

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF DENMARK
Danida



GUIDELINES FOR APPROVAL OF GRANT APPROPRIATIONS, STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

JANUARY 2018 (VERSION 2.4)



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Introduction

Processes for presentation of appropriations and strategic documents

These guidelines describe the procedures within the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs for presentation and approval of appropriations for grants to projects and programmes and the processes for presentation and approval of policy and strategy documents.

An overview of procedures is provided in the diagram at the next page. For details on the mandate and scope, composition and working procedures please refer to the relevant chapters A-C.

All documents submitted to the Programme Committee and the Council for Development Policy will be uploaded and published on [Danida's transparency website](#). Exemption from the obligation to publicise is only applicable in extraordinary cases (e.g. if deemed necessary due to risk to safety of individuals, Denmark's relations to other nations) and must be authorised by the Under-Secretary for Global Development and Cooperation.

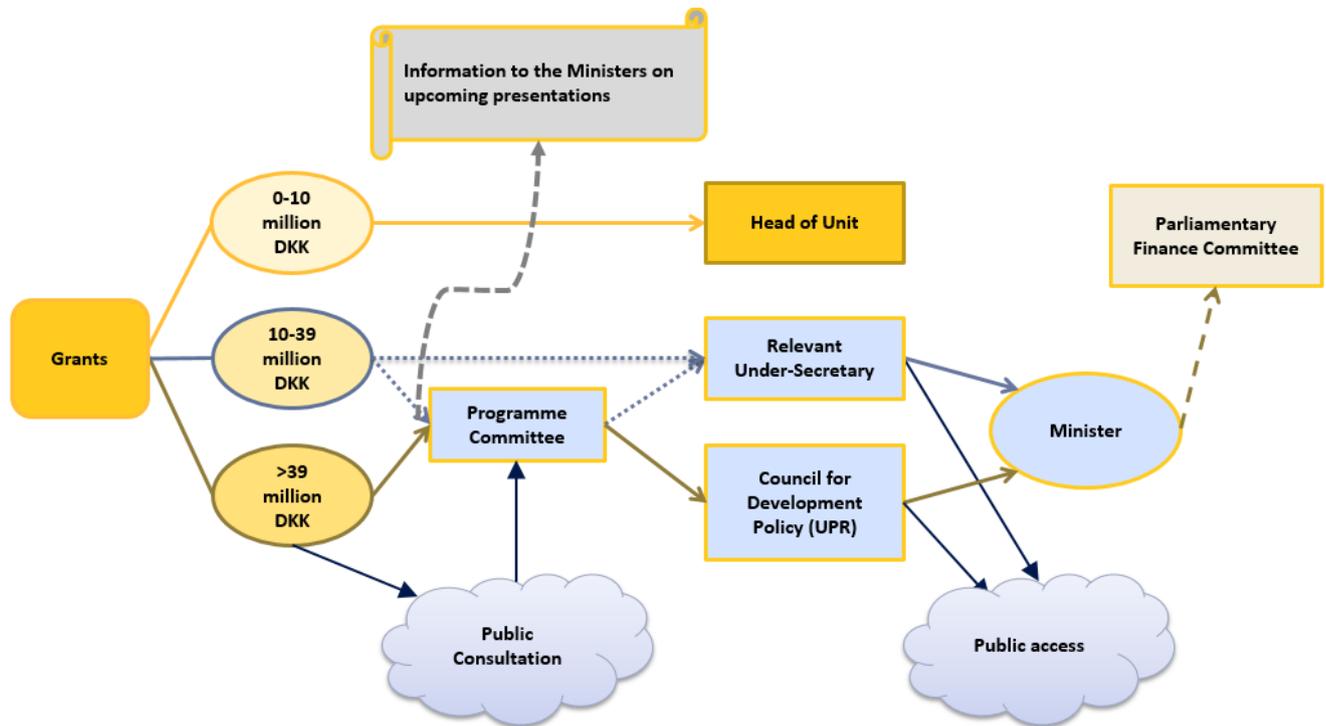
It is the responsibility of the head of the submitting representation or unit to ensure that documents and concept notes are quality assured prior to submission.

In order to put items on the agenda of the Programme Committee and the Council for Development Policy, the [registration facility on the Intranet](#) must be used.

