AARHUS

Kathrine Hansen Kihm and Kirstine Lilleøre Christensen

History and general information

One of the oldest nations in Europe, the Kingdom of Denmark is today a constitutional monarchy as well as a modern Nordic welfare state. Aarhus is located in Central Denmark on the eastern side of the Jutland peninsula. Jutland is the only part of Denmark that is connected to the mainland of Europe as 41% of the country consists of 443 named islands. The capital Copenhagen is on the island Zealand (Sjælland in Danish), which is 157 km south-east of Aarhus measured in a straight line and 303 km when driving across the island Funen (Fyn in Danish). Aarhus has 242,914 inhabitants in the urban area (of 91 km^2) and 306,650 in the municipal area (of 467 km^2). Aarhus is the second largest city in Denmark not only measured in size, but also in the extent of trade, education, industry and cultural activities. The main employers of Aarhus are the Aarhus Municipality and the Aarhus University Hospital.

Aarhus originated in the 8th century from a Viking settlement, which was built around Aarhus River and still marks the centre of town and laid the foundation for the major industrial port that Aarhus has today. Many old buildings in the city have been preserved, for example, the Aarhus Custom House (Toldkammeret), the Aarhus Theatre (Aarhus Teater), Marselisborg Palace (Marselisborg Slot) and the Aarhus Cathedral, which represent historic landmarks across the city.

Aarhus is a pulsating city offering a broad range of educational institutions and a vibrant and active student life. One third of the population in the urban area are students, which means Aarhus is a "young" city with an average age of 37. The biggest educational institution is the university. Founded in 1928, it is the second oldest university in Denmark. There are in total 32,304 students, including 4,500 international students, divided among four faculties: Arts, Science and Technology, Health, and School of Business and Social Science. Aarhus also has other higher education institutions such as VIA University College, the School of Architecture, the Danish School of Media and Journalism and the Jutland Art Academy.

Cultural infrastructure

The museums in Aarhus can be divided into two categories – museums of art and museums of cultural heritage. There are 10 museums of cultural heritage, which include both museums of cultural or natural history. The most famous museums of cultural heritage are the Old Town (Den Gamle By) and Moesgaard Museum (MOMU). The Old Town was founded in 1909 and became one of the world's first open-air

museums of urban history and culture. Moesgaard Museum has the archaeological responsibility for the local area around Aarhus, and also cooperates with Aarhus University on research and education. Other museums of cultural heritage include the Viking Museum (Vikingemuseet), the Women's Museum (Kvindemuseet) and the Occupation Museum (Besaettelsesmuseet). The Natural History Museum Aarhus is the second largest in Denmark and contains exhibitions within the fields of botany, geology and zoology.

Situated in the heart of Aarhus lies the ARoS Aarhus Art Museum, which opened in 2004. ARoS contains national and international art from 1770 to today and is especially known for the spectacular *Your rainbow panorama* by Olafur Eliasson on the rooftop. Other art museums are the Danish Poster Museum, Museum Ovartaci and Kunsthal Aarhus. Aarhus also contains several art galleries and associations of artists. In the educational field of art, Aarhus has the Jutland Art Academy, which is a five-year education programme. Denmark's biggest outdoor sculpture exhibition, called *Sculpture by the Sea*, was hosted by Aarhus for the first time in 2009.

Your rainbow panorama on the roof of ARoS Aarhus Art Museum. Photo: ARoS Aarhus Art Museum, used with permission.

Next to Aarhus City Hall is Musikhuset Aarhus, which is one of the most notable houses of music in the Nordic countries. Musikhuset is home to both the Aarhus Symphony Orchestra, and the Danish National Opera (the largest touring opera company in Denmark) as well as the Royal Academy of Music. The latter has a classical, rhythmic and electronic study programme and hosts DIEM, Denmark's National Centre of Electronic Music. This makes Aarhus the residence of many professionals in many genres of music. It is also possible for children to practise music at Aarhus Music School (Aarhus

Musikskole), which engages children of all ages in a wide range of music instruments, singing, ensemble playing and choir. Aarhus hosts several music festivals of classical, jazz, rhythmic and electronic music. The most notable are Aarhus Jazz Festival, Aarhus Took It (a hip hop festival), and the newer NorthSide Festival and SPOT Festival, which focus on new music trends, especially within Nordic music.

