

Analysing the chances and risks of mobile researchers and their partners/families within Europe

Introduction

TANDEM (acronym for “Talent and Extended Mobility in the Innovation Union”) is a transnational collaboration project within the European Union’s FP7 programme among the Dual Career Advice and Integration Services (ETH Zurich and University of Copenhagen) and the Euraxess Service Centres (in Bratislava, Copenhagen, Tartu, Thessaloniki and Zurich). The main aim of the TANDEM project is to analyse the mobility obstacles of researchers and their partners and family members, and to show various strategic and institutional ways of minimizing them. A special focus lies on talents’ support on a postdoctoral level and on female researchers in their academic careers.

Experience shows that young researchers choose countries and institutions, which offer a smooth transition with the least friction loss and a longer-term perspective for both their career and their private life. Thus, institutions need not only to offer an excellent and intellectually stimulating research experience and environment but also need also to address the social and cultural context and situation of the individual researcher. Despite social and cultural changes over the last decades, it is still mainly female researchers who face a dilemma building their career and being mobile while considering when and if they have children. Hence, there is a strong need to integrate high quality services with a wide range of co- as well as extra-curricular opportunities such as dual career services, child care options and recognitions of schooling approaches across countries if a country or an institution wishes to be attractive for the best researchers.

As mobility always requires an adaptation period to cope with culture shock, integration and orientation issues, dual career and integration services (DCIS) are one means to allow researchers to successfully continue their work despite the geographical move, as those services take care not only of the mobility obstacles but also help establish a satisfying work life balance. Therefore, the specific objectives of the present project include 1) an analysis of the current DCIS and how they can be adapted to the different career steps and therefore to the varying needs of the researchers, 2) a creation of a modular system adaptable to different institutions and their characteristics, and 3) a focus on the countries in the Tandem-research consortium (namely the above mentioned Denmark, Estonia, Greece, Slovakia and Switzerland) with a trend to brain drain by studying how DCIS could influence positively and support brain circulation.

In a very first step, under the guidance of ETH Zurich, a survey was conducted in the five participating countries (DK, EE, GR, SV and CH), and additionally in

the following European countries: Austria, Germany, Finland, Norway and Sweden. The reason for the latter selection was that Denmark maintains good relations (with a relatively high number of researchers moving right across the boarder for career purposes) to the Northern countries and Switzerland maintains good relations to its neighbouring countries Austria and Germany also due to language reasons. We therefore reached a higher response rate and a broader picture with little effort.

Although the introduction of DCIS is an answer to the changing situation that requires from the researchers to be mobile, there is not much data about the obstacles and needs of mobile researchers (and their partners & families). The analysis of this situation within the individual countries and the comparison between them should show in which countries and of which institutions DCIS are offered and/or how DCIS ideally should be designed so that the needs of mobile researchers are adequately met. Furthermore, we wanted to learn from the people concerned, which DCI initiative they consider to be the most important and which measure in their eyes would be most efficient and be the most needed and best accepted.

Methods

Initially, information was collected about the current state of DCIS, mainly in Switzerland and Germany, as both are regarded as highly advanced concerning DCIS. Based on this material, an interview guideline was created and semi-structured interviews were conducted with several people from various backgrounds mainly in Switzerland but also in Germany and the UK ($N = 11$). The people asked represented the most important target groups and key players such as service providers from the university and the private industry, postdoctoral researchers, and people on an assistant as well as full professor level as well as their spouse/partner (where applicable). The aim of the qualitative interviews was to gather material for the subsequent surveys.

Based on the interview material, a first survey draft was presented at the kick-off meeting of the TANDEM project in Zurich in October 2012. The aim was to have feedback from the very diverse member countries in order to adapt the survey in a way that each country is satisfied with the result. After the meeting, the member countries performed their own interviews in order to get a clearer picture about the situation of their own country. A final version of the survey including all the feedback of the member countries was developed. However, each country still had the possibility to add individual questions to their own country version to allow for specific national aspects and questions to be included.

Each country used its own distribution systems to reach as many researchers as possible who would fill in the survey and would likely send it further to their partner if applicable. The survey was programmed using an online tool (QuestBack Unipark), so it was not only more convenient to distribute the survey by using e-mail

with a direct link that would guide people to the respective page, but also easier for the data collection, as no further equipment was needed to read in the data. A disadvantage of the used method was that we would never know how many people have been reached in the end, as most of the partner countries had to ask their colleagues from other universities to distribute the survey within their institution. Thus, we will never be sure whether the survey reached all researchers at all universities within a country. This has to be taken into consideration when looking at and interpreting the data, as the sample might not be as random as one might have wished it would be. However, the error should be non-systematic, thus, we expect the results to be representative.

In order to have a common ground for all people within all countries answering and working with the survey, we defined the most important terms at the very beginning of the survey. The definitions were as follows:

Dual Career Couple

A couple where both partners pursue a career and aim to have a gainful employment. They may work either in academia or outside.

