



Country Check (4): Denmark

Small, yet enormous!

Hestland Danmark - Denmark, the horse country - is small but has a lot to offer. Germany's northern and flat neighbouring country is not only famous as a paradise for cyclists and Lego country as well as for its design, liquorice, hot dogs, its happy inhabitants and the surprise winner of the European football championships of 1992. In the country between the North Sea and the Baltic Sea, horse breeding, which has always been closely linked to the nobility, has a centuries-long tradition. Nowhere else on the world is the density of horses supposed to be higher. Fools of the Danish Warmblood breed have the highest success rate in making it to the top of the international dressage scene.

In part 4 of our "Country Check" series we are drawing a portrait of Denmark and its equestrian trade sector.

Denmark is a country of horse breeders, and particularly Jutland, which is adjacent to Germany and quite rural, is a horse area," Achaz von Buchwaldt says. The highly decorated equestrian trainer knows the small kingdom well. The now 72-year-old trained the Danish show jumping team for six years, from 2005 to 2011. "Horses have had a major influence on the Danish society, from a historical point of view, on the military, the industry and agriculture," Rikke Hoejgaard from Dansk Ride Förbund (DRF), the Danish national association of the FEI, explains. And Dennis Thrysoe from the manufacturer Karlslund Riding Equipment adds: "Horses are an extremely important part of our culture and our business life - both are still very vibrant."

SURROUNDED BY THE SEA

Apart from the mainland (Jutland), Denmark consists of about 500 islands. Even Copenhagen, the capital, is located on an area surrounded by the Baltic Sea: Zealand. 1.4 million of the 5.7 million in-



"Denmark is a country of horses and horse breeders."

Achaz von Buchwaldt

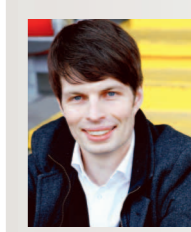
habitants of Denmark live in the capital and the surrounding areas. 40 per cent live in Zealand, 86 per cent in cities. Denmark is heavily urbanised. There are relatively

few areas included in a nature conservation scheme. Due to its many islands and rugged coasts, the country has a relatively long coastline of 7314 kilometres. The border - there is only one in the South towards Germany - is comparatively short with only 67 kilometres. The highest elevation, the Møllehøj hill in the vicinity of Aarhus, is only 170 metres high.

Apart from the capital, Aarhus (228,000 inhabitants), Odense (158,000) and Aalborg (122,000) are counted among the largest cities. Denmark is divided into the five regions Nordjylland (North Jutland), Midtjylland (Central Jutland), Sydjylland (Southern Denmark), Hovedstaden (Capital Region) and Sjælland (Zealand). In addition to the heartland, the kingdom also includes Greenland (56,000 inhabitants) and the Faroe Islands (50,000 inhabitants). Without these two autonomous external territories, the mother country is not quite the size of the German federal state of Lower Saxony.

GERMANY IS MOST IMPORTANT TRADING PARTNER

Since 1973, Denmark has been a member of the European Union (EU), but never introduced the euro as a means of payment and kept the Danish krone instead (1 krone = 100 öre). Currently, one euro is about 7.5 kroner. Both with regard to exports and imports, Germany is the most important trading partner of the eleventh largest EU economy. In 2015, the small kingdom exported goods worth 85.9 billion euros and imported goods worth 77.0 billion euros. 1.5 per cent of the gross domestic product of 266.2 billion euros were



OUR AUTHOR

Sebastian Reichert, qualified journalist, head of the Reitsport BRANCHE office in Leipzig, is in charge of the Country Check section.

If you are interested, please get in touch with Sebastian Reichert (sebastian-reichert@gmx.de) or the RB editorial team (info@meenen-presseservice.de). Your criticism and suggestions are most welcome.

generated by the agricultural, forestry and fisheries sector in 2015.

Another interesting note regarding the country's agriculture: there are twice as many pigs living in Denmark than people. The animals are either exported or end up in a Danish hot dog or on the plate as the



favourite national dish: pork belly with rind. Apart from the agricultural and forestry sector, which supply a large part of the Christmas trees for the German market, for example, the high-technology industries and tourism are also major sources of income. According to the German Travel Association, about one million Germans (12 million overnight stays) travel to Denmark every year.

