



Margrethe Vestagers tale ved The Danish Recovery and Resilience Plan

Taler

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Sted

København

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Introduction

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Good morning,

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Often in life, if something is worth doing, it is probably not easy to do. Most Danes know this very well. In fact I think it's fair to say this is a key factor behind a lot of Danish success stories. It's no accident that when you look at the World Economic Forum's 2020 report on Global Competitiveness, Denmark ranks among the highest countries, for a whole range of indicators - from digital skills to updating infrastructure and effectiveness of public institutions. Indicators of well-being consistently show Denmark as one of the happiest places on Earth to live.

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We Danes don't like to congratulate ourselves. I don't think it's in our nature. But sometimes we should: Because Denmark's success did not come automatically, and it has not been easy to achieve. Rather, it is the result of decades of careful policymaking; good business decisions; investing in and
35 benefitting from the EU's Single Market; which celebrates its 30th anniversary this year. And most especially, we owe it to the investment, work and commitment made by the Danish people.

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This question is how we take that success forward, into the next 30 years.

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Planning for transition

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Ultimately, this is what today's discussion is all about. The Danish Recovery and Resilience Plan sets out the key contours for how we continue our positive
60 drive into the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and beyond.

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It is first and foremost a great opportunity for Denmark. The value it brings to

70 Denmark cannot be measured solely in terms of the 11 billion kroner in grant
money. That's a lot of money, yes. But the true value of the EU Recovery Plan
for Denmark is much greater, because it is based on two things: Strategy and
Focus.

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80 First, the Danish Recovery and Resilience Plan is strategic. Denmark's plans and
priorities are aligned with those of other EU countries, creating important
synergies and ensuring positive spillovers. In this way, Danish companies that
innovate green and digital technologies will find their export markets expanded
thanks to the recovery plans in other countries.

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90 Second, the Plan is focused. Let's be honest. Coming out of the pandemic and
the energy crisis will always create momentum for recovery. That is how
economic cycles work. But the Recovery Plan directs this momentum towards
precisely those areas where we can achieve long term prosperity and make good
on our promises to the next generation: I'm speaking of course about the digital
95 and green transitions.

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This is a lot easier said than done. The digital transition brings with it enormous
benefits, but also substantial risks - whether that is about keeping our children
safe and healthy online, or about keeping digital markets open, fair and
105 contestable. The skills challenge, even here in Denmark, is enormous. And with
new technologies like ChatGPT or the Metaverse developing all the time - we

have to constantly stay alert for new risks.

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115 The same is true for the Green Transition. Whether it is about overcoming climate scepticism, ensuring that the transition does not come at the expense of Europe's most vulnerable, or remaining vigilant against the risk of greenwashing, getting to climate neutrality will not be easy.

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125 **The digital transition in the Danish Plan**

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But in policy as in life, the things that are worth doing are never easy. A successful digital transformation will bolster economic resilience and safeguard Denmark's place in the global competitiveness rankings. This is about more
135 than just Danish ICT companies and their export potential. It is about every Danish industry - integrating AI and machine learning into business practices increases efficiency across the board.

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The Danish Recovery Plan shows clearly that the government understands this
145 importance - two elements that I think are particularly relevant are digitisation

support for SMEs and extending rural broadband coverage. Not alone do these priorities show the value of rural regions and small businesses to our economy, they also demonstrate a commitment to the social dimension of digital policy -
150 for a fully digital Denmark to succeed, it cannot afford to leave anyone behind. Sole traders must benefit just as much as large companies. Thisted must benefit just as much as Frederiksberg.

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The green transition in the Danish Plan

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The exact same can be said of the green transition. I still hear far too many voices saying - in one way or another - that we cannot afford to honour our commitments to climate neutrality. First of all, we cannot afford not to honour them. Europe just experienced the mildest winter on record, and it follows one
170 of the hottest summers on record. The scientific consensus is now overwhelming. We must achieve climate neutrality, we must maintain/keep temperature increases to within an acceptable level. If we fail, the consequences for us, but mainly for our children and grandchildren can be unimaginable.

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180 The good news is that we can also make this transition growth friendly, in a number of ways. First, by exploiting the synergies between digital and green. For example, with 5G technology fully deployed and self-driving cars already advanced, we can begin the move towards smart cities - a shift that can reduce road emissions massively. Second, green technologies are themselves an engine

for growth. The sooner Danish industry makes this shift, the better placed it will be to lead as the green transition is rolled out across the globe. This opens fresh business and growth opportunities.

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195 Denmark's Recovery and Resilience Plan fully reflects this thinking. Reforms and investments under the Plan will contribute to the government's major policy objective of reducing CO2 emissions by 70% by 2030 - in line with the European Green Deal and among the most ambitious plans of any EU country. We always hear from business that they can redirect investments but they need
200 clear signals about where to go.

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This is what the Plan provides. The 1.8 billion kroner allocation to green research and development sets a clear priority for exploiting Denmark's competitive advantages in the knowledge economy. Already Denmark is a
210 frontrunner in clean tech and renewables - especially wind. I can well imagine that in a decade's time, the energy islands being constructed here will inspire the rest of the world - with the work overseen by skilled Danish engineers.

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Meanwhile, the 1.3 billion kroner allocation of funding to the green transition
220 of agriculture and the environment can help address outstanding concerns around habitats and groundwater quality.

Finally, Denmark's very ambitious green tax reform provides a window for
230 businesses to kick-start green investments, in preparation for the increase in
taxes on CO2 emissions.

The European Green Deal and supporting policies

245 Important as national measures are, they are still only one part of the story. The
European Green Deal, which the Commission presented in December 2019,
aims to make Europe the first climate- neutral continent by 2050. Building on
the Green Deal, in 2021 the Commission tabled the Fit for 55 package, a
comprehensive set of proposals on climate, energy, land use, transport and
250 taxation - all with the goal in mind of reducing net greenhouse gas emissions by
at least 55% by 2030. Political agreement was reached last year for several files,
and we expect final agreement on additional proposals soon.

But the real work starts once the ink is dry: Implementation. This is where all
260 sectors of the economy must play their part. We need a change in individual
mindsets and in business practices. How we produce. How we consume. How
we do business. This is a whole-of-society shift in thinking.

270 Which is not to say policymakers are off the hook! We still have a lot more to
do. For one thing, we must gear our industrial policy and trade policy to make
sure the products and raw materials need for the Green Deal are available -
whether that is for wind turbines, heat pumps, batteries or semiconductors.
High energy prices triggered by the war in Ukraine and the changing
275 geopolitical environment make these supply chain issues more challenging. We
have to think carefully, and we have to think ahead.

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That is why we presented a Green Deal Industrial Plan last month and why we
have just tabled proposals to ramp up clean tech manufacturing and ensure a
285 sustainable supply of critical raw materials.

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Conclusion

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I've been in Brussels for some time now. I've seen a lot of hard negotiations on
300 difficult files. I can tell you that with so many different voices at the table, it is
almost never easy to get really big things done.

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I can also tell you that what we are doing now with the green and digital
310 transition represents an even higher level of ambition. And with
acknowledgment that there's no way around solving these challenges together.
We have gone bigger this time. So there is no way everything will go smoothly.

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But I am convinced we will deliver on our promises and make Europe stronger,
320 cleaner and safer than ever before. The same way we got through the financial
crisis. The same way we got through the pandemic.

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Because in life, if something is worth doing, it is probably not easy to do. Thank
you.

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Kilde

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Kildetype

Dokumentation på online medie

Tags

Politisk tale

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