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Contents

1. Challenges for the 21st century 2

- 1.1. National Development of Competences ... 2
- 1.2. A national strategy for education, learning and ICT ... 3
- 1.3. Annual topic conferences in Sorø ... 3

2. General areas 4

- 2.1. Values in Practice ... 4
- 2.2. Democracy in the education system ... 5
- 2.3. The educational policy green paper 2000 ... 6
- 2.4. Internationalisation ... 7
- 2.5. Assessment of foreign qualifications ... 8
- 2.6. The Danish Evaluation Institute ... 9

3. The primary and lower secondary school 10

- 3.1. Introduction ... 10
- 3.2. The “Folkeskole” year 2000 (F2000) ... 10
- 3.3. New demands on the 10th form ... 11
- 3.4. Distinct goals ... 11
- 3.5. ICT-efforts ... 12

4. Youth education (upper secondary schools and VET) 13

- 4.1. Introduction ... 13
- 4.2. Youth education programmes ... 13
- 4.3. Youth education reforms and development programmes ... 14

5. Higher Education 16

- 4.4. Introduction ... 16
- 4.5. The Danish University of Education ... 17
- 4.6. Centres for Higher Education (CVU) ... 17
- 4.7. Diploma level education (MVU) ... 18
- 4.8. The short advanced education programmes (KVU) ... 18

6. Adult education and continuing training 20

- 6.1. Reform of Adult Education ... 20
- 6.2. Danish as a second language for adult immigrants ... 24
- 6.3. Act on the allocation of financial support to “Folkeoplysning” ... 25
- 6.4. Development on general adult education ... 25

1. Challenges for the 21st century

In a world of rapid and profound changes in almost all aspects of life the educational system is one of the key-agents in societal development, since it has to endow the citizens with skills for meeting the challenges caused by all the changes.

Internationalisation globalisation - requires a lot from both societies and the individual citizen: The global market offers possibilities for and demands towards the enterprises and their employees to act economically, production wise, culturally and socially on the world stage.

In the 21st century knowledge and skills are key factors for the production. Especially the skills for handling the tremendous amounts of information in our knowledge society are of great importance. The ever increasing and exhaustive political cooperation between the states creates completely new conditions for both the national and the local political work and challenges traditional comprehensions of democracy.

The rapid changes require skills for readjustment, adaptation and updating in all fields of life - and throughout life - for everyone who will - or shall - play an active part in society.

The educational system can contribute decisively in meeting these challenges. It can and must provide the citizens with the necessary prerequisites for life in the form of qualifications and competences in all fields - from technical know-how, creativity over language or cultural skills to the awareness of the values that constitutes the society and the community.

1.1. National Development of Competences

In 1997 the Ministry of Education launched the programme *National Development of Competences*. The main objective of the programme is to place the Danish educational system among the 10 most outstanding systems in the world - measured in relation to as well OECD analyses as well as to specific national targets.

The initiatives to reach the objective can be divided into five areas:

1. The Danish educational system shall belong to the world elite
2. Personal qualifications shall be developed
3. The partnership between educational institutions and working life shall be strengthened
4. Lifelong learning and recurrent education shall be developed
5. The role of the teacher and of the participant shall be broadened and the introduction of ICT shall be intensified.

The means are among other things the development, assessment and evaluation of quality in all parts of the educational system. Two of the goals are, for instance, that the proportion of young people receiving a general or vocational youth education has to be raised from approx. 80% to 95%, and that the proportion of young people taking a higher degree has to be raised from 35% to 50%.

In the report "National Development of Competences", the different qualifications needed in the future are described in detail. The report, thus, sums up very well concepts and classifications frequently used in the Danish debate.

The conceptualisation and operationalisation of the terms competences and qualifications "abeams" the distinction between knowledge, skills, sentiments and character. Therefore one or more of these elements may form part of a specific competence or qualification.

The general framework of concepts has been derived from current research, while the list of specific personal qualifications/competences is the result of interviews with key persons in "spearhead enterprises".

Thus the report on National Development of Competences is aiming to intensify the debate about the educational system in the future.

1.2. A national strategy for education, learning and ICT

As part of the government's overall ICT-strategy a long-term "Strategy for Education, Learning and ICT" is being worked out. This strategy will be based upon the fact that development today depends on how we share knowledge. It is essential that everybody in the society acquires sufficient skills in handling ICT and make use of all the possibilities available. The teachers have a key role in the diffusion of the use of ICT through education.

1.3. Annual topic conferences in Sorø

Each year in August the Minister of Education holds a one topic conference for key persons within the topic in question. This topic, which is of immediate importance, is thus made subject to speeches and dialogue. These themes mirror central aspects of the current educational debate.

Through the nineties the topics were as follows:

- 1991 On the scent of the Dane
- 1992 General education - in Sorø and in the school
- 1993 "Folkeoplysning" (general (or liberal) adult education)
- 1994 Expanding universities - about higher education
- 1995 Recurrent education
- 1996 The future role of the teacher
- 1997 Education and democracy
- 1998 Responsibility and education
- 1999 Broadness of the educational system
- 2000 Values in practice

2. General areas

2.1. Values in Practice

In the summer of 2000 the present Minister of Education - in a very personal form - presented her views on values and education. Values in Practice were the theme of the Sorø-meeting.

In the preface the Minister describes the background for the discussion about values:

"Danish society has developed at a rapid pace over the past 50 years. The realisation of the welfare society has on the other hand meant that today we find ourselves in a situation where things are much less given. Our lives no longer follow the beaten track. To a great extent we have made a virtue of constant change. We change jobs and move house more often, and we move abroad to live in other countries more than ever before. We more or less tailor our lives to our needs and abilities.

The formulation and teaching of values have at all times been taken care of by the education sector. It is therefore quite natural that the education system should become a central forum for the discussion of values and their basis. It is my firm expectation that teachers and educators at all levels of the education system will step forward and become more visible and play a key role in the discussion about the values that schools should impart, and about how they should do this. When all is said and done, we must recognise that schools and educational institutions are there to serve the causes of information and common sense. It is an important task to combat emotionalism, foolishness, and opinion and value relativism. Schools and educational institutions are and will remain conservative and supportive institutions in relation to society, with the task, among other things, of giving children, young people and adults a clear idea of the value basis on which our society is based. It is, for instance, the task of the education system to turn us all into good, committed and law-abiding citizens and to enable us to understand ourselves and act as citizens in a democratic society, at the same time as it enables us to exert an influence on the development of society and thereby contribute towards forming the present and the future.

And this is precisely what I hope to do in this discussion paper: to present my ideas about what I think should be the core values in our society – in the community and thus also in our schools and in our courses of further education.

Schools and other educational institutions play a quite decisive role with respect to our common values. It is when we teach and educate our children and young people that they learn what should be our common ballast of right and wrong. And this is why teachers and educators will play a central role as interpreters of what is right and wrong – a role which they already have today. The difference is that they are now being encouraged to say it so loudly and clearly. For the same reason I have also been very anxious to promote a number of fundamental values in the education system.

It is also my hope that schools and other educational institutions in Denmark will not only use this discussion paper as a point of departure for a discussion among head teachers, teachers, pupils and parents about values, their content and what this means for them and for their teaching or education. The long-term objective is also for each individual school to formulate its own value basis that takes its point of departure in a discussion of the outlined values, and which describes how they are or will be implemented in the day-to-day management and teaching. For values can only be tested and assessed through practice."

The core values are:

1. Intellectual and spiritual freedom and freedom of expression
2. Respect for the rights of others, a sense of one's own worth and tolerance
3. The community and the individual
4. Solidarity and care
5. Self-perception and identity
6. Dialogue and discussion
7. Curiosity, commitment and enthusiasm

8. The desire to be active and the pleasure that work can give
9. Insight into and responsibility for the natural world.

In the publication the individual values and the role of school and education in relation to the values are discussed in detail.

The Minister concludes:

"I hope that this contribution about my view on the fundamental values will be met by other contributions in an intense and lively debate about the fundamental values in our education system. A discussion which, on the one hand, will deal with the values which we need to develop, and which, on the other hand, will treat questions about how we can put them into practice. In my opinion, this can be done by, among other things, supporting children and young people's awareness of the values and by focusing on absorption both in subject-specific and social issues.

(...)

Values and practice must be closely interconnected. Practice without values becomes emptiness, values without practice will not have the impact to change our society for the better. We will be able to live together in mutual respect.