HAPPY PEOPLE

Maybe they want to experience and take along some of their northern neighbours' happiness. According to studies of the Earth Institute of the New York Columbia University, the Danes are among the happiest people. While Denmark ranked first in 2015, Germany took 16th place among 160 countries in a comparison compiled for the United Nations. The "World Happiness Report" combines country-specific data (gross domestic product, life expectancy etc.) with surveys on the self-perception of the residents.

The Danks Ride Forbund (DRF), founded in 1917, is the umbrella association for all riders, carriage drivers, vaulters and other equestrians. It is one of the eight national associations that founded the FEI world association in Paris in 1921. With almost 69,000 members (and 542 riding clubs) the DRF is the seventh largest sports association in Denmark. Only the associations of the following sports have more members: football (336,713 members), golf (152,103), swimming (183,204), gymnastics (177,395), handball (105,567) and badminton (79,618).

RIDING CLUBS EVERYWHERE

“Clubs and associations are very popular in Denmark and joined by a strong commitment to voluntary work. Together with the economic situation as well as the attractive nature this is what makes equestrianism so strong in this country,” DRF spokeswoman Rikke Hoejgaard says. “There’s a riding club in almost every town in Denmark,” Uwe Schrader, sales representative for HKM Sports Equipment in Denmark, confirms. Compared to 2014, the DRF grew by 0.45 per cent. In the 50 years between 1958 (3,559 members, 48 clubs) and the maximum numbers in 2008 (78,699 members, 541 clubs), the DRF recorded an enormous growth.

DANISH WOMEN LOVE HORSES AND FOOTBALL

As regards women, the Ride Forbund is the fourth largest association: almost as many Danish women ride (61,954) as play football (63,294). Among the 13- to 18-year-old girls, riding (15,335) is the second most popular sport after football (19,559), according to the number of members. In the riding association, the group of the girls up to twelve years old is the age group with the most members. As a percentage in relation to the population, the largest numbers of riders can be found in the municipality of Brønderslev in the region of North Jutland, where 4.1 per cent of the residents are a DRF member (1479 members in total) - followed by Gentofte (4.0 per cent, 3018 members) and Gribskov (3.9 per cent, 1620 members) in the Far North of Zealand.



WORLD'S HIGHEST DENSITY OF HORSES

With 5.7 million inhabitants and around 200,000 horses, Denmark probably has the world's highest density of horses. An analysis compiled by three economists in 2010 revealed that the entire horse sector generated a turnover of 24.7 billion Danish kroner in 2007, which is approximately 3.3 billion euros. In total, there are around 21,000 full-time jobs connected to horses in Denmark, that means that on average ten horses secure one workplace.



In Denmark, organised horse-breeding can be traced back to the 14th century. Equestrianism and horses have always been very closely connected to the nobility. As soon as 1562, King Frederik II founded the Royal Stud of Frederiksborg with Spanish and Andalusian horses in the city area of Copenhagen in the grounds of the former Esrom monastery. For more than 200 years, Frederiksborg was one of the leading breeding centres in Europe. To this day, Christiansborg Palace in Copenhagen has its own riding facilities and stables. “It is great that the Royal Family actively takes part in equestrian sports,” says Susan Gylling from Mink Horse, a Danish clothing and equipment brand for horse and rider.

FREDERIKSBORG HORSES - GENETIC HERITAGE

The royal families are also the ones to have founded the world’s oldest thoroughbred baroque horse breed. Frederiksborg horses are considered a genetic heritage of Denmark. With the declining demand for working horses, however, sport horse breeding spread all over the country in the past decades. The Danish Warmblood, a cross of various breeds, has been bred since the middle of the last century - and is very successful in equestrian sports. According to the ranking of the Dutch equestrian journalist Jac Remijnse, the Danish Warmblood has the highest percentage of foals that actually make it to the top of the international dressage scene.

