



**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
OF DENMARK**  
*Danida*

# **Guidelines for approval of grant appropriations, strategies and policies**

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark  
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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.

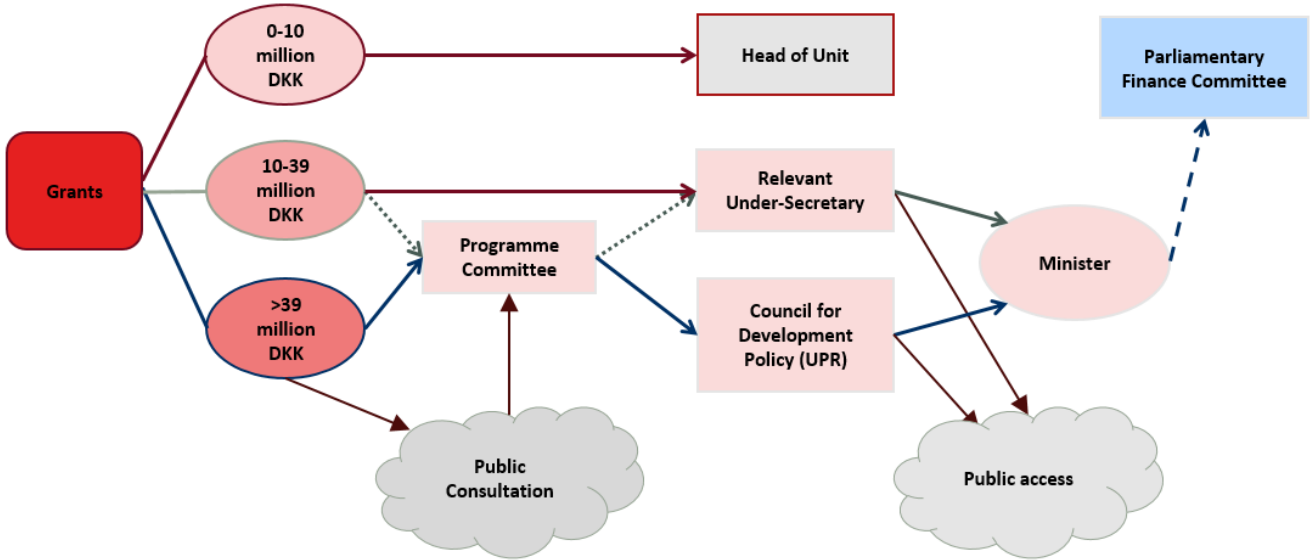
All documents submitted to the Programme Committee and the Council for Development Policy will be uploaded and published on [Danida Transparency](#). Exemption from the obligation to publicise is only applicable in extraordinary cases and must be authorised by the Under-Secretary for Development Policy.

It is the responsibility of the head of the submitting mission or unit to ensure that concept notes, draft strategies or draft policies are quality assured prior to submission.

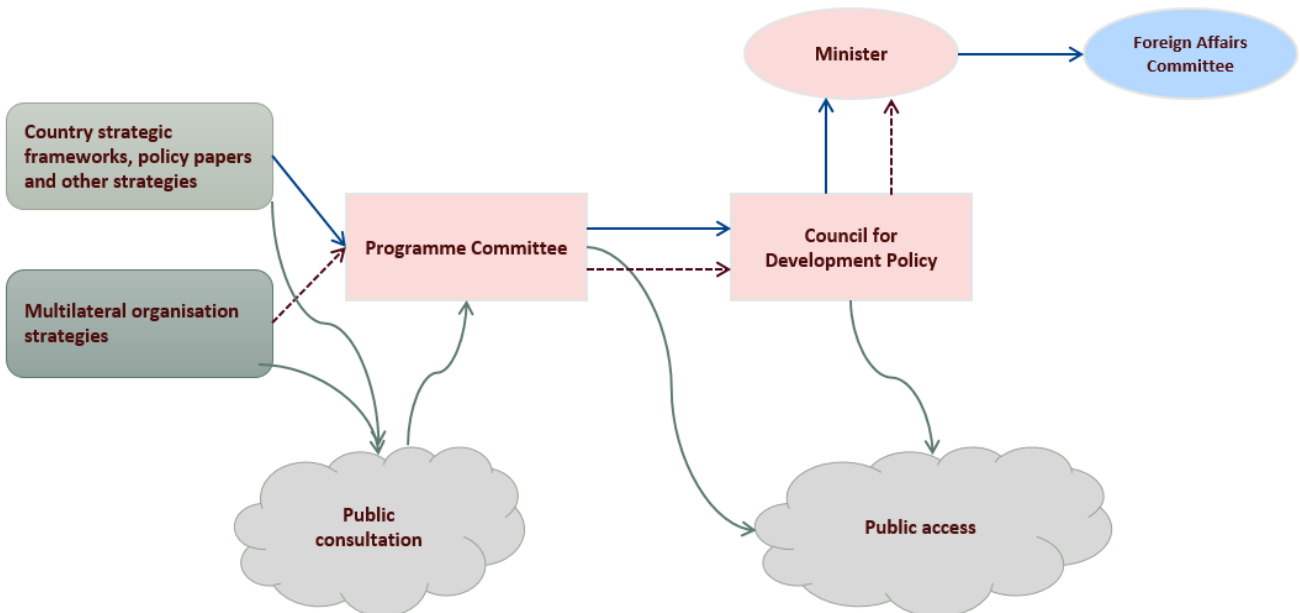
In order to place items on the agenda of the Programme Committee and the Council for Development Policy, [the registration facility on UMBrella](#) must be used.