Integration Initiatives

Integration initiatives are related to the questions after an international move which are relevant for the well-being and settling of the new hires and their families in the new place.

Mobility

Mobility relates to geographical and intersectoral mobility, not to social mobility.

In addition to the survey for the researchers and their partners, a survey for the service providers was developed and distributed in the member countries. Unfortunately, we did not reach enough service providers within each country and thus, data analysis could not be based on a big enough sample to be able to make any general statements. The aim of the provider survey was to also get an idea of the offers within the private industry apart from the universities and research institutions, as dual career services would be definitely useful to extend to the private industry, since a dual career couple in our definition does not exclusively consist of two scientists or researchers working in academia or a research institution. Furthermore, we also wanted to find out to what extent employers currently are responsive to dual career and integration aspects and how far they go in their support of their new hires. We wanted to find out if service providers in the private sector offer more generous DCI packages than universities.

Results

In total, more than 3000 researchers and their partners mainly from Europe but also from other continents have answered the survey. Through the Euraxess network, we could also gather enough data for analysing the situations in the following countries next to our ten target countries: France, *Italy*, Spain, United Kingdom and United States. Although Italy did slightly not reach a large enough sample size, we still included the results in the attachment, as Italy is an important partner country for many of the other investigated countries. Thus, the present results provide a very deep and broad insight into the opportunities and challenges of today's highly mobile researchers.

In the following, when speaking about researchers, we mean researchers *and* their partners if not indicated differently. The majority of the samples consist of doctoral and postdoctoral researchers, which were also the target audience, most of which are first hires and not second hires. When speaking about countries, not specifically mentioning which, it refers to a general statement that is true for all countries that had the minimum amount of people to make a statement. Thus, we only state results about the countries that have enough participants within a single calculation. Which countries those are for each single calculation can be withdrawn from the attachment.

The attachment includes results of three of the open questions, given as pie charts, that have been categorised based on a qualitative analysis of the data. For the interpretation of the results of the open questions It is important to know that only the first obstacle, challenge or positive aspect, respectively, have been categorised.

In the attachment, the results are always given for five countries as a comparison. The first reason is that initially, only the results for the member countries were calculated (DK, EE, GR, SV and CH) for the second meeting in June 2013 in Thessaloniki. Then, the results for the five additional countries that had a separate country link were calculated (AT, FI, DE, NO and SE). And last, we analysed data for the following countries: FR, ES, IT, UK and US. Those were the ones that had enough participants to make general statements, mainly gathered through the Euraxess-network link. However, the results for the US are not incorporated in the present paper, as this is a purely European perception. Another reason why we did not combine the results for all countries into one document is that it would have become too confusing for the reader.

The majority of the researchers are on a doctoral and postdoctoral level, and **most have lived in two to three countries since they started their higher education** (e.g. Bachelor studies), except for AT, SE, ES, and SV. In those countries also many researchers have never been mobile since they started their higher education.

Those researchers in CH that have indicated to have never been mobile since starting with their higher education said to 50% that they like to live in CH. Additional-

ly, a third each indicated that they find it difficult to match mobility with their private life and their partner's career plan. A similar result can be found for SE where also 52% indicated that they simply like to live in their country, 41% stated that they find it difficult to match it with their partner's career plan, and 39% stated that they never saw the necessity to go abroad.

In most countries except FR at least **40% up to 60% moved with a partner**. About 30% in most countries have children (ES: 45%), except for FR and FI where this number is much lower (9% and 18%, respectively).

Most of the researchers in all countries have a European nationality and a Master degree from Europe. It is DK and FI that have more non-European researchers compared to the other countries, even though 63% and 62%, respectively, still are Europeans. However, only about **60% have previously lived in another European country**. This number is even lower for Sweden (47%). Those who did not move from a European country have mostly moved from the United States.

Researchers in all countries indicated that **being mobile highly affects their private life plan**. Researchers also clearly indicated that they went abroad because it was important for their career and not due to the fact that there were no opportunities in their own country. Researchers also indicated that they are not strongly professionally connected to their home country. For all countries researchers indicated that their **professional integration is better than their private integration**, except for ES where this number is about equal. However, there is much room for improvement for both aspects in all countries.

When researchers were asked as an open question what the biggest obstacles were within the first three months after arriving in their current country, for most countries **it is language and culture they struggle most with**. In NO and SE it is also administrative/bureaucratic issues that are stated as a big obstacle. In the UK it is clearly administrative/bureaucratic issues that are the biggest obstacle, which might be explained by UK being an English-speaking country thus not adding the language barrier to the complex transition phase of the international hires. When asked to state the most challenging aspects about mobility in general, researchers clearly indicate social aspects as the most challenging. This means that it is difficult to establish new friendships, but it is also difficult to maintain old friendships. Moreover, **researchers miss their family and friends, also as a support network**. Asked what the most positive aspects of mobility are in general, researchers rather gave a diverse picture whereby the possibility to have new experiences, the chance to discover new cultures, one's personal and social enrichment, and occupational advantages were stated about equally. Still, when asked to weigh the positive and negative aspects about mobility against each other, **researchers rated mobility as rather more positive than negative in general**.

