

Denmark

This report describes the structure of the national higher education system in Denmark, focusing on the institutional types as defined by national categories. It builds on the Eurydice Report on the national higher education system but complements it with quantitative information on the role of higher education institution (HEI) types in national systems, based on data derived from the European Tertiary Education Register (<http://www.eter-project.eu>) for the period 2011-2019.

Types of Higher Education Institutions

According to Eurydice¹, Danish higher education is offered by five types of higher education institutions:

1. Business academies (*Erhvervsakademier*) offering professionally oriented short cycle and first cycle degree programmes.
2. University colleges (*Professionshøjskoler*) offering professionally oriented first cycle degree programmes.
3. Maritime education and training institutions (*Maritime Uddannelsesinstitutioner*) offering professionally oriented short cycle and first cycle degree programmes.
4. General and specialised research universities (*Universiteter*) offering first, second and third cycle degree programmes in academic disciplines.
5. University level institutions offering first, second and third cycle degree programmes in subject fields such as architecture, design, music, and fine and performing arts (*Kunstneriske og kulturelle udd. inst.*)

Most higher education institutions are regulated by the Ministry of Higher Education and Science (type 1-5). The Ministry of Culture regulates a number of higher education institutions offering programmes within fine and performing arts (type 5).

Main institutional characteristics. Legal status and the right to award a PhD

Table 1 below provides a quantitative overview of the main institutional characteristics by HEI type. Universities (*Universitet*) are all public institutions and have the right to award PhDs. In total, about one quarter of all Danish HEIs are Universities and equivalent institutions. University colleges (*Professionshøjskole*) and Business academies (*Erhvervsakademi*) account combined for almost 40% of all Danish HEIs. However, none of them awards PhDs. In contrast, six out of the eight Cultural education institutions (*Kunstneriske og kulturelle udd. inst.*), award PhDs. The five public Maritime education and training institutions (*Maritime udd. inst.*) and two public Schools for Police, Defence play a more limited role and are also not awarding PhDs. The

¹ https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/denmark/types-higher-education-institutions_en

Independent Academy for Free School Teaching, a University college, is the only Danish HEI which is not public but private government-dependent.

Table 1. Institutional type and legal status by HEI type, 2019

Category		N	Public	Private government-dependent	PhD awarding
Business academy	Erhvervsakademi	8	8	0	0
Cultural education institutions	Kunstneriske og kulturelle udd. inst.	8	8	0	6
Maritime education and training institutions	Maritime udd. inst.	5	5	0	0
School for police, defence	Inst. for udd. inden for politi, forsvar mv.	2	2	0	0
University	Universitet	10	10	0	10
University college	Professionshøjskole	8	7	1	0
Total		41	38	1	16

Note: Numbers reflect inclusion in ETER. Includes University of Greenland and the University of the Faroe Islands