For the school should both socialise and give the individual pupil and student a possibility to develop as a whole and competent human being, who can shape his or her own life and contribute to changing the world."

"Values in Practice." The Ministry of Education 2000.

2.2. Democracy in the Education System

In order to contribute to the continuous development of democracy the Parliament in may 2000 adopted an Act on Democracy in the Education System.

The education system plays a central part in the development of our democracy. Thus, the legislation encompasses decisions in order to ensure

1. education in the principles of democracy at all levels
2. a democratic educational institution – and
3. influence on the everyday life of the institutions and the educations.

According to this act rules will be implemented in the preambles for all schools and educations that the educations shall seek to develop the interest and the prerequisites for active participation in a democratic society.

2.2.1. Student Democracy

The new act gives influence to students. In the future, pupils and students will be able to exert more direct influence on their day-to-day school life.

What is the new common area of the school to be like, and how do we tackle vandalism at school in the best possible way? The new act on student democracy in the education system gives the pupils and students a possibility to exert an influence on the resolution of these and many other questions in the future.

The act among other things gives pupils and students from basic school to further and higher education the right to set up a pupils'/students' council and to have representatives on the school board. Furthermore, pupils/students are to be represented in all councils and committees set up by the school which deal with matters of interest to them.

The act will be followed by a number of ministerial orders which will provide more detailed provisions concerning the activities of the pupils'/students' councils and not least the schools' obligations vis-à-vis the pupils'/students' councils.

Apart from getting better possibilities of exerting an influence on decisions in matters of interest to them, pupils and students will also act as an expert panel for the Minister of Education. The Ministry of Education will set up overall councils within several areas of education where pupils and students as well as other interest groups will be represented. The Minister may consult these councils on specific issues.

For some educational fields committees will be established. In these committees local authorities (municipalities and counties), head teachers, teachers and students and in some cases the labour market will be represented. The function of the committees is advisory towards the Minister of Education

The report on which the Act on Democracy in the Education System is based was, in the best democratic spirit, prepared in close co-operation with pupils and students from all parts of the country. Among other things, specially established pupil groups pointed out action areas that they found essential, and the Ministry of Education held a conference, where the Minister was in direct dialogue with the children and young people.

2.3. The Educational Policy Green Paper 2000

2.3.1. New challenges with regard to competency

Traditionally, subjects constitute the framework, in which knowledge is created, developed and maintained. This in particular applies to science subjects, but also to the subjects studied in trade programmes and in programmes leading to a profession. Subjects are also an organisational principle for most programmes, where the totality of a given programme consists of a plurality of teaching subjects. Subjects and competencies are therefore central concepts in the educational system.

Subjects and competencies are being put under pressure. Primarily due to an almost explosive production of knowledge - both within, across and outside the subjects. The amount of subject matter is becoming more and more enormous and tend to tax the framework of the traditional subjects to breaking point. From within, through the production of knowledge within the subject. And from without, through other ways and forums in which knowledge is developed and transmitted. Furthermore, the working life, in which the competency is to be used in the production, is subject to a rapid reorganisation towards a much more flexible labour market.

Therefore more students seek to build up their competencies across the existing subject range. And the challenge facing the competencies is therefore how we can ensure a subject specific environment from which students can derive knowledge at the same time as it is possible for them to cut across it and develop their own competency in an individual perspective.

A possible answer to this challenge on the part of the subjects is to find the **core of the subjects** - their core competency. What is the inalienable core of competency for which, under all circumstances, there will be a need also in a modern world - and how do we maintain and develop it?

From a pedagogical point of view, the challenge is both to maintain a high subject specific level **and** make it possible to cut across the different competencies. We must try to find the answer to the question of how the insightful master is created. And the answer to this question is no doubt that it requires the ability to cut across established insights and problem solving methods while maintaining a possibility and room for immersion into the subject.

2.3.2. The competency of the Danish educational system seen in an international perspective.

The educational system as a national project is challenged by influences from the international community. The educational system must try to unite the two opposing values:

- The educational system as a safeguard for language and culture and
- The education system as a gateway to an international education and training market.

The influence from outside has four dimensions:

- Students' need to acquire credits to study abroad
- Distance learning as a possibility and challenge for Danish educational institutions
- Foreign students' need for integration into Danish education and training environments
- Immigration as a challenge to the educational system.

It is being discussed whether it is possible to define a special Danish competency. The conclusion is that "the purely Danish" aspect is more likely to be found in institutional life than in the building of competency - i.e. in the system through its correspondence with the popular/national cultures. In its structure, the Danish educational system is characterised by its technical vocational education and training programmes, its profession oriented medium cycle higher education programmes and the relatively low priority given to the university sector. There are both advantages and disadvantages in the Danish model.

The paper contains a description of an international trend towards "adaptive" competency, and it is noted that the Danish education system has the right prerequisites for developing such a type of competency.

Furthermore the paper presents a basis for interpretation and perspectives in a strategy for development of a new competency which may allow for the prerequisite of maintaining an education system with national characteristics in a more and more globalised world.

2.4. Internationalisation

The Danish system of education is being increasingly influenced by international developments in all fields. A growing number of Danish students take part or the whole of their education abroad, and more and more foreign students are coming to Denmark both as guest students under international exchange programmes such as the EU-programmes ERASMUS, COMETT and TEMPUS and as regular students.

In 1995/96 the ERASMUS-programme alone arranged for the exchange of approx. 2500 Danish students with a corresponding number of EU students. The teacher exchange is also on the increase.

The NORDPLUS-programme has further strengthened the already well developed Nordic cooperation on teacher and student exchanges.

To Denmark the EU plays a central role for the international educational co-operation. The different programmes have been in force for a number of years already, and as Denmark is a small country it is the evident way to participate in the international educational co-operation and to contribute to the policy aims, as for instance the Bologna-declaration from 1999.

As part of the international challenge, two new centres have been established: The CVUU (The Centre for Assessment of Foreign Qualifications (see point 2.5)) and CIRIUS (The Centre for Information and Consultancy about International Education and Co-operation Activities).

2.4.1. CIRIUS

Three former centres - ICU (Information Centre for International Study and Exchange), ACIU (the Danish Centre for International Training Programmes), and PIU (Centre for Practical Training Placements Abroad) – were closed down and re-emerged as CIRIUS, which was established 1 July 2000 as an independent State institution under the Ministry of Education, however with its own board and consultative assembly. CIRIUS' full name is Centre for Information and Consultancy about International Education and Co-operation Activities.

CIRIUS is to manage all the EU-programmes in the fields of education, vocational training and youth, and is furthermore to act as a national knowledge centre. In co-operation with educational institutions and the business sector, CIRIUS can contribute to the internationalisation of education at all levels.

The centre offers guidance and advice about exchanges, study visits, training placements in companies abroad, educational co-operation, school co-operation etc.

Furthermore, CIRIUS seeks/is to to strengthen internationalisation and mobility within education by carrying out other activities, e.g. conferences, seminars and meetings, making surveys and preparing publications.

CIRIUS is financed by the Danish state (40%), the European Union (30%) and by income from other sources (30%).

2.5. Assessment of foreign qualifications

It is of the utmost importance that persons - Danes who have been abroad as well as newcomers - that have acquired qualifications through education in other countries have the possibility to get these qualifications assessed. Otherwise their possibilities of getting a job will be decreased and the risk for unnecessary double education increased. This is the reason why the Ministry of Education by January 2000 established a so-called reference centre. The centre, CVUU (Danish Centre for Assessment of Foreign Qualifications), is an administrative unit under the Danish Ministry of Education. The objective of the unit is to make it easier for persons with foreign credentials to enter the Danish labour market and higher education institutions. Earlier it was a rather complicated affair to find out, who was authorized to approve which examinations. But now, anyone who wants to make use of their documented, foreign educational credentials in Denmark can contact the CVUU. The centre can not only be used by individuals who want to have a foreign education assessed in Denmark, but also employers can obtain counselling about the level of foreign educations.

The CVUU has the following tasks:

- According to agreement with the involved educational areas the centre assess examinations acquired outside Denmark
- The centre is examining body for individuals and authorities and can forward inquiries for a final assessment in the competent bodies such as expert committees, educational institutions etc.
- The centre collects and disseminates information and knowledge about both the Danish and the foreign educational systems.

