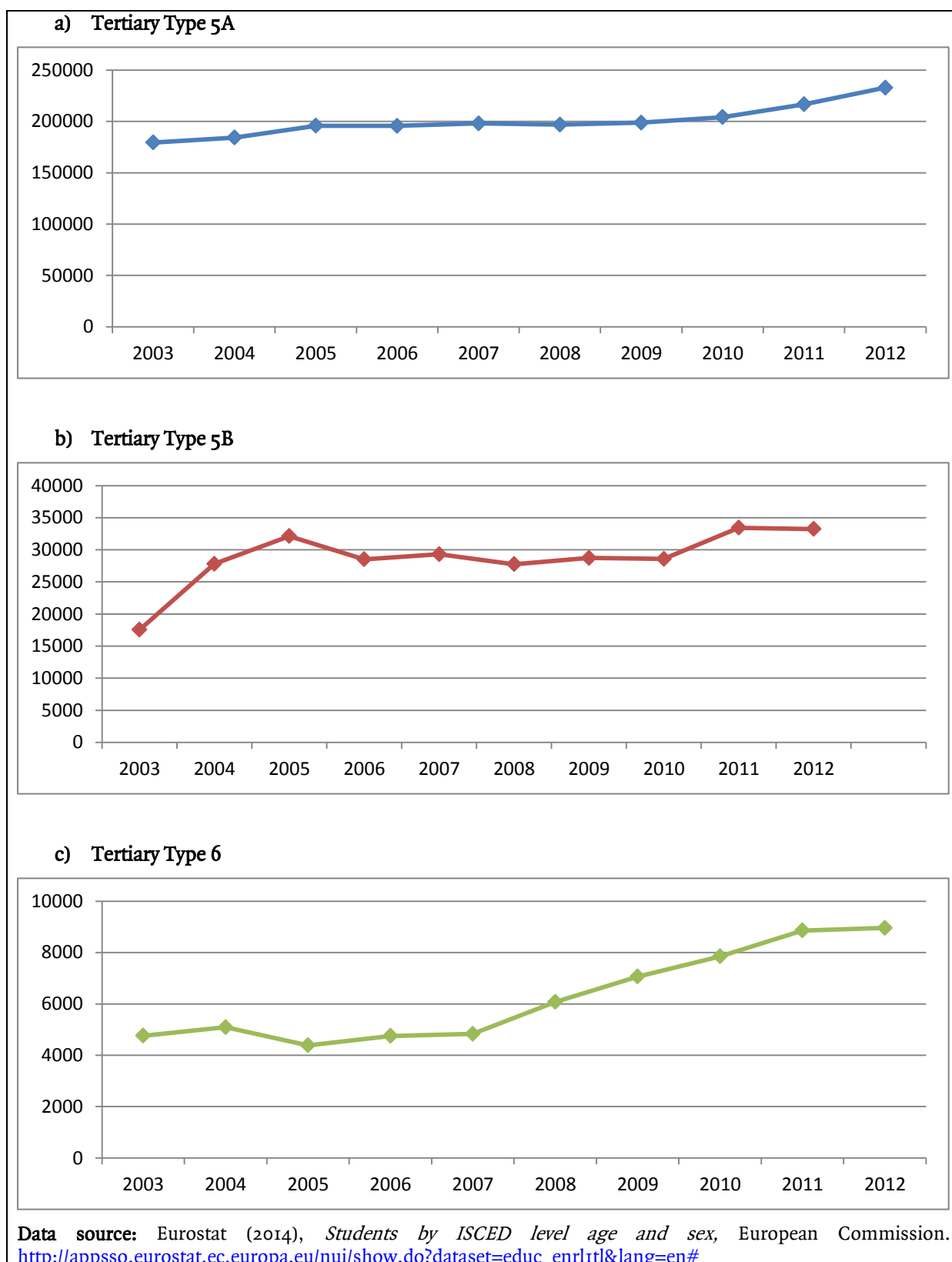
Figure 1 shows trends in enrolment levels (ISCED 5, 5B and 6, ISCED 97) in Denmark between 2003 and 2012. Students' enrolment levels in Tertiary Type 5A have increased by almost 30 % between 2003 and 2013; whereas the enrolment levels in Tertiary Type 5B and 6 have almost doubled in the last 10 years.

¹⁰ Eurydice. (2014). *Bachelor*. Retrieved <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Denmark:Bachelor>

¹¹ Eurydice. (2014). *Second cycle programmes*. Retrieved from https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Denmark:Second_Cycle_Programmes

¹² Eurydice. (2014). *Third cycle (PhD) programmes*. Retrieved from https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Denmark:Third_Cycle_%28PhD%29_Programmes

Figure 1: Trends in enrolment levels



6. Registration and/or Tuition Fees

Higher education in Denmark is free of charge for students from the European Union, the European Economic Area and Switzerland as well as for students who participate in an exchange programme or who have a permanent or temporary residence permit. All other students have to pay 6,000 Euro to 16,000 Euro in tuition fee in Denmark¹³.

7. Financial Support for Students¹⁴

Public support is available to Danish students for successfully completing their higher education. Financial support for students in Denmark is provided by the Danish State Educational Support (SU) in the form of grants corresponding to the study duration of the programme. Also, students can receive a completion loan in their final year of studies. In particular situations such as sickness or childbirth, students can apply for additional monthly grants. Additionally, Denmark offers scholarships for studying abroad.

8. Note on the Denmark data provided for EUROSTUDENT V

Due to difficulties with the data processing it was not possible to include international students in all tables/indicators. This has to be kept in mind when interpreting the Danish data on the following pages.

This report is based on the following sources:

Eurydice (2014). *Overview Denmark*. Retrieved from

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Denmark:Redirect>

Study in Denmark. (2014). *Tuition Fees and Scholarships*. Retrieved from

<http://studyindenmark.dk/>

Study in Denmark. (2014). *Admission Requirements*. Retrieved from <http://studyindenmark.dk/study-options/admission-requirements>

SU. (2014). *State Educational Grant and Loan Scheme*. Retrieved from

<http://www.su.dk/Sider/default.aspx>

¹³ Study in Denmark. (2014). *Tuition Fees and Scholarships*. Retrieved from <http://studyindenmark.dk/study-options/tuition-fees-and-scholarships>

¹⁴ Eurydice. (2014). *Financial support for learners*. Retrieved from https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Denmark:Higher_Education_Funding