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ЕВРОПЕЙСКА АСОЦИАЦИЯ НА СТАРШИТЕ БОЛНИЧНИ ЛЕКАРИ**

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# National Report from Denmark to the AEMH 2008

## Foreign Doctors in Denmark

The Danish Health care sector experiences a deficit of specialist physicians in general practice and specialist practice as well as in the hospital sector. In hospitals alone, it is estimated that there is about 1000 unemployed specialist doctor positions.

Denmark has about 1500 foreign doctors with a foreign education. This corresponds to about 6% of all working doctors. About 40% of these 1500 foreign doctors have a specialist authorization.

The majority of the doctors have an education from a third country, which means that about 1000 doctors have an education from a country outside the Nordic countries and the EU. Typically, they come to Denmark as refugees/asylum seekers (especially from areas in Iraq and Afghanistan) or they come from one of the eastern European countries (Russia, Rumania, Bosnia Herzegovina etc.), or they are recruited from for example India via active recruiting, which is the recent tendency. Very few doctors from USA and Australia come to Denmark.

The number of doctors from one of the Nordic countries or an EU-country is about 35% of all doctors with a foreign education. The majority of these have a specialist authorization.

## Freedom of choice of hospital as well as abroad

Patients, who have not been offered treatment by the public hospital sector within one month, can choose to be treated in a private hospital or clinic in Denmark or in a hospital abroad. To use this freedom of choice, it is required that the chosen hospital or clinic has entered an agreement on offer of treatment with the Danish Regions. In total, 6 foreign hospitals have entered an agreement with the Danish Regions on offering treatment to Danish patients.

## Hospital structure

1 January 2006, a reform of the political and administrative system was carried out in Denmark. The hospital sector is now administered by 5 Region Councils, which consists of elected politicians. The economic means to run hospitals are allocated from the State, and the municipalities also finance a smaller part of the expenses (about 20%).

According to agreement between the State and the Regions, a hospital planning is being designed, which implies reduction in the number of hospitals and an integration of emergency departments in fewer and bigger hospitals. The aim is to create professional sustainable units, which should improve quality in treatment. These plans demand significant investment in new buildings and apparatus.

## Collective bargaining

At the moment, new collective agreements are being negotiated in the public sector. Most groups, including doctors, have made an agreement for a new 3-year period, which in total means a salary increase of 12.8%.

Nurses and assistant nurses and other care personnel demand a higher wage increase, and as a consequence of unsuccessful negotiations, a strike has been announced to start on 17 April 2008.