By the establishment of the CVUU an unambiguous body has been created with the aim of furthering assessment and mutual recognition of foreign qualifications. The means of the centre will first and foremost be its own assessments of foreign qualifications together with the development and dissemination of standards for assessment. Furthermore, the centre shall contribute in developing and carrying through international activities aimed at furthering the transparency and mutual recognition of educational qualifications.

The establishment of the CVUU can also be seen as a reaction to the fact that foreign educational institutions - mostly working in English - on a commercial basis will establish themselves with joint ventures or branches with educational provisions that are not regulated nationally. Such increased offers of transnational educations increase the need for collecting knowledge and information about these provisions in order to be able to assess their academic content and volume when the full-fledged candidates enter the labour market.

The CVUU has been established as a part of the Danish implementation of the Convention of the European Council and UNESCO of 11 April 1997 about recognition of qualifications obtained in further education in the region of Europe (the Lisbon Convention) and also as an answer to the Educational Ministers' Bologna-Declaration from 1999 that can be considered as the European policy of facing the international challenges to be met by the European educational systems. Among others the furthering of a European attitude towards quality assurance is being emphasized together with transparency in educational systems as well as educational documentation.

Centres like the CVUU have existed for a long time in other countries. However, in one aspect the Danish centre differ(entiates) from those abroad. The other centres are concerned solely with higher education, whereas the CVUU covers the entire educational system, i.e. the vocational education and training as well.

The CVUU is governmental supported with a yearly grant of 11 million. DKK (2001).

2.6. The Danish Evaluation Institute

The Danish Evaluation Institute (EVA) was established in summer 1999 under legislation passed by the Danish Parliament. It is an independent institution formed under the auspices of the Danish Ministry of Education.

The purpose of EVA is to develop and highlight improvements in the quality of education and so the institute is also a national repository of expertise in the field of educational evaluation.

According to the law the Danish Evaluation Institute shall

- develop methods for evaluating the quality of teaching and learning
- develop and highlight quality of education and teaching through systematic evaluation
- advise and collaborate with public authorities and educational institutions on quality issues
- be the national centre of knowledge of national and international experience in educational evaluation.

EVA initiates and conducts evaluations of teaching and learning in the whole field of education. However, the evaluation of private independent schools and private primary schools, continuation schools, home economics schools and schools for art, crafts, textile and fashion design is planned in agreement with the individual school.

Additionally, EVA conducts accreditation of private courses in order to determine whether students at private teaching establishments should receive the Danish state grant.

The Minister of Education is entitled to issue rules of quality development on the basis of evaluations carried out by the institute and to issue orders to institutions to carry through necessary initiatives, suggested by evaluations. The minister is also entitled to withhold or withdraw public grants from educational institutions which do not comply with such orders. These rules do not apply for university institutions.

The evaluation methods used will vary and are adapted to the various educational sectors. A given evaluation may involve the entire course of study, individual subjects/courses or an entire institution. It will always be based on the national and local objectives for the course in question.

However, it is important to note that it is explicitly stated in the law that ranking of the evaluated educational activities and institutes is prohibited.

3. The primary and lower secondary school

3.1. Introduction

Education is compulsory for everyone between the ages of 7 and 16. Whether education is received in the publicly provided municipal school, in a private school, or at home, is a matter of choice made by the parents - as long as certain standards are met and an adequate range of subjects provided. 87% of all children attend the public education system - the so-called "Folkeskole" - with one year at each form level, progressing automatically from one form to the next irrespective of yearly attainment.

This comprehensive concept enables children to remain in the same pupil group with the same classmates from the 1st to the 9th form, sharing the same experiences in all subjects with peers of all types of backgrounds and covering the whole range of ability.

3.1.1. The Aims of the Folkeskole

In 1993, a new act on the Folkeskole was passed in the Danish Parliament to be put into force by August 1994 - only the 6th major change since the first Education Act in 1814. In preparing this present act a number of development projects - no less than 8,296 - were initiated and evaluated over a four year period. Thus the new act was rooted in the everyday reality of school life.

Article 1 describes the aims:

(1) The Folkeskole shall - in cooperation with the parents - further the pupils' acquisition of knowledge, skills, working methods and ways of expressing themselves and thus contribute to the all-round personal development of the individual pupil.

(2) The Folkeskole shall endeavour to create such opportunities for experience, industry and absorption that the pupils develop awareness, imagination and an urge to learn, so that they acquire confidence in their own possibilities and a background for forming independent judgments and for taking personal action.

(3) The Folkeskole shall familiarise the pupils with Danish culture and contribute to their understanding of other cultures and of man's interaction with nature. The school shall prepare the pupils for active participation, joint responsibility, rights and duties in a society based on freedom and democracy. The teaching of the school and its daily life must therefore build on intellectual freedom, equality and democracy.

3.1.2. Statistics and financing

In Denmark there are 2,403 primary and lower secondary schools (1998/99), of which 443 are private schools (approx. 20%). There are altogether 633,617 pupils (1998/99), of which 72,916 attend private schools (approx. 13%).

The "Folkeskole" is financed by the municipalities - through a block grant from the State to the municipality. The state covers 80-85% of the expenditure in the private schools, and the parents pay the last 15-20%.

3.2. The "Folkeskole" year 2000 (F2000)

3.2.1. Introduction

F2000 was a project running from 1998-2000 with the aim of supporting the complete implementation of the Act of the "Folkeskole" from 1994.

The Ministry of Education together with the National Association of Local Authorities and the Danish Union of Teachers agreed on focusing on eight areas of great importance for the development of the "Folkeskole". The foundation for the partnership was the common national frames for the "Folkeskole" as well as the decisions in the Act placing the overall responsibility for the schools at local level, and furthermore the responsibility for the quality of the education on the individual school.

3.2.2. The aims of the project

The three partners agreed that the basis for the Danish "Folkeskole" is a broad concept of education and formation underlining the necessity of basic academic skills together with personal qualifications and work-oriented competences. They also acknowledged that the globalisation and the transition towards a knowledge and learning society will characterize the qualification demands in the future thus increasing the need for lifelong learning. This altogether will raise the demands on the "Folkeskole" as a unifying and equalising institution.

3.2.3. Content of the project

The eight focal points were as follows:

1. Quality and development - expectations and results (about determined work with quality development in the school)
2. Challenges for the individual pupil (about differentiation of teaching, division of pupils in teams etc.)
3. Knowledge and skills (about implementation of goals for the fields, central aims and proficiency areas and curricula etc.)
4. Learning materials and school buildings (about integration of IT, the school library as a pedagogical centre and appropriate school buildings)
5. A good start in school - the common fundament (about coherence in the school start)
6. Cooperation between school and home (about the development of the cooperation between school and home)
7. Management - challenges and responsibilities (about concretising the concept of leadership and the education of head teachers).
8. Well-considered application of resources (about re-allocation of the financial resources in the schools)

3.3. New demands on the 10th form

A change of the Act of the "Folkeskole" concerning the 10th form was put into force by 1 August 2000.

These are the general changes:

- Danish, Mathematics and English were made obligatory and shall together cover 14 lessons, i.e. half of the minimum amount of lessons per week
- An obligatory self-elected exercise to replace the project-oriented exercise
- The pupils must draw up an educational plan
- A pupil can only enter for an examination in a specific subject if the lessons have been followed.

Private schools offering a provision called "10th form" must verify that the offer can be measured with the obligatory education in the "Folkeskole".

3.4. Distinct goals

In Denmark there is a long tradition that the "Folkeskole" shall develop the children holistically and not exclusively in academic skills. The "Folkeskole" shall create opportunities for industry, absorption, common experiences and democracy. It has, however, become increasingly difficult to document how these general competences are being furthered, how to set distinct goals and secure progression in the work and in the development of the individual. Parents can be uncertain as to what the school deals with - and when and how may not be sufficiently clear. For instance about how participation in decisions and responsibility is being developed in school and about when the pupils gain the experiences about rights and duties, equality and democracy.

The intention is in the future - to a much larger extent than today - to set words on these matters, meaning that all Danish municipalities shall work out intermediate aims for what is to be achieved in each subject in the school in order to make it very distinct for pupils, parents and teachers, what all children should have achieved after certain forms. These intermediate goals shall be directed both towards a more transparent development of the "hard" academic qualifications, and towards a more comprehensive development of the "soft" competences.