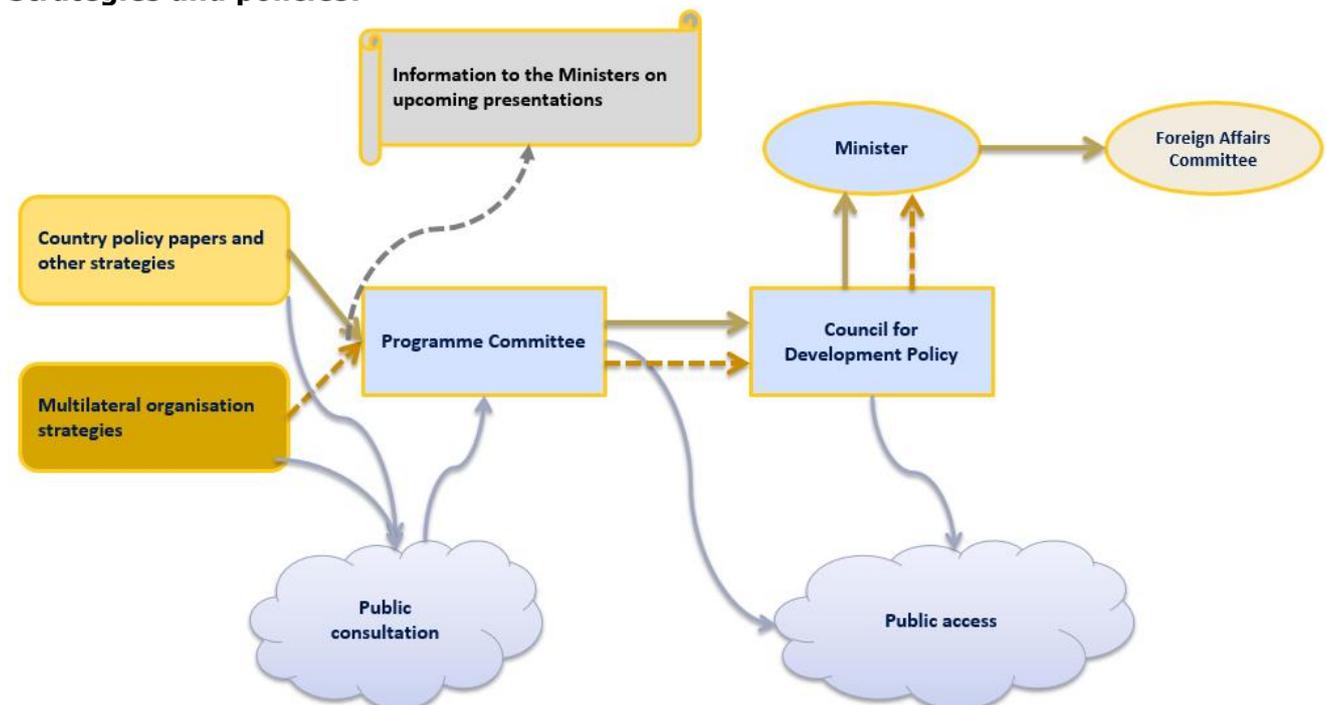
These guidelines replace Guidelines for Approval of Grant Appropriations, Strategies and Policies, dated May 2017.

Overview of procedures for presentation and approval of grants, concept papers and other strategic documents through the Programme Committee and the Council for Development Policy

Grants:



Strategies and policies:



A. Presentation to the Programme Committee

Mandate and scope

The Programme Committee provides quality assurance and guidance on best practises to bilateral (above DKK 39 million) and multilateral development cooperation (organisational strategies), and ensures coherence between specific programmes and overall policy issues. The Programme Committee is consulted at an early stage and provides advice on the implementation of policy priorities and on linkages between bilateral and multilateral development cooperation, provides guidance on technical aspects, quality assurance of rules and procedures and endorses initiation of the formulation and appraisal phase of programming. Thus, the Programme Committee is a forum for decision making, strategic discussions, organisational learning and knowledge-sharing, also among representations, which may participate as peer reviewers when relevant.

Issues to be discussed in the Programme Committee are:

- a) Concept Notes for bilateral and multilateral projects and programmes with a budget frame (commitment) above DKK 39 million. However, the principle regarding accumulation of grants must be taken into account. For further information, see [the general appropriation rules](#). This includes proposals under country programme frames in priority countries, activities under special frames, earmarked and core funding for multilateral organisations, but not financial proposals for humanitarian assistance.
- b) Draft programme documents for programmes with a budget frame (commitment) between DKK 10 and 39 million can - depending on the nature of the programme and upon request from the responsible unit and/or Under-Secretary - be brought before the Programme Committee for quality assurance prior to presentation for approval.
- c) Draft policy papers for Denmark's relations with priority countries, organisation strategies and other key Danida policies and strategies, country focus choices for Danish humanitarian assistance to prolonged humanitarian crises, and follow-up to evaluations.