Today, the Danish Warmblood accounts for the major part of Danish horse-breeding. With the expansion of leisure-riding, however, Knabstrupper (mostly leopard piebalds, i.e. greys with black and/or brown spots) and Frederiksborg horses experienced a renaissance due to their intelligence and good-naturedness. “In the past 15 years, the focus in breeding has clearly shifted towards dressage horses. A lot of money has been invested in this,” explains the former national coach of the Danish show jumping team, Achaz von Buchwaldt, who also notices an intensive exchange with the horse-country Schleswig-Holstein (until 1866 a province of Denmark).

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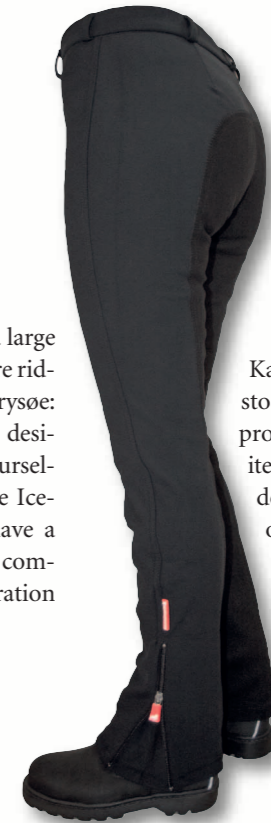
Karlslund – the Icelandic Horse experts

The Danish company Karlslund was founded in 1999 and has always been specialised in equipment, saddles and clothing. It was taken over by the current owners in 2009.

In the beginning, Karlslund primarily made saddles, but now there are about 500 active item numbers, spanning saddles, accessories, bridles, clothing, gift articles and much more.

Karlslund has resellers all over the world, primarily in countries where Icelandic Horses are kept. “We send out about 2500 shipments to our resellers per year,” company owner Dennis Thrysoe explains.

Karlslund is currently based on a large farm with Icelandic Horses, which are ridden professionally every day. Thrysoe: “This means that all products are designed, tested and used every day by ourselves. All employees at Karlslund ride Icelandic Horses, and therefore we have a great network in the Icelandic Horse community which provides a lot of inspiration for new products.”



The sales concept of Karlslund is based on large stock capacities and ongoing products (very few seasonal items), so that resellers don't have to place large orders in advance. Besides, there is a very strong emphasis on good customer service.



Karlslund performs most functions, including design, logistics, marketing, photo-shoots, IT systems etc. itself.



Contact: www.karlslundriding.com



The Thrysoes, husband and wife as well as company owners



DRESSAGE IN THE LAND OF LEGO

Today, Danish horses, particularly dressage horses, have an influence all over Europe. One of the main actors is Blue Hors Stud, behind which is Kjeld Kirk Kristiansen. The 68-year-old is the grandson of the company founder of Lego (= leg godt - play well) and main shareholder of the worldwide largest toy manufacturer. He is considered to be the richest



Mink Horse's idyllic company headquarters in Holbaek/Denmark

man in the country. The influence top companies and the nobility have on Danish equestrianism, together with German experts, can best be illustrated by the example of the dressage riders Anna Kasprzak and Nathalie of Sayn-Wittgenstein-Berleburg.

Both have German fathers and (used to) live in Germany. Anna Kasprzak celebrated her first big successes, which were also supported by her mother's sponsoring, on the Blue Hors horse Future Cup. Hanni Toosbuy Kasprzak owns the multi-billion shoe brand Ecco in Bredebro, close to the German border. The mother of Nathalie of Sayn-Wittgenstein-Berleburg is Princess Benedikte, the younger sister of Queen Margrethe II and a passionate rider and breeder herself. Both riders are (still) trained by Rudolf Zeilinger. The trainer from Emsbüren in Lower Saxony has been national coach of the Danish dressage riders since 1997 but will quit the job in the summer of 2017, the latest, at his own request.



