

Universitetspladsen

RUglobal

Information and debate from Roskilde University

Number 13 · 21. June 2010

“RU to be experimental and socially relevant”

The Academic Council backs Rector’s final proposal for RU’s new strategy:
A combination of “scenario 2” – the experimental and innovative university
– and “scenario 3” – the socially relevant university



Peder Agger turned 70 and said goodbye to RU after 31 years



What is actually going on “down in the EU”?

The working procedures in Brussels are complex, and for an outsider it can be very difficult to understand the course of an often long and complicated decision-making process



What is actually going on “down in the EU”?

The working procedures in Brussels are complex, and for an outsider it can be very difficult to understand the course of an often long and complicated decision-making process. It may all be very well with all the things we can learn from text books on the many procedures, but real life is in fact something else. In early June, the umbrella organisation Concord Danmark arranged a field trip for persons interested in becoming wiser on life in Brussels, the capital of Europe. A couple of RU people also participated

By: Anne Frida Christiansen, RUGlobal
Photo: Anne Frida Christiansen, RUGlobal

At the airport, the RUGlobal reporter could not avoid overhearing a co-passenger, assumingly somebody from the Danish embassy in Belgium, say that she were to spend a couple of hours with Lykke Friis, Minister for Climate and Energy and Minister for Gender Equality, who obviously wanted to find out who is in power in Brussels. One thing is formality; another thing is reality and often informality. The purpose of Concord Danmark’s field trip to Brussels was to provide the participants

with exhaustive knowledge on the working procedures in the EU. A small group of students and graduates, all taking an interest in communication, journalism and development, went along on the trip, the focus of which was journalism and development politics within the framework of the EU.

The tight two-day programme meant that the participants would be introduced to a wide range of procedures performed in Brussels. The programme allowed time for a meeting with five EU parliamentarians and visits with the Commission, an NGO, the European

Journalism Centre and the Permanent Representation of Denmark to the EU, which is one of three Danish diplomatic representations in Brussels.

The group gathered in front of the parliament around lunch time. Before the meeting with the five parliamentarians, there was time for some lunch and a round of introduction: One participant is a representative of the Rehabilitation and Research Centre, another is working as a journalist with “Magisterbladet”;

Continued on page 37

Table of Contents

- 39 What is actually going on “down in the EU”?
- 35 “RU to be experimental and socially relevant”
- 33 Environmentalist with a capital E

Publishing information

RUCnyt/RUGlobal is Roskilde University's official magazine for information and debate about the organization of the university. RUGlobal is open to all employees and students at Roskilde University to debate the educational and research organizations at the university, including questioning of common interest for research and education.

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Layout, print and edition:

PrinfoParitas Digital Service, 2300 copies

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Opening hours: RUCnyt/RUGlobal does not have any regular office hours. To get in contact with the editorial staff please e-mail us or contact the information office, which is located in building 04.1.

Articles: need to be handed in by e-mail. Please enclose suggestions for illustrations. Discs and other material are normally not returned. The editorial staff is allowed to shorten articles and

to reject articles which are not of common interest. Articles of more than 8000 characters (about 2 pages) can normally not be expected to be published un-shortened. There is no minimum length for an article to be published. Anonymous articles are not accepted.

Upcoming deadlines:

Nr.	Articles	Notices	Publication date
1	19/8	24/8	6/9
2	9/9	14/9	27/9

- at 12 noon on the assigned date

On Concord Danmark

Concord Danmark is an umbrella organisation working to fight poverty at EU level. Through information, advice and advocacy, Concord Danmark aims to focus on development. The organisation is the Danish platform for Concord Europe, which represents about 1600 development and aid organisations in Europe. Concord Danmark's goal is to achieve an effective and fair development policy based on civil society.