Overview of procedures for presentation and approval of grants, concept notes, draft strategies or draft policies through the Programme Committee and the Council for Development Policy

**Grants:**



**Strategies and policies:**



## **A. Presentation to the Programme Committee**

### **Mandate and scope**

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

Issues which must be presented to the Programme Committee are:

- a) Draft strategic frameworks for Denmark's overall engagement in priority countries.
- b) Draft organisation strategies for cooperation with multilateral organisations.
- c) Concept notes for bilateral and earmarked 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.
- d) 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 the Under-Secretary - be presented to the Programme Committee.
- e) Follow-up to evaluations.

### **Composition**

The Programme Committee is chaired by the Under-Secretary for Development Policy. Permanent members are the following units: Africa, Policy and Development (APD); Evaluation, Learning and Quality (ELK); Financial Management and Support in relation to Development Cooperation (FRU); Green Diplomacy and Climate (GDK); Humanitarian Action, Civil Society and Engagement (HCE); Migration, Stabilisation and Fragility (MNS) and Multilateral Cooperation Policy (MUS).

ELK is the secretariat of the Programme Committee.

Regional departments and units involved with global policy, security, trade and communication as well as multilateral and bilateral missions (through video conferences) are welcome to participate in the Programme Committee meetings. Representatives from other Danish ministries and authorities can participate if relevant e.g. in presentations of cross ministerial programmes.

The presenting unit/mission as well as other participating units/missions must be represented by their Heads/Deputy Heads. Desk officers may participate together with their Head/Deputy Head.

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

### **Working procedures**

The Programme Committee meets on a regular basis.

Documents for the meetings are published on [Danida Transparency](#).

Each meeting has a maximum of three 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 ELK (elk@um.dk) at the latest 17 working days prior to the meeting. It is the responsibility of the head of the submitting unit or mission to ensure that documentation has been subject to quality assurance prior to submission to ELK. For more information on meeting dates and specific deadlines, please consult [the registration site on UMBrella](#).

### **Preparation and submission of documentation to the Committee**

The deadline for conforming agenda items is 7 weeks prior to the meeting.

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.

A standard cover note has to be prepared for each concept note, draft strategy or draft policy. The templates for the cover notes can be found [here](#) (under templates on the right side of the page). Please note that the minimum font that can be used for the text is 10.

The concept note, draft strategy or 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.

In parallel with the submission of documents to ELK, the relevant unit/mission will submit three strategic questions aimed at framing the discussion in the Committee. ELK may revert to the presenting units with a view to defining the relevant questions.

### **Preparation of written comments to the Committee**

Permanent members of the Programme Committee must prepare their comments in writing in advance of the meeting, preferably in bullet form of max one page. Written comments should be sent to the secretariat in ELK four working days prior to the meeting. The secretariat will then

distribute the written comments as well as responses from the public consultation three working days before the meeting.

### **The Programme Committee meeting**

The Secretariat distributes invitations and documents (cover notes, concept notes, draft strategies or draft policies) at the same time as the documents are published on Danida Transparency, i.e. 16 working days prior to the meeting.

Missions wishing to participate through video link must announce this by e-mail to ELK with information on the names of participants. Depending on the participants the meeting will be conducted in either Danish or English. The mission(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, written 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.

### **Timeline for preparation of meetings in the Programme Committee**

<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Role of Secretariat</b>
7 weeks prior to the meeting	Mission and units confirm requests for agenda items	Missions and units in MFA	
17 working days prior to the meeting	Missions and units submit quality assured concept notes, draft strategies or draft policies and strategic questions	Missions and units in MFA	Ensure that all concept notes, draft strategies or draft policies are received
16 working days prior to the meeting	Concept notes, draft strategies or draft policies will be published for public consultation and sent to members of the Programme Committee.	Programme Committee Secretariat	Upload on Danida Transparency website and notify subscribers. Send to members of the Programme Committee
6 working days prior to the meeting	Public consultation ends		
3 working days prior to the meeting	Responses from public consultation as well as written comments from the relevant missions/units are distributed to the	Programme Committee Secretariat	To distribute the responses from public consultation as well as written comments to the members of the Programme Committee

Deadline	Action	Responsible	Role of Secretariat
	members of the Programme Committee and units/missions involved in development cooperation		
After the Programme Committee meeting	Chairman's summary of the meeting is drawn up and published	Programme Committee Secretariat/ELK	Distribute summary

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

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

Grants with a budget between DKK 10 and 39 million are to be approved by the Minister after endorsement by the Under-Secretary for Development Policy.

