

## 5.3 Youth representation bodies

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This section focuses on government policies, guidelines and rules that establish, regulate and support youth representation bodies. It provides a detailed overview of the structure, function and role of such youth representation assemblies, councils or unions.

### **Youth parliament**

Denmark has no regular formal consultation body at state level like a national youth parliament or an institutionalised youth council.

However, every second year the Danish parliament hosts a one-day ‘youth parliament’ ([Ungdomsparlamentet](#)). The purpose of the initiative is purely educational. Pupils from 8th and 9th grade in Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands are invited to draft a bill to the parliament. The top 60 bills are selected and 178 pupils participate in the youth parliament. The pupils gain knowledge about the decision-making process in the Danish

parliament, meet ministers and MPs, as well as practice their argumentation, discussion and presentation skills.

The initiative is financed by the Danish parliament, the Ministry of Children and Education and DUF.

## **Youth councils and/or youth advisory boards**

In Denmark, several youth councils, panels, and advisory boards exist at state, regional and municipal levels.

## **Youth representation bodies at state level:**

**The Danish Youth Council** ([Dansk Ungdoms Fællesråd, DUF](#)) is an umbrella organisation representing 80 youth organisations in Denmark.

## **Structure**

DUF is not part of the constitutional structure. Since DUF is a private organisation, [the legal framework of DUF](#) is its statutes.

Because DUF is also responsible for distributing 145.8 million DKK of the profits from the national lottery and football pools (udlodningsmidlerne) to Danish youth organisations and youth projects, DUF is also regulated by:

- Ministerial order on the presentation of accounts (Bekendtgørelse om regnskabsaflæggelse for og revision af tilskud til Dansk Ungdoms Fællesråd, [BEK nr 16 af 11/01/1999](#))
- Act on Receipts from the national lottery and football pools (Udlodningsloven, [LOV nr 1532 af 19/12/2017](#))
- Act on Public Administration (Forvaltningsloven, [LBK nr 433 af 22/04/2014](#))
- Act on Transparency in Public Administration (Offentlighedsloven, [LOV nr 606 af 12/06/2013](#))

Furthermore, organisations receiving funding from DUF must present their accounts according to:

- The ministerial order on presentation of account and audit of support for youth initiatives (Bekendtgørelse om regnskabsaflæggelse for og revision af tilskud til støtte af ungdomsformål, [BEK nr 1753 af 21/12/2006](#))
- The executive order on management support of national children and youth organisations and guidelines for initiative support (Bekendtgørelse om ydelse af driftstilskud til landsdækkende børne- og ungdomsorganisationer samt retningslinjer for initiativstøtte, [BEK nr 495 af 29/05/2016](#))

The Act on Receipts from the national lottery and football pools establishes that DUF determines the rules regarding the distribution of the profits from the national lottery and football pools ([udlodningsmidlerne](#)). However, the Lottery Youth Tribunal must approve the rules, and the Lottery Youth Tribunal supervises DUF's distribution and use of the profits from the national lottery and football pools. Furthermore, the tribunal handles complaints about DUF's distribution of grants.

[Members of DUF](#) are children and youth organisations.

Member organisations must:

- Have local divisions in four of the five Danish regions.
- Have more than 50% of their membership below the age of 30.
- Offer enlightening, educational or civic activities.
- Have a democratic structure.

## **Composition**

There are no public measures facilitating greater inclusiveness and diversity.

The assembly of delegates is the highest authority of DUF.

### **The assembly of delegates:**

- Elects DUF's board.
- The assembly of delegates is composed of delegates and the board.
- The number of members at the assembly of delegates is based on the members of each organisation. Less than 1000 members entitle an organisation to one delegate. More than 85 000 members entitle an organisation to 13 delegates. The maximum is 17 delegates per organisation.
- The age range of members: More than half of the organisations' members must be below the age of 30 years. There is no provision regarding the age range of delegates and boards members.
- Only delegates are entitled to vote.
- The voting for board members is cast by ballot.
- Simple majority is used when nothing else is stated.
- Simple absolute majority is used in elections for president and vice president.
- The assembly of delegates is held each year, but the mandate period of the board is two years. Elections are held in odd-numbered years.

### **The board:**

- Is the highest authority after the assembly of delegates.
- Is elected at the assembly of delegates.
- Consists of 19 members: a president, a vice president, 3 members of the executive committee, and 14 ordinary members. The members of the board must represent different youth organisations.
- Mandate period is two years.
- Candidacies must be announced one week before the assembly of delegates.
- Meets every month.

### **The executive committee:**

- Is the highest authority after the board.
- Is elected at the assembly of delegates.
- Mandate period is two years.

## **Role and responsibilities**

The assembly of delegates determines the policies and activities of DUF.