Country comparison:

	Denmark	Germany
Square kilometres	43.094	357.340
Inhabitants	5,7 million	81,6 million
Largest population group	25 to 54 years (41,4 %)	25 to 54 years (41,4 %)
Births per 1000 inhabitants	10,3	8,5
Population growth	0,2 per cent	0,7 per cent
Gross domestic product	46.233 Euro	37.000 Euro
Unemployment rate	6,2 per cent	4,6 per cent
Utilised agricultural area	2,6 million hectares (61,5%)	16,7 million hectares (47,9%)
Largest city in terms of inhabitants	Copenhagen (0,6 Millionen)	Berlin (3,5 Millionen)
Number of large cities (more than 100,000 inhabitants)	4	76
Umbrella association	Dansk Ride Forbund/DRF	Deutsche Reiterliche Vereinigung/FN
(members)	(68.934)	(697.126)
Number of riders	0,2 million	1,7 million
FEI tournaments	123	331
Number of competition horses	15.000 (higher than C-level)	147.000
Total number of horses	0,2 million	1,1 million
Equestrian trade fairs	Hestesportsmessen, Odense	spoga horse, Cologne
Equestrian fair	Hest & Rytter, Herninga	Equitana, Essen
Number of equestrian magazines	6	Über 60
Number of equestrian specialist shops	approximately 250	more than 1.500

Sources: information from FFE, DRF, DIF, GTAI, estimates

TRADE FAIR IN ODENSE

What is remarkable about the Danish equestrian sports industry is that in contrast to many other (larger) German neighbouring countries it has its own trade fair: the Hestesports fairs in Odense on the island of Funen in central Denmark. Among the exhibitors participating in the next trade fair in 2017 (14 and 15 January) are the three German manufacturers Waldhausen, Pfiff Reitsport and HKM Sports Equipment. "We have participated in the fair for about ten years. It would not be possible for us to keep in touch with many of the small shops without the fair," Uwe Schrader of HKM explains.

The Danish public exhibition "Hest & Rytter" (Horse & Rider) is the largest exhibition in northern Europe for equestrian equipment, according to the organisers. It takes place at the same time as the "Dansk Varmblods Hingstekåring" - Denmark's warmblood stallion show - in the MCH exhibition centre in Herning on the Danish mainland. It will take place for the 38th time from 9 to 12 March. In 2016, more than 60,000 visitors swarmed the three exhibition halls and stands of 300 exhibitors. One of them was the braiding and rope company Brockamp from Bürstadt. "The Danish market is interesting for us as we sell very special products," managing director Thomas Brockamp says.

TWO LARGE RETAIL CHAINS

There is a total of approximately 250 retail stores for equestrians in Denmark. One of two major retail chains for equestrian equipment is "Horze". The beginnings of the company ("Finn-Tack") go back to the year 1982 and three horseshoe ma-

nufacturers from Lahti in Finland. Apart from eight stores in their home country and nine shops in Norway (and three in Germany), the company is also represented in Denmark with eight stores. Almost three times as many shops, 21, belong to the cooperative company Danish Agro, which also offers equestrian products.

"20 per cent of equestrian specialist shops in Denmark are large, well-stocked shops," says Susan Gylling. Her company Mink Horse is supplier for more than 120 shops in the country. "The rest are small one-man businesses, maybe supported by the husband, wife, daughter or son. Many of them exist in cooperation with the numerous riding clubs." On the - generally less densely populated - western side of the country there are also fewer equestrian specialist shops. Nevertheless it is remarkable that although Denmark is a small country from a geographical point of view, and accordingly does not have a huge equestrian sector, either, there is a relatively large number of well-known manufacturers.

Why is that? "Denmark has always been a very innovative country of traders," Dennis Thrysoe of Karlsund Riding Equipment, a manufacturer specialising in Icelandic Horses, says. "The Danish themselves place more value on brands of renowned manufacturers when shopping than the Germans, for example," HKM sales representative Uwe Schrader explains. Last but not least, Denmark is famous in the world not only for Lego, hot dogs, liquorice and its royal family. Susan Gylling of Mink Horse explains what is also true for the manufacturers of equestrian clothing and accessories: "Danish design has a very good reputation abroad." land einen sehr guten Ruf.