Source: <http://www.concorddanmark.dk/>



Continued from page 39

two participants are from the independent publication of the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs By: *Anne Frida Christiansen, RUGlobal*
Photo: *Anne Frida Christiansen, RUGlobal*

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The group gathered in front of the parliament around lunch time. Before the meeting with the five parliamentarians, there was time for some lunch and a round of introduction: One participant is a representative of the Rehabilitation and Research Centre, another is working as a journalist with "Magisterbladet"; two participants are from the independent publication of the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs "Development", one of whom is actually a former RU student. In addition, there were a couple of RU students studying International Development Studies, EU-studies, Communication and Journalism.

The parliament and the new foreign service

The participants spent the afternoon in a modestly decorated room at the European Parliament. We were led through the long corridors with parliamentarians, journalists and civil servants on their homely everyday passage, to the room where our first politician, Emilie Turunen, was waiting. Just under an hour had been allocated for each politician turning up one after the other. They have been asked to shed some light on various subjects; however, there were also a number of areas that all participants touched upon, including COP15 and the impacts of global warming, the future role of China and the work of the new foreign service EEAS, which is being set up as a result of the Lisbon Treaty becoming effective. When the group called upon the so-called Spokesperson for Development, who works for Commissioner Andris Piebalgs, focus was also on the new foreign service.

A lot of uncertainty is surrounding this service, but its purpose is, among other things, to ensure that strengthened correlation between and coordination of the member state subsidies is achieved so that the "recipient countries" do not have to consider the different requirements of multiple donors. At the same time, the aim is to increasingly leave it to the "recipient countries" to administer the subsidies themselves in the future rather than have the donors define what the subsidies should be earmarked for. Apart from discussing international politics, the participants also gained an insight into purely low-practical aspects of everyday life in Brussels; the EU parliamentarians for example described what life in politics is like in the different political groups.

Decision-making processes in the EU

Who holds the decision-making powers and when? At what time during the decision-making process is it most appropriate to seek to influence the decision? These were some of the questions the participants tried to find answers to during the two-day visit. The answers were not always unambiguous, but there seemed to be agreement that the processes are fairly complicated.

This element was highlighted by the Danish EU parliamentarian, Christel Schaldemose (the Social Democrats), when explaining (and justifying) why it is so difficult for EU topics to find their way into the Danish media, where focus of a story is often on people, processes and last but not least, on a limited amount of content. In this context, Christel explained

For more information on

- The EU Parliament: www.europarl.europa.eu
- Action Aid: www.actionaid.org
- European Journalism Centre: www.ejc.net
- The Commission: www.ec.europa.eu
- The Permanent Representation of Denmark to the EU: www.eurepraesentationen.um.dk/da

that to her a process is for instance when we see politicians come out of or go to negotiations in the Danish Ministry of Finance, which often attracts more attention than the content of the negotiations. It is difficult to reproduce this “scene” at the EU because of the many processes stretching over a long period of time, often up to two years, she explained. Focusing on EU parliamentarians as individuals is not an obvious choice either since most of them are relatively unknown in Denmark. Thus, the content is what is left and is what the EU parliamentarians will have to try to base their stories on to get coverage in the Danish media. In Christel’s experience, it is often difficult to attract the media’s attention to decisions once they have been adopted. Besides, many of the decisions are often of a technical nature. Nor does it improve matters, Christel emphasized, that many Danish media only have a couple of journalists covering all EU topics, but handfuls of journalists covering the work performed at the Danish Folketing.



European Journalism Centre

The threads from the meeting with Christel were resumed the following day when the group visited the European Journalism Centre (EJC) located centrally between all the EU institutions. The EJC is an independent organisation working to ensure the quality in journalism primarily within the framework of the EU. This is done through seminars aiming to enhance journalists’ understanding of the institutions and EU affairs. The seminars target journalists inside, but also outside the member states. On this occasion, the field trip participants took the opportunity to ask a number of minor and major questions about EU affairs to a person who knew what he was talking about. Further, one of the messages in the introduction was: Currently, EU topics are covered as independent areas in line with domestic, cultural, sports and foreign policy. The introductory speaker did not find this prioritisation expedient, since to various degrees EU topics are of significance to all areas, and for this reason they also ought to be cross-organisational and cross-structural.