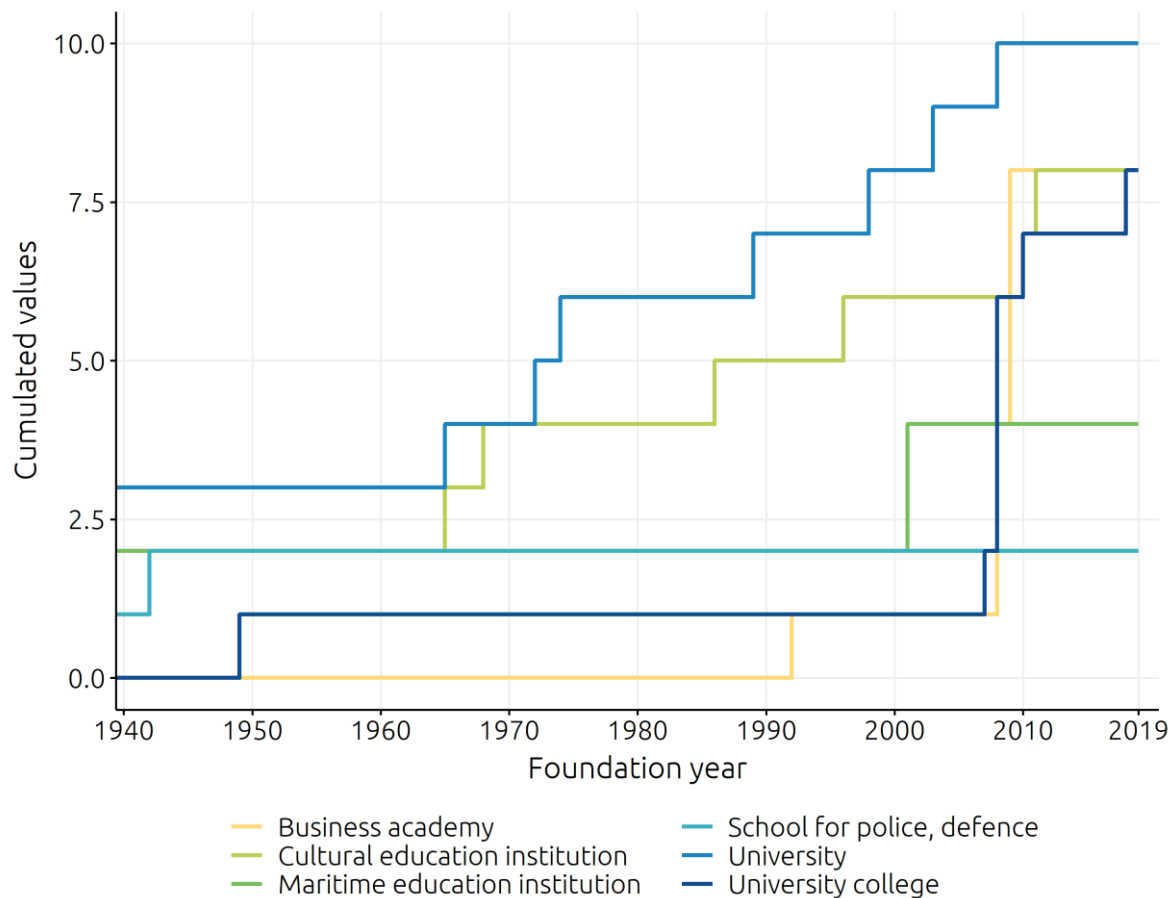
Institutional history. Older and younger institutional types

Data on the HEI foundation year provide information on the history of Denmark's higher education and its evolution over time.

Figure 1 overleaf shows that, despite ancient historical roots, the expansion of the system in terms of the number of HEIs is relatively recent. While the University of Copenhagen, the oldest Danish university, dates back to 1479, only four of today's HEIs were founded before the 20th century, including two Universities, one Cultural Education Institution and one Maritime Education and Training Institution. Overall, however, Danish HEIs are much younger; only eight of the HEIs were founded before World War II.

The figure shows distinct patterns of expansion. First, the number (and size) of universities has steadily increased – seven out of today's ten Danish universities have been founded after 1965. In parallel, also the number of Cultural education institutions has increased from two to eight since the 1960s. For the years 2007 to 2011 a wave of expansion can be observed with the foundation of 16 out of today's 41 HEIs within four years. This expansion included the foundation of seven Business academies and six University colleges.

Figure 1. Foundation year of HEIs by type



However, the figure above only displays organisations that were independent at the end of the reporting period, and it does not account for mergers and other demographic events. Many of the current HEIs in Denmark are results of such mergers between existing institutions. This includes for example the University of Southern Denmark founded in 1998 as a merger between South Jutland University Centre, Southern Denmark School of Business and Engineering and Odense University.

During 2006, a process to reduce the number of higher education institutions was started. The reason for this process was to strengthen research, education and innovation in Denmark². Today, long-cycle higher education is concentrated at eight Universities. Also most University colleges were formed) as mergers of several educational institutions (e.g. teaching colleges and nursing schools) during this time periode. Furthermore, the present Business academies came about as a demerger from the technical and business colleges.

