

THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION

National report of Denmark

by

The Ministry of Education

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## Chapter 1

Message of the Minister for Education and Minister for Nordic Cooperation Mr. Bertel Haarder

### *Challenges in Inclusive Education*

Inclusion and democracy are of one piece. Inclusion in special needs education is not only a sign of acceptance of differences or equality, but also a principle for the educational system within a democratic society. All children have the right to receive education - and the right to receive qualified education.

Inclusion is often presented as a principle for ensuring children with special needs the same education in the same settings as other children. Children, however, have different needs and therefore also a need for differentiated education.

Denmark has followed this principle since 1994 Salamanca Statements, and Danish legislation for primary and lower secondary education has underlined the obligations for schools to offer differentiated education according to the need of children.

However, the right of parents to choose the best quality for their children is essential in a modern society. Parents are often well informed about the possibilities within the school system, and they care about the well being of their child, both socially and academically. This is perhaps the reason why we in recent years have seen an increase in the number of parents demanding special needs education for their children in specialised environments. We must to a certain extent accept this development. The challenge is now how to improve the general educational system in order to offer a proper and qualified education to all children. Schools are not only a place to develop socially and personally. It is a place for progression and a place for learning. Children with special needs have the same right as all other children to be challenged and to achieve new competences.

This is why inclusive education must focus more on effectiveness and quality in differentiated education and not just on the organisation of special needs education. We need new research, guidelines and indicators for quality in differentiated education in order to give teachers and schools better educational tools.

## Chapter 2

### Primary and Lower Secondary Education

#### 1.1. Major reforms and innovations introduced in the education system, in particular concerning:

##### 1.1. a) the organisation, structure and management of the education system

#### **Folkeskolen**

The public municipal school – the so-called Folkeskole – is a comprehensive school covering both primary and lower secondary education. It caters for the 6-16/17-year-olds. Apart from the compulsory forms the pre-school year to 9, the Folkeskole an optional 11th year (10<sup>th</sup> grade).

“The Folkeskole” constitutes the free, public school system as well as the individual municipal schools, that is to say, the places where the teaching takes place. On the national level, the Danish Folkeskole is regulated by the Folkeskole Act, which provides the overall framework for the activities of the schools.

By means of this Act and the Executive Orders it contains, all municipal primary and lower secondary schools share a common aim, standard requirements concerning the subjects that are to be taught at the specific form levels, standard regulations concerning the so-called Common Objectives for the teaching in the individual subjects, as well as standard regulations concerning the leadership and organisation of the school system. However, it is the responsibility of the individual municipal councils to determine, within the framework established by law, how the municipality's schools are to be organised in practice. The municipal councils themselves determine the municipal level of service for the Folkeskole within this overriding framework and can set their own additional objectives for the schools.

Thus, the Danish Folkeskole is subject to a range of common regulations, and a child who changes schools will, on the whole, find a school routine in the new school familiar to the one he or she has previously attended. On the other hand, there is the freedom to allow for each school to incorporate their own local characteristics.

The individual municipal councils must prepare an annual quality report. The quality report must describe the municipality's school system, the schools' academic level, the measures the municipal council has taken in order to evaluate the academic level, and the steps the municipal council has taken in response to the previous quality report.

### **The Folkeskole in Figures**

- 98 municipalities
- 1,605 municipal schools
- 595,573 students
- 28,591 classes
- The average number of students per class is 19.6
- The teacher/student ratio is 1:10.7
- 50,972 teachers, of which 67 % are women and 47 % are below 45 years
- 10,491 students receive extensive special educational assistance (special schools and special classes)
- 59,869 bilingual students.

The Folkeskole is an undivided (comprehensive) school, where the formation of classes takes its point of departure in the age of the student - and not in the subject-specific proficiency of the student.

The students are divided into classes with an average of approximately 20 students per class. The number of students in a class must not exceed 28. Under certain seldom circumstances, a municipality can though give dispensation for a class to have up to 30 students. The majority of all classes in the country's municipal primary and lower secondary schools have an average of 20 or fewer students.

The Danish Folkeskole is not an examination-oriented school. The main rule is therefore that a student attends a class with students of the same age. In section 12, the Folkeskole Act allows for the possibility – with the consent of the child's parents – for a student to repeat a school year, i.e. if the student has

been away for a longer period of time or other reasons make this relevant. Under extremely special circumstances, a student may also pass over a form level.

In order to give all students in the Folkeskole the best possibilities to an all-round development and learn as much as possible, the Folkeskole builds on the principle of differentiated teaching. The teaching is organised in such a way that it both strengthens and develops the individual student's interests, qualifications and needs and so that it contains common experiences and situations providing them with experience which prepare them for cooperation on the performance of tasks. The Act on the Folkeskole provides a further possibility to sustain the principle that all students should be given adequate challenges, as the teaching can take place in a team for part of the time in order to make it possible to take the point of departure in the individual student's prerequisites and current level of development. In the recent changes in the legislation (2003) possibilities for organising the learning in teams of different sizes and according to learning abilities and styles has been strengthened.

#### *Students with special needs*

If the student's educational needs can not be fulfilled within differentiated teaching and teams the student shall be given special education or special educational support. Special education can be organised in different ways. In most cases, the student remains in a mainstream school class and receives special education in one or more subjects as a supplement to the general teaching. A student may receive special education that substitutes the student's participation in the normal education in one or more subjects. A student may alternatively be taught in a special class either within a mainstream school or within a special school. And finally a combination is possible in which the student is a member of either a mainstream school class or a special class, but receives education in both types of classes. Special classes exist for students with intellectual disabilities, dyslexia, visual handicap, hearing problems, and for students with a physical handicap. In 2007, approximately 3, 8 % of children receive this sort of special education in the public sector. In the private schools the percentage is 0, 63.

The provisions of the Folkeskole Act (regarding aims, curricula, evaluations, tests, school leaving exams etc.) apply to all students. Accordingly, students with special needs are, in principle, met with the same expectations as any other student. Special needs education includes differential teaching, counselling, technical aid and personal assistance.

#### *Special education appeals board*

The complaints procedure of special education is as follows: The decision can be complained against the local authority. This procedure is made in cases of special assistance in the mainstream, public school (Folkeskole). The decision, concerning children with severe physical and/or intellectual special needs, can be complained against an impartial complaints board, appointed by the Ministry of Education. This access to complain has been extended as part of the reform of the local authorities/ municipal reform. Recent estimation from fall 2007 shows, that 313 complaints had been received at the complaints board - all concerning public schools. It should be noted that it is the experience of the complaints board, that a considerable amount of the incoming complaints are solved on the basis of settlement between parents and the municipality.

*Bilingual students*

Bilingual children in primary and lower secondary schools (from preschool to 10th grade) are offered training in 'Danish as a second language' if they have a need of language support based on an individual assessment. The number of lessons and duration is determined in accordance with the need of the individual child.

Furthermore, a limited number of bilingual children in primary and lower secondary schools are offered mother-tongue tuition. In accordance with EU-directive 77/486 Denmark is obliged to offer mother tongue teaching to students coming from EU/EEA countries, as well as from Faroe Islands and Greenland and not to other bilingual children. The aim of this tuition is that the children of migrant workers must maintain their mother tongue during their temporary stay in Denmark. Other bilingual children are generally not in a similar situation. However, the municipalities may offer tuition in the mother tongue. The local authorities pay for the expenses for mother-tongue tuition for bilingual children from non-Western countries.

It is the position of the Danish Government to encourage the municipalities to employ bilingual teachers in the Folkeskole. That will make it possible to utilise the mother tongue of the students when teaching different subject of the curriculum with the dual aim that the students learn Danish and at the same time the content of the subject at hand. In this way, the mother tongue is used as a short cut to learning Danish. When teaching the bilingual teacher can give explanations or expand on the content of the subject at hand, utilising the mother tongue to enable the student to fully benefit from the education.

The Ministry of Education has published guidelines in how to organize the teaching in Danish as a second language and make use of the mother tongue in the tuition in March 2007.

**1.1. b) the aims and purposes of each education at each level****The Objectives of the Primary and Lower Secondary School**

”§ 1. The Primary and Lower Secondary School shall - in cooperation with the parents - provide the students with knowledge and skills that prepare them for further education, stimulate their urge to learn, make them familiar with Danish culture and history, give them an understanding of other countries and cultures, contribute to their understanding of man's interaction with nature, and nurse the all-round personal development of the individual student.

Section 2. The Primary and Lower Secondary School shall develop working methods and create possibilities for experience, absorption, and an urge to learn, so that the students develop awareness, imagination and confidence in their own possibilities, and a background for forming independent judgments and for taking personal action

Section 3. The school shall prepare the students for active participation, joint responsibility, and rights and duties in a society based on freedom and democracy. The teaching of the school and its daily life shall therefore build on intellectual freedom, equality and democracy.”

*Common Objectives*

The Folkeskole Act gives the Minister the authority to establish the regulations and aims regarding education and regarding the central knowledge and skill areas (end objectives) in subjects and compulsory topics. Moreover, the Minister for Education determines the regulations and objectives for specific form levels (attainment objectives) for the specific subjects/topics. The end and attainment objectives establish a national objective for the direction and goals of the teaching, ensuring that students acquire the knowledge and skills in the subject/topic at, respectively, the end of their programme of education and at the conclusion of specific form levels. A description of each subject is provided in the subject's folder under the title "Common Objectives" at <http://www.faellesmaal.uvm.dk/>.

Common Objectives covers the two most important sets of academic texts regarding the schools' subjects and topics.

- The binding national objectives in the form of the subject aims, central knowledge and skill areas (end objectives) and attainment objectives.
- Guidelines for curricula and descriptions of the educational development designed for reaching the attainment and end objectives. Once the local curricula and descriptions receive final approval from the municipal council, they also become binding – and thereby common – for the individual schools.

**1.1. c) curricular policies, educational content and teaching and learning strategies:**

The Ministry of Education lays down the overall objectives of and framework for primary and lower secondary schools. The local council is responsible for supervising and administrating local authority primary and lower secondary schools. The individual school and the local council decide how to meet the overall objectives and framework laid down by the Ministry. Within the given framework, individual schools are responsible for the quality of the teaching and determine its organisation and planning.

Individual local councils are ultimately responsible for teaching quality and ensuring that children and young people learn what they should. Thus, the local council is responsible for ensuring that local authority schools meet the objectives of and framework for the schools' work laid down by the local council. The duty of supervision also implies that the local council must ensure that all school-aged children in the local authority are admitted to a local authority primary and lower secondary school or otherwise fulfil the compulsory education obligation. The local council must prepare an annual quality report describing the local authority's schools, the teaching standard, the educational development, etc.

The task of the Council for Evaluation and Quality Development in Primary and Lower Secondary Education is to follow and assess as well as advise the Minister for Education about the teaching standard and educational development in primary and lower secondary schools as well as how the students benefit from the teaching offered. Another of the Council's tasks is to assess the schools' ability to help break the vicious circle of deprivation among students and how well schools are integrating students on non-Danish ethnicity. To support the Council's work, a Government agency for evaluation and quality development of primary and lower secondary education has been set up under the Minister for Education.

**1.1. d) the legal framework of education (in particular, new legal provisions)**

See <http://us.uvm.dk/folkeskolen/loveogregler/index.htm?menuid=100815>

### **1.1. e) Objectives and principal characteristics of current and forthcoming reforms**

#### *The Documentation Project*

In January 2008, the Ministry of Education in corporation with other ministries and the organisation for local Governments in Denmark and the organisation for the Danish Regions initiates the so-called documentation project. The project is a part of the agreement about the economy of municipalities from 2006. Here it is stated that the project has as its the aim the establishment of clear and covering documentation objectives and the development of new measuring methods for output, effect and user-satisfaction. The documentation project is a part of the Government general quality reform for the public sector, which among other things focuses on evaluation and effect measurements within the public sector.

The project's objective is to deliver concrete recommendations to the improvement and simplification of the forthcoming documentation of the municipalities' activities within the area of the Folkeskole. The recommendations should take the following three considerations into account: The data collection must be 1) one way to avoid parallel systems, 2) it must cover the state's necessary managerial needs and at the same time be relevant on a local level, and 3) the administrative costs of the collection of data must be as low as possible.

Based on analysis of the existing data and on the data needs from both a national and a local perspective, the project should lead to a strategy for implementation of new principles and guidelines for documentation and effect measurements within the Folkeskole.

#### *De-bureaucratisation*

In January 2008, the Ministry of Education appointed a committee for de-bureaucratisation of the Folkeskole. The committee's task was to evaluate and recommend various suggestions of simplification and reduction of the regulations within the area of schooling. The committee's work has to be grounded within a holistic view of the schools' situation. Therefore, the committee must look at the possibilities of simplifying or reducing the administrative demands at both the national and the local level. Furthermore, the committee must examine the administrative tasks at the managerial level and in connection to the teaching within the Folkeskole.

#### *Students with special needs*

It is stated in the Municipality agreement in 2008 between the organisation for local Governments in Denmark and the Government that an analysis of the special needs area is to be initiated. This analysis must include the content, scope and resources within this area. The intention is to reduce the increase in special needs education. This analysis is not yet initiated. This analysis is not yet initiated.