In CH, ES and UK the majority has never made use of integration initiatives neither formal nor informal whereas in DK, FI and DE the majority has already done so. In FR, SE and NO the distribution is about equal. As integration support was in-

indicated as highly important within all countries and from those who did not make use of integration initiatives, the majority would have wished to have such a support in most countries, one can conclude that there really are no integration initiatives for those countries at least for doctoral and postdoctoral students.

The survey included a ranking task that aimed to force people to trade the following aspects against each other according to their importance when arriving in a new country: living/housing, public authorities, taxes, language course / intercultural knowledge/training / culture, leisure, social policy, dual career and childcare/school. Researchers without a partner and without children clearly indicated that living/housing is the most difficult aspect. However, as soon as researchers have a partner and/or children, **dual career and child care/school are ranked as the most important aspects next to housing/living.**

Whereas the majority in DK has heard of (formal or informal) dual career services, in CH and SE most researchers have never heard of it. In NO and DE about half have already heard of (formal or informal) dual career services. Just as for integration initiatives, dual career services are seen as highly important by researchers in all countries and the majority of those that have never heard of dual career services would have wished to have such a service, at least in CH the only country that had enough respondents for this question. Moreover, the existence of **dual career services would clearly make a difference on researchers' final decisions** if they had more than one job offer. Although highly controversially discussed at the service provider's level, the researchers consider dual career services as highly positive.

In CH, second hires indicated to rather prefer to have help finding the best match for their career than to receive a job offer from the partner's institution with the best possible matching. This clearly shows that they prefer to be the active person who shapes his/her career him/herself instead of being offered something out of "goodwill" which is a temporary solution and which may cause problems of acceptance and respect (accusation of nepotism). However, both options were rated as rather desirable. Also, second hires would rather accept a position in a slightly different area from their educational profile than a position they were actually overqualified for.

Within the first hires, 22% to 39% of the couples made about the same amount of compromises within their career to match the career perspectives of the partner whereas between **59% and up to 75% of the first hires state that it was their partner who made more compromises.** Consequently, the picture is upside down for the second hires as we know of the Swiss sample where about 41% of the couples made about equal compromises to match the career perspective of the partner, however it was the second hires themselves, thus 53%, who made more compromises to match the career perspectives of the partner, i.e. a first hire.

When asked to state whether they think that the structures in the *institution they work* support a balance between private life and career, researchers in CH, DE and SE rather gave an average approving rating whereas researchers in NO and

especially DK gave a rather highly approving rating. When asked to state whether they think that the structures in the *country they live* support a balance between private life and career, researchers in DE again rather gave an average approving rating whereas researchers in NO and also SE and especially DK gave a rather highly approving rating. Researchers in CH however even gave a below average rating.

Researchers with children strongly indicated that they would have had a faster advancement of their career without children and they would have had more publications. However, they did not necessarily state that they fear to have less quality in work or less motivation with children. When asked to assess several options for a better work-life balance, **researchers assess flexible work hours as highly useful, followed by help with childcare and unlimited work contracts.** It is not necessarily part-time work that they rate as most useful.

Discussion

Mobility clearly affects researchers private life plans. Thus, being mobile is already a conflict in itself. Being mobile is a clear decision also for one's career, as researchers strongly state that they do it for career reasons and not because there are no possibilities within their home country.

Researchers state a number of different reasons when asked for the most positive aspects about being mobile. Although these aspects together with the decision for one's career probably let people conclude that in general mobility is rather positive than negative, it is clearly the social aspects that are most challenging for them. Therefore, **it is the social topics that should be taken care of in order to improve mobile researchers' situations.** Researchers state that the loss of their social support network is one of the most challenging obstacles they face abroad. This especially becomes important for partners with children, as **they are completely reliant on third party help when it comes to childcare.** Another indication that childcare is an important topic could be seen when researchers with children were asked about the best option for a better work-life balance. It was help with childcare and unlimited work contracts next to flexible work hours that were most preferred.

Limited work contracts make it difficult to plan the private future. It is a high-risk situation for a couple to follow the partner or one of the partners in the academic career, because the job perspectives of the partner are unclear and the financial security is not guaranteed. One academic salary is often not enough to support a family. The possibility of getting assistance with issues like dual career, childcare and housing would definitely help researchers to reduce this insecurity.