Action Aid and the Permanent Representation of Denmark to the EU

When visiting Action Aid, the participants got a completely different perspective on the work performed at the EU. Action Aid is a global NGO that has been working to fight poverty since 1972. Action Aid operates at international as well as national level – in Denmark through Mellempøkeligt Samvirke (MS Action Aid). The participants visited one of Action Aid’s international offices primarily operating within the framework of the EU to put development on the agenda and to ensure that political announcements are followed up by specific political action within the EU system. Action Aid also aims to influence concrete directives throughout the decision-making process. The participants thus also got a notion of how best to influence decisions at the EU. The sooner your proposal is supported the better, was the message. The Action Aid representatives also made it clear that throughout the process the organisation constantly seeks to influence the political work. Action

Aid also readily assists EU parliamentarians working to promote the same cause as Action Aid – this is also a means of seeking to influence decisions. When a directive has been adopted, the national entities can help ensure that the directive is actually also implemented correctly at national level.

The last stop on this intense and educational field trip was at the Permanent Representation of Denmark to the EU. There, the participants learned how Denmark’s interests are safeguarded in a decision-making process. The Permanent Representation of Denmark to the EU is in close contact with the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs which determines the Danish political position. Before cases are submitted to the Council of Ministers, a number of diplomats from different member states work to agree on political proposals in the so-called Council working groups where diplomats negotiate on behalf of the individual member states.

In addition to focusing on professional aspects, the participants were also given plenty of opportunities to talk to each other and share valuable ideas. The evening was spent exploring the most famous tourist streets in Brussels where Concord Danmark invited for dinner with the legendary *moules et frites* (mussels and chips) at the restaurant Chez Léon, a stone’s throw from Grand Place. A couple of Belgian beers were also consumed while discussing the many impressions taken in during the day. It is without question that the participants took back many new impressions, among other things a much better understanding of the working procedures in Brussels that are not easily acquired at Marbjerg; an idea for a story or maybe for a project to be produced at the next semester.

Sources: <http://www.eurepraesentationen.um.dk/da>

“RU to be experimental and socially relevant”

The Academic Council backs Rector’s final proposal for RU’s new strategy: A combination of “scenario 2” – the experimental and innovative university – and “scenario 3” – the socially relevant university

By: *Camilla Buchardt, The Information Office*

The Academic Council backs the rectorship’s final proposal for “RU Strategy 2015”. This was the overall conclusion after the strategy meeting held between the rectorship and the Academic Council on 2 June.

The Academic Staff group, the Technical Staff group and the students represented on the Academic Council backed the proposal for the new strategy, which had been revised to reflect the inputs from the consultation, even though more of the members also pointed to a number of problems in connection with certain formulations and “vague wordings” in

About the Academic Council

The Academic Council is the supreme collegiate body providing advice to the rectorship and the Board of Directors in all major matters concerning education and research. The Academic Staff, Technical Staff and Administrative Staff and students are all represented on the Council.

the strategy document.

Strategy versus broadness

At the meeting, Ib Poulsen started by emphasising how important it is that the new strategy clearly shows where RU is heading over the years to come, but also displays its broadness, enabling all academic environ-

ments at the university to see themselves be encompassed by it.

Overall, the Academic Council considered the draft strategy “much better” than the previous versions. It was emphasised that the strategy document set forth a sensible weighting between “scenario 2” – the experimental and innovative university – and “scenario 3” – the socially relevant university, but to a lesser degree “scenario 3”. However, the Academic Staff group found it problematic that in several passages it was difficult to see who were to decide the order of priorities and determine the various criteria in relation to e.g. successful research dissemination.

Despite the fact that he generally backed the strategy, Allan Dreyer Hansen, Associate Professor at the Department of Society and Globalisation (ISG), expressed general scepticism to the implementation of major strategies at universities. In this context, several of the other Academic Staff representatives stressed that the new strategy should never be implemented at the expense of the basic principle for free and independent research.