² https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/higher-education-22_en

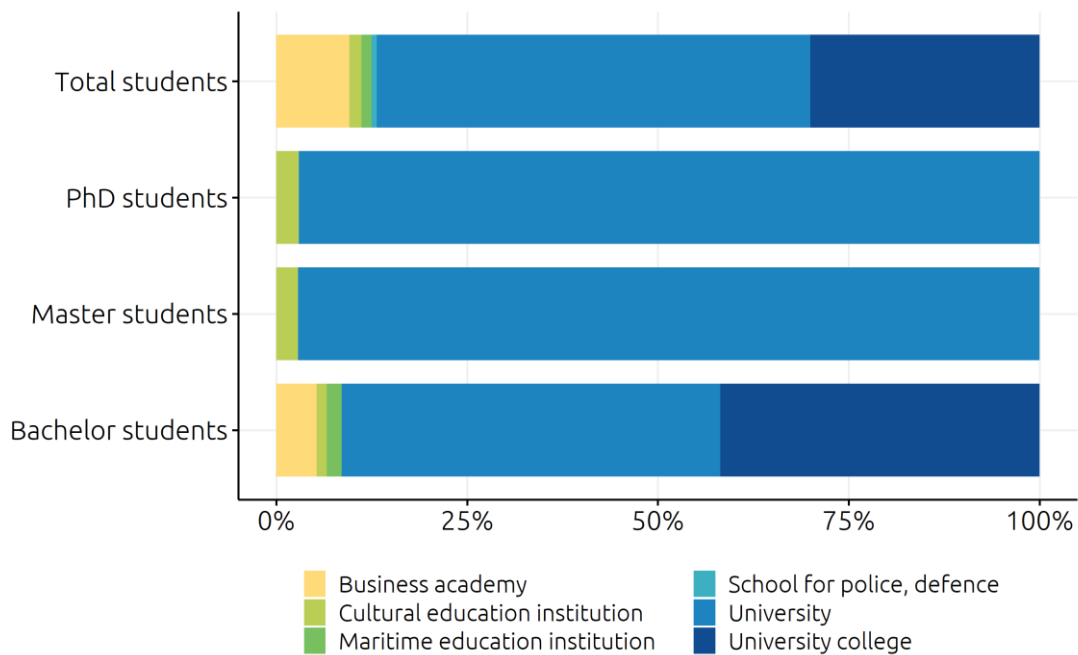
How are students distributed?

In terms of the number of students enrolled, Universities account for 57% of all students, University colleges (*Professionshøjskole*) for 30% and Business academies (*Erhvervsakademí*) for 10%. The other institutional types combined play a minor role in the aggregate (see Figure 2).

According to different institutional mandates, we also observe systematic differences between educational levels: University colleges account for 42% and Business academies for 5% of the bachelor students, while doctorates and master's degrees enrolments are within the remit of Universities. The majority of students of Business academies are at the ISCED 5 level, which is not displayed but included in total students.

This pattern closely matches the policy intention to focus *Professionshøjskole* on shorter professional curricula.

Figure 2. Students by level and type of HEI, 2019



Note: Total students include ISCED 5-7

Academic personnel and financial resources

As illustrated in Figure 3, in the year 2019, Universities account for more than 76% of financial revenues of the whole HEI system, i.e., substantially more than their share of students. This broadly corresponds to the fact that Universities also have an important research function. This difference is also reflected in the composition of revenues, where only Universities receive a large proportion of revenues from (research-related) third-party funds. Overall, state allocation remains dominant for all institutional types in Denmark, while student fees play a minor role.