The strong demand for flexible work hours can be interpreted as a fact that researchers like their job and would not like to reduce their workload. However, it could also be interpreted in a way that they are aware of the fact that they cannot work less in case they would like to progress their career. A third interpretation could

be that they definitively like to be more involved in childcare. Whatever the reasons might be, **flexible work hours should not be the most challenging measure for universities to implement into their structures.** Still, this was a somehow surprising result, as one would have expected that they might also ask for part-time work in a researcher's position. Institutions and especially universities should be aware that **researchers with children indicate to have fewer publications and progress their career slower.** This circumstance **should be taken into consideration in application procedures and tenure procedures.**

Childcare/school, dual career services and living/housing were ranked as the most important topics when arriving in a new country. Thus, **living/housing should clearly be taken care of for incoming researchers,** as it obviously affects all and would make a huge positive impact if improved.

About 40-60% of the researchers moved with their partner. Thus, also dual career is not a topic that affects only few researchers. This situation should especially alarm CH and SE where almost none of the surveyed researchers have ever heard of dual career services, because researchers clearly state that the existence of a dual career service for their partner would influence their final decision if they had more than one job offer. Looking at the high number of second hires that have to make compromises within their career because of the mobility of their partner, it becomes evident that **dual career services would help to improve this very dissatisfying situation for people living in an equal partnership.**

In general, it is clear that **for doctoral and postdoctoral students,** the target audience that at the same time also comprises the majority of respondents, **there are not enough or at least not good enough integration initiatives and dual career services,** be it on a formal or informal basis, even though there are differences between countries. For all countries, there was room for improvement be it for private integration or professional integration. Each university should be interested in improving the integration and dual career situation, as there are not only the best professors, there are also the best doctoral as well as postdoctoral students. If an institution does not want to shrink artificially the pool of possible world class candidates, it should also invest in those social factors and not only in research related benefits, as otherwise, **it is left with the people who are ready to sacrifice their private life which are not necessarily also the best researchers or ideal employee.**

Conclusion Europe

The existence of integration and dual career initiatives varies widely between European countries. Surprisingly, it is not the countries with the best and most financed research environment that offer the most initiatives, such as Switzerland and Sweden. One possible explanation could be that they are research wise attractive

enough and do not need to offer additional incentives for world class mobile researchers. The question is how long those countries can keep this exclusive position in Europe. This will closely be accompanied by the European aim turning brain drain into brain circulation within Europe.

The European research population still is a male population of up to two thirds although women are catching up.¹ This situation is against what one would expect knowing that women form the majority of graduate students at universities. However, the female percentage constantly falls reaching the doctoral preparation stage. At the top level, e.g. full professorship, only 20% of women are left. One quoted reason is that female researchers have been less mobile than male researchers. The present results clearly reveal that researchers are mobile for career reasons. The question is where do all the highly educated female researchers work and isn't it a waste of talent and a huge economical loss to not have them integrated better into the academic or research system.

According to estimates, there will be a high demand for well-educated professionals, technicians and managers worldwide in the near future.² So far, many governmental and business leaders have long relied on migrant workers to fill the talent gaps. However, it is also said that this will not be enough to minimise the upcoming talent shortfall. Thus, one strategy will be to rely better on the skill sets of women. Therefore, to extend the talent pool, one needs to make childcare easily available and one needs flexible work schemes to name only a few. The same demand for help with childcare and the need of flexible work hours has been found in our data for men and women. It is clear that with children the career is slower and the publications are fewer. However, the solutions researchers ask for do not represent insurmountable barriers and moreover they do not affect work load. The impression is that it is not necessarily the framework conditions that are not given, but especially the fact that those framework conditions are not brought to live from the people within institutions. And maybe it needs one more generation to finally implement equality of men and women when it comes to bear the brunt of work balancing career, childcare and keeping the family happy. Still, some countries like Denmark do already pretty good on the subject. It thus seems to be possible. Consequently, it is important that not only companies understand this but also that the government takes measures, as they determine the boundary conditions.

Still, countries will remain highly reliable on migration.² Thus, migration policies need to be improved in order to ease migration. Most mobile researchers within Europe have a European nationality and most have a Master degree from a European country. However, many are directly recruited from the United States. It seems that many researchers from Europe go once to the United States in their early ca-

¹ European Commission (2013) She Figures 2012. Gender in Research and Innovation. Statistics and Indicators. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

² World Economic Forum (2011). Global Talent Risk – Seven Responses. Geneva: World Economic Forum.

reer, but then come back. One speculation would be that they miss being close to their family and friends, the reason that was named most often for the biggest challenge of being mobile. Thus, as a brain drain country, you should offer return packages and also offer spouse career services and childcare programmes for the returning people.²

Young researchers choose countries and institutions, which offer a smooth transition with the least friction loss and a longer-term perspective for both their career and their private life. The reason why universities should be especially sensitive to work-life balance issues is the fact that researchers are more likely to have children than the working population in general independent of their sex.³ Thus, there is a clear demand for European universities to solve the childcare problem, as this was strongly stated as highly preferable for a better work life balance next to flexible work hours and unlimited work contracts. Moreover, European countries should be highly interested to invest in solid, prominent and professional dual career services. It will not only attract world class researchers but it is an additional economical win for a country, as most second hires are well educated, having at least a Master degree, many even hold a PhD. It will pay off in the future, not only as an additional win to reduce the predicted talent shortfall, but it will bond the world class researchers to their institutions and their new country.

