Denmark Regional Growth Forums

Framework and setting

Geographic scale
Regional Growth Forums are established in all five Danish regions (Northern Jutland, Central Jutland, Southern Denmark, Zealand, Capital Region) and additionally one Growth Forum in the regional community of Bornholm. The population covered by the Regional Growth Forums varies between the regions: approximately 40,000 in Bornholm; 700,000 inhabitants in Zealand and Northern Jutland; and 1,300,000 in Central Jutland, Southern Denmark and Capital Region.

Policy framework
The Regional Growth Forums are important partners in the regional efforts of creating and maintaining growth. Each Growth Forum consists of 20 members appointed by the Regional Council. On national level, the Danish Growth Council ensures cohesion between the regional efforts and the government business development policy. The chairman of each Regional Growth Forum has a seat on the Danish Growth Council.

Partnerships at work

Rationale
The rationale is to gather the most important partners within the field of regional development (e.g. private business sector) to decide on the strategic development of each region.

Objectives
The main objective is to support business development and improve Danish business competitiveness in the global economy. In particular, the Growth Forums aim to:
- improve the framework conditions for business growth, international co-operation and trade;
- promote regional economic development and employment;
- strengthen public authorities’ co-operation on business development; and
- stimulate co-operation between public and private sector on business development.

Functions
The Growth Forums have three main functions:
- developing the Regional Business Development Strategy;
- monitoring regional and local economic trends; and
- providing recommendations on co-financing for regional business development activities (including European Structural Funds) based on the Regional Business Development Strategy and action plan.

Policy areas
Regional development, business development, employment

Policy tools/Instruments
The Regional Growth Forums act as a stimulus for regional innovation by advising the Regional Councils on regional business development and innovation support measures and subsidies.

Timeframe
The Regional Growth Forums were established in 2006 and are re-elected every four years.

Partners
Representatives from the private business sector, knowledge and higher education institutions, labour market policy organisations, social partners and the municipalities and Regional Councils constitute the Regional Growth Forum. Each Regional Growth Forum has its own secretary.

Contracts
Partnership Agreements on growth and business development are signed between each Regional Growth Forum and the government.

Legal status
None, the Regional Growth Forums act as a committee.

Sources of Financing
Even though each Forum gives recommendations on the use of European Structural Funds and Regional Development Funds; the Forum itself has no funds at its disposal. The secretaries’ salaries are covered by the Regional Councils.

Results
In 2009, the Regional Growth Forums have a strong focus on measuring the impacts of the initiated projects.
Partnerships' highlight

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme/Project</th>
<th>Regional Business Development Strategies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Timeframe</td>
<td>2007 - 2010 (in some regions: 2007 - 2012)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>Each Regional Growth Forum prepared its own Regional Business Development Strategy identifying regional challenges and opportunities. They vary significantly but the areas of focus such as education, labour force, innovation, technology and entrepreneurship are common for all of them. The strategies set ambitious targets for how each region should develop. The Regional Business Development Strategy of Northern Jutland region focuses on developing clusters in the food industry, the construction sector, healthcare, and renewable energy as well as tourism. The region of Central Jutland creates three mega-initiatives in energy and environment (wind-energy), healthcare and the food industry. The region of Southern Denmark supports cluster development in the food industry, transport and logistics, Mechatronics offshore business, as well as applying measures to attract and retain high-skilled workers. The region of Zealand’s objective is to strengthen innovation capacity in small and medium sized enterprises through stronger co-operation with knowledge institutions. Special attention is also given to promoting Zealand as an attractive area to live. The Capital Region supports potential entrepreneurs, promotes business internationalisation and tourism development. One of the challenges of the Regional Community of Bornholm, an island area, is to retain its workforce by creating new job opportunities.</td>
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Contacts

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**Partnership co-ordinators at regional/local level**
Region Northern Jutland: www.rn.dk/RegionalUdvikling/Vaekstforum
Region Central Jutland: www.rm.dk/regional+udvikling/v%c3%a6kstforum
Region Southern Denmark: http://vaekstforum.regionsyddanmark.dk/wm220355
Region Zealand: www.vfsj.dk/Sider/Default.aspx
Capital Region: www.regionh.dk/vaekstforum/Menu
Regional Community of Bornholm: www.brk.dk/brk/site.aspx?p=12901