Figure 3. Resources, academic personnel and total students enrolled by type of HEI, 2019

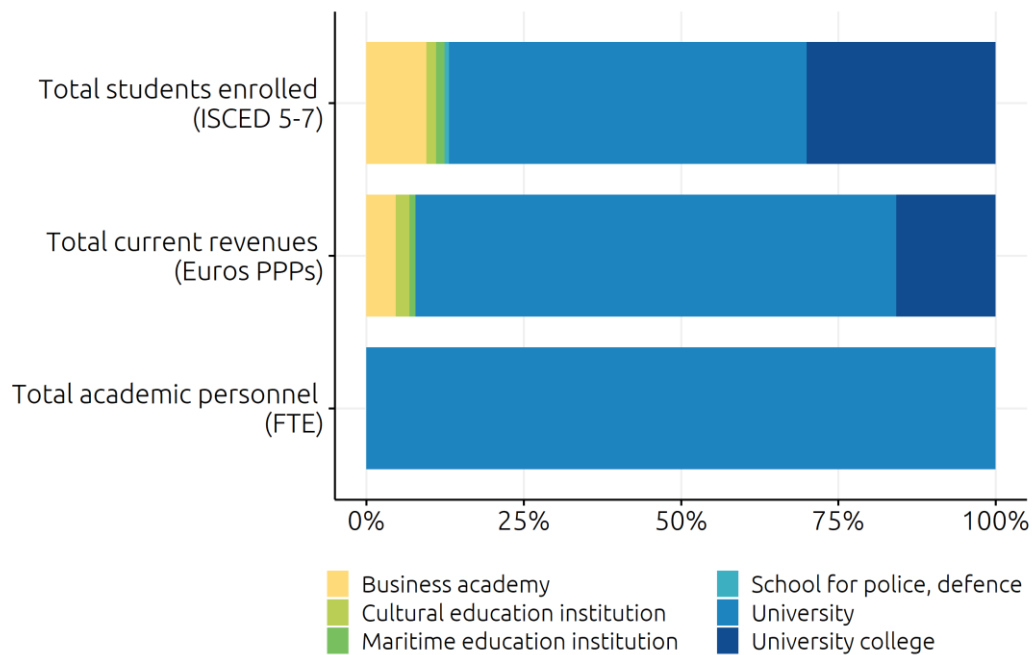
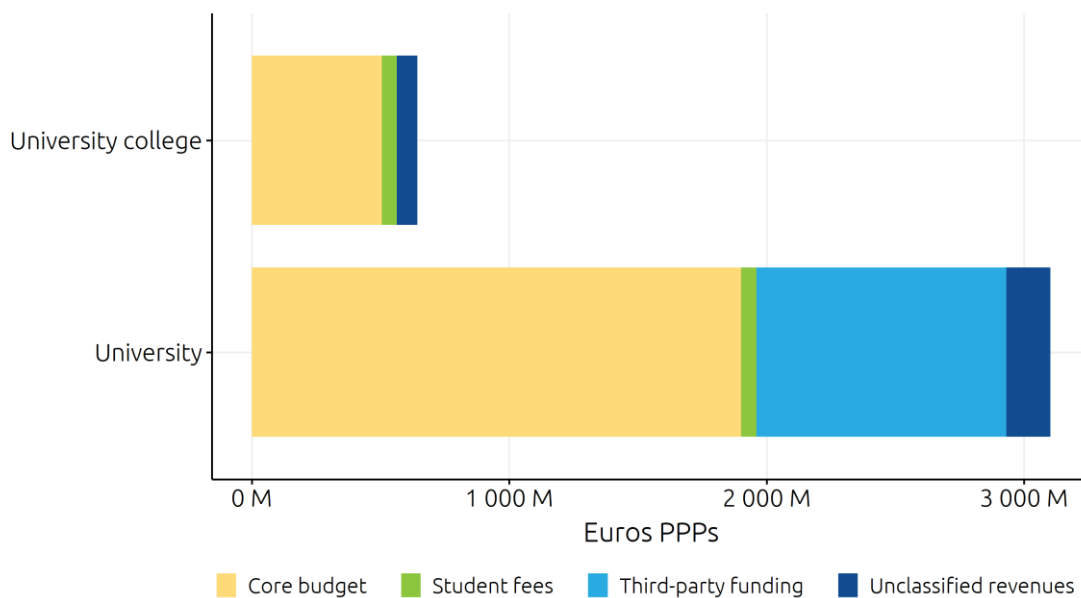