Composition

The Programme Committee is chaired by the Under-Secretary for Global Development and Cooperation. Permanent members are the following units: Technical Quality Support (KFU); Development Policy and Financing (UPF); Multilateral Cooperation and Climate Change (MKL); Humanitarian Action, Migration and Civil Society (HMC); Growth and Employment (VBE); Evaluation of Development Assistance (EVAL).

KFU is secretariat to the Programme Committee.

Representatives from other Danish ministries and authorities can participate if relevant e.g. in presentations of cross ministerial programmes. Regional departments and units involved with global policy, security, trade and communication as well as multilateral and bilateral representations (through video conferences) can participate when relevant depending on the agenda. The presenting unit/representation as well as other participating units/representations are to be represented by their Heads/Deputy Heads. Heads of section may participate together with their Head/Deputy Head.

All units and representations involved in development cooperation are invited to participate in the meetings. The presenting unit may suggest to KFU that a relevant peer representation or unit is invited to participate in the meeting.

Working procedures

The Programme Committee meets on a regular basis.

The deadline for requesting KFU to put items on the agenda is 7 weeks prior to the meeting. For more information on meeting dates and specific deadlines, please consult [the registration site on the Intranet](#).

The agendas as well as all concept notes for the meetings are published on [Danida Transparency](#).

Each meeting usually has a maximum of four agenda items. Requests to have items on the agenda will be accommodated on a first-come-first-served basis. Documents to the Programme Committee must be sent to KFU (kfu@um.dk) at the latest 17 working days prior to the meeting. It is the responsibility of the head of the submitting unit or representation to ensure that submissions have been subject to quality assurance prior to submission to KFU.

The formats and content of concept notes/draft strategies or draft policies should comply with the requirements listed in relevant guidelines. The documents should be written in English and not commonly known abbreviations should be avoided. Concept notes/ draft strategies or draft policies together with annexes must be submitted as a single combined file (Word format) ready to upload on the internet. The concept note/draft strategy/draft policy will be subject to a public consultation facilitated through the Danida transparency website for 10 working days ending 5 working days prior to the Programme Committee meeting.

The Secretariat distributes invitations for meetings including concept notes and responses received from public consultation 5 working days before each meeting. Representations wishing to participate through video link must announce this by e-mail to KFU with information on the names of participants. Depending on the participants the meeting will be conducted in either Danish or English. The representation(s) will call the virtual meeting room of the Programme Committee.

Normally, an agenda item is opened with questions and comments from members whereafter the responsible unit will respond, also providing a verbal overview of comments received from the public consultation.

The key observations, responses to key issues raised in the public consultation, recommendations and decisions of the Programme Committee are presented in a short summary, based on the Chairman's main points of conclusion in the meeting. The summary has to be taken into account in the subsequent formulation phase. Summaries are published on the Danida transparency website.

Timeline for preparation of meetings in the Programme Committee

Deadline	Action	Responsible	Role of Secretariat
7 weeks prior to the meeting	Representations and units confirm requests for agenda items (concept notes for public hearing)	Representations and units in MFA	Set up the agenda and upload on Danida Transparency website
17 working days prior to the meeting	Representations and units submit quality assured concept notes	Representations and units in MFA	Ensure that all concept notes are received
16 working days prior to the meeting	Concept notes will be published for public consultation	Programme Committee Secretariat	Upload on Danida Transparency website and notify subscribers
6 working days prior to the meeting	Public consultation ends		
5 working days prior to the meeting	Concept notes and responses from public consultation are distributed to Programme Committee members as well as all units/representations involved in development cooperation	Programme Committee Secretariat	To distribute the concept notes and responses from public consultation
After the Programme Committee meeting	Chairman's summary of the meeting is drawn up and published	Programme Committee Secretariat	Draw up summary and upload on Danida Transparency

B. Approval of grant proposals 10-39 million DKK.

Working procedures applying to approval of grant proposals up to 39 million DKK

It is the responsibility of the relevant Under-Secretary to recommend the proposals for approval by the Minister and, therefore, also to ensure the final quality assurance of the grant proposal.

Units and representations are requested to - in consultation with the relevant Under-Secretary – determine whether or not a draft programme document should be subject to a discussion in the Programme Committee. Considerations in this regard should include the complexity, risk level or strategic interest of the intervention, whether it is a new programme/area/partner, the preparation process, among others. See section A.b. page 5.

