

## Samarbejdsaftale mellem Aarhus Universitet og Business Region Aarhus

1. december 2016  
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### Baggrund

Business Region Aarhus er et samarbejde mellem kommuner, virksomheder og institutioner inden for det østjyske område omfattende 12 kommuner<sup>1</sup>.

Aarhus Universitet er en af de helt centrale videninstitutioner i Business Region Aarhus:

- Universitetet er den centrale videregående uddannelsesinstitution, der står for hovedparten af uddannelsen af kandidater på masterniveau og dermed den arbejdskraft, der indgår som en vigtig del af virksomhedernes rekruttering af højt kvalificerede og ofte specialiserede medarbejdere,
- Universitetet varetager forskning, som er relevant for virksomhederne, kommunerne og mange andre aktører i Business Region Aarhus på flere niveauer. Det spænder fra direkte anvendt forskning, som kan overføres til virksomhederne, til grundforskning med mere langsigtede perspektiver over til samfundsfaglig følgeforskning på såvel virksomhedsniveau (konkret cases) som samfunds-/Business Region Aarhus-/kommune-niveau.

Universitetet er således en tæt integreret del af arbejdsmarkedet og erhvervsudviklingen i området. For universitetet er det væsentligt at have en lokal tilknytning og samtidig et internationalt udsyn. Universitetet har behov for at tiltrække kvalificerede forskere og undervisere, som kan sikre at universitetet fortsat performer på et højt niveau internationalt, og det er væsentligt for universitetet at tiltrække studerende fra området samt have mulighed for at tilbyde studieforløb og integrerede forskningsforløb ved virksomheder og andre aktører i området.

Business Region Aarhus er kendetegnet ved at have en forholdsvis høj andel af landets industri herunder fremstillingsvirksomhed samtidig med, at der er kompetente videninstitutioner i området. Med baggrund i denne styrkeposition har kommunerne og virksomhederne i Business Region Aarhus sat sig som mål at styrke væksten og udviklingen i området. Målet er at styrke væksten i form af øget beskæftigelse, produktion, produktivitet og eksport.

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<sup>1</sup> Samarbejdet består af Favrskov, Hedensted, Horsens, Norddjurs, Odder, Randers, Samsø, Silkeborg, Skanderborg, Syddjurs, Viborg og Aarhus Kommuner.

## Formål

Business Region Aarhus samarbejdet ønsker at arbejde for en bred dialog med de forskellige dele af Aarhus Universitet med sigte på at underbygge den styrkeposition, der er i Business Region Aarhus i kraft af et aktivt og veludviklet erhvervsliv og højt estimerede videninstitutioner.

Business Region Aarhus ønsker også efter inspiration fra andre byregioner i Europa<sup>2</sup> at iværksætte følgeforskning, der kan underbygge (eller afkræfte) betydningen af et lokal lederskab i byregionen for vækst og udvikling samt dokumentere effekter på mikro (virksomheder) og makro (Business Region Aarhus) niveau.

Denne følgeforskning er det primære sigte med samarbejdet. Business Region Aarhus ser gerne, at Aarhus Universitet som en del af sin aktive medvirken i Business Region Aarhus området, står i spidsen for en sådan forskning i samarbejde med kommunerne og med brug af erfaringer fra andre europæiske byregioner.

## Konkrete initiativer

Business Region Aarhus samarbejdet kan understøtte Aarhus Universitets ønsker om til stadighed at kunne rekruttere internationale forskere og undervisere på højt niveau. Det gøres ved at stille assistance til rådighed for universitetet, der kan forbedre opgaven med at tilbyde relevante jobmuligheder for medrejsende ægtefælder for de internationale medarbejdere.

Kommunerne i Business Region Aarhus giver som arbejdsgivere i forhold til offentlige arbejdspladser og erhvervsorganisationerne i de 12 kommuner og i forhold til private arbejdspladser tilsagn om at finde jobmuligheder af 6 til 12 måneders varighed til ca. 30 stillinger årligt til medrejsende ægtefælder. Forpligtelsen indebærer, at der bliver fremlagt et relevant jobtilbud.

Ansættelseskompetencen er fortsat hos den enkelte arbejdsgiver, og der skal indgås en aftale mellem ansættelsesstedet og den pågældende person.

