



Denmark 2016 Crime & Safety Report

Travel Health and Safety; Transportation Security; Stolen items; Theft; Burglary; Cyber; Drug Trafficking; Riots/Civil Unrest; Floods

Europe > Denmark; Europe > Denmark > Copenhagen

2/5/2016

Overall Crime and Safety Situation

Post Crime Rating: Low

Crime Threats

Denmark remains a relatively safe, secure country. Overall crime rates decreased in 2014. Robberies and burglaries decreased 26 percent and 13 percent, respectively. Although burglary rates have fallen nationwide, they continue to rise in the affluent suburbs north of Copenhagen. Although not especially common, pickpockets and other petty criminals operate at tourist attractions, train stations, and on public buses. Local pickpockets operate in teams of two or three, with one or more distracting the victim while another steals the victim's valuables. Kidnappings and sexual assaults are rare. Violent crimes (homicides, assaults) occur less frequently than in the U.S. Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs (OMG) and other transnational organized crime groups exist, but their illicit activities rarely affect the average Danish citizen or the expatriate community.

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Cybersecurity Issues

In the November 2015 threat assessment from the Danish Defense Intelligence Agency, Denmark listed cyber threats, especially those emanating from state sponsors, as the third most significant threat, behind terrorism and Russia. The report noted: "In recent years, cyber espionage against Denmark has increased significantly, and the methods and techniques employed by the perpetrators have become increasingly sophisticated. The threat from cyber espionage against Danish authorities and companies is very high." Denmark, being a very connected society, is also often preyed upon by criminal cyber actors, to include hacktivists, fraudsters, and financially-motivated hackers. A cyber crime survey of 250 Danish companies by PricewaterhouseCoopers in October 2015 revealed 59 percent of Danish businesses reported cyber attacks and 22 percent were affected by ransomware attacks. Additionally, individual citizens often fell victim to spearphishing attacks involving their bank accounts and other classic fraud schemes.

Other Areas of Concern

There are no areas that are off limits to official American travelers. However, the Embassy advises travelers to be cautious in the neighborhoods of Nørrebro and Christiania. Nørrebro is a less affluent area with higher levels of violent street crime, narcotics dealing, and gang activity. Local gang conflicts in Nørrebro and adjoining neighborhoods occasionally result in violence. Visitors to the Free Town of Christiania, a self-proclaimed autonomous neighborhood in the Christianshavn section of Copenhagen, should also exercise caution. Christiania has long hosted one of the largest hash markets in Europe. Christiania's narcotics dealing activity has been linked to organized crime groups, including outlaw motorcycle gangs. Recent drug enforcement efforts have led to violent confrontations between police and

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Christiania residents. Tourists have also been harassed, assaulted, and robbed for breaking Christiania's strict no-photography policy.

Transportation-Safety Situation

Road Safety and Road Conditions

Road conditions are very good and are on par with Western European and U.S. standards. Denmark is extremely bicycle-friendly, and there are bicycle lanes located throughout the country, usually paralleling vehicular lanes. Many urban streets also have traffic lanes reserved for public transport or cycles only. This can cause issues for drivers unfamiliar with the area when individuals are not continually alert when driving or biking. Traffic laws are strictly enforced. Violations can result in stiff fines and jail sentences. Driving is on the right side of the road.

You must be 18 to drive. U.S. tourists may use their state driver's license for up to 90 days. Long-term residents must obtain a valid Danish driver's license. Road signs use standard international symbols. Use of seat belts is mandatory for drivers and passengers. Driving any vehicle, including bicycles, under the influence of alcohol or drugs is a very serious offense. It is against the law to drive while using a hand-held cell phone. To avoid vehicle break-ins, park in well-illuminated areas when possible and avoid leaving any valuable items in a vehicle.

Public Transportation Conditions

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The public transportation system is very reliable, punctual, and relatively safe.

Aviation/Airport Conditions

Copenhagen International Airport (CPH) is located 10 miles (15 kilometers) south of the city center, and a drive takes about 30 minutes. The airport adheres to international air safety standards, as does management of flight operations. Security measures are on par with U.S. airports, and the security personnel are well-trained and effective in the performance of their duties.

Other Travel Conditions

As a consequence of the ongoing refugee and humanitarian crisis in Europe, temporary border controls have been instituted. As of January 4, 2016, travelers from Denmark to Sweden may be subject to passport controls. In reaction to Sweden implementing border controls, Denmark announced it will also institute border controls with Germany to prevent a significant increase in migration to Denmark.

Terrorism Threat

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Post Terrorism Rating: High

Local, Regional, and International Terrorism Threats/Concerns

On February 14 and 15, 2015, a Danish citizen, Omar Abdel Hamid, opened fire at a public event called "Art, Blasphemy and Freedom of Expression" that debated depicting images of the Prophet Mohammed. One person was killed, and three police officers were wounded. Later, Hamid shot and killed a security guard outside Copenhagen's Main Synagogue after a bat mitzvah celebration where he wounded two police officers. The gunman was killed a few hours later in a shoot-out with police in the Nørrebro community.

The call for self-radicalization, whether disseminated on extremist forums, or via the broader approach via social media continue to be a global concern. It is difficult to determine which message will inspire a violent extremist.

