



# Reaching the Nations International Church Growth Almanac

Country reports on the LDS Church around the world from a landmark almanac. Includes detailed analysis of history, context, culture, needs, challenges and opportunities for church growth.



**Denmark**



**Population:** 5.57 millions (#115 out of countries)

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## Geography

**Area:** 43,094 square km. Geographically Scandinavia's smallest country, Denmark is located in Northern Europe and consists of the Jutland Peninsula and many islands in the Baltic Sea, notably Zealand (Sjælland) and Funen (Fyn). Germany borders the Jutland Peninsula. Terrain primarily consists of flat, low-elevation plains. Temperate climate modified by the surrounding ocean generate mild winters and cool summers and humid, overcast weather conditions. Denmark controls the Danish Straits that bridge the North and Baltic Seas. Flooding is a natural hazard. Environmental issues include pollution and fresh water contamination from pesticides and animal waste. Denmark is divided into five administrative regions.

## Peoples

Danish: 86.3%

Turkish: 1.1%

Other: 12.6%

Prominent immigrant groups include Turks, Poles, Syrians, Germans, Iraqis, and Romanians.

**Population:** 5,809,502 (July 2018)

**Annual Growth Rate:** 0.59% (2018)

**Fertility Rate:** 1.78 children born per woman (2018)

**Life Expectancy:** 79.1 male, 83.1 female (2018)

**Languages:** Danish (97%), other (3%). Danish is the official language. Faroese and German are recognized regionally. English is commonly spoken as a second language. Only Danish has over one million speakers (5.5 million).

**Literacy:** 99% (2011)

## History

The Danes were the first recorded inhabitants of the Jutland Peninsula and neighboring islands since antiquity and are of Gothic-Germanic stock. Denmark emerged as a major regional power during the Viking age from the ninth to eleventh centuries and for a thirty-year period was united with England under King Canute. Christianity spread to Denmark in the twelfth century, and the influence of the Catholic Church increased. Tension between royalty and nobility increased during the late Middle Ages. By the fourteenth century, Queen Margrete I brought Norway, Finland, Sweden, Iceland, Greenland, and the Faroe Islands under the Danish crown. Danish rule over Sweden and Finland lasted until 1520, and the Danish provinces in present-day southern Sweden were lost to Sweden in 1658. The Reformation arrived to Denmark in 1536, and over time, nearly the entire population converted to Lutheranism. Denmark allied with Napoleonic France in the early nineteenth century and ceded Norway to Sweden in 1814 following defeat. By 1849, a constitutional monarchy form of government was established. Following the loss of Schleswig-Holstein to Prussia in 1864, a policy of neutrality was adopted that was maintained during both world wars. German occupation began in 1940 and liberation by Allied forces occurred in 1945.<sup>[1]</sup> Denmark joined NATO in 1949 and the European Economic Community (the European Union) in 1973. Over the past half century, economic growth and prosperity have contributed to Denmark's political and economic role in the European Union and northern Europe today. Denmark has refused to participate in several aspects of the European Union's Maastricht Treaty, such as the adoption of the Euro currency and defense cooperation.

## Culture

The Danish possess a long-standing, proud heritage of scientists, researchers, philosophers, writers, architects, dancers, cinematographers, artists, and musicians that are internationally renowned for their cultural and scientific achievements. Danish sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen created the well-known Christus statue in the late 1820s, and reproductions of the statue have been frequently used by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in visitor centers and temple annexes.<sup>[2]</sup> The term Danish has become synonymous with high quality craftsmanship for many products and interior designs. Many museums and castles dot the landscape and are a tribute to Denmark's medieval history and Viking legacy. The government has sought to preserve and encourage cultural uniqueness to Denmark, spending slightly over 1% of the 2008 public budget on culture.<sup>[3]</sup> Society has grown increasingly more secular over the past century. Cigarette and alcohol consumption rates are high. Divorce rates are high.