I praksis sender Aarhus Universitet information om ægtefællens CV samt ægtefællens ønsker til jobindhold, starttidspunkt samt sted direkte til de jobcenter- og/eller erhvervs-kontaktpersoner, som Business Region Aarhus kommuner anfører.

Business Region Aarhus giver med denne aftale tilsagn om at give det høj prioritet at finde de relevante jobtilbud.

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<sup>2</sup> Jf. OECD rapporten "Local Economic Leadership, 2015"

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Aarhus Universitet indgår i et forskningsprojekt i samarbejde med Business Region Aarhus vedr. determinanterne for regional vækst og udvikling samt på mikro (virksomheder) og makro (Business Region Aarhus) niveau. Aarhus Universitet udbyder til dette formål to interne PhD projekter inden for det næste år, og Business Region Aarhus kan eventuelt indgå i en supplerende tredje eksternt finansieret PhD opgave med 50 % finansiering fra Business Region Aarhus.

Aarhus Universitet stiller med vejledning og supplerende støtte til PhD'er i henhold til de normale principper herfor. Formålet med projektet skal beskrives nærmere i et samarbejde mellem Business Region Aarhus og Aarhus Universitet. I første omgang forpligter Business Region Aarhus sig til at involvere eksternt forskningskapacitet (f.eks. director Mike Emmerich fra New Economy) til at beskrive projektet.

Det er målsætningen, at arbejdet kan igangsættes ultimo 2016. Modellen for anvisning af stillinger til medrejsende ægtefæller vedlægges som bilag til aftalen.

Business Region Aarhus tilbyder at indgå i arbejdet med at finde jobmuligheder, så snart der er indgået en aftale mellem Business Region Aarhus og Aarhus Universitet.

### **Opfølgning**

Der gennemføres en evaluering af aftalen, herunder midtvejsevaluering.

Der skal nedsættes en styre-/følgegruppe med repræsentanter for Aarhus Universitet og Business Region Aarhus, som dels kan følge forskningsprojektet og dels kan følge op på opgaven med at finde jobmuligheder til ægtefæller.

### **Indgåelse og varighed**

Aftalen er indgået i december 2016, og gælder i perioden 1. januar 2017 – 31. december 2019.

## Potential themes for two PhD-projects at the University of Aarhus

### Frame

Traditionally, growth policy has been a governmental responsibility, but since the start of the millennium – and especially since the financial crisis – there has been a strong focus on the role of city regions in economic development<sup>1</sup>. This is what the large pan-European ESPON-project in 2012 concluded: that European governments should develop more deliberate regional policy and investment strategies<sup>2</sup>. However, it is not only governments that should strengthen growth and productivity in business regions. This is something that local and city-regional stakeholders should do as well.

Recent analyses show that the inter-municipal cooperation in business regions has a direct effect on economic growth. In 2014, OECD published a working paper<sup>3</sup> that concludes that the organisation of city regions makes a difference for productivity development and thus for growth. The study shows that city regions with a fragmented administrative structure have lower productivity than city regions with a more simple administrative structure. At the same time, the study also shows that city regions having a formalised interdisciplinary collaboration can mitigate about half of the productivity loss occurring that occurs when they are many administrative units.

That is why it is important to find out how the participants in Business Region Aarhus themselves can contribute to strengthening growth and productivity. It is obvious that Business Region Aarhus – as the next-largest city region in Denmark – takes on the role of boosting productivity and growth for the benefit of all of Denmark. Moreover, that makes Business Region Aarhus best at achieving its potential as a leading international city region.

Business Region Aarhus ranks 17th out of 74 Nordic city regions, when looking at population development, labour market and economic key figures. This is too low, when there is an ambition to compete in the global competition.

Seen in a Danish context, Business Region Aarhus is Denmark's second-largest city region, and Business Region Aarhus is performing well. Seen internationally, Business Region Aarhus is a middle-sized, Nordic city region. Business Region Aarhus has many advantages including a prominent international university and major well-recognised companies, but Business Region Aarhus also faces many of the same challenges as the rest of Denmark. Among these are the lack of productivity development – this is a significant problem. There is also the challenge in creating more growth companies and more large export companies.