### **1.2. Main policies, achievements and lessons learned especially as regards:**

#### **1.2. a) access to education (focusing on actions being taken to reach children, youth and adults that are currently excluded)**

##### **Primary and Lower Secondary School**

According to the Act of the Folkeskole, all students regardless of any disabilities or special needs have the same right to education in Denmark. Students with special needs to the extend that these needs

cannot be met within the ordinary Folkeskole are offered an education in a special need class or at a school specialising in their needs. These schools have all forms for educational differentiation, but still have the same objectives and framework as the general Folkeskole, just as the students hold the same rights to education.

### *Achievements*

#### The free choice of school

Parents, including parents to children with special needs, have the right to get their child accepted in a Folkeskole of their choice within the municipality of their residence or within other municipalities. This includes schools specialising in special need education within the municipality of residence or within other municipalities. The free choice of school is, however, limited in the sense that there must be a relevant special need offered in the case of children with special needs. Furthermore, the free choice of school is limited in the sense that there must be capacity to accommodate the student at the chosen school.

#### Compulsory final examinations for all

Act No. 313 of 19 April 2006 introduced compulsory final examinations at the end of 9<sup>th</sup> form in the Folkeskole. The change was made to ensure that all young people have a good academic foundation when they leave the Folkeskole. Thereby, they will also have the best basis for completing a secondary education or a youth education.

The introduction of compulsory final examinations means that all students in the Folkeskole have to take seven examinations by the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> form.

A school cannot obtain a general exemption from the participation in the final examinations for all students at the school. However, in special situations the principal can decide to exempt a student from taking one or more of the examinations. This concerns students for whom taking the examination is found inappropriate due to severe disabilities or insufficient knowledge of the Danish language. The decision presupposes that it has been considered whether the student can take the examination under special conditions. The decision is further made on the basis of an educational and psychological evaluation of the student and in consultation with the parents.

#### National tests

As a part of the process of evaluating the students' learning outcomes, a range of obligatory national tests have been introduced. (All 10 tests are expected to be introduced as of 2009). The tests are to be used in order to be able to follow the individual student's acquisition of knowledge and skills so that the education process can be planned to a greater extent according to the individual student's strengths, weaknesses and potential.

Students must complete the following tests:

- Danish, with a focus on reading in form levels 2, 4, 6 and 8.
- English in form level 7.
- Mathematics in form level 3 and 6.
- Geography in form level 8.
- Biology in form level 8.

- Physics/chemistry in form level 8.

The tests are computer based and adaptive, meaning that they continuously adapted to the individual student. If a student answers a question incorrectly, then he or she is given an easier question; if the student answers correctly, he or she is given a more difficult question. In this way, it is assured that the tests provide a precise picture of each student's academic level. No two students receive the exact same test. Therefore, it is not possible to make internal comparative evaluations of the tests within a specific class.

The test is one of a number of pedagogical resources available to the teacher. Together with the results of the evaluation, which the teachers also make use of, these tools are to be used in the planning of the further programme of education. The results are also used in guiding the individual student and will, additionally, be beneficial in strengthening cooperation with parents. The parents are, therefore, to be informed in writing about the results of the tests.

Information concerning test results for individual students, groups of students, teams, classes, schools, municipalities and regions, etc., is to be kept confidential, with the exception of reporting on the national level. Therefore the test results will similarly not be covered under the Public Administration Act's regulations regarding the right to public access to information. Finally, the exercises included in the tests will also be kept confidential.

#### The Student's Plans

In order to strengthen the process of carrying out an ongoing evaluation of the Folkeskole, a provision was introduced requiring a written student plan for all students at all form levels, with the exception of the 10<sup>th</sup> form. The student plans are to contain information about the results of the ongoing evaluations in all subjects and the course of action decided based on these results. The student plans are to be prepared at least once each school year.

The student plans are to be provided to the parents. A single model for the form the student plans are to take has not been introduced. It will continue to be the responsibility of the school boards to determine the specific principles for notifying the home regarding the students' learning outcomes and regarding any additional cooperation between school and home that is to take place within the framework that has been established by the individual municipal councils.

#### National Evaluation Portal

A national evaluation portal will assist teachers in the work of evaluating the students' learning outcomes. Teachers have access to a wide range of inspirational material for performing evaluations in the individual subjects, and examples of good evaluation practices and working with student plans are also included. More information: <http://www.evaluering.uvm.dk/>

#### Focus on IT

Over the last 10-15 years, a number of the Ministry of Education's action plans have concerned IT, and the technical foundation for integrating IT in teaching has thereby been created. In 2003 the Government adopted an action plan with the aim of strengthening Folkeskole students' IT competencies, and it was determined that 75% of the total DKK 495 million that was allocated for the project would be earmarked for grants for purchasing computer equipment for the Folkeskole's 3rd form classes, conditional upon municipal co-financing equalling at least the amount of the State grants. On the basis of this grant model, the municipalities have invested such a large amount that the total spent on IT purchases is nearing DKK ¾ billion. This has contributed to ensuring that in 2006 there were only 4.88

students per newer educational computers in the Folkeskole, and, for those students who were included in this grant programme (3rd and 4th form), the figure for the same year was down to 2.01 students per computer. The aim was to make the computer a personal tool for the students in the lower form levels. And, to ensure that the computers were used to the greatest possible extent, a requirement was placed on the schools to place the newly purchased computers in the students' normal daily environment, instead of the traditional placement in designated computer rooms.

Another area of initiative has been in supporting the development of new internet-based educational material with DKK 60 million, as well as developing a national platform for all educational material, including both traditional and digital teaching resources. Many schools are now, to a greater extent, acquiring interactive whiteboards, more and more schools are experimenting with pod and vodcasts as teaching tools, and almost all Danish municipal primary and lower secondary schools will, by the end of 2007, be using a Learning Management System (LMS) in their daily communication. The purpose of these technological upgrades is to support and stimulate the students' learning processes and, at the same time, to provide the opportunity for differentiated teaching on a daily basis.

#### Action plan for the improvement of reading skills

The Danish Government is working on an action plan to improve reading skills. This plan covers primary, secondary, vocational and adult education. The plan includes various initiatives ranging from a supplementary reading counsellor education aimed at teachers within the Folkeskole to a reading award.

#### Anti-bullying policies

The legislation concerning this area is the Act on the Educational Environment for Students. In the Act it emphasised that the leaders of the individual schools are responsible for ensuring the preparation of a written evaluation of the educational environment both in terms of safety and hygiene conditions, as well as the conditions concerning the psychological and aesthetic environment at each individual school. An important factor in this regard is the extent of bullying that takes place at the school. The evaluation is to contain an overview of the school's physical, psychological and aesthetic educational environments, descriptions and evaluations of possible education-environmental problems, a plan of action for solving the problems, and suggestions for guidelines designed to follow up on the action plan. It is the municipal board's responsibility to ensure that the provisions in the Act are met in practice, including also the provision requiring the school leader to prepare an education-environmental evaluation, and that it is followed up on.

One of the main themes of the anti-bullying campaign "Together against bullying, toward a good atmosphere, tolerance and safety" Marts-May 2008 (see [www.sammenmodmobning.dk](http://www.sammenmodmobning.dk)) was the development of the schools' anti-bullying strategies. The Ministry of Education invited all relevant partners in connection to the Folkeskole to participate in the campaign. § 7, no. 3 in the Act on the Educational Environment for Students ensures that problems regarding bullying are taken care of, when such occur. The anti-bullying strategies are pro-active and have a preventive aim. Therefore, it is important continuously to ensure the quality of these strategies. This is also one of the main foci of the campaign. The Danish Centre of Educational Environment has developed a framework for these strategies, which can be acquired from the website [www.DCUM.dk](http://www.DCUM.dk). At this site, it is possible for schools to link on to a map of Denmark, which indicates the schools, which already have developed a written evaluation of the educational environment and anti-bullying strategies.

### Special initiatives aimed at the education of socially exposed children and the combating of a negative social heritage

The Danish Government frequently initiates activities aimed at students, who without a special effort are in the risk of becoming students with special needs or who are not obtaining the necessary skills and knowledge to complete a secondary education. These activities are evaluated and their effects are examined.

”The Government’s strategy in combating negative social heritage: Equal opportunities for all children” (January 2006).

The Ministry of Education has completed an examination of students with a long illegal absence from the Folkeskole. This examination has – among other things – shown that there are approximately 1.500 students on a national level, who are absent from more than 30 % of the lessons without a legitimate reason. The examination is followed by a publication with the aim of inspiring leaders at both the local and the school level. This publication provides an overview of all the relevant legislation concerning this area, including various local actors’ responsibility in connection to absence from the schools. Furthermore, the publication draws on examples of municipalities, which have worked with methods of combating the illegal absence combining various local sectors (e.g. the school and the social sector).

The strategy against negative social heritage also contains an examination of the education for children placed in care, and addresses the corporation between the school and the social authorities in this connection. The examination is not yet finished.

### School development (2008-2010)

In 2007, 11, 6 million Danish crowns were reserved for school development projects, which seek to develop methods to improve the inclusion of socially exposed children and young people. 23 local projects have just initiated development work within the following themes:

- *Local strategies and organisational forms*
- *Frameworks for learning, e.g. learning environments*
- *Additional or alternative activities in connection to the teaching*

The overall objective of these development projects is to enhance the academic level and to improve the inclusion of socially exposed children.

### The effect examination of special needs education (2007-2009)

Students with special needs are entitled to special needs education, but the educational system’s knowledge of how this education works is very limited. Therefore the Danish Government – within the framework of the programme for strategic welfare research – has contributed to an examination of the effects of different forms of support and organisation within special needs education. The examination looks at efforts concerning students with rather severe disabilities and effort towards students with a lesser need for special needs education. The effect of the different efforts within the general educational

system is also examined. One part of the project is a *longitudinal study*, where the effect of the special needs education is evaluated on the basis of whether the students continue within the educational system after the Folkeskole or are able to obtain a job.

The final results of the examination will be accessible at the end of 2009.

#### The examination of educational results and pattern for children and young people with disabilities (2007-2008)

The educational system ought to give the same results for students with disabilities as for the students without disabilities. This examination will be finished in 2008 and it set out to investigate the prior mentioned hypothesis as well as to clarify what factors are improving the academic results of students with disabilities within the Folkeskole and secondary education, and what factors are restricting students in achieving positive results.

#### *Bilingual students*

Bilingual students do not perform well in primary school or further on in the education system. Every other bilingual student lacks the necessary reading skills when they leave primary school to be able to have a general or vocational upper secondary education. A worrying number of bilingual students drop out of general or vocational upper secondary education.

The Government wishes to reinforce the initiative for bilingual children and young people by improving the opportunity for language assimilation inside and outside school, and supporting the students in transitional stages and in the provision of education.

#### “This works at our school”

As part of the Government’s strategy against ghettoisation, the Ministry of Education has launched the project entitled “This works at our school”. The project was launched at the beginning of January 2006 and will run until the end of 2007. The project covers the gathering of experiences, development work and communication in the field of bilingual students in the Folkeskole. (see [www.dettevirker.dk](http://www.dettevirker.dk))

#### Task force

A task force with a special focus on bilingual students has been established. This task force will approach schools with a high level of bilingual students and will in corporation with the local authorities and the schools improve the effort to enhance the academic level of the bilingual students. This is done through the development of a targeted action plan with aims and benchmarks for each effort. An essential task is to improve the knowledge of the existing tools and integrate them within the action plan. All this is done in corporation with the municipality.

#### Easier access to the education system for bilingual people

As part of the Government’s action plan to promote equal treatment and diversity and to combat racism dated November 2003, the Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs has collabo-

rated with the Ministry of Education to implement initiative 2 of the action plan, *Easier access to the education system*.

One part of the project involves identification of the opportunities to facilitate the transition from Danish education 2 (Danish tuition for foreigners with basic schooling from their home country) to vocational education and adult vocational training programmes. Among other things, there will be an investigation into the need and opportunities for Danish language support to undertake the vocational training programmes.

#### The “All young people are needed” campaign

The Government wishes to step up the initiative to break down the negative social inheritance, so that more young immigrants and descendants become involved in education and employment.

Against this background, in 2002 the Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs started the “All young people are needed” campaign, the aim of which is to increase participation in education and employment for young immigrants and descendants. The campaign is being undertaken by six consultants with a special insight into issues involving integration and education.

In connection with the campaign a number of initiatives have been launched, including the instigation of voluntary homework assistance schemes, the provision of placements and the conducting of targeted campaigns at specific areas of education in which there are traditionally few people with a non-Danish ethnic background, but where there are at the same time good employment opportunities.

A team of 25 role models has also been established, comprising people with a non-Danish ethnic background who have performed well in subjects where there are traditionally few immigrants and descendants, and where there will be a need for manpower in the years ahead. These role models visit the Folkeskole, upper secondary schools, vocational schools, technical schools, clubs and associations together with one of the consultants to speak to and inspire other young people who are about to make decisions on education and employment.