3.5. ICT-efforts

As a part of a larger effort in the field of ICT 340 million. DKK will be canalised to the "folkeskole" in the period from 2001 to 2004. Initiatives on the basis of the needs and knowledge of both pupils and teachers will be brought into focus. ICT should be used to make it even more fun and interesting to learn. Focus should be moved from the handling of the pc towards the use of its possibilities.

ICT ought to be a support in the teaching at school. This is one of the reasons why the schools to a much larger extent should use the ideas and experiences that are being developed locally. One fourth of the sum will be used on the project "ICT supported learning in the "Folkeskole"". The project consists of three elements that together forms the basis for the pupil-oriented part of the project. These elements are:

- Networking around the development of the content of the curriculum where the schools co-operate in solving problems and develop new teaching methods. It is the type of challenge more than geography that ties schools together.
- Capacity, where focus is on organising individually oriented learning environment that can cope with the differences in the pupil group.
- The dialogue must be strengthened through ICT. The pathway to a more direct internet-dialogue between teachers, pupils and parents is open.

In excess of the project "ICT supported learning in the "Folkeskole"" money will be spent with the over-all goal to make ICT play a greater role in education. Therefore, focus must be in other directions than the teaching itself.

110 million DKK has been set aside for strengthening the teachers' ICT-literacy, and another part of the money will be used on digitalisation and purchasing of educational programmes from TV. Furthermore, the intranet of the schools, the Sektornet, must be enhanced so that several more schools, also special schools and private schools, can apply for line switching for the common net.

4. Youth education (upper secondary schools and VET)

4.1. Introduction

At the end of the 9th or 10th form of the basic school, 93% of all pupils continue in youth education. About 40% go to one of the vocational education and training programmes offered by the vocational colleges, while 60% choose a general upper secondary programme.

In the beginning of the 1990's it became clear that the drop-out rates were too high - even if approx. 93% of all pupils actually did continue in some kind of youth education only 77% accomplished the programme. Therefore the Ministry of Education in 1993 set up the programme "Education and Training for All" aiming at increasing the percentage to accomplish a youth education programme from 77% to 90-95% in year 2000. Accordingly, a lot of initiatives were taken to include the residual group.

4.2. Youth education programmes

4.2.1. General upper secondary education

General upper secondary education is offered in different forms and at different types of institutions. There are the more academically oriented general upper secondary education programmes offered by the gymnasiums and the higher preparatory examination (HF) institutions, and there are the vocationally oriented general upper secondary educations offered by the business colleges and the technical colleges leading to the higher commercial examination (hcx) and the higher technical examination (htx).

Up till last year (2000) the pupils had to pass the leaving or advanced leaving examination after lower secondary education and be declared qualified for this type of education by their previous school - however, since August 2000 anyone can enter general upper secondary education unless they are recommended not to enter by their previous school, and if not they have to pass a test.

All subjects taught in more than one type of upper secondary education can be taken at low, intermediate or advanced level. And students who have already passed the examination in a subject may be awarded credit for the subject, if they change to another type of upper secondary education.

4.2.2. Vocational education and training

The pupils can also embark on one of the commercial or technical vocational training programmes based on the alternance principle, i.e. a combination of periods of theoretical and practical education at one of the business or commercial colleges and periods of practical training in a business enterprise.

Other types of vocational or semi-professional education and training are offered at the schools of agriculture, basic social and health care, home economics etc.

4.2.3. Untraditional youth education and training programmes

Youth unemployment became an increasing problem throughout the seventies and have been a matter of great concern. Less favourable trade conditions combined with a growing number of young people made it impossible for a large number to begin a vocational education and training programme, mainly because they could not get a training agreement. Taking into consideration that the labour market's demand for people without vocational skills and working life experiences decreased, initiatives were taken to offer these young people alternative education and training possibilities.

Production schools: These schools offer combined education and production courses to young people (18-25 years). The education is both practical and theoretical - the theoretical part must be of considerable proportions and as far as possible integrated with the practical work. Educational and vocational guidance is an important part of the education.

The participants can attend the school for up to one year - there is running intake and outlet.

Vocational basic training (egu): Since 1 August 1993 it has been possible for the municipalities - in co-operation with the local educational institutions - to establish the 'egu', basic vocational training, which is a framework which makes it possible to organise courses according to wishes and abilities of the less academically minded students, who can get credit if they afterwards want to continue in the ordinary vocational education and training system.

The course takes two years. Only 20 to 40 weeks are set aside for theoretical education. The practical training takes place in many of the 80% of the Danish enterprises that are considered too small for or too specialised to be approved as training places for the students from the vocational education and training system. However, the practical training could also take place in a production school or in a workshop of a technical college.

Open youth education (fuu): The Act on Open Youth Education came into force on 1 January 1995. It gives the young people the opportunity of composing an individual youth education course made up of both known and new course-elements in co-operation with a school, which guarantees the quality and coherence of the different parts of the education. The target group is young people, who have not chosen or completed one of the formal types of youth education. Thus, the fuu constitutes not only an alternative to the existing types of youth education, but also a new gateway into them.

A course may be of 2-3 years' duration and must consist of at least 3-4 different parts of known or new course sequences. Exchange and study visits abroad as well as municipal projects and activities may also form part of the course.

Bridge-building and guidance: In the beginning of the 1990s the drop-out rates were very high in the vocational education and training system - only 60% completed their education. In order to come to grips with these problems, the Parliament passed an Act on bridge-building courses for transition into youth education which came into force on 1 January 1996. According to this act new arrangements were added to the previous educational and vocational guidance of the "Folkeskole". The act provides for short introductory courses for pupils in the 8th-10th forms, and even for class teachers and educational counsellors on the youth education institutions.

There is also a possibility for longer courses (between 8-40 weeks) with 2-4 elements from different school forms.

4.3. Youth education reforms and development programmes

4.3.1. The VET Reform 2000

The last reform of the VET system was put into force on 1 January 1991 - exactly 10 years later the VET Reform 2000 was put into force.

As mentioned above, the VET system is based on alternating periods of school education and practical training in a company. In general, vocational training does not exceed four years of which two thirds have been spent on training periods in a company approved by the Trade Committee.

The major change after the reform is the admission channels into the system - there used to be 90, but the number has been reduced to only 7, however wider, access routes. Each of these routes paves the way to a foundation course covering interrelated vocational programmes. The following access channels have been created:

- Technology and communication
- Building and construction
- Crafts and engineering trades
- Food production and catering
- Mechanical engineering, transport and logistics
- Service industries
- The commercial field - trade, office and finance.

Each access channel opens up to a number of main specialisation programmes which correspond to the 85 VET courses offered in the earlier VET system. A complete basic programme gives access to one or more VET programmes.

The basic training phase is flexible and may vary from 10 to 60 weeks. The obligatory part of this programme consists of basic subjects - the composition of the final programme depends on the student's own choice and the requirements set to be able to start a given specialisation programme.

A student who has completed a full basic programme has an assured right to start on another programme within the same group of interrelated programmes without having to take the relevant area subjects once more.

Throughout the basic programme the student receives guidance and counselling on for instance the final choice of education - this is expected to lead to more realistic educational choices.

The main VET specialisation programme is organised as a dual system. Through this system students are always in touch and familiar with typical changes of technology, machines, material, workplace organisation and job functions that occur on the labour market. The programme is finalised by a 'journeyman's test' or a similar examination.

This VET reform is very much a pedagogical reform: The students must be more active in their own learning processes. This implies radical changes, also for traditional teaching and the role of the VET teachers. The teachers do have a good background for supporting the school-company interplay. A critical factor, however, is the way in which the VET teachers are recruited and trained: Teachers are employed by the VET colleges and only then starts their actual pedagogical teacher training.

4.3.2. The development programme for the youth educations

Together with the VET reform 2000, the Parliament adopted a development programme for the youth educations (April 1999). The main goal is to have all young people begin a youth education and to have at least 95% accomplish this education - today 83% accomplishes. It is furthermore the goal that 50% shall have a further education - today it goes for 42%.

Since the vocational education and training system was being reformed simultaneously, this development programme is mainly targeted at the general upper secondary educations. However, the programme also seeks to reinforce cooperation between the different youth educations and to support the development of activities that can further the transition between primary/lower secondary schools and the upper secondary schools as well as initiatives to ease the pathways to further education.

