

# Project International Recruitment



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# Introduction

The project International Recruitment was launched in 2021 out of a desire to investigate the conditions for international recruitment at UCPH. The purpose has been to look at interfaces and processes in international recruitment, with a particular focus on the recruiting manager. In particular, the project highlights the recruitment of international faculty staff as well as the section International Staff Mobility (ISM) under Shared HR and the services that this section provides to this group of employees.

The global competition to spot, attract and retain academic talents has intensified with new stakeholders on the international researcher job market. The international recruitment of researchers remains an important parameter for both UCPH's position on rankings as well as for UCPH's ability to attract external funding. The International Recruitment Project is a two-year project (2021-2023) that was based on supporting UCPH's strategy to increase the recruitment of international talents to the university. The project consists of a steering committee representing the management of departments and faculties at UCPH with many international VIP recruitments. Furthermore, a working group was set up consisting of recruiting VIP managers with extensive experience with international recruitment, heads of sections and staff from the three HR centres, as well as several department administrators. A reference group of international researchers was subsequently appointed, who have helped to assure the quality of the specific recommendations.

## The purpose of the project

The purpose of the project is to strengthen the coordination of the collaboration between the departments, faculties, HR centres and ISM in relation to international recruitments at UCPH. In this way, joint efforts can be made to improve the support of the recruiting manager in all phases of the recruitment.

In addition, the project aims to launch an action plan with specific recommendations to reduce the barriers to international recruitment. Furthermore, ISM's services to both international employees and recruiting managers has been evaluated. At the same time, experience and information was gathered from selected international universities to learn from their best practices within e.g. global mobility, employer branding and their internal organisation.

In the past years there has been a steady increase in the number of international employees at UCPH, with 42% more international employees in 2023 compared to 2019. In total, the share of international employees at UCPH by the end of this project in November 2023 is 30% (Source: Business Intelligence (BI)).

## **Working on the project**

During the course of the project, 30 qualitative interviews were conducted with department heads and centre directors as well as other relevant persons working with international recruitment at UCPH. The interviews have, among other things, covered branding of UCPH, challenges in international recruitment, knowledge of ISM's services as well as the need for assistance in connection with international recruitments. The interviewees have varying degrees of experience of the processes within international recruitment at UCPH. There has been a wide cross-section of employees from all faculties representing different genders and nationalities.

At the same time, a sub-working group was set up consisting of case workers from the three HR centres and ISM. The sub-working group has worked with the HR centres' and ISM's process descriptions and interfaces, as well as reviewed HR's welcome emails and internal guidance. The sub-working group has identified a number of improvement points throughout the process concerning employees abroad as well as in the work between ISM and the HR centres.

Furthermore, a survey was conducted among the university's 3,500 international employees to uncover their own experiences. The purpose of the survey was to



examine the aspects of international recruitment that relate to ISM's services and the experiences with these. There was a strong focus on specific experiences and the satisfaction with the services they were offered upon arrival in UCPH.

# Recommendations

Based on the interviews, data from the survey and the work in the project groups, the following recommendations were made for improving and continuing to develop international recruitment at the University of Copenhagen. It should be noted that work is continuously being done to develop the work processes in this area outside the scope of this project.

The recommendations include improvements, wishes and suggestions from heads of department and members from the working, reference and steering committee that have emerged during the project.

The primary focus group in the project has been international Faculty VIP. However, there has been an ongoing wish for PhD students and postdocs to also be included, as the international recruitment is largest in these employee groups. For this reason, the questionnaire was sent to all international employees at UCPH who have been employed within the past five years in order to gain a broader perspective on international recruitment at UCPH. All employee groups were included in the survey, including both employees before and after Covid-19, in order to examine possible differences in the experience of service levels.

The recommendations are divided according to topics, where there has generally been found reason for increased attention and development. Subsequently, specific recommendations will be made within these topics. The recommendations will be submitted to the senior management team as well as other relevant managers at the university's departments and faculties. In this way, UCPH as a whole can continue to work on the recommendations and strengthen international recruitment at the university. Finally, the recommendations are broken down according to relevant areas of responsibility internally at UCPH.

# Recommendations

**1**

**Branding of Denmark, Copenhagen and UCPH**

**2**

**Search for new candidates**

**3**

**Diversity in application pools**

**4**

**Job interviews**

**5**

**Danish courses and language requirements**

**6**

**Onboarding new employees**

# Topic 1: Branding of Denmark, Copenhagen and UCPH

**Visits from potential candidates have a positive effect on recruitment,** as many are surprised by the potential of UCPH and Copenhagen when they experience the university and the city. Especially the material conditions such as research equipment and research labs, but also the family-friendly conditions in the city surprise many. During these visits, it is important to focus on the various services that ISM can offer to assist researchers' families and their establishment in Denmark. Several department heads point out that to a large extent it is the opportunities for family life in Denmark that determine whether a successful international recruitment is achieved. ISM offers a special dual career service for the researcher's accompanying family, which offers both job support for partners, as well as help to find a daycare or school. ISM's Faculty Service offers to meet with potential candidates for Faculty positions already in the pre-recruitment phase, to clarify any questions that are important for the candidate to accept a job offer at UCPH.