#### **1.2.b) early childhood intervention (ad a means to support children’s development, transition to primary education and learning)**

##### *Language evaluation of all three year old children*

With § 11 within the Act of day-care, there is put an emphasis on children’s development of language. The Act prescribes that all three year old children must be offered a language evaluation and language stimulation, if they have such a need. The language evaluation and the language situation are offers that families can choose to accept. They are not compulsory. The language evaluation and the language stimulation are not an exam, but an extra tool, which is offered in addition to the general pedagogical work in connection to the child’s development and well-being. If necessary, the child is offered targeted language stimulation. The parents are involved in connection to the language evaluation and they are guided in how to support the language development of their child. The language stimulation is not

thought as specific language activities independent of other activities. It is rather a differentiated pedagogical effort, adjusted to the individual child's qualifications.

*Compulsory language evaluation of all bilingual children (§ 4a)*

The Government can confirm that linguistic stimulation of young bilingual children is effective. The scheme has therefore been expanded to include children aged 3, and linguistic stimulation has been made mandatory in order to make sure that all bilingual children with needs for this receive such an offer. To further reinforce this area, the Government wishes to develop and utilise the interaction between the offers of linguistic stimulation and tuition in Danish as a second language in school.

The Government wishes to reinforce the preschool initiative and the transition between preschool and school by:

- drawing up language tests to assess the linguistic development of small children through visits and ongoing assessment in the language stimulation initiative. The materials will be made available to the municipalities.
- guaranteeing that the knowledge built up about children's linguistic assimilation in the pre-school age is not lost in the transition to school. Dialogue tools are being developed for collaboration between staff in the preschool and school stages.
- with a view to making the introductory period at school easier and reinforcing parental responsibility, producing video material to explain how they can best support their children in the years until they start school.

*Pre-school children with special needs*

All pre-school children in Denmark have the right to receive special needs education, if they have such a need. The special needs education is provided by the local authorities.

From the 1st of October 2008, the rules regarding children under the age of 18 with severe and permanent disabilities and a special need for support changed. The rules include examination of the child, corporation with the parents and the involvement of the child in the planning. The parents are, under certain conditions, given the right to train their child partly or completely at home and to receive support in doing so. The support includes special needs education in the form of language support to both children under and within the schooling age, who are being homeschooled. Furthermore, parents, who choose to home school their child with special needs, can receive educational guidance in how to ensure the child's special needs education.

*Pre-school class*

From the school year 2009-2010, the compulsory education will be extended from 9 to 10 years, so that the preschool class will included as part of the compulsory education of the Danish students. At the same time the academic content of the pre-school class will be clarified through a more pointed out description of the binding content and objectives of the education within the pre-school class. Especially the development of the language skills is in focus in the pre-school class and the students will have a compulsory language evaluation in the beginning of the pre-school class.

It will also be possible to establish age-integrated classes and a differentiated starting date for students up to the second grade, where teachers and pre-school teachers teach in accordance with the rules of co-ordinated school start.

**1.2 c) learning outcomes, particularly concerning the efforts to improve learning achievement (how well are students performing at various levels?) and reduce inequalities (how have disparities in achievement been reduced?)**

In 2006, Denmark participated in the third PISA-enquiry, which tested 15-16 year old students' competences within the natural sciences, reading skills and mathematics.

The results showed that Denmark has improved in the natural sciences from a placement as no. 26 in 2003 to no. 18 in 2006. Denmark has an average of 496 points in a group of countries with an OECD average of 500 points. This development is partly due to an actual improvement in the academic level, possibly because of the introduction of new subject concerning natural science in the Folkeskole in 1995, partly due to the fact that the PISA test was improved in 2006 than in 2000 and 2003.

The Danish girls have earlier performed remarkably worse than the boys in natural science, but the difference between boys and girls has decreased since 2003.

In Denmark the social background play a relatively big role in the academic performance in the natural science of the students, and the big difference between ethnically Danish students and bilingual students contributes to this. However, the importance of social backgrounds in relation to the academic performance in the natural sciences is less significant in 2006, than in 2000.

The results for reading showed that there still are many Danish students with insufficient reading skills and few really good readers at the end of the Folkeskole. In 2006, 16 % of the students were without a functional reading competence, while the percentage in 2003 was 17 %. Denmark has moved from a placement as no. 16 in 2003 to a placement as no. 12 in 2006. In all countries girls read better than boys, in Denmark, however, the difference is the third smallest.

In mathematics the Danish result was on the same level as the result in both 2000 and 2003. The results were significantly above the OECD average. Denmark was placed as no. 10 in 2006 compared to no. 12 in 2003. The number of students with really good competences in mathematics is 14 % in Denmark compared to 11 in OECD as a whole.

The difference between boys and girls in Denmark is approximately around the average for all the OECD-countries. The difference has lessened since 2003.

See also the description of projects under 1.1.b

**1.3. The role of the education system in combating poverty as well as other forms of social exclusion and cultural marginalization (how is it envisaged? What kind of contribution is expected? What kind of strategies should be implemented?)**

*The establishment of the School Council*

The task of the Council for Evaluation and Quality Development in Primary and Lower Secondary Education (*School Council*) is to follow and assess the teaching standard and educational development in primary and lower secondary schools and how the students benefit from teaching offered, as well as advice the Minister for Education in these matters. Another of the Council's tasks is to assess the schools'

ability to help break the vicious circle of deprivation among students and how well schools are integrating students of non-Danish ethnicity. To support the Council's work, a Government agency for evaluation and quality development of primary and lower secondary education has been set up under the Minister for Education.

See also the description of projects under 1.1.b

### **Free private independent schools**

#### **1.1. Major reforms and innovations introduced in the education system, in particular concerning: a) the organisation, structure and management of the education system;**

Private independent schools in Denmark are self owned institutions. The Schools offers education from pre-school class to 9. grade. The private education has to measure up to that of the Folkeskole. The schools can also offer one year of education on a 10th grade level.

The overall management of a private independent school is done by a board. The Schools leader has the daily pedagogical responsibility for the school.

#### *Students with special needs free private independent schools*

Free private independent schools are obliged to offer special education and special educational services to the students corresponding to the Folkeskole's offer. The Government offers grants towards the free private independent schools. On the annual budget there are special grants which are connected to education of students with a disability and students who are bilingual.

The Danish Educational Support Agency administrates the aid scheme on special conditions for applications, deadlines, documentation etc. The schools apply for support, and the decision of the Agency will be sent to the school which must inform the student and the parents.

The contribution must be used to compensate the specific educational consequences of a disability (or bilingual background). The compensation will take place as special education, support education in Danish of bilingual students and to cover extra expenses for special education, practical support, aids and transportation of students with severe disabilities.

#### *Complaints procedure of special education in free private independent schools*

The decisions of the Agency (administrates the special educational assistance agreements which include students and students with disability at free private independent schools, vocational training, general and vocational upper secondary education and further and higher education) can be complained against an impartial complaints board - Ankenævnet for Uddannelsesstøtten. In these cases an expert, appointed by Disabled Peoples Organisations - Denmark (DPOD), will attend. The Ankenævn can change the decision of the Agency completely or partly. The chair of the Ankenævn must be a judge. A legal judging of the claim from the student will be made.

#### *Bilingual students*

The Government also wishes to reinforce the education of bilingual students in private independent schools by:

- making sure that private independent schools are made aware of the results of the recently completed assessment of Danish as a second language in private independent schools by reporting the results.
- making the language test developed for the Folkeskole available to all private independent schools for their optional use.

On the annual budget there are special grants which are connected to education of students who are bilingual.

**1.1. b) the aims and purposes of each education at each level; 1.1. c) curricular policies, educational content and teaching and learning strategies:**

Private independent schools are free to choose their method of teaching as long as the level of the teaching corresponding to that which is offered by the Folkeskole.

Because the private independent schools are free to choose their own methods of teaching, there does not exist specific policies regulating this area. It is, however, interesting, that the private independent schools often choose the focus as the Folkeskole and the educational system in general.

**c) learning outcomes, particularly concerning the efforts to improve learning achievement (how well are students performing at various levels?) and reduce inequalities (how have disparities in achievement been reduced ?);**

At the moment, it is not viewed as relevant to examine the differences between the various school forms. The private independent schools have been a part of PISA and of Pirls on the same terms as the public institutions, and the results have not indicated any reason why the difference between the forms of schooling be studied closer.

**1.1. d) the legal framework of education (in particular, new legal provisions)**

Act no. 891 of 8 July 2007 on private independent schools etc.

Act no. 702 of 30 June 2008 on subsidies to private independent schools etc.

See also [http://www.ft.dk/doc.aspx?Samling/20072/lovforslag/L83/som\\_vedtaget.htm](http://www.ft.dk/doc.aspx?Samling/20072/lovforslag/L83/som_vedtaget.htm)

**Free boarding schools**

**1.1. Major reforms and innovations introduced in the education system, in particular concerning: a) the organisation, structure and management of the education system;**

Free boarding schools substitute the last or the last two years of primary education. In this field the Government offers support to students with special needs such as special education or other educational services for students with disabilities. The grant is a rate per year per student. The figure is stated in the annual budget.

*Students with special needs free private independent schools*

The Government grants special support to the schools special expenses for aids, special education and practical help to students with severe disabilities. The size of the grant is settled in the annual budget. The Danish Educational Support Agency administrates the aid scheme on special conditions as to applications, deadlines, documentations etc.

The grant may be special education organized within the mainstream subjects of the school, education or training in order to limit the consequence of the disability or the student may alternatively be taught in a special class.

## **Education for Young People with Special Needs**

### **1.1. Major reforms and innovations introduced in the education system, in particular concerning: a) the organisation, structure and management of the education system**

In June 2007 the act of education for young people with special needs was passed. The act addresses primarily young persons, who are mentally handicapped or persons with special needs, who are not able to complete the mainstream education program for young people. The main purpose for the young person is to attain personal, social and - to the extent possible - vocational competence in order to be an active and independent citizen in adulthood.

The education is a legal claim and is offered after compulsory primary and lower secondary education (Folkeskolen). It is 3 years of training and can be attended until the 25th year. The young person has to finish the training after five years. The specific training is planned in cooperation with the young person herself, the parents and the Youth Guidance Centres. ("Ungdommens Uddannelsesvejledning")

Since this youth education program is fairly new the full extent is not known at this time. It is expected to take in approximately 2.3 percent of a youth year group amounting to almost 4.100 young people. The authority, responsibility and financing of Youth Education for Young People with Special Needs are assigned to the municipalities. The municipalities also are responsible for social welfare services and job creation programmes and as such will be able to coordinate the effort to increasing the participation in public life of young people with special needs. The 31. May 2008, 790 students had initiated the education for young people with needs.

#### **1.1.b) the aims and purposes of each education at each level;**

The objective of the education for young people with needs is to ensure that young persons, who are mentally handicapped or persons with special needs, who are not able to complete the mainstream education program for young people attain personal, social and vocational competence in order to be an active and independent citizen in adulthood and if possible to further education and employment. The participant will receive a paper of competences at the end of the education. The paper describes the obtained competences through the youth education programme.

#### **1.1.c) curricular policies, educational content and teaching and learning strategies:**

The education for young people with needs must – to the extent possible – be planning under de consideration of the individual young persons qualifications, maturity and interests, The education must consist of one planned and coordinated course.

#### **1.1.d) the legal framework of education (in particular, new legal provisions)**

Act no. 564 of 6 June 2008 on education for young people with special needs

#### **1.1 e) Objectives and principal characteristics of current and forthcoming reforms**

The act on education for young people with special needs was implemented the 1st of August 2007. The act is a new, and there may be a need for adjustments, it has, therefore, been decided that the act is evaluated no later than in the year 2011/2012. Until then, the education will be monitored and evaluated frequently.

### Chapter 3

#### **Upper secondary education - general upper secondary education and vocational education and training (VET).**

##### **Production schools**

#### **1.1. Major reforms and innovations introduced in the education system, in particular concerning:**

##### **a) the organisation, structure and management of the education system;**

**Upper secondary education** typically follows after 9 years of compulsory education. In Denmark upper secondary education or the youth education programmes include:

*General upper secondary education qualifying for access to higher education.*

There are four different types of programmes in Denmark: Stx, hhx, htx and hf. Stx, Hhx and Htx take three years to complete and admit young people who have completed nine years of basic school. Hf takes two years and admits persons who have completed 10 years of basic school. Hf is also offered as single subjects and sometimes as packages of subjects at adult education centres.

The *STX* and *HF* programmes consist of a broad range of subjects in the fields of the humanities, natural science and social science.

The *HHX* programme focuses on business and socio-economic disciplines in combination with foreign languages and other general subjects.

The *HTX* programme has its focus on technological and scientific subjects in combination with general subjects.

There are 146 schools with STX and/or HF, 60 offering HHX and 38 with HTX. Together they admit around 46,000 students every year. This is more than 60 % of the young Danes who commence youth education after basic school.