4.3.3. The SOSU-reform

The basic social- and health education (SOSU) programmes were introduced in 1991, and the basic education programme for educator assistants was introduced in 1997. These programmes form part of the vocational education and training system in Denmark. It is the aim of these programmes to qualify staff in the welfare, care and nursing area for broad-based functions so that patients and clients do not have to deal with so many different staff groups, when they find themselves in a situation, where they need to make use of the care and welfare services.

All of these programmes are generalist programmes. It is the aim to combine pedagogical/social and activating qualifications with nursing qualifications and thus obtain more preventive and resource-oriented work forms in the social and health care sectors.

As part of the Budget agreements for year 2001 it was decided to initiate a development project around the basic social and health education.

Counties and municipalities do now have a possibility to enter into development projects with the SOSU educations. The projects must imply a prolongation of the school part compared to hitherto SOSU-courses and it shall consist of a curriculum including themes and a personal educational plan for the participants. It is possible to apply for a grant to cover the extra expenses due to the prolongation of the course.

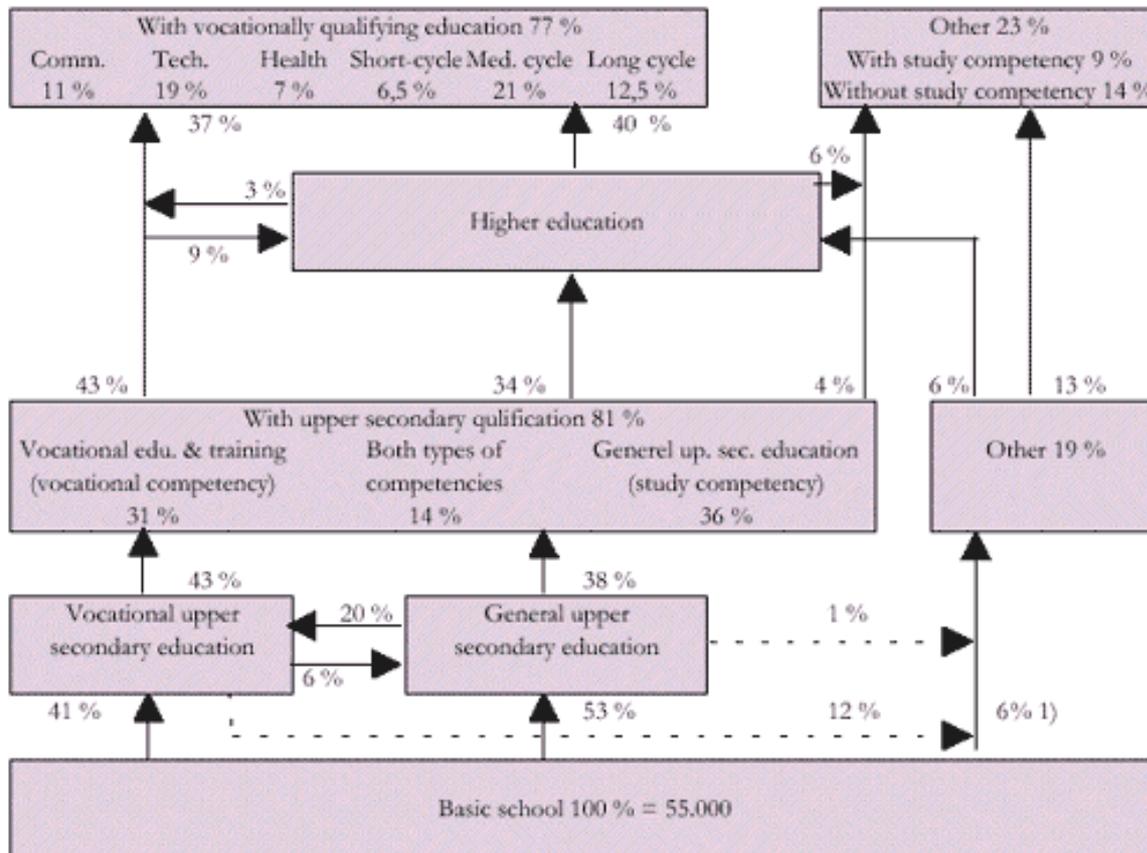
Money has been allocated to the development projects in 2001-2003. 15 million DKK in year 2001. The expenses for year 2002 and 2003 are dependent upon the activities set up in year 2001.

5. Higher Education

5.1. Introduction

As illustrated by figure 1 it is estimated that 40% of the year group from 1998 will complete a higher education programme. Of these, 6.5% will complete a short-cycle (short advanced education), 21% a medium-cycle (diploma level) and 12.5% a long-cycle higher education programme (master level).

Figure 1 A year group's journey through the education system after basic school 1998. Graduation from basic school =100% (Source: The Ministry of Education, Denmark)



Higher education offers a great variety of choice. More than 130 institutions offer study programmes of varying lengths and levels. The institutions can be divided into: universities, university centres and other institutions of higher education.

5.1.1. The goal is 50% to accomplish higher education

The goals for the Danish educational system is to have at least 50% of a youth cohort to accomplish higher education. A prerequisite for achieving this goal is that the system is transparent and coherent so that candidates can re-enter their studies at advanced level. This has been the bearing principle behind the reforms that over the past years have been carried through in higher education.

At master level a number of changes have taken place concerning the structure and the professional profile. It is now possible for the students to leave their studies with a well-defined competency, to enter the labour market and gain experiences and later return to university to continue the education. Furthermore, interdisciplinarity characterize the basic courses to a much larger extent and there are more combined studies. However, reforms in the long-cycle educations have not been described further in this report.

This presentation of the development of higher education in Denmark concentrates on the areas where greater reforms have been introduced during the recent years. These reforms comprise the establishing of the Danish University of Education, reform of the faculty structure within short advanced education and diploma level education, as well as reforms of educations at these levels.

5.2. The Danish University of Education

The Danish University of Education (DPU) was established 1 July 2000 after merging The Danish School for Educational Studies, The Danish College for the Education of Pedagogues and the National Institute for Educational Research. The establishing was part of recent years' efforts to strengthen and enhance Danish pedagogical and educational research. It was and still is a vision to give the university a leading role in international research within pedagogics, learning theories and competence development.

With the creation of the DPU the aim was:

- to secure coherence between research and education
- that DPU will be ponderous when it comes to research, meaning that it shall be assured the necessary freedom of research as well as independence in academic matters
- to ensure that DPU is an educational institution at master level, which implies a close co-operation with other universities
- that DPU can secure the research bonds for the Centres for Higher Education
- that a research and development centre, the so-called Learning Lab Denmark, would be established in order to secure that knowledge and experiences with ICT-supported learning becomes a central field for research, information and development.
- that other and special fields within the area of pedagogics will be considered.

5.2.1. Learning Lab Denmark

Learning Lab was established in 2000. Learning Lab is first of all a research-based hands-on science centre which will be carrying out a wide range of experiments with learning and development of qualifications in companies (private and public), educational institutions and organisations. Learning Lab shall through these experiments, so to say, develop science about how companies, institutions, organisations and people learn and how they develop knowledge and qualifications.

Experiments within Learning Lab shall be carried out in co-operation with companies, educational institutions, researchers, consultants and teachers. Learning Lab shall in that way contribute to the creation of new partnerships and networks transversal to the business and educational sectors as well as institutions specialising in knowledge dissemination. Learning Lab's experiments shall be systematic and research-based so that practical experience is on a continuous basis converted into theoretical knowledge, tools, materials, principles and methods which can be used in practice and hereby improve and develop practice itself.

5.3. Centres for Higher Education (CVU)

In May 2000 - as part of the coherent educational effort - the Danish Parliament passed a law on creating Centres for Higher Education. The law can be seen in the light of the fact that the Danish educational system is characterized by many very small institutions in Denmark - all with a limited number of objects in focus. The centres for higher education are meant to support and strengthen the profession oriented higher educations, especially the diploma level educations (MVU) and the continuing and further educations in this area. At the same time the centres are to function as development and knowledge centres within their individual professional fields.

5.3.1. Models for co-operation

Co-operation can take place in four ways:

1. A merge from the very beginning.
Institutions wanting to merge to become a CVU do not lose their professional identity, profile or institution when considering the fundamental education, they only enter into a corporation.

2. A conditional CVU-approval
The institutions establish a CVU, and the individual institution shall within a limited span of years finally decide whether they want to stay within the CVU as one corporation - this has to be decided before the final approval.
3. Networking - a supplement to the CVU's
Institutions outside a CVU gets the possibility to enter into a network with the CVU's concerning further and continuing education, research and development work.
4. Isolated
The institutions can choose to stay outside and not enter into a CVU-corporation. Isolated institutions are in principle secured the same possibilities for educational provisions and development since this is a fundamental responsibility of the CVU's.

