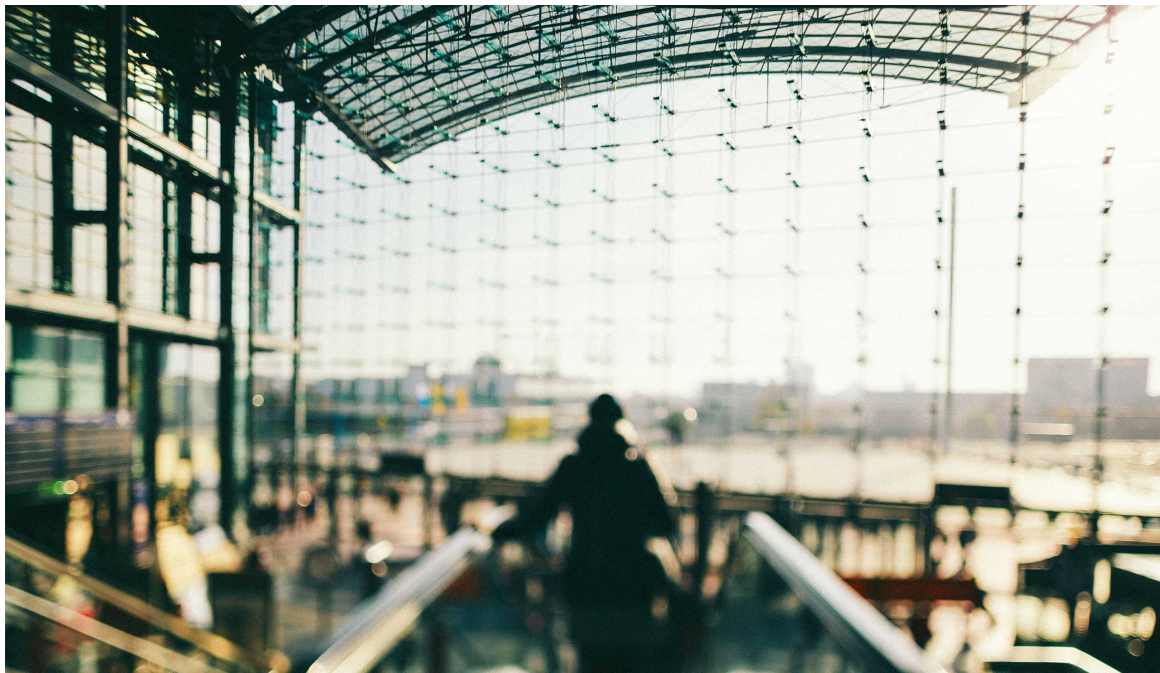


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Master's thesis:

Talent attraction and retention seen from a nation branding perspective



Title in Danish: Talentiltrækning set fra et nation branding-perspektiv

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Referat

En nylig rapport fra the Global Talent Competitiveness Index slår fast, at Danmark klarer sig specielt godt i forhold til at skabe og dyrke talenter, hvorimod det kniber med at tiltrække og fastholde dem. Det vil sige, at Danmark ligger helt i top som attraktivt talentland, men formår alligevel ikke at tiltrække og fastholde nok internationale talenter til at modsvare virksomhedernes efterspørgsel.

Det er problematisk, fordi danske virksomheder mangler højtuddannet arbejdskraft, særligt inden for de tekniske og naturvidenskabelige fag. En prognose foretaget af ingeniørforeningen IDA og Dansk Industri fastslår, at der i 2025 vil mangle næsten 10.000 ingeniører og lidt over 4.000 naturvidenskabelige kandidater. Der er således behov for en forstærket international markedsføring af Danmark som karrieredestination.

Der har igennem de seneste ti år været forøget fokus på Danmarks image i verden. Særligt Muhammed-krisen gjorde et betydeligt indtryk på danskerne, der efterfølgende igangsatte en massiv nation branding-indsats, der skulle forbedre Danmarks flakkede omdømme. Nation branding er en teori og en markedsføringsmetode, der ofte nævnes i forbindelse med målet om at tiltrække højtuddannede internationale studerende og færdiguddannede – de såkaldte internationale talenter.

Dette speciale undersøger, hvordan nation branding kan bruges til at tiltrække og fastholde disse internationale talenter. Først undersøges nation branding og dets relation til international talenttiltrækning. Efterfølgende bliver der set på den praktiske implementering af talenttiltrækning gennem et case studie af erhvervsorganisationen Copenhagen Capacity's talenttiltræknings- og fastholdelsesstrategi. Data indsamles gennem deltagerobservationer samt en række dybdegående interviews af eksperter inden for områderne nation branding samt talenttiltrækning. I diskussionen reflekteres der over den teoretiske udvikling af nation branding, og der bliver set kritisk på teorien og dens praktiske implementering. Der konkluderes, at der er nogle mangler i teorien, der nævner talenttiltrækning som et af hovedmålene uden at redegøre for en dybdegående analyse af, hvordan dette kan implementeres. Endvidere konkluderes der, at der er behov for et samlet, langsigtet nationalt samarbejde, der kan skabe en mere strømlinet kommunikation udadtil. En af de vigtigste indsigter i dette studie er, at nation branding og dets relation til talenttiltrækning går langt dybere end en markedsføringskampagne. Det er et koncept, der involverer udvikling, ledelse, politik og innovation. Nation branding og dets relation til talenter handler om identitet snarere end om kommunikation, markedsføring og kreativitet.

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Introduction

A recent report by the Global Talent Competitiveness Index 2015-2016 places Denmark at number five among the best countries to grow international talent (Lanvin & Evans, 2016, 11). According to the report, Denmark is only a hair's breadth behind the United States, and in Europe, Denmark is the third best ranking country, only surpassed by Switzerland and Luxembourg. Furthermore, in terms of growing and creating attractive conditions for global talent, Denmark is ranked as the best country in the Nordic region. However, the report also shows that whereas Denmark is doing specifically well in terms of creating and growing talent, the country could do better in regards to *attracting* and *retaining* talent, (Lanvin & Evans, 2016).

This is problematic because Danish companies are lacking highly educated specialists, particularly within the technical and scientific fields. In April 2016, Copenhagen Capacity and the Federation of Danish Industry (DI) published an analysis stating that 58 % of the largest Danish companies are experiencing an acute need for highly educated specialists (Seerup, 2016; Juel, 2015). Furthermore, the technological alliance of tech companies, educational institutions and organisations; Engineer the Future,¹ has published a report with the prediction that the Danish working force will be lacking 13,500 engineers and scientific candidates by 2025 (Jørgensen & Kyed, 2015). One of the consequences of this shortage is that Danish companies will have to look outside of the country to find the employees they need.

International talents contribute with competences, the development of new knowledge and technology and can lead the way to new markets. Analyses have shown that the ability to attract international talent plays a vital role in the attraction of foreign direct investments and R&D companies to a country (Florida, 2005, 32; CopCap Årsberetning, 2014). Accordingly, research shows that a vital concern for foreign companies in Denmark is the difficulty in

¹ Engineer the future is a technological alliance of tech companies, educational institutions, and organizations (IDA, DI, and FRI). The aim of Engineer the future is to promote Danish engineers and technology experts and to create the foundation for many more future knowledge workers and specialists in technological development.

attracting and retaining the competences needed. The forthcoming shortage of labour, due to demographical issues and the increasing mobility of people in the labour market, affects the possibilities to attract and retain employees with valuable competencies. International talent thus plays a significant role in the quest for innovation, investments and productivity improvements, which are some of the key components to increase job creation, growth and welfare (Copenhagen Capacity Annual Report, 2014; DEA, 2013).

Talent attraction is often used in relation to the concept of nation branding, as the image of a country is of vital concern for the attraction of highly skilled international students and workers. After Denmark was extremely criticized in 2006 for publishing highly provocative cartoons of the prophet Muhammad, the country ran a massive campaign to brand Denmark as open to the world, with “Openhagen” as its capital (Broksø, 2013, 11). In 2007, Denmark kick-started its own nation branding programme, which included a plan to promote Denmark as an attractive country for talented international students and workers (Mordhorst *et. al*, 2010). The so-called “Action Plan for Global Offensive Marketing of Denmark” was one of the first serious attempts to brand the image of Denmark internationally. Now, the image of Denmark is facing new challenges. Given the circumstances of the current refugee crisis, a growing critique of Denmark in international media has sparked new concerns for Denmark’s image in the world (Kjær & Rossau, 2016). This points to a need for a strong international branding of Denmark as an attractive career destination.

It is only within the last couple of years that the attraction and retention of foreign skilled workers has been clearly put on the national and regional political agenda in Denmark. Talent attraction has become a buzzword often used in connection with the theory of nation branding. However, once you dig deeper into the surface of these buzzwords *talent attraction* and *nation branding*, it becomes more difficult to find a deeper understanding of the concepts and how the concepts are used in practical terms.

Nation branding has become a popular concept, which is used in a wide range of areas. Its aim is to improve a country's standing, as the image and reputation of a nation can dramatically influence its success in attracting tourists and investment capital; in exports; in attracting a talented and creative workforce and in its cultural and political influence in the world. Despite

the popularity of nation branding and the extensive use of the concept, nation branding is still largely in its theoretical stage, with not much information on how these practices are being implemented from one nation to the next. Due to its different approaches and scholars' differing views on the concepts, the concepts becomes blurry and difficult to approach. Particularly within the field of international talent attraction, it seems that there is a lack of a theoretical framework. Although nation branding is closely linked to international talent attraction, the concept seems to be used more on a practical level, with limited theoretical implications. This suggests that talent attraction is an unexplored field of research on the nation branding agenda.

A number of organisations are working collaboratively to create a transparent and positive image of Denmark to attract international students, workers and businesses. These include the Confederation of Danish Industries (DI), the industrial political partnership between municipalities and regions in Greater Copenhagen, and the organisation Copenhagen Capacity. Since 2014, Copenhagen Capacity has been one of the main leaders in developing and implementing a talent attraction and retention strategy, which seeks to brand Greater Copenhagen to attract and retain international students and workers. Copenhagen Capacity is the official organisation for investment promotion and economic growth in Greater Copenhagen. The organisation assists foreign businesses, investors and talent in identifying, releasing and capitalizing on business opportunities. Copenhagen Capacity's Talent Department seeks to brand Denmark as an attractive career destination for foreign talent.

In light of the predictions of an even bigger need for international talent, this thesis seeks to investigate the practice of talent attraction and retention in Denmark. As much literature on nation branding suggests that talent attraction is one of the key elements in nation branding, the thesis explores how nation branding can be related to talent attraction. Finally, this thesis is concerned with the question of whether actions can be undertaken at the local level, by city or region, to enhance the attractiveness of the region for the attraction of international talent.

Research question

To what extent can nation branding theories be applied in the field of talent attraction, as illustrated by the findings from a case study of international talent attraction?

Following the main research question, these sub-questions arise:

- What is the recent literature on nation branding and talent attraction?
- How does Copenhagen Capacity attract and retain international talent?
- How do the theoretical definitions relate to the practical implications of talent attraction in Greater Copenhagen?

Thesis structure

The thesis is structured as follows: In the introduction, the relevancy of the thesis' topic has been explained and the reader has been given a short introduction to the concepts of nation branding and talent attraction. In the following, the rest of the structure of this thesis will be outlined. First, the methodological approach adopted for this paper will be explained followed by an explanation of the purpose of the choice of qualitative research. Secondly, the reader will be introduced to the theoretical framework of nation branding in the form of an overview of the dominant nation branding literature. After the theoretical chapter, a brief outline of the Danish nation branding effort since 2007 is explained in order to give an overview of the current situation and practice of nation branding in Denmark.

In order to link the theory of nation branding to talent attraction, the thesis addresses the theories of nation branding and their scope in international talent attraction. After this, the empirical data collection is introduced, which comprises of a case study of Copenhagen Capacity's talent attraction and retention strategy. In the analysis, the thesis looks at Copenhagen Capacity's approach to brand Denmark and particularly Greater Copenhagen for the purpose of attracting and retaining international talent. In the discussion, the connection between Copenhagen Capacity's international talent attraction and how it relates to the conceptual similarities and differences of nation branding will be explored. Finally, the discussion and conclusion of the thesis will reflect the value of the study and its outcome, along with pointers on limitations and suggestions for future approaches within the field.

Methodology

The following chapter will describe in which way the overall research question will be approached, including the empirical research method for data collection.

The methodology of this thesis is based on an exploratory study, in which the relevant actors in talent attraction in Greater Copenhagen and how they carry out their efforts to brand Greater Copenhagen as an attractive destination to work and study in are examined. To carry out this study effectively, it is important first to clearly map out the scope of nation branding. Therefore, a detailed description of the literature of nation branding and its relation to talent attraction will first be outlined. Therefore, the theoretical framework will also include theory related to talent attraction and retention. Additionally, the concepts of nation branding and talent attraction will be discussed in relation to the case study of Copenhagen Capacity.

By doing an exploratory study, the purpose of the thesis is intended to explore the research questions. Exploratory research is not intended to provide conclusive evidence, but helps to have a better understanding of the problem. Therefore, the purpose of this type of study is to explore new phenomena that may help the researcher's need for a better understanding of the subject investigated (Saunders *et al.*, 2007, 134).

Philosophical orientation and scientific method

Epistemologically, the thesis explores the research subject through an interpretivist orientation in which the researcher is perceived as a traveller instead of a miner (Kvale, 2007, 1; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, 47). This means that the researcher does not seek to find an ultimate true meaning about reality, but instead the researcher perceives reality and meanings as constructed in the interaction between human beings (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, 14). There are multiple truths, which are constantly changing due to being socially constructed. Through the interpretivist approach, the researcher seeks to gain an understanding of the phenomena explored and uncover the meanings of how people understand their own experiences (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, 14; Hedman, 2013, 7). Furthermore, interpretivists acknowledge that research cannot be ultimately objective and separate from the researcher's own meaning and way of viewing the research project.

Therefore, the author of this thesis acknowledges that the collection of the empirical data cannot be unbiased or agenda-free. As the researcher, I filter the interviewees' responses through my own way of perceiving 'reality'. This does however not diminish the academic authenticity of the research since the researcher constantly reflects upon the subject studied.

Research methods

The empirical analysis of this research consists of a case study of the talent attraction and retention strategy in Copenhagen Capacity. With the case study approach chosen as the research strategy, this research seeks to produce findings that help explain the validity of the conceptual premises made on the basis of the introduced theory. The main methods used are interviews with both talent attraction representatives as well as experts from within nation branding. As a combination of methods, these are used to produce empirical findings that are used to identify similarities or differences to either support or invalidate the theoretical propositions.

The proposed findings from this research are based on the case study of the talent attraction strategy carried out by Copenhagen Capacity. This strategy is based on Copenhagen as a central anchor for branding the Danish Capital Region and Region Zealand to attract international qualified workforce to what is to be branded as the Greater Copenhagen region. It is important to note that although Copenhagen Capacity focuses predominately on this region, it will be looked at how talent attraction is carried out in all of Denmark. In order to relate the theory of *nation* branding to the talent attraction strategy, the author will look at how this affects talent attraction in Denmark in general. The research will be conducted via interviews with experts from within the field of nation branding and talent attraction, observations from workshops, an international talent attraction conference as well as interviews with representatives from Copenhagen Capacity's talent department and the partner organization DI Consortium for Global Talent.

Data collection

Data collected for this paper consists of an analysis of academic publications on theories related to nation branding and talent attraction, which is then compared to an analysis of the author's own empirical findings. The empirical research will be based on a qualitative method through in-depth interviews with relevant actors and experts from within the field of talent attraction and nation branding. In order to understand the theoretical and practical implications of the concepts of nation branding and talent attraction, the author has interviewed persons with expert knowledge of the studied subject. There are experts from within the field of talent attraction who do not necessarily know much about the theories related to *nation branding*. Vice versa, there are experts from within the field of nation branding who do not necessarily know much about the concept of *talent attraction*. The interviewees are experts within different levels of *practical implementations* or *theoretical implications*. Therefore, there are experts on the *theoretical* concepts as well as experts on the *practical implementation* of the subject. This is done in order for the researcher to comprehend how these two concepts are related, how the theoretical definitions are used practically and if the two concepts are theoretically and practically intertwined.

The purpose of using a qualitative study is to provide unique insight and knowledge of how the relevant actors view talent attraction and nation branding, and also how they use it strategically. The qualitative methods are not constructed in the same generalising way as quantitative surveys, as the point of qualitative studies is to permit the researcher to delve deeper into the relevant subject's personal experience with the research questions (Kvale, 2007, 7).

The type of research interview used in this thesis is the semi-structured interview, which is defined as "*an interview with the purpose of obtaining descriptions of the work and life world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the meaning of the described phenomena*" (Kvale, 2007, 8). The reason for applying this interview method is based on its ability to create first hand qualitative data provided by key players in the field, who can give privileged information (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, 24). A semi-structured interview approach has been chosen in order to achieve the best balance between depth and comparability, so that the specific

elements and frames are somewhat similar, in order for the interviews to be compared to each another. In addition, this method has the flexibility, which is essential to be able to reflect on elements within all the focus areas of this research.

Choice of language

As the thesis includes interviewees from a number of different countries, including Denmark, France, the United States and Sweden, the author has decided to choose English as the language of the thesis. The interview subjects were chosen due to the level of expertise that the interviewees had on the subject. Therefore, the country that the interviewee came from was not of as much importance as the selection of expert knowledge in the field of this research. In order to avoid misinterpretations of the interviewed subjects that may occur in translations, all interviews except one have been conducted in English. The interview with Mads Mordhorst was conducted in Danish. A point of critique is that some level of information is often lost in translations. The interviewer however chose not to quote his citations directly and instead use them as paraphrases, which was also due to the fact that his statements were merely supporting the theory applied. The level of English spoken by the interviewees was high, so there were no difficulties in understanding the interview questions or explaining the concepts for the interviewees.

Participant observations

During the timeframe allowed for this thesis, the researcher has participated in a number of events related to international talent attraction. Both the participation of these events as well as the role of the researcher as a Research Assistant in the Talent Department in Copenhagen Capacity allows the researcher to support the data collection methods used in this research as a supplementary research strategy for this thesis. One of the first events the researcher participated in was a company challenge with Copenhagen Capacity and the Danish IT company Netcompany. Secondly, the researcher participated in a workshop with leading nation branding experts at Copenhagen Business School. Thirdly, the researcher participated in a think-tank event on international talent attraction at DEA, which is an independent, non-profit think tank based in Copenhagen. Fourthly, the researcher participated as an employee of Copenhagen Capacity at an International Talent Conference at the Danish consulting group

COWI. Under the theme *“Your future career in Denmark”*, the conference facilitated matchmaking between young international professionals and Danish companies on the lookout for talented international employees. Finally, the researcher participated in an International workshop on Talent Attraction Management with the Nordic Place Academy. All these events have been co-managed by the Talent Department of Copenhagen Capacity, which is the case study that the researcher studies in-depth and uses to see overall phenomena of nation branding and talent attraction.

| Event | Date | Relevance for research |
|---|--------------------|---|
| Company Challenge <i>with Netcompany and Copenhagen Capacity</i> | 26. February 2016 | http://www.copcap.com/our-services/finding-talent/company-challenge |
| Workshop with Melissa Aronczyk: <i>Branding the Nation</i> | 10. March 2016 | http://www.cbs.dk/cbs-event-da/125/workshop-branding-the-nation-0 |
| Think-tank event with DEA: <i>Brain drain or brain gain: where do our future employees come from?</i> | 31. March 2016 | http://www.dea.nu/arrangementer/vidensalon-brain-drain-brain-gain-kommer-fremtidens-medarbejder |
| International Talent Conference at COWI <i>Youth Goodwill Ambassador corps</i> | 2. April 2016 | http://www.copcap.com/event-calendar/international-talent-conference-2016 |
| Nordic Place Academy: <i>International workshop on Talent Attraction Management</i> | 18. – 20. May 2016 | http://placeacademy.com |

Participant observation involves the researcher to actively participate in the studied situation with the purpose of going in-depth with the issues addressed in the field of research (Mack *et.al.*, 2011, 13). The main argument for using this method is to support information not accessible through the previously described methods, relying on the understanding that knowledge is formed in relationships (Mack *et.al.*, 2011, 14). Data obtained through participant observation serve as a check against data obtained through interviews and the interviewees' subjective reporting of what they believe and do. In this way, participant observation allows the researcher to check definitions of terms that participants use in interviews. Furthermore, participant observations can be used to observe events and situations that informants have described in the interviews. In addition, the method enables the researcher to develop a familiarity with the cultural setting of the practical work with talent attraction. This gives the researcher a nuanced understanding of the context that can come only from personal experience (Mack *et.al.*, 2011, 14).

Role of the researcher

The main part of the participant observation is carried out through the researcher's own role as an employee in the Talent Department of Copenhagen Capacity. It is important to note that this role may create bias in the researcher's findings. The author is aware that being part of the organization Copenhagen Capacity can challenge the level of objectivity in the research conducted. However, an advantage of this method of participatory research is that it allows the researcher to observe the actors of talent attraction from a close range during a longer period of time. This allows the researcher to get very close to the interviewees as well as the way talent attraction is conducted on a practical level. In this way, the aim of using participant observation as a support of the method for qualitative data collection is to develop a holistic understanding of the phenomena that have been investigated during the study.

Workshop Observations

As mentioned briefly in the previous chapter, one of the methods used for collecting empirical data for this research was the observation of a workshop session with leading experts within nation branding from Denmark and abroad. The workshop "*Branding the Nation*" was held at Copenhagen Business School in the Department of Management, Politics and Philosophy on the 10th of March 2016. The workshop was led by Melissa Aronczyk, who is a professor in the

School of Communication and Information at Rutgers University in the United States. The main topic for the workshop was to discuss a chapter from Melissa Aronczyk's recent book on Branding the Nation: *'The New and Improved Nation: How Culture became Competitive'*. The topics discussed were how national governments around the world are turning to branding consultants, public relations advisers and strategic communications experts to help them 'brand' their jurisdiction:

"Using the tools, techniques and expertise of commercial branding is believed to help nations articulate a more coherent and cohesive identity, attract foreign capital, and maintain citizen loyalty. In short, the goal of nation branding is to make the nation matter in a world where borders and boundaries appear increasingly obsolete.

But what actually happens to the nation when it is reconceived as a brand? How does nation branding change the terms of politics and culture in a globalized world? Through case studies in twelve countries and in-depth interviews with nation branding experts and their national clients, Melissa Aronczyk argues that the social, political and cultural discourses constitutive of the nation have been harnessed in new and problematic ways, with far-reaching consequences for both our concept of the nation and our ideals of national citizenship." (Copenhagen Business School, 2016)

The workshop was structured as a presentation of Melissa Aronczyk's latest research followed by a group discussion on the overall topics with professor Melissa Aronczyk as primary moderator, professor Stefan Schwarzkopf from Copenhagen Business School as support, and the researcher observing the entire process. The focus in the workshop was how nation branding changes the terms of politics and culture in a globalized world. Although the workshop did not involve talent attraction per se, the researcher found the topic and the relevance of the nation branding experts who were participating to be of interest to one of the main themes in this thesis, which is Danish nation branding. In order to get an understanding of nation branding and its relation to the topic of international talent attraction, the researcher participated actively in the group discussions by asking questions related to the scope of this thesis, namely, the role of talent attraction in nation branding. The ideas generated at this workshop will be included in the discussion of this thesis.

Given the context of the researcher's attendance as a master thesis student aiming to get useful information for the purpose of this research, the workshop had many similarities to a focus group. Consisting of nation branding representatives from the University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen Business School, Roskilde University and the University of Lund, these experts were brought together to explore attitudes, perceptions, feelings, and ideas about nation branding with findings presented by Melissa Aronczyk. The primary methodological justification for the focus group is the role that group dynamics plays in generating data that would not be accessible if respondents were interviewed individually (Kvale, 2007, 72). A focus group is characterized by a non-directive style of interviewing, in which the prime concern is to encourage a variety of viewpoints on the topic of focus in the group (Kvale, 2007, 72). The aim of the focus group is not to reach consensus or solutions to the issues discussed, but to bring forth different viewpoints on a specific issue. An advantage of a focus group is that the data generated in groups creates a different perspective than the data generated through individual interviews, as the group environment provides greater sense of security, anonymity, and support for its members and hereby encourages the participants to speak out with more detail than if they had been interviewed one-by-one.

Individual interviews

Interviewing design

Most of the interviews were conducted at the respondent's place of work or in their own home in order for the interview situation to be as convenient and comfortable as possible. There were, however, a few exceptions: Two of the interviews that did not take place at the respondent's place of work or in their own home was the interview with Paul Evans, due to the fact that he lives in Paris, and Melissa Aronczyk, who lives in the United States. The interview with Paul Evans took place at Copenhagen Capacity, following a meeting he had had with the Director of the Talent Department and the Director of Copenhagen Capacity. The workshop with Melissa Aronczyk took place at Copenhagen Business School. Following the workshop, the researcher had a 30-minute long conversation on the topic of nation branding and how it relates to talent attraction. This was followed up by an e-mail interview, in which Melissa Aronczyk sent the author of this thesis a number of relevant case descriptions and

additional literature on the subject. Therefore, the thesis does not include an appendix with a transcribed interview with Melissa Aronczyk. However, a lot of relevant information was gathered through this conversation following the workshop and afterwards via e-mail.

