

Science Advice in Denmark and the Nordic Countries

Organized jointly by Aalborg University (AAU) and the International Network for Government Science Advice
Held on 26-27 April, 2017, at The Carlsberg Academy, Gamle Carlsberg Vej 15, 1799 Copenhagen V

PROGRAMME

WEDNESDAY APRIL 26TH

09:00-09:30	Registration, coffee and tea
09:30-09:45	Welcome by Per Michael Johansen. Rector, Aalborg University Introduction from the moderator David Budtz Pedersen. Director, Humanomics Research Centre
09:45-10:30	Keynote by Prof. James Wilsdon. University of Sheffield. Vice-Chair of the International Network for Government Science Advice (INGSA) <i>A Global Outlook on the Science-Policy Interface</i>
10:30-11:15	Keynote by David Mair. Head of Unit, Science Advice to Policy, European Commission Joint Research Centre <i>Skills for the Science-to-Policy Interface</i>
11:15-11:30	Coffee break
11:30-12:15	Keynote by Jens Oddershede, University of Southern Denmark. Chair of the Danish Council for Research and Innovation Policy (DFiR) <i>The Danish Ecosystem for Governmental Science Advice</i>
12:15-13:15	Lunch
13:15-13:30	Reflection by Flemming Besenbacher. Chairman, Carlsberg Foundation <i>A Foundation Perspective on Scientific Social Responsibility</i>
13:30-14:00	Reflection by Søren Brostrøm. MD, PhD, MPA, Director General, Danish Health Authority <i>The Crisis of Health Advice and What to Do About It</i>
14:00-14:30	Reflection by Vibeke Borberg. Head of Research Department, Danish School of Media and Journalism <i>Balancing Facts and Values in Science Media Coverage</i>
14:30-15:00	Coffee break
15:00-16:30	INGSA case study: "Powering change: Immigration, labour and social cohesion in a resource town" <i>Moderator: David Mair, European Commission Joint Research Centre</i>

16:30-17:00	Reflection by Henrik Wegener, Rector, University of Copenhagen <i>The Role of Universities in Delivering Science Advice</i>
17:00-17:30	Reception

THURSDAY APRIL 27TH (CONSULTATION EVENT)

09:00-09:30	Coffee and tea
09:30-10:00	Introduction by Prof. Marc Saner, University of Ottawa & Inaugural Director of the Institute for Science, Society and Policy <i>The INGSA Principles for Science Advice</i>
10:00-10:15	Discussion Lead by Prof. Maja Horst, University of Copenhagen. Member of Danish Council for Research and Innovation Policy
10:15-11:30	Consultation on INGSA principles of governmental science advice <i>Moderator: David Mair, European Commission Joint Research Centre</i>
11:30-12:30	Lunch and departure

BACKGROUND

For years, controversies over scientific expertise have continued to permeate public discourse and policy-making. Responding to the increasingly complex nature of societal challenges and the need for timely and robust scientific advice, this conference explores mechanisms and best practices for translating scientific knowledge into policy-making. The conference brings together key international experts to share best practices and perspectives on science advice to governments. In more and more fields, there is an urgent need for scientists to provide input into policy e.g. in terms of evidence, possible solutions, impact and risk assessment. From climate change to cybersecurity, from pandemics to vaccines, from food production to infrastructure, the need for sound policy-advice and public communication of research continues to multiply.

At the same time, the authority and legitimacy of scientific experts are under scrutiny, particularly in areas marked by controversy, such as climate change, genetically modified crops and health intervention. Scientific experts are regularly confronted by think-tanks, citizen groups, social media and individuals who have access to an abundance of verified and unverified information and who are able to mobilize advocacy groups and counter-evidence. Contemporary liberal democracies are approaching a “post-factual world” in which science-informed policy-making is increasingly challenged. Facts and norms, science and politics, permeate each other in numerous ways that makes it difficult for policy-makers and experts to reclaim authority. At the same time, group dynamics such as polarization and infostorms have ramifications for the ability of public authorities and advisers to communicate scientific expertise in the face of public controversies.

Participants at the conference will be asked to contribute actively to discussions of the issue of governmental science advice. Inspiration for the discussions at the workshop will be provided by the International Network for Government Science Advice (INGSA) and presentations by key Danish and Scandinavian institutions. The goal of the conference is to

create a dialogue between advisers, experts and practitioners to share models and lessons. Without platforms that connect practitioners of science advice with decision-makers, funding agencies, and universities there will be no real progress in conveying science advice to governments. Key themes to be explored at the workshop include

1. The importance of recognising the societal contexts in which science is undertaken and applied;
2. The value of involving policy-makers and publics in shaping the questions that science can help answer;
3. The need for collaboration among scientists, public authorities and civil society to advance the accountability and transparency of knowledge brokering.

The aim of the conference is to explore and discuss enablers and barriers of science advice to governments and authorities in Denmark and the Nordic Countries. Speakers will give their views and perspectives on the topic seen through the lens of prior work in the area. Danish and Nordic stakeholders will have the opportunity to learn first-hand about (1) framework conditions for science advice, (2) best practices of science advice in public health and social policy, and (3) ways to enrich and integrate local science advisory systems in public policy-making.

Key takeaways from the conference will be summarized in a subsequent workshop report from The Humanomics Research Centre, which will be published in the autumn of 2017.

At the World Science Forum (WSF) in Budapest in 2015, scientists and policy-makers called for: "... the need to define the principles, processes and application of science advice and to address the theoretical and practical questions regarding the independence, transparency, visibility and accountability of those who receive and provide advice has never been more important". The Declaration of the 2015 World Science Forum called "for concerted action of scientists and policy-makers to define and promulgate universal principles for developing and communicating science to inform and evaluate policy based on responsibility, integrity, independence, and accountability." The International Network for Government Science Advice (INGSA) is making progress responding to this call. As an international and broad-based network, supported by recognized international science bodies such as ICSU and UNESCO, INGSA is well positioned to provide the platform to convene expertise and broadly consult on draft principles for science advice. INGSA have a series of consultative workshops planned over the next years for input into the draft principles and guidelines, with the intention of reporting back to the World Science Forum in Jordan 2017. During the Copenhagen workshop a two hour session will be dedicated to reflecting on principles and guidelines for scientific advice to policymaking and gaining a Nordic perspective.

For registration, please send an email to:

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Links

[International Network for Government Science Advice \(INGSA\)](#)

[Danish Council for Research and Innovation \(DFIR\)](#)

[The Evidence for Policy Community \(JRC\)](#)

[Humanomics Research Centre \(AAU CPH\)](#)