Programme or project documents must be prepared in English and according to the relevant guidelines. All grant proposals are published on Danida Transparency after the Minister's approval.

Finalisation of documentation before grant approval

A special appropriation cover note must be used as a cover to the relevant programme or project documentation. Template for the appropriation cover note can be found on [AMG](#) (under templates on the right side of the page).

The responsible unit is required to fill in a checklist indicating whether or not all mandatory annexes are included. If, for some reason, some of the annexes are not included, the checklist should give an explanation to why not. Template for the checklist can also be found on [AMG](#) (under templates on the right side of the page).

Approval of grant proposals

For approval of grant proposals there are two steps: the Under-Secretary's approval and the Minister's approval.

Step1 - the Under-Secretary's approval

The documentation required for this step is:

- a) the appropriation cover note
- b) programme or project documentation incl. mandatory annexes
- c) signed Quality Assurance Checklist for appraisal of programmes and projects
- d) checklist for approval

The approval flow in F2 should be:

1. Head of unit
2. KFU ("Modtagelse i Bevillingssekretariatet")
3. Relevant Under-Secretary (*i.e. the Under-Secretary responsible for the presenting unit*)

A special approval flow is available in F2 (“Bevillingsgodkendelse u.39. Godkendelse af centerchef”)

Step 2 – the Minister’s approval

The documentation required for this step is:

- a) a recommendation note (indstillingsnotits) to the Minister
- b) the appropriation cover note

The approval flow in F2 should be:

1. Head of unit
2. The Minister + Copy to State Secretary for Development Policy, relevant Under-Secretary and KFU

A special approval flow is available in F2 (“Bevillingsgodkendelse u.39. Godkendelse af minister”)

KFU’s role

KFU will not quality assure the grant proposals. KFU will check that mandatory documents are attached and whether the proper quality assurance process have been followed.

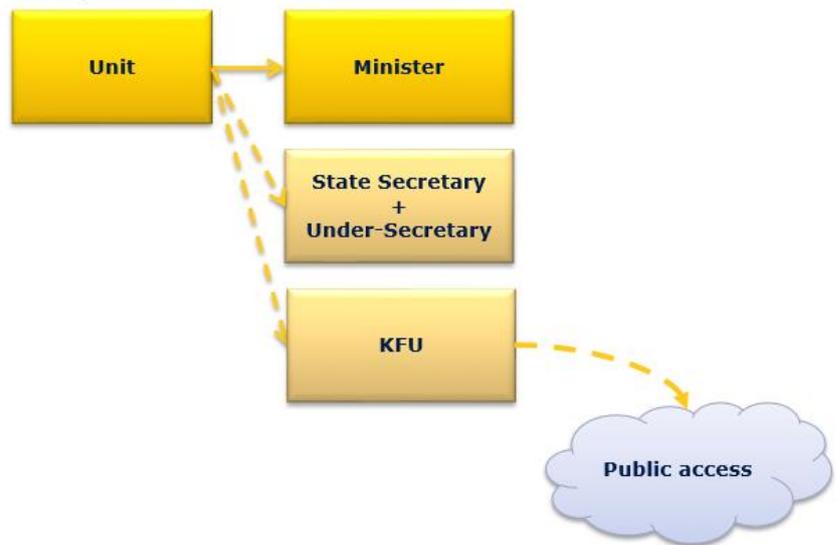
KFU will be available for consultation in the preparation of the programme documentation and for any clarifications regarding the approval process.

After the Minister’s approval, KFU will publish the programme document on Danida Transparency.

Step 1



Step 2



C. Presentation to the Council for Development Policy

Mandate and scope

According to the Act on International Development Cooperation, the mandate of the Council for Development Policy is to provide strategic advice to the Minister in relation to the preparation and implementation of Danish development cooperation as well as quality assure and recommend grant proposals for programmes above 39 million DKK to be approved by the Minister.

The rules of procedure for the Council for Development Policy are available [here](#) (in Danish only).

The Council for Development Policy will discuss and advice the Minister on:

- a) Country Policy papers for Denmark's relations with priority countries
- b) Country Programmes
- c) Grant proposals for programmes with a budget of more than 39 million DKK
- d) Multilateral Organisation Strategies
- e) Other strategies or policies within the scope of development cooperation
- f) Priorities in the annual evaluation programme.

Furthermore, the Council will be briefed on the Finance Act proposal, the humanitarian engagement, support through civil society organisations, support through the business instruments, engagements under the Peace and Stabilisations Fund, support to development research and development communication including information activities.