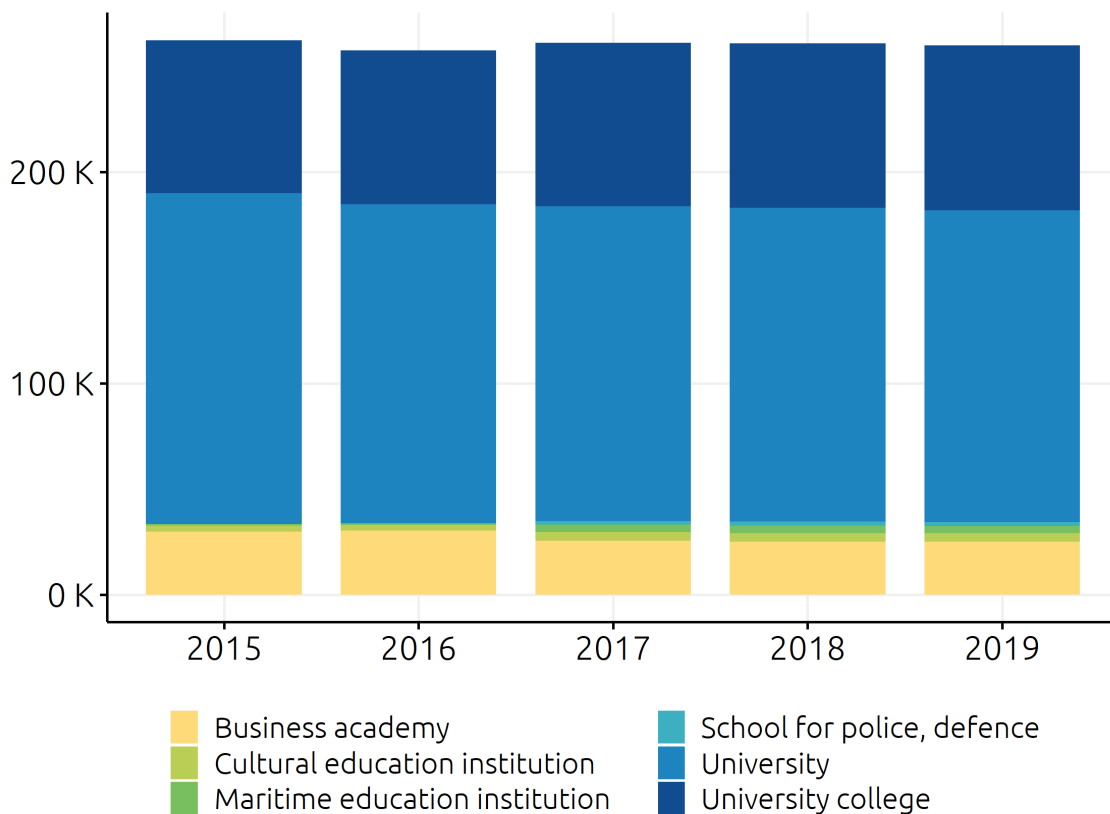
Figure 4. Composition of resources. Universities (Universitet) and University colleges (Professionshøjskole)



Changing roles over time

When observed through the lens of the number of students, data show a stable pattern with the number of enrolled students slightly decreasing by 1% from 2015 to 2019 and with a slight increase in the share of University colleges (*Professionshøjskole*) from 28% to 30% of the students enrolled.

Figure 5. Share of students enrolled by institutional type





twitter.com/eter_eu



www.eter-project.eu



eter@eter-project.eu



Università
della
Svizzera
italiana

JOANNEUM
RESEARCH
POLICIES



AUSTRIAN INSTITUTE
OF TECHNOLOGY

NIFU

Nordisk institutt for studier av
innovasjon, forskning og utdanning



SAPIENZA
UNIVERSITÀ DI ROMA