5.3.2. Approval of CVU's

A CVU can obtain approval from the Ministry of Education provided it offers at least one education on diploma level (MVU). The approval of a CVU is given on the basis of a broad assessment of the educational provisions, including diffuseness, demography, teachers, quality of the provisions and of the institution, participation in development work, co-operation with other institutions and of the development possibilities of the institution. By approval can, furthermore, geography be taken into consideration. Per January 2001 seven CVU's had obtained an approval or a conditional approval.

5.4. Diploma level education (MVU)

Diploma level educations (MVU) have so far been organized to qualify the full-fledged to maintain specific professions. This continues to be the case, but the educations have been changed to open up for the possibility of more interdisciplinary perspectives and coherences, in the individual education as well as across the whole field of MVU's.

This act - just as the before mentioned - was passed in the Parliament in May 2000. The initiative is part of the ambitious goals of the government that 50% of a youth cohort shall accomplish higher education. The law is the first framework for all educations at diploma level and opens for a perspective of developing new educations in order to follow the rapid changes on the labour market.

5.4.1. Profession bachelor

The law introduces a new title - profession bachelor - on the same level as the bachelor title that can be achieved at the university. This specification of level is important for the possibilities for further or continuing education in Denmark as well as abroad. The title is a mark of quality which the Minister of Education can offer the MVU's that prove to have a dynamic coherence between theory and practice.

The demands for obtaining the title of profession bachelor include that the knowledge base of the education must be on a high level and be characterized by

- quick and easy access to knowledge about central tendencies in the profession (profession based)
- the education must be based on own experiments and development work (development based) - and
- easy and quick inclusion of knowledge about research and research results within the educational field (research based)

5.5. The short advanced education programmes (KVU)

By the end of 1997 the Danish Parliament unanimously passed a law about a thorough reform of the short advanced education programmes (KVU). First of all the pathways became broader and more transparent. The goal is that all KVU's are open to all young people with either a relevant vocational education and training qualification or with a leaving examination at upper secondary level. Another major change is a coherent graduation level, the academy level, which normally is reached in two years.

5.5.1. 13 educational programmes

In connection with the reform of the short-cycle higher education or vocational academy programmes, around 75 of the existing programmes were closed down and replaced by 13 new programmes. A few programmes, however, continued unchanged.

5.5.2. Quality rules

The establishment of the programmes was accompanied by a set of quality rules which is to ensure the quality of the programmes and a steady development in accordance with the needs of trade and industry. The quality rules give the Ministry of Education the means to conduct quality development and inspection at educational institutions and to conduct guidance to ensure a high professional and pedagogical level. The programmes are to be attractive for young people and are to be instrumental in achieving the government's target that 50% of a youth cohort complete a higher education programme. All programmes are to be completed with an examination project, which may be carried out in connection with a practical training placement.

6. Adult education and continuing training

6.1. Reform of Adult Education

In 2001 Denmark is introducing a major reform of the vocational education and continuing training system. In May 2000, the Danish Parliament adopted a number of acts which will tie continuing training and further education programmes together in a single coherent and transparent adult education system. The adult education reform has been drawn up in a co-operation among the ministries responsible for adult education in Denmark, i.e. primarily the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour.

6.1.1. Objectives of the reform - in brief

The adult vocational reform has three main objectives:

1. To provide relevant adult education and continuing training offers to all adults at all levels, from the low-skilled to university graduates

The offers of education/training are to constitute a system of competences which will give all adults formal recognition of the knowledge and qualifications they acquire, whether this takes place at the job or by participation in formal education/training programmes.

2. Improving opportunities for those with the lowest levels of education

Courses for adults in general subjects, such as reading, spelling, mathematics and continuing vocational training play an important role in the efforts to enhance education/training opportunities for the low-skilled groups. The same applies to the new possibilities for having work experience and participation in continuing training credited as part of an education programme which will give the participants formally recognised vocational competences.

3. Better utilisation of resources

In 1998, the Danish State spent 12.7 billion DKK on continuing and advanced training. The adult education reform will make it possible to use the huge resources for adult education in a more cost effective way.

The education programmes within the adult education system are characterised:

- by being organised for adults in employment,
- by having a content which takes into account the work and life experience of the adults, and
- by their flexible organisation.

6.1.2. Present situation

Compared with many other countries, Denmark is in a favourable position in the field of education/training. But for one third of the labour force, basic schooling continues to be the highest education level. There is a need for strengthening the basic and occupational skills and qualifications of this group of employees. There are several reasons for this:

- in order to ensure a well-functioning labour market,
- in order to be able to meet the needs of the enterprises for qualified labour, and
- in order to give the individual adult persons better opportunities for continuing to learn and develop competences on the basis of the work and life experience they already possess.

In brief: the adult education reform has a double objective; a labour market objective and an educational policy objective.

Participation

Participation in adult education in Denmark is high. Total number of participants in 1998 corresponded to 153.000 full-time student - a rise of more than one third compared to 1993.

Participation is distributed between general and vocational education. Vocational education in labour market training centres and Open education has a participation of 33.000 full time students, while 28.000 participate in formal general adult education, and 35.000 in non-formal education in day folk high schools and evening schools.

Expenditure

The expenditure for adult education was in 1998 7,5 billion to the educational institutions and activities and 6,2 billion DKK for income deficiency payments to the participants, a total of more 13 billion DKK which was almost twice the amount given out in 1993.

The public expenses to adult education are financed by the state and regional and local authorities. Both in the vocationally oriented Open education and in non-formal education the participants pay a substantial contribution of at least one third of the expenses.

6.1.3. Vocational training programmes for adults

Denmark has a very broad range of vocational training programmes for adults. They are in the form of short or longer training courses organised for adults in employment and may be targeted on both low-skilled adults (i.e. with basic schooling as the highest level of education) and skilled adults (i.e. adults who have completed a vocational training programme after basic schooling). Vocational training programmes normally have a duration of 3- 3½ years and are organised as alternance training, i.e. theoretical instruction in school alternating with periods of practical training in an enterprise.

Today, a vocational training programme for adults may qualify the participants for going into a vocational education programme or may give them recognised competences in relation to specific job functions, for instance a welding certificate or a truck driving certificate.

It will still be possible for all adults who need to strengthen their occupational skills to participate in any vocational training programmes they may need - throughout their working life. But these adult vocational training programmes also play a very important role in the adult education reform. The programmes will constitute an important part of the activities in connection with the new basic education for adults mentioned below. It will therefore be a determinant factor in connection with the implementation of the adult education reform to ensure that there is a good and relevant supply of vocational training programmes for adults which will make it possible for the individual to maintain his or her labour market attachment and to be credited for participation in these programmes as part of a basic education programme for adults.

6.1.4. The adult education system

The main principles of the adult education system are:

- good and relevant opportunities for continuing and advanced training for all,
- adult education programmes shall be at recognised and comparable levels, and
- good possibilities for building bridges between education programmes and educational levels.

It is a characteristic feature of education programmes within the adult education system that the work and life experience of the adults plays an important role in connection with the organisation of the education programmes as well as their content, profile and duration.

The new adult education system can grossly be split into two levels of education:

- Basic Adult Education (BAE) in the form of education programmes which give the same competence as ordinary youth education programmes up to and including the level of vocational education.
- Advanced education levels which are comparable with ordinary education levels, but different from these as regards organisation and content; short, medium-term and long higher education programmes.

A very important element of the adult education reform is to strengthen basic skills such as reading, writing and mathematics. About one million adult Danes with labour market attachment have reading skills at a level which is considered insufficient compared to the literacy skills required in a knowledge-based society'. This is one of the results of a study published by the OECD in the spring of 2000, and this is why the adult education reform comprises an additional education level, the preparatory adult education.

6.1.5. Preparatory adult education

Preparatory adult education (PAE) will be an offer to all persons over 18 who wish to improve their general skills so that they will be better equipped to get along on the labour market and as citizens in a democratic society. This will also greatly enhance their opportunities for undergoing further education or training within the framework of the adult education system.

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

6.1.6. The individual levels of adult education

Basic adult education (BAE) is a framework for education programmes up to the level of vocational education. At this level, the former education and work experience of the individual participants may be further supplemented by courses in order to achieve a skilled level (= vocational education).