The interviews took between 40 minutes to about an hour each. A mobile recorder was used for all interviews so that taking notes would not remove focus from the interview. Shortly after each interview, the recordings were transcribed to form a more complete base of data. The interviewees were afterwards contacted for approval of quotes included in this thesis in order to avoid misinterpretations.

The interviews were initiated by a short description of the research and its purpose in order to place the questions in the bigger context. During the interview, the author tried in the least possible way not to steer the conversation or in any way influence the respondent, while simultaneously keeping track of time so that the interview would not go beyond the themes addressed. The researcher waited to ask new questions until the respondent expressed that he or she was finished with answering the question. The researcher's point of entry for the interviews was Kvale's "Seven stages of an interview inquiry" (Kvale, 2007, 33). The aim of this interview inquiry is to enable the interviewer to make decisions about method on a reflective level, based on knowledge of the topic of the study, the methodological options available, their ethical implications, and anticipated consequences of the choices for the interview project (Kvale, 2007, 33.). These seven stages of the interview inquiry set the framework for the research conducted and the purpose of the research in order to design an interview that seeks to produce findings for a set of themes that can later be analysed and discussed in this paper.

During the interviews, the researcher made use of an interview guide that was constructed beforehand (see app. 7). The interview guide served as a general framework and was not followed question by question, in line with the semi-structured approach. The author also tried to minimize her own influence by giving the respondents the possibility of articulating their own answers and thoughts, as well as to ask questions with open ends to not present alternatives within the questions themselves (Kvale, 2007, 36).

Selection of interview subjects

In the following, the interviewees as subjects for this paper's empirical research will be outlined.

The interview subjects have been chosen due to their expert knowledge in the field of nation branding and talent attraction. Some of the interviewees have more knowledge on the theoretical framework and the Danish nation branding context, whereas others work closely with the practical implementation of a talent attraction strategy. In this way, the purpose is to view the studied subject through different perspectives of nation branding and talent attraction. First, interviews have been conducted with experts on nation branding and talent attraction. This has given the researcher a broader view on the subject and the theoretical framework set for the research. Secondly, interviews have been conducted with experts on the practical implementation of Danish international talent attraction. In this way, the thesis seeks to explore the research subject first from a larger perspective and then through the practical implementation of the case studied.

| Interviewee | Title | Organization | Field of expertise |
|------------------------|--|---|--|
| Mads Mordhorst | Ph.D. Lecturer at the Department of Management, Politics and Philosophy | Copenhagen Business School | Nation Branding (theory) |
| Melissa Aronczyk | Ph.D. Assistant Professor, School of Communication and Information | Rutgers University (USA) | Nation Branding (theory) |
| Paul A. L. Evans | Ph.D. Academic Director of the Global Talent Competitiveness Index | INSEAD ² (Paris) | Talent Attraction (theory) |
| Nikolaj Lubanski | Ph.D. Director, Talent Department | Copenhagen Capacity | Talent Attraction (case) |
| Merete Sandager | Senior Talent Attraction Manager | Copenhagen Capacity | Talent Attraction (case) |
| Morten King-Grubert | Team Leader of Talent Department | Copenhagen Capacity | Talent Attraction (case) |
| Linda Duncan Wendelboe | Head of DI Consortium for Global Talent | The Confederation of Danish Industry | Talent Attraction (case) |
| Marcus Andersson | CEO and co-founder | Tendensor International, Nordic Place Academy (Stockholm) | Talent Attraction and place branding (case and theory) |

² INSEAD is a prestigious graduate business school with campuses in Europe (Fontainebleau, France), Asia (Singapore), and the Middle East (Abu Dhabi). INSEAD is behind the Global Talent Competitiveness Index.

Nation branding experts

As the field of talent attraction and its relation to nation branding is a quite new and fairly unexplored subject, the author of this thesis first interviewed one of the leading experts on nation branding in Denmark to gain a better overall understanding of the subject.

Mads Mordhorst was chosen as the first interviewee in order to get a better understanding of the field of nation branding and its practical implications in Denmark. The aim of the interview was also to get a better understanding of how nation branding can be related to international talent attraction. Mads Mordhorst holds a Ph.D. and is associate professor at the Department of Management, Politics and Philosophy at Copenhagen Business School. He is also co-director of the cross-disciplinary research program "National identity, branding, history and the company". His research focuses on the field of national reputation management and the concept of nation branding.

Talent attraction experts

In order to gain a broader understanding of talent attraction, Paul Evans was interviewed. Paul Evans works closely with Copenhagen Capacity and has a strong influence on how the organization sets their attraction strategy for international talent. He is the Academic Director of the Global Talent Competitiveness Index (GTCI), which is an annual benchmarking study that measures the ability of countries to compete for talent. Designed as a practical tool for governments, businesses and non-profit organisations, the GTCI ranks over 100 economies according to their ability to develop, attract and retain talent.

Furthermore, Marcus Andersson from the consultancy firm Tendensor was interviewed due to his level of expertise on the practical implementation of *place* branding, a much related concept to nation branding, and international talent attraction management practices. Marcus Andersson advises countries, cities, regions and clusters on their reputation, innovation and attractiveness and leads business development, research and consultancy projects in Northern Europe. As Marcus Andersson lives in Stockholm, the interview was conducted via Skype and recorded. This is the second and last interview that has not been transcribed due to the limited timeframe for the deadline of the thesis. Moreover, Marcus Andersson is head of

Nordic Place Academy, which the researcher participated in as a participant observer. Nordic Place Academy has been created to address the issues that all places – large or small – face in today's global competition for start-ups, talent, visitors, investment and media attention. The aim of Nordic Place Academy is to strengthen the knowledge for place managers about developing the attractiveness of places and how to lead in such places. Ultimately, the goal is help create more creative interfaces and learning encounters between place managers in the Nordic countries (Nordic Place Academy, 2016). The key findings from the participation of the three-day long workshop with Nordic Place Academy will be included as reflections in the discussion of the thesis.

Interviews from Copenhagen Capacity and DI Consortium for Global Talent

Finally, the author has interviewed subjects from Copenhagen Capacity and DI Consortium for Global Talent. Nikolaj Lubanski is the Director of the Talent Department in Copenhagen Capacity. Morten King-Grubert is the Team Leader of the Talent Department in Copenhagen Capacity. The third and last person interviewed from Copenhagen Capacity is Merete Sandager who is the Senior Talent Attraction Manager. All three have leading roles in Copenhagen Capacity's talent attraction and retention strategy.

Copenhagen Capacity works closely with DI Consortium for Global Talent, which is a newly established unit within the Confederation of Danish Industry. Therefore, one of the last interviewees chosen for this paper is Linda Duncan-Wendelboe, who is Head of DI Consortium for Global Talent. The purpose of DI Consortium for Global Talent is to make it easier for companies to attract and retain global professionals. This part of the talent attraction is seen from the angle of Danish companies, which are some of the key drivers that create growth and welfare in Denmark. If Danish companies are to grow and compete on a global scale, they will need more highly qualified and skilled labour from abroad. Although the case study is focussed on Copenhagen Capacity's talent strategy, the Confederation of Danish Industries and DI Consortium for Global Talent works closely with Copenhagen Capacity, which is why Linda Duncan-Wendelboe has been chosen as an interviewee for the study.

The findings from all of the interviews will be examined in the data analysis and the following discussion. In the next, the case study will briefly be introduced, followed by the theoretical framework for nation branding and talent attraction.

Case study

The choice of a case study as part of the methodology in this thesis relies on the fact that a case study of an individual organization (Copenhagen Capacity) and several related events rests implicitly on a micro-macro link in social behaviour (Gerring, 2007, 1). In-depth knowledge of an individual example can be more fruitful than fleeting knowledge about a larger number of examples. Thus, the researcher gains better understanding of the whole by focusing on a key part (ib.). However, case studies have been criticised for focusing their attention on a single example of a broader phenomenon and are often identified with loosely framed and nongeneralizable theories, biased case selection and subjective conclusions (Gerring, 2007, 6). With this critique in mind, it is nonetheless important for the subject of this thesis to observe the theoretical and practical implications of nation branding and talent attraction through an in-depth case study.

The case study chosen for this research is a case from Copenhagen Capacity in the Department of Talent. Copenhagen Capacity is one of the leading organizations that work to attract and retain international talent in Denmark. As the scope of this thesis is to explore nation branding and its relation to talent attraction, it is important to note that Copenhagen Capacity's talent attraction strategy is not only aimed at talent attraction in Greater Copenhagen. The national project aims to promote Denmark as an attractive place to work and stay for talented international students and employees.

Defining international talent

In this paper, 'international talent' refers to foreign university students, particularly on their master's and PhD levels, as well as young professionals who have recently graduated. As definitions of the word 'talent' differ, the author will first briefly explain what is meant by the term 'international talent':

There is no single definition or demographic profile stating what a talent is. Talents are people with knowledge, skills and experiences that can make a difference in an organization (Matos, Lopes, & Matos, 2012). One definition sees talent as *"the sum of a person's abilities through his or her intrinsic gifts, skills, knowledge, experience, intelligence, judgment, attitude, character and drive. It also includes his or her ability to learn and grow"* (Beechler & Woodward, 2009, 274). This paper offers a working definition proposed by Andersson *et.al.*, 2014: *A talent is a person who can contribute to the prosperity of the place and workplace in a world where knowledge, creativity and innovation are key factors"* (Andersson *et.al.*, 2014, 13).

Copenhagen Capacity carries four definitions of an international talent: First of all, the person has to immigrate to Denmark after the age of 18, meaning that an international talent has to be an **adult** upon arrival in Denmark. Then normally, the other three of the criteria are a combination of **education**, **specialization**, and **wage**. However, there are some exceptions: If an international talent has a very high wage, he or she might have **the idea** (App. 1). This means for instance an entrepreneur that has started his or her own company with success. Although talent is normally correlated with the level of education, you can sometimes also find talent without the education criteria, as long as they have high scores on the other two criteria. For instance, some talents do not have a high education, but they are specialized within their field because they have been working within this field for a long period of time. For instance, within the gaming industries, some people can be defined as talents due to their level of specialization. Thus, international talents within the gaming industries rarely have long educational backgrounds, but they still have expert knowledge within the field. Therefore, they can be categorized as international workers that are highly sought after.

Theoretical framework

This section investigates the concept and theory of nation branding. Firstly, the concept is defined and explained. Secondly, the concept is examined in terms of what value a nation-brand strategy can deliver to a country. Thirdly, this section briefly traces the evolution of nation branding and outlines the increasing importance nation branding has received in recent years. The author will begin with a review of selected literature in order to give an account of the conceptual contexts of the Danish nation branding initiative and how it relates to international talent attraction. The purpose is to convey what knowledge and ideas have been established on the theories of nation branding, and what their strengths and weaknesses are. The overview of the theoretical framework seeks to focus on nation branding's relation to international talent attraction and how much in depth the author can go with this particular focus. Therefore, the author will start by looking at the concept of nation branding in a broader term and then go more in depth with its relation to international talent attraction.

Perspectives on Nation Branding

It is nothing new for nations to care about image, but the past ten years represent a turning point in the methods states use to manage their reputations. Given the global competition that nations now face in both their domestic and external markets, nations are making more and more conscious efforts to promote themselves internationally (Dinnie, 2008, 17). Therefore, the extent of resources that nations spend to manage their images is growing rapidly (Angell & Mordhorst, 2013, 184).

In order to understand what a *nation brand* is, let us first look at what a *brand* is. Basically, there are two ways of understanding a brand. The first one involves the meaning of the brand itself, and the second way is the meaning the brand creates to the consumer (Klüver, 2010, 6, Clerk *et.al*, 2015, 10). A brand is defined as a toolbox of marketing and communication methods that help to distinguish a company from competitors and create a lasting impression in the minds of customers. It is the compilation of symbols, experiences and associations that connects the consumers with the brand that differentiates and positions the brand from its competitors (Clerk *et.al*, 2015, 10; Klüver, 2010, 6).

Whereas brands were previously used to enable consumers to distinguish between one mass-produced product to the next, brands are nowadays increasingly used as elements for identity building. This applies to consumers, companies, and even to nations. This is happening because a number of factors that were previously very important parts of people's identity construction are now playing smaller roles in people's everyday life. As gender, class, religion and ethnicity play less important roles in our lives, many people seek other elements to create and build their own unique identities (Clerk *et.al*, 2015, 10).

In this way, there is a large market for identity construction, which also means that identity is being marketed increasingly. For people in the globalized economy, brands constitute a reservoir of signs and stories. It is not until the consumers start to ascribe stories and meanings to products that these become brands. People enter into so-called "brand communities", which is a community with a shared identity where people believe to have similar ideas and values (Klüver, 2010, 6). Increasingly, therefore, brands are considered to be properties of a broad range of areas, including corporations, causes, and even ideologies (Pryor & Grossbart, 2007, 292).

Nations as super brands

If we look at the above-mentioned brand and replace the product with a nation and the consumer with a citizen, it would appear as if the definitions of branding have been created on the grounds of nations and national identity (Klüver, 2010, 7). However, when viewing nations as brands, it becomes far more complicated. Some researchers argue that it is impossible to brand nations because they cannot be measured the same way that products and marketing campaigns are measured.

Other researchers however believe that the reason as to why nations are so difficult to brand is that they are in fact *super brands* (Klüver, 2010, 6; Sylvestersen *et.al.*, 2011, 9; Mordhorst, 2010). Due to the strong foundations of their national identity, nation brands possess much richer and deeper cultural resources than any other type of brand (Dinnie, 2008, 14; Klüver, 2010, 6). Therefore, it is also far more difficult to change consumers' image of a given nation. This is because of the pre-existing national stereotypes that the consumers have of these so-called "super brands" (Klüver, 2010, 6; Dinnie 2008, 15, Mordhorst, app. 6). Therefore, the brand-building process requires long-term commitment, which means that it takes several years to change.

This reality needs to be acknowledged with a long-term strategic view when building a nation brand rather than a short-term advertising campaign, which will only be a short-lived quick fix (Sylvestersen *et.al*, 2011, 10).

Nations are the strongest brand communities in the world. They are so strong that people do not only use them to live their lives in – in the most extreme situations, people would also give their own lives for their nations (Klüver, 2010, 8). The idea that you can change the brand of a nation within a short time frame is therefore an impossible task. Klüver *et.al*. (2010) argue that nations *are* brands. They are products of branding processes that have developed over many hundreds of years, long before the concepts of branding and marketing were invented. Professor and marketing consultant Wally Olins states that nations have always branded themselves through symbols, languages, and culture (Olins, 2002, 242). Professor Mads Mordhorst agrees with this and mentions that the nation branding of Denmark could have started as far back as in the 1100th century when Saxo wrote the chronicles of ‘Gesta Danorum’ (the Achievements of the Danes) in an attempt to improve Denmark’s reputation abroad due to the civil war in the country and the country’s massive debt (app. 6).

Therefore, both advocates and critics of nation branding are mistaken when they believe that nations are not already brands (Klüver, 2010, 8). Advocates of nation branding make the mistake to think that it is an unbranded product, and they therefore have an unrealistic idea of what a nation is and what it means to fundamentally change such an image of a nation. Critics, on the other hand, make the mistake to think that nations historically are above any marketing logic and the strategic use of nations’ identity (Klüver, 2010, 8; Clerk *et.al*, 2015, 10).

Nation branding as a concept

If there is one thing that scholars of the field of nation branding can agree on, it is the fact that the term “nation branding” lacks a unanimous definition, as its scope and limitations are contested and redefined constantly. Kaneva (2011) offers a working definition of nation branding as “*a compendium of discourses and practices aimed at reconstituting nationhood through marketing and branding paradigms*” (Bassey, 2012, 8; Kaneva, 2011, 118).

Nation branding as a concept was established by the British branding consultant and nation branding expert Simon Anholt in 1998 (Klüver, 2010, 5). Nation branding has become a popular yet disputed field of research and practice, attracting interest from a broad range of disciplines (Kaneva, 2011, 118). The concept of nation branding originates from the marketing arena, but it has changed into becoming a deeper social, cultural and even psychological discipline on a larger scale. Nation branding is a growing, complex and much debated concept, representing an area with little existing theory but a huge amount of real-world activity (Dinnie, 2008, 13). It is complex, because it covers multiple disciplines that go beyond the conventional brand strategy. Because of its politicized activity, it is also a highly controversial subject (Dinnie, 2008, 13). The term nation branding is often used interchangeably with related terms such as *place branding*, *place marketing* and *place promotion*. In addition, there is often a substitution of *country* with *place* in each of the above-mentioned expressions (Pryor & Grossbart, 2007, 293).

Dinnie (2008) defines the nation brand as “*the unique, multi-dimensional blend of elements that provide the nation with culturally grounded differentiation and relevance for all its target audiences*” (Dinnie, 2008, 15). This definition recognizes the multi-dimensional nature of the nation brand as well as the need to integrate the dimensions of national identity in the nation brand (Mordhorst, *et.al*, 2010, 6). By branding a nation, the purpose is to attract tourists, workers, inward investment, and to boost exports (Kaneva, 2011, 117). Moreover, nation branding can increase currency stability, help restore international credibility, increase international political influence and stimulate stronger international partnerships (Dinnie, 2008, 17). The achievement of such goals requires conscious nation branding strategies for countries to compete effectively on the global stage.

Nation branding and its related concepts

In recent years, new theories and concepts related to nation branding are emerging. Scholars are looking into the much-related concepts of *nation marketing* (Kotler 1997), *the brand state*, *competitive identity* (Anholt 2007), *national image reputation* (Fan 2010), *public diplomacy* and *cultural diplomacy* (Nye 2004; Wang 2006) (Angell & Mordhorst, 2013, 184). Thus, there is a vast number of different approaches and theories within the concept of nation branding. Some scholars therefore employ the term *national reputation management* as an umbrella

term for all of the above-mentioned concepts of nation branding (Angell & Mordhorst, 2013, 184).

Hybridization

Some scholars argue that nation branding is heavily inspired by the concept of corporate branding (Rasmussen & Merckelsen 2015, 184;). Furthermore, the strong influence of consulting agencies and the link to the commercial areas of marketing and communication means that nation branding has emerged as a practice-oriented field.

Nation-branding expert Wally Olins argues that when companies and nations become increasingly alike, they start to negotiate their identities. This integration of politics and business is a form of hybridization in which the division between nation-states and politics, on the one hand, and companies and economies, on the other, becomes increasingly blurred (Szondi, 2008, 2, Olins 1999, 1; Angell & Mordhorst, 2013, 186). This approach is criticized because politics become depoliticized and national identity and cultural differences become distorted by standardized managerial branding practices (Rasmussen & Merckelsen 2015, 185; Aronczyk, 2008, 42).

Competitive identity

The idea that nation branding is heavily inspired by the concept of corporate branding has already been challenged by several scholars, such as Simon Anholt, who has abandoned his own concept of nation branding and instead established the concept of *competitive identity* (Anholt, 2007, 3). Anholt argues that whenever branding is spoken about in the context of countries, regions or cities, people tend to assume that these promotional techniques are simply being used to 'sell' the country. This is often reflected negatively, as promotional efforts need to go hand in hand with the actual image associated with the nation.

Anholt argues that when discussing the application of brand theory to countries, there is a danger that the discussion turns into what psychologists call *cognitive dissonance*. This means that everyone talks at cross-purposes, pursuing an almost private conversation based on their own understanding of the word, and there is little communication (Anholt, 2007, 6). Because most of these organizations, official and unofficial, national and regional, political and commercial, are usually working in isolation, they send out conflicting and even

contradictory messages about the country. As a result, there is no consistent picture of the country, and its overall reputation stands still or even moves backwards (Anholt, 2007, 5).

Instead, Anholt argues that countries and their governments should represent themselves to the rest of the world in a combination of public diplomacy and nation branding. Public diplomacy is a concept that is closely linked with nation branding, which focuses more on the branding of the state rather than the nation (Andreasen, 2007, 9; Angell & Mordhorst, 2013, 188; Szondi, 2008, 2).

Anholt suggests that the term *competitive identity* is used instead of nation branding because this approach has more to do with national identity and the politics and economics of competitiveness than with branding (Dinnie, 2007, 474). *Competitive Identity* is therefore used to describe the synthesis of brand management with public diplomacy and with trade, investment, tourism and export promotion.

Danish nation branding

Although the previous section argues whether nation branding is in fact a concept that has been used by countries for centuries, nation branding as a concept has not been on the national and governmental agenda until recently:

After Denmark was hugely criticized in 2005-2006 for publishing highly provocative cartoons of the prophet Muhammad, the country ran a massive campaign to brand Denmark as open to the world, with “Openhagen” as its capital (Broksø, 2013, 11; Merckelsen & Rasmussen, 2015, 181). The Cartoon Crisis not only resulted in the burning of Danish flags and embassies as well as receiving worldwide negative publicity, it also awakened a national debate of Danish values and Danish identity (Clerc, Glover & Jordan, 2015, 245).

A report published by nation branding expert, Simon Anholt, stated that Denmark’s brand had been damaged severely. This caused the Danish government to call for action. In 2007, the Danish government officially established a nation branding initiative called ‘Action Plan for the Global Marketing of Denmark’ (Angell & Mordhorst, 2013, 189). The purpose of the programme was to re-brand Denmark as a modern nation in the forefront of current global competition (Clerc, Glover & Jordan, 2015, 249).

The aftermath of the Cartoon Crisis turned out to be pivotal in the development of the Danish strategy for international communication sponsored by the state of Denmark. The new nation branding initiative moved away from the field of public diplomacy and towards the more marketing-oriented approach of nation branding (Clerc, Glover & Jordan, 2015, 238).

The campaign “Offensive global marketing of Denmark”, which ended in 2012, cost the Danish government 622 million Danish Kroner (Mordhorst, *et.al*, 2010, 6). To this day, experts argue to which degree the action plan had an impact on the Danish image in the world (Broksø, 2013, 11). The overall target for the action plan was to go from Denmark’s 15th place on Anholt’s Nation Brand Index, to a 10th place by 2012 (Broksø, 2013, 11).

The Nation Brand Index is a ranking system developed by Simon Anholt to benchmark country brands and pit them against each other (Clerc, Glover & Jordan, 2015, 249). Not until 2015, however, did Denmark succeed in reaching this target (Broksø, 2013, 11). Angell & Mordhorst argue that there is some irony in using the Nation Brand Index as a benchmark in the case with Denmark due to the fact that the well-known nation branding expert Simon Anholt himself has concluded that the Anholt Nation Brand Index does not function optimally (Angell & Mordhorst, 2015, 189). The reason for this was that the perception of the country was influenced very little in the long run (Clerc, Glover & Jordan, 2015, 249). On the basis of the Danish case, Simon Anholt concluded that the Danish image was extremely stable, and that nations in general are nearly impossible to brand (Clerc, Glover & Jordan, 2015, 249). This is however only one practitioner’s view on nation branding, as many others argue the opposite.

The plan’s explicit goal was to improve value of the nation brand. Thus, the conceptualization of the plan was to a large extent inspired by the idea that a nation brand can and should be actively managed (Merkelsen & Rasmussen, 2015, 182). This approach is managerial in the way the country’s reputation is constantly monitored, assessed and compared to other countries on a ranking scale: *“The plan is to create a clearer and more positive image of Denmark in areas where a better image will provide specific advantages in the global competition for qualified labour, tourists, students, investments and a global market share.”* (Ministry for Economic and Business Affairs 2007, 10; in Angell & Mordhorst, 2013, 191).

As a result of the Action Plan of the global marketing of Denmark, three new government organizations were established: the *Foundation to the Marketing of Denmark*; the *Marketing Advisory Board*; and the *Branding Denmark Taskforce* (Merkelsen & Rasmussen, 2015, 189). The purpose of these organizations was to coordinate and control the government's existing efforts on the management of Denmark's image and the marketing of Danish culture.

Merkelsen & Rasmussen argue that it is a mistake to think of the Danish nation brand as a stable entity that existed prior to the Action Plan initiated in 2007 (Merkelsen & Rasmussen, 2015, 191). If the Danish nation brand were to be understood as a managerial object, it would only come to exist because it was objectified through the initiation of the Action Plan. Merkelsen & Rasmussen further argue that the Anholt Nation Brands Index served as a catalyst for this process whereby the nation brand gained status as a stable object (Merkelsen & Rasmussen, 2015, 189). Merkelsen & Rasmussen's observation does not contradict the literature that explains how various perceptions and beliefs of nations have always existed (Anholt 2002; Olins 2002; Dinnie 2008). But they argue that these perceptions and beliefs have little resemblance to the multidimensional combinations on which the conceptualization of nation brands is based. They therefore argue that whereas perceptions exist in the minds of *people*, multidimensional nation branding efforts are managerial objects that exist as a series of *practices*. (Merkelsen & Rasmussen, 2015, 193).

This can also be seen in the Action Plan from 2007. Following the same market-oriented logic, instead of political goals and values, the Action Plan offered a "communication platform" created by the Danish consultancy firm Red Associates. The consultancy firm was hired to define and describe what it means to be Danish and what Danish culture is, and condense it into distinctive, positive images (Clerc, Glover & Jordan, 2015, 251). The way the Action Plan and thus the nation branding programme for Denmark was implemented and carried out shows that the Danish *reputation management* was steered away from public diplomacy and more towards nation branding (Clerc, Glover & Jordan, 2015, 248).

