

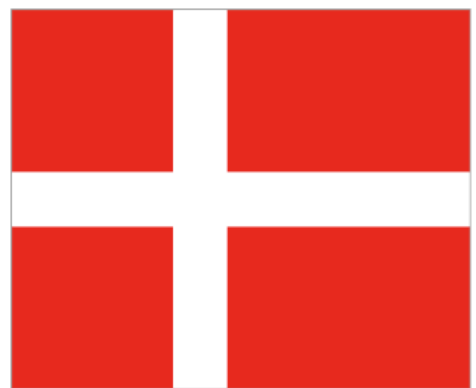
COUNTRY  
CHAPTER

**DEN**

# **DENMARK**

**BY THE GOVERNMENT OF DENMARK**

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## Denmark 2013 Overview

Resettlement programme since: <b>1979</b>	Selection Missions: <b>Yes</b>	Dossier Submissions: <b>Yes</b>
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### Resettlement Admission Targets for 2013:

Admission targets for <b>UNHCR submissions</b> :	516
Total Resettlement Admission Target:	516

### Regional Allocations for 2013:

Asia and Pacific:	Approx. 140
Americas:	Approx. 125
Africa:	Approx. 125

### Sub-quota features:

Designated sub-quota/acceptance for:	2013 Description, additional comments:
Emergency resettlement procedures	Dossier procedure in place for urgent and emergency priority cases. (approx. 75 places)
Medical cases	30 medical places per year -Twenty or More program (TOM) – by dossier or selection missions
Women-at-risk cases	No specific category for this group, but many cases accepted as such
Unaccompanied children	Same as above.
Family Reunion (within programme)	For family members of a person accepted under the TOM program, numbers vary.

## 1. Resettlement Policy

### 1.1 Description of Denmark's resettlement policy

Denmark has for many years contributed to finding durable solutions to refugee crisis around the world. Since 1979, Denmark has, in cooperation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), offered refugees resettlement to Denmark. Every year, the Danish parliament approves funding for the Danish resettlement quota within the annual budget. For many years the funding has covered an annual allocation of 500 resettlement places for refugees.

As of July 2005, Denmark started operating a flexible quota programme lasting three years and consisting of 1,500 places. The present period started 1 January 2011 and will run until 31 December 2013.

### 1.2 Ministries or Departments responsible for resettlement policy, and process for deciding the annual resettlement quota

Following recommendations from the **Danish Immigration Service**, the **Minister of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs** decides, at the beginning of each calendar year, on the overall allocation of the approximately 500 resettlement places within four different categories. The Minister also decides to which countries the 2 to 3 annual in-country selection missions will take place, cf. section 8 (6) of the Aliens Act, which reads as follows: *The Minister of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs decides the overall distribution of the aliens to be issued with a residence permit under subsections (1) to (3).*

The Danish Immigration Service bases its recommendations on UNHCR's Projected Global Resettlement Needs report presented before the Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement (ATCR) in June/July of each year, on bilateral consultations with UNHCR and on feedback from Danish municipalities about their experiences.

The resettlement quota is divided into four categories: a geographical category (primarily refugees offered resettlement following in-country selection missions); an emergency and urgent category (refugees, who are in an immediate risk of *refoulement* to their country of origin and/or who risk assaults in their country of stay); a medical category under the Twenty-or-More (TOM) programme (refugees with special medical needs); and a fourth category for families, who are accepted on a dossier basis together with a person accepted as a medical case under the Twenty-or-More programme).

Every year, 30 places are allocated to the Twenty-or-More programme, approximately 75 places are allocated to the emergency and urgent category on a dossier basis, while the number of places allocated to different geographical areas and for family members to a person accepted under the Twenty-or-More programme may vary and can be changed upon request from UNHCR should the needs arise during the calendar year. Such changes must, however, be submitted to the Danish Immigration Service and receive final approval by the Minister of Refugee, Integration and Immigration Affairs.

As a main rule, the majority of refugees accepted for resettlement in Denmark will be selected during in-country selection missions. UNHCR Headquarters and UNHCR's Regional Offices may in addition submit emergency and urgent cases as well as Twenty-or-More cases on a dossier basis during the calendar year.

## 2. Criteria for Recognition of Refugee Status Eligibility and Asylum

### 2.1 National legislation defining refugee status eligibility

Section 7 of the **Danish Aliens Act** provides the legal basis for refugee status eligibility in Denmark.