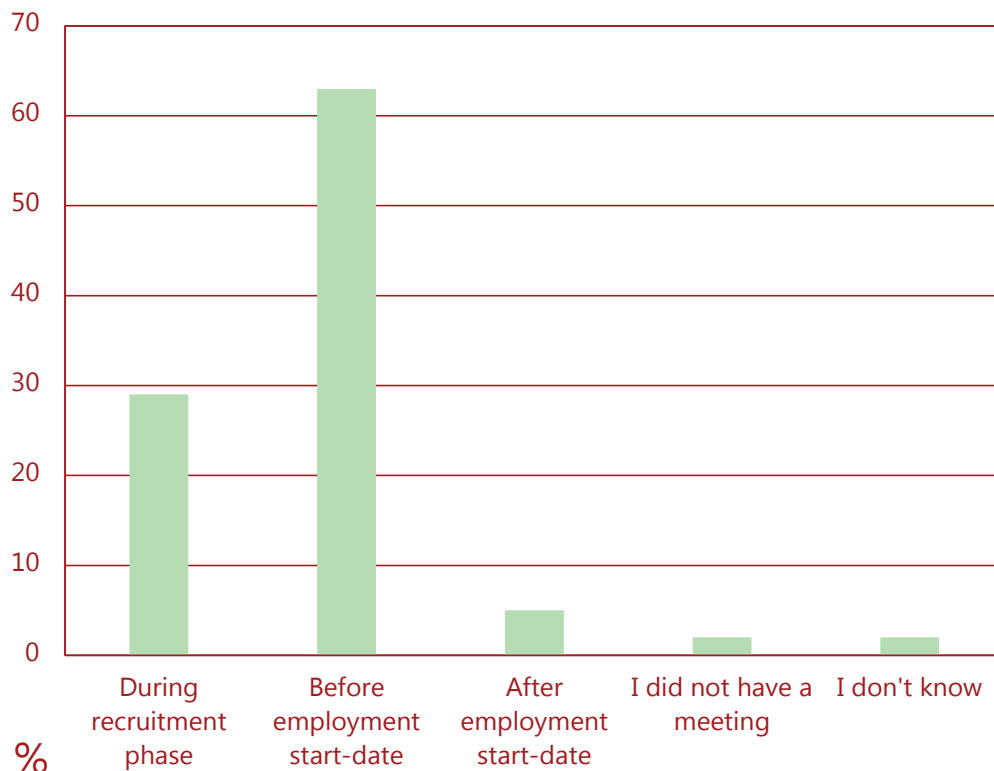
***“We must articulate particularly high level of excellence, soft values and Copenhagen as a city. There is a younger generation who want something different on the agenda”***

**The good job opportunities for a spouse or the possibilities for a subsequent career in Denmark for the researcher** should be an increased focus point in recruitment. Copenhagen has particularly unique opportunities here, as there are many jobs in Copenhagen where Danish is not a requirement. In addition, it is important to focus on the promotion processes internally at UCPH by enhancing the **six criteria of merit** for career development. This will help to clarify and demystify the career opportunities internally at UCPH, as many express confusion about precisely this.

**It is important to highlight the possibilities for external, private funding in Denmark.** External funding benefits researchers as well as the university, as attracting renowned researchers can increase the chances of raising more funds. In this connection, it is particularly important to emphasise the help that UCPH and UCPH's research support units can offer researchers during the search process, as UCPH is particularly strong on this point.

Both the recruiting managers and the international employees have indicated that guidance early in the recruitment process is essential for a successful recruitment. ISM's International Faculty Service is an initiative that focuses on this guidance.

### **At what point during recruitment were you offered a Faculty Service meeting?**



*Source: Data from the survey on international recruitment conducted by ISM, with the participation of 750 international employees at the University of Copenhagen.*



**The good working conditions in Denmark, Copenhagen as a city and the Danish welfare society** are points that are often highlighted as advantages of UCPH. Several department heads mentioned that the University of Copenhagen generally has a good reputation as a workplace, but that it is still important that UCPH become better at highlighting other benefits of working in Denmark. Among other things, some of the benefits are free medical care and the opportunity to create a good work-life balance, especially for families with children.

**Recommendation 1:** Visits to UCPH from potential candidates have a positive effect and make UCPH more attractive.

**Recommendation 2:** It would be beneficial to increase the focus on career opportunities for the accompanying partner and for the researcher.

**Recommendation 3:** More specific information is needed about the good opportunities for external funding in Denmark, as well as about the support from UCPH to this.

**Recommendation 4:** Copenhagen as a city and Danish working conditions must to a greater extent than today be included as part of job postings for positions at UCPH.

## Topic 2: Search for new candidates

**In general, there has been a need for more clarity about the hiring process,** both on the part of the manager and the employee. In this clarification, it is important to specify that ISM can be involved early in the process for sparring if the need arises. It is also essential that the recruitment procedures are regularly revisited to ensure that they are constantly developed and improved.

**It is a good idea to use job platforms outside the standard package (UCPH's job portal and the EURAXESS website)** when advertising UCPH's vacancies.

However, several departments and faculties use many other platforms to search for new graduates, including LinkedIn and Twitter (X), networks in the academic environment and several international subject-specific job portals. However, not everyone is aware of this option. There is broad consensus that external recruitment companies have not been successful in previous recruitments, as using external recruitment companies often results in the same candidates that the recruiting managers can find themselves.

**Several departments have positive experiences with using researchers' own networks,** as they often know good candidates within their own field. Here it is particularly important that the manager is involved in a clear and active role if possible, as several international employees have expressed it as a special strength at UCPH that there is good and active management.

In addition, there have been positive experiences with being present at international job fairs, especially in relation to the recruitment of PhDs and postdocs, but less so when it comes to Faculty positions. Especially to create initial awareness of UCPH, it makes sense to advertise vacancies at international job fairs and conferences.

**Another improvement can be found in increased information about career opportunities at UCPH,** both for internal and external graduates. Here, it would be a good idea to encourage the departments to make greater use of open job advertisements and tenure-track positions across disciplines. When the department has an internal candidate who is ideal for a position at the department, increased career advice on internal career opportunities can make it more attractive and accessible for the candidate to apply for the position. At the same time, increased information about further career opportunities can make it easier to recruit good candidates, as it makes UCPH more attractive.

## **Platforms for searching for new candidates**

The platforms highlighted here are a segment of subject-specific job portals mentioned by the different interviewees.

- **LinkedIn**
- **EURAXESS**
- **UCPH's job portal**
- **International job fairs**
- **European University Institute**
- **Academic Keys**
- **MathJobs**
- **International Studies Association**

*“The network effect is much greater than what we can pay for on all sorts of portals”*

*“We have a lot of foot soldiers out there who know us and help us. When we advertise a job, it is quickly tweeted by someone who has a lot of followers”*

**Recommendation 1:** Increased information on recruitment procedures is needed for more clarity.

**Recommendation 2:** The departments and faculties should be encouraged to advertise positions on a wider selection of job portals, and to make greater use of the networks of internal researchers.