DUF's objective is to strengthen children's and young persons' involvement in the associational life and in democracy locally, nationally and globally. DUF has four long-term focus areas:

- Young people's voter turnout: DUF works to increase the voter turnout among young people. DUF runs campaigns during election time in order to generate attention on the election and to make young people politically aware and politically confident. After the election, DUF analyses the voter turnout and publishes reports.
- Lowering the voting age from 18 to 16 years.
- Support associations:
  - DUF supports youth associations financially with three types of grants based on the profits from the national lottery and football pools (udlodningsmidlerne).
  - DUF assists youth associations with regard to administration, economy and the legal framework (e.g. tax, insurance and municipal grants).
  - DUF conducts surveys and research projects on different aspects of young people's associational life.
  - DUF hosts workshops and courses for the member organisations (project development, development of international project/partnerships, youth leader courses, etc.).
- Selects the Youth Municipality and the Youth Organisation of the Year.

Furthermore, every second year the assembly of delegates establishes the political objective of DUF's work. In the 2018-2019 strategy period, the focus is on including all young persons in the community, both nationally and locally.

Lastly, DUF plays a role in policymaking. DUF represents the organised Danish youth in several committees and policy fora:

- Special EU Committee Regarding Education and Youth (EU-specialudvalget for Uddannelse og Ungdom) under the auspices of the Ministry of Children and Education
- EU Structured Dialogue (EU's strukturerede dialog)
- Council for Children's Learning (Rådet for Børns Læring)
- 2030 network: The parliament's cross-political network for the UN's sustainable development goals (SDG)
- Development Aid Committee (udviklingspolitisk råd)
- UN Youth delegates

DUF also formulates hearing statements and are represented in state advisory ad hoc committees.

## **Funding**

DUF is primarily [publicly funded](#).

[The minister for equal opportunities has established a youth council](#) with the objective of engaging young people in the debate on challenges and solutions to inequality in Denmark and internationally, and to provide input to the government's gender equality strategy.

The minister has appointed 17 young people who represent different opinions on gender equality. The young people are not formal representatives of youth organisations but generally have an affiliation with associational life.

The youth panel participates in several workshops until 8 March 2021, and the minister intends to invite some panel members to participate in international conferences in order to give them a voice on the global stage.

[Youth Climate Council](#) under the Ministry of Climate, Energy and Utilities. See [section 9.3](#)

## **Youth panels**

### **The Media Council's SoMe panel**

The Media Council for Children and Young People ([Medierådet for børn og unge](#)) is a national council that classifies films for children under the age of 15 and provides guidance on children's and young people's use of computer games and digital media.

Since 2016, the Media Council has had a regular youth panel consisting of 10 average young people in the 13-15 age group with no experience from pupil's councils, etc. The 10 young people come from all over Denmark.

Save the Children Denmark and Centre for Digital Youth Care are partners in the project, and the panel members were selected from Save the Children's school network. The selection was based on local teachers' nomination of qualified pupils.

The SoMe Youth panel deals with young people's use of social media and digital technologies. The panel has published recommendations to adults on how to guide young people in the use of social media. In the process of developing the recommendations, the Media Council has consulted the Centre for Digital Youth Care's online chat group, Cyberhus, as a measure to reach vulnerable young people and to improve the representativeness of the recommendations.

The panel has no political decision-making competences. The panel has presented their recommendations to the minister of culture and other relevant stakeholders.

The Media Council wishes to change the composition and structure of the panel, since it is difficult to gather the

young people. Every year, the Media Council and its partners select an entire class based on Save the Children's school network. The class advises the Media Council and partners regarding social media and digital technologies. The Media Council and partners continue the consultations in the chat group, Cyberhus.

### **The Children and Youth Panel ([Børne- og Ungepanelet](#))**

The Children and Youth Panel (Børne- og Ungepanelet) is the National Council for Children's ([Børnerådet](#)) panel. The National Council for Children is a state institution under the auspices of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Senior Citizens. The Children and Youth Panel is a regular survey in 100 Danish school classes randomly selected by the Danish School of Education (DPU). The National Council for Children chooses the focus of the survey (e.g. mental well-being, divorce, financial crisis). A preliminary examination is made in one class in order to understand the ways children and young people perceive and talk about the theme of the survey. This method ensures that children's perspectives are included in the formulation of the survey.

### **Expert groups of the National Council for Children ([Ekspertgrupper](#))**

The groups consist of 4-10 children/young persons with specific and personal knowledge of special problems that involve 5-10% of Danish children/young people (e.g. mental illness, poverty, children of convicts, etc.). The panel meets three times over 2-3 months, and the discussions in the panel result in recommendations to practitioners or policymakers. Sometimes the panel itself presents the recommendations. The selection of panel participants is complicated, since the panel must be experts on the selected theme. Thus, the National Council for Children is in close contact with other institutions that cooperate with children/young persons, for instance, schools, interest organisations, therapist groups. The National Council for Children obtains consent from parents or guardians when the child is below the age of 15.