Composition

The Council consists of 11 members appointed by the Minister. The members are appointed for 3 years and they can be reappointed one time. The composition of the Council can be seen [here](#).

The Council is chaired by a Chairman (or Deputy Chair) both nominated by the Minister.

KFU is secretariat for the Council for Development Policy.

Working procedures

The Council will meet approximately 8 times per year.

The agenda will be finalised by the Secretariat after consultation with the Chairman. Departments can register agenda items by using the [registration facility on the Intranet](#). The internal deadline for confirming agenda items is 7 weeks before the meeting. For further information on specific deadlines please consult [the registration site on the Intranet](#).

The Council Secretariat will assist the Chairman in planning meetings with a view to ensuring a balance between the different agenda items. The dates and agendas are published on the [Danida's transparency website](#). The agenda for Council meetings will be made public 10 working days before the meeting.

The standard language for documents to the Council for Development Policy is English unless special circumstances suggest otherwise, e.g. presentations in Danish of documents aimed exclusively at a Danish audience. Strategies and programme documents must be drawn up in accordance with the relevant guidelines.

A standard appropriation cover note has to be prepared for each agenda item. The templates for the coverpage can be found [here](#) (under templates on the right side of the page).

The internal deadline for submitting documents to the Council is 13 working days prior to the meeting. The documents will be published on the Danida transparency website at least 10 working days prior to the Council meeting. For further information on specific deadlines please consult [the registration site on the Intranet](#). Documents and annexes, including the cover note, must be submitted in one file (Word format).

The meetings are normally conducted in Danish. At the respective agenda items, representations participate via videolink, while units in the Ministry participate by attending the meeting. The presenting unit or representation must be represented by its Head/Deputy Head. The Council will comment and ask clarifying questions; the representation/unit will answer, and the Council will deliberate, whereafter the Chairman summarises and concludes.

Regarding grants, the Chairman concludes whether the grant proposal is to be either:

- a) recommended for approval by the Minister, or
- b) rejected in order to be re-submitted later.

The Chairman will summarise the Council's key observations and main recommendations on each agenda item. Subsequently, the Council Secretariat will prepare minutes of the meeting based on written contributions from the responsible departments and representations. The minutes should reflect the Council's comments and the Chairman's summary. Minutes are approved by the Council. The approved minutes will be published on the Danida transparency website.

Timeline for the preparation of meetings in the Council for Development Policy

Deadline	Action	Responsible	Role of Secretariat
7 weeks prior to the meeting	Representations and departments confirm requests for agenda items	Representations and units in MFA	Set up the agenda which will be approved by the Chairman
6 weeks prior to the meeting	Representations and departments must send per email summary of appraisal to the Under-Secretary for Global Development and Cooperation with a copy to kfu@um.dk , Deputy Head of KFU and the Council Secretariat	Representations and departments in MFA	Ensure that all summaries of appraisal have been sent to the Under-Secretary in due time to proceed with presentation to the Council
15 working days prior to the meeting	Agenda is circulated to representations and departments	Secretariat	Distribute the agenda
13 working days prior to the meeting	Representations and departments submit grant proposals	Representations and units in MFA	Ensure that all grant proposals with all annexes are received
10 working days prior to the meeting	Agenda and documents are circulated electronically to the Council members	Secretariat	Send the agenda and the grant proposals per email
10 working days prior to the meeting	Agenda and grant proposals are published	Secretariat	Upload the agenda and the grant proposals on Danida Transparency
1 working day after the meeting	Input to the minutes is sent to the Council Secretariat	Representations and units responsible for preparing agenda items	Collect inputs and elaborate draft minutes including the Chairman's conclusions
After the meeting	Approval of minutes	The secretariat	To ensure that the minutes are approved by the Chair and the Council members. Minutes are published on Danida Transparency

D. Presentation to the Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee (URU)

As illustrated in the diagram on page 4, a number of issues including country policy papers and other strategies and policies are discussed in the Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee (URU) after the Council meeting. Please note that not all issues and documents presented to the Council for Development Policy are necessarily discussed in URU.

It is up to the responsible unit to contact the Secretariat of the Minister in order to put items on the agenda in URU. Agendas for meetings in URU as well as deadlines for forwarding documents to URU are agreed on in collaboration between the Secretariat of the Minister and the Secretariat of URU. Documents which are to be sent to URU are forwarded through the Secretariat for the Corporate Management (dir.sek.).

Please note that even though documents were originally in English, all documents to URU must be presented in Danish, either through a full translation of the English version or, if the document is long, a Danish language cover of max. 5-8 pages.