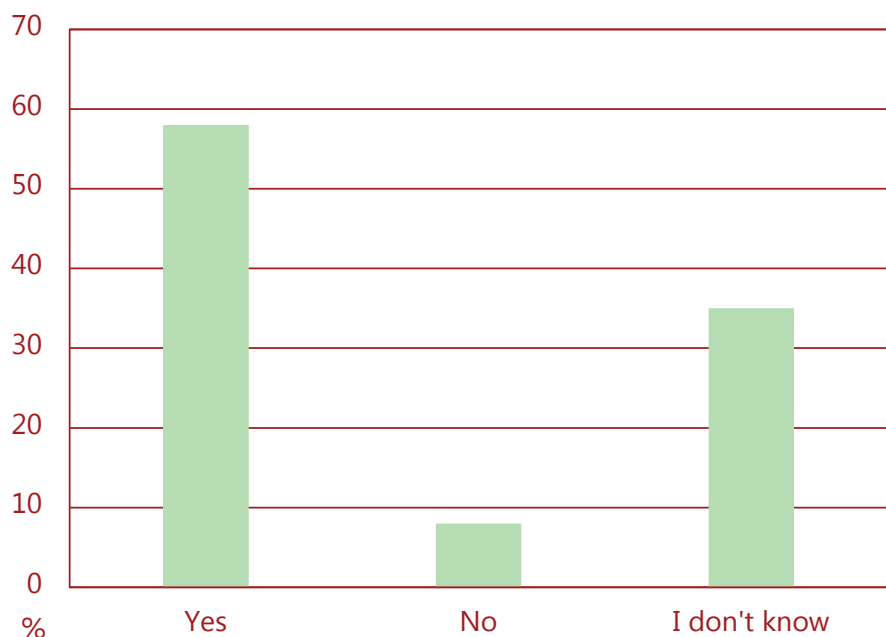
**Recommendation 3:** The departments and faculties should be encouraged to increase the use of fully open job advertisements. In addition, it would be beneficial to increase career counselling for this purpose.

## Topic 3: Diversity in application pools

**To increase diversity among applicants, several departments and faculties have good experience with advertising open positions each year.** Here, emphasis should be placed on the candidate's ability to contribute to existing research areas. Although, there must be clarity about who and what they are looking for, it opens up the possibility of a wider selection of candidates than with subject-specific job advertisements. It may be beneficial to extend this method to all levels of employment.

Several others mention that it is challenging when graduates apply from unknown countries. Here, lack of knowledge of the university or national documents may complicate and delay the hiring process. Several of the respondents had good experience with involving employees with the same national background as the employee to be recruited. One suggestion could be that ISM builds up competencies within the evaluation of foreign qualifications and provides increased assistance when needed.

### Does ISM's services meet your expectations, when recruiting internationally?



*Source: Data from the survey on international recruitment conducted by ISM, with the participation of 750 international employees at the University of Copenhagen.*

**The need for diversity should be addressed to a greater extent than is the case today,** as several departments stress a desire for this. Here, it can be an advantage to work with active search in the departments and faculties with clear requirements for diversity among the candidates. Furthermore, diversity consultants employed in Shared HR, as well as elsewhere at UCPH, can be contacted for good advice and guidance.

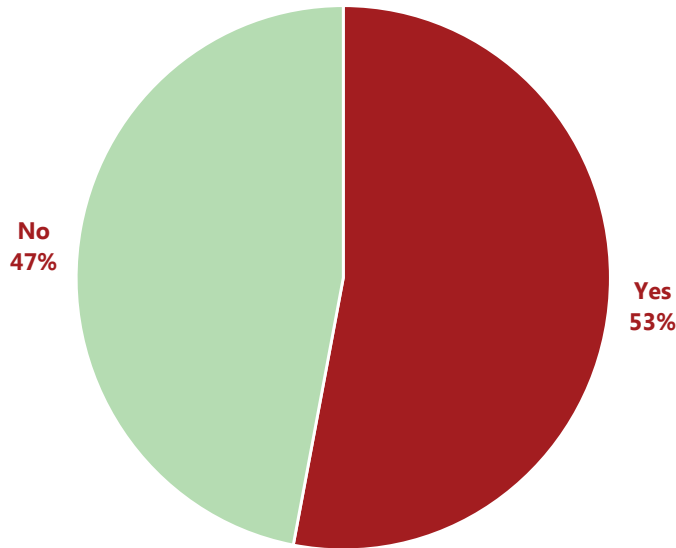
**It is still a problem to recruit graduates from countries where the degree is not immediately compatible with the Danish degree.**

This applies, for example, to the UK, where there is a large group of otherwise relevant candidates. Although the problem has been known for a while, it has proven difficult to solve. Some faculties have succeeded in enrolling graduates on a more flexible 4+4 PhD scheme, where they were employed as PhD students after one year of studies at a relevant Master programme at UCPH. However, this solution has met challenges at other faculties. An increased strategic collaboration with the other Danish universities on this area would therefore be a good suggestion.

***”We cannot hire potential candidates with Masters degrees from e.g. Oxford and other really good universities because of the rules. We have more or less given up on talking to masters from these universities which is crazy. They are in the top 10 in the world”***



**Have you encountered problems due to the rules on compatible education?**



*Source: Data from the survey on international recruitment conducted by ISM, with the participation of 750 international employees at the University of Copenhagen.*

**Recommendation 1:** Open positions at all academic levels can be used to attract a broader and more diverse pool of applicants.

**Recommendation 2:** Articulate the need for increased diversity in employment to a greater extent than today with the involvement of UCPH's diversity consultants.

**Recommendation 3:** Continued focus on solving the problem of compatible study programmes.

## Topic 4: Job interviews

**Several respondents have expressed a wish to revisit the job interview procedures** in order to create a common foundation of quality across departments and faculties. A number of people describe that the appointment process often consists of a single interview lasting one hour. Many perceive this as frivolous, but that it is difficult to change. Especially when the dean or vice-dean has to be present at interviews for permanent faculty positions, it is difficult to allocate more time. At the same time, there have also been problems with assessing candidates' competencies when job interviews are not conducted physically, which is why this must be taken into consideration.

**In addition, focus must be on ways in which the recruitment procedure can be streamlined in order to avoid unnecessarily lengthy processes** and thereby give the candidate a better experience. However, there is broad agreement that the solution must often be found at the individual faculties, as the needs vary from faculty to faculty.

***“Our recruitment process is a bit frivolous. The classic recruitment consists of an hour-long interview regardless of the type of position it is for: assistant professor, associate professor, etc. An hour is a very short time. It's the faculty's conversation, so it's difficult to push the process.”***

**During the hiring process, expectations may be aligned with the candidates** regarding how much teaching is expected of the individual. Compared to several foreign universities, including the US, researchers in Denmark are expected to teach much more than they are often used to. The interviews should therefore emphasise the UCPH's **six criteria of merit** for career development at UCPH, so that the candidate understands what is expected of them and, at the same time, what is required to develop at UCPH.