An important note in the context of the Danish nation branding initiative is that the goal of branding Denmark was mainly to attract resources to the country (Clerc, Glover & Jordan, 2015, 249). In other words, the goal was not political, but merely seen from the angle of the state as a commercial actor on the global market. The vocabulary and states' objectives of the

nation branding programme was thus directly drawn from marketing concepts (Clerc, Glover & Jordan, 2015, 249). In this perspective, it is interesting to see how little focus there seemed to be on human capital as a resource. The intentions behind the Action Plan were to adapt the strategic imaging of Denmark to the global economic competition (Clerc, Glover & Jordan, 2015, 249). However, little focus seemed to be on the attraction and retention of international talent. In fact, this seems to be the case with most literature on nation branding: talent attraction is mentioned as one of the aims of nation branding, but as soon as you dig into the surface of it, the notion of *how* to implement and carry out a strategy for this purpose or *for what reasons* seems to be lacking. Thus, it is difficult to find literature that links nation branding directly to talent attraction.

This statement is supported by Mads Mordhorst who argues that international talent attraction is something that has not been part of the nation branding strategy until recently (App. 6). Whereas Denmark has put a lot of effort into branding the country to attract tourists, boost exports and improve the image of Denmark, there has not been a specific focus on international talent as part of the global competition.

The media's increasing focus on Danish nation branding

The emphasis on the Danish nation brand and the emphasis on its increasing awareness is also visible at societal level in the media discourse in Denmark from 2006 to 2014. Until 2006 only nine articles included terms such as “nation brand”, “Danish brand” or “Denmark’s brand.” Furthermore, only three of them addressed Denmark as a national brand. This changed dramatically after the Cartoon Crisis: In 2014, the number had grown to almost 1000, which demonstrates that the term nation branding has become widely used beyond the narrow field of specialist language (Merkelsen & Rasmussen, 2015, 194).

It is not clear whether The Action Plan for the Global Marketing of Denmark was directly implemented because of the crisis, or whether the crisis was rather a pretext for establishing the programme (Clerc, Glover & Jordan, 2015, 256). It is, however, clear that the nation branding programme sparked the branding of Denmark and thus also a branding programme to attract international talent.

New challenges

Now, Denmark's reputation is again facing a rapid transformation. From a nation that tops global indices as the happiest in the world, is green and democratic, and a leader in human rights and welfare provision, a new, more negative narrative is again emerging. The refugee crisis and the government's handling of it pose a serious threat to the image of Denmark.

Out of an eagerness to dissuade Syrian and other refugees to seek asylum in Denmark, the government has built an image of Denmark as a leader in European anti-immigration policies (Gormsen, 2015; Boserup, 2016; Mordhorst, 2016). It has done so by placing dissuasive ads in Lebanese media, by challenging the applicability of international conventions on the regulation of refugees and, most recently, by passing a highly controversial and symbolic anti-immigration law. The Danish law enabling police to confiscate cash and valuables above ten thousand Danish Kroner has created a storm of anger among people worldwide:

Chinese dissident artist Ai Weiwei closed his Copenhagen and Aarhus exhibitions in protest; the former UN leader, Kofi Annan, said the legislation was "not in the spirit of the European convention on human rights, the UN convention on the rights of the child, and the UN refugee convention – all of which Denmark is a party to" (Hjort, 2016; Crouch, 2016). This poses a serious threat to the Danish nation brand and our reputation as an attractive nation to do business in as well as for the attraction and retention of foreign highly educated workers.

Talent attraction

In order for nations to attract foreign investors and companies, and for domestic companies to remain competitive, they need to be able to attract talented professionals to bring in innovation and tax income. This objective is known as *talent attraction*, whereby countries compete to attract higher education students and skilled workers (Dinnie, 2008, 17; 222). As globalisation deepens, talent mobility becomes an important element of innovativeness and competitiveness for countries and places. This is a matter that national governments, and also regional and municipal leadership, need to address in practical ways (Lanvin *et al.*, 2016,7).

A concept that is much related to nation branding is the concept of *place branding*. As opposed to nation branding, this concept covers not only nations, but also regions and cities. When

creating strategies for attracting and retaining international talent, *place branding* is a more widely used concept than *nation branding* (Andersson *et. al.*, 2014, 41; Zenker, 2009, 23).

International talent and urban-regional growth

One of the most influential intellectuals in the United States, Richard Florida, draws a connection between place branding and the so-called *creative class*. Richard Florida asserts that the prosperity of a place is directly proportional to the concentration of creative people who live there. According to Florida, the people of the creative class choose their city of residence depending more on the levels of tolerance and cultural attraction than on the job market (Florida, 2005, 33). Florida coined the concept of the “creative class” in his seminal essay, ‘*The Rise of the Creative Class*’, in which he holds that the creative class is key to cities’ economic growth and urban vitality.

According to Florida, human capital and urban-regional growth go hand in hand. Research shows that a great deal of city growth over the twentieth century can be traced back to cities’ levels of human capital. Studies of national growth find a clear connection between the economic success of nations and their human capital when measured by the level of education. This connection has also been found in regional studies, in which human capital is the central factor leading to growth. Thus, places with greater numbers of talented people are reportedly growing faster and are able to attract more talent (Florida, 2005, 33).

Talent as a competitive advantage

Florida asserts that nearly every aspect of economic development is being reshaped by the creative economy (Florida, 2005, 49). The creative economy is how Richard Florida defines human capital in the form of highly educated people who can boost the economy by new and innovative methods. Knowledge and creativity have in many cases replaced natural resources and the efficiency of physical labour as the sources of prosperity and economic growth (Florida, 2005, 49). This radically changes the ways that cities, regions and countries establish and maintain a competitive advantage.

In the creative economy, competitive advantage comes to places that can quickly mobilize talent, resources and the capabilities that are required to turn innovations into new business

ideas and commercial products (Florida, 2005, 50; Andersson *et.al.*, 2014, 7). This means that the key focus area in competitive advantage for places shifts to those regions that can generate, retain and attract the best talent. Therefore, it is the ability to attract human capital or talent that creates regional advantage: Those places that have the talent win, and those that do not lose. This makes the *quality* of nations, regions and cities extremely important in order to attract the right human capital.

Creative workers are both highly mobile and much sought after by technology employers, and they therefore have the option to locate virtually anywhere they want (Florida, 2005, 68). Florida argues that sociological factors are as important, if not more important, than economic factors when it comes to creating and sustaining regional advantage in the creative economy. Florida's arguments are provocative in terms of shifting people's interests from organizations as a whole to the individual as a driving force in economic development. He suggests a long-term research agenda in regional economic development.

In his book, "Cities and the Creative Class," Florida argues that place and community are more critical factors in economic development than ever before. Traditionally, when making location decisions, economic developers have focused on how to attract firms to a region. Florida, however, claims that companies cluster in an area to draw from the concentration of talented people who lead innovation and strengthen economic growth (Florida, 2005, 1). Instead of competing with each other, each individual economic unit needs to cultivate creativity from all people. Florida's analysis rests on the correlations between what have been described as the "three T's" of economic growth: **talent, tolerance and technology** (Florida, 2005, 129; 143; Zenker, 2009, 26):

Talent: The driving force behind any effective economic strategy is talented people. We live in a more mobile age than ever before. People, especially top creative talent, move around a lot. A community's ability to attract and retain top talent is the defining issue of the creative age. As the global economy becomes more competitive, countries across the globe will be challenged to attract and retain the brightest talent, as well as provide the necessary skill training and education opportunities to stay competitive.

Tolerance: Economic prosperity relies on cultural, entrepreneurial, civic, scientific, and artistic creativity. Creative workers with these talents need communities, organisations and peers that are open to new ideas and different people. Cities and regions therefore have to continue to be a place that is receptive to immigration, alternative lifestyles and new views on social status and power structure.

Technology: Technology and innovation are critical components of a community or organisation's ability to drive economic growth. To be successful, communities and organisations must have the avenues for transferring research, ideas and innovation into marketable and sustainable products.

Florida's analysis has been applied to argue for the improvement of the quality of place of various cities, most often with implications for cultural development. In particular, his analysis has been a key component of cultural policies and strategies in Montreal and Calgary in Canada (Florida, 2005, 129).

Global trends setting the context for the competition for talents

The following section will look at some of the global trends that are setting the context for the competition for international talent.

The world of work is changing faster than ever before. Economics, technology, government policies, demographics and social trends are reshaping global labour markets. Considering that most people spend the majority of their time - and therefore a very significant proportion of their lives – at work, the changes and opportunities that the globalization provides are important to us all (Lanvin & Evans, 2016, 11). As globalization deepens, talent mobility becomes a significant element of dynamism, innovativeness and competitiveness.

The war for talent has been a hot topic in the business world since the end of the 1990's, caused by an increasingly competitive landscape for attracting, developing and retaining competitive employees. Now this competition for talent has spread to cities, regions and countries, and it is assumed that it will become one of the most defining economic issues of the 21st Century (Andersson *et.al.*, 2014, 5). In the constantly evolving knowledge-intensive economy, access to talent is a main driver of productivity, innovation and economic growth. Therefore, the ability to attract highly skilled talent has become an essential element in the efforts to create favourable conditions for growth in knowledge-intensive companies, cities or regions. International talent contributes with new knowledge and technology to the region (Andersson *et.al.*, 2014, 7).

Some of the key global trends that drive and thus set the context for today's competition for talent are low birth rates and an aging population, increasing specialisation and new technologies. Despite a growing global population, the availability of skilled talent is actually decreasing. Furthermore, several analyses predict that this so-called 'war for talent' will become increasingly acute in sectors that require a highly skilled and educated workforce. In the knowledge economy, both firms and regions increasingly specialise around core competencies. This means that highly specialised skills that are not always readily available in one's own region, or even country, must be attracted on an international market (Andersson *et.al.*, 2014, 8).

Economic benefits of attracting talent

Attracting talent is a good investment for the society. Economists agree that the immigration of high-skilled people such as scientists, engineers and executives increases economic growth (Lanvin & Evans, 2016, 93; Andersson *et.al.*, 2014, 10; Seidelin, 2015, 1). Research shows that foreigners have accounted for more than half of the net increase in the labour force of scientists and engineers in the United States since 1995 (Lanvin & Evans, 2016, 93.) Furthermore, foreign talent are more likely to be entrepreneurs and innovators, which boosts prosperity and creates growth. International talent are twice as likely to start a business, and they patent at double the native rate. Between 1995 and 2005, one in four technology start-ups in the United States was initiated by immigrants (Lanvin & Evans, 2016, 94.). Thus, international talents create jobs and wealth rather than taking jobs from nationals.

If you look at research in this area in Denmark, a report by Centre for Economic Business Research at Copenhagen Business School shows that the average expat family adds approximately 1.9 Million Danish Kroner (appr. 250,000 Euros) and the average single expat adds 900,00 Danish Kroner to the Danish economy per year (Andersson *et.al.*, 2014, 10). This goes for the retention of international talent as well. The report also shows that if the City of Copenhagen managed to retain all international talents for six months longer, this would in fact yield economic benefits of 6.4 billion Danish Kroner (appr. 850 million Euros) (ib.). Furthermore, calculations done by the Confederation of Danish Industries show that every highly educated immigrant in Denmark creates two new jobs and contributes with a tax net surplus of 250,000 Danish Kroner (appr. 33,500 Euros) every year (Andersson *et.al.*, 2014, 10).

Global Talent Competitiveness Index

Corporations have long used company branding in order to recruit the most skilled employees. Now cities and nations do it as well. The Global Talent Competitiveness Index (GTCI) is an action tool for continuous improvement in linking talent to economic development. Furthermore, it is an instrument to stimulate dialogue between governments, business, academia, professionals and citizens (Lanvin & Evans, 2016, 11). The purpose of the GTCI is to help us understand the broader issues behind talent competitiveness. Furthermore,

the report maps out the countries of the world and ranks them in terms of their ability to grow, attract and retain international talent.

A key word in the purpose of talent attraction is *mobility*. Due to a combination of economic and technological factors, mobility is being redefined on a global scale. The redefinition of mobility applies to all dimensions of talent attraction, which involves skills, people and jobs (Lanvin & Evans, 2016, 20). People are becoming more mobile across borders because of improvements in transport, telecommunications and because of the advent of global virtual teams. This massive redefinition of mobility is making talent attraction a key objective for every country. International mobility of talent is thus a core dimension of any national or regional strategy because it determines the ability of countries, regions and cities to connect to globalized value chains and develop successful strategies for sustainable growth (Lanvin & Evans, 2016, 20).

Talent mobility and the refugee crisis

The GTCI report states that although Europe currently faces the biggest global refugee crisis in this century, most migration to Europe and OECD countries is still driven by economic motives. This means people seeking to improve their standard of living by gaining a better job, rather than refugees fleeing persecution who seek asylum (Lanvin & Evans, 2016, 21).

Prime destinations for international talent

When one looks across countries, the GTCI states that the migration picture is uneven. Although migrants originate from an increasingly diverse number of countries, they move to a shrinking pool of prime destinations. Some of these prime destinations are the United States, Canada, Australia and Switzerland (Lanvin & Evans, 2016, 95). The GTCI report points to the United States as a clear winner in terms of attracting and retaining international talent. For instance within Ph.D.'s, the United States scores highly on attracting Ph.D.'s not only from emerging countries, but also from Western Europe.

"In tennis, it would be a 6-0 core in the first set of a US versus 'Rest of the World' match. The U.S. has won a game, which, really, nobody else has been playing, until 2010. Everybody gets trained

in the United States. America attracts the very best – the top students from China and India,” says Paul Evans, Academic Director of the INSEAD, which is the organization behind the Global Talent Competitiveness Index (Paul Evans, App. 4³). Paul Evans also points out that although some emerging economies are now successfully attracting highly skilled migrants, Europe may continue to be the ‘land of missed opportunity’, unable to attract the talent that instead chooses to go to either the United States or to the new, emerging economies of the world (Lanvin & Evans, 2016, 95; Paul Evans, App. 4). Furthermore, Paul Evans states that talent attraction is a concept that only very recently has been put on most countries’ agendas:

“Talent attraction has until very recently, and we are talking about up until five years ago, talent attraction hasn’t been on the map anywhere in the world.” –Paul Evans, App. 4.

When asked about Denmark’s role in international talent attraction, Paul Evans argues that it is such a new phenomena that most countries, including Denmark, are only just waking up to it: *“The Danes are first waking up to it! You only just started on the talent attraction now! So to your question on branding Denmark for international talent: You’ve got to catch up – fast!”* – Paul Evans, App. 4.

Denmark according to the GTCI

According to the Global Talent Competitiveness Index, Denmark’s strengths include attractive business conditions such as a flexible labour market regulation which makes it is easy to hire and fire. Furthermore, strengths include a highly educated workforce, high-level research supported by substantial government investment and a strong educational system. Another key factor to Denmark’s success is the unique Scandinavian management style that makes room for self-development. Finally, freedom of expression and participation is an area in which the Danish model scores some of the highest points.

³ App. is short for appendix and used throughout the thesis to refer to the transcribed interviews.

Key factors for attracting talent

The Global Talent Competitiveness Index (GTCI) emphasizes that although immigration policies are important, their role is simply to 'regulate the valve' (Lanvin & Evans, 2016, 95). What the GTCI is more concerned about is to understand what *attracts* talent to a particular country or region. This is further explained in the interview with Paul Evans. In terms of factors that attract international talent, Paul Evans points to the following essential factors:

Language and opportunity

The first factor is language, which basically means English due to its role as lingua franca in most parts of the world: *"English is the dominant language of the talent pool across the world. People want to go where they can speak the language and interact with the locals easily. The United States is very attractive to people because of their language. Great Britain is also attractive. Denmark has actually gotten much better at English, which is an important advantage."* –Paul Evans, App. 4.

The second thing that attracts people is opportunity: *"There are many different factors to opportunity: educational opportunity is one thing. Equally important is the opportunity of a challenging and interesting job in a specific area of expertise."* –Paul Evans, App. 4.

The GTCI makes use of Richard Florida's idea of creative talent, or *Global Knowledge Skills*, as the GTCI calls it. In regards to creative talent, opportunity has a different meaning. Talent is attracted by the opportunity to learn, create and innovate, and in turn, the creative talents will create opportunity for others (Lanvin & Evans, 2016, 95).

Clusters

"Another important factor that you can put under opportunity are clusters. If you want to attract people from abroad, you have to have a reputation. Not just the reputation of 'Copenhagen as a beautiful city', but you have to have a reputation as being one of the world's most dynamic places in biotech, robotics or software." –Paul Evans, 2016 App. 4.

Opportunity is therefore not meant here so much as jobs, but rather the existence of clusters and industry hubs where new innovations are likely to happen. Lanvin & Evans (2016) argue that much of the international migration of scientists and engineers is in fact highly localized around knowledge-intensive clusters and specific research areas, for instance within

biosciences (Lanvin & Evans, 2016, 95). Another important attraction factor is that clusters also attract entrepreneurs. Paul Evans notes that it is a problem that Denmark does not have that reputation:

"If you look at other countries, for instance Taiwan, they have created a hub in the electronics industry, while Singapore has a growing cluster in biosciences. Ireland has successfully created a software hub and Finland's Helsinki region, called Espoo, aspires to do the same.

Denmark, on the other hand, does not have that reputation in the software area. So Denmark finds it very difficult to attract IT specialists from abroad, but internally as well. Therefore, IT is one of your most problematic areas of attraction." –Paul Evans, App. 4.

Lifestyle

Paul Evans points to lifestyle as the third criteria for attracting talent: *"Lifestyle is family, friends, Wonderful Copenhagen, welcome houses and so forth. There are a lot of things that you put under the lifestyle area."* –Paul Evans, App. 4.

Taxation, pay and education

Paul Evans emphasizes that taxation and pay are also very important factors in attracting people from abroad. Furthermore, countries with world-class institutes of higher education have an advantage in attracting creative talent (Paul Evans, App. 4; Lanvin & Evans, 2016, 96). Universities that are well known for their high educational levels and scientific achievement will attract students and researchers from abroad, as well as the home country. Some of the international students and researchers will stay and get jobs, which fosters innovation. Other attractive assets are the access to the social networks of prestigious institutions, autonomy, and freedom to debate (Lanvin & Evans, 2016, 96).

Management practices

The last thing that Paul Evans (2016) points to as a key attraction factor is management practices, which matter significantly for the attraction and retention of talent (Lanvin & Evans, 2016, 25). International talents' biggest fear is being stuck in a job with no development opportunities. Creative leaders of the future want to focus on growing and learning new things. In this regard, Denmark is doing extremely well, according to Paul Evans: *"Danes manage people extremely well - better than in any other country in the world."* –Paul Evans, App. 4.

The quality of management practices varies greatly from one national culture to another. According to Paul Evans, management practises should be given more prominence in the talent attraction agenda. Whether we call international talent ‘Global Knowledge Talent’ (Lanvin & Evans, 2016) or ‘the Creative Class’ (Florida, 2005), this particular group of global people is attracted by opportunities to grow, develop, have an impact, and get rewarded and recognized for it (Lanvin & Evans, 2016, 96). *“Danes are a benchmark for management practises. You’ll see in our GTCI report a more scientific way of putting this there, which is a complex three-dimensional graph with data from all over the world.”* –Paul Evans, 2016.

This demonstrates that attractive countries that score high on brain gain are those where opportunities go to people on the basis of their merit and where companies take employee development and training seriously. Furthermore, Paul Evans states that research by the GTCI shows that the most attractive countries are countries that practise professional management and provide active support for employee development (Lanvin & Evans, 2016, 96).

Paul Evans notes that there are different ways of labelling professional management. He uses the Danish word “*anerkendelse*”, which he believes is a more subtle way to explain attention to employee development: *“Professional management is basically managing people on the basis of their merit. The Danish word “anerkendelse” is a very good word to explain it. Anerkendelse of people” – making people feel good when they contribute,”* – Paul Evans, 2016, App. 4. Paul Evans further notes that professional management is a factor, in which Denmark scores highly over the United States: *“In the United States, attention for employee development is zero. It’s every person for themselves. In Denmark, it is a completely different situation.”* (App. 4)

Finally, Paul Evans argues that professional management could be marketed as one of the most important attraction factors for the Danish branding strategy (App.4).

Talent attraction at the local level: cities and regions

Talent attraction has become more and more of a local issue, as communication hubs, cities, regions and municipalities have recaptured their roles as attractors of talents. Over the last decades, cities and municipalities all over the world have taken a high profile and adopted proactive strategies to attract talent. Accordingly, many cities and regions have created strong

branding strategies to attract talent, and more importantly; the *right* talent (Andersson *et.al.*, 2014, 7; Lanvin & Evans, 2016, 93).

The Global Talent Competitiveness Index highlights that while much of talent development may lie in the hands of countries, highly skilled people are attracted more by cities and regions than by entire countries. People do not think of the United States versus England or Australia versus Sweden. Rather, they think of Silicon Valley versus Cambridge and Sydney versus Stockholm (Lanvin & Evans, 2016, 29).

Some cities focus on one particular niche: Dublin, for instance, is known for its reputation as a technology hub. Therefore, Dublin has focussed its branding on attracting talent by building a reputation as a technology hub and developing an attractive lifestyle for tech professionals. The same strategy is used by other European cities like Helsinki-Espoo. In the United States, the position of San Francisco's Silicon Valley is now challenged by New York and its 'Silicon Valley' (Lanvin & Evans, 2016, 29).

The international talents: who are they?

In order to understand how to attract and retain international talent, we need to first define the demographics of this particular group. Andersson *et.al.* (2014) identify different groups of international talents. First, we have the so-called '*global economy's nomads*' who are people that move from one country to another in periods of one year or several years, looking for new opportunities and challenges (Andersson *et.al.* 2014, 19). *The global economy's nomads* do not have an objective to fully integrate into local society but rather into their own global culture (ib.) Instead, this distinct type of international talents search for fusion cultures with high possibilities for interaction between different cultures and other international talents.

Of course, not all international talents belong to this category of global nomads (Andersson *et.al.* 2014, 19). The international professionals tend to have three key characteristics: they are young in the ages between 25-34 years either at the end of their master studies or with a completed higher education. They have a good understanding of what career they want to

build, but they do not have deep roots in their current community (ib.). We also find other international talents whose key interest is to look for opportunities to improve their quality of life. They consider moving to places that offer better conditions and fit their lifestyle in a better way than the current location. These people usually seek a permanent place to stay and want to integrate into the local social life. We also find another group of internationals that move to a certain place because they have family or friends located there. Talent's spouses fall into this category (ib.). Although some internationals move with their spouses and sometimes their entire families, many of these are in fact single. This group is extremely flexible, as they only have their own career to worry about. Compared to talents with families, single talents can find more flexible housing arrangements, which allows them to move to high cost areas while their earnings are still low (Andersson *et.al.*, 2014, 19).

As mentioned previously, many of the international talents belong to the so-called *Creative Class* (Florida, 2005, 32; Andersson *et.al.*, 2014, 20). The Creative Class contribute to an open, dynamic, personal, and professional environment, which in turn attracts more creative people and also businesses and capital. Diversity and a mix of influences is of key interest to the Creative Class, who listens to different kinds of music and try different kinds of food. These creative-minded people want to meet and socialize with people who are different from themselves. Therefore, tolerance, social inclusion and openness are vital components for an environment that can attract the Creative Class (Florida, 2005, 32; Andersson *et.al.*, 2014, 20).

Analysis

Case: Copenhagen Capacity

Copenhagen Capacity is Greater Copenhagen's official organization for investment promotion and business development. The organization was established in 1994 by the city of Copenhagen. While operating as an independent organization financed by the Greater Copenhagen Authority, Copenhagen Capacity offers business development services such as market research, business set-up and business expansion to foreign-owned companies free of charge (Copenhagen Capacity Annual Report, 2016).

Access to highly skilled employees is a requirement for many foreign businesses and investors just as it is a requirement for continued growth in Danish companies. Attracting talent is therefore one of Copenhagen Capacity's core focus areas. Particularly, the most recent performance contract for 2014-2017, which they have concluded with the Capital Region of Denmark, highlights talent attraction and retention as one of the key areas for continued growth (Copenhagen Capacity, 2014).

Copenhagen Capacity's talent attraction and retention agenda

Background

As the leading regional investment promotion agency of the Greater Copenhagen area, Copenhagen Capacity's prime activities are focused on assisting foreign companies who are looking to expand their activities and build a business case for Copenhagen to be the physical location for their investment.

"Back in 2009-2010 these international clients stated increasingly that access to skilled competence would be a key decision making factor for which region they would expand their activities to. Looking at the demographics of Denmark and labour market forecasts with small generations coming out of our universities and large amounts of people close to the retirement age, we simply realized that we needed to attract international talent to support our clients." - Morten King-Grubert, Team Leader of the Talent Department in Copenhagen Capacity (App. 3).

In 2012, Copenhagen Capacity initiated their first talent attraction strategy. The idea behind the talent attraction initiative was formed by two trends:

“The first trend was that more and more of our Investment Promotion cases asked us: If we locate ourselves here, can you ensure us that we can actually find the right workforce for our companies? The companies that come to Denmark are knowledge companies that need highly competent employees. We started to realize that we needed to find a way to ensure the probability of finding the right people here.” –Nikolaj Lubanski, Director of the Talent Department in Copenhagen Capacity (App. 1).