### **Youth panel**

[Ungepanel.dk](#) is a national network of youth panels at the Danish hospitals. Currently, the network is composed of local youth panel representatives from Danish hospitals. Each local youth panel is entitled to four seats in the national network.

The age group for the local youth panels is 14-25 years.

All young people in the target group seriously or chronically ill can participate in the panel. The local youth panels meet several times a year. Some panels discuss local matters such as youth rooms at the hospital, while others discuss ill people's rights, school, and friendship.

The national youth panel network speaks out for young ill people and advises politicians and decision-makers at the hospitals.

Recommended regularity of consultation: 6-8 times a year

The youth panels are funded by the Danish regions.

## **YoungDenmark (UngDanmark)**

The Youth School Association (Ungdomsskoleforeningen) focuses on young people's possibilities to develop their competences and skills, equip them for life in a democratic society and develop their life quality. The Youth School Association offers young people from the local youth schools the opportunity to participate in YoungDenmark. YoungDenmark is a network of young people from the local youth schools. The focus of YoungDenmark is active democratic participation, youth involvement, and community.

YoungDenmark meets three times a year. The meetings are held and organised by local youth schools.

Among the board members of YoungDenmark, one member is appointed to the National Council for Children's Learning under the Ministry of Children and Education.

## **The Youth Ring's youth council (Ungdomsringens Ungeråd)**

The Youth Ring is an association for local youth schools and youth clubs. The association's objectives are to provide opportunities for children and young people to enter into communities where children and young people develop meaningful relations, tolerance, active citizenship communities, etc.

The Youth Ring has a youth council. The youth council targets young people with interest in young people's leisure time. The youth council consists of 11 members – two members from each region and a chair elected at the Youth Ring congress. The Youth Ring congress is the top-level authority of the Youth Ring.

The youth council has six members in the national board (Landsrådet) of the Youth Ring – one from each region and the chair of the youth council.

## **Youth councils/advisory board at the municipal level**

At the municipal level, two types of council/board exist:

- Youth councils
- Joint pupil council

The municipal youth councils vary greatly as far as structure, composition and political influence is concerned. Some youth councils are open to all young people in the municipality, others require an election. Some councils coordinate municipal/cultural events for the youth while others have political influence and their own budget. Most youth councils are entitled to be consulted by the city council (byrådet) in matters related to youth.

According to [NAU](#), which is a network of youth councils, 63 of 98 municipalities have a youth council.

The joint pupil council is based on the local pupils' councils from the municipal schools. Forty-four

municipalities in Denmark have committed themselves to a set of regulations established by the organisation Danish School Pupils ([Danske Skoleelever – DSE](#)). These municipalities are called pupil-friendly municipalities. The regulations obligate the municipalities to:

- Fund the joint pupil council with representatives from all local pupil's councils. The joint pupil council engages in school political matters.
- Commit to a minimum standard for youth influence.
- Assist the joint pupil council in its work. Often a civil servant assists the council.

In 2016, DUF made a guideline concerning the construction and influence of the youth councils and the joint pupil councils. DUF (2016) Retningslinjer for ungeinddragelse. DUF, København.

### **Higher education student union(s)**

In Denmark, student unions of higher education students are independent organisations. No student unions of higher education students are funded directly by the public. In order to receive public funding, primarily through DUF (see above), they must apply on equal terms with other youth organisations. DUF distributes part of the surplus from the profits from the national lottery and football pools to youth organisations.

### **The National Union of Students in Denmark**

The National Union of Students in Denmark ([Danske Studerendes Fællesråd, DSF](#)) is a national, independent interest organisation for students enrolled in higher educations in Denmark. The union was established in 1932.

DSF represents 16 student organisations from higher education programmes, altogether 165 000 students from higher education institutions across the country.

DSF represents the following student unions:

- [CBS Students at Copenhagen Business School](#)
- [Funen Art Academy](#)
- [Polyteknisk Forening at Technical University of Denmark \(DTU\)](#)
- [The Council of Architecture Students](#)
- [The Student Council at Aarhus University \(AU\)](#)
- [The Student Council at Design School Kolding](#)
- [The Student Council at Roskilde University \(RUC\)](#)
- [The Student Council at The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts – Schools of Visual Arts](#)
- [The Student Council at The Royal Danish Academy - Architecture, Design, Conservation](#)
- [The Student Council at The Royal Danish Academy of Music \(DKDM\)](#)
- [The Student Council at The Royal Academy of Music](#)
- [The Student Council at University of Copenhagen \(KU\)](#)
- [Student Council at IT University of Copenhagen \(ITU\)](#)

- [Studentersamfundet at Aalborg University \(AAU\)](#)
- [Syddanske Studerende at University of Southern Denmark \(SDU\)](#)
- [The Student Council at Rytmaskonservatorium](#)

## **Structure**

The [legal framework of DFS](#) is its statutes.