**Recommendation 1:** Work needs to be done on a joint evaluation of recruitment procedures. However, the solution should be found at faculty level according to individual needs.

**Recommendation 2:** The interview and recruitment procedures should be revisited, with a focus on increased efficiency.

**Recommendation 3:** It is essential to actively use the six credits of merit for career development in order to balance expectations with the candidate.

# Topic 5: Danish courses and language requirements at the university

## Local, differentiated implementation

At UCPH, there are major differences in language use across faculties and departments. Although a number of departments currently use English as their working language, a majority still use Danish as their primary working language.

Several places at UCPH already experience parallel language use with established offers of Danish courses for international employees. Several departments offer informal language training to international employees so they can practice their everyday Danish. There are also good examples of departments that have successfully introduced concepts such as 'language buddies' and 'whispered interpreters' – where Danish-speaking employees support their international colleagues. Often, however, these types of initiatives are driven by individuals, making them vulnerable to local changes such as restructuring and employee turnover.

Generally speaking, we can see that the departments where the implementation of the language policy is most successful are often in the departments where the need for local implementation is greatest. This is typically the case in Humanities, where teaching is heavy and language, communication and presentation already take up a lot of time.

***“We could start by agreeing to implement the language policy. When we say that we deliver information in both Danish and English, it must apply to all relevant information. We could start by doing that. I spend a lot of time translating a lot of things, and it’s a waste of time”***

**One of the biggest challenges** is that the language policy is often interpreted very differently, but it is also essential that local conditions and resources at each faculty, department or centre are taken into account. Although the relatively free framework is designed to make implementation easier, it also contributes to creating confusion and uncertainty among both employees and recruiting managers.

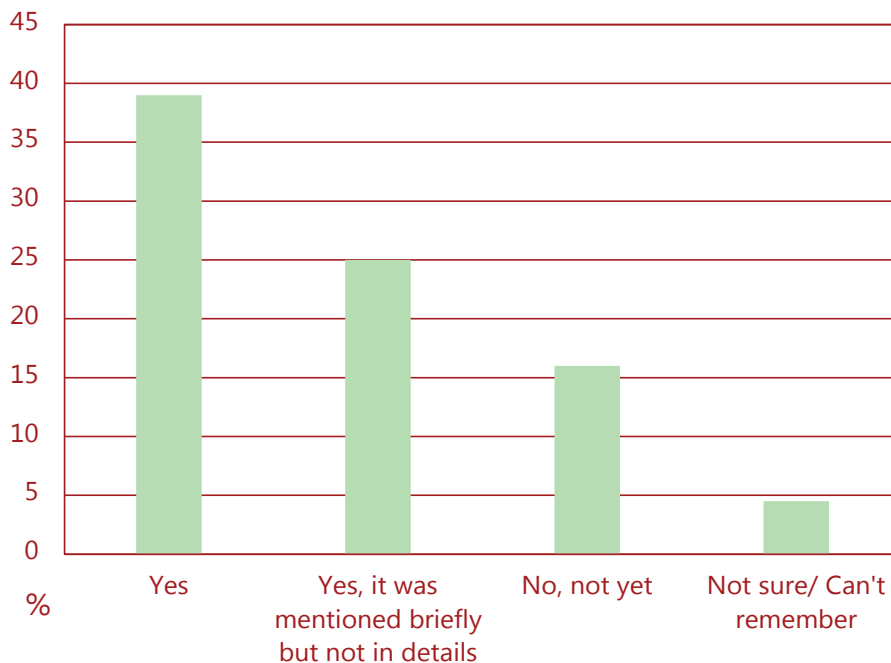
ISM regularly receives enquiries from managers who seek advice and guidance on how to articulate and specify the language expectations to new international employees. Several respondents express concern that the department must offer paid, and targeted Danish courses to all of their international Faculty employees over a number of years. In addition to this comes the requirement that Danish lessons may for periods of time relieve the International Faculty employees of other work obligations, including teaching. This is a resource-intensive task for the departments to perform, and it may potentially deter some departments from recruiting international talents if they assess that the costs exceed the benefits of international recruitment.

Many department heads point out that they do not have the right competences to judge whether and when their employees’ language skills are sufficient to be able to teach in Danish. Several also find it difficult to assess how many resources they should expect to allocate when hiring new international employees. As the return on the investment in the international

employees' language skills will only begin to be realised after a few years, the retention of international employees is an aspect that is important for the department heads.

In a pilot project, which among other things deals with the international Faculty employees' Danish skills, we have seen a positive trend since the start of the implementation phase. All new incoming Faculty VIP have accepted offers of tailor-made Danish as part of their onboarding at the university. However, several express some concern about whether they can live up to the language requirement in the language policy, which states that they must contribute to teaching in Danish after 3-6 years.

### Have you heard of the Language Policy at UCPH?



*Source: Data from the survey on international recruitment conducted by ISM, with the participation of 750 international employees at the University of Copenhagen.*



## **Recommendation**

We see a need to develop and continue cross-sectional support for the language policy with concrete advice, guidance and concretisation of UCPH's ambition for parallel language practice, so that both recruiting managers and (international) employees know what is expected of them to be able to participate in a parallel language everyday life.

## **Language policy after 2023: A part of the new strategy**

The language policy was last discussed at the board meeting on December 13th 2022. The committee agreed that the initiatives in the implementation phase have contributed to the integration of new international employees, but that the language policy has not yet been fully implemented, and that UCPH's ambition to promote parallel language practice has not yet kept up with the internationalisation that has taken place and is expected to continue. The Board and the task force for implementing the language policy supported a continued work and development of the specific initiatives that had so far had a positive effect on the implementation of the language policy.