The second trend behind the initiative for a talent attraction and retention strategy was influenced by the outsourcing of Danish companies: *“Another thing that happened was that many companies started offshoring or outsourcing their activities away from Denmark. So to some extent, there was also a pressure: why didn’t we do more to keep the companies that were already here in Denmark?”* –Nikolaj Lubanski, 2016 (App. 1). Thus, Denmark faced a severe risk of losing many of the international companies that were already in the country. If these companies were unable to find the right people for their companies, they would also soon start to leave.

Senior Talent Attraction Manager, Merete Sandager, explains another reason for the initiation of the talent attraction strategy, which was also influenced by new challenges in Copenhagen Capacity’s Investment Promotion: *“One of the success criteria for choosing Denmark as a place to set up business has changed over the past years. From being a matter of tax reductions for specific companies, now it’s the softer values that are important. By this I mean finding the right people that can help companies grow. Denmark was not being branded for anything other than for tourists or for investment promotion. What we needed was to brand Denmark for talented people.”* –Merete Sandager, 2016 (App. 2).

Talent attraction as part of globalization strategy

Nikolaj Lubanski notes that although the aforementioned trends were some of the main reasons behind the initiative for the talent attraction strategy, there were already some ideas for this in previous years. All the way back to the start of the Millennium in 2000-2001, the Danish government set the agenda for a so-called globalization strategy. As part of this strategy, the idea to make Denmark a more attractive place for international talent was placed on the national agenda. This was however not implemented practically:

"I think it (talent attraction, red.) had been on the international scale long before it entered into the Danish discussion. All the way back to the Action Plan by the Danish government back in 2007, the need for international talent was mentioned. In fact, already in 2000, the government made a globalization strategy. As part of that strategy, it was emphasized that we needed to do more to make this place attractive for international people. But you couldn't really see how this was somehow implemented." –Nikolaj Lubanski, 2016.

Merete Sandager agrees with the lack of a government implementation for a national talent attraction strategy: *"Copenhagen Capacity has been trying to push and lobby for a national effort. At some point, there were rumours about a national talent strategy; that it was just lying in a drawer somewhere at the government, but it has never been rolled out."*

Action Plan for Denmark and its role in talent attraction

Nikolaj Lubanski refers to the Action Plan for Denmark, which was set in 2007, as part of a long-term globalization strategy. He further notes that although the purpose of the plan was to create a much stronger effort at promoting Denmark internationally and changing the negative image of the country, it was also part of the same political agenda of opening and changing Denmark into a globalized economy:

"I think the concern was very much: What should we live from in the future? How do we survive, a small country, in a globalized world, with all the economy of scale possibilities?" –Nikolaj Lubanski, 2016 (App. 1).

Copenhagen Capacity's attraction and retention strategy on a practical level

On a practical level, Copenhagen Capacity works to attract international talent in Greater Copenhagen via two main lines of activity. The first line is the retention of the international talents in Denmark. The second line is the international marketing of Greater Copenhagen as a career destination (Morten King-Grubert, App. 3). In order to go more in-depth with the practical implementation of Copenhagen Capacity's talent attraction and retention strategies, the two lines of activity will be explained in further detail in the following section:

Retention strategy

Creating a good on-boarding for internationals

The first level of activity involves the retention of the international talent pool that is already in Denmark. Copenhagen Capacity focuses predominately on international students who are at their master level at Danish universities and recent graduates. One of the first activities that Copenhagen Capacity initiated for their talent retention agenda was the project "Copenhagen Talent Bridge". The idea was to create a one-point entry for potential foreign employees by making it easier for internationals to find the right information. Copenhagen Talent Bridge was a welcoming and retention project to create a good on-boarding for internationals:

"When relocating, there are a number of things to see to; establishing a new network, finding out what the city has to offer and getting your family settled in. With 15 different partners in this project, Copenhagen Capacity was the lead on Copenhagen Talent Bridge. A great result that came out of this was International House. International House is not Copenhagen Capacity's doing, but working with this agenda has resulted in the thought of connecting different actors in the talent attraction agenda." –Merete Sandager, 2016 (App. 2).

Established in June 2013, International House Copenhagen⁴ is a public-private partnership specialized in the reception and retention of international talent. The objective of the house is to provide international citizens with the best possible start to life in Denmark by giving them the comfort of a one-point entry. In one physical place, the International House Copenhagen,

⁴ <http://ihcph.kk.dk>

state, academia, municipality and the private sector join forces to assist international citizens with all the tasks that are related to relocating. International House Copenhagen assists foreign people who are moving to Denmark with everything from the official paperwork to finding a job, introduction to Danish working and living conditions as well as how to create a social network in Denmark (Andersson *et.al.*, 2014, 113). International House Copenhagen is unique in many ways, as it creates a physical place that joins all the sectors that are involved with international talents. Secondly, it has a long-term effect in that it reduces unnecessary time for internationals to get their paperwork done. This strengthens the quality of the services provided and secures a better retention strategy for the internationals (Andersson *et.al.*, 2014, 113).

Move to Denmark App

An on-boarding tool that came out of the Copenhagen Talent Bridge project was a mobile app. The Move to DK app simplifies the process of relocating to Denmark while functioning as a practical guide for international talents considering Denmark for their next career move (App. 2). The app thus serves as a step-by-step checklist and a one-point entry to the many websites and authorities to contact when relocation to Denmark to live and work. Potential new employees or students in Denmark can use the Move to DK app to give them access to the necessary information, which in the end makes it easier and more manageable to move to Denmark. Furthermore, the app relieves Danish companies' HR departments of the most standard practical questions for their potential new international employees (Merete Sandager, App. 2).

"Through this app, we can direct them to the official websites, so instead of finding old news or random pages that may or may not have been updated, we guide them to, for example "New to Denmark", which is the official website in which internationals can read about our tax system etc." – Merete Sandager, App. 2.

Global talent networks

Another strategy for the retention of international talent in Denmark is via the global talent networks. The Youth Goodwill Ambassador Network of Denmark (YGA) is a global network of talented international students. They brand Denmark as an attractive study destination while

working to increase the job opportunities for the appointed youth ambassadors as well as international talents in Denmark. Thus, it is a career platform for international students and companies in Denmark, which addresses the need for highly educated young talent in Danish businesses. The YGA aims to increase the number of international full-degree students from Danish universities who find full-time employment with Danish companies and organisations after completing their studies. The Youth Goodwill Ambassador Corps is a global network of approximately 550 talented international students from more than 70 countries worldwide. All network members are studying, or have studied, in Denmark. The corps is working to market Denmark as a leading study and career destination, as well as to promote Danish business, culture and academic programmes to students and selected higher education institutions worldwide. While studying in Denmark, network members take part in a career development programme that provides them with the professional tools and network to land their first job in Denmark (Nikolaj Lubanski, App. 1).

Founded in 2010 by Copenhagen Capacity and Wonderful Copenhagen in partnership with the Danish Agency for Universities and Internationalisation, the network is managed by Copenhagen Capacity's Talent Department (Andersson *et.al.*, 2014, 96). It is modelled after Copenhagen Goodwill Ambassador Corps, which is a network of international Danes living abroad. The YGA started out with the purpose of engaging international students and sending them back as ambassadors for Denmark:

"The Youth Goodwill Ambassador Corps started back in 2010 as an exit strategy. These students simply came to Denmark and then went back. Based on the fact that Copenhagen Capacity and Wonderful Copenhagen have a Goodwill Ambassador corps of executive Danes living outside of Denmark who serve as brand ambassadors for Denmark, Morten King-Grubert in Copenhagen Capacity thought: Why not try and match that? Who could be the best brand agents for Denmark other than the students that have already been here?" –Merete Sandager, App. 2.

However, within the last two years, the purpose of the Youth Goodwill Ambassador corps has changed from being an exit and branding strategy for international students to becoming part of the retention strategy. This means that Copenhagen Capacity now aims at keeping the students that have studied in Denmark when they finish their studies.

"Now we want to keep these students that for the majority have studied here for free. Instead of them just going back, we would like to keep them here as part of the workforce. So now the big effort is getting them in touch and in dialogue with companies by trying to match-make them."

- Merete Sandager, App. 2.

International talent conferences

The actual matchmaking between companies and young professionals is done in several ways. Twice every year, Copenhagen Capacity hosts an International Talent Conference, which facilitates matchmaking between young international professionals and Danish companies on the lookout for talented international employees. The most recent conference was held in April 2016 with more than 200 highly skilled international talents. The purpose was to offer a wide range of international companies in Denmark the opportunity to strengthen their employer brand among international undergraduates and graduate students based in all of Denmark (Merete Sandager, App. 2). With the theme *"Your future career in Denmark"*, the conference facilitated matchmaking between young international professionals and Danish companies on the lookout for talented international employees. The Royal Prince of Denmark, Prince Joachim, is the protector of the official Youth Goodwill Ambassador corps:

"For students, Prince Joachim is a fun factor because Denmark is known as a monarchy. For them to get a picture with the prince is something that is quite unusual to happen in their home countries." - Merete Sandager, App. 2.

At the conference in April 2016, Copenhagen Capacity set up a competition for the international students participating in the conference. With the purpose to see how far they could reach, the international students were asked to write a press release targeting their home country. In their own language, they were asked to write about the International Talent Conference with the Royal Prince of Denmark and send it out to local newspapers in their home countries. With the hope of winning the prize; an iPhone 6, this challenge turned out to be quite the success: The International Talent Conference has gone worldwide as the student's own press releases have been mentioned in news stories from Eastern European countries and Russia all the way to China, just to mention a few.

Copenhagen Capacity therefore uses their own network of brand ambassadors to tell the story of the students' own experience with HRH Prince Joachim of Denmark, and the main purpose of the conference; namely to attract more internationals to the country and share this in their home countries. Andersson *et.al.* (2014) argue that many of the activities of the YGA network are based on the ideas of co-creation and idea generation through crowdsourcing and 'crowd-marketing', which means that the networks harnesses the engagement and creativity of the network members (Andersson *et.al.*, 2014, 96). The competition to win an iPhone for branding Denmark for international talent worldwide could be seen as an example of this particular branding strategy.

Company challenge

As a recent initiative started up in the fall of 2015, Copenhagen Capacity tries to match-make international students in Denmark with companies by making a case together with Danish companies.

"Companies do this by employer branding exercises to see how the students work and how they take on different challenges. The companies actually assess the students as part of these company challenges to see if they fit with the companies. This is meant to be a pipeline into that job." –Merete Sandager, App. 2.

Furthermore, Copenhagen Capacity tries to match-make a large group of internationals in Denmark with a job: primarily a student job, an intern position or an entry level position. This programme aims to match the pool of international students and recent graduates in Denmark with Danish companies. Copenhagen Capacity works with a regional network that was started up in summer 2015, which is called the Greater Copenhagen Career Programme. This programme also aims at young internationals that are either recent graduates, about to graduate or have a few years of experience as graduates: *"This programme aims at helping the graduates prepare to get a job in Denmark. It could be anything from CV-workshops to mentor programmes while at the same time trying match these graduates with Danish companies."* – Merete Sandager, App. 2.

Talent attraction strategy

The second line of activities is focussed on the attraction of international talent. One of the broader talent attraction campaigns is Talent Attraction Denmark. Copenhagen Capacity is the lead partner of Talent Attraction Denmark with the Central Region of Denmark and the Southern Region of Denmark as partners. The purpose of this interregional collaboration is to have a unified national platform to brand Denmark from. Talent Attraction Denmark exposes Danish businesses, business clusters, Danish working culture, the companies and the specific jobs in Denmark. The Talent Attraction Denmark project brings together Danish companies' experience and best solutions – and on this basis develops free tools and campaigns to brand Denmark to use in the companies' recruitment of international labour. Talent Attraction Denmark supports everything from SMEs to C20 enterprises, universities and research institutions in their efforts to recruit international employees⁵.

Figure 1: Talent Attraction Denmark targeting specific sectors.

FIND YOUR NEXT JOB IN DENMARK

| OPEN JOBS IN IT | OPEN JOBS IN CLEANTECH | OPEN JOBS IN LIFE SCIENCE |
|---|--|---|
| If you are looking to pursue a career within IT, why not consider Denmark? With its highly competitive IT cluster and ability to innovate and integrate complex software systems, Denmark has become a favorite hot spot and test market for some of the most successful and internationally renowned software companies like Microsoft, VMware, Apple, Google etc. | Are you looking to work with green technologies that make a difference? Denmark is a global leader in the development of environmentally and climate-friendly energy solutions. Almost forty years of focused energy policies have resulted in Denmark ranking among the top five most important clean technology producers worldwide. | If you are looking to pursue a career within life sciences, Denmark should be on top of your list. Why? With Medicon Valley, Denmark is home to one of Europe's strongest Life Science clusters. Brimming with talented academics and researchers it offers an abundance of exciting career opportunities within pharmaceuticals, biotech and welfare tech companies. |
| Your career. Your move. Think Denmark. Read more | Your career. Your move. Think Denmark. Read more | Your career. Your move. Think Denmark. Read more |

Source: www.talentattractiondenmark.com

⁵ <http://www.talentattractiondenmark.dk/en/about-talent-attraction/the-project/>

The purpose of Talent Attraction Denmark is to:

- Brand Denmark as the preferred country to work and live in for international employees.
- Develop common tools and campaigns based on industrial experience and best-practice solutions for businesses of all sizes.
- Provide free access to marketing materials that reinforce companies' stories by integrating Denmark's unique strengths in a presentation of the options that the specific industry and region has to offer to international employees.

"What this project is mostly involved in is what we call employer place branding: connecting place branding, or even nation branding, with employer branding in order to give the companies access to tools and materials that actually talk about Denmark. These tools and materials tell the story of Denmark; not from a glossy touristy way, but from a living and working perspective. The idea behind this came due to the fact that the companies were good at branding themselves internationally, but they didn't use Denmark as a place to live and work in their branding. In fact, they rarely used Denmark as an attraction factor." – Merete Sandager, App. 2.

Targeting sectors

The talent attraction campaigns are targeted for three specific sectors: IT, Clean Tech and Life Science. The campaigns are intended to be a supplement to the companies' own recruitment as they target 'passive' job seekers. Via communication channels such as university alumni network, professional journals, professional member organizations, conferences and LinkedIn, the talent attraction campaigns demonstrate that Denmark has exciting career opportunities within the above sectors towards a particularly relevant recruitment segment.

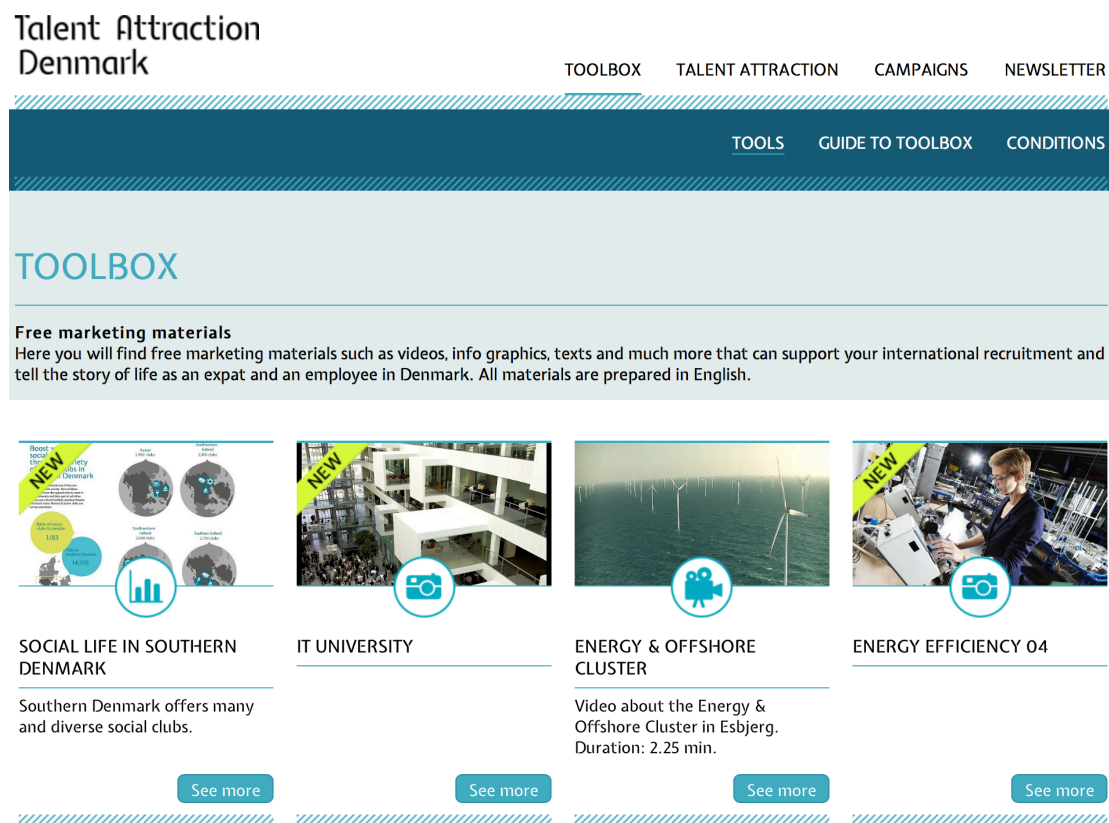
"We expose Danish companies and their open jobs through different channels. Further, we try to generate more traffic to the companies' own sites. The reason why we are doing is because it's considered more cost efficient to use one pool for all of these companies. By doing this with for instance the IT campaigns, we are branding Denmark, the IT sector and the IT companies. Not

necessarily just IBM or Microsoft, but also the smaller and more interesting opportunities in the SME's." – Merete Sandager, App. 2.

Talent attraction toolbox

For numerous times, international studies have placed Danish inhabitants at the top of happiness and general satisfaction rankings and the Capital Copenhagen as "the most liveable city in the world". This apparent satisfaction with life is often recognized as 'soft factors' – culture, leisure time and family life - as opposed to 'hard values' such as money or material wealth. It is apparent that the country has a distinctive culture, sometimes referred to as "the Danish lifestyle", which is affected by a variety of features, such as high-class education, flat hierarchy, work-life balance, an increasing focus on sustainability and well-managed welfare society (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2016). To assist companies in branding Denmark for the country's soft factors, Copenhagen Capacity has created a toolbox that companies can plug and play to elaborate on their brand. The toolbox contains free marketing materials such as videos, infographics, articles and the like that can support companies' international recruitment and tell the story of life as an expat and an employee in Denmark. The materials are prepared in English and can be found in several formats. Merete Sandager explains that the reason for the implementation of this toolbox is mainly because Danish companies have, until now, not been very good at using the softer values of Denmark as an attraction factor for international employees. Companies, especially bigger international companies in Denmark, often refer to their own company instead: *"Either the companies don't think about using the softer values of Denmark as an attraction factor, or they don't do it because it's time consuming.*" – Merete Sandager, App. 2.

Figure 2: Talent Attraction Denmark Toolbox



Working culture in Denmark

Branding the softer values of Denmark is a key point in which Denmark differs from many countries. Within the IT sector, for instance, it is difficult for a small country like Denmark to compete with countries like Germany and the United Kingdom which have incredibly strong IT sectors:

"What we can differ in is actually for the people who are on the verge of getting a family started. Because here in Denmark, you have a much different work environment in order to support family life and have more time for yourself. This is much more compatible for young talents' future work-life balance. This is how we differentiate ourselves in the Nordic Region from the rest of the world." –Merete Sandager, App. 2.

As has been argued by Paul Evans (App. 4), Merete Sandager supports his statement that the flat leadership structure in Denmark is another factor that differentiates Denmark from many

other countries. Danish working culture is based on communication, collaboration and personal responsibility (Work in Denmark, 2016). Furthermore, employees in Denmark are team players and are often given personal influence and flexibility, in order to have a career without compromising work-life balance. Merete Sandager (App. 2) mentions the *flat hierarchy, flexible working conditions* and *knowledge sharing* as some of the key factors in which Denmark differs from other countries: *“You get much more responsibility much faster here in Denmark in a junior position than you would get in most other countries.”* – Merete Sandager, App. 2.

Targets

The Capital Region of Denmark sets the targets for Copenhagen Capacity’s talent attraction and retention strategy. The main target is to create growth, which is measured via job creation. The targets are measured the same way that Copenhagen Capacity does Investment Promotion and marketing of the capital region to attract businesses. *“That’s been the way that Copenhagen Capacity has been measured for the last 20 years. And that’s also the way that the talent attraction strategy is being measured.”* – Merete Sandager, App. 2.

Therefore, targets are measured on the number of jobs that Copenhagen Capacity creates, meaning the number of international students that are retained in the jobs and the number of new people from abroad that Copenhagen Capacity attract to this country (Nikolaj Lubanski, App. 1.). Merete Sandager points out an issue in this way of measuring: *“In some ways, it’s like putting a triangular into a square because you are not really working under the same parameters as an investment case. In an investment case, you are in very close contact with this case and company for two or three years, which makes it very easy to measure the exact value and how many jobs are created. Talent attraction is a little bit further away. We are basically doing marketing, which is harder to measure on a one-to-one scale.”* –Merete Sandager, App. 2. An investment promotion case is measured on predicted jobs, which means that if a company sets up a business in Copenhagen and estimates ten jobs, Copenhagen Capacity counts if these ten jobs are created within one year. Talent attraction and retention faces an issue in measurement due to the fact that it is not a company case in which Copenhagen Capacity can measure on a specific case in the same way an investment case is measured.

The Talent Department in Copenhagen Capacity has tried to approach this problem by focusing on matchmaking companies with potential candidates both from outside of Denmark via talent attraction and inside the country via talent retention and thereby creating jobs by looking at exactly which international candidates are taking which jobs: *“When we look at cases from other countries, they all face the same problem: How can we actually measure this initiative? This is why we have changed the talent attraction strategy a little bit in Copenhagen Capacity during the last year. In order to focus on matchmaking, we can follow the exact value that we create for a company.”* – Merete Sandager, App. 2.

Challenge: Funding

One of the biggest challenges for creating a long-term strategy is the funding. The funding structure for the Talent Department is that a minor part of the funding comes from the Capital Region of Denmark (Nikolaj Lubanski, App. 1; Merete Sandager, App. 2). Additional funding is provided by the European Union as well as other funds like the Marketing Fund of Denmark. Merete Sandager points out that it is very time consuming and bureaucratic to get this funding. This makes it difficult to change targets due to the fact that the goals of a project have to be set six months before the funding is actually given. As the goals are set for three years at the time, the goals may change within this time span.

“Sometimes the goals of a project that was written a half year before you actually get the money – the goals are then set for three years – but within the time span of 4.5 years, these goals might have changed. But you are not able to change the output towards the Chamber of Commerce in the EU, which are the ones who are handling the EU fundings.” – Merete Sandager, App. 2.

National or regional talent strategy

There is not a national strategy for the attraction and retention of international talent in Denmark. Copenhagen Capacity has been trying to push for a national effort together with the partnering organizations such as the DI Consortium for Global Talent.

“Copenhagen Capacity and our partnering organisations are working towards the same goal. We are all hoping that the Danish government could take initiative towards being better at attracting and retaining international talent. You see examples of other governments around Europe that have this. Ireland and Germany are examples of countries that are focussing specifically on this. Germany spends millions and millions of Euros in getting more talent to Germany. (...) But Denmark does not have a national strategy.” –Merete Sandager, App. 2.

Instead of a national strategy, Copenhagen Capacity collaborates with 15 different partners, including the Municipality of Copenhagen, on a regional strategy for attracting and retaining international talent in the Greater Copenhagen Region:

“We work together with the municipality and relevant organizations to try to put together these initiatives in a regional strategy (...). However, the aim was not a regional strategy. The aim was to use a regional strategy to be a starting point for a national talent strategy. This has never really arrived.” – Merete Sandager, App. 2.

The development of this strategy for attracting and retaining more international talent in the Copenhagen Region has been initiated and managed by Copenhagen Capacity (Linda Duncan Wendelboe, App. 5). Copenhagen Capacity offers to guide the implementation of the initiatives in this strategy in close collaboration with all relevant parties (Copenhagen Capacity, 2014).

DI Consortium for Global Talent

An organization that has played a large part in the initiation of the regional talent attraction agenda in collaboration with Copenhagen Capacity is the Consortium for Global Talent. The Consortium for Global Talent was initiated in collaboration with 17 of the largest companies in Denmark with the purpose to improve the conditions for international talent in Denmark. Recently, the Consortium of Global Talent and the Confederation of Danish Industries (DI) joined forces in a new venture called DI Consortium for Global Talent (DI Consortium for Global Talent, 2016, 1). The newly established initiative intends to further strengthen the efforts to create a good framework for businesses when they employ international talent (Linda Duncan Wendelboe, App. 5).

“We look at how we as a country can provide the right framework for businesses to attract and retain the right talent that they need to run their business and their production in Denmark. Also, we look at in which ways we can help promote the image of Denmark as a career country internationally.” – Linda Duncan Wendelboe, App. 5.