7 (1): *Upon application, a residence permit will be issued to an alien if the alien falls within the provisions of the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (28 July 1951).*

7 (2): *Upon application, a residence permit will be issued to an alien if the alien risks the death penalty or being subjected to torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment in case of return to his country of origin. An application as referred to in the first sentence hereof is also considered an application for a residence permit under subsection (1).*

Refugee status criteria are the same for asylum-seekers and resettled refugees. Further, there is also a possibility of offering resettlement to persons who would otherwise be able to obtain a residence permit in Denmark, upon application, such as e.g. persons with humanitarian needs or unaccompanied minors. Please see below, section 8 (3) and 8 (4) of the Danish Aliens Act for additional criteria.

### 2.2 Distinction, if any, between refugee status criteria for asylum-seekers, and that for resettled refugees

Refugee status criteria are the same for asylum-seekers and resettled refugees. Further, there is also a possibility of offering resettlement to persons who would otherwise be able to obtain a residence permit in Denmark, upon application, such as e.g. persons with humanitarian needs or unaccompanied minors. Please see below, section 8 (3) and 8 (4) of the Danish Aliens Act for additional criteria.

### 3. Criteria for Resettlement

#### 3.1 Refugee resettlement eligibility criteria

Section 8 of the **Danish Aliens Act** provides the legal basis for the Danish resettlement programme. It is a precondition that resettlement to Denmark takes place based on an arrangement with UNHCR or a similar international organisation. To qualify for resettlement to Denmark, the person must meet either the criteria of section 8 (1), (2) or (3):

##### **Section 8 (1):**

*Upon application, a residence permit will be issued to an alien who arrives in Denmark under an agreement made with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees or similar international agreement, and who falls within the provisions of the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (28 July 1951), cf. section 7 (1).*

##### **Section 8 (2):**

*In addition to the cases mentioned in subsection (1), a residence permit will be issued, upon application, to an alien who arrives in Denmark under an agreement as mentioned in subsection (1), and who risks the death penalty or being subjected to torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment in case of return to his country of origin, cf. section 7 (2).*

##### **Section 8 (3):**

*In addition to the cases mentioned in subsections (1) and (2), a residence permit will be issued, upon application, to an alien who arrives in Denmark under an agreement as mentioned in subsection (1), and who presumably has satisfied the fundamental conditions for obtaining a residence permit under one of the provisions of the Aliens Act, if he had entered Denmark as an asylum-seeker.*

To qualify for resettlement under section 8 (3), one of the following conditions must be fulfilled:

- the person must find him- or herself in a situation where essential considerations of a humanitarian nature make it appropriate to grant him or her a residence permit, or
- the person has for a longer period of time not been able to return to his or her country of origin, even though he/she no longer risks persecution, and there is no prospect for him or her to return to the country of origin, or
- the person is an unaccompanied minor, i.e. he/she is staying in the country of first asylum without his or her parents, whose place of residence is unknown and/or he/she is without any other caretakers replacing the parents – and the unaccompanied minor will be placed in an emergency situation upon continued stay in the country of first asylum or upon return to the country of origin, or
- the person has essential qualifications which make it appropriate to grant the him/her a residence permit, including if he/she can obtain employment within a professional field of particularly qualified labour, or
- the person has close family ties in Denmark, which would normally allow the person to apply for family reunification; or
- other exceptional reasons make it appropriate to issue a residence permit.

When assessing submissions for resettlement, Denmark, furthermore, focuses on the refugee's prospects for settling and benefiting from living in Denmark, cf. section 8 (4) of the Danish Aliens Act.

**Section 8 (4):**

*In the selection of aliens issued with a residence permit under subsections (1) to (3), the aliens' possibilities of establishing roots in Denmark and benefiting from the residence permit, including their language qualifications, education and training, work experience, family situation, network, age and motivation, must be emphasised, unless particular reasons make it inappropriate.*

The following supplementary criteria are, therefore, of importance when considering a person for resettlement:

- **Language Qualifications:** The refugee should normally be able to read and write his/her mother tongue. Illiterate refugees are, as a general rule, not selected for resettlement by Denmark. However, if the illiterate refugee belongs to a family or group of persons who in general possess the qualifications considered important for integration in Denmark, illiteracy alone is not a reason for exclusion from resettlement. Refugees who have learned one or more additional languages should as a general rule be given priority, due to a reasonable assumption that they are motivated for learning Danish. In general, it is an advantage if the refugee is able to speak a language, which is already spoken by professionals (interpreters and the like) in Denmark in order for the authorities to be able to communicate with the refugee during the initial period of his/her stay in Denmark.
- **Education and Work Experience:** Education and work experience are of importance. However, a higher education is not necessarily considered to be optimal for successful integration. Refugees with a higher education may expect to find work within their field of expertise shortly after their arrival in Denmark. However, this will often not be possible.
- **The Unity of the Family:** It is considered of high importance that the unity of the family is maintained. The unity of the family shall therefore be maintained, even when not all family members are fulfilling the supplementary criteria considered important for integration in Denmark.
- **Families with Children:** Families with children should be prioritised, due to the fact that families with children often find it easier to integrate into Danish society compared to, for example, refugees who are single. This does not mean that refugees who are single or couples without children cannot be resettled to Denmark. However, for such refugees, the possibility of establishing a social network in Denmark, other than the one constituted by family will be of importance.
- **Social Network outside the Family:** A close social network, other than the one constituted by family members, may have formed during the stay in the first country of asylum. In such cases the collective resettlement of an entire group forming such a network may strengthen the individual refugee's possibility for obtaining a successful integration in Denmark.
- **Age:** In general, it is presumed that old or very young people, without relatives or any other social network, will have a harder time adjusting to the living conditions in Denmark.
- **Motivation:** The individual refugee's motivation for successful integration and ability to act is of utmost importance. Failing to fulfil one or more of the supplementary criteria may be disregarded if the motivation to work for a successful integration exists. It should be noted that there may be several valid reasons for an individual not demonstrating motivation or the ability to act. Such reasons may be the many years spent in a refugee camp and/or traumatising events experienced by the individual. However, if the supplementary criteria shall have any significance, such reasons cannot be taken into account when selecting the individual refugee for resettlement.

The supplementary criteria shall, however, be disregarded in emergency and urgent cases as well as in medical cases under the Twenty-or-More programme (now thirty places).

Furthermore, a certain amount of flexibility with regard to the supplementary criteria shall be exercised in relation to refugees, who are under consideration for resettlement in Denmark as part of a strategic resettlement plan.

In order to be granted a residence permit under section 8 (1) to (3), the person concerned must sign a declaration regarding the conditions for resettlement in Denmark. The declaration contains information about the importance of getting a job, the necessity of learning the Danish language, the duty to participate in and complete an integration programme, the limited access to family reunification and the level of financial and other aid offered by the Danish social services. The declaration must be signed prior to the final decision of the Danish Immigration Service to grant resettlement in Denmark.

### 3.2 Exclusion Factors

All refugees who are under consideration for resettlement in Denmark undergo a security investigation by the Danish Security Intelligence Service and the Danish Defence Intelligence Service.

Pursuant to section 10 (1) of the Danish Aliens Act, an alien cannot be granted a residence permit under section 8, if the alien fulfils the following:

- 1) The alien must be deemed a danger to national security;
- 2) The alien must be deemed a serious threat to the public order, safety or health;  
or
- 3) The alien is deemed to fall within Article 1 F of the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees.

Furthermore, under section 10 (2), an alien cannot, unless particular reasons make it appropriate, be granted a residence permit under section 8, if:

(i) + (ii) the alien has been convicted abroad of an offence or there are serious reasons for assuming that the alien has committed an offence abroad, that could lead to expulsion, if the case had been heard in Denmark, that is if:

- The alien has been sentenced to minimum 4 years' imprisonment (in relation to an offence that would have resulted in a punishment of this duration), or
- For several criminal counts has been sentenced to a minimum of 2 years' imprisonment (in relation to an offence that would have resulted in a punishment of this duration).

Furthermore, under section 8 (5) all aliens who are under consideration for a residence permit under section 8 (1) to (3) must participate in a health examination:

#### **Section 8 (5):**

*Unless particular reasons make it inappropriate, it must be made a condition for a residence permit under subsections (1) to (3) that the alien assists in a special health examination and consents to the health information being passed on to the Danish Immigration Service and to the local council of the municipality to which the alien is allocated, and signs a declaration concerning the conditions for resettlement in Denmark.*

In general IOM performs the medical examinations in-country on behalf of the Danish authorities.