It is culture and language that are among the biggest obstacles for foreigners within all investigated European countries. However, it is also an advantage of Europe to have cultural and lingual diversity that makes Europe so unique to live in. Foreigners can not be expected to perfectly speak the language of a new country from the beginning and European countries should try to strongly assist foreign researchers with integration and dual career topics. At the same time it is the researchers that should be aware that it needs an effort to learn a language and to immerse in another culture to be able to fully integrate. Most of the researchers also indicate those new experiences and the learning about new cultures as a big advantage of being mobile. It needs both sides to take an effort in order to make the most of (requested) mobility.

Our personal conclusion is that the expectations from the researchers' side and the possibilities from the institutional side are not that far away as one might think after reading the present report. Some of the major obstacles are language and culture. It is clear that as an institution one cannot change cultural issues, however, the access to free or cheap language courses also for partners and family members would be a relatively easy task. Additionally, one could think about cultural awareness trainings. We consider a minimal amount of integration and dual career services from the institutional side as part of the social responsibility they have to take when actively wishing to attract and recruit the best talents worldwide.

³ European Commission (2013) She Figures 2012. Gender in Research and Innovation. Statistics and Indicators. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

The same initial support as for dual career solutions is needed for childcare and housing, as these two also address basic needs. Unsolved, they will hinder researchers to produce great work, which actually was the initial reason why they have been hired over from abroad. What is needed is a common consciousness about the situation for all parties. It is clear that institutions cannot find the perfect position for partners, offer day care places for all foreign hires' offspring and offer an inexhaustible reservoir of apartments to rent at the same time. However, a foreign researcher (with partner/family) needs to be assured that her/his institution can provide her/him with information about the most important topics and offer a certain degree of active support on all those basic needs as part of their social responsibility.

The aim should be to help people to help themselves. It is clear that in the end, researchers have to integrate themselves and this needs an extra effort that they should make. However, as each country also profits from this international recruitment, we as a society should become more open. Mobility is a fact, integration is not. Institutions, the biggest profiteers of this change, should thus pioneer.

Conclusion Denmark

The focus of this summary is to explore obstacles and strengths international researchers and their families' face, while living and working in Denmark. More than 200 international employees and their partners from all eight Danish Universities participated in the survey. Important topics highlighted by respondents are analysed and substantiated with key measures and areas of improvement.

Demographics - Danish Respondents

There is a higher female participation of (54%) in comparison to male (46%) in the survey with about 109 respondents having a PhD as their highest qualification. In addition the most number of respondents who participated in the survey were from the University of Copenhagen.

The general international researcher landscape in Denmark reveals a large mix of nationalities. One in three new researchers at Danish Universities is from abroad. The survey also proceeds to demonstrate a trend that Denmark attracts more non-European researchers in comparison to the other countries participating in the TANDEM project.

In addition, Denmark has also doubled its number of new international PhD researchers from the past years. Reviewing the data from the Copenhagen University international researcher population itself, the top European countries are (Germany, Sweden, Italy, UK and France) and top Non-European countries are (China, USA, India, Canada, and Russia).

Retaining new international PhD researchers is a challenge, since many of them return home after they have finished their PhD due to tough immigration policies or difficulty in getting a job as according to the Danish National Audit Office report. Career progress and job satisfaction are key factors for all however; additional factors highlighted include family concerns, work life balance, dual career, social integration, childcare and schools.

Given this knowledge the survey proceeds to reveal key insights of international researchers and their family. Why certain questions are highlighted as areas of improvements and others as strengths. The results help in identifying changes and implementations that might help improve the international climate in Denmark and especially in retaining these highly educated and skilled individuals.

Areas of Improvements in Denmark

In this section, key obstacles international researchers and their families face are introduced; together with descriptions of key measures and also areas of improvements to consider.

Language and Culture issues rank as a major obstacle faced by 36% of internationals in Denmark. However, this figure is lower than the other European countries participating in the TANDEM project.

More than 1/3 of the respondents highlight that aside from language and culture, **social aspects** is their second biggest challenge.

Key Measures in place:

Even though Danish is spoken in the country, the number of people speaking it worldwide is rather nominal. English on the other hand is widely spoken, taught in schools and even introduced as an administrative language in a growing number of institutions and organisations. Understanding and knowing the Danish language might be the initial barrier for anyone who moves to Denmark or is looking for a job; but one can easily get by with speaking English in every day circumstances.

Language classes are conducted in many schools that cater to internationals and their families. These classes are free for the first three years of the international's life in Denmark. This is a drive within the country to promote the language and make it accessible for new comers. It is an initiative to help internationals integrate better in knowing the language and ultimately understanding the Danish culture.