The Head of Unit is responsible for the content and quality assurance of the grant proposal.

Units and missions are requested - in consultation with the relevant Under-Secretary – to 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. For further information see section A on the Programme Committee

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

### **Finalisation of documentation before grant approval**

The programme documentation should include all standard annexes. For further information, please refer to [AMG](#). Furthermore, a special appropriation cover note must be used as a cover to the programme documentation. Template for the appropriation cover note can be found on [AMG](#) (under Formulation, Quality Assurance and Approval on the right hand side of the page). Please note that the minimum font that can be used for the text is 10.

### **Approval of grant proposals**

For approval of grant proposals there are two steps:

- 1) the Under-Secretary's endorsement
- 2) the Minister's approval.

While the unit is responsible for obtaining the Under-Secretary's endorsement, ELK will present the grant for the Minister's final approval.



## **The Under-Secretary's endorsement**

The documentation required for this step is:

- a) checklist for approval (can be found on [AMG](#) (under templates on the right side).
- b) the appropriation cover note
- c) programme or project documentation incl. mandatory standard annexes (annex 1-8)
- d) signed Quality Assurance Checklist for appraisal of programmes and projects (annex 9)

The approval flow in F2 should be:

1. Head of unit
2. ELK ("Modtagelse i Bevillingssekretariatet")
3. Under-Secretary

A special approval flow is available in F2 ("Bevillingsgodkendelse u. 39")

## **The Minister's approval**

ELK is responsible for the presentation of the grant for the Minister's final approval.

After the Minister's approval, ELK will inform the unit and publish the programme document on Danida Transparency.

## **ELK's role**

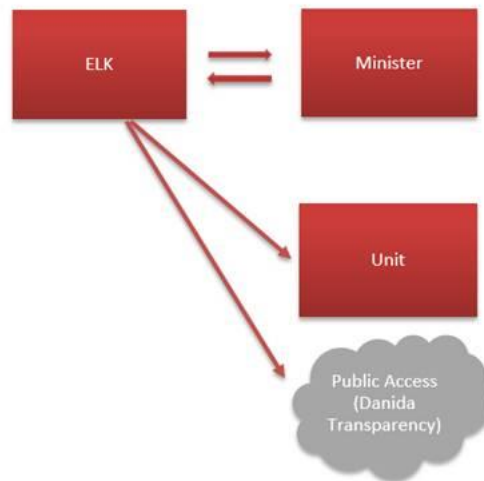
ELK will not quality assure the grant proposals. ELK will check that mandatory documents are attached and whether the proper quality assurance process has been followed.

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

### 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) Strategic Frameworks for Denmark's overall engagement in priority countries
- b) Grant proposals for programmes with a budget of more than 39 million DKK
- c) Multilateral Organisation Strategies
- d) Other strategies or policies within the scope of development cooperation
- e) 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 re-appointed once. The composition of the Council can be seen [here](#).

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

ELK is the secretariat of 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 UMBrella](#). 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 UMBrella](#).

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 [Danida Transparency](#). 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. Strategies and programme documents must be drawn up in accordance with the relevant guidelines.

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, missions participate via videolink. The presenting unit or mission must be represented by its Head/Deputy Head. The Council will comment and ask clarifying questions; the mission/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 missions. 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	Missions and departments confirm requests for agenda items	Missions and units in MFA	Set up the agenda which will be approved by the Chairman
15 working days prior to the meeting	Agenda is circulated to missions and departments	Secretariat	Distribute the agenda
13 working days prior to the meeting	Missions and departments submit grant proposals	Missions 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	Missions 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 Chairman 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, country strategies and other relevant strategies and policies are presented to the Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee (URU) after the Council meeting. Other issues and documents presented to the Council for Development Policy are normally not discussed in URU.

It is up to the responsible unit to contact the Minister's Secretariat 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 between the Secretariat of the Minister and the Secretariat of URU. Documents which are to be sent to URU are forwarded through the Ministers' and Executive Secretariat (MLS.).

All documents to URU should be presented in Danish through a full translation of the English version e.g. of the Country Strategic Framework. In exceptional circumstances, the document can be presented with a Danish language cover of max. 5-8 pages. This should, however, be agreed with the URU secretariat.