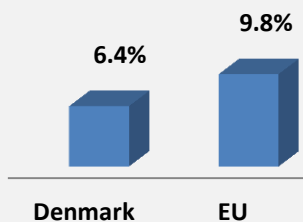


### Recent history

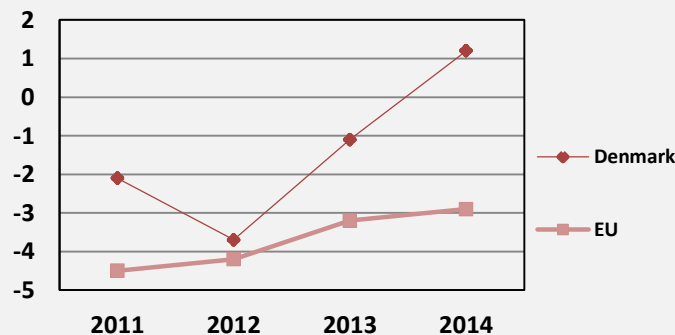
For much of the post-war period, Danish politics was dominated by the Social Democratic Party. However, between 2001 and 2011 a centre-right government was in power, which took a much stronger line on policies such as immigration. Nevertheless, the Social Democratic Party regained prominence in Denmark in the 2011 election and it is now ruled by a left-leaning coalition.

In 2005 the Danish government faced a major crisis when protests erupted across the world in response to cartoons depicting the Islamic Prophet Mohammed that were published in a Danish newspaper.

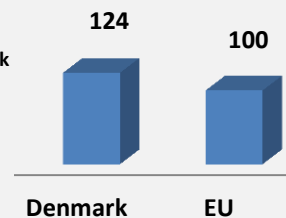
Unemployment rate  
(2015)



Public budget deficit/surplus



GDP per capita in PPS  
(2013)



### Current government

Denmark is a parliamentary constitutional monarchy. The Head of State is Queen Margrethe II, but this is a largely ceremonial role and executive power rests with the Prime Minister, the cabinet and the Parliament (*Folketing*). The Folketing has one chamber made up of 179 MPs, 175 of which represent Denmark, with two representatives each from Greenland and the Faroe Islands. Members of the Folketing are elected by a system of **proportional representation** for a maximum of four-year terms. Because of the electoral system, there is a tradition of minority government in Denmark, which means policies are more likely to be the result of **consensual agreements** amongst all major parties.

The current Danish government, elected in September 2011, is led by Denmark's first female head of government, Prime Minister Helle Thorning-Schmidt. She leads a left-leaning minority coalition between the Social Democrats, the Social Liberal Party and the Socialist Peoples' Party. Thorning-Schmidt was previously a Member of the European Parliament.

### Denmark: key facts



❖ Capital	Copenhagen
❖ Population	6 million (2014)
❖ % of total EU population	1.1%
❖ Official language	Danish
❖ Year of EU accession	1973
❖ Currency	Danish krone DKK
❖ Schengen Area member	Yes, since 2001
❖ Seats in European Parliament	13

### Denmark and the EU

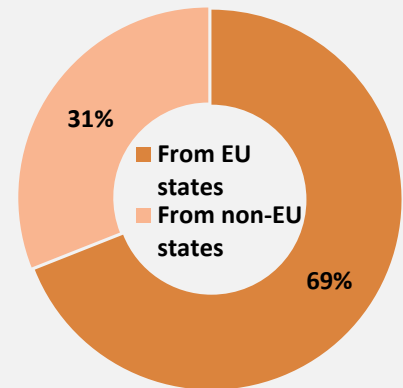
Denmark's decision to join the European Community was closely linked to UK and Ireland's decision to join in 1973. The UK was one of its principle export markets, meaning that it felt that it was in its interests to follow the UK's lead. As the first new members of the club since its foundation in 1958, the entry of three countries marked a significant change for the European Community. On 2 October 1972 the Danish people voted to join the European Community, with 63.3 per cent of the population in favour. Initially, Greenland joined the EC with Denmark whilst the Faroe Islands remained outside. However, Greenland decided to leave the EC in 1982. Denmark was a well-developed economy before joining the EU, and has since experienced significant economic growth, making it amongst the most dynamic economies in Europe.

Denmark has had a mixed relationship with the EU, and is marked as one of the most EU-sceptic member states. In 1992, Danish voters rejected the Maastricht Treaty at a referendum. The Treaty was later accepted at a further vote in 1993, following the successful negotiation of opt-outs from the sections of the Treaty relating to the monetary union and the creation of a European defence force.

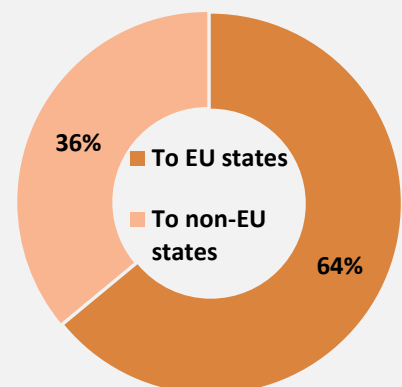
The Danish people rejected the opportunity to join the **Eurozone** in a referendum in 2000, reportedly due to fears of losing political independence. Consequently, Denmark negotiated an **opt-out** from the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and continues to use the Krone as its currency.

In July 2011 Denmark was heavily criticised by the EU Commission and other member states for reintroducing strict border controls, in contravention of the EU single market and Schengen Agreement. However, on election in September 2011, the new Prime Minister Helle Thorning-Schmidt removed the border controls that had been put in place by the previous government and restored the usual Schengen procedure. Denmark held the rotating Presidency of the Council of Ministers from January to July, 2012. The Danish Presidency's key focus was jobs and economic growth and it successfully oversaw the adoption of a comprehensive growth plan for the EU.

### Danish imports (2014)



### Danish exports (2014)



### Facts and figures

- ❖ Denmark consists of the Jutland peninsula and over 400 named islands, 82 of which are inhabited

#### Technical Terms

- ❖ **Opt-out:** the ability of a member state to permanently exempt itself from part of an EU treaty
- ❖ **Proportional representation:** electoral system where the overall number of votes determines the distribution of seats
- ❖ **Consensual agreements:** general political agreements around a majority opinion
- ❖ **Eurozone:** the geographical/economic area formed by the EU countries that have adopted the euro
- ❖ **PPS:** GDP per head is expressed in Purchasing Power Standards (PPS) to eliminate the differences in price levels between countries allowing meaningful volume comparisons of GDP between countries

#### Links

- ❖ [www.stm.dk/Index/mainstart.asp/a\\_1644.html](http://www.stm.dk/Index/mainstart.asp/a_1644.html)
- ❖ [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/country\\_profiles/1047864.stm#facts](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/country_profiles/1047864.stm#facts)
- ❖ <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>
- ❖ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2145.html>