The purpose of the DI Consortium for Global Talent is in many ways similar to the purpose of Talent Attraction Denmark and the aforementioned talent attraction and retention strategies that Copenhagen Capacity is working on. However, whereas Copenhagen Capacity is mostly focussed on creating growth in the Greater Copenhagen Region, the Confederation of Danish Industries has a more wide-ranging approach towards securing a good framework for businesses all over Denmark. Thus, the reason for interviewing Linda Duncan Wendelboe who is Head of DI Consortium for Global Talent is to investigate whether there is a national approach towards branding Denmark for international talent:

“The Confederation of Danish Industries has been pushing for a national talent strategy in Denmark for seven years. It would be a good idea to have joint national efforts within this area. What happened instead is that many organizations such as DI, Copenhagen Capacity and some of the big Danish companies have tried to define a regional talent strategy. This was launched a couple of years ago with a set of initiatives we wanted to start up.” (Linda Duncan Wendelboe, App. 5)

Linda Duncan Wendelboe points out an interesting perspective in regards to the national agenda. Even though talent attraction initiatives are represented all over Denmark, there are a lot of scattered initiatives:

“In DI, we have 19 different regional associations covering all of Denmark. In Jutland alone, we have International Community, and in the Aarhus Area, we have many organisations working for the same thing. We have WorkLiveStay in the Southern part of Jutland, who are really working on making it attractive for expats to come and stay in that part of the country. We have an initiative in the middle part of Jutland to attract and retain highly skilled international talent and also to help companies to hire and to retain the right labour force. In Copenhagen, we have Copenhagen Capacity, but we also have the Municipality in Copenhagen. They have their own strategy.” - Linda Duncan Wendelboe, App. 5.

So what we see is that there are many different strategies. Linda Duncan Wendelboe points out that the problem is that we do not have the exact same value proposition to why Denmark is a good place to stay. This is what makes it a little bit complex in relation to nation branding: *“We are a small country with a population of five million inhabitants. How many different messages can we carry out if we want to have a strong nation brand?”* -Linda Duncan Wendelboe, App. 5.

In terms of clusters, there are many defined clusters in Denmark: *“If we are to translate that into nation branding in a career perspective: Is it credible that Denmark is an expert on 50 different clusters? Or should we maybe try to narrow it down and define a few clusters where we have something special to offer, knowing that it is credible if we build this storytelling? In this way, we can attract employees from abroad by telling them that the career opportunities within certain areas are very attractive.”* -Linda Duncan Wendelboe, App. 5.

International talents are attracted by an environment with the best people. They want to find a place where they can stay and keep on developing their skills. If we look at other countries, regions and cities, the ones that are successful are very specific on what they are good at and what they want to be known for. *“That is something that we should consider: to bridge all the good initiatives all over the country. This is why – if we are to build a national talent strategy – it*

has to be anchored politically. Furthermore, it has to be a long-term strategy and not something that only has a four-year perspective when one government changes to another government.” -

Linda Duncan Wendelboe, App. 5.

This points to a need for a long-term national perspective of talent attraction along with a strategy to assess what Denmark has to offer. This needs to be translated into a branding strategy that all of these different players can use when they go abroad to brand Denmark as a career destination.

Discussion

Theoretical implications

The purpose of this paper is to contribute to an understanding of the theoretical connection between nation branding and talent attraction by looking first at the **theoretical implications** of **nation branding** and secondly by looking at the **practical implications** in the case of Copenhagen Capacity's talent **attraction and retention strategy**. In the following, the author will argue that there is a need for a contribution in the theoretical development in nation branding within the area of talent attraction. Drawing on findings from the case study of Copenhagen Capacity, the author suggest areas that are related to nation branding which could be further developed in the field of talent attraction.

From a theoretical viewpoint, the thesis has looked at nation branding from the following perspectives:

1. **Nations and places can be branded** (Angell & Mordhorst, 2013, 184; Klüver, 2010, 6; Dinnie, 2008, 14; Jaffe & Nebenzahl, 2006, 139; Andreasen, 2007, 139)
2. **Nation branding differs from product branding in theoretically central ways** (Pryor & Grossbart, 2007, 292; Anholt, 2007, 3)
3. As a result, **nation branding is a special case of branding** that differs in its way of theoretical and practical applications due to the fact that it cannot be branded the same way products and corporations are branded (Klüver, 2010, 6).

Unclear definitions in the theoretical framework

In the context of nation branding, the term *brand* is often understood as synonymous with perception, image and reputation. It is conceptualized as the result of the sum of a set of marketing activities (Pryor & Grossbart, 2007, 293). While marketing scholars have sought to develop theories to help firms, tourist agencies and the like develop key measures of the nation brand, practitioners have played an important role in testing and refining nation brand theory. As brands have changed from being used to enable consumers to distinguish between one mass-produced product to the next, brands are nowadays increasingly used as elements for identity building. This applies to consumers, companies, and even to nations (Klüver,

2010, 6). However, the rapid growth of interest in the research field of nation branding has created a number of challenges:

Firstly, there is a challenge in the **lack of a coherent system** for the study and practical use of nation branding theory. This challenge is made even more difficult by **inconsistent conceptualizations** of the term nation branding, which is seen in the varying terminology related to the concept (Skinner & Kubacki, 2007). Thus, the term **nation branding** suffers from a lack of structured and consistent usage: Both academics and practitioners tend to use the term nation branding interchangeably with other related concepts, such as *nation marketing* (Kotler 1997), *national image reputation management* (Angell & Mordhorst, 2013), *competitive identity* (Anholt, 2007), and other related concepts including *public diplomacy* and *tourism marketing* (Angell & Mordhorst, 2013, 184). Nation branding thus appears as a blurry **concept and a grey zone** that is used interchangeably within these differing concepts. This thesis does not seek to apply an entirely new concept of nation branding, but the author argues that it would benefit the understanding and **conceptual underpinnings** of nation branding if the theoretical framework could appear more clearly. Therefore, the use of more consistent conceptualizations of the term would provide the framework with a more **coherent usage**. However, it is also essential to note that the constant development of the theory of nation branding is inevitable as it changes with the political, historical and cultural changes in the world.

Secondly, the idea that nation branding can be used in **standardized marketing** practises provides a significant challenge for the understanding and practical implications of nation branding. By promoting a national image through **managerial branding practices**, national identity and cultural differences become distorted (Rasmussen & Merckelsen 2015, 185; Aronczyk, 2008, 60). Anyone can sell a product, but can you really market an entire country?

The presence of brand management at the heart of this approach to national competitiveness presents a problem. A key aspect to consider is to ensure that the values that are marketed are aligned with the **actual identity perceived** by the citizens within the country. However, the citizens of the country may have a completely different view of their nation than foreigners may have. Every person has his or her own personal view of the nation. Furthermore, by setting up marketing efforts to promote national identity with the use of

consultants and marketing scholars, the national identity can never be fully grasped (Mads Mordhorst, App. 6).

Nation branding and talent attraction

As has been argued throughout this thesis, not only employers need to step up their efforts to attract and retain international talent. Cities, regions and countries are entering into this competition as well. More and more locations are now taking active steps to enhance their attractiveness towards a skilled workforce along with creative people and entrepreneurs. But even though it is evident that countries need to make themselves more attractive to international talent, there is little theoretical evidence of an **in-depth approach** within this particular area in **nation branding**: How can nation branding be used to attract skilled internationals to a country? Although nation branding often *mentions* highly skilled people as one of the aims of nation branding, there is a **lack of a theoretical approach** within nation branding that **identifies, explains and provides suggestions** for key areas in **talent attraction and retention**. Instead it seems that the related theory of place branding is a more widely used theoretical framework for talent attraction (Andersson, 2014; Zenker, 2009; Florida, 2005).

Perspectives from other countries

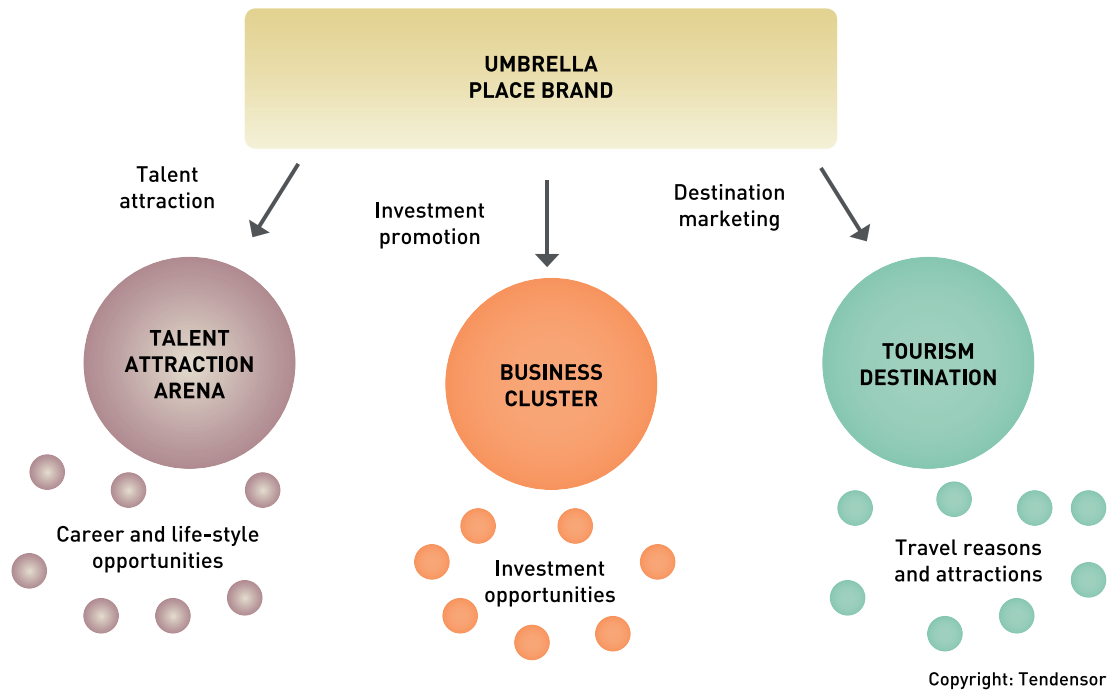
The Swedish-based international consultancy firm Tendensor provides a framework for talent attraction management practices in their handbook *“Tools and Strategies for Innovative Talent Attraction and Retention – a Handbook on Talent Attraction Management for cities and regions”*. This handbook was launched in 2014 and it has received notability from talent attraction managers all over the world (Andersson *et.al.*, 2014). Centering its talent attraction and retention strategy on the theory of **place branding**, the handbook is based on case studies of some of the leading cities and regions in the world in terms of talent attraction. The handbook is the result of a Nordic project on Talent Attraction Management with participants from 17 cities and regions from all over the world. The handbook contains strategies and tools for an organized and effective talent attraction and retention strategy.

The place branding applied in Andersson *et.al.*'s handbook is used particularly in the context of Philip Kotler, who has received notoriety as the founder of *place marketing*, which is a concept that was developed prior to Simon Anholt's theory on nation branding. It can be argued why **nation branding** theory has not yet developed a framework for the practical implementation and conceptual underpinnings that talent attraction entails.

As previously mentioned, the author of this thesis participated in a three-day Nordic Place Academy workshop with Tendensor and Copenhagen Capacity. During the workshop, leading talent attraction managers from all over Europe discussed best-case practices and issues related to place branding and talent attraction. Places that were highlighted as best case practices were for instance Ireland, due to its targeted talent attraction within the IT sector. Another country that is often used as best case practice in talent attraction and place branding is Singapore. Due to the fact that Singapore is both a country and a city, it can keep a unified approach towards branding the entire country for international talent. Another interesting reflection from the workshop was the discussion on how the **public sector** plays an important role as legitimizing force through the branding efforts.

Participants at the workshop discussed areas for improvement in talent attraction and whether there needs to be a **long-term national perspective** within the area of talent attraction and retention. Thus, cities and regions provide a good starting point in the assessment of a **targeted** talent attraction and retention strategy. Nevertheless, this needs to be linked with a coherent **overall objective** that includes all areas within this field.

Figure 3: Tendensor's model of the Place Branding Ecosystem. Courtesy by Marcus Andersson



Practical implications

By including the case of Copenhagen Capacity, we can start to draw a picture of the connection between nation branding and talent attraction. As we have seen from the case study, talent attraction was not a focus area or even a strategy until 2012 when it took its first steps with the opening of a Talent Department at Copenhagen Capacity. Although the topic had been on the global arena a few years before that, talent attraction is still a relatively new area, particularly within the field of nation branding. The above figure shows Andersson *et.al.*'s visualization of how place branding is connected to talent attraction, investment promotion and as a tourist destination. The idea behind a talent strategy sprung from Copenhagen Capacity's Department of Investment Promotion. Therefore, it is not surprising that talent attraction is closely related to *employer branding* and that most articles written within the area of talent attraction are related to employer branding or *employer place branding*. It is however important to draw a broader connection between the concept of talent attraction and retention.

Talent attraction is not only employer branding, it is investment opportunities, travel reasons and attractions, and not the least it is career and lifestyle opportunities. Furthermore, **nation brands** are socially and culturally embedded, and co-created and reified

by social actors (Pryor & Grossbart, 2007, 291). This applies to an even bigger extent to the purpose of **attracting and retaining** workers to a **country**. Social and cultural dimensions should therefore be included in the talent attraction and retention strategy as well as factors for identity creation. Copenhagen Capacity provides an example of an organization that seeks to coordinate the efforts of talent attraction and retention through a number of organizations working collaboratively towards the same goal. Furthermore, the efforts in Copenhagen Capacity's attraction and retention strategy are in many ways including identity factors and social inclusion through for instance the ambassador network (YGA).

However, **differing targets** and KPI's (key point indicators) set by **different stakeholders** makes the task towards creating a **coherent strategy** for attracting and retaining international talent in Denmark difficult. Copenhagen Capacity has one set of KPI's, the DI Consortium for Global Talent has another, and so forth. Moreover, the changing perspective on whether the purpose is to create growth in Greater Copenhagen or in the entire country of Denmark makes the task even more difficult to manage.

The **Talent Attraction Toolbox** that Copenhagen Capacity has created to help companies brand Denmark's soft factors and at the same time elaborate on their brand is a competitive tool for branding Denmark and Danish companies in a more coherent way. The Toolbox thus combines both Danish *culture* and Danish *working culture* with the attraction factors that the specific companies use to attract international talent to Denmark. Clearly there are more differences than similarities between countries and companies, but this particular example shows how some of the theories and techniques of brand management can, if intelligently and responsibly applied, become powerful competitive tools and agents for change both within the country and internationally.

A talent-oriented model for nation branding

In order to fully grasp the nature of nation branding and its relation to talent attraction, let us start by dividing the conceptual development of nation branding into three different stages within the development of nation branding theory: Let us call them **nation branding 1.0**, **nation branding 2.0** and **nation branding 3.0**.

Nation branding 1.0 is the marketing of a country in the same way we market a product, as explained in the above section. It includes marketing practices and advertising campaigns and does not approach branding any differently than product branding.

Nation branding 2.0 is the more current use of nation branding as it has evolved into incorporating nations and places as brand identities. This includes two-way communications that enable people to share their view of the nation in the nation branding process instead of leaving the entire task of branding a nation to consultants, tourist agencies and marketers.

Finally, we have **Nation branding 3.0**, which is a more holistic approach towards branding nations and places to attract talent. This approach aims to incorporate **five vital components** in the nation brand that together create a **holistic, transparent and honest image** of the country, which are particularly important in the attraction of people. This approach is not focussed on the attraction of tourists but more importantly, it focuses on the attraction of highly skilled internationals. The difference between the attraction of tourists as opposed to international talents is that tourists are looking for a place to explore; a place with a different culture, and the more different it is, the more interesting a vacation it could be. International workers and students, on the other hand, are looking for a place within which they can see themselves living. This means that although the culture may be different, they must also be able to integrate into that culture. Nation branding 3.0 could be an effective way of including the challenges and prospects of the above discussion and use a more holistic approach as the future approach towards talent attraction. In the following, suggestions for nation branding 3.0 will be outlined:

The five components of nation branding 3.0 are: **visibility, reputation, identity, authenticity and purpose** (Andersson *et. al.*, 2014). The framework for nation branding 3.0 is inspired by Andersson *et.al*'s suggestion for a *place* branding framework for cities and regions that incorporates these five place branding aims. The author of this paper suggests that this framework could be incorporated into an approach that encompasses not only place branding, but could be used for a more integrated framework that assesses the branding towards international talent in an entire country and not only a region or a city.

Figure 4: Five dimensions of a talent-oriented place branding. Source: Andersson *et.al*, 2014

| | |
|--------------|----------------------------------|
| VISIBILITY | To be known or recognized |
| REPUTATION | Building trust |
| IDENTITY | Belonging and identification |
| AUTHENTICITY | To be unique, to be real |
| PURPOSE | A role to play in a global world |

The above figure shows Andersson *et. al.*'s talent-oriented model for place branding. **The first dimension, visibility**, emphasizes the importance of a place or even a nation to be visible in the international arena. Even more important for the **visibility dimension** is to be visible in areas or industries that contain the talent needed. As an example, the English city Brighton changed their city branding from targeting tourists to a more direct talent-oriented approach. As their targets were specialized people from within the IT sector, the branding strategy of the city was changed into a talent-oriented city branding targeting the digital sector (Andersson *et. al*, 2014, 45).

If we look at the case of **Copenhagen Capacity**, this approach is already being used in the **Talent Attraction Denmark** campaigns. The way that Talent Attraction Denmark is organized is through a number of platforms targeting specific sectors within which Denmark is particularly in need of labour. These sectors are the **IT sector, the Cleantech sector and the Life Science sector** (Seerup, 2016). Through Talent Attraction Denmark, these specific sectors are made *visible* towards the specific talent that Denmark is in need of.

However, a point of critique of this approach is that the specific targeting has a downside to it, as it favours a particular group of people. As Florida (2005) argues, economic prosperity of a place relies on the so-called *Creative Class* of people with cultural, *entrepreneurial*, civic, scientific, and *artistic* creativity (Florida, 2005; Go *et.al.*, 2015). Copenhagen Capacity chooses its target sectors based on Danish companies' needs. But even though Danish companies may not express an urgent need of *artists* and *entrepreneurs*, these people are also contributors of growth. Of course, this is always dependent of the success of the individual, as these lines of businesses are highly competitive. Nonetheless, it is a point of

argument whether this particular group of creative people should be excluded in the specific targeting or whether the *creative class* in fact a group that could to be assessed in Copenhagen Capacity's talent attraction strategy as well.

The second dimension of the talent-oriented model for place branding, *reputation*, involves the overall trust or esteem that talents feel for the place (Andersson *et. al*, 2014, 45). A good reputation is achieved through the overall qualities and values in a city, region or a country. As we can see from the Global Talent Competitiveness Index, Denmark scores highly on numerous talent attraction factors, such as *access to growth opportunities* (1st place in the GTCI), *formal education* (6th place in the GTCI) and in terms of *freedom of voice* (1st place in the GTCI). Other attraction factors in which Denmark scores highly on the GTCI are *FDI* and *technology transfer*, *cluster development*, *labour-employer cooperation* and *internal openness* (Lanvin & Evans, 2016, 47,157). However, *external openness* lags behind on the index together with the dimension of retaining and attracting the best global talent (Lanvin & Evans, 2016, 47). The GTCI is one way of measuring Denmark's reputation, but in general, Denmark is a nation known for its citizens scoring highest on the World Happiness Report, its environmental policies and sustainable cities as well as a good social mobility, gender equality and a safe society.

The author of this thesis argues that *reputation* is a part of nation branding which is one of the most difficult to achieve due to the vast number of different values a nation transcends. One thing is the image that consultants and companies like Copenhagen Capacity promotes to the world, and another thing is the image that is seen through the actions caused by citizens, the media, and the government. Examples of this are seen in the aftermath of the Cartoon Crisis, and more recently, in the current debate on the refugee crisis. No one knows how big an effect these events have on the image of Denmark in the bigger picture. If the nation is a super brand, it is very difficult to alter the perception of it. Thus, it will take time before we can measure to what extent the most current image setback, if we can even look at it from such a black and white perspective, has affected the nation brand of Denmark in the long run.

The third dimension of the talent-oriented place brand is *identity*. This aspect has been highlighted in the theoretical section of the thesis in terms of nation branding and the impact

of applying a deeper meaning to a (super) brand. As gender, class, religion and ethnicity play less important roles in our lives, along with an increasing need for individualization, many people seek other elements to create and build their own unique identities. The growing market for **identity construction** with people entering into so-called “**brand communities**”, in which people believe to have similar ideas and values, set the agenda for nation branding and its relation to talent attraction (Klüver, 2010, 6; Pryor & Grossbart, 2007, 292). It could be argued that the international talents seek shared communities in the global arena in which they can build their identities together with people from different cultures with similar values.

However, when it comes to nations, the dimension of *national identity* becomes a contested subject. We cannot say that nations are losing their role as identity builders. On the contrary, nationalism is on the increase throughout the world (Fineman, 2015). Instead, what *can* be branded are the factors of a country that outside people can *adapt* to. These are for instance the soft factors that the case of Copenhagen Capacity shows are very important attraction and retention factors for international talents. For instance, the sustainable development of a place needs people who care about it, feel that they belong there and can identify with the residents and their lifestyle (Andersson *et. al.*, 2014, 45).

The city of Copenhagen is a perfect example of a place that has built an identity that attracts people from all over the world who want to become part of a city that numerous times has been voted “the most liveable city in the world” (Visit Copenhagen, 2016). Copenhageners excel in combining sustainable solutions with growth and a high quality of life. Some of the reasons are the large number of green and open spaces with fresh air, some of the cleanest water in the world as well as a city overflowing with bicycles, and a high availability and consumption of organic produce. The ambitious green profile of the city has a clear goal: The City of Copenhagen aims to become the world's first CO2 neutral capital by 2025. Copenhagen Capacity provides an example of an organization that attracts international talents by drawing on these soft factors that people can identify with.

Nevertheless, we still need to bear in mind that we have several views of how foreigners are perceived in Denmark. Even using the word ‘foreigner’ instead of ‘international’ has a somewhat more negative connotation than the latter.

In February 2016, the Danish newspaper Berlingske Tidende published an article that highlights this issue with the case of a person named Ali (Bruun, 2016). Ali is a highly educated software developer who has been working in a global IT company, Tradeshift, in Denmark for the last couple of years.

The company creates products for a global market and they aim to have an international working culture with experts from all over the world. They have customers from over 190 countries, which is why cultural understanding and language abilities are paramount. Therefore, the Danish headquarters have a workforce consisting of people from 43 different nationalities and their working language is English. Ali is greatly valued and a unique part of the workforce, but now he is leaving Denmark. Why? Because of the constant focus that Danish media and the political debate has put on refugees and immigrants, which makes him and many others feel stigmatized as immigrants in Denmark. The company states that although they have been very successful in *attracting* highly qualified people to their workforce, they are worried that it is becoming more and more difficult to *keep* the internationals for longer periods of time.

This story provides an example of one of the reasons as to why Denmark is not scoring high on the Global Talent Competitiveness Index when it comes to *retaining* talent. When asked what we could do about it, it becomes an even more difficult question. This thesis does not seek to provide any answers, merely to pinpoint the practical implications as well as challenges in the attraction and retention of international talent in Denmark.

The fourth dimension of the talent-oriented place brand model is *authenticity*. Being authentic means being true, unique and for real. It could be seen as the opposite of being copied, generic or mass-produced (Andersson *et. al.*, 2014, 45). People today face a surplus of goods and services, so those marketers who can use cultural markers or storytelling to signal culture, heritage or emotions can build stronger relationships in the market (ib.). This is somewhat related to the third dimension; *identity*, but one of the core aims of providing an *authentic* framework for branding a place to attract international talent is through storytelling and by enabling internationals to be their own brand ambassadors.

The Youth Goodwill Ambassador network is a unique example of peer-to-peer marketing that promotes an authentic image of Denmark all over the world in a free, honest and open-minded way. This further enables co-creation and idea generation through crowd-

marketing, which means that the network harnesses the engagement and creativity of the network members (Andersson *et.al.*, 2014, 96).

Finally, **the fifth dimension**, *purpose*, is needed in a talent-oriented place brand in order to assess the competitive advantage of a certain place or country. Thus, if a place can manage to find a role to play in certain fields where their competences and recourses can be combined into competitive place offerings, the place will have a strong advantage in the global landscape (Andersson *et. al.*, 2014, 45). Learnings from places that succeed in attracting international talent show that a strong place leadership is needed.

Denmark positions itself as a forerunner in green technology helping to solve climate challenges and build a sustainable future. However, Denmark does not focus particularly on creating hubs within green technology. It could be argued that Denmark needs to position itself more clearly within the area of green technology. As Linda Duncan Wendelboe points out: *"We are a small country with a population of five million inhabitants. How many different messages can we carry out if we want to have a strong nation brand?"* - Linda Duncan Wendelboe, App. 5.

