

# Guide to Safeguard

## VIA University College



**Target group:**

**Employees from VIA visiting international partners**

Employees from VIA on international stays

**The purpose** of this guide to safeguard is to secure that exchange programmes between international partners and VIA can be successfully accomplished for the participants.

Accordingly VIA wishes to support each individual employee in accomplishing the stay abroad as planned. In connection with exchange programmes situations may occur that can interfere or even prevent the completion of the stay.

With this guide to safeguard VIA wishes to inform all employees about the possibilities for support and help should something unexpected occur. The guide to safeguard is therefore meant as an information tool on how to prevent/act should you end up in unforeseen situations or crises.

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## Action prior to the stay abroad

### Medical examination, risks of disease and vaccinations

It is always a good idea to find information on endemic/infectious diseases in an area and if there is a risk of an endemic or pandemic disease. Read in particular about [SARS](#), [Bird flu](#) and [Swine influenza](#) or [www.cdc.gov/swineflu/](http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/). You are recommended to stay updated via the websites: [www.pandemicflu.gov/](http://www.pandemicflu.gov/) and [www.who.int/en/](http://www.who.int/en/) as well [Statens Serums Institut](#) in Copenhagen, Denmark. Study the health requirements in connection with entry to a specific country as well as requirements regarding vaccinations. It is always useful to contact your own

general practitioner well in advance of the trip. You can also contact Statens Serum Institut on telephone no. +45 32 68 32 68 or visit [www.netdoctor.co.uk](http://www.netdoctor.co.uk) for further information. Finally we recommend that you read the [travel guidance](#) (In Danish: rejsevejledninger) compiled by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the relevant country (in Danish) or check [other countries travel guidances](#) as well as take advice and directions from the local authorities.

### Conditions related to insurance

It has been decided to make use of the possibility of taking out shared travel insurance for employees on business trips abroad.

Read more about travel insurance, etc., as regards stays abroad on the Intranet under Purchasing (Indkøb):

<https://intranet.viauc.dk/indkoebold/Lists/Leverandriste/DispForm.aspx?ID=145>

Here information is available (in Danish) on all relevant matters regarding insurances for stays abroad.

### Insight into special cultural and political relations in the host country

Staying in other countries for a longer period of time can be a very different experience compared to what you are used to. It may be difficult to go without the familiar and safe network at home. When away you make your own decisions based on the many impressions, expectations and influences you are exposed to. Thus it is important prior to departure to investigate what characterizes the daily social conventions, political, religious and social conditions in the host country that could influence your impression. It can be everything from ordinary polite phrases to dress code and how to interact with people of different status and age. Being prepared on what to expect and on how to behave will provide you with a good starting point and give you a foothold in the new environment.

### Passport, visa, residence permits

When to bring your passport?

- **When you travel in the North (Norway, Sweden, Finland and Iceland)**  
As a Danish citizen you are not required to bring your passport when travelling to other countries in the North. However, you shall be able to identify yourself and are thus required to bring another form of identification. You may e.g. be required to document who you are when staying at hotels etc.
- **When you travel outside the North**  
As a Danish citizen you shall bring your passport when you travel to countries outside the North.

This also applies when travelling to countries outside the North that constitute part of the Schengen Agreement. Denmark joining the Schengen Agreement does not change the rules on when you must bring your passport when you travel.

- **EU or Nordic citizens living in Denmark (non-Danish citizens)**  
If you are not a Danish citizen but an EU citizen or a Nordic citizen and living in Denmark, you shall bring your passport or other legitimate travel identification when you travel to one of the other Schengen countries.

Nordic citizens living in Denmark are not required to bring their passport when they travel to the other Nordic countries. However, it is required to bring another form of identification (e.g. driver's license).

- **Third country citizens**

If you are a foreigner (not EU, EEC or Nordic citizen) with a valid residence permit for Denmark, you can travel to and stay visa-free in one or more of the other Schengen countries for a total of three months within a period of six months.

When travelling to the other Schengen countries, you shall bring a valid passport as well as valid residence permit in the form of a residence card or a residence sticker in the passport. These rules also apply to children under the age of 18.