The main organs running DSF at the top level:

### **General assembly**

- The highest decision-making authority regarding organisational and economic affairs
- Held once a year in connection with the political conference
- The general assembly has the authority to make decisions regarding (list not complete):
- the budget
- exclusion of member organisations
- dissolution of the union
- amendments in the statutes

### **Political conference**

The political conference is the highest political authority of DSF.

- Held twice a year, in the spring and in the autumn
- The political conference in the autumn elects the president, two vice presidents, one member of the executive committee, one 'organisation responsible' in the executive committee and three members of the national forum

### **National forum**

- Is the board of DSF
- The highest authority in between the political conferences
- The national forum manages DSF according to policies decided at the political conference and the general assembly

### **Executive committee**

- Coordinates the work in the national forum
- In the political work, the executive committee refers to two committees: the academic affairs committee and the welfare and social affairs committee, which, in the everyday work, are the highest authorities

- within each policy area
- Takes action to implement the decisions made by the political conference

### **There are three political committees in DSF:**

#### **Welfare and social affairs committee**

The committee on welfare and social affairs handles all of the political issues that affect students' living conditions and their daily life. The committee develops DSF's policy on areas such as housing, transportation, state education grant graduate unemployment, and study environment. The meetings are open to all who are interested from DSF's member organisations.

#### **Academic affairs committee**

The committee on academic affairs handles all of the political issues regarding the students' educations and education institutions. The committee develops policy on areas such as quality in educations, funding, and democracy at the education institutions. The meetings are open to everyone from DSF's member organisations.

#### **International committee**

The international committee coordinates the international aspects of DSF's work. These aspects range from representation of the interests of students in Denmark in international forums, such as the European Students' Union (ESU), the Nordic Presidential Meeting (NOM), or the European Union, to managing international projects, such as partnership projects with the Palestinian Student Council Forum (PSCF) and the Zimbabwe National Students Union (ZINASU).

The committees develop DSF's policy between the political conferences. In the committees, there are representatives from DSF's member organisations, and the two vice presidents are secretaries for the committees along with the international officer. The committees get together approximately three times each semester.

### **Composition**

#### **General assembly and political conference:**

- Member organisations send delegates to participate in the general assembly and political conference.
- Elections for the political conference and the general assembly require that a quarter of the member organisations are present.
- The member organisations have votes according to the number of enrolled students.
- A delegate from a member organisation can have a maximum of three votes. Some decisions require simple majority, others require a majority of the vote from 33% of the member organisations present.

#### **Executive committee:**

- Five persons: The chair of DSF, the two vice chairs and two elected persons

- Mandate duration: one year

### **The national forum:**

- Currently 16 members: Eight members elected at the political conference, three representatives from the member organisations, and the five members of the executive committee. The members of the executive committee are automatic members of the national forum.
- The president of DSF is the chair of the national forum.

There is no guideline or outreach strategy to facilitate greater diversity.

### **Role and responsibilities**

DSF works for better educations and for the improvement of living conditions for its members.

DSF uses different strategies to gain influence on national policymaking. DSF is active in the national press, formulate hearing statements, run campaigns, conduct surveys on subjects relevant to students, and is sometimes represented in national committees set up by the government or other bodies.

In order to gain influence, DSF has, like other citizens and organisations, the possibility to convince MPs to formulate policy proposals.

Furthermore, since January 2018 [all persons entitled to vote in general elections in Denmark may formulate a policy proposal](#) if three additional persons sign the proposal. If the proposal subsequently receives support from 50 000 persons entitled to vote in general elections, the parliament is obliged to discuss and vote on the motion.

### **Funding**

DSF is funded by member fees, fundraising activities, and operating grants from DUF. DSF is an independent organisation, but it must comply with the funding rules established by DUF.

### **The National Student Union Student Forum**

The national student union Student Forum UC (SFUC; Studenterforum UC) unites university college students in Denmark. Members are local student councils from:

- University College Absalon
- Copenhagen University College
- University College South
- UCN
- UCL
- VIA University College

**Structure:**

The legal framework is the [SFUC statutes](#). The union is independent.

The main organs running SFUC are:

**Annual meeting:**

- The annual meeting is the highest authority of the union
- Held once a year.
- Elects the presidency.
- Establishes the policy of the union.