## Economy

**GDP per capita:** \$50,100 (2017) [83.8% of U.S.]

**Human Development Index:** 0.929 (2017)

**Corruption Index:** 88 (2018)

Denmark has developed a modern, high-tech market economy heavily integrated into international trade that is well diversified and specialized in many sectors, including renewable energy, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, and maritime shipping. Government welfare redistributes wealth equally among the population. The economy continues to steadily expand albeit at a reduced rate. The aging population is an evolving challenge for maintaining economic growth. Services employ 79.3% of the work force and generate 75.8% of the GDP, whereas industry employs 18.3% of the work force and generates 22.9% of the GDP. Wind turbines, metals, chemicals, food processing, machinery, clothing, electronics, construction, wood products, shipbuilding, pharmaceuticals, and medical equipment are major industries. Agriculture accounts for less than 3% of the labor force and GDP. Barley, wheat, potatoes, and sugar beets are common crops. Additional agricultural products include fish, pork, and dairy products. The primary trade partners include Germany and Sweden. Denmark experiences one of the lowest rates of corruption worldwide.

## Faiths

Christian: 83.1%

Muslim: 5.1%

Other: 0.1%

None: 11.7%

## Christians

### Denominations – Members – Congregations

Evangelical Lutheran – 4,415,222

Roman Catholic – 40,000

Jehovah's Witnesses – 14,644 – 173

Orthodox – less than 10,000

Latter-day Saints – 4,458 – 22

Seventh Day Adventists – 2,408 – 45

## Religion

Official statistics from 2017 indicate that 76% of the population are members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELC),<sup>[4]</sup> a decline from the 1980s when over 90% of the citizens were members of the ELC. A large number of those who have left the ELC have joined other Christian denominations. Less than 3% of citizens attend the ELC regularly, whereas up to 65% of citizens attend at least once annually for religious holidays and special ceremonies such as marriages and funerals. Church attendance on religious holidays for Lutherans has increased in recent years.<sup>[5]</sup> Muslims account for the second largest religious group, comprised principally of immigrants, and are concentrated in the largest cities. There are approximately 5,500-7,000 Jews who primarily live in Copenhagen.<sup>[6]</sup>

## Religious Freedom

The constitution protects religious freedom, which is upheld by the law. The constitution declares that the Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELC) is the state church, demands that the state financially support the church, and stipulates that the ruling monarch must be a member of the Church. Eighty-six (86%) of funding for the ELC primarily comes from a church tax paid by its members. To register with the government as a religious community, a religious group must have at least 150 members, submit a document summarizing traditions, rules, and beliefs, a description of the group's most important practices, a list of members' and leaders' permanent addresses, and an audited financial statement. Missionary work and proselytism may occur as long as they do not interfere with public order or morality. Public schools are required to teach students about the ELC. There have been some societal instances of abuse of religious freedom targeting Jews and Muslims. Occasional conflict occurs between Jewish and Muslim communities.<sup>[7]</sup>

## Largest Cities

### Urban: 87.9% (2018)

Copenhagen, Aarhus, Odense, Aalborg, Esbjerg, Randers, **Kolding**, Horsens, **Vejle**, Roskilde.

Cities listed in **bold** have no congregation of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Eight of the ten of the largest cities have a Church congregation. Thirty-nine percent (39%) of the national population resides in the ten most populous cities.

## Church History

The first known Danes to join the Church were Danish-Americans who were baptized in 1843 in Boston, Massachusetts. In 1849, the Danish Constitution went into effect and granted religious freedom, allowing Elders Erastus Snow and Peter O. Hansen to open the Scandinavian Mission in Denmark the same year. Fifteen converts were baptized in Denmark in August 1850, and later that year, the first branch was organized with fifty members. A second branch was organized the following year, and the Book of Mormon was translated into Danish, becoming the first foreign language translation of Latter-day Saint scriptures. By 1852, the first converts immigrated to Utah to join the main body of Latter-day Saints. The Church experienced significant persecution by the prominent Christian churches beginning in the 1850s primarily due to strong ethnoreligious ties between most Danes and traditional religious groups that were threatened by Latter-day Saint missionary efforts. A total of