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<sup>1</sup> OECD (2006), Competitive cities in the global economy  
OECD (2013), Interconnected Economies: Benefitting from Global Value Chains – Synthesis Report.

<sup>2</sup> ESPON (2012), Second Tier Cities and Territorial Development in Europe: Performance, Policies and Prospects.

<sup>3</sup> (Ahrend et. al., 2014)

An analysis of four city regions in Europe<sup>4</sup> shows that all four work strategically to strengthen growth. All four city regions focus basically on the same kinds of activities, such as business promotion, tourism and marketing of the city region. However, there is a difference in how much emphasis there is on each activity and how the cooperation is organised. There is also a big difference between whether some activities are there because “we should have them, because the others do”, or whether the collaborating activities are part of a strategic synergy between the region’s areas of strength.

The analysis also shows that the four international city regions have worked longer to create closer cooperation between relevant actors than is the case in Business Region Aarhus. There is an opportunity for Business Region Aarhus to form closer collaboration on a number of programs in coming years, but the preferred kind of collaboration is yet to be found.

### Potential themes

- The causes of growth in Business Region Aarhus. The role of technical skills in creating growth and facilitating economic adaptation. The key theme here is the role of technical skills in the region and their importance in the growth process. It might examine both the level of training and how skill formation has occurred. It should include statistics and if possible econometric evidence on the returns from investment but could also take an institutional perspective looking at the relative roles of employers, the state, education institutions and individual learners.
- The causes of growth in Business Region Aarhus. An examination of the role of innovation creating growth and facilitating economic adaptation. The key theme here is the role of innovation in the region and its importance in the growth process. It might examine both the level of innovation using a variety of metrics. Patents are important but graduates and student destinations, and the evidence of their absorption into the economy is more important. So too are university/firm collaborations. It should include statistics and if possible econometric evidence on the returns from investment but could also take an institutional perspective looking at the relative roles of employers (both individually and through collective groups), the state, and education institutions.
- Technology transfer and industrial change: an examination of the economy of Business Region Aarhus since 1990. This would be a more detailed focus on the means by which ideas created in the university do or do not filter into the economy. This might usefully be comparative looking at other cities and regions in Europe and elsewhere to establish whether there is anything unique about the Business Region Aarhus case and what can be learnt from elsewhere and successfully adopted in the Business Region Aarhus.

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<sup>4</sup> [www.businessregionaarhus.dk/analyse2016](http://www.businessregionaarhus.dk/analyse2016)

- Agglomeration and growth: the changing economy of Jutland since 1990. The aim here is to understand what is driving growth from a spatial view. The region has been more successful over recent decades and Aarhus itself as prosperous as it has ever been. Is this agglomeration economies at work and if so what are the implications of this for policy in the future?
- Competition and Collaboration between the towns and Cities of Jutland. This builds on the last idea and is an examination of the policies of different places within the region to the growing economy and the nature of cooperation and collaboration.
- Business Region Aarhus and Greater Copenhagen: a comparative analysis of the economic role of the city regions. This idea is concerned with establishing whether perceptions of competition between the two cities Aarhus and Copenhagen have any basis in evidence. It would look at whether there appear to be examples of the cities competing for inward investment or other economic functions, at the value added or otherwise of subsidies and incentives and what the nature of an ideal value maximizing relationship would be.
- The Labour Markets of Eastern Jutland: an examination of how patterns of movement change. Central to the Business Region is a deep understanding of the connectivity of the different areas to understand both the nature of economic links and how these are changing over time.
- Long term unemployment public policy. Frequently a cause of long term unemployment is a mismatch of skills between the elderly population and new jobs. A possible topic could therefore be a review of the mismatch between skills and unemployment in the region, and opportunities and potential policy solutions to address this mismatch.
- Harnessing the European capital of culture. Aarhus is the European capital culture in 2017. Possibly a review of the impact of the COC on creative businesses in the region (perhaps a regional comparison, or just before and after). Could also do an investigation into the legacy of the COC, how it has changed the city going forwards, and what policies could maximize this.

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Founding Director Mike Emmerich, Metro Dynamics  
in association with Business Region Aarhus