The target is the same for basic adult education as for the corresponding formally qualifying youth education. Adults who complete a BAE-programme pass the same final examinations as young persons in youth education, but a BAE-programme is organised in a more flexible manner and the concrete content of the programme will depend upon the practical work experience of the adult person as well as qualifications attained by participation in various courses, etc. In other words, a BAE-programme is based on the experience and qualifications of the individual in order to make the best possible use of them.

Before starting on a BAE-programme, participants will go through a competence assessment of previous courses and work experience. The school then draws up a personal education plan which shows what the individual needs to do to have full educational qualification.

6.1.7. Advanced levels in the adult education system

The adult education system comprises three advanced education levels:

- Advanced adult education (AAE) which corresponds to the level of a short advanced education programme within the ordinary educational system
- Diploma level education which corresponds to an intermediate level higher education programme within the ordinary educational system.
- Master level education which corresponds to the level of a long higher education programme within the ordinary educational system.

Education programmes at the advanced levels within the adult education system may be advanced in depth and in breadth, i.e. either vocational specialisation within or outside the ordinary vocational field of the participant. The organisation of the content and teaching methods of the continued education programmes within the adult education system is also to a high degree based on the life and work experience of the adults.

It is a condition for starting in continued adult education that the participants have a relevant educational background and at least two years of work experience. It should be possible for the individual to participate in advanced education while still performing the daily work. This is why adult education at the advanced levels mainly takes place as leisure-time education, i.e. open education.

6.1.8. Financing

In Denmark, it has always been seen as a public task to finance continuing and advanced education and training.

In the case of preparatory and general education at the level of the "Folkeskole" (primary and lower secondary education) and "Gymnasium" (upper secondary education) the State will finance the activities 100 per cent, possibly with a modest participants' fee.

As regards education/training up to the level of vocational education, the social partners will to a high degree be responsible for the allocation of the resources through their membership of the board of the new body which will be set up, "Arbejdsmarkedets UddannelsesFinansiering" (the Labour Market Institution for Financing of Education and Training), and will be given the possibility of making recommendations to both the Minister of Labour and the Minister of Education concerning a number of matters of importance to the financing and organisation of adult education and continuing training up to the level of vocational education. One of the main tasks of the board will be to make recommendations concerning the total need for education/training and the expenditure entailed in the field of vocationally oriented adult education and continued training activities.

It will also be possible for the social partners to streamline and rationalise the system so that the focus will be shifted to formally qualifying education/training and programmes of a broad and generally qualifying nature. The board of the Labour Market Institution for Financing of Education and Training may recommend that the enterprises should to a higher degree contribute to the financing of very narrow or very specialised education/training programmes and the board may also recommend the imposition of an employer contribution to co-finance adult education and continuing training measures.

As regards adult education at advanced levels, the financing of the State will be supplemented by participants' fees.

6.1.9. Income basis

Participants in continued and advanced training programmes will continue to receive public financial support to cover their costs of living. There will be two possibilities: State educational support for adults (SESA) or the special allowance paid mainly to low-skilled workers under the Labour Market Institution for Financing of Education and Training.

State educational support for adults (SESA) is to ensure that adults who participate in education at the levels of primary school, lower secondary school, upper secondary school and in higher education may obtain financial support.

SESA falls into two parts. The first concerns support to participation in PAE-programmes and in general education at the levels of primary, lower secondary and upper secondary school. Support for this type of general education can only be granted to persons with a low level of educational attainment. The second concerns support for participation in advanced education at short, medium-term or long higher education levels. This means that SESA covers education at the level under and the level over the allowance to vocationally oriented adult education and continuing training.

The special allowance in connection with participation in vocationally oriented adult education and continuing training aims to ensure that adults who participate in such programmes up to the level of vocational education may receive financial support to do so.

The special allowance is given as compensation for loss of earnings or loss of a job opportunity.

6.1.10. Who decides?

Denmark has a long tradition for involving the social partners in the organisation of adult vocational education and training programmes. In order to ensure the continuance of this practice in the future, a new inter-ministerial Adult Education Council has been set up. The task of the new Council will be to act in advisory capacity to the Minister of Education, the Minister of Labour and the Ministry of Trade and Industry in matters concerning the needs in the field of adult education and continuing training. The Council will offer guidance concerning, inter alia, open education, state educational support for adults and the inter-action between state educational support for adults and the special allowance paid in connection with participation in vocationally oriented adult education and continuing training schemes.

A Council will also be set up for general adult education at the basic level. This Council is to act in advisory capacity to the Minister of Education concerning the needs for education/training as well as the inter-action between preparatory adult education, general adult education and other education programmes at the basic level.

One of the tasks of the board of the new Labour Market Institution for Financing of Education and Training will be to submit an annual recommendation to the Minister of Labour and the Minister of Education concerning the total need for vocationally oriented adult education and continuing training.

In the field of adult vocational training, the existing Training Council for Adult Vocational Training will be continued. The Council acts in an advisory capacity in relation to the Minister of Labour in matters concerning adult vocational training programmes and submits opinions concerning other matters of principle in relation to adult vocational training.

6.1.11. Ready for the creative knowledge-based society

Denmark has a high educational level. With the adult education reform, the framework has been set for a good and flexible system for continuing and advanced education and training; a system which will give all adults opportunities for continuing to learn and develop competences on the basis of the work and life experience they already possess. This development of competences is a sine qua non in the future creative knowledge-based society.

6.2. Danish as a second language for adult immigrants

6.2.1. Introduction

As part of an increased effort of improving the integration of new refugees and immigrants into the Danish society a new law on teaching Danish as a second language was put into force in 1999. This law - which came together with a whole new law on integration - aims at a more formalised education in Danish than the former one did.

6.2.2. The aim of the law

The former efforts on integration, including teaching Danish, proved not to be adequate. The integration of refugees was formerly carried out by private organisations (NGO's) like Danish Council for Refugees and the Danish Red Cross in an 18 months integration programme that included language teaching. The integration of other immigrants was attended to by the municipalities as far as they came into connection with the social security system. Otherwise they had to take care of themselves. The teaching of Danish was an offer that was organised within the rather liberal frames of e.g. evening schools. A disproportionate number of refugees and immigrants was left outside the labour force during the 80's and 90's because their skills in Danish were inadequate to get a foothold at the labour market or enter even basic education.

The new legislation aims at making the effort more efficient and goal-directed both through the curriculum and the organising of the teaching and by establishing better coherence between language teaching and other elements of the integration effort.

6.2.3. Objectives of teaching Danish as a second language

The objective of teaching Danish as a second language is for adult foreigners to acquire knowledge about and skills regarding understanding and using Danish on the basis of their own language and cultural backgrounds. The teaching shall promote and enhance active use of Danish among participants and shall develop participants' awareness of Danish culture, thus contributing to rendering them functional within Danish society. Teaching shall provide participants with opportunities to acquire basic prerequisites for further education and common skills and knowledge which are relevant in relation to working life, and which enhance participants' active participation in Danish society in general.

The education is organized in different levels and streams providing the participants with the teaching exactly fitting their prerequisites and objective with the education. In connection with the reform an entire national system of examinations was introduced serving to document the progression of the participants and their possibilities for participating in other educational activities.

Together with the reform was also launched a new educational programme for the language teachers

6.2.4. Organisation of the provision

The education is provided by approx. 50 language centres all over the country. The language centres were established by appointed "language centre municipalities" that attend to the education for their own citizens as well as citizens in municipalities without a language centre.

The municipalities have the responsibility for the 3-year-integration effort, including schemes for assuring the immigrants a lasting connection to the labour market and to the Danish society as a whole.

This offer shall be available to all foreigners over the age of 18 years who hold residence permits or who under current legislation have rights of residence in Denmark for an indefinite period and are registered in the residence register.

6.2.5. Conclusion

As coherence between language teaching and the integration efforts is considered extremely important for the entire integration a range of experiments has been initiated in order to provide experience from the effort in order to show how the employment aspect can be improved. These experiments are followed by a working group with representatives from the Ministry of Education, the municipalities and the language centres.

As legislation has been active only for a short time only there are no solid experiences with its functions and effect. There are ongoing evaluations on the integration efforts of the municipalities, including the language centres. The Ministry of Education administrating the national tests follows the examinations, including the number of participants that enter for examinations and which results they reach.