23,500 converts joined the Church during the first seven years of proselytism and two-thirds of converts remained active in the Church.<sup>[8]</sup> By the end of 1869, approximately half of the converts in the Scandinavian Mission immigrated to Utah. More than 30,000 people joined the Church in Denmark prior to 1900.<sup>[9]</sup> In 1905, the Scandinavian Mission divided to create the Swedish Mission, and by 1920, the Church organized the Danish Mission. The first “Anti-Mormon” film was produced in Denmark in 1911.<sup>[10]</sup>

The Danish Mission president received permission from the government to perform marriages in 1970.<sup>[11]</sup> Seminary and institute commenced in the mid-1970s. Church President Gordon B. Hinckley met with members in 1996. In 1998, President Thomas S. Monson rededicated Denmark for missionary work.<sup>[12]</sup> In 2000, Denmark was assigned to the Europe Central area<sup>[13]</sup> and in the late 2000 was reassigned to the Europe Area. Latter-day Saints with Danish ancestry commemorated the emigration of early Danish converts in the 1850s by participating in a sea trek by ship from Denmark to the United States in 2001.<sup>[14]</sup> In 2005, Elder L. Tom Perry met with civic and government leaders and explained how Church teachings can answer many societal challenges.<sup>[15]</sup> In 2014, Elder David A. Bednar visited members in Copenhagen.<sup>[16]</sup>

## Membership Growth

### Church Membership: 4,458 (2018)

In 1857, 2,317 of the 3,353 members in the Scandinavian Mission were Danes (69%). Four hundred ten converts were baptized in Denmark and Norway in 1910.<sup>[17]</sup> Between 1852 and 1900, approximately 18,000 Danish Latter-day Saints immigrated to Utah.<sup>[18]</sup> Church membership totaled 1,408 in 1930, 1,521 in 1940, 1,933 in 1950, and 2,192 in 1960.

The number of convert baptisms varied from fifty and 200 a year between 1966 and 1973.<sup>[19]</sup> There were approximately 4,500 Latter-day Saints in Denmark in 1975.<sup>[20]</sup> Stagnant membership growth has occurred since the mid-1970s. Membership stood at 4,300 in 1987, 4,400 in 1993, 4,600 in 1997, 4,457 in 2002, 4,343 in 2007, 4,408 in 2014, and 4,458 in 2018. By 2010, an estimated 30,000 Danes had joined the Church since 1850.<sup>[21]</sup>

The number of annual convert baptisms in the Aarhus Denmark Stake between 2005 and 2009 ranged from a low of twenty in 2008 to a high of forty in 2009. Most convert baptisms in the stake were Danes in 2010. Total membership in the Aarhus Denmark Stake generally increased by twenty members a year in the late 2000s. There were over 2,100 members in the Aarhus Denmark Stake by year-end 2010. In 2018, one in 1,303 was a member on Church records.

## Congregational Growth

### Wards: 13 Branches: 9 (April 2012)

During the 1850s, the Church quickly expanded into several cities on the eastern side of the Jutland Peninsula and nearby islands. Some of the locations where early missionaries organized branches during the 1850s include Alborg, Aarhus, Copenhagen, Fredericia, Frederikshavn, Horsens, Odense, Randers, and Rønne. A few additional cities had branches organized in the 1920s and 1930s such as Herning, Roskilde, and Skive. More cities had branches established in the 1970s and 1980s such as Esbjerg, Lillerød, Nykøbing-Falster, Slagelse, and Sønderborg.