### **Residence cards and stickers**

One of the following Danish residence cards or residence stickers applies to visa-free entry into a Schengen country:

- Residence cards indicating the letter A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, J, K or L
- Pink/white residence stickers indicating the letter B, C, D, E, F, H or S.

### **Particular information on visa for other countries**

The Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs has compiled an outline of other countries' rules on visa for Danish citizens. The outline is in Danish, but it provides links to important websites in English.

**Follow the link, use the drop down menu in the right side and choose country:**

<http://um.dk/da/rejse-og-ophold/rejse-til-udlandet/pas-og-visum/>

## **Action during the stay abroad**

### **Medical problems and suddenly occurred risks of disease**

On arrival you should get familiar with how the hospital service and visits at a general practitioner works so you will know what to do should you find yourself in a situation where medical assistance is needed. Before leaving Denmark you can visit a Danish pharmacy and receive guidance on how to prevent diseases and what medicine you are advised to bring with you. If you need medical treatment abroad it is important that you keep all receipts for later reimbursement. In connection with this you should contact your insurance company to ensure the proper procedure for reimbursement of your expenses.

In case of epidemics, pandemics or outbreaks of serious diseases in the country you are visiting you are advised to keep yourself updated via [Statens Serum Institut](#) and [WHO's news site](#).

### **Theft and robbery**

It is an unpleasant experience to discover that you have been robbed. Not only is it annoying to have lost something which may be of great importance to you, but theft is usually also something settled only between you and your insurance company. Any theft should be reported to the local police authorities. In most cases the insurance company will require documentation for the notification to the police. Therefore you should always make sure to receive a copy of the police report to clarify questions related to insurance.

If you experience a robbery it may have serious and psychological consequences. It can be a very intense experience when others deliberately and maybe even violently wants to take your possessions. It is important that you try to act calm in the situation (however difficult that may be). To begin with you should give what the robber asks for – if possible try to register how the robber talks, acts and other noticable characteristics - and when it is all over contact the police.

Furthermore you should be aware that an experience such as a robbery can cause a serious psychological crisis. Therefore you should contact your insurance company, closest family and

your employer with the aim of getting in contact with a psychologist or the like with whom you can talk about the incident and get useful tools to get over the traumatic experience.

### **Prevention of assaults**

Assaults often happen when people are intoxicated or agitated. It is important to keep one's composure and not lose one's temper. If possible pull away from the situation. If you are exposed to a sex crime you should resist and scream.

The following precautions may help to get out of a possible violent situation:

- Do not show you are afraid
- Do not lose your temper
- Use a kind but assertive voice
- Apologise if you have been part of the episode
- Avoid further discussion
- Do not answer back
- If possible leave the spot quietly
- If others are present let them in on what is happening
- If all fails then run to safety

Always remember to respect local cultures and customs in the country you are visiting.

As soon as you can get away you must seek help with the closest surroundings and the police. It is best to contact the police straight away. Furthermore you should contact your embassy/consulate in order to get help with reporting the assault and get informed about your rights. You should also contact your host or contact person in the host country and inform your employer. Each of them will be able to support you in finding the proper help to overcome the psychological problems that may appear after an assault.

In connection with rape, it is important to go to the nearest hospital to be examined. Do not wash before going to the hospital even though that may be what you want to do the most. Remember that it is not a shame and not something you need to hide. It is not your fault and it helps to talk about it. The hospital or rape centre can support you with further information.

### **Traffic accidents and other accidents resulting in physical and/or psychological damages**

When being abroad there is always a risk of getting involved in a traffic accident or an accident at the host facility causing bodily injuries on oneself or others. Depending on the nature and extent of the accident there will be different plans of action. The insurance company must be involved in order for you to know the possibilities for help which you are able to receive in the form of e.g. medical treatment, admission to hospitals, emergency relief, home transportation and any legal proceedings.

It is important that you contact your closest family at home and the insurance company in order for them to support you in dealing with the incident. In most cases it will be possible to receive emergency relief and help to the subsequent arrangements that needs to be taken.

### **Death in the closest family**

If a death occurs in your closest family in connection with a stay abroad, you may in some cases receive help from your insurance company for the home transportation etc.