**The board:**

- The board is the highest authority in between the annual meetings.
- Manages SFUC according to policies decided at the annual meeting.

**The presidency:**

- Responsible for the day-to-day management of the union.
- Represents the public image of the union.

**Composition:****The annual meeting:**

- The annual meeting is open to all university college students, and all students are entitled to speak at the meeting.
- Every member organisation is entitled to seven delegates, who are entitled to speak and vote at the meeting. Among the delegates are the chair and vice chair of the member organisation.
- The annual meeting elects the presidency of the union and the mandate period is 1 year.
- All member organisations can send items for the agenda and all students can raise an issue under any other business.
- Three quarters of the member organisations must be present in order for the annual meeting to make decisions.
- Decisions are made by simple majority vote, amendments demand a two-thirds majority.

**The board:**

- Consists of a chair and a vice chair from all member organisations.

- The chair and vice chair of the board are elected at the first board meeting after the annual meeting.
- The mandate period of the chair and vice chair is 1 year.
- The board meets at least once every quarter.
- Board decisions require a simple majority vote.

### **The presidency:**

- Consists of a president and a vice president.
- Elected at the annual meeting.
- Takes office 1 August after the annual meeting.
- Every student from the member organisations are eligible.
- The presidency is elected by a simple majority vote.

### **Role and responsibility:**

- SFUC represents university college students' interests.
- SFUC work for the best professional, social, and physical surroundings at the education institutions.
- The main domains of SFUC's activities are: education and youth-specific topics such as the state education grant, student housing, education development, climate and the environment, and transportation.
- SFUC is part of the Education Alliance together with a wide range of student unions, interest organisations and trade unions. The Education Alliance cooperates on reducing budget cutbacks on education.
- All organisations and private persons can present a policy proposal if three additional persons sign the proposal. If the proposal is signed by 50 000 persons, the parliament is obliged to discuss and vote on the proposal. However, it is much more common that politicians consult relevant organisations in relation to a motion or that a ministry consult a range of organisations when formulating a policy proposal.
- The decisions made in SFUC are not binding on policymakers.

### **Funding:**

SFUC is funded through member fees and operating grants from DUF. SFUC is an independent union, but it must comply with the funding rules established by DUF.

### **School student union(s)**

In Denmark, students in primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education have the right to establish pupil councils. The legal framework is statutory instruments and acts by the Ministry of Education. If the students at a given education institution do not establish a council, the head of the institution is obliged to urge pupils to do so. The pupil council is the pupils' representative vis-à-vis the education institution.

Act on primary and lower secondary education (folkeskole): (Lov om folkeskole, [LBK nr 823 af 15/08/2019](#))

The Ministerial order (bekendtgørelse) for the pupil council in primary and lower secondary education (folkeskole): (bekendtgørelse om elevråd i folkeskolen, [BEK nr 695 af 23/06/2014](#))

The Ministerial order for all pupil councils in general and vocational upper secondary education: (Bekendtgørelse om elevråd ved institutioner for almen gymnasial uddannelse, almen voksenuddannelse eller erhvervsrettet uddannelse samt private gymnasieskoler, studenterkurser og kurser til højere forberedelseseksamen, [BEK nr 84 af 30/01/2013](#))

## **The Association of Danish Pupils ([Danske Skoleelever, DSE](#))**

DSE is the only school pupil union for primary and lower secondary education.

### **Structure**

DSE is an [independent interest organisation](#).

The members of the organisation are local pupil councils from recognised primary schools, youth schools, and other youth education institutions in the primary school sector. Furthermore, individual pupils are admitted as members if they approve DSE's objects clause.

Members organise in at least 17 local divisions and these divisions are organised in five regions.

Local divisions are led by a local board with 11 members. From these local divisions, a president and vice president are elected. The presidents and vice presidents of the local divisions are members of DSE's board.

DSE's board can decide to establish additional divisions. The decision requires two thirds of the votes in the board.

The main organs of DSE are:

1. The general assembly
2. National conference
3. The board
4. The presidency

### **Composition**

#### **The general assembly**

- The highest authority of DSE
- Held once a year
- Every member school is entitled to send delegates to the general assembly based on the number of pupils at the school
- Individual pupils can participate as observers

- All delegates and member councils are entitled to formulate proposals
- The general assembly elects the president, vice presidents and 34 locally elected members
- Decisions are made by simple majority, except for amendments, which require a majority of two thirds of the votes
- Extraordinary general assemblies are held when the board is unanimous or is 10% of the members wish so

### **The national conference**

- Held once a year
- The purpose of the conference is to train pupils and to determine next year's policy
- Rules regarding delegates and observers are similar to the general assembly
- Decisions are made by simple majority

### **The board**

- Consists of the president, two vice presidents, and 34 locally elected members
- The board is the highest authority after the general assemblies and the national conferences
- Mandate period: one year

### **Role and responsibilities**

Objectives: The objectives of the organisation are to promote the interests of the pupils, engage and activate the pupils and to strengthen pupil participation.