A growing number of the bigger international companies and organisations in Denmark adopt a language policy which prescribes the use of English and Danish in the workplace. In some of the bigger companies, the working language is primarily English; and Danish is only used when colleagues are casually talking to one another or during lunch. This is still seen as a challenge by international colleagues as they find themselves excluded from casual yet important social conversations.

Areas of Improvements:

Additional considerations can be provided to support international researchers and their families get better acquainted with the Danish culture. This includes an understanding of “differences in hierarchy”, “differences in the levels of trust” and the “unwritten law of Jante” in a Danish work environment.

These considerations play a big part in how one acts and interacts at work and social situations. It is something that one is expected to know and understand from the beginning. Internationals could be provided with information on understanding these unwritten rules and code of conduct prior to arrival in Denmark.

Danish cultural courses could highlight what Danes mean when they say what they say and why they behave in certain ways. Important information on how to interact and communicate with Danes at work and at social settings could also be useful.

Understanding aspects such as “they avoid confrontation” and “prefer low hierarchy environments” will assist an international to integrate better.

Several organisations and Universities offer cultural courses or use culture as a topic in their introduction courses, but there is still a huge demand from internationals to learn more about the Danish culture as they are still finding it hard to understand the intricate nuances.

Social Networks is identified as an area where 39% of the respondents feel is most difficult for them to establish in Denmark.

Further reviewing the survey, it is noted that about 40% of the participants have not lived in another country before their move to Denmark. As family and friends are not at close range, an international will need a support system to help them cope with the move. This then raises the importance of establishing a social network right away.

Even though 60% of respondents have previously lived in one or two other countries, prior to moving to Denmark, the survey should indicate that it is easier for them to adapt. However, it only highlights that, despite having lived in another country, the ability to adapt and integrate is still a big issue even with the respondent’s experience and background.

When it comes to friendships, a large percentage of international researchers and families (73%) agree that it is difficult to form friendships with Danes. Many note that they find them hard to approach and connect with socially. They also find that Danes in general do not have a positive attitude towards new comers and that they are quite private.

Integration is an area that the respondents would like to receive more support with. Many feel a lack of connection with society in general and experience limited opportunities for emotional support in the new country. Many also cite missing established networks and family as their top inconveniences. They would like to recreate these established networks in Denmark.

A consideration internationals might want to reflect on is their own personal way of socialising and connecting with people e.g. what were they like in their own country in terms of socialising, meeting new people and introducing new people into their own social circle? An international's cultural or personal experience and comfort level with meeting different types of people will determine the success, speed and overall transition in the new country. This might provide an insight into how easy or difficult it might be for someone to adapt and integrate in Denmark.

Internationals may have to come out of their comfort zone and be open to attending different networking and social events and to keep increasing opportunities to connect with people in different settings. Building bridges to Danish networks will take time and once an understanding about the cultural nuances is formed; establishing friendships will become easier. The key thing in Denmark, as in many other countries, is to be open and to allow another to get to know you and your culture.

Key Measures in place:

Many networking and social events are organised in Denmark, providing opportunities for people to engage and network. Organised events are also available for internationals and their families to sign up to meet other like-minded individuals. These are organised by various institutions such as municipalities, Universities, libraries, job centres, public and private interest groups.

Most Danish Universities organise several networking events monthly, which are open to both Danish and international employees and their family. Some events are joint University events or organised by several different companies and institutions. Denmark has the highest percentage of membership per capita to different interest groups and sports organisations in the world. These organisations are open to both internationals and Danes and provide opportunities to further one's network and social calendar. Therefore, it will be vital to become members of these organisations if newcomers would like to meet other Danes. In addition, international researchers with children can tap into the ready social and professional network present through their children's school environment.

Areas of Improvements:

There are many Danes who in general are open and forth coming in befriending internationals, but there are those who may have had friends since childhood and feel that they have a strong network and are not keen in expanding it.

Policies and practices can also be included in the institutions to enable integration e.g. an idea could be to have a show and tell cultural day where an international can bring their food from home or other things they would like to share about themselves and their culture. This might enable other Danes to get to know the internationals in their workplace better.

Several mentor programmes are in place for international employees to meet with their Danish colleagues. Experience highlights though that, if these programmes are not made mandatory and structured, the interest wanes and the programmes cease being effective.

Administrative Issues is the next big obstacle that 17% of the respondents face. Particularly, many have issues in completing non-English documents, as they are not able to understand the documents and are unsure in what supporting documents are required for the application.

The most important solution that internationals and their families' feel they need, are guidance and information on the different paperwork and forms required. Many state it will be prudent to have as much support as possible when initially settling in Denmark, especially with obtaining official documents which are not in English. Suggestions are to have translated forms and instructions in English, and a checklist before and upon arrival as accompaniments.