*Vocational education and training (VET) qualifies primarily for skilled jobs.*

The 110 Vocational Education and Training ('erhvervsuddannelser', or 'eud' in Danish) programmes include agriculture, the basic social and health training programmes (sosu), the commercial programmes and the technical programmes. These programmes aim at providing the students with vocational, personal and general qualifications, which are formally and actually recognised by, and in demand in, the labour market. Some vocational programmes have a number of adult participants, especially the social and health educational programmes.

Prior to enrolling in the VET programmes students having difficulties within book learning, who are tired of theoretical education or who have other kinds of problems, e.g. social or psychological problems may choose the practically oriented programmes either vocational basic education programmes (egu) or the production schools.

*Production schools*

Production schools are independent institutions with statutes approved by the local authority that provides the school's basic grant. The local labour market organisations (social partners) must be represented on the school board, and the board can include representatives of the municipality(ies) providing the basic grant.

The target group is young people under the age of 25 who are not motivated for or not qualified for enrolling in an ordinary youth education programme or who have dropped out of or not completed a youth education programme. Production school may only admit a participant with a state grant when the Youth Guidance Centre has assessed and identified that the young person belongs to the target group of the production schools. Under normal circumstances, the individual student is entitled to a maximum of one year at a production school.

The production schools are primarily financed by the state through a taximeter funding system in the form of grants to cover operational and building costs. It is a precondition for the grant that the individual production school receives the municipal basic grant. Students attending production schools receive a school allowance.

**1.1. b) the aims and purposes of education at each level**

Education must be organized so that it contributes to stimulate the students' interest for and ability to participate actively in a democratic society, and forms their personal development. Furthermore education must develop the creative and innovative skills of the students and their critical faculty. Accordingly school-based education is based on intellectual freedom, equality and democracy.

The objective in the production schools is to strengthen the personal development of the participants and improve their chances in the education system and the ordinary labour market. This educational option is organised with a view that the young people obtain qualifications that can enable them to complete an education on upper secondary level leading up to a professional qualification.

The objective of *VET* is

- To motivate young people for education and secure that young people have possibilities of completing a VET qualification.
- To qualify the young people for the labour market.
- To contribute to the young peoples interest in and participation in a democratic society
- To correspond to the labour market needs for vocational and general qualifications.
- To provide the students with knowledge about international matters as a basis for accomplishing work and education abroad.
- To provide a basis for the students' further education.

**1.1. c) curricular policies, educational content and teaching and learning strategies:**

*General upper secondary education, including Hf as single subject programme:*

Each programme, stx, hhx, htx and hf, has its specific range of compulsory subjects that are common for all students taking the programme. In STX, HHX and HTX, in addition, each school offers a number of different specialized studies packages (packages normally containing three subjects) and elective

subjects for the students to choose between. In HF the students make their choices from among the electives offered by the school.

All the education programmes also contain multi-subject courses, among other things with the object of strengthening the students' preparedness for further study. This includes the ability to apply knowledge and methods from several subjects to illustrate interdisciplinary themes and problems and the ability to compare the subjects' knowledge and methods.

The Ministry of Education draws up curricula for subjects and multi-subject courses. The emphasis is on determining requirements as to students competencies - rather than detailed descriptions of specific contents.

All subjects are placed in system of levels, C, B and A, in relation to the subject's scope and depth. The levels system is as a general rule structured in such a way that C-level subjects are allotted 75 periods of 60 minutes, B-level subjects have 200 periods and subjects at A-level 325 hours.

Link for more information to the question:

<http://eng.uvm.dk//publications/factsheets/fact6.htm?menuid=2515>

<http://eng.uvm.dk/publications/factsheets/hf08.htm?menuid=2515>

[http://eng.uvm.dk/publications/factsheets/htx08o\\_000.htm?menuid=2515](http://eng.uvm.dk/publications/factsheets/htx08o_000.htm?menuid=2515)

<http://eng.uvm.dk/publications/factsheets/hhx08.htm?menuid=2515>

### *VET*

The VET system is highly decentralised with an overall management principle of “management-by-objectives”. This means that the overall objectives and framework are drawn up at central ministry level and the colleges draw up local curricula within this framework.

The Danish VET system is characterised by a high degree of stakeholder involvement. Not only the social partners, but also colleges, enterprises, teachers and students are involved in a continuous dialogue about, and development of, the Danish VET system. This guarantees that the content of the individual VET programme meets the demands of the labour market and that the qualifications are recognised by business and industry. The social partners are represented in a number of councils and committees acting at local, sector and national levels.

The central body is the Advisory Council for Initial Vocational Education and Training (Rådet for de Grundlæggende Erhvervsrettede Uddannelser – REU). REU comprises 25 members from the social partners, the leader and teacher organisations and a number of members appointed by the Ministry of Education. REU is an advisory body for the Ministry of Education on all matters concerning VET.

The Ministry is responsible for approving new and adjusting existing VET qualifications on the basis of recommendations from the Advisory Council for Initial Vocational Education and Training: REU, and for approving the colleges that are to provide the basic and main courses in VET. Furthermore the Ministry lays down the overall rules for VET – in cooperation with the REU – and draws up the regulations of the individual VET programmes – in cooperation with trade committees. The regulations are supplemented with guidelines drawn up by the trade committees and issued by the Ministry. Finally, the Ministry is responsible for inspection and quality assurance, which are issues gaining in importance.

The national trade committees (de faglige udvalg) provide advice on specific VET qualifications relevant to their sector and on the content, structure, duration and evaluation of programmes and courses. Employers and employees are equally represented in the trade committees. Each committee is responsible for one or more VET qualifications. One of the main objectives of involving the social partners is to ensure the relevance and quality of VET programmes in relation to the labour market. The trade committees are responsible for the continuous adaptation and development of the VET programmes. Another important aspect of the trade committees' scope of work is the approval of training places. Based on defined criteria the trade committees are responsible for approving and inspecting enterprises that take on students or apprentices. Finally, the trade committees are responsible for the journeyman's test or the final exam.

The local training committees (de lokale uddannelsesudvalg) assist the vocational colleges in the local planning of the programmes. They provide advice on all matters concerning training and are responsible for strengthening the contact between colleges and the local labour market. The local training committees consist of members representing the organisations represented on the national trade committees. The local training committees also include representatives from the college, the teachers and the students. The local training committee acts as advisor to the college in all matters concerning the VET programmes within their jurisdiction and, furthermore, promotes cooperation between the college and the local labour market.

Danish VET is organised according to the dual principle in which the students alternate between school-based education and practical training in a workplace. The dual principle is both the organisational and pedagogical principle.

The VET programmes typically take 3,5-4 years to complete. However most programmes include partial qualifications so the VET system encompasses programmes of durations from 18 months to 5,5 years.

There are two access routes into the VET programmes: the school pathway which is the most common route and the company pathway. Choosing the school pathway the students enrol in the basic course (please see below) and choosing the company pathway the students start in a company with which they make a training contact. No matter which entrance the students choose school periods (1/3-1/2) alternate with practical in-company training (1/2-2/3).

VET programmes are divided into a basic course and a main course. There are 12 basic courses and they take place in a VET college, are highly flexible in content and length, and consist of both compulsory and optional subjects. Everybody who has completed compulsory school can be admitted to the basic course. Having completed basic course the students have to apply for an apprenticeship in order to continue in the main course that is divided into fixed periods of school-based education and practical training in a workplace.

The VET reform in 2000 implied comprehensive restructuring of VET, introducing enhanced flexibility and a shift from teaching to learning and consequently to a focus on the individual learner. The re-

form introduced a number of new elements: the contact teacher, the personal education plan and the possibility for partial and additional qualifications.

When the student enters a VET programme he or she has to have a personal education plan drawn up in cooperation with the contact teacher. The personal education plan includes a description of the objectives and the ways to obtain the objectives. The plan is based in an assessment of the students prior learning (realkompetencevurdering) and focus on the competences i.e. the outcome of the learning. Together with the contact teacher the plan is currently evaluated and adjusted throughout the training period.

VET pedagogy is characterized by a number of principles: interdisciplinary teaching, differentiated teaching, practice related teaching, i.e. a toning of the general subjects to the current industry or trade and the students' responsibility for their own learning. However the latter principle has been currently discussed and criticized for corresponding only to the very proficient students' needs and qualifications.

As a reaction to the reform in 2000, which introduced rather broad and theoretical entrances, a number of alternatives have been developed for practically oriented students. Short training programmes and partial qualification have been established. The purpose is to provide optimal opportunities for young people who have difficulties in completing a full training programme. Students leaving the programme after having completed a partial qualification may re-enter at a later stage to continue training and complete a full training programme.

To the existing options of VET programmes organised for adults was added, from 2001, as part of an adult education reform, a new programme called Basic Adult Education ('GVU'), which gives VET qualifications after a personalised training programme based on an assessment of the student's prior learning, a programme without apprenticeship because it consists only of theoretical single subjects and/or the final examination, as the case may be.

#### *Production schools:*

The pedagogical theory and practice of the production schools is built around activities in various workshops, taking a point of departure in practical work and problem-solving combined with instruction in theory, with a view to genuine production and sales. The professional standard at the workshop is used as an educational tool to make a contribution to the development of personal and social competencies. In addition, the school offers teaching in general subjects in order to prepare the participants to commence a regular youth education programme. Upto one third of a school-based programme can be spent on teaching, education programmes and courses that are established by means of, or pursuant to, an educational Act. This can consist of, for example, general subjects at an Adult Education Centre (VUC) or part of the basic programme at a vocational college. A general rule is that, students attending a production school for more than three months must take part in a programme of minimum 2 and maximum 5 weeks that grants credits and is aimed at a qualifying education and training programme, for example vocational education and training (EUD).

The Ministry of Education is the supervisory authority for the production schools. As a general rule, there are no tests or examinations at production schools, unless the student completes courses that grant credits and where there are tests.

### **1.1. d) the legal framework of education (in particular, new legal provisions)**

Rules laid down by legislation:

Act no. 791 of 24 July 2008 on the gymnasium (stx)

Act no. 445 of 8 May 2007 on the higher preparatory examination (HF)

Act no. 790 of 24 July 2008 on higher commercial examination (HHX) and higher technical examination (HTX)

Act no. 575 of 9 June 2006 on institutions for stx and hf

Act no. 1244 of 23 October 2007 on vocational education and training, act no. 136 of 1 March 2006 and act no 561 of 6 2007 on VET-institutions

Act no. 785 of 6 July 2006 on production schools

### **1.1 e) Objectives and principal characteristics of current and forthcoming reforms**

In April 2006 the Government issued its globalisation strategy inspired by a Globalisation Council, see under bibliography. All young people should complete a general or vocational upper secondary education programme. At least 85 per cent of all young people should complete a general or vocational upper secondary education programme in 2010 and at least 95 per cent in 2015. In 2007 95 per cent of all young enrol in a general or vocational upper secondary education, and approximately 82 per cent complete the education.

General and vocational upper secondary education programmes must be attractive and of top quality and vocational education and training (VET) programmes should be challenging for the brightest students and provide them with opportunities for further education and training.

#### *General Upper secondary education*

A reform in 2005 restructured both structures and contents of the four programmes stx, hhx, htx and hf. The main objectives were:

- Solidifying students' competencies in relation to higher education. An important element in this respect is new educational structures allowing for increased academic standards
- Increased focus on natural sciences
- Enhancing cooperation among teachers and subjects through introduction of formalized timeframes
- Clearer objectives for teaching and students' competencies
- New work methods aiming at activation of students
- New forms of testing and examination

Provisions as to steering and financing has also been restructured – all schools offering programmes at upper secondary levels are now structured as self-governing institutions funded by the state.

*VET*

With the comprehensive amendment of the Act on Vocational Education and Training resulting in Act no. 561 of June 2007 a comprehensive amendment of the Act on Vocational Education and Training was adopted, the implementation of which will take place throughout 2008.

The main driver of Act no. 561 is the overall political goal that, by 2015, 95% of a youth cohort should complete a youth education programme. This goal has led to a number of minor and major adjustments of the Reform implemented in 2000. The changes encompass both structural and pedagogical changes:

- The number of basic courses has been extended from seven to 12, and they are described in a way that should make it easier for young people to recognize job prospects related to the basic course.
- The curricula of the basic courses have been revised in order to make it easier to relate the general parts of the programmes more closely to the vocational parts.
- Objectives for teaching in innovation, entrepreneurship and internationalisation have been laid down in the overall legislation and have hereby been strengthened in the VET programmes.
- In the new reform, the colleges are obliged to develop “basic course packages”, i.e. specially designed courses aimed at either very qualified students or less qualified students who may have additional needs, such as improving language skills and knowledge of Danish culture.
- Introduction of streaming. All basic subjects are provided at different levels (F to A), and streaming offers the opportunity for the individual student to choose a suitable level.
- To reduce the overall drop-out rate the guidance provided at basic course level, including career and educational guidance has been strengthened .
- The drop-out rate in VET is high. The colleges must draw up plans of action, including concrete strategies for reducing the drop-out rate. The plans are public and evaluated annually.
- Ensuring a sufficient numbers of apprenticeships. During recent years, the number of apprenticeship contracts has increased from approximately 26,000 to 37,000 per year. However, the main challenge remains to create a better match between the students’ wishes and the companies’ requirements for labour. In particular, it is necessary to increase the number of apprenticeships available for ethnic minorities.
- The provision of VET programmes should be better tuned to the developments within trades and industries. In order to follow developments closely, analysis and prognosis activities have been strengthened, including close cooperation with VET research activities.
- The training of teachers is an important element of the reform. Teachers’ technical and pedagogical competences are to be brought up to date in order to match the new challenges, not least that of meeting the 95% completion target.