In 2003 Filmby Aarhus was established, which is the regional film and media centre in western Denmark. Filmby Aarhus offers production facilities and a vast majority of offices for about 70 companies that mostly work with media and film. Filmby Aarhus also provides education in film and media for children and adults. Another film school is Station Next – for young people between the ages of 13 and 18, where students get to be in charge of their own productions under guidance from professional filmmakers. Each year in November the Aarhus Filmfestival takes place, presenting international short and documentary films. Aarhus has three large cinemas showing mainly mainstream movies to more than 1.2 million visitors every year. Since 1978, the cinema called Øst for Paradis, has shown quality films from all over the world. The two main TV-broadcasters in Denmark, DR and TV2, both have a regional production centre in Aarhus, and the media house Mediehus Aarhus produces local radio and TV. Aarhus also has a large base of knowledge in the field of media research, since Aarhus University has a Centre for Advanced Visualization and Interaction, Centre for Digital Urban Living and Digital Aesthetics Research Centre, all part of the School of Communication and Culture.

Theatre infrastructure

Aarhus has a variety of performing arts, which includes theatre, dance and experimental performance. Aarhus Teater is the main theatre in size, being the regional theatre with five stages as well as one of Denmark's three Schools of Acting and the Dramatist School, the only one of its kind in Denmark. It is also possible to study theatre academically in Aarhus University's bachelor's and master's degree programmes in dramaturgy. Aarhus has about 25 smaller theatres and independent theatre groups with 1,500 performances and 300,000 visits annually, which makes the performing arts an important part of the cultural environment in Aarhus. Several of the productions produced in Aarhus also go on tour nationally and occasionally internationally. Denmark as a whole has an abundant variety of theatre for children and even hosts the largest annual theatre festival for young audiences in the world. The focus on children is also evident in Aarhus, where three theatres, Gruppe 38, Filuren and Teater Refleksion (of which the latter uses puppets and animation), and a couple of theatre-groups are focused on young audiences. Two theatres, Opgang 2 and Gellerupscenen have a special focus on cultural and social diversity and integration. Aarhus also has a very active network of amateurs and semi-professionals, who arrange their own performances, happenings and an annual festival called QuongaFest. This means that there is a lot of flexibility and mutability in a free environment with a lot of new projects and collaboration. In

the field of dance, Aarhus also has a variety of companies, schools and networks. The professional companies also work internationally with co-productions and exchanges of both dancers and choreographers. There are five festivals for performing arts in Aarhus, of which the most well known are :Danish+ and ILT. :Danish+ is a biennial international showcase of the best Danish performing arts for children and young people. The ILT, International Living Theatre, also brings a selection of high quality contemporary international dance and performance to Aarhus every two years.

In addition to all these cultural organisations and activities Aarhus has the festival Aarhus Festuge, which gathers all art forms. Aarhus Festuge is one of northern Europe's largest cultural festivals and is recognised both in Denmark and abroad. Since September 1965, Aarhus has transformed streets, clubs, stages, galleries and museums into festival venues for ten days in August–September with over 1,000 events divided across more than 100 different stages and locations.

BERN

Mathias Bremgartner, Andreas Kotte, Frank Gerber and Beate Schappach

History and general information

Located in the centre of the country, Bern is the seat of the Swiss government and de facto capital of Switzerland, and also the principal town of the Canton of Bern. Despite its relatively small population (133,656 inhabitants in 2011), Bern features a cultural life rich in variety and numerous leisure amenities such as twenty museums, a concert hall for classical music, sixteen cinemas with 37 screens, two major sport stadiums as well as a vast number of galleries. However, the city of Bern stands out due to an enormous range of theatre venues, theatrical performances and a unique concentration of four branches: drama, opera, ballet, symphony orchestra, all under the name Konzert Theater Bern), a lively *Freie Szene* ("free scene") consisting of various independent companies and venues, the international theatre festival AUAWIRLEBEN, the Hochschule der Künste Bern (university of the arts, including acting and singing education), amateur and folk theatre, commercial theatre, the Schweizerische Theatersammlung (Swiss theatre museum and archive), as well as the Institut für Theaterwissenschaft der Universität Bern, the only academic institute of theatre studies in Switzerland.

Bern was founded in 1191 – one hundred years before the formation of Switzerland – on a headland surrounded on three sides by the Aare River. In 1353, the *freie Reichsstadt* Bern joined the Swiss Confederation. Since the successful civil revolution of 1848 that led to the foundation of the modern Swiss state, Bern is de facto capital – de facto because the federation does not foresee a de jure capital (*Bundesstadt*, not *Hauptstadt*).