Tinne Hoff Kjeldsen, Associate Professor of Mathematics at the Department of Science, Systems and Models (NSM) made it clear to Rector that it would have been appropriate had the Academic Council been informed of the concrete financial consequences before the adoption of the new strategy.

Moreover, the Technical Staff group added that the rectorship was “saying too much” when

stating that implementing a new strategy was “broadly accepted” at RU and stressed that they had not yet met a member of the Technical Staff who understood the purpose of the new strategy.

Making campus more attractive

Poul Bitsch Olsen, Associate Professor at the Department of Communication, Business and Information Technologies (CBIT) recommended that it be added to the strategy that research and education should relate to each other and also proposed, backed by both the Academic Staff, Technical Staff and the students, that various team sport activities be initiated at campus and that a number of coaches in charge of the teams be hired to enhance welfare and team spirit as well as to attract attention to RU and show the surrounding world that RU is an attractive university.

Ib Poulsen took note of the proposal and told the attendants that initiating negotiations

Inputs from consultation

A total of 22 inputs from the consultation were provided, and they are available on <http://www.ruc.dk/2015/hoeringssvar/>. All the inputs have been included in the rectorship’s preparation of the final draft strategy.

with the municipality with the purpose of introducing more sports activities on campus is being considered.

If the Board of Directors adopts the new strategy recommended by the rectorship and the Academic Council, RU is to become an innovative, experimental and socially relevant university. File photo by Tuala Hjarnø.



The students added that it was important that the new strategy stated that making campus more attractive in terms of more art and improved sports facilities, etc. will be a priority in the future.

Improved strategy

With a view to the Board of Directors finally adopting the strategy, the strategy document was revised after the meeting in accordance with the comments and proposals from the Academic Council, of which most were accepted by Rector.

“It means a lot to me that the Academic Council, in a competent manner, provided additions to and improvements of the strategy document – and it also means a lot that the Academic Council and the other parties were involved in the process”, said Ib Poulsen after the meeting.

Since RUGlobal went to press the Board of Directors had just agreed on the strategy. For the Board meeting in October there will be prepared an implementation plan incl. an updated financing.

The three scenarios in brief

Scenario 1: An international university

To be able to implement its vision, it is important that RU is internationally oriented. Basically, RU is a Danish university located in Denmark. The pivot point in this scenario is, however, that RU increasingly sees itself becoming an internationally recognised player.

To be an international player involves a high degree of interaction with the surrounding world, which may provide new impulses and perspectives on RU's research and education.

Scenario 2: An experimental and innovative university

The experimental and innovative RU is based on and will renew RU's tradition of thinking out of the box within research, education and teaching. Thus, the scenario is based on a position of strength.

The scenario builds on RU's history and strength as a university taking new approaches.

By focusing on RU as an experimental, unique, recognised, different, curious and courageous university, RU will become the attractive alternative.

Scenario 3: A socially relevant and developing university

To be able to implement the vision, it is important that RU is internationally recognised for responding to society's needs within research, education and organisation at the highest professional level.

RU has a very wide range of collaborative partners – including a broadly composed network not only comprising research environments, but also partners from the civil society, citizens' groups and NGOs. This breadth provides RU with a competitive edge relative to other universities.

The scenario is thus based on RU as an active participant in and contributor to society at large.

Environmentalist with a capital



Peder Agger turned 70 and said goodbye to RU after 31 years. On that occasion, a reception was held in honour of the popular professor

*By: Thomas Humle, RUglobal
Photo: Poul Erik Nikander Frandsen*

The hallway in front of RU's large auditorium was buzzing with life. Smiling broadly, old friends were shaking hands, hugging and laughing. Wine glasses and soft drink bottles clinked and in the middle of the cordial noise, an elderly gentleman stepped onto a green milk crate. He tapped the handheld microphone lightly, saying "hello, hello".