## **1.2 Main policies, achievements and lessons learned especially as regards:**

### **1.2 a) access into education (focusing on actions being taken to reach children, youth and adults that are currently excluded);**

In general most young people begin in a youth education programme. So the problem is not to reach the young people but rather to keep them in education. Accordingly the aim of the following initiatives is mainly to keep young people in youth education and to secure that they complete the qualification.

The effects of these initiatives are not yet documented; however the challenge in VET remains to be preventing drop out.

Cooperation between the basic schools, youth education colleges and the municipal youth guidance centre ("UU") secures contacts to every youngster. See below under Act on Guidance in Relation to Choice of Education, Training and Career. In form 8 (compulsory school) the students are introduced to the youth education programmes and the youth education colleges.

*Advertisement:* In public places e.g. in trains the colleges advertise for their education programmes.

*Bridging activities:* Many of the young people do not continue directly from compulsory education into VET. For young people who are tired of school or do not have clear education and career plans a number of alternatives are offered e.g. The young people can enrol in a vocationally oriented 10<sup>th</sup> grade; they can enrol in production schools (please see above 1.1a.); pre-training of 3-6 months in an enterprise which may help the young people to clarify their educational choice while trying out real working life.

In general guidance and mentoring are central elements both in basic school in the transition from basic school into VET and in VET. According to the colleges the mentor or another supporting person is an important factor in keeping the students in education.

### **1.2 c) learning outcomes, particularly concerning the efforts to improve learning achievement (how well are students performing at various levels?) and reduce inequalities (how have disparities in achievement been reduced?);**

In VET the individual education plans provide flexibility as concerns the time that the students need to complete the programme and the amount of practical and theoretical training.

For Danish VET it is important to attract all kinds of students. Those students who are proficient within book learning will tend to choose upper general education programmes in stead of VET. In order to attract both highly qualified and less qualified students all basic subjects are offered at different levels (F to A).

The colleges have developed "basic course packages", i.e. specially designed course that meet group of students with the same learning and qualification needs. According to the colleges the basic course packets positively influence the students' motivation for learning.

In order to motivate the students for learning research and development projects have shown it is important that the students meet practice (the vocation) at an early stage in the programme. Thus the VET programmes have been reorganised to provide relatively more vocationally and practically oriented training in the beginning of the programme and postponing the general theoretical parts to the latter parts of the programmes.

In order to motivate and help students to obtain the VET qualification alternative practice oriented routes are offered. Thus the students can choose between the school pathway and the company pathway. The amount of practical training is the same in the two pathways; however the students meet practice earlier in the practical pathway than in the school pathway

The apprenticeship pathway is another option. The students can choose to complete the first year of the VET programme in an apprenticeship in a company. The element of the in-company training and the objectives to be attained will be described in the student's personal education plan. During the apprenticeship the local college, the company and the students are in close contact in order to secure that the objectives are obtained so that the student's proficiency level will correspond to the level reached in the ordinary programme. After one year of apprenticeship training the student completes the rest of the programme together with the "ordinary" students.

#### **d) pre-service teacher training, recruitment, deployment, working conditions and in-service professional development**

In order to teach in VET colleges the teacher must have qualifications both within their subjects and within pedagogy. The VET teachers must complete a basic pedagogical programme through which they among other things acquire knowledge about the heterogeneous group of students in VET.

Within VET it is important to recruit teachers that have practical experience within the various vocations in order to be a role model for the students; especially students who are practical minded need to meet teachers who have a skilled background.

The VET colleges aim at employing ethnic minority teachers who can serve as role model for the ethnic minority students.

Teachers in particular within the vocational subjects are encouraged to do practical training in workplaces regularly.

In service courses are currently offered including courses about students with special problems, e.g. immigrant students. An evaluation of the courses that qualify for teaching and helping immigrant students e.g. to obtain in company training shows that the courses have had a positive effect by developing tools and methods in relation to immigrant students

[http://www.brugforalleunge.dk/fileadmin/bruger\\_upload/Billeder/Publikationer/English\\_Summary\\_evaluation\\_BFAU\\_final-version.pdf](http://www.brugforalleunge.dk/fileadmin/bruger_upload/Billeder/Publikationer/English_Summary_evaluation_BFAU_final-version.pdf)

As part of the globalisation strategy an extra grant has been provided for in service training for VET teachers in the period 2007-2009. The use and effects of this additional grant has not yet been evaluated.

As part of a national plan for reading each VET college gets a grant to educate at least one teacher of dyslexia. A dyslexia teaching programme at diploma level has been developed that is especially directed at teachers in VET.

## **2. Inclusive education: The way of the future**

### **2.1 a) How is inclusive education conceptualized? What is the current vision of inclusive education in your country?**

Within VET the main target is that of the youth education system that by 2015, 95 percent of a youth cohort completes a youth education programme, so inclusiveness involves almost all young people.

Teachers in primary and secondary school must be prepared to meet the challenges of including education. Therefore the reform of the teacher training programme focus on how to prepare and qualify student teachers to work with children of non-Danish ethnic origin as well as social education problems. Student teachers must develop skills for teaching in culturally diverse primary and lower secondary schools. The curriculum in the teacher training programme consists of cultural theory as well as theories of and research into identity development and learning in children and young people from different social and cultural backgrounds. Students work with theories of multicultural education. They are also required to become competent in creating, maintaining and leading inclusive groups, including particularly vulnerable groups of children. Student teachers can also elect to qualify themselves to teach students with Danish as a second language.

The Ministry of Education also works with the Ministry and Refugees, Immigration and Integration Affairs on intensifying efforts to recruit bilingual young people and young people of non-Danish ethnic origins to the social education and teacher training programmes. The two-fold aim is to ensure that teaching staff reflect the composition of the population and to enhance the cultural diversity and the teaching body.

### **b) What are seen as the most important challenges for ensuring educational and social inclusion? How have these challenges changed in recent years?**

The most important challenge is to reduce the drop out rate, and the drop out rate is especially high among ethnic minorities and males. The challenges have changed in accordance with the target that almost all young people complete a youth education programme, because a larger portion of the students have severe social and psychological problems and/or learning deficits. Furthermore the proportion of ethnic minorities has increased and will continue to increase.

### **c) What specific legal or regulatory frameworks refer to inclusive education issues? What groups are considered as excluded in these frameworks and how are they categorized?**

Act no 561 of 6 June 2007 on Vocational Education and Training and the regulation of that law: Regulation nr. 1244 of 23 October 2007 refer to inclusive education issues.

In the regulation e.g. § 51 deals about the possibilities of establishing extra classes, including prolonging the study time, and the possibilities of giving credit transfer, including reducing the study time..

Another act is Act no 564 of 6 June 2007 about youth education for young people with special needs.

Within these laws all young people are included.

## 2.2 Public policies

### a) **What are the current dimensions of the phenomenon of exclusion from and within education? What kind of indicators and data are used to inform inclusive education policies?**

All young people who have completed compulsory education have a right to enrol in VET. The Ministry of Education currently produces figures about enrolment in youth education, drop out rates etc. Each college is obliged to register the number of drop outs and the drop outs' further educational or occupational choices.

In cooperation with the Ministry of Education the VET colleges have to draw up acting plans that describe how they will prevent drop out and retain the students in education. The actions are evaluated and the plans adjusted in accordance with the evaluations.

### b) **Which inclusive education issues have been, are or are going to be relevant for educational policies in your country?**

The following issues:

- How to secure that the students remain in and complete a VET programme.
- How to develop curricula that regard practically oriented young people, young people with learning disabilities, social and psychological problems and ethnic minorities complete a youth education programme. The main issues are that the curricula should balance theory and practice differentiated in relation to the students' diverse qualifications and ambitions. Furthermore the curricula should include possibilities of additional course, e.g. in vocational second language Danish, or in basic reading, writing, and arithmetic.
- How to develop inclusive learning environments.

### c) **What groups are considered to be most vulnerable to various forms of exclusion from and within education? Who are the excluded groups that current policies have yet to take into account?**

Male ethnic minorities and students with social, psychological problems and or lack of basic qualifications from compulsory education.

### d) **In what ways do current educational reforms address inclusive education?**

Inclusiveness is mainly addressed as the 95 per cent target. How can this target be met?

## 2.3 Systems, links and transitions:

Please see the answers in 1.1

## **2.4 Learners and teachers:**

Please see answers in 1.1

The teacher training should include training in how to address the diverse group of students, including introduction to various learning styles. The teacher training should include methods for connecting theoretical training to current vocations and in general the teachers should develop linguistic competences not only in relation to ethnic minorities but also in relation to the students' general communicative competence.

In VET the dual principle secures that all programmes are alternating between school-based education and training and in-company training.

There is currently much attention to the in-company training in order to prevent drop out and in order that the supervisors understand the diversity of the students and adopt a pedagogical approach in the practical training and dialogue with the students.

## Chapter 4

### Higher Education:

#### 1.1. Major reforms and innovations introduced in the education system, in particular concerning:

##### a) the organisation, structure and management of the education system

Institutions are grouped into two different sectors: The college sector, i.e. the professionally oriented higher education sector and The university sector.

The college sector comprises more than 150 specialised institutions of higher education, about one-third offering short-cycle and two-thirds offering medium-cycle professionally oriented programmes. Increasingly, colleges are merging into larger and more diverse units. The institutions that have specialized in short cycle higher education are merging to Business Colleges (in Danish: Erhvervsakademier), see Act. no. 346 of 14 May 2008 and institutions that have specialized in medium cycle educations have been merged into 8 University Colleges (in Danish: Professionshøjskoler), see Act No 562 of 6 June 2007.

##### b) the aims and purposes of each education at each level

This level typically begins at the end of upper secondary education and comprises the short-cycle and the medium-cycle higher non-university education programmes as well as the long-cycle university programmes. The higher education programmes provide occupational competencies. In general, the programmes are divided into levels according to duration, namely short-cycle higher education programmes, professional bachelor programmes, other medium-cycle higher education programmes and bachelor and candidatus programmes at the universities. Furthermore, there are the PhD programmes. The higher education programmes build on top of the youth education programmes, and some include practical placements. The programmes are of varying duration.

#### *Teacher training education:*

The objective of the Bachelor of Education (Bed) programme for primary and lower secondary school teachers is to train teachers for the primary and lower secondary school and to provide a basis for further training

With a view to their professionally oriented function as primary and lower secondary school teachers, the training programme is to

- provide the students with the necessary academic and educational insight and practical training,
- contribute to furthering the students' personal development, and
- contribute to developing the students' interest in and ability to participate actively in a democratic society.

Graduates of the teacher-training programme have the right to use the title of Bachelor of Education (BEd). The programme provides a general qualification for teaching in the primary and lower secondary school.

#### *Social education programme:*

The programme is to provide professional qualifications for working with development and care assignments within the following areas: children and young people (including working in day nurseries, day-care centres, pre-school classes, recreation centres/school-based leisure time facilities, after school

clubs, 24-hour service institutions), institutions for children, young people and adults with reduced psychological or physical capacities, adults with social problems (homelessness, substance abuse, mental disorders), family institutions, and child and youth psychiatric hospitals. Additionally, the education provides qualifications for working in the field of crime prevention in, for example, neighbourhoods as well as working within the Prison and Probation Service.

The programme provides students with the foundation for further education and training, for example in a range of educational diploma programmes within, for example, psychology, educational work, social psychiatry, social work, special needs and youth education.

### **c) curricular policies, educational content and teaching and learning strategies**

#### *Teacher training education:*

The teacher-training programme takes 4 years to complete, corresponding to 240 points in the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS points). A student's full-time work for one year corresponds to 60 ECTS points.

The programme consists of the following for all students:

- 1) Educational subjects in the form of general educational theory, psychology and educational science (a total of 33 ECTS points)
- 2) Christianity studies/Philosophy/Citizenship Education (17 ECTS points)
- 3) 2 or 3 main subjects (a total of 144 ECTS points)
- 4) A bachelor thesis (10 ECTS points)
- 5) Teaching practice (36 ECTS points)

To the greatest possible extent, the teaching of the programme should include the results of national and international research and experimental and development work relevant to the teaching profession and suited to contributing to the development and application of fresh professional knowledge.

The evaluation, documentation and application of evaluation results in planning and implementing teaching are to be included on an ongoing basis in the students' work with the different subjects and disciplines in the training programme.

The programme includes a cross-professional element. The cross-professional element is to be so organised that, with a starting point in their identity as teachers, the students achieve insight into other relevant education programmes and an understanding of the interfaces between and the boundaries of their own profession and those of others in performing specific tasks, among other things in working with children at risk.