In emergency and urgent cases, exceptional circumstances can make it inappropriate to expect the person to participate in the health examination or to sign the declaration on the conditions for resettlement in Denmark.

For public health considerations, persons who suffer from particular highly contagious diseases will, unless particular reasons make it inappropriate, not be accepted for resettlement in Denmark. Particular reasons that could favour granting a residence permit are, for example, weighty needs for protection or close family ties to persons residing in Denmark.

Furthermore, persons with mental illnesses will, unless particular reasons make it inappropriate, also not be accepted for resettlement in Denmark.

Persons with physical illnesses or disabilities and who are in need of special or long-term treatment are considered by Denmark under the Twenty-or-More category. A Danish health consultant may review such cases in order to assess whether proper treatment is available in Denmark and whether the overall situation of the person concerned is likely to improve if resettled to Denmark.

Persons with only minor medical needs are accepted under the normal geographical categories of their nationality.

## 4. Resettlement Allocations/Processing Priorities

### 4.1 Resettlement allocation including sub-quotas

The resettlement quota of an annual 500 resettlement places is divided into four categories: 30 places are allocated to the Twenty-or-More programme, approximately 75 places are allocated to the emergency and urgent category on a dossier basis, while the number of places allocated to different geographical areas (refugees offered resettlement following in-country selection missions) and for family members to a person accepted under the Twenty-or-More programme may vary and can be changed upon request from UNHCR should the needs arise during the calendar year.

Non-UNHCR allocations do not exist in Denmark at the moment.

## 5. Submission and Processing via Dossier Selection

The Resettlement Service at UNHCR Headquarters may submit emergency and urgent cases as well as medical cases (under the Twenty-or-More programme) on a dossier basis. After clearance with UNHCR Headquarters and prior agreement with the Danish Immigration Service, other UNHCR regional or in-country offices may submit urgent cases directly to the Danish Immigration Service.

Normal priority cases cannot be considered on a dossier basis.

### 5.1 Case Documentation

The documentation required for dossier submissions is the Resettlement Registration Form (RRF) and any available medical files and/or other relevant information about the country of origin and the country of residence. The documentation should include an account of why the case is presented as urgent.

Any copies of identity documents available must also be submitted with the case as attachments with an explanation regarding what kind of documents they are. A carefully completed RRF with exact bio data and family details is of utmost importance in order to enable the Danish authorities to move quickly in processing the case.

Also of utmost importance is a detailed account of the political activities in which the refugee has been engaged in his/her country of origin, and/or any other circumstances that may be relevant for understanding the reasons for flight. Detailed chronological information about whereabouts and activities in the country of asylum is also important for the Danish authorities to process the case quickly. The possible application of article 1 F of the 1951 Convention is of particular concern. A specific and detailed paragraph in the RRF or a

separate declaration done by UNHCR dealing with the possible application of article 1 F of the 1951 Convention is therefore mandatory in all submissions.

It is a requirement by Denmark that children who are 18 years of age or older, as well as Principal Applicant's (PRA's) relatives who are 18 years of age or older, with the exemption of PRA's spouse, are submitted on separate RRFs.

Updated, detailed and readable medical documentation indicating diagnosis, medical prognosis and needed treatment should be available in all cases submitted within the Twenty-or-More category.

In general, all submitted cases where PRA or included family members have known medical needs or problems should include medical documentation.

In all cases, as much information as possible regarding language qualifications, educational background, working experience, family situation, network, age, and motivation should be included in order to enable the receiving Danish municipality to prepare for a successful welcome.

Refugees submitted for resettlement in Denmark should be made aware beforehand that medical documentation and personal biodata, with the exemption of details of the refugee claim, will be passed on to the receiving municipality in Denmark. The RRF will also be submitted to other relevant Danish authorities, such as the Danish Security Intelligence Service and the Danish Defence Intelligence Service and possibly the Ministry of Refugee, Integration and Immigration Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Information will not be passed to the authorities of the country of origin. Where necessary, UNHCR will be requested to inform the refugees accordingly.

## **5.2 Routing of Submissions**

An emergency or urgent case presented on a dossier basis should be forwarded directly to the Danish Immigration Service by e-mail to [resettlement@us.dk](mailto:resettlement@us.dk).

Upon reception, the case will be registered with a Danish Alien number. This number is the reference number of the Principal Applicant. Children aged 18 and older and other relatives who are 18 and older, with the exemption of PRA's spouse, will be registered with their own Danish Alien number.