## Topic 6: Onboarding new employees

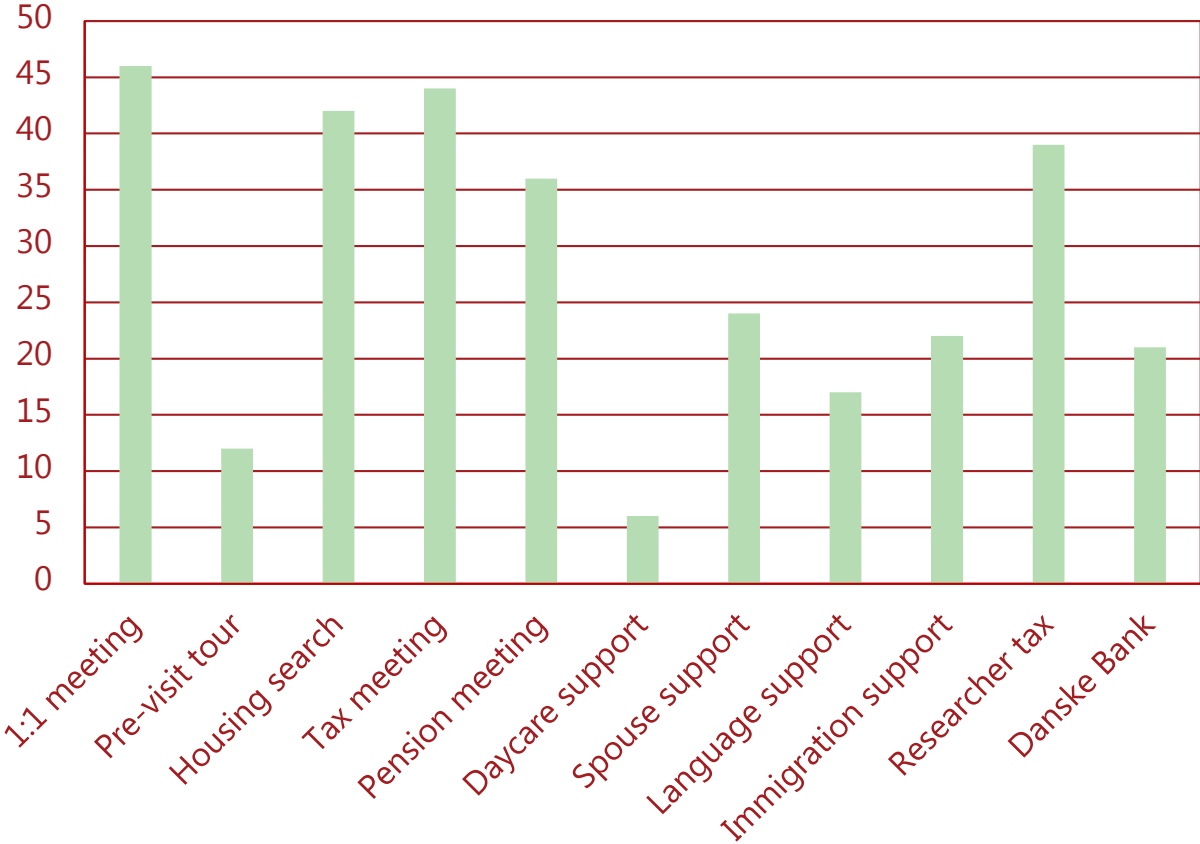
**There is a demand for more accessible information about conditions in the Danish labour market.** Almost all of the interviewed heads of department emphasise that it is a surprise to international researchers that they do not negotiate their own salary, but that this is done through a union representative. In general, the Danish work culture appears complicated for newcomers, which can further complicate the onboarding process. The same applies for example to the tax system and insurance (including unemployment funds), which are also difficult to understand as new in Denmark. Therefore, many people are requesting more precise information from UCPH about various Danish labour market conditions, including information about the many unwritten rules in Denmark.

**The reference group emphasises, in particular, that UCPH is known for its strong onboarding process of international employees.** At the moment, however, much of the onboarding is up to the departments themselves, resulting in varying onboarding programs with different degrees of an international touch. Some departments use buddy schemes, especially for younger researchers, where you can get help from a Danish researcher or someone who has been in Denmark for a long time. In addition, ISM holds monthly welcome meetings for international employees together with other cultural and networking events, so that international employees can meet across the university. This is highly supported by the participants, as Denmark can be a difficult country to integrate into.

**Overall, the housing situation for new employees is a major problem,** and several departments are calling for increased help, as this contributes to making UCPH less competitive. PhD students and postdocs in particular experience problems as they only have to stay in Denmark for a limited period of time and are thus not offered the same services.

**It must be made clear for new international employees which opportunities they are offered upon appointment.** ISM offers a special International Faculty Service where comprehensive assistance is offered during the recruitment and relocation process to International Faculty staff. During the data collection, it became particularly clear that several respondents were not aware of which services were made available to them. It is therefore also important to communicate more clearly and broadly about the existence of these offers to new international Faculty employees.

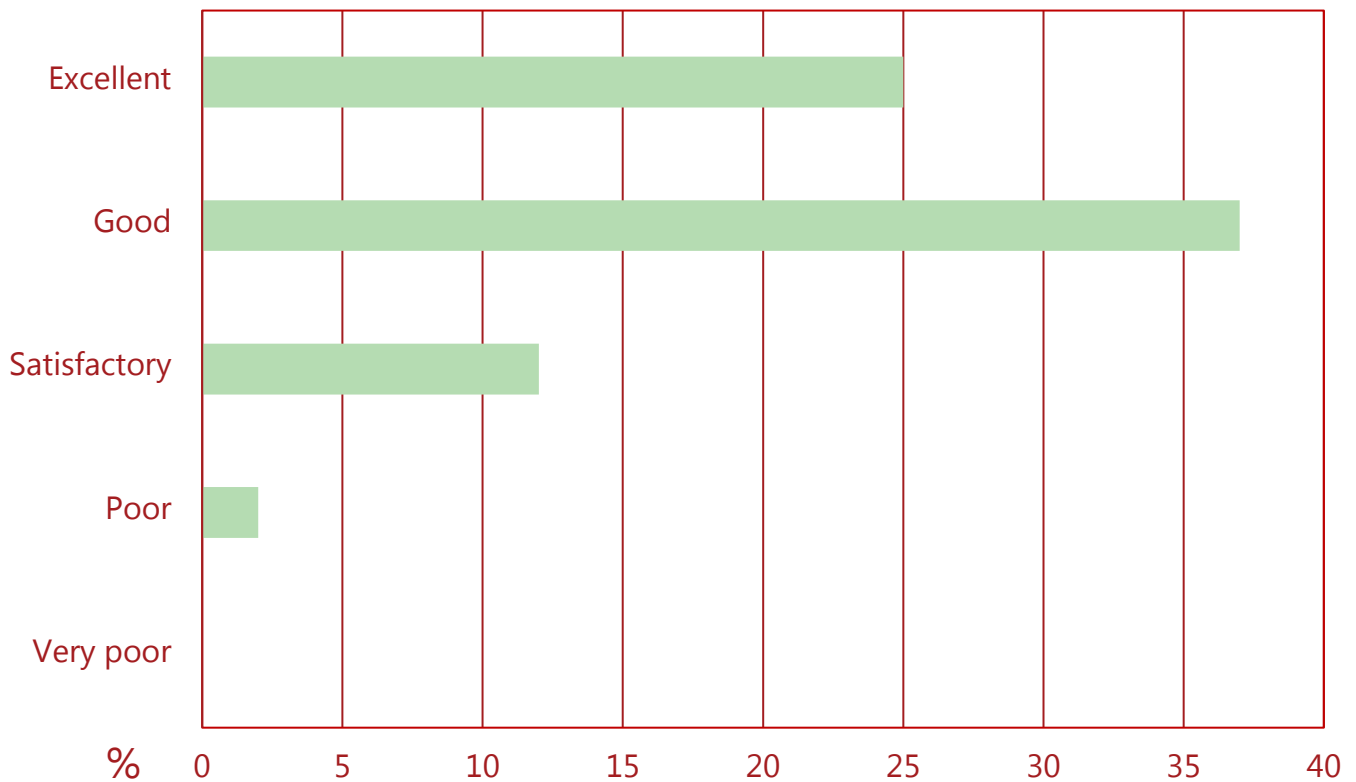
### Which Faculty services did you receive?