The long-term goal is, to an increasing extent, for qualified teachers to teach their main subjects.

#### *Social education programme:*

The programme of social education takes 3½ years to complete, corresponding to 210 points in the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS-points). A student's full-time work for one year corresponds to 60 ECTS points.

The programme consists of formal teaching at the educational institution as well as practical training at relevant institutions. There are three periods of practical training during the programme. The total amount of time of the education programme spent on practical training amounts to 1 year and 3 months.

The programme consists of the following subjects and academic elements:

- 1) Educational theory and practice (43 ECTS points)
- 2) Danish, culture and communication (28 ECTS points)
- 3) Individual, institution and society (18 ECTS points)
- 4) One of the following main subjects according to the student's own choice (each 30 ECTS points):
  - a) Health, the body and exercise
  - b) Expression, music and drama
  - c) Arts and crafts, science and technology
- 5) Practical training (74 ECTS point)
- 6) Specialisation within one of the following occupational or functional fields (a total of 35 ECTS points):
  - a) Children and young people
  - b) People with reduced functionality
  - c) People with social problems

At the conclusion of the education programme each student must complete a bachelor project. (12 ECTS points)

#### **d) the legal framework of education (in particular, new legal provisions)**

Rules laid down by legislation:

Act no. 207 of 31 Marts 2008 on short-cycle and medium-cycle higher (-non university-) higher education, Business College Educations and University College Educations.

Act. no. 220 of 5 april 2006 on teacher training education.

Act. no. 315 of 19 april 2006 on social education programme.

From the first of January 2008 all *medium-cycle further education* is to take place at one of the 8 university colleges in Denmark. University colleges are self-governing institutions within the field of public administration. University colleges offer bachelor programmes that ensure that the region is covered geographically, as well as in-service training and further training in connection with this.. All University College study programmes are research-affiliated and the institutions must cooperate closely with each other, with universities and with Business Colleges.

To learn more about new reforms on teacher training education and social education see World Data.

#### **e) objectives and principal characteristics of current and forthcoming reforms**

Within the area of self-governing *medium-cycle further education institutions*, the institutional structure has also undergone extensive changes in recent years. As of 2008 8 *University Colleges* (in Danish: Profession-shøjskoler) are established that will have the task of developing and offering practically oriented further, continuing and higher education programmes in their respective regions. These programmes are to

meet the need for a qualified labour force in the private and public sectors at an internationally academic level. A university college is to function as a regional institution of knowledge and have a close and strong working relationship with the regional interests, including enterprises, clients, regional growth fora, etc. as well as a strategic and concrete working cooperation with universities and other relevant research environments.

## **1.2. Main policies, achievements and lessons learned especially as regards:**

### **a) access to education (focusing on actions being taken to reach children, youth and adults that are currently excluded)**

From 2007 school teachers can follow a new part time education as a reading supervisor. The aim is to strengthen school teacher's ability to function as a reading supervisor for children in primary and lower secondary school and thereby give more children better reading and writing skills so that more children gets the possibility to continue in higher education. The reading supervisor education is meant as an in-service professional development opportunity.

### **b) early childhood intervention (ad a means to support children's development, transition to primary education and learning)**

The act on teacher training education from 2006 it is now possible for teacher training students to choose Danish as a second language as main subject. The subject of Danish as a second language is based on the fact that a large number of students in the Folkeskole are bilingual and have Danish as their second language. The subject aims to enable the student to prepare, plan, implement and evaluate tuition in Danish as a second language. The subject provides a qualification to undertake specially arranged tuition in Danish as a second language, and to teach and collaborate with other subjects with a view to bringing a second language perspective into these subjects.

#### **Objectives:**

The objective is to provide the student with the skills to be able to

- contribute to the further development of the subject, including being able to interpret and use results of research and development work of relevance to Danish as a second language
- apply the provisions on the subject in relation to his/her own and other people's view of subjects, and to view the subject in a wider perspective, including an historical perspective and a development perspective, and on this background to be able to consider and describe objectives and progression for the subject
- identify, evaluate and characterise bilingual students' development in Danish as a second language, including an evaluation of students' circumstances and needs
- prepare, implement and evaluate tuition programmes based on the individual student or groups of students
- collaborate with colleagues and other people in the tuition of bilingual students in the subject of Danish as a second language, and to become involved in interaction with the other subjects in the school and in offering advice and guidance.

Another possibility for the teacher training students is to specialize in special pedagogy. The subject of special pedagogy enables the student to prepare, plan, implement and evaluate tuition of children, young people and adults with special needs with due reference to the individual person's circumstances.

**Objectives:**

The objective is that the student obtains skills to

- conduct development-based and research-based analyses and evaluations of central, special, fundamental pedagogical issues
- formulate personal and professional views on special pedagogical problems
- take part in inter-disciplinary discussions
- identify special pedagogical problems relating to organisational, institutional and social conditions and opportunities
- prepare, implement and evaluate tuition adapted to the individual student's needs
- prepare, issue and evaluate student plans
- describe, analyse and evaluate conditions of significance for the way individuals, organisations and institutions perform tasks in relation to people with special needs
- describe, analyse and evaluate normality and non-conformance in a historical light

describe, analyse and evaluate opportunities for development for children, young people and adults with special needs.

In the social education programme "Danish, culture and communication" is now a separate, compulsory subject. The aim of the subject is to make the students more cultural and linguistic confident and better qualified to support the individual child in its social and linguistic development. Through this subject the students obtain an insight in how culture, communication and language are part of the forming of identity, understanding of culture and ability to express one self. The subject comprises development of language and Danish as a second language, different concepts of culture and cultural diversity. An aim of the subject is that the trained social educator can communicate with the child in a precisely, understandable and varied way and also with the parents – Danish and non-Danish – in an appropriate and professional way.

**d) pre-service teacher training, recruitment, deployment, working conditions and in-service professional development**

For information about the pre-service teacher training see above and World Data for more details on recent reforms.

**2. Inclusive education: The way of the future**

See above under 1.2.a)

## CHAPTER 5. Adult learning and education

### 1.1. Major reforms and innovations introduced in the education system, in particular concerning:

#### a) the organisation, structure and management

Denmark has a long-standing tradition for life-long learning for adults, ranging from liberal adult education activities to qualifying general as well as vocationally oriented adult education, both basic education, further education and continuing training.

#### *AMU*

Adult vocational training (AMU) is short vocational training programmes mainly for low skilled and skilled workers on the labour market. The programmes correspond to the level of upper secondary vocational education and training. From 2001-2004 the programme was reformed and a new framework of management, financing and structuring and presentation of the content was introduced.

The social partners play a major role in the management, priority setting, development, organisation and quality assurance of AMU. The social partners take part in the 11 continuing training and education committees, each responsible for a specific sector of the labour market. The committees have to continuously analyse the need for new competencies on the labour market and for developing relevant new programmes. At local level social partners participate in the governing board at institutions providing AMU. Each institution sets up a one or several local education boards for AMU programmes directed at specific local job areas.

There are about 120 schools approved by the Ministry of Education to providing AMU all over the country – the principle being to offer training programmes in all regions. The providers are adult vocational training centres, vocational technical colleges, commercial colleges, agricultural colleges, social and health service schools etc.

AMU is partly publicly financed. The providers operate within a fixed financial framework (EVE) based on taximeter funding according to the Budget and provided by the Ministry of Education (taximeter grant per full-time equivalent participant, a fixed rate per programme). Once a year the school has to present and negotiate activity and budget targets with the Ministry, i.e. the framework within which the school may decide which programmes they want to provide according to the need in the local area.

#### *TAMU*

The training programme of the training school TAMU is part of the Act of adult vocational training etc. TAMU is an offer for young people with special difficulties. It is a programme for young Danes and immigrants with special adjustment difficulties and without any real connection to the labour market. AMU programmes may be included in the adult vocational training programmes.

TAMU primarily provides vocational and occupational competencies for the job area targeted by the programmes. The training takes place at centres for TAMU..

It is publicly financed as AMU by the State or the local authorities.

#### *Single subject programmes for adults: Hf, AVU and FVU*

##### *Hf as single subject programme*

Single subject courses leading to Hf (Higher Preparatory Examination, see chapter 3) are offered at the Adult Education Centres (VUC), as well as Upper Secondary Schools. These courses are identical to the courses in initial upper secondary education for young people. All qualified young and older adults have

a right of access to general adult education at upper secondary level, with a corresponding obligation for the regional authorities to ensure provision of such education in accordance with the law. Approximately 80,000 students annually complete one or several HF subjects.

Link for more information to the question:

<http://eng.uvm.dk/publications/factsheets/hf08.htm?menuid=2515>

### AVU

The general adult education programme (AVU) at lower education level is also offered at the Adult Education Centres. The programme is based on a single-subject structure, and the subjects can be pieced together according to the individual's own requirements and needs. It is possible to study one or several subjects at the same time.

The target group is primarily adults, who have never completed lower secondary education or who have a need to improve or supplement their basic education.

AVU at lower secondary level is provided as single subject courses. The general adult education is parallel to, but not identical with, the initial basis education system the "Folkeskole" (the Danish municipal primary and lower secondary school for children between the ages of 6-7 and 16). Curricula and examinations are adapted to the experiences and interests of adults.

The teaching leads to an examination, which qualifies for admission to continued education on a par with the school-leaving certificates obtained after the 9th and 10th forms of the Folkeskole.

The AVU programme consists of a broad range of subjects. *The core subjects* are: Danish, English, French, German, mathematics, science, and social studies. The core subjects must be offered once a year at every adult education centre (VUC).

*The additional subjects* are optional subjects for the VUC's to offer, and they are therefore not necessarily found at every VUC: Art, Danish as a second language, IT (information technology), philosophy, history, Latin, media studies, psychology and cooperation and communication.

Subjects are offered at different levels: Basics, G and E.

Link for more information to the question:

<http://eng.uvm.dk/publications/factsheets/adultv.htm?menuid=2525>

### FVU

Preparatory adult education ('Forberedende voksenundervisning', 'FVU' in Danish) was introduced in 2001. The education is course in basic skills in literacy and numeracy and is offered to all adults of 18 years and above, who will benefit from this type of courses.

FVU consists of two subjects: FVU Reading and FVU Mathematics.

FVU Reading includes training in reading, spelling and written presentation. The training is to be functionally adjusted according to the participants. Authentic texts involving the participants' own daily life are used as teaching material. These could include, for example, instruction manuals, articles from trade magazines, work-related notes and manuals and public pamphlets.

FVU Mathematics includes training in number skills, arithmetic and basic mathematical concepts. The training is to be functionally adjusted according to the participants. The teaching involves material taken from daily life. This could include work plans, recipes, payslips, statistics, labels and other specific material.

FVU is a state-financed education programme offered through adult education centres (VUC). Based on organisational agreements with VUC, FVU programmes can be offered by a number of different education institutions.

The teaching of FVU is organised so that it will be in interplay with the daily life of the participants. This means that many of the activities can take place at the daily workplace rather than in educational establishments.

#### *Teaching adults with dyslexia*

Teaching dyslexic adults is targeted for people with basic difficulties in acquiring written language skills. The aim is, through specially organised instruction, to help participants overcome the difficulties and improve their possibilities for taking a natural part in situations requiring written language.

The teaching for adults with dyslexia is planned, targeted and progressive. The teaching is intended to assist in improving the participants' possibilities for taking advantage of compensation strategies and methods that will increase the participants' opportunities for functioning successfully in a job, an education, participating in society and in their private lives.

Teaching for adults with dyslexia is a state-financed teaching programme that is offered by an adult education centre (VUC). In accordance with an operational agreement with VUC, teaching for dyslexics is also provided by:

- Institutions that provide labour market education programmes (AMU)
- Institutions for vocationally oriented education
- Adult education associations and day folk high schools
- Folk high schools, home economics schools and trade schools
- Production schools
- Language centres
- Social and healthcare training schools (SOSU)
- The Forestry College
- Educational institutions with basic maritime education programmes
- Educational institutions with teaching programmes for adults with special needs

The providers can conduct the teaching for dyslexics locally at public and private enterprises, in associations and academic organisations.

#### *Special needs education for adults*

Special needs education for adults is an offer to persons with physical or mental disabilities. Special needs education for adults is a planned, targeted and progressive effort with the aim of compensate – through education - for the effects of a disability. Through special needs education for adults, the participant receives strategies and methods that – to a larger extend - makes the participant able to take part in the society on the same level as people without disabilities.

The education is primarily offered at special schools for adults and at instituts for speaking, hearing and vision. These institutions are either owned by the local authorities or driven by the regional authorities in agreement with the local authorities. Furthermore, private institutions can have an agreement with the local authorities and thereby offer special needs education to adults. The special needs education can also take place the participants own home, at work, etc.

### *Liberal Adult Education*

Liberal adult education, which consists of a wide range of different schools and courses operating within the framework of liberal, non-formal adult education; there is a long-standing tradition of a prolific provision by a large number of private organisations, and of public subsidies. It is part of the concept that such courses do not lead to recognised qualifications.