A submitted case will be categorized within one of the quota categories and an immediate case screening will take place.

After assessing the case, including submission to the Danish Intelligence Services, the person will be asked through UNHCR to sign a declaration regarding the conditions for resettlement in Denmark. After receiving the signed declaration, the Danish Immigration Service will make a final decision. UNHCR's Resettlement Service and possibly the relevant in-country UNHCR office, which has submitted the case, will be informed of the decision.

The relevant Danish in-country representation is at the same time informed about positive decisions and authorized to issue travel documentation and entry permits and IOM is also informed for travel purposes.

## **5.3 Processing Times**

Average processing time is normally a few months, and less for emergency cases.

## **5.4 Recourse**

There is no recourse against a negative decision, but a case which was not accepted may be resubmitted if there is new and relevant information.



## 6. Submissions and Processing via In Country Selection

### 6.1 Selection mission policies

The majority of refugees resettled to Denmark are selected following an in-country selection mission. As mentioned under section 1, the Minister of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs decides at the beginning of each calendar year upon the countries in which the 2 to 3 annual selection missions shall be carried out.

The Resettlement Service at UNHCR Headquarters, UNHCR Regional Offices or UNHCR in-country offices may according to internal UNHCR guidelines and prior agreement with the Danish Immigration Service submit cases for resettlement in connection with the in-country selection missions.

### 6.2 Case Documentation

The documentation required for submissions in connection with an in-country selection mission is the Resettlement Registration Form (RRF) and any available medical files and/or other relevant information about the country of origin and the country of residence.

A carefully completed RRF with exact bio data and family details is of utmost importance as well as a full and detailed account of the political activities in which the refugee has been engaged in his/her country of origin and/or any other circumstances that may be relevant for understanding the reasons for flight. The possible application of article 1 F of the 1951 Convention is of particular concern. A specific and detailed paragraph in the RRF or a separate declaration done by UNHCR dealing with the possible application of article 1 F of the 1951 Convention is, therefore, mandatory in all submissions.

It is a requirement by Denmark that children who are 18 years of age or older, as well as Principal Applicant's (PRA's) relatives who are 18 years of age or older, with the exemption of PRA's spouse, are considered separately for resettlement. Denmark will require separate RRFs for such family members.

Updated, detailed and readable medical documentation indicating diagnosis, medical prognosis and needed treatment is required for all cases submitted within the Twenty-or-More category.

In general, all submitted cases where PRA or included family members have known medical needs or problems should include medical documentation.

In all cases, as much information as possible regarding language qualifications, educational background, working experience, family situation, network, age and motivation should be included in order to enable the receiving Danish municipality to prepare for a successful welcome, and in order for the interviewing delegation to assess the integration potential of the refugees.

Refugees submitted for resettlement in Denmark should be made aware beforehand by UNHCR that medical documentation and personal bio data, with the exemption of details of the resettlement claim, will be passed on to the receiving municipality in Denmark. The RRF will also be submitted to other relevant Danish authorities, such as the Danish Security Intelligence Service and the Danish Defence Intelligence Service and possibly the Ministry of Refugee, Integration and Immigration Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Information will not be passed to the authorities of the country of origin.

### 6.3 Routing of Submissions

UNHCR Regional Offices or UNHCR in-country offices submit cases for resettlement in connection with the in-country selection missions directly to the Danish Immigration Service by e-mail to [resettlement@us.dk](mailto:resettlement@us.dk).

The RRFs should be submitted well in advance of the missions, i.e. 3 to 4 weeks before the departure of the delegation. After an initial screening of the submitted cases prior to the

departure of the delegation, the Danish Immigration Service may inform UNHCR that certain cases cannot be accepted for resettlement and UNHCR will be requested to cancel the interview dates for those individuals.

The Danish Immigration Service undertakes the selection missions. Staff members from the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), a Danish NGO, participate in the in-country selection missions. Also, social workers from the receiving municipalities may participate in the selection missions. The Danish delegation undertaking the in-country selection missions will therefore consist of delegation members from the Danish Immigration Service as well as the Danish Refugee Council and possibly the receiving municipalities.

Interview teams consisting of staff members from the Danish Immigration Service and the Danish Refugee Council will interview the persons in question. All adult children will be interviewed separately from their parents. The Danish Immigration Service usually requests the assistance of UNHCR with regards to the provision of interpreters and to all logistical arrangements.