The author of this thesis suggests that this talent-oriented model of **place branding 3.0** with its five dimensions to create a strong brand can be applied not only to a place in the sense of a region or a city, but that this model could be incorporated into a nation-wide model. If there is one thing that all the interviewed subjects can agree on – and this applies to both Copenhagen Capacity, which is more regionally focussed, as well as the Confederation of Danish Industries, which covers all of Denmark, as well as the interviewed experts on national talent competitiveness (Paul Evans) and the two nation branding experts (Mads Mordhorst and Melissa Aronczyk) – it is that there is not a *national* effort for the attraction and retention of international talent in Denmark (App. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6). Although there are several regional efforts that seek to combine the talent attraction efforts of regions and bigger cities of Denmark, there is not a unified strategy for this. Therefore, in terms of the practical implications of a nation branding strategy aimed at international talent, it could be argued that there is a need for a more integrated approach towards this. It is therefore suggested that the many scattered regional initiatives try to collaborate and agree on more similar value propositions for their branding.

Conclusion

This thesis has addressed the theories of nation branding and how they can be applied in the field of talent attraction. The research has been conducted first by exploring the theoretical framework of nation branding and how it has been practically implemented in Denmark since the Action Plan for the Global Marketing of Denmark. Secondly, the concept of talent attraction has been looked at in terms of its competitive advantage and its relation to nation branding. Research has been conducted through theoretical analyses as well as in-depth interviews with experts on the subject, participant observations at relevant conferences, think-tank events, workshops and talent retention events. This has created a basis for the researcher to get inside inspirations on the latest trends and challenges on the talent attraction and retention agenda. A case has been applied to the study to gain a more thorough understanding of the broader subject by focusing on a key example, namely Copenhagen Capacity's talent attraction and retention strategy.

The case study of Copenhagen Capacity illustrates how talent attraction and retention is carried out practically and in what ways it is related to nation branding. The analysis of the case shows that one of the key aspects in attracting and retaining international talent is that the message and image communicated about the country should be as realistic as possible. Therefore, to strengthen the image, the communicated story should portray honest messages of the country, such as security, lifestyle and career opportunities.

Furthermore, the case study shows that an important factor for a successful talent strategy is targeted talent attraction. Through the Talent Attraction Denmark campaigns, specific targeting sectors are made visible towards the talent that Denmark needs. However, a point of critique of this approach is that the specific targeting has a downside, as it favours a particular group of people. As Florida (2005) argues, economic prosperity of a place relies on the so-called *Creative Class* of people with cultural, *entrepreneurial*, civic, scientific, and *artistic* creativity. It is a point of argument whether this particular group of creative people should be excluded in the specific targeting or if the *creative class* is in fact a group that could to be assessed in Copenhagen Capacity's talent attraction strategy as well.

Finally, this thesis has looked into whether actions can be undertaken at the local level, by city or region, to enhance the attractiveness of the region and create a more targeted talent attraction strategy. Although Copenhagen Capacity works collaboratively with a number of organisations on the same targets, the findings suggest that a long-term *national* perspective within the area of talent attraction and retention is needed. Thus, cities and regions provide a good starting point in the assessment of a targeted talent attraction and retention strategy. Nevertheless, this needs to be linked with a coherent overall objective that includes all actors within this area.

One of the key insights seen through the study of nation branding and its relation to talent attraction is that nation branding is not so much about logos, slogans, advertising and marketing campaigns. It is a much deeper concept involving development, management, policy, and innovation. It is about identity rather than communications, marketing and even creativity. Far more can be achieved if the work of the stakeholders in nation branding and talent attraction is coordinated, of consistently high quality, and harmonised to an overall national strategy that sets clear goals for the country's economy, its society and its political and cultural relations with other countries.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview Nikolaj Lubanski

Appendix 2: Interview Merete Sandager

Appendix 3: Interview Morten King-Grubert

Appendix 4: Interview Paul Evans

Appendix 5: Interview Linda Duncan-Wendelboe

Appendix 6: Interview Mads Mordhorst

Appendix 7: Interview Guide

Appendix 1

Interview Nikolaj Lubanski

1. *Could you please introduce yourself and your role in Copenhagen Capacity?*

I'm Nikolaj Lubanski and I'm the Director of the Talent Department in Copenhagen Capacity, which means that I'm the overall responsible for the talent attraction and retention activities that we do at Copenhagen Capacity.

2. *What is your definition of international talent?*

Basically, the definition of talent is a bit complicated. We actually have four definitions: First of all, you have being immigrated after the age of 18, which means that you have to be an adult, e.g. **above the age of 18 when you immigrated into the country**. Then normally, the three of the criteria are a combination of **education**, of **specialization**, and of **wage**. So you don't necessarily need to have an education, if you have a very high wage. Because you have *the idea* – if you get paid several million Kroner per year, then you must have some sort of talent. For instance, a football player. But normally we say that education criteria is from a bachelor's degree and upwards. But if you have a high specialization code in the employment system, then you actually have a highly specialized job. So the work you do also has a meaning when defining what a talent is.

Four criteria to determine what a talent is:

1. Above the age of 18 when they immigrate.
2. More than a bachelor's degree
3. More than a score of 52 in the specialization code / in the labour market code in Denmark. The higher the number you have, the more specialized the job and the person.
4. The fourth criteria is wage.

So by combining these 4 criteria, we define what an international talent is.

So basically, what I'm saying is that talent is normally correlated with education. But you can sometimes also find talent without the education criteria, as long as they have high scores on the other three criteria. So some of the people, for instance within the ICT field, they do not have a high education, but they are specialized within their field because they have been working within the gaming field for a long period of time, and that's why we need to have them here.

3. *Could you please explain when Copenhagen Capacity's talent attraction and retention agenda was initiated and for what reasons?*

Basically, we are back in 2011 with the first talent strategy in Copenhagen Capacity. There were two trends that started this: The first trend was that we, as the formal, official investment promotion agency of Greater Copenhagen means that we are working on a lot of different things with international companies, trying to attract them to locate themselves here in Greater Copenhagen. More and more of these companies asked us: If we locate ourselves here, can you ensure us that these people *are* here; that we can actually find the right workforce for in our companies. Because these companies are knowledge companies that need highly competent employees. So that was the first trend: More and more of our IP (Investment Promotion) cases started asking about talent and if we could help them ensure the probability of finding the right people here.

Another thing that happened was that a lot of companies started offshoring or outsourcing their activities away from Denmark. So to some extent, there was also a pressure: why didn't we do more to get retain the companies that were already here in Denmark? Also, if the international foreign old companies, that were already here, started to leave due to not being able to find the right people for their companies.

So these were the two trends saying: We need to do more to make this place more attractive for international talent.

So was this the beginning of the talent attraction agenda in Denmark?

Yes you can say that all the way back from the globalization report by the Danish government back from 2006, it was mentioned. In 2000, the government made a globalization strategy. As part of that strategy, you can say that we need to do more to make this place attractive for international people. But you couldn't really see how this was somehow implemented. The agenda was also driven by, I think, the book "The War for Talent", wasn't it back in 1999? But I think it had been peering on the international scale long before it entered into the Danish

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discussion. But I think that the combination of the book “The war for Talent”, the globalization strategy from 2006 actually initiated the first discussions about this. Then of course, there has also been the Consortium for Global Talent, I think that was initiated around there as well.

The one from the Confederation of Danish Industry?

Yes exactly, but it was actually firstly formalized as a separate organization, they just joined the Confederation of Danish Industry last year.

Did this have anything to do with the Action Plan for Denmark in 2006?

Yes it was probably basically part of the same strategy to open Denmark and globalize Denmark.

So do you think the reason for this strategy was part of the aftermath of the Muhammad Crisis?

The globalization history actually started longer back. Taking the results back from the 1990's with the crisis and stating: *How can Denmark survive, so to say, in a globalized world?* And then I think, maybe the Globalization Plan actually is the Action Plan for Denmark, I don't know. Maybe sometimes you get confused about what it's called. I always referred to it as a globalization strategy. But it might actually be part of the same political agenda of changing Denmark into a globalized economy. I think the concern was very much: *What should we live from in the future?, basically.* How do we survive, a small country, in a globalized world, with all the economy of scale possibilities? We don't have any industry structure, large multinationals. How can we cope and work in this world?

Is there a national effort to attract and retain international talent?

We'll call it a bumpy one!

And if so, what organizations are involved and how is it organized?

Basically, when I say that it's a bumpy ride, it's because sometimes it appears on the national agenda in Denmark. But maybe an easier answer is no. At the moment, Denmark is trying to find its way through the refugee crisis. And it seems like there are at least two other tendencies that make this agenda very complicated in a Danish political setting at the moment. The first one is the refugee crisis. The other thing is the influx of immigrant workers from Eastern Europe, who are taking lower skilled international jobs. This is very much a discussion on social dumping. The problem for the government at the moment is that they are completely dependent on some political parties, not to mention any names that of course have a more reluctant view on immigration. Of course that makes it very difficult for the government to actually come up with a clear strategy on how to do it. Even though they are very positive towards the notion of a very competent international workforce. I think that's really what is holding them back. Because it is very complicated in the political setting at the moment. Both for the general population to understand the difference between the influx of refugees and the influx of highly skilled international workers. That of course makes it extremely complicated. So at the moment, I can't say that there is a clear national effort to attract or retain international workers. But they are separated initiatives. There are initiatives within research and the educational sector, where there is a tendency right now to try to retain more international students after they have graduated. That is like one separate one. But then we also have the bigger companies that go out and try to put this on the agenda full-time. And when they do that, normally the government is very supportive. But you can't really see where, in their policies, do they actually do even more to make this happen or change. And then again, the last three governments have all done a lot of stuff to improve both the welcoming and the settling in procedures: setting up international citizen services. The present government hasn't rolled any of those initiatives back. So, to some extent, they are actually continuing the lines of former governments in making the setting with the context of attraction and retention easier. But you can't say that there is an integrated national effort at the moment.

Would it be difficult for your strategy, if the government changes, and the government efforts changed?

Exactly. If they started seriously to roll back some of those initiatives, that would really hamper our work. But at the moment, you can say that we have a silent support. That's my experience of it.

My next question: How does Copenhagen Capacity work to attract international talent in Greater Copenhagen on a practical level?

Just to get back to your former question: Even though there is not a national effort that is government driven, you could say that of course there are initiatives on a regional level. And of course, what we try to do, together with the Confederation of Danish Industries, International House and the municipalities of Copenhagen (*Interviewer interrupts: Could you please explain, exactly which organizations do you collaborate with?*) What we have tried to do is to make a very cooperative approach. Because we can see that there are so many actors in this setting. We need to work together and, so to say, pull our resources together to get a better output. So on the government level, we work together with the Ministry of Research and Education. Then we work together with the Minister of Employment. They have Work in Denmark issued, the so-called SIRI, which is the organization attracting and for international recruitment. So that's how we work with the government. We also work together with the Ministry of Business to improve the setting for international businesses in settling in. So that's very much our government level of our cooperation partners.

Then on a regional level, for Copenhagen, but very much also for Denmark, we work with the Confederation of Danish Industries, International House Copenhagen (mainly behind that is the municipality of Copenhagen, but also more municipalities are involved in that cooperation). So you can say, their partners become our partners as well.

Then we try to, in a broader sense, work together with all relevant actors on a regional level in Greater Copenhagen. That means international schools, the business association AmCham, the German business chamber, and so on. But that's on a regional level. Then we try to reach out on the national level to work together with similar organizations as us, with all the differences there are. This means for instance WorkLiveStay in the Region of South Denmark, International Community and Erhverv Aarhus in Region Midt and the municipality of Aalborg in the Northern part.

So now you are actually answering another of my questions: Does Copenhagen Capacity carry out its talent attraction strategy on a national or on a regional level?

To some extent, we do both. The main focus is Greater Copenhagen. That means this side of the belt. It also involves the Southern part of Sweden, which is a relatively new initiative. But every time we try to do something, we might as well work together with the rest of the country.

How does Copenhagen Capacity, on a practical level, work to attract international talent?

Basically, we put our initiatives in two main lines of activity. We have the retention activities, which are very much focused on international students and newly graduates. That means the pipeline concern for companies. Then we have programmes like the Youth Goodwill Ambassador programme, the Greater Copenhagen Career Programme, the Education to Employment (a new programme with the Business

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Academy). What we simply try to do, is that we try to connect newly graduates or international students with Danish based businesses. Trying to get them to start up their career here.

What is the difference between the YGA and the Greater Copenhagen Career Programme?

The Youth Goodwill Ambassador Corps (the YGA) is a national programme covering the whole of Denmark, having at the moment the five biggest universities on board, and we are trying to reach out to have all eight universities on board. *Which universities are those?* Those are Copenhagen Business School, the Danish Technical University, University of Copenhagen, University of Aalborg and the University of Aarhus. Just the last two weeks, we have had meeting with the IT University, Roskilde University, and we have a meeting coming up with the Southern Denmark University. So we try to have them all on board.

The YGA Corps is a one-year talent programme where we also use the international Youth Goodwill Ambassadors as ambassadors for Denmark. They are also doing marketing activities, and we try to get them in jobs. Whereas the Greater Copenhagen Career Programme is for all international students and newly graduates who are living in the Greater Copenhagen region. It's a half-year programme, which is focused on mentoring and getting them in jobs. So lots of people who are in that program is people who are actually looking for a job right now. (Which they are not necessarily doing in the YGA corps.)

How many students are involved in the programme?

At the moment, it's 160 in the GCCP (two programmes). We took 80 in November, and we are taking 80 here in April.

And the YGA?

That's 144 this year.

So that's one thing that we do. The second line is the talent attraction activity. There we go out and do, basically, three different things. We do run overall talent attraction campaigns. Based on companies' needs, we try to locate: Where are the competences that we need? Where is the talent? And then we try to attract their attention and get them to look for some of the open jobs. That's the broader talent attraction campaigns.

Do you focus on any specific countries?

Yes, we have both countries and also industry areas. We go for the clean tech area, the life sciences and IT. That's the industries that we focus on. With regards to countries, we are very much focussed on: where are the talent mobile? So we go to countries mainly within Europe, depending on which kind of campaign and which kind of competences that we are looking for, whether it's Eastern Europe, Southern Europe or Germany. Then we have the United States, which is also a part of what we do. And then sometimes, for very specific purposes, we go outside of Europe and the States to for example India, Brazil or somewhere else. But that's very focussed if we do that.

What is the reason for this?

There are two reasons: One is the company needs and experiences. The companies have their experiences with what kind of competences they look for and who are easier to integrate, so they can start working relatively fast. That's some of their preferences.

Secondly, the situation in Denmark has changed a lot over the last years, so first we had a huge extraordinary influx from the Eastern European countries because they were looking for better paid jobs and so on. And now we have seen, due to the crisis in the Southern Europe, that we have a great opportunity of attracting people from Southern Europe. So of course, it's also dependent on where there are labour opportunities and surplus where it is easier to attract from. Then of course, when we look at the United States, there has been a huge influx of international students from the States. These people have seen it and tried it.

So one thing we do is the broader talent attraction campaigns. Then we also do the targeted attraction campaigns. The targeted attraction campaigns are for instance when we work very closely with gaming companies where we go out and simply try to attract specific profiles, for instance a back-end programmer.

The third thing we do is that we are present on a few, but very important, career programmes around the world, for instance MIT Career Fair or Nature Jobs Europe.

And then on a practical level, you have some events in Denmark?

Yes, that's very focussed on the retention activities. That's when we do the matchmaking events, company challenges and all kinds of ways to get companies to hire internationals.

In terms of the attraction: Which channels do you use?

Basically, what we try to do is that we try to locate the passive job seekers. That means that we are not going for somebody who is necessarily looking for a job. That means that we need to be where these people find their information. This means being on websites, being in journals they read, or being basically on a channel they use, like Bing, Sing, or some other online possibilities of reaching directly out to the potential candidates. Then what we try to do is to get their attention and get them into our campaign platform and look for further job possibilities.

In your opinion, do you think talent attraction relates to nation branding?

Absolutely. You can discuss whether it's nation branding, city branding or region branding. Basically, if you move for a job, all research shows, the first thing you look at is if the job is empowering. Can you boost your career through this job? And/or is it an interesting experience. But then, the second thing you move for is an interesting place to be. So maybe what retains you is the interesting place. So you need to have that story together with the interesting job offer. That's what all our experiences tell us.

Can you explain a bit about the results that the talent attraction strategy has to fulfil? Who sets the targets?

You can say: Basically, the targets are set for us by our funding partners. That means that we have a result contract with the Greater Copenhagen Region. That means that in our discussion of developing this result contract / growth contract, we discuss this input that we deliver for the basic funding. So this is set in that discussion, which is then set by our board of governors. We are a business foundation, so in the very end, it's the board of governors for Copenhagen Capacity, who set the targets that we work for. In this board of governors, there should be a majority of private business leaders. So in the very end, those are the ones who set the targets. But of course, due to the fact that around 60% of our fundings come from the regions, they have a big say in what kind of targets we should reach.

What about the European Social Fund project?

Of course, that's part of the funding. Every time people throw money in the projects, they expect some sort of results. But I try to see it as one pile of KPI's that I should reach with one overall target.

How do you measure the results?

It's basically on the number of jobs that we create, how many international students we retain in the jobs and how many new people from abroad that we attract to this country.

Now my final question: What is the long-term strategy to ensure the retention of international talent in Denmark?

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What we need to do first of all, is to make this small spot of the world known as the talent destination. I think we have a lot to do in what our assets are. Why should they come here, why is the job interesting, why is Denmark a liveable place. I think we could do much more there. I think we need to do much more to tell the story and expose this story much more internationally. We are not a know talent destination, and we need to do something about that. That's both improving the story telling, the setting and the framework conditions here, but it's also exposing the story much more. But when people *are* here, what we need to do is basically to get them involved in our society. So the more we can do to get them connected in the clubs, to the people here and to the living here; that's the best thing that we can do.

Appendix 2

Interview Merete Sandager

1. *Could you please introduce yourself and your role in Copenhagen Capacity?*

My name is Merete Sandager Thomsen and I'm a Senior Talent Attraction Manager in Copenhagen Capacity. I've been working there for the past 3,5 years and I've been part of the team who started up the talent attraction in Copenhagen Capacity. My primary role has been to attract senior professionals through international recruitment campaigns / Talent Attraction Campaigns to brand Denmark as an attractive career destination.

2. *What is your definition of international talent?*

That's a broad term. In the sense that we use it, it's the competences that we need in Denmark that we do not have at the moment. What CopCap defines as an international talent, it could be the young professionals, the international students with a higher degree, or these senior professionals that we are trying to attract with the competences that we are in lack of in Denmark. These are within IT, Engineering and other high tech areas. It's more beneficial for Denmark to attract an engineer rather than a marketing professional, since we have a lot of marketeers in Denmark.

The sectors that we specifically look for are Life Science, IT and Clean Tech.

3. *Could you please explain when Copenhagen Capacity's talent attraction and retention agenda was initiated and for what reasons?*

It was initiated back in 2012. A little bit earlier in fact, but the actual activities started in autumn 2012. The agenda came up due to our Investment Promotion: One of the success criteria for choosing Denmark as a place to set up business has changed over the past years. From being a matter of tax reductions for specific companies, now it's the softer values that are important. So whether they can find the right talent to grow their business. So knowing that, and also knowing that Denmark was not being branded for anything other than for tourists or for investment promotion. Copenhagen Capacity initiated the talent attraction agenda by the project "Copenhagen Talent Bridge" with the idea to create a one point entry for a potential foreign employee. The idea was to make it easier for this international to find the right information. The Copenhagen Talent Bridge was more of a welcoming and retention project to create a good onboarding for internationals. For example, Copenhagen House is a good example of what came out of that collaboration as well. (15 different partners.)

Copenhagen Capacity was the lead on this, writing the official application for the EU funding. International House is not Copenhagen Capacity's doing, but working with this agenda has resulted in the thought of connection the different actors in the talent attraction agenda.

The other project that was initiated was coming from the Marketing Fund of Denmark. It was a project that Copenhagen Capacity again was the lead partner of. We partnered with the Central Region of Denmark and the Southern Region of Denmark in order to have one platform to brand Denmark from. What they were mostly involved in was what we call employer place branding: connecting place branding with employer branding in order to give the companies access to tools and access to materials that actually talked about Denmark. They talked about Denmark, not from a glossy touristy way, but from a living and working perspective. So the main involvement was getting the right materials to the companies, and getting them to use it. The idea behind this came due to the fact that the companies were good at branding themselves internationally, but they didn't use Denmark as a place to live and work in their branding. They rarely used Denmark as an attraction factor.

The tools for employer branding – nation branding:

One platform is a toolbox that they can plug and play. So basically, they can just take the materials that they need to elaborate on their brand. So for example, there is a lot of material that explains about our quality of living, the work-life balance, balancing kids and work, but also flexibility in the work life, etc. The companies are not very good at using the softer values of Denmark as an attraction factor at all. You rarely see it. They often refer to their own company instead. Either they don't think about it, or they don't do it because it's time consuming.

Why can't they just get their employees from Denmark?

They probably would, if they could. A Dane is of course easier to integrate faster. But if you can't get that person in Denmark, then you need to look abroad.

Which countries do you focus on?

We focus primarily on EU. That's based on the fact that a lot of the companies are reluctant to enter into the visa issue. It's time consuming and it costs money. In regards to the BRIC countries, most companies go there to find talent. At least for India, the companies get overwhelmed. They

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get spammed by a lot of CV's that don't have any relevance. Indian CV's are almost never targeted; they send their CV's to basically everyone.

But why can't we find enough talent in our own country, now that we have such a highly educated workforce?

A recent prediction states that in 2020, we will lack 900.000 IT specialists in Europe. So it's not that we have overwhelming loads of these competences in Europe. Which also makes it more difficult to find, because the competition is higher.

I'll give you an example. If you take for example power engineers, which is used in any of the power industries: Wind, solar, coal. One year at the DTU, which is the largest technical university in Denmark, six power engineers were graduates. The other platform we used, besides the toolbox, was the talent attraction campaigns, where we actively go out and push to go out and more actively make Denmark an attractive career destination. We have done that primarily by targeting passive job seekers by making, sort of a long-term noise within their professional environment, trying to target IT at their IT platforms and where they get knowledge, for instance via Reddit, etc.

We have done it in the three sectors: IT, Clean Tech and Life Science. When the companies that are involved, we expose their jobs. We try to generate more traffic to the companies' own sites. The reason why we are doing that is because it's considered more cost efficient to use one pool for all of these companies. By doing this, we are branding Denmark, the IT sector, the IT companies (and not necessarily just IBM or Microsoft, but also the smaller and more interesting opportunities in the SME's, and of course the jobs). Most importantly, we brand the softer values of Denmark. Because where Denmark differs, it's within the soft values. Denmark can't say that we have a huge IT sector in Denmark. Germany and the UK have really strong IT sectors, and Denmark can't really differ on our IT sector. But what we can differ on is actually for the people who are on the verge of getting a family started. Because here you have a much different work environment in order to support family life and have more time for yourself. So for the Millenium generation, this is much more compatible for their future work-life balance. This is how we differentiate ourselves. Of course not so much from Sweden or Norway, but from the rest of Europe, we can differentiate ourselves to a very high extent in this way.

It's not only the work-life balance, but it's also the flat leadership structure that we have in Denmark. You get much more responsibility much faster here in Denmark in a junior position, than you would get in many other countries.

What are the obstacles in the attraction scheme?

The obstacles are of course always our taxes, the weather, the Unknown (why go to Denmark if you've never heard of it). 90% of our businesses in Denmark are small and mediums sized, so they are not really known brands. When they get here, the challenge is the social life. They face difficulties in getting to work. Then you asked what we are doing now and what we are doing differently.

4. How does Copenhagen Capacity work to attract international talent in Greater Copenhagen on a practical level?

I also have to mention that we of course also focus on the international students who are in Denmark. That started back in 2010 as an exit strategy. These students simply came to Denmark and then went back. Based on the fact that Copenhagen Capacity and Wonderful Copenhagen have a Goodwill Ambassador corps of executive Danes living outside of Denmark who serve as brand ambassadors for Denmark. A clever guy in Copenhagen Capacity called Morten King-Grubert thought: Why not try and match that? Who could be the best brand agents for Denmark other than the students that have already been here? So it started out as a collaboration between Study in Denmark and the Universities saying: We know that they are here for a certain period. So we will engage them and give them some extra skills. Then we will send them back as ambassadors for Denmark. If you could do one-to-one effects meaning that if one youth goodwill ambassador could get just one other international student to Denmark, then our goal has been achieved.

That has changed within the last two years. So basically now it's a retention strategy. Now we want to keep these students that for the majority have studied here for free. So instead of them just going back, we would like to keep them here as part of the workforce. So now the big effort is getting them in touch and in dialogue with companies by trying to matchmake them. This is a rather new feature that we have with the actual matchmaking. We do the high profile talent conferences twice a year, where we have the Royal Prince of Denmark. He's the protector of the official Goodwill Ambassador Corps. He has been very kind to have an interest in this agenda with the younger profiles. For students, he's a fun factor because Denmark is known as a monarchy. For them to get a picture with the prince is still interesting.

We also try to matchmake with companies by making a case together with the companies. They do this by employer branding exercises to see how the students work and how they take on different certain challenges. The companies actually assess the students as part of these company challenges to see if they fit with the companies. This is meant to be a pipeline into that job. As a new thing, we try to match make our large group of internationals in Denmark with a job: primarily a student job, an intern position or an entry level position. We actually have a platform for that too, which is a very new initiative.