*Source: Data from the survey on international recruitment conducted by ISM, with the participation of 750 international employees at the University of Copenhagen.*

***“Denmark is difficult to understand. I have been surprised that our local culture can be so difficult for newcomers to understand”***

**How did you find the welcome email from ISM?**



*Source: Data from the survey on international recruitment conducted by ISM, with the participation of 750 international employees at the University of Copenhagen.*

**Recommendation 1:** It would be beneficial to focus on clearer communication about the Danish labour market conditions.

**Recommendation 2:** The onboarding process can be streamlined and improved so that all departments and faculties also focus on internationalisation.

**Recommendation 3:** The difficult housing situation in Copenhagen and the lack of assistance affects UCPH's competitiveness and should therefore be a focus point.

**Recommendation 4:** Communication about existing service offers for new international employees must be improved.

# Experiences from Danish and foreign universities

Interviews were conducted with several foreign universities in order to exchange experiences in the field of international recruitment. Interviews were conducted with Harvard University, Reykjavik University, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, University of Helsinki and Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU).

Furthermore, there has been dialogue with several Danish universities, including Aarhus University, University of Southern Denmark, DTU and Aalborg University. It can be deduced that several universities have or are working towards an office similar to ISM, which currently exists at UCPH.

**Specifically, several universities are working to gather and centralise international recruitment in one office**, in order to improve and streamline their services. During the interviews, there has thus been a great demand for learning from UCPH and in particular ISM on this front.

**In addition, there has been widespread emphasis on a wish to increase the diversity among employees**, where for example Harvard University has set up a special office (Office for Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging (OEDIB)) where consultants work to increase diversity and conditions for all groups on campus.

**Another university that stands out in this area is Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam**, which has a separate recruitment office. Here they work to find and recruit relevant international candidates on behalf of the departments. In dialogue with the recruiting manager they identify criteria for the candidate,



after which the employees of the recruitment office prepare a shortlist of relevant candidates. The scheme began as a trial at a single faculty, but due to its success it has now become a 2-year trial scheme for the entire university.

**In order to address the major problems with housing for international researchers,** NTNU International Researcher Support (NIRS) offers housing assistance and housing for new international researchers. NTNU has a special housing policy which states: “permanent or temporary foreign employees and visiting scientists who will spend more than 1 month at NTNU should have an offer of an accommodation when they arrive at NTNU. This may be either in housing owned by NTNU or in privately owned housing. This housing is primarily intended to cover the need for transitional housing (up to 3 months) and short-term housing (from 1 month up to 12 months) and is not intended to be permanent housing”. Researchers can apply to the university for housing to be allocated on the basis of specifically stated criteria. NTNU has its own apartments, but also collaborates with rental agencies and hotel chains. In addition, their office is centrally located in a building on campus to increase accessibility and clarity for international employees.

**The University of Helsinki, similar to UCPH, focuses on helping accompanying spouses when they arrive.** A UniBuddy programme is offered, where Finnish or international volunteers help researchers and their families settle in upon their arrival. The international recruitment department at Reykjavik University also has many similarities with UCPH’s ISM. Here they work extensively with their language policy, where they focus on increasing language teaching to both the researcher and their accompanying partner. At a university like Reykjavik University, where the proportion of international employees is lower compared to UCPH, it has proven more difficult to implement the language policy at the entire university. Therefore, it is still an area where they are working extensively.

# Experiences from a specially appointed reference group

A specially appointed reference group was set up, in collaboration with the steering committee and sub-working group, consisting of international researchers from UCPH. The group consists of researchers from all faculties in various positions and with a wide range of nationalities. The participants have been in Denmark between one and ten years.

The reference group was presented with the report's topics in a focus group interview, after which they had the opportunity to share their own experiences.

**A point mentioned by several participants was the long and confusing interview and hiring process.** This was a problem for researchers across different faculties. In particular, the long waiting time for the final job offer was highlighted as a problem, as you may need to accept the first job offer presented to you. Thus, UCPH risks losing good candidates due to the long hiring process.

There were also varying experiences with interviews on Zoom. While some had a successful meeting with a tour of the department, others had a short conversation at inconvenient times due to international time differences.

**Furthermore, several of the researchers requested a higher level of personal contact with the HR centres,** both at the time of recruitment and in case of subsequent problems during their employment. Several mentioned feeling insecure by starting without an official working contract from UCPH, despite knowing that this is not unusual in Denmark. As a point of improvement in this process, a closer contact with the HR centres was highlighted for secure more comfort throughout the hiring process.

**Many of the participants praised the contact they had with ISM both before and after being hired**, where they received personal assistance on different fronts. There was particular praise about the help they received when looking for daycare or a school for their children. At the same time, several praised the help they received when they had to find accommodation before arrival.

**Furthermore, there was broad agreement that the good working and living conditions in Denmark were strong points of attraction**, even though many primarily came to Denmark due to the desired position at UCPH. Several of the participants had the opportunity to visit Denmark before accepting the offer. During this visit, it had been possible to visit potential schools and kindergartens for their children, which helped them accept the position.