The decision-making body is the Danish Immigration Service. Indications as to who may be accepted will usually be given at the end of the mission. The final decision on whether to offer resettlement or not is made by the Danish Immigration Service upon return to Denmark.

#### **6.4 Processing Times**

Processing will normally take approximately 3 months following the return of the delegation to Denmark. This includes time for IOM to carry out health assessments and for the Danish Immigration Service and the Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs to plan and conduct a pre-departure cultural orientation course, please see section 10.

#### **6.5 Recourses/Appeals**

There is no recourse against a negative decision, but a rejected case may be resubmitted if there is new and relevant information.

### **7. Emergency Cases/Urgent Cases**

Please see section 3 and 5.

### **8. Special Categories/Special Needs**

Please see section 3.

### **9. Medical Requirements**

Please see section 3.

Individual pre-departure treatment will only be covered by Denmark after approval by the Danish Immigration Service. After the refugees' arrival in Denmark, expenses will be covered by the Danish authorities.

### **10. Orientation (pre-departure)**

After each in-country selection mission, the Danish Immigration Service and the Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs conduct a pre-departure cultural orientation and Danish language training programme before the departure to Denmark. Staff members from the receiving municipalities in Denmark may also participate in such a training programme.

The pre-departure cultural orientation and Danish language training programme consists of 10 lessons in Danish language and 10 lessons in Danish cultural orientation provided over a period of 5 days.

## 11. Travel

The Danish government covers all expenses connected with the travel to Denmark including possible medical escorts. Pre-departure expenses are normally not covered.

The Danish Immigration Service prepares the travel arrangements in close cooperation with IOM. Upon arrival in Denmark, representatives from the Danish Immigration Service and the receiving municipality in Denmark meet the resettled refugees at the airport.

All refugees travelling will be issued laissez-passer by the relevant Danish in-country representation.

## 12. Status on Arrival and the Path to Citizenship

Refugees accepted for resettlement under the Danish resettlement quota may either be granted convention status according to section 8 (1) of the Danish Aliens Act; protection status according to section 8 (2); or other status according to section 8 (3). If granted convention status, the resettled refugee may upon application and payment be issued a convention travel document. The fee is 115 Danish Kr. for children below 18 years of age, 600 Danish Kr. (equivalent to approximately 100 US \$) for adults, and 350 Danish Kr for persons above 65 years of age. If granted protection status or other status, the resettled refugee may be issued an alien passport, for which the fee is the same as for convention travel documents.

Refugees accepted for resettlement in Denmark are granted a temporary residence and work permit. They have the right to take up employment in Denmark immediately upon their arrival in the country.

The resettled refugee is issued a temporary residence permit valid for 4 years. Following the 4 years, the resettled refugee may apply for a permanent residence permit. When processing an application for permanent residence permit, the Danish Immigration Service takes into consideration among other things whether the resettled person has fulfilled the obligations of the mandatory introduction programme, see section 13. If the resettled person has not fulfilled the obligations of the mandatory introduction programme the Danish Immigration Service may choose to grant the person in question a new temporary residence permit instead of a permanent residence permit. Residence permits can always be revoked if they have been obtained on a false basis.

For all applications regarding residence permits, the Danish Immigration Service assesses whether the cessation clauses are applicable. This may be the case if the refugee has returned to his/her country of origin or if the conditions in the country of origin have changed substantially in accordance with article 1 c of the 1951 Convention. The Danish Immigration Service will examine such cases individually to assess whether there may be reasons of a humanitarian nature that speak in favour of prolonging the residence permit.

Resettled refugees convicted of serious crimes committed in Denmark may be expelled by court. When the prison sentence has been served, the Danish Immigration Service and possibly the Refugee Appeals Board will examine whether the 1951 Refugee Convention or Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights prohibits deportation to the country of origin.

Foreigners applying for Danish citizenship will have to satisfy certain conditions before citizenship is granted. Such conditions are the number of years holding a Danish residence permit (the principal rule is nine years, but only 8 years are required for refugees), age, renunciation of present nationality, general conduct, overdue public debts, Danish language skills, and knowledge of Danish society, culture and history.

## 13. Domestic Settlement and Community Services

### 13.1 Overview of services, including providers and length of eligibility

According to the Danish Integration Act, the Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs has the principal responsibility for the reception and integration of foreign citizens. The actual integration is carried out by the local municipalities in Denmark.