Activities: DSE is involved in several activities (list not complete):

- Research
- Manages a telephone service funded by the Ministry of Education
- Develops teaching material
- Develops courses for teachers and classes
- Manages the certification of pupil-friendly municipalities (see above)

Policymaking:

In order to gain influence, DSE has, like other citizens and organisations, the possibility to convince MPs to formulate policy proposals.

### **Funding**

DSE is funded by member fees from municipal school pupil councils, revenues from courses and teaching materials, and funding from public institutions such as DUF and the Ministry of Education. DSE is financially accountable to DUF and the Ministry of Education according to their rules on accounting and reporting.

**There are three national unions for pupils at upper secondary educations receiving public funding:**

- DGS
- LH
- EEO

The national school unions organise the local pupils' councils. The legal framework is the Ministerial order for all pupil councils in general and vocational upper secondary education: (Bekendtgørelse om elevråd ved institutioner for almen gymnasial uddannelse, almen voksenuddannelse eller erhvervsrettet uddannelse samt private gymnasieskoler, studenterkurser og kurser til højere forberedelseseksamen, [BEK nr 84 af 30/01/2013](#))

The pupils' councils cooperate with the board of the local education institution, the head of the institution, and other staff groups regarding educational, cultural, personal and economic matters of the pupils.

Council members participate in all committee meetings related to pupils' concerns. Council members also participate in board meetings. At some education institutions, the council representative is entitled to vote.

Each year, a pupil meeting is held. All pupils at the institution are invited, all are eligible and have the right to vote.

The mandate period is one year.

Each pupil council has its own regulations and procedural rules that establish the exact number of members, the responsibility of the council, the frequency of meetings, etc.

The education institution provides funding for the activities in the council (e.g. membership fees for national pupil unions).

The councils unite in national member organisations for each youth education. In the national organisations, the pupils fight for better education, better conditions for pupils and for influence at a national level.

**The Union of Danish Upper Secondary School Students ([Danske Gymnasieelevers sammenslutning, DGS](#))**

**Structure**

The Union of Danish Upper Secondary School Students (DGS) is a national, independent interest organisation. [The legal framework of the union is its statutes.](#)

Local pupil councils can join DGS. The members are organised in nine regions.

- The regions coordinates DGS' activities at the local schools
- The regional secretaries represent the local schools in DGS board meetings
- The highest authority in the regions is the annual meeting held once a year
- Each region has its own statutes

- The annual meeting elects the leadership of the region, which as a minimum consists of a treasurer and a number of regional secretaries

The main organs of DGS are:

- The national congress
- Activity conference
- Board
- Executive committee

## **Composition**

A simple majority vote is used when not stated otherwise. All students in upper secondary schools are eligible when not stated otherwise. Only students enrolled in the Higher Preparatory Examination Programme are eligible for the Higher Preparatory Examination Programme committee.

The election of a president, two vice presidents and board members in DGS is split up in four separate elections.

### **The national congress:**

- All local pupil councils each have one vote. Members of DGS are given two additional votes.
- Furthermore, members of DGS receive one additional vote for every 300 students enrolled.
- A simple majority vote is used when not stated otherwise.
- The national congress meets once a year.
- Local student councils are entitled to send amendments and proposals to the national congress.
- The national congress elects the president, two vice presidents, eight board members and three substitute members.
- The election of a president, two vice presidents and board members in DGS is split up in four separate elections.
- All students in upper secondary schools are eligible, when not stated otherwise.
- A quarter of the members of DGS or one third of the board can call an extraordinary national congress. Initiators must formulate an agenda.

### **Activity conference:**

- Meets once a year
- Determines next year's policy

### **The board:**

- Highest authority between the national congresses and the activity conferences
- Consists of president, two vice presidents, two representatives of the Higher Preparatory Examination Programme, eight board members, an International Baccalaureate (IB) representative, and 18 regional

secretaries

- The board meets at least 7 times a year
- The mandate period is from 1 July to 30 June
- Pupils can participate in board meetings and have the right to speak, except when the board discusses matters concerning private individuals
- The executive committee or one third of the board can summon an extraordinary board meeting

### **The executive committee:**

- Highest authority between the board meetings
- Set up by the board on the constituent meeting
- Consists of the president, two vice presidents and six members of the board
- Mandate period: from the board's constituent meeting to 30 June the following year
- Meets at least 12 times in the mandate period

### **Higher preparatory examination programme committee:**

- Consists of a limitless number of higher preparatory examination programme students
- Only students enrolled in the higher preparatory examination programme are eligible for the higher preparatory examination programme committee
- The committee has decision-making competence regarding higher preparatory examination programme matters
- The committee appoints two representatives to participate in the board
- The two representatives must be confirmed at the national congress
- Meets at least four times in the mandate period from 1 July to 30 June

### **IB network:**

- Consists of a limitless number of IB (International Baccalaureate) students.
- An executive committee for the IB network consists of two students from each IB school. The representatives are elected during regular network meetings.
- The IB network appoints one member to the board of DGS.
- Meets four times a year.