Independent non-formal educational activity includes:

- evening schools
- University extension courses
- day folk high schools

No particular school or professional qualifications are required for participating in liberal adult education.

### *Evening schools*

Private non-formal adult education activity is based on fellowship/community and the philosophy of the individual providers. The private non-formal education activity must be established by a non-formal adult education association with a board and statute in order to be eligible for a grant and to be allocated facilities.

Non-formal adult education comprises teaching, study circles, lectures, debate-creating activities and flexibly organised activities, and fees are charged for participation. The teaching is usually offered at evening schools which, within the framework laid down in and pursuant to law, themselves create the frame for their choice of subjects and activity. The fundamental principles are free choice of topics, universal assess, free initiative and free choice of teachers.

The local authority sets the financial framework and the rules for how it is to be administered. The local authority can appoint a non-formal adult education committee. The committee carries out administrative tasks such as making concrete decisions regarding, for example, non-formal adult education associations and their activity, assigns facilities and distributes grants.

The evening schools are partly financed by local authorities. Allocation by the municipality must not exceed one third of the evening schools total expenditure and the municipality may differentiate their allocation according to subject, it may decide on special allocations to reduce user payment for special groups of participants.

There are approximately 2,100 evening schools. The number of participant's is approximately 1,000,000 per year.

*University extramural department*

The University Extramural Department is nationwide with a regional structure consisting of 4 divisions in the university cities of Copenhagen, Aarhus, Odense and Aalborg. There are, moreover, more than 100 university extramural committees working with this activity outside of the university cities. Each branch designs its own programmes, which also offer courses by the committees of the region in question.

The state gives grants for costs involved in payroll etc. for lecturers and teachers, travel allowances and administration of the university extramural departments' activities. The size of the grant is laid down in the annual Appropriations Act. The Council for the University Extramural Department distributes the grant for the activity both in and outside of the university cities.

The overall fees must constitute a minimum of 1/4 of the expenditure for remuneration etc, of teachers and 1/3 of the expenditure for remuneration of lecturers.

There are approximately 140,000 participants in extramural courses.

*Day folk high schools*

Day folk high schools are organised as independent, self-governing institutions with its own board and own statute. Day folk high schools offer teaching for adults to better their skills and competences to enter formal education or employment. The target group is mainly low-skilled persons having a week connection with the labour market.

The courses normally run for 4 to 18 weeks full time. Many day high schools offer preparatory adult education (FVU) in reading, writing and mathematics.

Before 2002 the schools were co-financed by the State, now by the local authorities. The local authority can decide to give a grant to the non-formal adult education or employment-creating activity of the day high school. The local authority decides the form that the municipal support is to take and may lay down further conditions for the grant. The local authority supervises the day folk high schools to which it awards grants.

There are approximately 50 day folk high schools with approximately 16,000 participants per year.

Lifelong (permanent) education is crucial for continuous growth in Denmark; consequently there must be current possibility for the individual to update his or her qualifications.

The objective of the Government has been to strengthen the appreciation of the education that has taken place adult liberal education and to create a far better interaction between this popular education and the education that takes place in the formal education system and the workplace.

In 2007 Parliament passed a new law regarding access to evaluation of qualifications and recognition of life experiences in adult education and supplementary training. This means that the evaluation of life experiences will take place in relation to a specific education, a professional level or admission requirement which relate to an education. The evaluation is carried out by the school, institution etc. approved for the specific education.

The University of Southern Denmark has for the Ministry of Education developed 3 IT-based tools to be used to describe the qualifications acquired within either adult liberal education or participating in voluntary activities.

## **b) the aims and purposes of each education level**

### *AMU*

The adult vocational training programmes serve a triple purpose:

- To contribute to maintaining and improving the vocational skills and competencies of the participants in accordance with the needs of the labour market and to furthering competence development of the participants.
- To contribute to solving the labour market restructuring and adaptation problems in accordance with the needs on the labour market in a short and a long perspective.
- To give adults the possibility of upgrading competencies for the labour market as well as personal competencies through possibilities to obtain formal competence in vocational education and training.

Participants may acquire new and updated skills and competencies to better their opportunities to managing new and wider job functions and to becoming more flexible on the labour market.

AMU has been developed for low skilled and skilled workers. But everybody may participate irrespective of educational background. Only formal entrance requirement is being resident or holding a job in Denmark. In general:

- The programmes are mainly provided for skilled and low skilled workers having a job. Workers and employers in private as well as public sector enterprises may participate in the programmes.
- The unemployed in their first unemployment term may have a combination of adult vocational training programmes of their own selection for 6 weeks. Unemployed with a personal action plan from the job centres/local authorities may participate.
- Immigrants and refugees may follow ordinary courses or courses specifically developed for this group.

### *TAMU*

TAMU is a practical programme for young people with special difficulties. These may be young people with a poor school background as well as social and personal problems that are expressed through alcohol and substance abuse and crime.

TAMU primarily provides vocational and occupational competencies for the job areas targeted by the programmes. However, development of the individual participant's ability to be part of a work-related context and handle the social interaction at the workplace is also emphasised. It is a question of having a sense of responsibility towards the work being performed, pace and work rhythm, co-operation with others and not least regular attendance.

Through TAMU, most of the participants obtain competencies that are so specifically aimed at the needs of the individual and the requirements of the labour market that they obtain a job or continue with further vocational training after having completed the TAMU programme.

### *FVU*

The overall objectives of the preparatory adult education is to give these people a possibility to improve and supplement their literacy and numeracy skills, This takes place with a view towards continuing education as well as strengthening their prerequisites for playing an active role in society.

**c) curricular policies, educational content and teaching and learning strategies:***AMU*

AMU programmes and affiliated single subjects from the mainstream vocational education and training programme has been organised in joint competence descriptions (FKB). Every joint competence description correspond a job area for low skilled and skilled workers. It consists of:

- A description of the typical workplaces.
- A description of relevant competencies within the job areas.
- A list of adult training programmes and affiliated single subject courses from the mainstream vocational education and training programmes leading to those competencies.

There are about 120 joint competence descriptions to which are affiliated about 2800 adult vocational training programmes and 300 single subject courses.

They are mainly short programmes, the duration of which normally varies from half a day to 6 weeks, in average 3½ days. The programmes may be combined in a package including programmes in the same field at a higher level.

The training is organised in classes or as open workshops or organised at the workplace. Normally the training activities take place during working hours, but may also take place outside working hours e.g. during weekends or as distant learning. Language of instruction is normally Danish, but may be other languages.

In general there are three main types of programmes:

- Specific job/sector related skills and competencies, e.g. crafts, technical insight and knowledge of materials.
- General skills and competencies, e.g. ICT and job relevant mathematics.
- Labour management skills and competencies, e.g. social communication, organisation and management.

In addition there are special programmes for:

- Recognition of prior learning according to the individual competence assessment programme (IKV) within the adult vocational programme – with the aim of recognising competencies acquired in education and training, on the labour market or from spare time activities as the basis for composition of an individual training plan including one or several adult vocational training programmes for the participant.
- Immigrants and refugees not having adequate Danish language skills to join ordinary adult vocational training courses, may join specifically developed programmes, e.g. Danish language courses combined with introductory short training courses and work placement. According to individual needs immigrants and refugees may join a combination of courses for a short or long period, where ordinary adult vocational training courses are combined with Danish language courses and practical training.

Participants with inadequate basic skills and competencies may be assessed in reading, writing, arithmetic and mathematics and may receive guidance in this context. Participants may follow preparatory courses for adult with low qualifications in reading, writing and mathematics (FVU) as a supplement and support to the adult vocational training programme/-s.

On completion of a programme the participant receives a certificate qualifying for the national labour market. For about 150 of the programmes the participant receives a formal, qualifying certificate for the labour market recognized by the legal authorities, e.g. crane driver.

#### *TAMU*

Adult vocational training programmes and single subject courses from the joint competence descriptions may be included in TAMU.

The duration of a TAMU-programme is normally 34 weeks. The content of the programme are preparing for a job in different sectors as transport and logistics, agriculture, building and construction or facility service and cleaning.

On completion of a TAMU-programme the participant receive a certificate.

#### *AVU*

The teaching takes place at different levels. Each subject has one or more steps, which are subdivided into levels and modules. Some subjects offer basic teaching meant for students who need to start from scratch in the subject. Many of the subjects consist of modules. This provision provides the student with a variety of options as far as entrance and exit are concerned. A module normally lasts six months, but there are no guidelines with regard to the duration. The individual VUC will itself decide on the duration of the modules. A recommended number of teaching hours has, however, been stipulated.

The curriculum is laid down at central level, but at the same time it takes into account the experience of the adult students.

#### *FVU*

Following the altering of the regulation concerning FVU in the spring of 2007, a number of activities were initiated.

- The earlier investigative activities concerning the FVU area was replaced by a permanent arrangement. This means that investigative networks visit the companies, and explore the need for adult education.
- The 1st of August 2008 a compulsory access test to FVU are introduced. The purpose of the test is to determine whether or not FVU is the right programme for the individual. After the test, the applicant will receive individual guidance based on the results. If the applicant is judged to have the right profile, they will be offered the opportunity to participate in an FVU education programme on a level appropriate to their skills.
- Pilot projects concerning new FVU-subjects in English and IT are being carried through at the moment.

#### **d) the legal framework (in particular new legal provisions):**

Rules laid down by legislation:

Act no. 1153 of 07 December 2005 on preparatory adult education

Act no. 190 of 18 March 2008 on adult vocational training etc.

Act no. 136 of 01 March 2006 on schools and institutions for vocational education and training

Act no. 956 of 28 November 2003 on open education (adult vocational education) etc.

Act no. 535 of 14 June 2004 on liberal adult education

**e) objectives and principal characteristics of current and forthcoming reforms:***AMU*

Changes will be seen in guidance and counselling activities to ensure that information about the adult vocational training programme are reaching out also to enterprises and workers normally not using AMU. Especially small and medium size enterprises and low skilled workers with pure basic skills and competencies are in focus. Also further upgrading of the teachers is on the agenda. Finally the Ministry of Education are revising the criteria for legalising schools providing AMU programmes to get a more comprehensive and simple and transparent structure of providers all over the country.

*AVU*

The General Adult Education system has been restructured following act no. 998 of 20 July 2007 from the Ministry of Education.

**1.2. Main policies, achievements and lessons learned especially as regards:****a) access to education (focussing on actions being taken to reach children, youth and adults that are currently excluded:**

It is crucial, that more adults participate in the labour market and participation in adult education and continuing training and competence development in enterprises is strengthened. This applies regardless of what job a person does. Many, especially low-skilled workers, people with literacy problems and bilinguals either do not participate in adult education and continuing training at all or do so far less than other groups in the labour market. In addition, many enterprises do not invest enough in systematic development of their employees. This applies particular to small and medium-size enterprises.

Demand for adult education and continuing training among workers and enterprises must therefore be strengthened. Those with the lowest level of formal education and training who have the greatest need for and barriers to education must be motivated. Public and private enterprises must be encouraged to become learning and developing workplaces to a greater degree and to help strengthen the development of human resources.

The Danish Government and the social partners agree that an enhanced effort in adult education and continuing training is a shared possibility:

- Individuals are responsible for continuously developing their competences and ability in the labour market.
- The task of enterprises is to ensure the development of the competences of employees in line with the needs of the enterprises and the requirements of the labour market.
- The role of the social partners is to contribute to the development of the competences of the labour force and of enterprises as places of learning at work.
- The role of the authorities is to provide a good framework, relevant education programmes of high quality and the necessary incentives to ensure that everyone in the labour market has good opportunities to participate in adult education and continuing training.

Based on close dialogue with the social partners, the Danish Government has laid down the following goals to be promoted in adult education and continuing training:

- Everyone shall engage in lifelong learning.

- Adult education and continuing training efforts must be effective and flexible. They shall support good job opportunities for individuals, good competitiveness in enterprises and high employment and prosperity in society.
- Adult education and continuing training must provide everyone with opportunities to improve competences – not least those with the lowest level of formal education.
- Adult education and continuing training must reflect changes in the qualification requirements and needs of the labour market.

The Government's strategy from 2007 for the promotion of lifelong learning in adult education and continuing training, which is based on the agreement on future wealth and welfare and investment in the future, as well as agreement on implementation of the globalisation fund, comprises the following key initiatives:

- Guidance and counselling for employees and enterprises is to be strengthened.
- Better and easier access to recognition of prior learning is to be ensured in all public financed adult education and continuing training programmes from basic adult education to diploma (bachelor) level.
- A significant effort to increase participation in literacy and numeracy courses for adults. Provision is to be made more flexible, and possibilities of combining literacy and numeracy courses with adult vocational training are to be utilised better.
- Better provision for bilinguals who have problems with the Danish language will be developed in the Danish language education programmes for foreign adults and in other general and vocational adult education to ensure that they can cope in the labour market and as citizens.
- Adult education and continuing training provision in e.g. labour market training will be made more attractive, targeted and flexible in relation to the needs of individuals and enterprises.
- A better and broader range of qualifying adult education programmes at higher education levels shall be developed in the adult further education system.
- The number of adult apprentices who can obtain a vocational education and training qualification shall be increased through increased State grants.
- Ensuring institutions' conditions of provision, more flexible tuition fees and a new model for financing special allowances in vocational adult education and continuing training are to be discussed with the social partners and the political parties behind the welfare agreement.
- Systematic competence development in small and medium-sized enterprises will be promoted in public as well as private enterprises through, among other things, the development of methods and tools.
- Increased public and private investment in adult education and continuing training will be promoted.
- The progress of efforts in the area of adult education and continuing training will be monitored through the development of an indicator system.