6.3. Act on the allocation of financial support to "Folkeoplysning" (non-formal adult education)

The act on "Folkeoplysning" is a frame law on allocation of support to "folkeoplysning" by the municipalities to general, non-formal education for adult and to activities for children and young people in a large number of associations.

In accordance to the legislation up till now - adopted in 1990 - it was considered appropriate to work on certain adjustments. Among others there have been uncertainty as regard to the possibility for the municipalities of securing that support was given to general and public purposes and not to commercial activities.

6.3.1. New elements in the law

As a new element the legislation introduces the so-called "10%-pool". This rule implies that 10% of the grants received for enlightening educational activities shall be used for "debate activities" and to other expenses that those that are normally used for teacher salaries and rent. The objective of this rule is to ensure that the 2,700 evening schools gain better possibilities to play an active role in the democratical dialogue about important issues in the local communities or for the country - environmental questions, planning in the municipality, integration of refugees and immigrants, just to mention a few.

The earlier legislation had only very few formal demands on the organisation of the initiators. The new act states that grants can be given only to groups who organize themselves as formal associations with constitutions wherein they commit themselves as organisations with enlightening as a main objective. Associations must in their constitution demonstrate that they are democratically organised, meaning that the members and participants have a real influence on the running and the activities of the association.

6.4. Development work on general adult education

On the basis of a thorough survey of the situation around the general adult education offers a committee appointed by the Ministry of Education has suggested that a comprehensive development work should be carried out over a three year period. The initiative about new participant groups are suggested to be included as a crucial element. The development programme should be supported by a united effort from counties, managers and teachers.

The development programme has three main targets:

1. New participants

The adult education centres must improve their ways of dealing with the challenge of new types of participants. This can happen through improved continuing education within adult or youth policy, didactical quality development regarding differentiated education and also the language and cultural barriers made obvious by immigrant participants.

The flexibly organised education is a crucial point when meeting the demands of the new heterogenous groups of participants.

2. ICT supported education

Including ICT in education calls first of all for a certain ICT-capacity in the adult education centres. Moreover it is a significant prerequisite that the teachers are able to include ICT in order to support the outcome of the participants. One educational possibility is to offer the teachers the educational “pc drivers licence”.

3. Bridge building

Coherence in the adult education system can in certain areas be strengthened through bridge building, for instance via the language centres in order to reach the immigrants. Also the path from day folk high schools to the adult education centres can be eased by bridge building. Inside the adult education centre the path from general adult education to higher preparatory examination can be supported by improved teamwork among the teachers etc.

A body consisting of representatives from the Ministry of Education and organisations and experts within the area will – according to the current plans – be invited to give advise to the Ministry about the programme.

The development programme will be finalised with a thorough evaluation that will be disseminated through reports and conferences.

Attachment

More detailed information on general facts and statistics can be found in the publication:

“**Education Indicators 2000**” Danish Ministry of Education 2000.

The publication can be found on the website of the Ministry under the address:

<http://www.uvm.dk/eng/publications/tal/index.html>

List of references from the Danish Ministry of Education

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The Education System - 1998, 89 pp., UVM 2-023. Price: 95 DKK.

English Presentation of the Danish Education System - 1997, 39 pp. Price: 50 DKK, excl. colour overhead transparencies/375 DKK, incl. colour overhead transparencies.

Education in Denmark -Principles and Issues - 1997, 29 pp., ISBN 87-603-0994-6. Price: 45 DKK.

Dansk-Engelsk Uddannelsesterminologi - 1995, 111 pp., ISBN 87-89727-36-3. Price: 100 DKK.

Facts and figures. Education indicators in DK - 1996, 107 pp., ISBN-87-603-0831-1. Price: 110 DKK.

Technology-supported Learning (Distance Learning) - 1994, 156 pp., UVM 4-008. Price: 150 DKK.

The State Education Grant and Loan Scheme - factsheet - 1996, 4 pp., UVM 30-016. Price for a complete set of factsheets about the different levels of the education system or a minimum of 10 copies of one factsheet: 50 DKK.

Active Life for Young People with Disabilities. Early Intervention Strategies for Children at Risk. 1988. Price: Free of charge.

Development of Education 1992-1994 - National Report of Denmark (UNESCO) - 1994, 14 pp. Price: Free of charge

Handicapped Students in the Danish Education System - 1991, 23 pp. Free of charge.

Holidays in Primary and Secondary Schools in Denmark - 1998-99, 2 pp. Price: Free of charge.

International Schools in Denmark - 1998, 2 pp. Price: Free of charge.

Provisions and Guiding Proposals concerning the Teaching of Sign Language in the folkeskole - 1992, 7 pp. Price: Free of charge.

Special Education in Denmark - Statements, notes and figures. 1992. Price: Free of charge.

Statistical Information concerning the Extensive Special Education in State (County) Schools - 1990, 30 pp. Free of charge.

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The Folkeskole - factsheet - 1996, 4 pp., UVM 30-016. Price for a complete set of factsheets about the different levels of the education system or a minimum of 10 copies of one factsheet: 50 DKK.

A school for All. On the new Education Act. 1995. 14 pp. Also available in German, French, Serbo-Croatian, Turkish, Urdu, Tamil, Arabic, Somali, Farsi and Vietnamese. Price: Sold in sets of a minimum of 10: 70 DKK.

Private Schools in Denmark - factsheet - 1996, 4 pp., UVM 30-016. Price for a complete set of factsheets on the different levels of the education system or a minimum of 10 copies of one factsheet: 50 DKK.

Act on the Folkeskole - 1996, 44 pp., ISBN 87-603-0758-7. Price: 40 DKK.

The Aims of the Teaching in the Subjects and Obligatory Topics of the Folkeskole with Indication of Central Knowledge and Proficiency Areas - 1996, 87 pp., UVM 5-231. Price: 60 DKK.

Administration of the Folkeskole - 1997, 31 pp., UVM 5-297. Price: 40 DKK.

English - A Subject in the Danish Folkeskole - 1997, 16 pp., UVM 5-085. Price: 30 DKK.

The Media Office - 1995. Price: Free of charge.

Upper secondary education

New structure of the Danish Vocational Education and Training system - 2000. UVM 0068. Price 25 DKK

The Transition from Initial Education to Working Life in Denmark - 1999, 70 p, ISBN 87-603-1355-2. UVM 4-018. Price 75 DKK.

General Upper Secondary Education - factsheet - 1996, 4 pp., UVM 30-016. Price for a complete set of factsheets about the different levels of the education system or a minimum of 10 copies of one factsheet: 50 DKK.

The Danish Gymnasium - General Rules and the Subjects. Order on Upper Secondary Education - 1994, 154 pp., UVM 6-130. Price: 90 DKK.

School Development, With a report on the work and activities of a school

The Danish Gymnasium - General Rules, ISBN 87-503-9359-6, 1991, 59 pp. Price: 35 DKK.

The Danish Higher Preparatory Examination - General Rules - 1994, 45 pp., UVM 6-009. Price: 35 DKK.

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Good Practice - Signs of quality in upper secondary schools - 1994, 42 pp. Price: 40 DKK.

National Advisers in Danish Upper Secondary Education - 1993, 16 pp. Price: Free of charge.

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The University Act - 1994, 12 pp. Price: Free of charge.

Order on the Education of Nurses - 1990, 4 pp. Price: Free of charge.

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The Educator Training Programme - 1994, 32 pp., UVM 30-026. Price: 40 DKK.

Executive Order on Professional Postgraduate Teacher Training (Pædagogikum) for Upper Secondary School Teachers - 1990, 9 pp. Price: Free of charge.

Adult Education and Continuing Training

"Folkeoplysning" - factsheet - 1998, 4 pp., UVM 30-016. Price for a complete set of factsheets about the different levels of the education system or a minimum of 10 copies of one factsheet: 50 DKK.

Open Education, Vocationally Oriented Adult Education - factsheet - 1996, 3 pp., UVM 30-016. Price for a complete set of factsheets about the different levels of the education system or a minimum of 10 copies of one factsheet: 50 DKK.

Adult learning in Denmark - 1997, 51 pp., UVM 11-139. Price: 40 DKK.

Consolidated Act on Teaching Danish as a Second Language for Adult Foreigners and others, and Language Centres 2000

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Information and Communication Technologies in the Danish School System. A State of Art Evaluation in 6 Areas of Government Action

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A green Approach to Education and Training - 1998

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