The day-to-day management of DGS is handled by the president and the two vice presidents.

### **Role and responsibility**

#### **Objectives:**

The role of DGS is to strengthen the local pupil councils. DGS acts locally through campaigns, workshops and presentations. The objective is to engage and activate pupils.

## **Activities:**

Each year DGS runs campaigns on subjects related to upper secondary education. The campaigns can result in demonstrations, activities in the press, or surveys.

## **Policymaking:**

DGS engages in national policymaking. Nationally, DGS tries to influence MPs from all parties dealing with education as well as the civil service in the Ministry of Education.

In order to gain influence, DGS has, like other citizens and organisations, the possibility to convince MPs to formulate policy proposals. Furthermore, since January 2018 [all persons entitled to vote in general elections in Denmark may formulate a policy proposal](#) if three additional persons sign the proposal. If the proposal subsequently receives support from 50 000 persons entitled to vote in general elections, the parliament is obliged to discuss and vote on the motion.

The DGS also formulates hearing statements.

The decisions of DGS are not binding on policymakers

## **Funding**

Approximately three quarters of DGS' budget are covered by public funding. DGS' grants primarily come from DUF (see above), from the Ministry of Children and Education, and from membership fees. DGS is financially accountable to DUF and to the Ministry of Children and Education according to their rules on accounting and reporting.

## **The National Federation of Business Students in Denmark ([Landssammenslutningen af Handelsskoleelever, LH](#))**

The National Federation of Business Students in Denmark (LH) unites business students in Denmark.

## **Structure**

LH is an independent, interest organisation. The legal framework of LH is its statutes.

Local pupil councils can join LH. Local member councils are organised in six regions that are the connection between LH and the local council. The regional offices coordinate regional activities at the regional business schools.

The main organs of the LH are:

- The general assembly: the highest authority of LH.
- Member conference: the second highest authority.
- The board: the highest authority in between the general assemblies and the member conferences. The board is responsible to the general assembly and the member conference.
- The executive committee.

## **Composition**

### **The general assembly**

- Held once a year.
- Each member school is entitled to send three delegates.
- Each year the board of LH decides upon the number of observers allowed from the member organisations.
- Delegates have the right to vote and speak at the assembly, observers only have the right to speak.
- The assembly elects a president, a political vice president, an organisational vice president, three national board members, and 12 regional board members.
- Only students from a business school are entitled to vote.
- A simple majority is used for most elections, except changes in the statutes. Changes in the statutes require the acceptance of two thirds of the delegates present.

### **Member conference**

- Held once a year.
- The purpose of the conference is to determine next year's policies.
- Each member school is entitled to send three delegates. Each year the LH board decides upon the number of observers allowed from the member organisations.
- Delegates have the right to vote and speak at the assembly, observers only have the right to speak.

### **The board**

- The board consists of the president, the two vice presidents, three national members and 12 regional members
- The members of the board are elected at the general assembly
- The mandate period is one year

### **The executive committee**

- The executive committee consists of the president, the two vice presidents and three national members
- The members of the executive committee are elected at the general assembly

## **Regions**

- The six regional sections of LH act in accordance with the statutes of LH
- Each region also has a set of statutes that must be revised each year
- The regional sections also have a board
- The number of members is unknown

There is no guideline or outreach strategy to facilitate greater diversity.

## **Role and responsibility**

### **Objectives:**

LH coordinates the initiatives in the interest of the business pupils and represents these interests to the school boards and politicians.

### **Activities:**

- LH is active at the local level, where it seeks to improve pupils' conditions at the school.
  - For instance, pupils can contact LH if they feel discriminated or wish to file a complaint.
  - LH hosts a series of workshops in order to improve the work done in the local pupil councils.
- LH is also active at the national level, where it seeks to improve the quality of business educations and youth educations as such.
- Sometimes, LH cooperates with other pupil unions regarding matters concerning all pupils. Currently, the pupil unions from school and higher education student unions cooperate in the Education Alliance (Uddannelsesalliancen) in order to commit policymakers to stop budget cutbacks on education.