The first stake was organized in Copenhagen in 1974 followed by a second stake organized in Aarhus in 1978. There were twenty-two congregations in 1987, increasing to twenty-three in 1993 and twenty-four in 1997. By year-end 2000, there were twenty-five congregations, including fourteen wards. The number of congregations declined to twenty-two in 2002 and increased to twenty-three in 2003 and twenty-four in 2004. In 2005, there were twenty-three congregations. Congregations consolidated in the 2000s include the Tastrup and Lyngby Wards and the Helsingør Branch. During the 2000s, the Horsens Branch became a ward. In early 2011, the Aarhus Denmark Stake had seven wards and six branches, whereas the Copenhagen Denmark Stake had six wards and three branches. The Denmark Copenhagen Mission Branch is also based in Denmark and serves members residing in remote locations mainly in Greenland, Iceland, and the Faroe Islands. In 2010, the Odense 2nd Ward was facilitating the establishment of a congregation in Svendborg as a result of recent convert baptisms in the area. However, no branch was established. In 2016, the Silkeborg Branch was discontinued.

## Activity and Retention

Over 600 attended a regional conference for Scandinavia in 1966. Seventy-five patriarchal blessings were given in 1971.<sup>[22]</sup> Seven hundred members from Denmark and western Sweden attended the groundbreaking for the Copenhagen Denmark Temple.<sup>[23]</sup> Over 1,000 attended a statue unveiling with Elder Russell M. Nelson commemorating the 150th anniversary of the establishment of the Church.<sup>[24]</sup> Approximately 4,000 members from Denmark, western Sweden, and Iceland attended a member meeting with President Hinckley in 2004 prior to the dedication of the Copenhagen Denmark Temple.<sup>[25]</sup> 25,512 attended the temple open house, and 3,419 attended the dedicatory services.<sup>[26]</sup> Three hundred sixty-eight were enrolled in seminary or institute during the 2008–2009 school year; approximately one hundred more than the previous school year. The average number of members per congregation slightly declined between 2000 and 2009 from 195 to 191.

There were thirty members in the Rønne Branch in 1988.<sup>[27]</sup> Before seminary and institute commenced in Copenhagen, only 20%–40% of youth Latter-day Saints remained active. By 1993, 75% to 80% of youth remained active due to attendance in seminary and institute that stressed the development of personal scripture study. Reactivation efforts came to greater fruition in the early 1990s.<sup>[28]</sup>

The Nykøbing-Falster Branch had fewer than twenty active members in early 2011. In mid-2010, sixty of the 200 members in the Arhus Ward were active. The Arhus Denmark Stake reported no change in sacrament attendance during the late 2000s, and sacrament meeting attendance accounted for 38% of church membership in the stake in late 2010. Member activity rates for the Arhus Denmark Stake varied from a low of 20% to a high of 54% in late 2010. Most wards appear to have between fifty and one hundred active members, whereas most branches tend to have fewer than fifty active members. Some branches have as few as ten active members, whereas some wards have as many as 120 active members. Member activity rates for youth and children are high in the Arhus Denmark Stake (67%–87%), and approximately two-thirds of recent converts were retained in 2010. In the mid to late 2010s, returned missionaries reported church attendance by congregation as follows: Copenhagen wards (90-175), Roskilde (60-150), Odense wards (80-120), Fredericia (75), Horsens (50-70), Slagelse (50-75), Esbjerg (50-60), Aarhus (50), Birkerød (50), Frederikshavn (45), Randers (40), Amager (30), Bornholm (12-15), and Skive (12-15). Returned missionaries during the past three decades have reported that the Denmark Copenhagen Mission usually baptizes less than one hundred converts a year. Approximately half of new converts remain active one year after baptism. Nationwide active membership is estimated at 1,500, or 35% of total membership.