International researchers agree that, it is also not easy to get a general overview of relevant rules and regulations. Non-European internationals also face additional issues e.g. with unclear immigration policies and long waiting periods for their residence permits.

But 59% of international researchers in general find that Danish authorities are relatively easy to deal with. 74% of the international researchers indicate that most public authorities are able to communicate in English.

Key Measures in place:

To counter these administrative problems, many forms and web systems have an English option. This is greatly helping to improve the administrative process. In addition, many of the government agencies have English speaking consultants who are able to provide support either over the phone or in person.

Further, the municipalities in the four biggest cities in Denmark have housed all relevant Danish government authorities under one roof called International Citizen Service (ICS). Internationals arriving to Denmark will be able to meet with relevant authorities and get needed information to ensure their paperwork is completed within a few hours. Having these authorities' under one roof, will help to curb confusion and assist a new comer to navigate the world of Danish paper work a lot easier.

In addition, Universities assist international researchers in different ways. The University of Århus for example, accompanies international researchers to ICS to assist with paperwork. The University of Copenhagen (as part of the international initiative) has an office in the same building where ICS is located, for any new international researcher and their family to connect with the International Staff Mobility (ISM) consultants directly.

Furthermore, there are several contact and network groups where both, representatives from Danish Universities and Danish authorities take part in discussions and workshops to continue to remove administrative barriers.

The tax and immigration offices hold seminars at several Universities to inform international researchers about new practices and changes. The tax office also visits some Universities, twice a year where international employees and their families will be able to discuss directly with the consultants regarding their tax assessments.

Areas of Improvements:

Several Universities and private companies already have in-depth checklists for internationals to follow e.g. agencies that one needs to visit and the forms to be completed. These checklists however, quickly become out of date and new comers get confused reviewing old information. A solution could be to have a central place, where these checklists are updated. This could be e.g. at the Workindenmark website (a governmental agency providing information to all internationals moving to Denmark) or the umbrella organisation "*Danish Universities*".

Another key point is the lack of transparency and understanding of the complicated tax and pension systems in Denmark. Either the information that institutions are providing is not adequate, or it is still explained in a complicated manner. Additional support such as specific information meetings on these topics could be arranged. Another possibility could be a payable service where external consultants are able to provide support and assistance with settling in Denmark to international researchers and their families.

Housing is another obstacle internationals face when they first arrive in Denmark. Many find it complicated to understand Danish housing abbreviations and terms. In addition, they are not able to find suitable housing for the price range or location that they require.

Key questions raised are: How to understand the areas to live in, what does semi-furnished/ fully furnished mean in Denmark, and how to find the condition and the rental limits of apartments.

Key Measures in place:

To counter this, several Universities have an office which deals with housing. Some of these institutions own apartments, which are offered to the international researchers and their families. But within Copenhagen, this placement is still insufficient. These apartments are usually high in demand and are hard to come by with long waiting periods. Another initiative is a joint website for researchers to rent their apartment to fellow researchers while they are away on fieldwork.

The recent launch of the Researcher Hotel offers basic inexpensive rooms to internationals to rent for longer periods. The Researcher Hotel also provides international researchers an immediate solution to their living needs and a place to stay within the

city vicinity while enabling new internationals a chance to network and socialise with other internationals living there. Weekly dinner clubs and other social activities are organised to encourage comradeship and companionship.

Areas of Improvements:

Not all Universities have a housing office in place and perhaps within Copenhagen different Universities could collaborate on this issue. The municipality could also play an active role, in reserving apartments for international researchers. In general, the Danish government is focusing on creating more housing options in bigger cities to cope with this demand.

Another option is to create a more transparent English website, with clear information to understand the housing market, and what to look out for especially for new comers who have never lived in Denmark. There are rental sites and blogs which are provided to internationals as part of their welcome package by their institutions however, this information may be missed by the international with other concerns on their mind.

Areas of Strengths in Denmark

Work life balance is a strength, which is ranked highly by (39%) of international researchers and their partners. Many identify that there are several opportunities for flexible work options available and that the structures in their institutions support a balance between private life and career.

Key Measures in place:

As Denmark is famous for its work life balance, many companies and Universities offer their staff for example paid lunch, possibility to work from home and discounts on insurance and holiday homes.

Moreover, all employees who work for public institutions have 6 weeks paid leave and two “sick days” for each child under the age of 7 who falls ill. These benefits are becoming a standard practice within the working culture in Denmark; and most employees expect to receive these benefits. It is also quite a common occurrence that employees leave their office by 3pm to pick up their children from day care and continue to work from home in the evenings.

Areas of Improvements:

However, not all work environments are able to support this flexibility. For instance, the research field may demand longer working hours, but in general work hours and over-time practice is enforced by labour union agreements and the institutions governing policy.