We also work with International House with this regional network that was started up in summer 2015, which is called the Greater Copenhagen Career Programme. Here we also have a pool of younger internationals that are either recent graduates, about to graduate or have a few years of experience as graduates. This programme aims at helping the graduates prepare to get a job in Denmark. It could be anything from CV workshops, they get a mentor, and we try to match these graduates with the companies. So the match making is a very new approach for us.

5. Is there a national effort to attract and retain international talent? If so, how is it organized and what organizations are involved?

No. Copenhagen Capacity has been trying to push and lobby for a national effort. At some point, there were rumours about a national talent

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strategy; that it was just lying in a drawer somewhere at the government, but it has never been rolled out. We have different organizations such as the Consortium for Global Talent, Expat in Denmark and Copenhagen Capacity that are trying to push for a national strategy.

Do the different organisations have different aims?

We are working for the same goal. Everyone wanted the government to take initiative towards being better at attracting and retaining international talent. You see examples of other governments around Europe that have this. Ireland has it Germany has it... Germany spends millions and millions of Euros in getting more talent to Germany. Because they are really facing a deficit in talent. But Denmark doesn't have a national strategy. This is why Copenhagen Capacity and the other organisations work together to try to put together ten initiatives in a regional strategy, that we thought was important to continue to work with in order to attract these people. But the aim was not a regional strategy. The aim was to use a regional strategy to be a starting point for a national talent strategy, but it has never really arrived. Now, Consortium for Global Talent has moved into the Federation of Danish Industry – DI – as DI's Consortium for Global Talent. They of course have a little more muscle to lobby for this national strategy.

So the Consortium for Global Talent wasn't always a part of DI?

No. The Consortium for Global Talent was started by one woman called Tina Horwitz. She was paid by 18-20 of the largest companies in Denmark. They paid to be members of this Consortium for Global Talent. Tina Horwitz was very good at lobbying. The reason why she started is was the lobbying. She was trying to get tax reductions and lobby for international talent. She was working on behalf of these C20 companies in Denmark.

6. *Does Copenhagen Capacity carry out its talent attraction strategy on a national or on a regional level?*

We try to make it national in the Marketing of Denmark Fund, because we partnered up with the Central Region of Denmark and the Southern Region of Denmark. We also invited the Northern Region into this project, as well. Then you could say that Greater Copenhagen was also a part of the Capital Region. Everyone agreed that when you brand Denmark internationally, it makes sense to brand all of Denmark. Because nobody knows what Region South is not the Central Region of Denmark. People know what Copenhagen is, but... The Greater Copenhagen initiative is a great branding platform.

7. *In your opinion, do you think talent attraction relates to nation branding? Please elaborate.*

Yes, very much indeed, at least on the level that we carry it out. You could say that working with talent attraction in a corporate company wouldn't have anything to do with nation branding, really. It's about employer branding then. But I think when you talk about it from a regional, national or a city talent perspective, of course the place branding and nation branding has a lot to say. There is no doubt that our national brand has suffered during the last couple of years from being known for the Muhammad drawings to the last "taking jewellery from refugees". So, that's of course something that can affect it. But in reality, whether it has big effect on attracting talents, it's hard to say. Because even though it seems to take up a lot of media space in Denmark. But it might not take up that much media space in Denmark, for example.

But it was even in Washington Post?

Yes, it was everywhere. But whether it has cramped our style – being at MIT two weeks after the media really hit Denmark due to the refugee crisis and the new immigration law – no. There would probably also be a lot of negative news stories about many other countries, but we just don't see them. It seemed big in Denmark and it wasn't something that made you proud, but it's hard to see the actual effect on the talent attraction. But of course, if it continues with these news stories, there might be an effect in the future. It's not nice to be known as a very hostile country that's not very open to foreigners.

Do you think it's true though – do you think Denmark is a closed up country towards foreigners?

Yes and no. There is the populist side and there is the real world. In the real world, all companies are open to great talent. So whether you are from Poland, Iran or Syria, and you have the skills – they don't really care. But then you have a populist half of Denmark that just want everything to stay as everything has always been. This is of course a political issue. But I would assume, when it comes down to the integration that Denmark is probably not the easiest country to integrate in. At least that's what the data says. All the interviews through our expat studies show that Denmark is a hard country to integrate into. And I don't think it's because Danes don't really like foreigners. I think it's because Danes create relationships all through their lives and they are not as open to short-term relationships, shorter friendships – for instance if you are just here for one year.

8. *Can you explain a bit about the results that the talent attraction strategy has to fulfil? Who sets the targets?*

The Region actually sets the targets, because Copenhagen Capacity works with a result contract set by the Capital Region. The Capital Region wants growth, and a good way to measure growth is through job creation. That's been the way that Copenhagen Capacity has been measured for the last 20 years. And that's also the way that the talent attraction strategy is being measured. In some ways, it's like putting a triangular into a square., because you are not really working under the same parameters as an investment case. An investment case may be two years on their way. You are in very close contact with this case and company – you are the guidance all the way through, holding their hands and seeing the project through registration, finding space for the company, etc. Whereas talent attraction is a little bit further away. We are basically doing marketing, which is harder to measure on a one-to-one scale. You could say that the investment promotion is measured on predicted jobs. So if a company sets up business in Copenhagen and estimates ten jobs, then we count ten jobs within one year. Whereas in talent attraction, it's a one-to-one job. So this is the actual job creation. So it definitely faces the issue of measuring. It's interesting to hear about the cases in Amsterdam and in Ireland: They all

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face the same problem: How can we actually measure this initiative? This is why we have changed the talent attraction strategy a little bit in Copenhagen Capacity during the last year. In order to focus on match making, we can follow the exact value that we create for a company. E.g. "I gave you this candidate for this job."

You were recently in Amsterdam for an international talent attraction management workshop. What did you learn from this?

Tendensor, who is the organizer of this, is primarily focussing on the Nordic countries. They are actually also looking at initiating a Nordic talent strategy for when we for example go to China or Brazil, where nobody really knows what Norway or Denmark is, and where they have a vague idea of Scandinavia. They are gathering a lot of cities and regions in Finland, Sweden, Denmark and Norway. We were invited for this workshop where Brainport Eindhoven had done some really interesting work in this area. We also had a presentation of "I Amsterdam", which is the more overall place branding strategy. It's very much place branding. What is interesting is that I Amsterdam has just recently looked into the talent attraction management, whereas Brainport Eindhoven is very much focussed on this, but they are learning about city branding. So it's interesting to have those cases. The workshop was primarily for the Nordic countries, but we also had Ireland there along with Germany (Berlin) and Estonia. The good thing about it was that Copenhagen Capacity is actually considered best case in many of the cases that we do. So a lot of the other companies are looking at us and how we do it. For instance, Estonia is just about to initiate these attraction strategies. So it's interesting to see that we are so much ahead. We have been working with it for three years and have some products that a lot of these cities and regions really envy us for.

Why do you think that is? Why did they say that you were so much ahead?

So for example, no one is really doing the talent campaigns. You could say that Ireland has been doing it, and they have been doing a great job. The toolbox, for example.

You said that Germany has been doing it and that we could learn a lot from Germany?

Yes, but Germany has been doing it from a nation branding perspective. There is a organisation called "Research in Germany", which is a huge organisation with millions of Euros. They are at all the research conferences, the career fairs etc. So they are good at combining these initiatives in Germany. I have to mention one more thing that came out of Copenhagen Talent Bridge, which was the "Move to Denmark" app, which is a very good on boarding tool for companies and for the expats, where they can do their research instead of having to google "What is a CPR number", international Schools or housing. Through this app, we can direct them to the official websites, so instead of finding old news or random pages that may or may not have been updated, we guide them to, for example "New to Denmark", which is the official website where internationals can read about our tax system etc. Everything that is involved in Copenhagen Talent Bridge is a collaboration between these 15 partners of the Capital Region.

What was the time frame for Copenhagen Talent Bridge?

It actually started in January 2012, but as all EU projects, it was only initiated during the summer of 2012 and it started in the fall of 2012. At least, that was when people were hired for it to take the lead. So Copenhagen Talent Bridge ran from 1st January 2012 until the end of year 2015. So it was a two-year project.

Why did it end?

It's always like that with the EU funded projects – they are always two-year projects.

9. How do you measure the success criteria of the talent attraction strategy?

The very simple answer is job creation. But it's difficult to measure. We also interview some of the international students that we get into jobs, we measure on how many people we manage to join our campaign sites, we measure how many people convert to these companies, how many clicks we manage to get in to the companies, so of course we share that information with the companies as well. We send evaluations out to all the companies that are involved in the campaigns, asking them to estimate the perceived value of the international branding. So we ask them whether they find it relevant that we are doing the international branding, and they always finding highly relevant. Then we ask them how many international hires they had during the set timeframe, which always runs per half year. One of the challenges is that it is difficult to evaluate for the companies down to a one-to-one hire.

10. What is the long-term strategy to ensure retention of international talent in Denmark?

The long-term strategy is still the regional strategy. The way the regional talent strategy is set up is through these ten initiatives. We actually asked all the participating stakeholders to take responsibility for these initiatives, because no money came with the regional talent strategy. Of course also evaluating how these initiatives are evolving is important. Which went well / which went bad. So Copenhagen Capacity wouldn't be able to lift all of these. In order to have a long term strategy, the by far biggest challenge that we have is actually the *funding*. Because the funding structure for the talent department is that we have a minor part of the funding from the Region, and then we need to gear the funding with, for example, additional funding from the EU or other funds. This is really time consuming, and bureaucratically, they are really hard to work with. Sometimes the goals of a project that was written a half year before you actually get the money – the goals are then set for three years – but within the time span of 4,5 years, these goals might have changed. But you are not able to change the output towards the Chamber of Commerce in the EU, which are the ones who are handling the EU fundings.

What do you think would make it easier for the long-term strategy?

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You could say that if it was a national strategy... well you can't really say that there wasn't a national strategy, either.

Are you talking about the Action Plan from 2006 that was set after the Muhammad crisis?

Yes. That's the one.

Was it focussed on international talent.

Not necessarily focussed on talent. What came out of it was that they created a pool of money called the Marketing Fund of Denmark. So instead of the government having to carry out a lot of initiatives, they said: please apply with projects that either support the increased investment promotion, increased tourism, or increased talent. So you could apply for these funds. The State of Green was working on this, highways, bicycling: Basically, Denmark was being branded as a green nation. The UM's Denmark.dk page was heavily funded by the Marketing Fund of Denmark. The Talent Attraction project that we did from 2012 to the end of 2015 was heavily funded by the Marketing Fund of Denmark. So it wasn't earmarked for talent attraction; it was earmarked for the general branding of Denmark.

In your opinion, do you think the UM should have used talent attraction more in their strategy? Because it seems to me that there is not really a correlation between the foreign ministry's approach of nation branding and talent attraction.

That's true. Every year, these goodwill ambassadors are at a conference in Denmark. Last year, Talent Attraction was the agenda for the conference. Also, of course, the refugee crisis and what it was doing to the Denmark brand and its talent attraction. The discussion was: Why couldn't the foreign ministry and the embassies be better at doing more talent attraction? Because the youth goodwill ambassadors were saying that the embassies were actually making it more difficult. Why isn't Denmark doing more? They find embassies really slow and not really engaging in this. But then on the other hand, the foreign ministry and the innovation centres they have in the BRIC countries have initiated Top Talent Denmark as a way of branding Denmark towards internationals.

But when the focus is only on the BRIC countries, doesn't this contradict the focus that Copenhagen Capacity has to get people from within Europe?

It's not just our strategy to get people from within Europe. If a lot of companies need people from China or Australia, we could do a push there. So we are not confined to the EU, which is what WorkinDenmark actually is, when you compare the different initiatives and challenges that we face. So we do have a national approach in getting international talent in workindenmark. They are just restricted to work within the borders of EU as a part of the EURES collaboration. They are not allowed to market the workindenmark platform. So we do have it as a strategy, but we have it as a very reactive strategy and not a very proactive strategy in order to showcase Denmark. The Top Talent Denmark makes sense because we are less known in the BRIC countries. But my experience in this is that they use the strategy by getting the Danish companies to the good Chinese students.

Thank you very much Merete for the interview.

Thank you

Appendix 3

Interview Morten King-Grubert

1. *Could you please introduce yourself and your role in Copenhagen Capacity?*

My name is Morten King-Grubert and I am the Team leader of our Talent Department. I have been part of building up our entire strategy and operational activities regarding talent attraction and retention applying for the funding we have received and build up our public and private partnerships locally, regionally, national and internationally within talent attraction and retention.

2. *What is your definition of international talent?*

An international talent to me is someone who possesses the skills that Danish employers need to fulfil their hiring needs short and long term, but they cannot find in Denmark because:

- A. We simply do not have the competences available (Someone who can do something no one in Denmark can
- B. We have the competence in quality but not in the needed quantity (Think IT or engineering

3. *Could you please explain when Copenhagen Capacity's talent attraction and retention agenda was initiated and for what reasons?*

Copenhagen Capacity is the leading regional investment promotion agency of the Greater Copenhagen area. Our prime activities are focused on assisting foreign companies, who are looking to expand their activities and build the business case for Copenhagen to be the physical location for their investment – being a Scandinavian HQ, Sales office, R&D or the like. Back in 2009-2010 these international clients stated increasingly that access to skilled competence would be a key decision making factor for which region they would expand their activities too. (And they are still saying that). Looking at the demographics of Denmark and labor market forecasts with small generations (in size) coming out of our universities and large amount of people close to retirement age, we simply realized that we needed to attract the international talent needed to support our clients.

4. *How does Copenhagen Capacity work to attract international talent in Greater Copenhagen on a practical level?*

On a practical level we do 3 things:

- A) We do international marketing of Greater Copenhagen as a career destination, where we work closely with leading companies in the region and help them reach the required target group of candidates, who can help grow their business.
- B) We work with the international talent pool already in Denmark, predominately international students at master level at our universities and position Greater Copenhagen as a career destination upon completion of their degree.
- C) We are very active in the ecosystem of Talent Attraction and Retention making sure that all entities, who work within our broader scope of helping universities, companies and talents attract, welcome and retain in our region are aligned and developing innovative solutions for the future. The regional talent strategy that we have co-created with a multitude of partners is a prime example of that: "Make Copenhagen your personal business" Look here:

[http://internationalcommunity.dk/Admin/Public/Download.aspx?file=Files%2FFiles%2FPDFer%2F2014-Copenhagen+Capacity+\(2014\)+Strategy+for+attracting+talented+internationals+14-17.pdf](http://internationalcommunity.dk/Admin/Public/Download.aspx?file=Files%2FFiles%2FPDFer%2F2014-Copenhagen+Capacity+(2014)+Strategy+for+attracting+talented+internationals+14-17.pdf)

5. *Is there a national effort to attract and retain international talent? If so, how is it organized and what organizations are involved?*

We have just finished our national project about talent attraction and retention financed by the Danish Ministry of Business and Growth. Key organizations in this regard have been International Community /Erhverv Aarhus, work-live-stay and Copenhagen Capacity. All 3 parties have agreed to continue to collaborate, but currently not as part of an official Danish platform.

6. *Does Copenhagen Capacity carry out its talent attraction strategy on a national or on a regional level?*

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Up until the end of year 2015, we operated on a national platform, but due to our current funding structure our primary activities will be on a regional level within Greater Copenhagen. Where it makes sense, we are open to and happy to also work on a national level

7. *In your opinion, do you think talent attraction relates to nation branding? Please elaborate.*

I think the word of nation branding has developed a lot. More niche movements within foreign direct investments and tourism respectively have taken over and then again more regional or metropolis branding than nation branding. Talent attraction is the new kid on the block, but definitely here to stay as all countries and regions will find that innovative workforce is key to economic growth and international talent represents the solution.

8. *Can you explain a bit about the results that the talent attraction strategy has to fulfil? Who sets the targets?*

Very simply put. We can do all the branding in the world and influence the perception of people. We can do all the marketing in the world and reach our target group in person or on digital platforms and get all the exposure KPI's and social media likes and shares we can get. But at the end of the day we are in business to create economic growth in our region and that is measured by jobs. Our targets are set by our primary stakeholder the Capital Region of Copenhagen and the targets are specifically related to how many international talents we can attract and retain by jobs in Danish based companies.

9. *How do you measure the success criteria of the talent attraction strategy?*

We measure our success criteria on 3 levels. Our primary client is the Company we assist in identifying and employing the talent they need. After completion of our services we survey them and specifically look into:

- A) Did we carry out our services professionally?
- B) Did the services create value?
- C) How many talents they have hired as a consequence of our service

10. *What is the long-term strategy to ensure retention of international talent in Denmark?*

Our focus is on the international students in Denmark. We want to continue to provide and improve our programs for international students in the region and make their entry to the Danish job market as smooth as possible. That strategy starts on the day of arrival to Denmark, where we need to be even better at positioning Denmark as THE career choice after graduation and increase the matchmaking and student jobs during the academic years for the international students to better equip them for employment after graduation.

Appendix 4

Interview: Paul A. L. Evans

1. *Why do we need to attract international talent to Denmark?*

Because you haven't got enough – and you haven't got the *right* talent in Denmark, which is what was being discussed yesterday at the Think Tank Event at DEA. And you're not alone; this is a problem in every country. The big problem is what's called the Skills Gap. (There is a lot of literature on this.) You have a lot of people who don't have skills, or who don't have the *right* skills. "Erhvervslivet", broadly speaking, and particularly the more dynamic companies with specific services or ideas, in order to grow, they need skilled technicians, engineers, sales people, marketing people etc. etc. They don't have the right ones for their workforce. A problem with this is with our education systems. People don't want to be technicians, or women in Denmark all want to work for the government, for some understandable reasons. We have a big gender divide in Denmark. We have a very gender equal country, but there is a big gender divide in Denmark, because the women all want to work for the government. The reason for this is because there is a lot more flexibility there. Erhvervslivet is still a very, very male dominated world. So you have got 50% of the talent pool of Denmark, which is left out of the productive area. You have demographic problems because people are getting older and older, and young people aren't having enough kids. So there is a very big shortage.

2. *The latest Global Talent Competitiveness Index from this year shows that whereas Denmark shows an exemplary performance in terms of education and access to growth opportunities, a strong market landscape and a good business-labour landscape, one dimension in which Denmark has room for improvement is in Retainment of international talent. i.e. both attracting and retaining the best global talent is a challenge. Why do you think that is?*

There is no secret about one of the major reasons. It's the reason why Norway has a much higher score, if you look at it on Retention, than Denmark has. That's because we have a country with very, very high taxes. If you are a Dane, you get a lot of long-term benefits and so forth, but the taxes in Denmark are much higher than they are in Norway. And there's a reason, because Norwegians are very happy to have oil, which pays for higher taxes.

What are the factors that attract international talent?

One of the major reasons is pay. And I confess, now that I have lived and worked in Denmark for two years; I left as a "skatteflygtning". The taxes in this country were horrendous for people like me. These were however under different circumstances than they would be now, because that was years ago.

What's important to attract people from abroad? What attracts people?

You will find in chapter one and in chapter five of our report; our analysis. Listing the things that are important: Number one on top of this report is *language*, which basically means English. The United States are very attractive to people because of their language. Great Britain is also attractive. Denmark has actually gotten much better at English.

The second thing that attracts people is *opportunity*. There are many different factors to opportunity: educational opportunity is one thing, job challenge is another, e.g. challenging and interesting jobs in my area of expertise. The third thing that you can put under opportunity is *clusters*. If you want to attract people from abroad, you have to have a reputation. Not just the reputation *Copenhagen*, but you have to have a reputation as being one of the world's most dynamic places in biotech, robotics or software. Dublin and Espoo – Helsinki have reputations in the software area, whereas Denmark does not have that reputation in the software area. So Denmark finds it very difficult to attract IT specialists from abroad, but internally as well. The reason why is because women – 50 % of the population – don't like IT. It remains a male world. Therefore, IT is one of your most problematic areas of attraction. Charlotte Mørk from Microsoft was saying this yesterday.

The third thing is *lifestyle*. Lifestyle is family, friends, Wonderful Copenhagen, welcome houses and so forth. There are a lot of things that you put under the lifestyle area. That's actually what has driven a lot of my foreign friends away from Denmark. This is an important thing that foreigners

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need to learn about Danish culture: Foreigners never get invited to people's homes. But what foreigners don't recognize is that Danes only invite to their home; their old school friends – never their working colleagues. So there's actually a very simple point there, which is quite manageable. Another thing that's important to attract people from abroad is of course *pay* – very important. And *taxation*. You can read about this in the report. The last thing, which is also very important, is *management practices*. It's the way we manage people. Danes manage people extremely well. Danes are world class in this. Danes manage people extremely well – people better than in any other country in the world. You can read about this in the report, and I wrote a book about this in 2001 – "*på dansk, at least kapitel 1*". The book is called "The Global Challenge". Chapter one is all about the Danes and how they are a benchmark for this. And you'll see in our report a more scientific way of putting this there, which is a complex three-dimensional graph with data from all over the world, which I have shown to Nikolaj Lubanski. You will find it in the report in chapter five. Up here is professional management (he's drawing). Professional management is basically managing people on the basis of their merit. It is "anerkendelse". "Anerkendelse of people" – making people feel good when they contribute. Meritocracy is part of that. And I was just talking to Nikolaj Lubanski about what this is – because we need to have a discussion with a group of people in this country, because he (Nikolaj Lubanski) was talking about it as "anerkendelse", which might be a better way of talking about it. There are different ways of labelling it. It's labelled in the studies – in the data we use – as professional management. Or meritocracy. But it's a little bit more subtle than that. Attention to employee development – in other words – I, the boss of the company – really want *you* to develop *as a person, as a professional*. In the United States, attention for employee development is zero. It's every person for themselves. In Asia, there is a lot here. In Denmark, there is a lot here. Countries, which are attractive, are countries which are up here and up here. (He's drawing and showing the interviewer this graph.) Countries which are unattractive, are countries where you recruit people, because they are your friends, not because they are the most competent for the jobs. So they are either your friends or your family. You pay no attention to their development.

So this is something, which is interesting in Denmark. I've always argued that this is something that you can market. This should be part of your branding strategy. My headline for this is: "If you want to live the American dream, come to Denmark."

3. *In order to attract international talent to Denmark, do you think a national branding strategy is the solution? If so, in what way? If not, why?*

There are many parts to the solution. I don't think it is *the solution*, but I think it's a very important part of your strategy. Because the reality is that Denmark is in a moderately good position, because Denmark has had a reputation as the Latin capital of the Nordic region for long time. Wonderful Copenhagen, everybody knows it. But you are up against a fierce competition from a lot of different countries. So, unless you have a *brand*... the point I have is: To build a brand is expensive. And I have always argued that the Nordics would be well off if they got together to build a Nordic brand. There is a lot in common between the four Nordic countries. That was part of my discussion with Nikolaj Lubanski (they had a meeting prior to this interview). He's basically giving up on this, because it's extremely difficult to get four countries to agree, for understandable reasons. It would also be difficult to get Denmark to agree with that. So going with Copenhagen would make sense. Especially since, I believe, a lot of the action in the talent area wouldn't be at the level of countries, but it would be at the level of cities.

4. *What do you think of a regional talent strategy (eg. Greater Copenhagen) as oppose to a national talent strategy?*

It is not either or. But the fact is that it is much easier to get things done at the level of a city or a region than it is at the level of a country. Luxembourg and Singapore are two places where national strategy is much more built around talent than it is in Denmark. This was actually discussed yesterday at the conference with DEA. All of Singapore's national strategy, all of the ministries, everything focuses upon talent. To do that, you have to have what is called an eco system. An eco system means very close collaboration between governance, which is the city, the municipalities or the governance of the country. Educational institutions, which are located in a particular part of the country, and companies/business, which all have their headquarters. At the level of a city you can get a tight collaboration between the three of them (governance, companies, education). So our forecast is that the centre of action will not be, in the future, at the level of countries. Unless they are city states like Singapore and Luxembourg. But it will be at the level of municipalities.

One of the things that I was talking with Nikolaj about is that we are developing and piloting, this year, a parallel index, which is called "*The Local talent Competitiveness Index*". Down the road, we would like to have Copenhagen involved. The 2017 report will be our first tentative ranking of 30 cities around the world, including Copenhagen.

The Economist used to do it, but we don't know if they still do it. By the way, the purpose of a ranking is not a beauty contest. But between comparisons, you get projective exchange and we feel that there is far too much learning within the barriers; the fortress of the Nordic Region. So the action is at the level of cities, but you need dialogue in exchange with London, Singapore and so forth. At the moment, there is no global vehicle for that sort of dialogue. So we have some ideas about how to create that.

Would the activities in the Foreign Ministry have anything to say in the area of talent attraction?

They would presumably. I've never thought about them as being involved in talent attraction, except the commercial attaché or press attaché, who has some interest in that area.

You have got to realize that, in terms of talent attraction, it's so incredibly recent that... one country in the world has been benefiting massively in the talent attraction. That country is the United States. People want to go to Stanford, MIT, Silicon Valley. People want to go to the clusters. They've been looking at brain drain – brain game. Look at chapter five in the GTCI.