## Finding

Nine television stations broadcasted a thirty-minute program produced by choirs from three wards in the Odense area in 1988.<sup>[29]</sup> Full-time sister missionaries assigned to the Rønne Branch were featured in a local newspaper and on a radio program in 1988.<sup>[30]</sup> In 1993, a stake president was interviewed on one of the most popular television shows in Copenhagen.<sup>[31]</sup> In 2007, thirty-six Latter-day Saint young single adults held a choir performance in the Cathedral of Copenhagen, which was viewed by 160 spectators.<sup>[32]</sup> That same year, members held a walk-a-thon and health fair in Copenhagen.<sup>[33]</sup> In recent years, returned missionaries indicate that local members have little involvement in finding investigators for missionaries to teach.

## Language Materials

**Languages with Latter-day Saint Scripture:** Danish, German, Swedish, English.

All Church scriptures and most materials are translated into Danish, German, and Swedish. The Liahona magazine has twelve issues a year in Danish, German, and Swedish.

## Meetinghouses

The first church-built meetinghouse in Europe was built in Aalborg in 1907.<sup>[34]</sup> There were eighteen church-built chapels in 1974.<sup>[35]</sup> In early 2011, there were twenty-one meetinghouses, most of which were built by the Church. In 2019, there were nineteen meetinghouses nationwide.

## Humanitarian and Development Work

Humanitarian work has been limited to local members performing service projects or donating items for the needy both at home and abroad. Danish members and participants in a walk-a-thon in 2007 collected over \$1,800 in donations for the Danish Red Cross.<sup>[36]</sup> Members participated in Helping Hands projects in 2010 as part of the celebration of the 160th anniversary of the Church in Denmark. Projects included cleaning roads, serving the elderly, beautifying parks, and collecting toiletries and towels to send to Haiti to earthquake victims.<sup>[37]</sup>

## Opportunities, Challenges, and Prospects

### Religious Freedom

Latter-day Saints face no governmental restrictions impeding worship, assembly, or proselytism. Foreign missionaries serve regularly in Denmark. The Church is among the 116 religious communities with approval for performing marriages in Denmark.<sup>[38]</sup>

### Cultural Issues



Extremely low rates of church attendance and widespread secularism are the foremost barriers to mission outreach in Denmark. The lack of successful missionary approaches tailored to a nominal Christian population with little regular religious involvement has resulted in stagnant membership growth for several decades. Greater receptivity among non-Danes through full-time missionary finding efforts has resulted in increasing numbers of convert baptisms among immigrant groups, but many immigrant groups exhibit low to modest levels of convert retention due to ethnic integration issues, language barriers, and inordinate distances traveled to reach meetinghouses, transient lifestyles, and lack of tradition of church service in their native cultures. Local member-missionary efforts appear largely responsible for finding and baptizing Danes, who also exhibit higher retention. The Church has responded to the challenging proselytism climate by focusing on the more receptive youth and young single adult populations through emphasis on seminary and institute attendance. Young single adult (YSA) outreach centers may secure long-term growth and sustainability of current Latter-day Saint populations by providing a social outlet and opportunities for local single members to date and marry fellow Latter-day Saints. In 2013, one member in Denmark reported that approximately one thousand convert baptisms occurred in Europe a year as a result of YSA outreach centers. High smoking and alcohol use rates challenge efforts for local members to abstain from these substances and create obstacles for full-time missionaries in teaching those who habitually use these substances. Casual sexual relations are commonplace and oppose church teachings.

## National Outreach

Forty-one percent (41%) of the national population resides in a city with a Church congregation, and all five administrative regions have multiple congregations. Seventeen of the sixty-four cities with over 10,000 inhabitants have a ward or branch. The city with the smallest population with an congregation is Rønne (13,800 inhabitants). Several cities without congregations are within ten kilometers of a Church meetinghouse, which may increase the percentage of the population receiving limited mission outreach to 50%. The percentage of Latter-day Saints and extent of mission outreach appears consistent throughout Denmark's five administrative regions, as indicated by an average of one congregation per 200,000 to 300,000 inhabitants for each region. There is no official Church presence in Greenland or the Faroe Islands.