**The Danish language as well as the Danish culture in general was highlighted by many as difficult to understand.** Therefore, there was a wish for a strengthened focus on these aspects in the onboarding process. However, there were clear differences among those recruited in recent years. Newly recruited employees have been offered more Danish lessons compared to previous years, because of the new language policy. There was strong support for this offer in the group, as it had given the employees better opportunities to integrate into the workplace. Further, the need to maintain the Danish language proficiency was emphasised, as the investment in taking Danish language classes is otherwise in vain.

**At the same time, it was highlighted by many that they had a successful onboarding both with assistance from ISM and with help from their department.** Several emphasised that it was a great help that they had a personal contact at ISM who took care of their case. It was further emphasised that it was sometimes difficult to figure out who the right person to contact at the HR centres, when in need for further guidance. The researchers who had been employed at UCPH for several years described a higher degree of personal contact to HR in the past.

# Overview of recommendations

1

## **Branding of Denmark, Copenhagen and UCPH**

**Recommendation 1:** Visits to UCPH from potential candidates have a positive effect and make UCPH more attractive.

**Recommendation 2:** It would be beneficial to increase the focus on career opportunities for the accompanying partner and for the researcher.

**Recommendation 3:** More clear information is needed about the good opportunities for external financing in Denmark, as well as about the support from UCPH to this end.

**Recommendation 4:** Copenhagen as a city and Danish working conditions must to a greater extent than today be included as part of job postings for positions at UCPH.

## 2

### **Search for new candidates**

**Recommendation 1:** Increased information on recruitment procedures is needed for better clarity.

**Recommendation 2:** The departments and faculties should be encouraged to advertise positions on a wider selection of job portals, and to make greater use of the networks of internal researchers.

**Recommendation 3:** It can be encouraged to increase the use of fully open job advertisements. In addition, it would be beneficial to increase career counselling for this purpose.

## 3

### **Diversity in application pools**

**Recommendation 1:** Open positions at all academic levels can be used to attract a broader and more diverse pool of applicants.

**Recommendation 2:** Articulate the need for increased diversity in employment to a greater extent than today with the involvement of UCPH's diversity consultants.

**Recommendation 3:** Continued focus on solving the problem of compatible study programmes.

## 4

### Job interviews

**Recommendation 1:** Work needs to be done on a joint evaluation of recruitment procedures. However, the solution should be found at faculty level according to individual needs.

**Recommendation 2:** The interview and recruitment procedures should be revisited, with a focus on increased efficiency.

**Recommendation 3:** It is essential to actively use the six credits of merit for career development in order to balance expectations with the candidate.

## 5

### Danish courses and language requirements at the university

**Recommendation:** We see a need to develop and continue cross-sectional support for the language policy with concrete advice, guidance and concretisation of UCPH's ambition for parallel language practice, so that both recruiting managers and (international) employees know what is expected of them to be able to participate in a parallel language everyday life.



## 6

### Onboarding new employees

**Recommendation 1:** It would be beneficial to focus on clearer communication about the Danish labour market conditions.

**Recommendation 2:** The onboarding process can be streamlined and improved so that all departments and faculties also focus on internationalisation.

**Recommendation 3:** The difficult housing situation in Copenhagen and the lack of assistance affects the university's competitiveness and should therefore be a focus point.

**Recommendation 4:** Communication about existing service offers for new international employees must be improved.

# Breakdown of recommendations

The breakdown below of the report's recommendations has been made in response to a wish from the steering committee and sub-working group to allocate responsibility. This breakdown should therefore be seen as a guide for the further work to improve international recruitment at the University of Copenhagen.

## Faculty level

**Recommendation 1.3:** More clear information is needed about the good opportunities for external financing in Denmark, as well as about the support from UCPH to this end.

**Recommendation 2.1:** Increased information on recruitment procedures is needed for better clarity.

**Recommendation 2.3:** It can be encouraged to increase the use of fully open job advertisements. In addition, it would be beneficial to increase career counselling for this purpose.

**Recommendation 3.2:** Articulate the need for increased diversity in employment to a greater extent than today with the involvement of UCPH's diversity consultants.

**Recommendation 3.3:** Continued focus on solving the problem of compatible study programmes.

**Recommendation 4.1:** Work needs to be done on a joint evaluation of recruitment procedures. However, the solution should be found at faculty level according to individual needs.

**Recommendation 4.2:** The interview and recruitment procedures should be revisited, with a focus on increased efficiency.

**Recommendation 5:** We see a need to develop and continue cross-sectional support for the language policy with concrete advice, guidance and concretisation of UCPH's ambition for parallel language practice, so that both recruiting managers and (international) employees know what is expected of them to be able to participate in a parallel language everyday life.

**Recommendation 6.3:** The difficult housing situation in Copenhagen and the lack of assistance affects the university's competitiveness and should therefore be a focus point.

## Department level

**Recommendation 1.4:** Copenhagen as a city and Danish working conditions must to a greater extent than today be included as part of job postings for positions at UCPH.

**Recommendation 2.2:** The departments and faculties should be encouraged to advertise positions on a wider selection of job portals, and to make greater use of the networks of internal researchers.

**Recommendation 3.1:** Open positions at all academic levels can be used to attract a broader and more diverse pool of applicants.

**Recommendation 4.3:** It is essential to actively use the six credits of merit for career development in order to balance expectations with the candidate.

## Local level

**Recommendation 1.1:** Visits to UCPH from potential candidates have a positive effect and make UCPH more attractive.

**Recommendation 1.2:** It would be beneficial to increase the focus on career opportunities for the accompanying partner and for the researcher.

**Recommendation 6.1:** It would be beneficial to focus on clearer communication about the Danish labour market conditions.

**Recommendation 6.2:** The onboarding process can be streamlined and improved so that all departments and faculties also focus on internationalisation.