Talent attraction has until very recently, and we are talking about up until five years ago, TA hasn't been on the map anywhere in the world. The leading is 6-0 to the US. The U.S. has won a game which, really, nobody else has been playing, until 2010. Everybody gets trained in the United States. America attracts the very best – the top students from China and India. The Danes are first waking up to it! You just started on the talent attraction now! Nothing is happening.

So your question on branding: You've got to catch up – fast!

Appendix 5

Interview Linda Duncan Wendelboe

1. Could you please introduce yourself and your role in the Confederation of Danish Industry (DI)?

My name is Linda Duncan Wendelboe. I am Head of DI Consortium for Global Talent, which is a unit within the Confederation of Danish Industries, which focuses on creating a good framework and conditions for businesses when they employ international talent. So we look at how we as a country can provide the right framework for businesses to attract and retain the right talent that they need to run their business and their production in Denmark. Also, we look at in which ways we can help promote the image of Denmark as a career country internationally.

2. What is your definition of international talent?

Well, that can be many things. First of all, I think it's about an individual that has an international perspective on his or her career. Someone who sees not only a local labour market; but a global labour market and assesses the world of opportunity when deciding where to continue ones career. In that perspective, it might be less important in which country or in which region. But more importantly: is it the right job? Is it an interesting environment? Does it have a cluster that I can see myself in if this job does not work out? Then maybe there can be other opportunities for me in that area. Will it add to my qualifications; will it set me in a better occupation to get a new job another time? So an international perspective on the whole career perspective and a sense of mobility. Someone who is willing to travel around the world for the right career challenge.

3. Could you please explain when DI's talent attraction and retention agenda was initiated and for what reasons?

So this is not a new topic to DI. This is something that the organization has been working with for many years. It was formalized a couple of years ago when DI defined an initiative called *Bright minds, Great skills* about 2,5 years ago. So that's when it was formalized and talent attraction got its own unit within DI. Otherwise it was part of the labour market politics here in DI, which is a big unit. The reason for separating it into an independent unit was to focus completely on this agenda. This initiative quickly developed because there was another initiative out there called the Consortium for Global Talent. This was an independent organization formed by 17 of the biggest companies in Denmark and the biggest employers of international labour in Denmark. These companies really needed a voice in the local debate about foreign labour. Then we had these two different units and we began to talk about if it would make sense to consolidate these two units to be able to speak with one clear voice to politicians and different stakeholders on the importance of qualified international labour in Denmark. That happened this summer when the two organizations merged into one. So we created DI Consortium for Global Talent, or in short, DI Global Talent, which I am heading now. We are a group of five people who are working full-time on this agenda.

However, the DI efforts within this agenda goes many years prior to this. Already before the financial crisis, it was impossible to get employees. The job market was very hectic and there was low employment, unemployment and just a great need for skilled talent all over the country, basically. So already then, we had different initiatives going on with talent attraction. It's hard to say exactly when it started, but it was long before the financial crisis. Maybe some mid- 2000. The first decade of the 2000 century. But of course, it's very fluctuating, it depends on the labour market situation and the economic situation. Are the companies hiring or what are the challenges in the society. So it's all interconnected.

4. How does DI work together with Copenhagen Capacity to attract international talent in Greater Copenhagen on a practical level?

First of all, the reason why DI is involved in this is of course because businesses need talent. It's not only about finding the one person who can fill this job. It's also about finding the *right* person to fill this job. And it's also about the value that international employees bring to a company. It's not only to fill a seat, but it's also in terms of knowledge, of international markets and of languages and of cultures that can open up for new export opportunities, markets and business development. So there are many different drivers for how we focus our efforts. When we look at the practical initiatives that we have, also in collaboration with Copenhagen Capacity, we look at: Where is the specific need right now? One thing we did initially, when we started this new project that we are working on "Growth through highly educated foreign labour" was to find out: How ready are companies to bring in international talent to their businesses? We actually found out that we know big companies are already doing this; they have done it for years although they still have their challenges. We are working on legislation challenges and things like that. But then we have another group of companies, which are the small and mid-sized companies, which might not have the same acknowledgement at this point. Maybe they have acknowledged that they have this need for international talent, and that they need to look beyond Denmark's borders to find the employees they need. But they are just not ready yet. They don't have the overview of what it takes to get international talent, which rules and procedures they need to follow and how they can integrate this international employee, that might not even speak Danish, into the company. Further, how do they make sure that they can also retain them so they don't just bring them here and lose them again. So we found out that we needed to work on the company readiness. So we made a company guide to international labour. It's really an A-Z guide going through all the practicalities and considerations that companies should go through. Good advice and best practises in terms of retention, the procedure all the way through the process. The aim is to make the companies comfortable in the process, and although it may seem very complicated at first. But once you know how it works, it's not that complicated actually. There has been a lot of attention to making the process easier through government and the public system over the past years. So it's also an information task. So that was the first thing we did.

Right now we are looking into targeted talent attraction. This is an initiative where we look at kind of the same as with the guide. Maybe companies want to recruit internationally, but it can be pretty scary. Just considering where to go and how to do it. That can be a challenge. So we are trying to find a way to help the companies in this process. Where Copenhagen Capacity can put up a framework and companies can team up with other companies. We can go out and brand the career opportunities in Denmark within those companies as a group towards a big group of potential candidates internationally. So it's kind of finding which initiatives would make more sense to companies right now to get them the talent they need

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to run their business, basically. Because what we want to avoid is if they have to say no to orders because they don't have the production they need or start recruiting in other places than Denmark so we basically lose the workplaces here in this country. So we are trying to take something that can seem scary and big and making it a bit more accessible for companies.

5. Is there a national effort to attract and retain international talent? If so, how is it organized and what organizations are involved?

This is an interesting question (laughs). The reason why I'm laughing a bit about that is because we have been pushing for a national talent strategy for Denmark for seven years. It would be a good idea to have joint national efforts within this area. So no – we don't have a national talent strategy, but I think that we should have one. What happened instead is that many organizations such as DI, Copenhagen Capacity and some of the big Danish companies have tried to define a regional talent strategy. This was launched a couple of years ago with a set of initiatives we wanted to start up.

Let me just ask you a quick question: The Confederation of Danish Industry covers the whole country, correct?

Yes. What's interesting about this is that we can have a lot of scattered initiatives – in DI we are represented all over Denmark. In DI, we have 19 different regional associations, so we cover all of Denmark. And we know that there are a lot of good forces working towards this agenda for international talent. In Jutland alone, we have International Community, and in the Aarhus Area we have many organisations working for the same thing, we have WorkLiveStay in the Southern part of Jutland, who are really working on making it attractive for expats to come and stay in that part of the country. We have an initiative, in Danish called "Bliv I Midt" (Stay in the Middle), which is an initiative in the middle part of Jutland to attract and retain highly skilled international talent and also to help companies to hire and to retain the right labour force. But of course in Copenhagen, we also have Copenhagen Capacity, but we also have the municipality in Copenhagen. They have their own strategy. So what we see is that there are many different strategies. There are also many different clusters. The problem is that we don't have the exact same value proposition for why Denmark is a good place to stay. This is what makes it a little bit complex in relation to nation branding. We are a small country with a population of 5 million inhabitants. How many different messages can we carry out, if we want to have a strong nation brand? This is an interesting aspect perspective. Also in terms of clusters, there are many defined clusters in Denmark. If we are to translate that into nation branding in a career perspective: Is it credible that Denmark is expert on 50 different clusters? Or should we maybe try to narrow it down and define a few clusters where we have something special to offer, knowing that this is credible if we build this story telling, we can attract employees from abroad by telling that the career opportunities within this area are very attractive. It's an environment where the best people come, so I can stay there and build my skills. What we see from other countries – I've done a bit of digging lately to learn about best practices from other countries or regions or even cities and what they are doing in this area. And the ones that are successful are very specific on what they are good at and what they want to be known for. That is something that we should consider to bridge all the good initiatives all over the country. This is why – if we are to build a national talent strategy – it has to be anchored politically. Furthermore, it has to be a long-term strategy and not something that only has a four-year perspective when one government changes to another government. It needs to be a long-term national perspective and also objectively assess what Denmark has to offer – and we have a lot to offer. We need to get that translated into a story telling that all of these different players can use when they go abroad to brand Denmark as a career destination.

6. Does DI carry out its talent attraction strategy on a national or on a regional level?

Both, I would say. We do everything we can to work on a national level with the national legislation also to make sure there are good framework conditions and support national initiatives and so on. But through our regional association, we work also very closely with local business associations and regions to promote their initiatives and to make sure that what they have special needs within their region is met and we can support them and help to set the stage for this agenda locally and exchange the good practices in other regions in the country to a particular region. So I would say both. If we were to wait for a national talent strategy, we wouldn't get anywhere – at least we haven't for the last seven years. We shouldn't hold on for any of the regional initiatives, but it would be a nice add-on with a national strategy.

If we are to build a national talent strategy, it would be completely different from launching these regional strategies. A national talent strategy, in my perception, is about mapping the supply and demand for qualified labour. Not only for now, but also ten years from now. We have some very good surveys on which capacities we need, also in the longer term. If we are to map that with the educational system, how many graduates within the different educations and so on – this is what should go into a national talent strategy. This is the overall framework. The initiatives are at another level, and the foundation for the Marketing Fund of Denmark had many sets of good initiatives in other directions. I'm sure they had done really good in the area that they focussed on – but we still need an overall umbrella to make sure that we are driving all these initiatives in the right direction for our country, going forward.

7. In your opinion, do you think talent attraction relates to nation branding? Please elaborate.

Absolutely. I don't think you can separate the two things. When you are looking for where to build your career - that is not separate from the rest of your life. So people have a life at work and a private life. So they need to see themselves connecting with the job they have and connecting with the society they live in. So we need to sell the idea – not only of the job in Denmark, but also of a life in Denmark. So I think that the two things are interconnected. I'm also very positive that these rankings that we have seen, such as "Most liveable city", "Happiest people in the world", and so on, they do have an impact. They are important because they are the icing on the cake – of Denmark compared to other countries, when international talents are to choose where to accept a job and where to live and build a life. So I don't think you can separate the two things.

8. How do you measure the success criteria of the talent attraction strategy?

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(Laughs) Yes – which talent attraction strategy? In DI, we have our own set of KPI's, basically, which I and my employees are measured on. We have set some strategic objectives and ways to measure these. They are different in terms of which topic they relate to, basically. It could also be interesting to look at national KPI's within this area. We have defined this. Other countries have done that.

For instance, we have just done some analyses for best practices in countries, regions and cities. And the ones who are successful are the ones who want to accomplish. Of course, it's also easier to measure on success if you know what you want to accomplish. It's interesting to see a country, or should we call it a city, like Singapore. They have a clear strategy for wanting to be a top career destination for global talent – and they are. They do what they can to adjust their society, so they are attractive to this group. DI wants to make sure that our companies in Denmark have the right talent that they need, and that that talent is also part of contributing to the growth and prosperity to Denmark. We know that the international talents that come to Denmark to take a job – they contribute positively to the Danish society from day one. So that's of course one measure. But I think in relation to seeing KPI's in the strategy, you need to be more concrete on what the strategy is, basically.

9. What is the long-term strategy to ensure attraction and retention of international talent in Denmark?

I think we have talked a lot about attraction, but retention is also a very important thing. If we want to attract international talent, we need a long-term strategy to attract and retain international labour. Basically, we need to be competitive. We see a lot of competition out there, and it will only get worse in the years to come, as we see the demographic development in Europe, especially. In the perfect world, we will be an open and welcoming society and we will acknowledge the value of international expats in Denmark. It's a difficult conversation in Denmark sometimes, because we are talking about foreigners as one group. We really need to look at foreigners as many different groups: there are refugees, which is one issue that we need to resolve; there is migration, which is another issue we need to resolve, and as a third group we have the highly qualified international labour which our businesses really need. When we are defining legislation and talking about the foreign debate in the press, we cannot just talk about it as one group. There are so many different drivers. If we want to win in this competition for global talent, we need to be very specific on the fact that we *want* international talent to come to Denmark. I don't think we necessarily are there right now politically in the debate we have going on right now in Denmark.

Do you think the refugee crisis and the new immigration law has affected the talent influx to Denmark?

Not yet. That's too soon to assess what the consequences will be. But I think what we can see already now is that we have two proposals for changing the legislation right now. These are really pulling in the wrong direction. The one is the pay limit for people who come to Denmark to get a job – or because they have a job with a company in Denmark - and the scheme to come and work in Denmark now has a pay limit. We see that three of the political parties in Denmark now are proposing that this pay limit should be raised. That will just make it more difficult for companies in Denmark to get the people they want.

The other thing is that the Green Card scheme has been proposed to close down. That's quite a significant signal to send out in the world. DI thinks that both these proposals are really steps in the wrong direction. We need to make it easier for companies to recruit the talent they need and not make it more difficult. Of course these political statements also send out signals to the rest of the world. Then there are a number of other issues that we need to be better at solving if we want to retain the talent that come here. First of all, we need to make sure that there are better opportunities for spouses of expats to get a job in Denmark. This is something that we hear again and again. We need to facilitate some kind of network that makes it easier to get in connection with the companies that have open positions. We also need to make more information in English available. We also need international schools and kindergartens. All of the more softer values. A very hardcore, tangible value is that we need a competitive tax system. That goes both for attraction and retention. We do not have a competitive tax system in Denmark today. That's why we want to push for getting a more competitive general tax system. We are not looking for making a set of new, special tax schemes for expats, it's more important that our general tax system is more attractive, because it also goes for Danes. We want Danish talent to stay, as well. So that's definitely also something where we can see that in the Talent Competitiveness Index by INSEAD where Denmark is really scoring low. That's important. It's great that we are scoring high on many other parameters, but we also know that tax is one of the big factors when deciding where to take a job.

Do you have any final remarks? I think it's an extremely interesting area and I look forward to reading what you conclude.

Thank you very much. Thank you.

Appendix 6

Interview Mads Mordhorst

1. *Hvilken rolle spiller international højtuddannet arbejdskraft (herefter: internationale talenter) for Danmark, tror du?*

Jeg vil jo hellere svare på, hvad man siger, den skal spille. For jeg har ikke en kvalificeret holdning til netop den del af det. Det man har fokuseret på siden 1980'erne i Danmark, er bl.a. hvad man netop *skulle* tiltrække internationale højtuddannede og talenter. Der skete et skift i diskursen, hvor man tidligere ikke har sagt det så grundlæggende: Det er, at vi er per definition de bedste. Så med den begyndende globalisering, og dermed også den begyndende anerkendelse af, at Danmark ikke har de talenter, der er behov for, så begynder man at italesætte det på forskellige måder (at det er vigtigt at kunne tiltrække). Hvorimod vi har gjort meget for at tiltrække industriinvesteringer, så er tiltrækning af arbejdskraft en relativt ny del af diskursen.

2. *Hvor vigtig er talenttiltrækning for Danmark?*

Det påstås jo, at det er rigtig vigtigt. Inden for PD, NB og Place Branding er et af hovedformålene at tiltrække talent. Det hænger også sammen med, at man i takt med globaliseringen begynder at se talenttiltrækning som en grundlæggende ressource. Ligesom den identitet vi har indadtil er det, vi skal leve af. Derfor er det klart, at vi begynder at fokusere mere på det i Danmark. Allerede tilbage i 2001 (må ikke hæfte mig op på årstal), så begyndte man for alvor at italesætte international talenttiltrækning. Samtlige rapporter understreger, at Danmark har ingenting. Det vi skal satse på, er kreativitet og bevægelser. Dermed arbejdskraft og internationalt talent.

Rigtig mange af de initiativer, vi tager ift. nation branding og at bruge et lands image/omdømme til noget, så skal man være klar over, at det drejer sig om rigtig langsigtede initiativer. Det, tror jeg, er en af de store fejl, som man har begået ift. at man har kigget for snævert på tidsperspektivet. Hvis du ser på den modernistiske skole, så er det nation building perspektiver noget som er skabt i løbet af 200 år. Der er ingen virksomheder, der har brugt 200 år på at bygge disse investeringer/billeder op. Folk vil give deres liv for nationalstaten og halvdelen af deres indkomst. Man skal skille de langsigtede ting overfor de kortsigtede områder. Der er behov for mindre bureaukrati, så det er lettere at komme ind i Danmark. Det, at man tror, at man kan ændre på et nationalt billede (det som vi projicerer ud). Det stemmer aldrig overens med det billede, som vi har af os selv. Det vil der altid være en diskrepans mellem det som vi projicerer ud af. Vores nationale identitet lever af konflikt. Man bliver aldrig færdig med en nation building proces. Vi har nogle forskellige udgaver af den nationale identitet. Der vil altid være modstridende elementer / modsætninger i de billeder, vi giver af Danmark. Fx dansk design: Det blev skabt som et begreb om et demokratisk design, fordi det er små værksteder, der går sammen med designer og skaber et nyt udtryk. Det svarer til et identitetsbehov, fordi vi har et helt nyt behov i samfundet: vi får en mellemklasse, der får nogle identitetsmarkører, som de skal bruge til at projicere udadtil. De ville ikke kunne bruge arbejderklassen eller den højere klasse. Når disse identitetsmarkører eksporteres til USA, bliver de udtryk for hele Danmarks identitet i USA. Der sker et skift fra identitet til image, og i USA indgår disse i et nyt image og en ny identitet samt ny konflikt om hvem vi skal være. For dem der vil købe det derovre er demokrationerne. Det indgår i en lang række identitetsprojekter.

3. *Hvordan hænger internationale talenter sammen med nation branding teori?*

a. *Har du nogle forslag til forfattere på dette specifikke område?*

Der er meget lidt akademisk litteratur på talentområdet. Og den litteratur, der er, den handler om at kritisere den litteratur, der er om nation branding. Vi har på den ene side konsulentlitteraturen med Anholt, KeStine, Kotler. Og de har de samme grundprincipper om at nu kommer globaliseringen, og så skal vi passe på, at vi ikke bliver ryddet ud.

Forslag til hvordan jeg stiller spejlet op: Skrive et litterature review og komme frem til, at det ender i en blindgyde. Selve NB-litteraturen er endt i en blindgyde, og problemet er reelt. I stedet for at tage udgangspunkt i store forkromede begreber vil jeg i dette studie tage udgangspunkt i en konkret case, som er Copenhagen Capacity. I sidste del kan man prøve at løfte op og se om der er nogle generelle logikker, som leder hen til min problemformulering, som er, at jeg ikke kan bruge teorien til at verificere problemet, men kan jeg i stedet selv prøve at opstille nogle modeller ift. min konkrete case.

b. *Hvordan hænger place branding og international talenttiltrækning sammen?*

I nationer glemmer man tit, hvor stor indflydelse politikerne har. Hvis ens ledere går ud og siger noget, som er fuldstændigt modstridende til den nation branding man laver, så ødelægger det fuldstændigt hele nation branding-indsatsen. Man glemmer også, hvor stor indflydelse et lands politikere har. Nationer er utroligt afhængige af tilfældige politiske udmeldinger. Der ligger nogle andre logikker for politikerne, end der gør for virksomheder, når det gælder om at brande sig selv. For politikerne gælder det ofte om at "nakke ens modstander", frem for at tænke på de langsigtede konsekvenser, som de politiske beslutninger har for et land.

4. *Selvom NB ofte bruges i sammenhæng med international talenttiltrækning, er der ikke megen litteratur om dette specifikke område det, når man stikker lidt dybere ned i det. Hvordan kan det være, at talenttiltrækning ift. NB er et område, hvor der ikke er forsket mere i det?*

Jeg tror en central ting er, at der er nogle forskellige logikker på spil. Når man taler om NB, så handler det om at booste eksporten, tiltrække investeringer, talenter og turister. Man ser alle sammen ud fra en ikke brandmæssig eller markedsføringsmæssig logik, men derimod ud fra en økonomisk logik, hvor man ser det ud fra ressourcer. Og ressourcer kan jo oversættes "til penge", dvs. de har en værdimæssig form. Men det er jo meget uens størrelser, og de står tit i modsætning til hinanden. Nogle af disse modsætninger er fx turisme og investeringer: hvis du er en turist og skal til et land, så går du efter noget, som er anderledes fra din egen kultur; noget der på en eller anden måde er eksotisk. Noget der er *autentisk*. Hvis du derimod er *investor*, så vil du gå efter noget, der er i fuldstændig modsætning til hvad turisten ville gå efter. Så vil du i stedet søge efter noget, som minder det, du selv er tryk ved. Ud fra en investortvinkel, hvad ville du så kalde det? Transaktionsomkostninger. Det er hamrende irriterende for investoren. Så min pointe er, at det er nogle meget uens målgrupper. Her ligger talentmassen nogenlunde i midten: De vil gerne have noget, der er lidt anderledes og eksotisk, men det må heller ikke være for anderledes. De skal kunne vænne sig til at bo i Danmark. I hvert fald hvis de ikke bare skal være her et halvt år.

Hvis man sammenligner med Hamborg og Stockholm, så er de bedre til at tiltrække talenter (det var de i hvert fald for nogle år siden). Vi topper altid listerne, men vi topper ikke, hvad der faktisk kommer. Der er altså en modsætning mellem hvad vi siger om DK ift. hvad der kommer ud. Derfor er det rigtig interessant, at man forsøgte at lave en Københavner-historie. Det der tidligere var det politiske blev pludselig til det administrative, og omvendt. Det samme skete med vores nation branding-kampagne: regeringen nedsatte en idé om vores nation branding. Så spurgte de nogle konsulenter: hvad skal vores brand være? Så sagde konsulenterne: før vi kan gøre det, skal vi sige, hvad Danmark er. Dvs. at man bad konsulenterne

Talent attraction and retention from a nation branding perspective

Ida Maria Angelo

om at definere, hvad vores nationale identitet er. Det burde være den politiske agenda / regeringen, der gør det. Jeg synes i hvert fald, det er forkert at lade det være op til nogle konsulenter at definere, hvad dansk identitet er.

Når vi skaber en national identitet, så er der altid et magtprojekt/magtaspekt. Hvem skaber det? Kan Islam være en del af dansk kultur, osv.?

5. *I hvor høj grad tror du, at den nærværende flygtningekrise påvirker vores danske nation-brand? Og hvordan tror du, at den påvirker talenttiltrækningen til Danmark?*

Jeg tror, at det påvirker det på den måde, at der er ved at opstå en (national) fortælling. Brands og det nationale omdømme opstår gennem fortællinger. Fortællinger skal gerne gentages/repeteres, for at de kan bestå. For at superbrands kan bestå, kræver det, at denne fortælling repeteres. Det, der sker, er at den nuværende flygtningekrise bygger videre på de fortællinger, der blev skabt i forbindelse med Muhammedkrisen. Denne fortælling blev senere bekræftet, da man genoptrykte Muhammed-tegningerne. Så det er ikke bare én gang vi har set det, men det er rigtig mange gange. Og derfor så begynder fortællingen af blive selvbekræftende. Det betyder, at den begynder at undersøge sig selv og bekræfte sig selv. For eksempel "Frikadelle-sagen" i Randers, hvor sagen om frikadellerne bekræftede fortællingen om Muhammed-krisen og fremmedfjendskeden i Danmark.

Man skal dog huske på, at der er to fortællinger i Danmark. Der er også fortællingen om et åbent samfund, om bæredygtighed og om ansvarlighed. Det lykkelige land, den stærke velfærdsstat. Det kan jeg selv se på min arbejdsplads, CBS, hvor vi er i stand til at tiltrække nogle rigtig dygtige professorer, som ellers er svære at lønne ift. hvor dygtige de er. Der hvor vi har problemer, er ikke så meget ift. den nære talenttiltrækning. Men når vi skal lidt længere ud, så får vi en diskrepans ift. det vi siger vi er og det vi rent faktisk gør. Når vi får den her modsætning ift. hvad vi siger vi er, og hvad vi rent faktisk gør, så skaber det diskrepans. Det er aldrig godt for vores nation brand. Folk bliver nervøse for at komme til, hvis de opfatter at danskerne ikke kan lide fremmede. Danmark bliver flere gange fremstillet som et land, der ikke har forstået, at vi er en del af globaliseringen. Det skete fx også ifm. karikaturtegningerne. 60 Minutes lavede et program om Eventyrlandet – men her som det ironiske eventyrland, der stadig troede, at det selv var et eventyrland og stadig lå i sin tornerosesøvn. Det er problematisk for talenttiltrækningen, fordi folk ikke automatisk søger herhen.

6. *Vil du sige, at NB og place branding er det samme?*

Nej.

Appendix 7

Interview guide for Copenhagen Capacity

- 1. Could you please introduce yourself and your role in Copenhagen Capacity?*
- 2. What is your definition of international talent?*
- 3. Could you please explain when Copenhagen Capacity's talent attraction and retention agenda was initiated and for what reasons?*
- 4. How does Copenhagen Capacity work to attract international talent in Greater Copenhagen on a practical level?*
- 5. Is there a national effort to attract and retain international talent? If so, how is it organized and what organizations are involved?*
- 6. Does Copenhagen Capacity carry out its talent attraction strategy on a national or on a regional level?*
- 7. In your opinion, do you think talent attraction relates to nation branding? Please elaborate.*
- 8. Can you explain a bit about the results that the talent attraction strategy has to fulfill? Who sets the targets?*
- 9. How do you measure the success criteria of the talent attraction strategy?*
- 10. What is the long-term strategy to ensure retention of international talent in Denmark?*