The municipalities offer a 3-year mandatory integration programme on behalf of the government, financed by governmental funds. The integration programme consists of Danish language training as well as lessons in Danish culture and history. Furthermore, the social workers from the municipalities provide assistance upon arrival in Denmark with housing as well as assistance with an individual contract/plan of action for finding employment in Denmark.

The **Danish Refugee Council**, the **Danish Red Cross**, the **United Churches Integration Service** and other organisations offer various activities all over the country in order to promote the integration of newcomers into the local communities. It is voluntary for the newly arrived to participate in such activities. The activities are carried out by volunteers and are set up in order to create a dialogue, understanding and tolerance between the newly arrived and the rest of the population.

### 13.2 Reception

Upon arrival in Denmark, representatives from the Danish Immigration Service and the receiving municipality in Denmark meet the resettled refugees at the airport.

### 13.3 Orientation and Financial Assistance

Refugees resettled to Denmark must participate in a 3-year mandatory introduction programme, whose main objective is to ensure integration of newcomers into the Danish society.

The programme contains a minimum of 30 hours of activities per week and must include a course in Danish cultural orientation as well as Danish language lessons. For those who do not have a job and who are not self-supporting, the introduction programme may also consist of vocational training.

The municipality shall together with the person in question prepare an individual contract/plan of action based on an assessment of the person's particular skills and qualifications in order to facilitate the person's access to the Danish labour market or, if relevant, to an education. Contracts will be followed up regularly.

The main objective of the programme is to enable the person to get an understanding of the fundamental values and norms of Danish society and to ensure that the person within a relatively short period of time will be able to support him- or herself through a job. This means that the resettled refugee is expected to find work or complete an education aimed at getting a job.

During the introduction programme and until employment is found and they can provide for themselves and their families, refugees resettled to Denmark are, subject to certain conditions, entitled to an introduction allowance from the Danish social services.

Refugees resettled to Denmark who, without reason, do not participate in the introduction programme, may have their introduction allowance reduced.

### 13.4 Housing

In connection with issuing a residence permit, the Danish Immigration Service decides in which municipality the resettled refugee should reside for the first three years of the integration period. The municipality is decided upon on an agreed fixed municipal quota-system as well as on the personal circumstances of the resettled refugee in question.

The municipality is responsible for finding accommodation for the refugee. Strong efforts are made to find permanent accommodation for resettled refugees prior to their arrival or if this is not possible within the first 3 months of their arrival. Moving to another municipality within the first three years of the integration period is only possible if the receiving municipality accepts the responsibility of the cost and implementation of the introduction programme for the refugee in question, which will normally be the case if the refugee has found a job or an education located in the other municipality.

Moving without prior acceptance from the receiving municipality may result in the allowance being reduced or ended all together as well as the residence permit not being made permanent.

### **13.5 Health**

All persons registered as residing in Denmark have access to the public health care.

Public health care is financed through the taxes in Denmark. This means that insured persons do not pay directly to a public health care insurance system and that patients are treated either free of charge or must pay only partially for the treatment. The latter is relevant only for certain health care services e.g. dental treatment.

Once arrived, the resettled refugee will receive a Health Insurance Card from the municipality. The card must be shown when accessing the public health care as proof of one's entitlement to health care.

The public health care includes such services as, for example, hospitals and maternity care, visits at general practitioners, visits at a wide range of medical specialists (following referral from a GP), district nurses as well as medicine, vaccinations and preventive health care.

### **13.6 Language Training**

All children residing in Denmark have access to the public Danish school system, which is free of charge. Children who cannot speak sufficient Danish when they start school may be placed in special reception classes before they proceed to a regular class. After moving to a regular class they may continue to receive special language lessons if necessary.

Danish language classes are part of the mandatory introduction programme for adults. See 13.3.

### **13.7 Education and Employment-Related Training**

There are no restrictions on resettled refugees' access to the Danish adult education system. In order to promote educational opportunities and job prospects, special courses may even be designed in order to meet their needs.

Some courses are of short duration and aimed at finding actual work, whereas others are aimed at preparing the person for further education. In order to access certain types of higher education, however, sufficient knowledge of Danish is required.

Resettled refugees who have been accepted by an educational institution are entitled to the same student grants as Danish citizens. In addition, they may apply for special help under the Social Assistance Act, which contains a special clause providing financial assistance during educational and vocational training for persons who find it difficult to manage for health or social reasons. This clause can be applied to resettled refugees who have educational or employment problems for linguistic or cultural reasons.