### **Unfortunate situations caused by the employee (e.g. arrest, inflict damage on others)**

#### *Arrest*

Should you be arrested in connection with e.g. theft, an accident, violence, vandalism, demonstration ask permission to contact the local embassy/consulate as well as your host institution. Remember to 'behave properly' as this makes it easier to receive help. The police and the judicial system may have another practice than that of Denmark and the severest penalty may be more strict. An arrest may also include expulsion from the country which implies that besides not being able to complete your stay you may not be able to travel into the country for a definite period.

The degree of help which you can expect to receive will depend on the specific situation and the circumstances in your host country. However the Danish authorities will always do their utmost to come to your rescue as a Danish citizen assisting you in your situation and your communication with the authorities. Denmark has e.g. exchange agreements with many countries – but there are also countries where it can be extremely difficult to do anything from Denmark (for the authorities as well as your family). However when discharged you can contact the embassy, employer and your family in order for you to be prepared in the best possible way for any personal crisis that may arise and to know your legal status and rights.

### **War or situations similar to war**

Unfortunately there are many places in the world that are unstable due to war or political disputes which makes it difficult or impossible for foreigners to live there. When going abroad you should always look into the situation in the country you are visiting. The Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs can assist you with information concerning assessments of risks related to staying in specific countries. Visit the website <http://um.dk/da/rejse-og-ophold/rejse-til-udlandet/> for information on risk countries as well as useful information on e.g. rules on passports, visa, residence permits and also see the recommendations on vaccinations (in Danish).

If war or situations similar to war should break out (including terror activity) you must contact the local Danish embassy as soon as possible and state where you are and ask for advice on how you can secure yourself in the best possible manner and how – if necessary – you can get out of the country.

Furthermore you should contact your closest family in Denmark in order for them to know where and how you are. Remember that a critical situation may appear quite different and dangerous when viewed from the outside and it is therefore always important that your closest family are well-informed about the situation in the country where you are staying.

### **Natural disasters**

Natural disasters are usually a sudden arisen phenomena e.g. volcanic eruptions, earth quakes, hurricanes, flooding, tsunamis and avalanches. It is important that you familiarise yourself with the risk of the above-mentioned disasters prior to your trip. In case these risks are probable you should on arrival investigate what is available of emergency plans and other arrangements in case of a natural disaster. It may be a matter of knowing where to find shelters against hurricanes or how to act if you feel tremors from an earthquake. In all it is important that you talk to the locals about risks and what to do if something should happen. Keep you closest family updated on the situation. Furthermore you are recommended to stay updated via the website of the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs on [natural disasters](#) (in Danish - click 'Fold alle afsnit ud' in the bottom of the page to find information in English) or consult [WHO's website](#).

## **Action after the stay abroad**

### **Evaluation of the stay abroad**

If you have experienced special incidents it is important that you describe them in the evaluation and subsequently talk them over with your employer. It is important to follow up on any unsolved problems relating to your personal experiences throughout the entire process from your decision to go abroad, the preparation, the accomplishment and the revision of your stay abroad.

### **Responsibilities of the employee**

- Read this guide to safeguard carefully and make the necessary decisions based on what you read. A thorough preparation is often a guarantee to a successful stay abroad.
- Make sure you have appropriate insurance coverage both in regards to disease and liability.
- While on make sure to explore your possibilities for help and support if anything unexpected should occur. A rapid response minimizes problems considerably.
- Show respect for local cultures and traditions – without necessarily having to participate actively.
- Accept the responsibility of own decisions and actions.
- Familiarize yourself thoroughly with your possibilities for help in regards to legal as well as medical matters.

### **Responsibilities of VIA/the host**

- VIA and the host shall ensure that you have the requisite information about your travel and your stay abroad.
- VIA and the host have entered a special agreement about your stay which states the more definite guidelines for the cooperation.
- VIA will ensure that you have adequate insurance coverage during your stay.

### **Important telephone numbers and contact addresses**

- [VIA University College](#)
- [Faculty of Technology and Business](#)
- [School of Education and Social Sciences](#)
- [Faculty of Health Sciences](#)
- [Faculty of Design Animation Media and Business](#)

***HAVE A GREAT STAY!!!***