### **Role in policymaking:**

In order to gain influence, LH has, like other citizens and organisations, the possibility to convince MPs to formulate policy proposals. Furthermore, since January 2018 [all persons entitled to vote in general elections in Denmark may formulate a policy proposal](#) if three additional persons sign the proposal. If the proposal subsequently receives support from 50 000 persons entitled to vote in general elections, the parliament is obliged to discuss and vote on the motion.

LH can formulate hearing statements, but the decisions of LH are not binding on policymakers.

## **Funding**

LH receives public funding from DUF, Ministry of Culture, the union HK and membership fees. LH is

financially accountable to DUF and the Ministry of Culture.

## **The Danish Vocational and Technical School Student Union ([Erhvervsskolernes Elevorganisation, EEO](#))**

The Danish Vocational and Technical School Student (EEO) organise vocational pupils in Denmark.

### **Structure**

EEO is a party-political independent organisation.

Members of EEO are local pupil councils.

The local councils may organise in regional divisions and set up a regional board. The regional networks have a democratic structure with an annual general assembly as a minimum.

All pupils from member pupil councils are eligible for elections to the main organs of EEO. Pupils who are or have been enrolled in schools with member pupil councils are eligible to be president, vice president, or treasurer (see below). Only pupils from VET and the vocational education examination qualifying for access to higher education (EUX) are eligible for the VET committee. Only pupils from HTX and the vocational education examination qualifying for access to higher education (EUX) are eligible for the HTX committee. Members of the executive committee or standing committees are not eligible for the position of international officer.

The main organs of EEO are:

- Congress
- National conference
- The central board
- The executive committee
- Standing committees
- Regional boards

### **Composition**

#### **The congress:**

- The highest authority of EEO.
- Held once a year.
- Each member student council can send a delegate with one vote for every 200 students, but every member student council has at least two votes.
- Student councils without membership of EEO can send three observers with the right to speak
- Delegates can vote and speak at the congress. Observers can speak, but they can only vote in relation to the rules of procedure and the agenda.
- The congress is competent to make decisions when one fifth of the member student councils are present.
- Decisions are made by simple majority from at least three member student councils.

- Only member student councils or members of the standing committees are entitled to submit proposals and amendments.
- The congress elects the president, a vice president, a treasurer, a spokesperson and a coordinator for the VET committee, a spokesperson and a coordinator for the HTX committee, seven ordinary members of both the VET committee and the HTX committee, and an international officer.
- A majority in the executive committee, the central board or at least three member student councils representing one fifth of the member students are entitled to request an extraordinary congress.

### **National conference:**

- Held once a year.
- Each member student council may send a delegate with one vote for every 200 students, but every member student council has at least two votes.
- Student councils without membership of EEO can send three observers with the right to speak.
- Delegates can vote and speak at the congress. Observers can speak, but they can only vote in relation to the rules of procedure and the agenda.
- The national conference is competent to make decisions when one fifth of the member student councils are present.
- The national conference elects supplementary members of the standing committees and the executive committee.

### **The board:**

- Consists of 22 members all elected by the congress (see above)
- Mandate period: one year
- Meets at least six times a year

### **The executive committee:**

- Consists of the president, vice president, treasurer, spokespersons and coordinators for the two standing committees, and an executive committee representative
- Meets at least 10 times a year

### **Role and responsibility**

### **EEO's objectives are:**

- To strengthen the network of student councils and between student representatives and the boards at the local vocational colleges
- To coordinate the interests of the students and to represent these interests towards schools and public authorities
- To strengthen the student democracy and student influence at vocational colleges through student councils and student representatives on the school boards and other relevant organs

## **Main domain of activities**

EEO is active at the local level as well as the state level.

At the local level, EEO informs and educates the local student councils in order to strengthen their voice with regard to the local school board. EEO also facilitates workshops for the regional divisions with a focus on the exchange of experience.

At the state level, EEO closely follows the implementation of reforms and participates in evaluation initiatives. EEO also discusses reforms with other interest organisations. Furthermore, EEO forwards the concerns and wishes of the students to the Ministry of Education and represents the students in committees. Lastly, EEO runs campaigns on specific issues.

## **Role in policymaking**

In order to gain influence, EEO has, like other citizens and organisations, the possibility to convince MPs to formulate policy proposals. Furthermore, since January 2018 [all persons entitled to vote in general elections in Denmark may formulate a policy proposal](#) if three additional persons sign the proposal. If the proposal subsequently receives support from 50 000 persons entitled to vote in general elections, the parliament is obliged to discuss and vote on the motion.

EEO's proposals are not binding on policymakers.

## **Funding**

The main source of EEO's revenue is public funding via grants from DUF and the Ministry of Children and Education. EEO is financially accountable to DUF.

## **Other bodies**

There are no other top-level, publicly financed youth forums.