If the resettled refugee has completed an education abroad, it may be relevant to establish whether his/her qualifications are recognised in Denmark, or whether he/she needs supplementary training to be able to use the education in Denmark. It is therefore highly useful for the resettled refugee to bring along documentation of his/her qualifications if possible.

Upon arrival in Denmark, the **Danish Agency for International Education**, an institution under the Danish Ministry of Education, may upon application assess how the educational credits earned abroad compare with Danish academic and labour market standards. Such an assessment is free of charge. However, the service does not include translation of documents.

### 13.8 Employment

See 13.3.

## 14. Family Reunification of Refugees

Family reunification is outside the resettlement quota.

### 14.1 Definition of family

Refugees in Denmark may under certain circumstances be granted family reunification with their spouse or permanent partner (same sex relationships) and unmarried children. As a general rule, reunification with children requires that the child is under 15 years of age but may, under some circumstances, also be given to children aged between 15 and 18.

Exceptions for persons between 15 and 18 years of age are made in cases in which refusing to grant a residence permit would put Denmark in violation of its international obligations. In a specific case, the Family Reunification Department will assess three main issues: 1) whether the person has started his/her own family, 2) whether the person has been part of the household up to the departure of the refugee in Denmark and 3) provision within the family. Other issues such as e.g. how long time it is since the person and the refugee have been living together will also be assessed.

Family reunification cannot normally be granted to children aged 18 years and older or to parents or siblings.

### 14.2 Submission

An application for family reunification can be submitted at a Danish diplomatic mission (embassy or consulate general) or by post to The Danish Immigration Service. The spouse living in Denmark can also submit the application to The Danish Immigration Service on behalf of the applicant.

### 14.3 Rules and regulations

If the family member in Denmark holds a residence permit on the grounds of asylum or Protected Status, the Danish Immigration Service will make a renewed assessment on whether he/she is still in risk of persecution in his/her country of origin.

If he/she still risks persecution in his/her country of origin, The Danish Immigration Service will make an exemption from the usual requirements for family reunification.

Requirements for family reunification with a spouse who is still in risk of persecution:

- the marriage must be valid both according to the rules of the country in which the marriage was contracted and according to Danish law; this means, among other things, that both parties to the marriage were present at the marriage ceremony;
- both parties must have entered into the marriage contract of their own free will;
- if the parties are not married prior to entry into the country but can document that they have lived together at a common address for at least one and a half years, the fiancé(e)/permanent partner may join the resettled person in Denmark;
- the marriage or the co-habitation may not have been entered into with the sole purpose of obtaining a residence permit for the spouse or the co-habitation partner for Denmark, and
- the applicant should normally hold a valid passport.

Some of the most important requirements for family reunification with children are:

- normally, children must be under 15 years of age; if the children are aged between 15 and 18, they may be granted the right to family reunification, if, for example, a rejection of the application is in contravention of the right to respect for family life as set out in Article 8 in the European Convention on Human Rights;
- the children must not have established a family of their own; for example, they must not be married;
- the resettled person must have joint or full custody of the children;
- the children must live together with the resettled person following their entry into Denmark.

If The Danish Immigration Service finds that the person living in Denmark is **no longer** in risk of persecution, the applicant will meet additional requirements than the above mentioned.

Rules on family reunification may change and we therefore always refer to our homepage [www.newtodenmark.dk](http://www.newtodenmark.dk) for updated information.

#### 14.4 Processing times

The processing time is maximum 7 months from the time The Danish Immigration Service has received all of the requisite documentation from the applicant and the spouse.

If The Danish Immigration Service grants a residence permit, the applicant will be issued an entry visa, and must enter Denmark within 6 months. The residence permit will be valid for two years, and should then be extended. The applicant can apply for a permanent residence permit when he/she has been residing legally in Denmark for at least 4 years.

#### 14.5 Entitlements

The applicant can apply for financial travel assistance at the Danish Refugee Counsel.

If issued a residence permit, the applicant has the right to free medical care in Denmark.

The applicant can apply for public financial assistance at the local municipality. The applicant won't automatically be entitled to public assistance in Denmark.

### 15. References/Resources

For further information see: [www.newtodenmark.dk](http://www.newtodenmark.dk).