The gentleman standing on the milk crate was Professor Peder Agger (MSc in Biology). He tried to attract the attention of the crowd surrounding him; those closest turn around and form a circle around the retiring professor. Shortly after, Professor Agger had the full attention of the big crowd. "Thank you all for coming. I'm pleased to see you."

That way, Professor Agger started off the personal part of his birthday and farewell reception. Shortly after, he stepped down from the milk crate.

With the exception of a seven-year period as Head of Department with the Danish Mini-

stry of the Environment, Professor Agger has been with RU since 1972 – five weeks before the first students set foot on the university ground. But now it's over. Having turned 70, the very popular professor is retiring, but he will, however, continue as Chairman of the Danish Council of Ethics until end-2010.

Material enough for ten speeches

Professor Agger has always been an active and committed environmentalist and throughout his tenure with RU and the Danish Ministry of the Environment, he has consistently been a fervent advocate for the environment.

"On 1 September 2006, you celebrated your 40th anniversary (Editor's comment: Peder Agger graduated as a fisheries biologist in 1966). That same day was my first as Head of Department, and for this reason I had to give your anniversary speech. Back then, I didn't know you very well and I didn't really know what to say, so I read your CV, and fortunately there was material enough for ten speeches," said Head of Department at ENSPAC, Profes-

sor Valery Forbes, having stepped onto the milk crate.

Over the years, Professor Agger has been a member of several councils and boards, including the Danish Nature Conservation Council, the Ecological Council, the National Pesticide Board, the Danish Nature Council, the Steering Committee for the Danish Society for Nature Conservation and last but not least the Danish Council of Ethics, which he has chaired since 1 January 2008.

Nature and environmental award

There is no doubt that Professor Agger's commitment to environmental work will be greatly missed. The next speaker stepping onto the milk crate was Ella Maria Bisschop-Larsen, President of the Danish Society for Nature Conservation. She focused on Professor Agger's invitation to the debate event of the day: "You write in your invitation that you want to mark your retirement by giving yourself a kick in your a..." she said.

"We are very pleased to hear that because we cannot do without you. We need you to continue your active work for a healthier environment and a better nature. Throughout your professional carrier, you've greatly influenced this work. You've always been sharp and constructive and you've been able to put different problems into perspective. You're a rare fiery soul in the fight for a better environment and I've therefore recommended you for the Bodil Pedersen Fondens Nature and Environmental Award of DKK 100,000."

The crowd gasped in surprise and applauded enthusiastically as Peder Professor Agger stepped forward to receive the check. However, the award didn't take Professor Agger completely by surprise. Smiling, he unfolded his speech: "This recognition means a great deal to me and I've chosen to donate the money to the environmental organisation





NOAH, which is undoubtedly a genuinely deserving recipient. I'm sure they'll put all this money to good use," said Professor Agger, who helped found NOAH back in 1969.

Looking ahead

Immediately before the reception and the many excellent speeches, Peder Agger had invited a panel debate entitled "The fight for nature right now", which took place in connection with his retirement, as Professor Agger did not want to give a traditional farewell lecture.

"Lately, several people have asked me how I'm doing with my farewell lecture. However, I'll not spend today looking back on my research. I've never been a researcher with a capital R and I would therefore rather look ahead," said Professor Agger from the lectern in the big auditorium. For this reason, he had invited five nature and environmental organisations to participate in a panel debate: NOAH, the Ecological Council, the Danish Society for Nature Conservation, the Danish Nature Council, and the Centre for Landscape Ecology, Democracy and Management of Sustainability at ENSPAC, RU. The idea was for them to reflect on the environmental challenges we are facing today and to consider how the grassroots movement could make a difference.

Nature falling victim

"In the true spirit of RU tradition, I will – instead of giving a lecture – try to orchestrate a problem-oriented project work," said Professor Agger from the lectern and with his left arm pointing towards the five invited debaters waiting at the podium. One by one, they presented their depressing reports about how the environment and nature are increasingly being destroyed despite increased public awareness of environmental issues.

