

Denmark

Facts and Statistics

Location: Northern Europe bordering Germany 68 km

Capital: Copenhagen

Climate: temperate; humid and overcast; mild, windy winters and cool summers

Population: 5,413,392 (July 2004 est.)

Ethnic Make-up: Scandinavian, Inuit, Faroese, German, Turkish, Iranian, Somali

Religions: Evangelical Lutheran 95%, other Protestant and Roman Catholic 3%, Muslim 2%

Government: constitutional monarchy

The Danish Language

Over 98% of the population speak Danish. German is recognized as an official regional language in the Nord-Schleswig region that borders Germany, where it is spoken by 23,000 people, about 0.4% of the 5.2m Danish population. Greenlandic, an Inuit language, is spoken by 0.1% of the population.

Why not learn some useful Danish phrases?

Danish Society & Culture

Egalitarianism in Danish Society

Denmark is an egalitarian society.

- . Interestingly this is reflected in their language, which employs gender-neutral words.
- . Most Danes are modest about their own accomplishments and are more concerned about the group than their own individual needs.
- . Maternity and paternity leave provisions are particularly generous in Denmark.
- . Men are more actively involved in child-rearing activities than in many countries, although the division of domestic chores is similar to other developed countries.

Women in Danish Society

- . Women are highly respected in business and generally receive equal pay and have access to senior positions.
- . Working mothers can easily arrange flexible hours so that they can maintain both a career and a family.
- . Danish women expect to be treated with respect in the office.

Proper Public Behavior

- . Danes believe there is one proper way in which to act in any given circumstance.
- . If someone is not following the rules, be they written or merely understood, someone will generally speak up and admonish them to obey the accepted protocol.
- . They expect courteous behavior from everyone.
- . Talk in moderate tones and do not do anything to call attention to yourself.

Danish Family Values

- . Most families are small.
- . The nuclear family is the centre of the social structure.
- . Children are raised to be independent from an early age.
- . Most are put in day care centres at about 1 years old.
- . Marriage is not a prerequisite to starting a family. Many couples live together without legalizing the arrangement with marriage.