In order to fulfil the goals and key initiatives the Danish Government has set aside an extra 2 billion DKK over a six years period for the area of adult education and continuing training within the context of a broad political agreement. Of these, 1 billion DKK has been set aside to strengthening vocational adult education and continuing training, subject to the condition that in forthcoming collective bargaining the social partners accept greater financial co-responsibility for an increased effort in the area of adult education and continuing training.

The Danish Government will discuss with the social partners as well as with the political partners and how adult education and continuing training and competence development in enterprises can be strengthened.

**b) learning outcome, particularly concerning the efforts to improve learning achievement (how well are students performing at various levels) and reduce inequalities (how have disparities in achievement been reduced):**

*Recognition of prior learning*

The main objective of the Government's initiative is recognition of prior learning (RPL) seen in an educational perspective. But it also stresses the importance of improving the interplay and interaction between learning taking place in formal education, in work life and in the third sector.

The purpose of assessing and recognising prior learning in formal education and training, which is what the new legislation is about, is to give the individual the possibility to continue to build on his or her competences irrespective of where and how they were acquired, and thus obtain formal recognition. The reference points for the prior learning assessment are the educational objectives and/or entrance requirements pertaining to the desired formal education or training programme. The result of the assessment and recognition is documented by a certificate/documentation as described above. The individual contributes through documentation of his or her competences acquired in education, in work life or in the third sector. Whether the person's competences may be recognised, depends on whether the educational objectives etc. of the particular education programme are considered to be met.

In work life, identification and clarification of 'real' competences, and making competences visible, plays an important role for the job and competence development of the employees as well as for the competitiveness of the enterprise. Many enterprises already work systematically with identification, clarification and assessment of the employees' competences as part of the enterprise's competence development. Through the enterprise's prior learning assessment, the employee may be assessed in reference to certain job functions. As a rule, an enterprise chooses to use its own yardstick, or reference points, for its employees' competence assessment and development. Clarification and documentation of competences in relation to the enterprise's job functions may also be used actively by the individual employee, or by the enterprise itself, to obtain recognition in relation to a state approved education or training programme.

Within liberal adult education as well as in association life, 'real competences' are developed in many different contexts and comprise a broad spectrum of knowledge, skills and personal competences. Making 'real competences' visible is seen by the third sector as an important contribution to improving the individual's awareness of the benefit of e.g. a liberal adult education course and competences acquired in the process. On this background, the third sector organisations and the Ministry of Education co-operated to develop a set of tools that may support the individual in evaluating, describing and documenting competences acquired in liberal adult education, association life and voluntary social work, respectively, which may prove to be an active contribution to a person's competence development. Documentation for competences acquired in the third sector may also be used as preparation for job interviews, or for RPL in relation to a formal education or training programme.

## **2. Inclusive education: the way of the future**

See 1.2 a).

## Chapter 6

### Act on Guidance in Relation to choice of Education, Training and Career

#### 1.1. Major reforms and innovations introduced in the education system, in particular concerning:

##### a) the organisation, structure and management of the (education)/guidance system

Educational and vocational guidance is given high priority in Denmark. The overall structure and seven national targets in the field of guidance are defined in the [Act on Guidance in Relation to Choice of Education, Training and Career](#), which was adopted by the Danish parliament in April 2003. Subsequently, the act from 2003 has been amended several times: in 2006, 2007 and 2008. The Ministry of Education is responsible for continuous supervision and development of guidance services in the educational sector. With the latest legislation from August 2008 Act on Guidance includes both all guidance related to choice of education and guidance related to fulfilling vocational and upper secondary education and higher education. Guidance delivered by guidance centres and delivered by educational institutions are all supervised from the Ministry of Education

The Act on guidance is primarily targeted at young people up to the age of 25 years but it also concerns services for adults wishing to enter a higher education programme. Read more about the [main aims of Danish guidance](#).

Two different types of guidance centres exist:

##### 1) Youth Guidance Centres

Since 2004 local authority councils have had the responsibility for ensuring guidance to be provided to students in forms 6-10 and to young people under the age of 25 whose situation is unsatisfactory in terms of guidance, education or employment. The actual guidance is provided by 45 Youth Guidance Centres, most of which have been established by groups of local authorities.

The guidance is now offered to young people up to the age of 25, and the guidance centre has an obligation to give guidance to all young people who are not enrolled at an educational institution or who have dropped out or are in risk of dropping out of youth education.

There is a very ambitious ongoing project in cooperation between local Governments and Ministry of Education in order to improve the effort of giving all young people a youth education. Guidance plays an important role in this project, which is a part of the strategy to reach the goal of minimizing drop out rate from youth education and reaching the national goal of 95 % of a youth cohort to complete of youth education.

##### 2) Regional Guidance Centres

The Danish Ministry of Education established 2004 seven Regional Guidance Centres, which have regional responsibility for the provision of guidance on the choice of higher education and career as well as on continued education within the system of continued education for adults, subject to certain overall guidelines formulated by the Ministry.

The centres have existed for 4 years now, and the centres have had success in reaching the students at upper secondary schools, and there has been an improvement of cooperation between the different groups of guidance practitioners in order to improve service for students at school and outside school.

Furthermore there is guidance as mentioned above at all educational institutions provided by guidance staff. The responsibility for this guidance activity is placed at management of the specific educational institution.

A new report concludes that students at upper secondary schools have improved their skills regarding finding relevant information on career and further education and that they have been more aware of their personal and career related goals – thanks to the guidance given by the regional guidance centres. [Regional guidance centres](#) with responsibility for guidance related to the transition from youth education to higher education.

The Ministry of Education is responsible for a national guidance portal: [www.uddannelsesguiden.dk](http://www.uddannelsesguiden.dk) or simply [www.ug.dk](http://www.ug.dk). Uddannelses Guiden means the "Education Guide". It provides information on:

- Education and training possibilities at all levels
- Vocations/professions
- Labour market conditions and statistics
- Study programmes taught in English at Danish colleges and universities

The website [www.ug.dk](http://www.ug.dk) is being updated all the time to encompass all new changes within the educational, vocational field and in the field of labour market. Two private companies are contracted to have the full responsibility for the website. There is close dialogue between two contract holders and The Ministry of Education in order to secure an updated web all the time.

In order to spread examples of good practice within the field of guidance there are published articles showing activities and strategies at different locations (educational and geographical). This is shown at a specific site which is a part of the portal (Virtual Resource Centre). At this site, there is a more specific toolbox for guidance practitioners.

In order to provide relevant information about the opportunities available to people with disabilities, the Ministry of Education has also established a web-based accessibility portal with the following address:

<http://tilgaengelighed.emu.dk/>

#### **b) the aims and purposes at each level**

There is a stronger focus on the political goals of having a higher percentage of the youth to fulfil a youth education and a higher education. Also there is more focus on the necessity of cooperation between the guidance staff at educational institution level and the guidance staff at the guidance centres. There are national goals for guidance, which are to be followed at all levels of guidance activity. That means, that Guidance Centres and educational institutions must follow those national goals, which are set up in Act on Guidance.

#### **c) curricular policies, educational content and teaching and learning strategies**

Through the provision of high quality information and guidance, the students' and students' abilities to acquire and use the information about education opportunities will be strengthened, and they will

be better prepared to make decisions concerning choice of education. The Ministry thus seeks to reduce the time span between an individual's graduation from one level and his/her start at the following level in the education system; a time span that has been relatively high in Denmark in recent years. Furthermore, students are more likely to choose the right education from the start, if they possess the knowledge and the decision-making skills needed to make qualified decisions. All in all, the Ministry expects that the guidance reform will have a positive effect on drop-out rates.

**d) the legal framework of education (in particular, new legal provisions) and  
e) objectives and principal characteristics of current and forthcoming reforms**

With new legislation in the field of guidance – related to the guidance centres and related to the youth education institution – there is now a more precise description and understanding of the different roles of guidance related to the various sectors. There is a closer connection and cooperation between the different areas of guidance in order to improve the overall goals of guidance. There is a specific focus on young people with specific need of guidance. The guidance provided shall be seen as an attempt to get higher fulfilling rates in the area of youth education, specially the vocational education area. There have been taken specific measures – especially in the VET system in order to support young people in risk of dropping out of education. Those special measures are: Using mentors, using special pedagogical and psychological intervention when needed, having more focus on the practical competences when planning curriculum and using guidance more focused. Below are listed headlines of changes and priorities:

**Headlines of priorities within guidance are the following:**

- Professional guidance (improve qualification of practitioners)
- The transition from education to jobs must be clearer
- Smooth transition from compulsory school to upper secondary education
- Smooth transition from upper secondary education to higher education
- Measurable results
  - Quantitative goals for completion and transition
  - Systematic benchmarking
- Guidance from the 6th form
  - Special attention to students at increased risk of not starting or completing an upper secondary education programme
  - Bridging the transition from lower secondary school to an upper secondary programme
- Mentoring scheme for young people who are particularly disadvantaged (VET)
- Municipalities responsible that all young people complete a general or vocational upper secondary education
- Better guidance about the actual requirements in upper secondary

Better feedback from general and vocational upper secondary

Since 2004, the act on guidance has been revised three times and the latest revision of the law was effective as from August 1<sup>st</sup> 2008. New legislation can be seen here (the links are to Danish versions only).

Rules laid down by legislation:

Consolidation Act no 630 of 28 June 2008 on Guidance in Relation to Choice of Education, Training and Career

Ministerial order no 196 of 26 March 2008 on bridging course and introduction to Secondary Education

Ministerial order no 704 of 30 June 2008 on Guidance in Relation to Choice of Education, Training and Career

Ministerial order no 705 of 30 June 2008 on guidance of higher education and careers

Ministerial order no 706 of 30 June 2008 on completion of educations

In June 2007, another comprehensive plan for adult guidance services was agreed upon by the Danish Parliament. This plan focuses primarily on improving information and guidance services related to adult and further education and training. Four new initiatives will be implemented over a three-year period: adult guidance networks - A National Centre for Competence Development - An Internet-based guidance portal - A National Adult Guidance Council. [Click for more information about adult guidance](#)

## **1.2. Main policies, achievements and lessons learned especially as regards**

### **Quality assurance**

A quality assurance system has been introduced, which will contribute to the achievement of higher quality standards in guidance by making it possible to register all guidance activities and the outcome and effects of these activities. The collected data will serve as a scientific basis for evaluating the guidance centres and for improving their services. Developing a quality assurance system on a complex area such as guidance has been a learning process, which will continue in the years to come.

The guidance centres and the educational institutions are required to establish a quality assurance system, which can be used to document activities, quality and effect on clients and society. It will give the centres and institutions a comprehensive view of their guidance services and serve as a foundation for further development. The use of a quality assurance system is also demanded in order to evaluate the performance of the private companies responsible for the national guidance portal and the virtual centre of expertise for guidance ([www.vejledningsviden.dk](http://www.vejledningsviden.dk)).

The requirements concerning quality assurance are included in the act on guidance and described in the executive orders covering the Regional Guidance Centres (“Studievalg”), the Youth Guidance Centres (“Ungdommens Uddannelsesvejledning”, UU) and the study advice on educational institutions, as well as in the Ministry’s contracts with the Regional Guidance Centres and the abovementioned private companies.

#### *The purpose of the quality assurance system*

The quality assurance system will be subject to continuous development. The aim of the system is to ensure that the contents of guidance services meet high quality standards so that the guidance provided is of greatest possible benefit to the clients. Furthermore, the system contains a monitoring clause in order to ensure that the guidance services meet the main objectives of the new act and lead to the expected results. Development of the quality assurance system takes place in cooperation with the interested parties.

In general, the Ministry's concept for development of the quality of guidance services involves three interdependent factors:

1. Methods and tools
2. Guidance practitioners' qualifications
3. Organisation and networks

By improving these factors and making them more tangible, the individual centres' ability to assure and further develop the quality of their own guidance services will be strengthened. The work related to quality assurance is a task for each of the municipal or regional centres. However, annual reports and developments will be discussed at yearly reviews with the municipal councils and the Ministry respectively.

Six university colleges in Denmark offer a one-year modular common training programme at diploma level for guidance practitioners across sectors. Furthermore, the Danish University of Education offers a one-year Master of Education programme in guidance counselling. With an amendment in 2007 of the 2003 Act on guidance, it is now a requirement that guidance practitioners working in the education system complete the diploma programme or, alternatively, that they – through assessment and recognition of prior learning – can document that they hold the required qualifications. Please, [click for more information about training of guidance practitioners.](#)

## Chapter 7

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