Several active and less active Latter-day Saints reside in cities without a nearby congregation. Coordinating finding and reactivation efforts with stake and mission leaders will be required to effectively extend outreach to these areas. Church planting efforts in Svendborg in 2010 resulted in some progress although it was not sustained and a branch was never organized. Holding cottage meetings and forming dependent branches and groups in these locations offer opportunities to expand national outreach, generate a flexible approach to gauge receptivity in lesser-reached cities and towns with a small nucleus of members, and may lead to a reversal of the forty-year trend of stagnant membership and congregational growth. However, a lack of priesthood holders in these areas prevent the establishment of independent congregations in the near term. Emigration remains an enduring challenge for maintaining current levels of national outreach. A Danish-speaking branch was organized in Salt Lake City in 1963,<sup>[39]</sup> likely as a result of Danish members immigrating to the United States but has since been discontinued. Member-missionary efforts among Africans provide opportunities for the Church to expand outreach in Africa. For instance, the first Ugandan to join the Church in Uganda initially learned about the Church through a pen pal in Denmark.<sup>[40]</sup>

Internet proselytism prospects are favorable. In 1997, Denmark ranked among the top fifteen countries with the most visitors to the Church's website,<sup>[41]</sup> and in 2003, Denmark was among the first eight nations to receive a country-specific LDS website.<sup>[42]</sup> The Church continues to maintain the Denmark website at <http://www.mormon.dk/>, providing Danish-language materials, a meetinghouse locator, local and international Church news, and contact information for visits from full-time missionaries. There is also a Danish version of the Come unto Christ website, formerly Mormon.org, at: <https://www.comeuntochrist.org/dan>. Use of the websites by missionaries and members can increase national outreach, provide accurate information for those earnestly seeking to learning about the Church, and offer some outreach to unreached areas. Additionally, the Church operates a Denmark-specific Newsroom site in Danish at: <https://www.presse-mormon.dk/>.

## Member Activity and Convert Retention

The influence of secularism on Danish society has reduced church attendance and member activity levels in some areas. Reactivation efforts have experienced little success, according to full-time missionary reports. Quick-baptism techniques among non-Danes, especially African immigrants or students, has led to lower convert retention rates, as many do not develop habitual church attendance and face logistical challenges traveling to church. Full-time missionaries report that long travel times have reduced member activity rates in some congregations, such as the Randers Branch. Opening additional congregations in cities distant from currently established congregations may improve local member activity rates over time, but small numbers of faithful members reduce opportunities for fellowshiping at church and may create additional challenges in maintaining member activity rates.

## Ethnic Issues and Integration

Active membership in most congregations reflects Danish demographics for the general population. High receptivity among immigrant groups has resulted in increasing numbers of nonnative European members, albeit many demonstrate lower activity rates. Mounting anti-immigrant sentiment in recent years may create challenges for some native members to accommodate the needs of immigrant converts. Full-time missionaries report that language barriers and long distances to travel to church are the primary obstacles for better integration of immigrant converts.

## Language Issues

Widespread use of Danish as a first or second language simplifies mission outreach efforts and facilitates the integration of differing ethnic groups into the same congregations. The creation of an international congregation to accommodate non-Danish speakers in the Copenhagen area may improve member activity and convert retention rates among non-Danes and facilitate greater testimony building, gospel instruction, and sustainability of immigrant Latter-day Saint populations. Greenlandic and Faroese, which together have approximately 100,000 speakers worldwide, remain without Church materials.

## **Missionary Service**

In 1972, there were eighteen native Danish missionaries serving in Norway, Germany, England, and Denmark.<sup>[43]</sup> Danish members frequently served full-time missions in the late 2000s but not in enough numbers to staff the missionary complement of the Denmark Copenhagen Mission. Conditions appeared similar in the late 2010s. Increasing seminary and institute attendance in recent years may generate more local members who are willing and capable of full-time missionary service, thereby reducing reliance on foreign missionaries to staff local missionary needs.