Anti-American/Anti-Western Sentiment

Denmark is generally free from anti-U.S. sentiment. Unlike most other countries, it is common for many people, both Danes and Americans, to wear shirts, hats, and jackets with logos and names of U.S. universities, sports teams, and companies, all without concern of any backlash from the general population.

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Political, Economic, Religious, and Ethnic Violence

Post Political Violence Rating: Low

Civil Unrest

Public demonstrations are fairly common but rarely result in violence. Typically, demonstrations number between a few dozen to a few hundred protestors and very rarely more than 1,000. All public demonstrations require a permit issued by the police, and spontaneous demonstrations are uncommon. Police support is generally appropriate to the size of the demonstration, and the police have experienced and effective riot control elements.

Religious/Ethnic Violence

Religious/ethnic violence is rare. Confrontations between ethnic Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs and street gangs comprised of ethnic minorities occur, but these tend to be motivated by general criminality issues and turf wars. Far-right wing anti-immigrant groups do exist and are growing, but, according to the Danish National Police, total nationwide membership does not exceed 1,000.

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Post-specific Concerns

Environmental Hazards

Environmental hazards are not a major concern, although significant flooding occurred on several occasions in recent years after heavy rains. Flooding caused millions of dollars in damage, and many businesses and homes in/around Copenhagen were affected. Rigshospitalet, the primary trauma center servicing the greater Copenhagen area, was forced to temporarily relocate emergency services to Herlev.

Critical Infrastructure Concerns

While the 2010-2011 level of flooding is considered extremely rare, it raised questions regarding the city infrastructure's capacity to handle torrential rains.

Personnel-Background Concerns

Denmark is a very open society. Rarely is there violence or travel concern based on gender, sexual orientation, race, nationality or disability.

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Drug-related Crimes

Denmark has seen a slight increase in drug-related arrests over the past 12 months. As the only Nordic country with a land border with Western Europe, Denmark is an important transshipment point for all types of cargo, including illegal narcotics. Law enforcement continues to observe trafficking in hashish via the large volume of legitimate trucking through Denmark from the Netherlands, Germany, and Spain. Seizures of amphetamines, cocaine, and heroin are routinely made at the ferry crossings from Germany and during random checks on the bridge from Jutland or at the bridge to Sweden. A majority of the heroin destined for Sweden and Norway transits Denmark. The availability of heroin fluctuates based on the heroin production levels in Afghanistan

Police Response

Danish law enforcement, public safety, and security services are professional, highly trained, well equipped, and effective. Denmark is well-known as a country with very little corruption, and the police are very well trained, professional, and competent. Most police officers are quite proficient in English.

How to Handle Incidents of Police Detention or Harassment

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Individuals detained by the police should comply with instructions. If a visitor does have an issue with unlawful detention, corruption, bribery, or harassment, s/he should report it immediately to the Embassy and request assistance.

Crime Victim Assistance

The Danish National Police are very proactive and responsive when dealing with all types of criminal activity. The Danish National Police are typically the primary first law enforcement responder in the case of any emergency. Dial 112 for emergencies and life-threatening situations.

The ACS unit accepts appointments between 9 am and 12 noon on weekdays, except Thursdays. The Embassy is closed on American and Danish holidays. For emergency cases, please contact us by telephone or email. Telephone inquiry hours: (45) 33 41 71 00, between 2-3 pm. Email: CopenhagenACS@state.gov.

Police/Security Agencies

The National Police in Denmark, Greenland, and the Faroe Islands are one united Police Corps, under the direction of the Ministry of Justice. The National Police develop strategies, supports the work in the local police districts, and coordinates police operations on a national level.

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Medical Emergencies

The Danish nationwide emergency number is 112 (Police/Fire/Medical). Non-emergency medical care is widely available throughout Denmark.

Contact Information for Recommended Hospitals/Clinics

There are multiple hospitals and clinics located throughout Denmark. Rigshospitalet is the primary emergency care and trauma facility in Copenhagen. It is a Level I trauma center located at Blegdamsvej 9, 2100 DK Copenhagen Ø. Tel: +45 3545 3545.

Recommended Air Ambulance Services

Air ambulance services are available via the nation-wide emergency number, 112.

Country-specific Vaccination and Health Guidance

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For additional information on vaccines and health guidance, please visit the CDC at: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/denmark>.

OSAC Country Council Information

Copenhagen is in the process of reactivating its OSAC Country Council. For additional information, please contact the RSO office via CopenhagenRSO@state.gov or by tel: +45 3341 7413. The Copenhagen OSAC website is: <http://www.copenhagen.osac.gov>. To reach OSAC's Europe team, please email OSACEUR@state.gov.

U.S. Embassy Location and Contact Information

Embassy Address and Hours of Operation

US Embassy Copenhagen

Dag Hammarskjölds Allé 24

DK 2100 Copenhagen Ø

Operating Hours: 0830-1700

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Embassy Contact Numbers

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Post One: +45 3341 7400

RSO: +45 3341 7413

E-mail: CopenhagenRSO@state.gov

Website: <http://www.usembassy.dk>

Consular coverage for multi-post countries

Denmark includes the mainland, Greenland, and the Faroe Islands.

Nearby Posts

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Virtual Presence Post Nuuk: <http://greenland.usvpp.gov>

Tips on How to Avoid Becoming a Victim

Situational Awareness Best Practices

Individuals should follow the same personal security precautions that they would follow in any major city. Visitors and residents should always lock their residences and use available alarms.

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