"The hare has become an endangered species in Denmark," said Ella Maria Bisschop-Larsen from the Danish Society for Nature Conservation and continued: "This is the result of inadequate and weak legislation that allows the agricultural sector a free rein, rendering nature in a state of depletion and exhaustion." Architect Carl Herfort of NOAH was also discouraged: "We're the most irresponsible generation of all times. Destructions accelerate and nothing is done about it," he raged. Carl Herfort has a vision of creating a website that will act as a common platform for all environmental activists, making it easier to speak with one voice and be heard by the government.

Christian Ege Jørgensen of the Ecological Council, although saddened by the state of nature and the environment, argued that improvements have in fact taken place in

recent years. "We have prevailed in a great many areas. For example, we have eliminated acid rain and smog in London. The wind turbine industry has become one of Denmark's biggest exports. We should be very pleased about that."

The debate was not so much a debate. All the participants agreed that we need to change our daily routines if we want to change the current negative development.

"We're working to change three things that will improve the environment: Fewer cars, fewer steaks and fewer wood-burning stoves," said Christian Ege Jørgensen. It takes a change in attitude to make people think green in many everyday situations.

In the previous issue of RUGlobal, we printed an interview with the retiring professor. To read this issue, go to our website:

ruc.dk/ruc/rucnytt

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If you have problems receiving e-mails it may be because you have no space left on the mail server, see
www.ruc.dk/en/nospaceleft

Tips and tricks from Campus-it

Grete Lundbeck European Brain Research foundation
Call for Nomination for

THE BRAIN PRIZE

THE PRIZE OF €1 MILLIOM WILL BE AWARDED FOR THE FIRST TIME
IN COPENHAGEN IN MAY 2011

Nominations by 15 September 2010

Nominations will be reviewed by the Selection Committee

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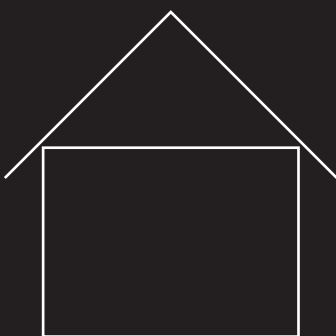
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FOR THE NOMINATION FORM AND DETAILS OF THE NOMINATIONS PROCEDURE, PLEASE VISIT
WWW.THEBRAINPRIZE.ORG

For the nomination form and details of the nomination procedure, please visit:
www.thebrainprize.org



Room for rent

We have one three bedroom apartment for rent. The apartment consists of two rooms, a kitchen, living-room and a share-bathroom. The apartment can be shared so that rented a single room and a double room. Price of the rental agreement by contacting. The apartment is in Fløng, 2640 Hedehusene – not far from RUC. Contact us by phone: 0045 23 40 92 10 or by e-mail: jh@privat.dk

Kind regards
Jannie
Hammershøj



Deadlines for RUGlobal Autumn 2010

Nr. 1:

Articles: Thursday 19. August
Notices: Tuesday 24 August
Publication date: Monday 6 September

Nr. 2:

Articles: Thursday 9. September
Notices: Tuesday 14. September
Publication date: Monday 27 September

Nr. 3:

Articles: Thursday 30 September
Notices: Tuesday 5 October
Publication date: Monday 18 October

Nr. 4:

Articles: Thursday 21 October
Notices: Tuesday 26 October
Publication date: Monday 8 November

Nr. 5:

Articles: Thursday 11 November
Notices: Tuesday 16 November
Publication date: Monday 29 November

Nr. 6:

Articles: Thursday 2 December
Notices: Tuesday 7 December
Publication date: Monday 20 December

Nr. 7:

Articles: Thursday 23 December
Notices: Tuesday 23 December
Publication date: Monday 10 January 2011

Best regards
RUGlobal