**Recommendation 6.4:** Communication about existing service offers for new international employees must be improved.

# ISM's work with the results

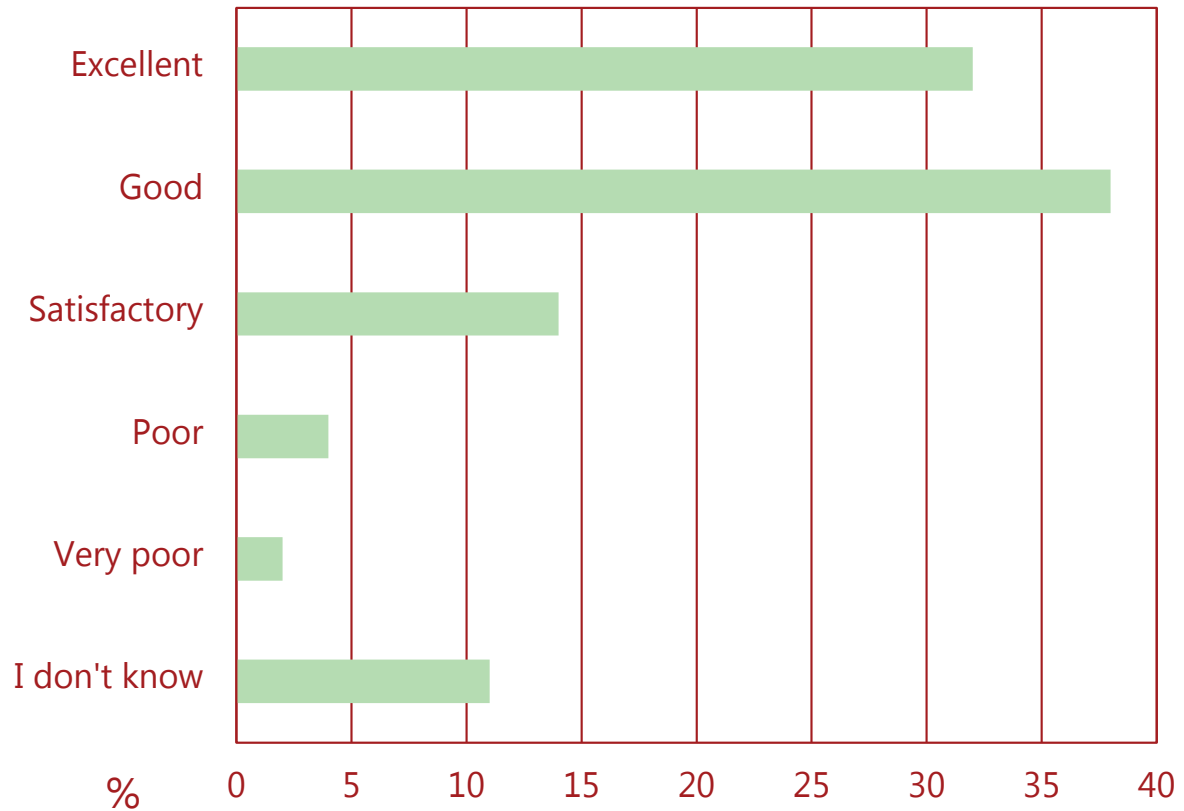
Based on the interviews with the recruiting managers as well as the analysed data from the survey conducted by ISM, there was an overall picture of positive experiences and satisfaction with the services provided by ISM, in connection with international recruitment at UCPH. Several have expressed that ISM is a central and necessary part of the recruitment phase, especially regarding the practical conditions when researchers are relocating to Denmark with their family:

***“I would like to praise ISM. I know that ISM has made a difference for several of our employees. They were out looking at apartments and kindergarten with ISM. They discuss many important topics with them so that we at the department can focus on the more academic aspects. Everything that the graduate is thinking about when moving to Denmark is the family. The concern has already been sorted out after the meeting with ISM”***

The services provided have been described as “world-class” and there was a broad agreement that a good foundation for international recruitment has been created by ISM and the rest of Shared HR.

However, several employees emphasise that the information about the services offered can be improved so that more people know which services are available. A recurring criticism from recruiting managers is the interfaces between ISM and the HR centres, where several experience confusion about who to contact in given situations. This may end up affecting the recruitment or retention of new international employees.

## What is your overall impression of the services at ISM?



*Source: Data from the survey on international recruitment conducted by ISM, with the participation of 750 international employees at the University of Copenhagen.*

***“The interaction between ISM and the HR centres could be improved. Several of my colleagues have mentioned this. The better it is, the better the recruitment will be”***

To address this criticism, ISM has launched ongoing projects to help improve this:

- Internally in ISM, a one-pager with information about ISM's services has been created to clarify in which areas ISM can provide assistance. This brochure is available on ISM's website, but it will also be distributed at information meetings, visits to ISM and presentations at the departments and faculties.
- A page has been created for ISM's website with information about the Danish labour market conditions, including unemployment funds, trade unions, union representatives etc. The page was created to make the information more accessible to international employees, as several Danish employment conditions have caused confusion.
- ISM will increase its visits to the departments to communicate the information about existing services broadly and directly. Furthermore, ISM will hold regular meetings with the department heads to ensure that they are updated on ISM's current services and how best to optimise the collaboration.

The comments regarding the HR centres have been collected and distributed to the HR centres and sent to the Deputy Director of Shared HR, who presented the comments to the HR centre managers. The sub-group has also worked continuously on the interfaces between the HR centres and ISM.



# Concluding considerations

Throughout all phases of the project, great enthusiasm has been expressed as well as a desire for improvements in the area of international recruitment. At the same time, the continued increase in the number of international employees hired at UCPH leads to complex problems that require increased attention. This underlines the need for continuous efforts to improve and optimise processes and workflows within international recruitment. Furthermore, it has become clear that UCPH and ISM already have a strong position within international recruitment, also compared to other large international universities.

Overall, it can be concluded that there is a significant desire for greater clarity and streamlining of processes within international recruitment. This applies to both the recruitment and onboarding procedures. This demand is highlighted not only by the international employees themselves, but also by the recruiting managers, working groups and the steering committee. Long and unclear recruitment processes mean that the University of Copenhagen risks losing qualified employees, even before they have been hired.

Furthermore, it has been emphasised that although UCPH and Denmark generally enjoy a good reputation around the world, this is not enough to attract and retain the strongest candidates. There is an increased need for better advice and guidance, both in relation to career opportunities but also in relation to the good opportunities for external funding for research that exist in Denmark. This is an area where the University of Copenhagen has a particularly strong position and it is therefore a significant improvement for further optimisation and attraction.

Finally, several of the international employees express strong satisfaction with the services offered to them by UCPH and ISM upon arrival in Denmark. However, efforts should continue to disseminate and improve these services so that all new international employees and recruiting managers are aware of their opportunities, when they arrive at the university.