

## **Background**

The population of Denmark is 5.5 million, with Immigrants and their families making up 9% of the population, the majority of which are Turkish (57,129). In 2006 there was an administrative reorganisation of the 270 municipalities reduced to 98. There are 4 significant periods in Denmark's recent Government history – 1973, 1983, 1999, and 2002. In 2002 the new Danish Government made the decision to close its borders in order to concentrate their resources on the immigrants already in the country. Under these new immigration laws, those who were claiming benefits were obliged to undertake a training package consisting of 18 English lessons a week and 12 hours of work based/vocational training.

The Government installed several tools in order to aid integration of the immigrants such as:

- On the job training
- Job fairs
- Wage subsidies
- Job packets and contracts
- 80/20 recruitment policy which involved reducing the wage to 80% coupled with 20% training
- Health clarification
- Job express
- Mentoring by a Danish colleague

## **ISS**

Established in 1801, ISS is one of the 10 largest companies in Europe with more than 400,000 employees and 10,000 customers. There are 132 nationalities in ISS of which 90% are from non-western background, these being from Turkey, Poland, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Thailand, Somalia, Filipino, Yugoslavia, Bosnia, Morocco etc Currently 90% of managers are from Denmark. The company also has rules in place to ensure diversity in their workforce.

- HR Index – obligation to employ a certain number of migrant workers per year
- Diversity Award
- All Managers being trained in diversity management
- Danish teaching for everybody

What was also interesting about this organisation was that they have gone one step further by implementing an Apprenticeship programme to try and bridge the gap for migrants workers wanting to progress into management. The programme comprises of 6 weeks working alongside an experience manager ('a master') at full salary, class training of 2 days per week, Danish practise for one hour every day and a final evaluation.

### ISS Achievements:

From 93 to 153 managers with migrant background

From "hard to find" to waiting list of candidates for the management programme.

ISS is a good example of implementing diversity measures in the workplace, though I think that since this is a large international company it doesn't accurately reflect the majority of Danish companies.

### **The Association of New Danes**

Edvin talked about what inspired him to set up the association and the difficulties he faced when he first started out. What inspired him to create the association was a realisation that no one was addressing the integration of immigrants into the labour market. He described the difficulty he experienced in persuading companies to join the association and the perseverance required to do so.

### Recruitment

Danske Bank – 16 -18 members of staff from an ethnic minority background. They adopted the 80/20 programme and offered language courses through group classes and web-based tasks.

### Mentoring and Introduction into Company/Labour Market

They ran a pilot programme where they linked a foreign family with a native Danish family and they would engage in different kinds of activities such as dinners and excursions to places of interest.

### Intercultural Management – maintenance and development

50%+ of Danish companies have employed ethnic minorities AND wanted to assess the long term success of this integration by creating a web-based information bank, case studies and company profiles.

### Strategic Development

Implemented a diversity strategy in 10 Danish organisations

### Partnership Projects

The media played an important part in reinforcing positive images and raising awareness of successful collaboration.

### Mobilisation Civil Society

Active Women project – focused on ethnic minority women. Meet during workshops and meetings.

### Member Activities

Invited to meetings, newsletters around a theme, job network for New Danes, logo that demonstrates the member is an employer that is committed to ethnic diversity.

I think that the UK could learn a lot from the creative strategies used by The Association of the New Danes. They create an interesting link between government and private

companies to ensure diversity in the workplace and something like this would be of benefit to the UK.

In summary, this was a very well organised and interesting visit with valuable insight into how Denmark and, in particular The Association of New Danes, are using innovative ideas to tackle the issue.