## **Leadership**

Denmark possesses a small, stable, and well-trained body of local priesthood leadership capable of staffing the administrative needs of two stakes and a temple. With perhaps a couple exceptions, all congregations appear to be administered by local leaders. A shortage of prospective leaders in some unreached or lesser-reached cities may prevent the organization of additional congregations. Danish members have served in several international church leadership positions. In 1966, Don L. Christensen was called as a regional representative.<sup>[44]</sup> In 1995, Knud B. Andersen from Fredericia<sup>[45]</sup> was called to preside over the Denmark Copenhagen Mission.<sup>[46]</sup> In 2010, Jens Hjarup Andersen from Allerød was called to preside over the Denmark Copenhagen Mission,<sup>[47]</sup> and Hans Hjort Rode Nielsen from Soborg was called as the Copenhagen Denmark Temple president.<sup>[48]</sup> In 2017, Torben Engbjerg from Copenhagen was called as an Area Seventy.<sup>[49]</sup> In 2018, Michael Olsen from Gladsaxe was called to serve as the Denmark Copenhagen Mission president.<sup>[50]</sup> In 2019, Hans Hjarup Andersen from Frederiksberg was called as the Copenhagen Denmark Temple president.<sup>[51]</sup>

## **Temple**

Denmark is assigned to the Copenhagen Denmark Temple district. Announced in 1999 and dedicated in 2004, the temple is one of only a few temples worldwide that was renovated from a preexisting church meetinghouse. The Copenhagen Denmark Temple had one of the smallest temple districts in the world in 2011, as the temple serviced three stakes and mission branches in Greenland and Iceland. Notwithstanding the small size of the temple district and the temple operating well below capacity, the few local members in the district utilize the temple well. In 2011, endowment sessions occurred Tuesdays through Saturdays with two sessions on Wednesdays, three on Thursdays, six on Fridays, and three on Saturdays. Additional sessions are also available by appointment. In 2019, endowment sessions occurred Tuesdays through Saturdays with one session on Tuesdays, two sessions on Wednesdays and Thursdays, five sessions on Fridays, and three sessions on Saturdays.

## **Comparative Growth**

The percentage of Latter-day Saints in the general population and member activity rates in Denmark are representative of Scandinavia and higher than in most of Europe. The average number of members per congregation approximately 200 or less for Denmark, Finland, and Norway and among the lowest in the world, indicating a high degree of self-sustainability for local congregation despite few members. In the late 2000s, Denmark had one of the highest percentages of members enrolled in seminary or institute in Europe at 8%, a percentage comparable to Norway and Finland at the time. The size of Latter-day Saint membership and membership growth trends are comparable to Norway and Finland. The Copenhagen Denmark, Stockholm Sweden, and Helsinki Finland Temples are among the most utilized temples in the world among temples with four or fewer stakes within a temple district.

Missionary-minded Christian churches report some of the poorest church growth trends worldwide. Seventh-Day Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses gain few new converts. Total church membership declined for Adventists during the 2000s and the 2010s. Jehovah's Witnesses experience slow active membership growth, but there has been a net decrease of approximately twenty-five congregations in the past decade.

## **Future Prospects**

Stagnant membership and congregational growth have persisted for several decades and will likely continue for the foreseeable future due to low rates of receptivity, small numbers of convert baptisms, moderate rates of convert retention, and high rates of member activity among youth. The greatest challenge for the Church in the coming decade will be maintain the current level of national outreach by avoiding congregation consolidations and augmenting the number of local members that serve full-time missions. Continuing mission outreach directed toward youth and young adults and focusing on member-missionary work appear the most favorable options for proselytism at present.

President Hinckley stated the following in 1996: “There are now nine million or more of us. There ought to be a lot more in Denmark. Well, that’s up to you—I believe you could double the membership of the Church here in five years. I really believe that. If you would work and pray and pray and work and concentrate on doing it at every opportunity and go forward in faith and without fear.”<sup>[52]</sup>

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