Many Danish employers also offer many options in improving work life balance. It is however, easy to offer these different options but, at the end of the day an interna-

tional will need to understand how to make full use of these services being offered to them. There could also be a greater focus on how to reduce stress and to instil a good work life balance practice.

Integration policies, practices and dual career services are offered and around 60% of the respondents feel that these services are adequate. Respondents answered that, there isn't a need for additional implementation of services as they receive sufficient information.

A growing number of international researchers relocate to Denmark with their partners. Thus, dual career services become top priority for many, since the partners are also interested in pursuing a career. Besides that, housing especially in the bigger cities, is expensive and having a dual income becomes important.

The aim is also to discourage a split family situation, when one partner is not able to find suitable work in Denmark and the partner who is not able to find work, returns home or to another country where they are offered a position. This puts pressure on the international hired in the country as he/she may consider terminating or shortening the contract as the separate living situation puts a strain on the family.

Key Measures in place:

Most respondents feel that there are no missing integration services in Denmark. However, Denmark still needs to improve the current services offered. It shows that feedback and opinions from internationals are considered seriously and solutions implemented either country wide or in relevant insitutions.

Many international families (83%) rely on two incomes prior to arriving in Denmark. High taxation and costs of living puts a strain on the family if the partners are not able to continue working in Denmark. However, several governmental and private programs have been introduced and in place to counter these issues. The programs are complimentary and help the partner build their own network outside of the other half's network. Support is also given to help partners find jobs independent of their other half's network or work environment.

There are several programs in place that are both useful to the international and partner when considering working in Denmark.

Different governmental organisations, Universities, private initiatives, and job placement centres provide complimentary (mostly) and paid courses to new comers.

These courses consist of how to create and submit a cover letter and curriculum vitae for a specific position but, keeping in line with the Danish requirements.

There are also possibilities to get complimentary private job coaches as the Danish job market is unique to other countries. This possibility should be made available to all new comers and partners.

Several municipalities offer a wage subsidy scheme called ("løntilskud") specifically targeting partners of international employees. In this scheme, partners will have the

opportunity to work for six months in a public or private company whilst earning salary.

Public or private companies will receive a subsidy and need to follow certain guidelines in accordance to this scheme which is, to protect both the employee and the labour market in general. This scheme is not to be used to replace current positions and should be implemented in support of enhancing the jobseeker's possibilities in his/her job search. The purpose of a wage subsidy position is to either retrain or strengthen professional skills of an individual and which these skills can be tested by gaining professional experience within a desired workplace or private company.

Small-Medium sized enterprises are the backbone of the economic environment in Denmark and start-up companies get financial support and advice from public organisations. These organisations provide grounds for internationals to lend their work expertise and experience whilst also offer possibilities for the enterprises to expand business opportunities with the international's home country.

Areas of Improvements:

International researchers who have completed their studies in Denmark, find it more difficult than Danish graduates to find suitable positions. One of the main challenges is the lack of a good network and relevant job experience. It has been reported that many internationals actually leave Denmark sooner due to difficulties within this area.

Secondly, broader issues of integration have caused this separation, although work and life in Denmark is described as attractive and comfortable by internationals, integration in the workplace is not always smooth and effortless. This causes friction and a sense of non-acceptance arises, which leaves internationals feeling alone and excluded. Both a mental and professional barrier is created which then forces internationals to consider opportunities outside of Denmark.

A tenure track program, prior to 2013 was not available in Danish Universities. Thus, having this in place now in some Universities will provide an impetus for international researchers to feel connected to their institution and to consider a long-term view of living and working in Denmark instead of the current two to three year contract. Furthermore, career training and guidance will also provide researchers opportunities to continue to stay and work in Denmark.

Information on cross border job opportunities could also be made relevant for internationals and their partners; especially if finding a job within Denmark is not an immediate possibility. Sweden and Germany offer alternative job opportunities and this information together with providing support on cross border rebates on tax, pension might go a long way in internationals understanding their options better.

In conclusion

All in all, the respondents have expressed an overall satisfaction with their move to Denmark and living in a Scandinavian country. Many integration services are in

place and work life balance in society as a whole, keeps international researchers satisfied in working and living in Denmark. These are areas where internationals are still struggling with and require improvements; such as with administrative paperwork and finding appropriate housing.

The language, meeting Danes and expanding their network are still big concerns. There are many free language schools and networking possibilities, but “just” taking part in these does not necessarily mean that one will be better integrated in a Danish society.

Despite, having initiatives related to career advice and job search, partners of international employees still have a hard time finding relevant jobs in Denmark. This puts a strain on the family and especially in quantifying the reasons to continue to work and live here.

The existing cooperation between private and public organisations has a positive effect on the wellbeing of international employees and their family. Continuing to expand in this cooperation will be fundamental to removing barriers and improving the situation for internationals and their families in Denmark.

The survey clearly shows that, there are many opportunities for Denmark to attract international talent and to retain them by either changing or adjusting existing practices and introducing new initiatives.

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