

Denmark

This article is divided into two parts. The first one giving an overview on what is considered disadvantaged youth regarding un-employment and education in Denmark. Within the first section the contextual settings, the educational system itself and the problems the Danish Society are facing are introduced.

The second part of the article presents 3 different kinds of Best Practices. These include a new Guidance-counselling initiative, the productions-schools and the activation policy. The three “best practices” are chosen as being broad and substantive political initiatives, which potentially are offered to large numbers of young people endangered of being marginalized. Focus is on a presentation and clarification of policies targeting young disadvantaged people, while small scale projects and special efforts in this area are left out.

Key words: Youth, Youthpolicies, Unemployment, Education, Disadvantaged, Guidance & Activation

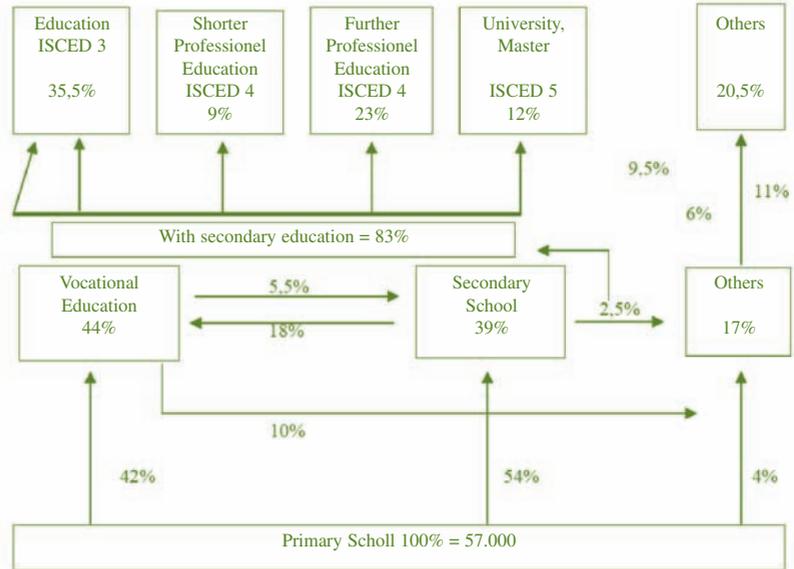
1. Disadvantaged in Denmark

Whether young people become disadvantaged in Denmark depends on how they are able to handle the increasing individualised demands. Young people with few resources often fail, why personal, educational, social and economic factors are important in terms of becoming disadvantaged or not.

- The key indicator for disadvantaged youth in Denmark is education; **Young people are considered disadvantaged if they do not have an education.**
- Denmark is a society based on knowledge and it is therefore **at least** essential to achieve **a secondary school degree**. Today 83% of the population achieves a secondary education and in the government platform 2005 it is formulated that at least 85% should achieve a secondary school degree in 2010 and 95% in 2015.

(1)
The article is written by Torben Bechmann Jensen from a cooperative effort done by the three authors mentioned. The original reports and working papers has been part of the European project done during 2005 for the European Commission, under the name “Disadvantaged Youth”. Full report is: Walther et al.: “Thematic Study on Policy Measures concerning Disadvantaged Youth” [www:ec/European union, social/social, youth inclusion. 2005](http://www.ec/European union, social/social, youth inclusion. 2005).

Figure 1:
Model of Educational system



The profile of the youth leaving compulsory education in the year 2000
(Source: Danmarks Statistik & UNI_C Statistik of Analyse)

This model shows that 79,5 % of youth leaving compulsory education in 2000 will get an education with employment qualification.

- More and more people (literature and debates) call attention to the fact that the challenge in this regard is more **maintenance** than recruitment (2). The main problem is not primarily to get the young people to start an education, but to keep them from leaving the education system before time, which is reflected in policies such as the Counselling and guidance reform (3). (see second part.)
- In spite of the fact that young people in general could be said to have more opportunities and resources today, the **increasing expectations and demands in the educational system and the labour market** (i.e. the gymnasium reform, individualised action plans) causes young people with lack of resources (social/cultural or intellectual) to become more disadvantaged (4).

The result is a slowly **polarisation of a week and a strong youth** which means that the disadvantaged becomes more disadvantaged as a consequence of this development where people with academic skills are given priority. An estimated number is that 20% of the youth generation is at risk of becoming disadvantaged. (5)

In Denmark **social heritage** still plays an important role regarding the ability to be successfully integrated in the educational system and the labour market, especially regarding young people with other ethnic origin. (6)

The percentages of early school leaving and young unemployed are higher among the young people with other ethnic origin than Danish (hereafter Ethnic minority). Twice as many ethnic minority young people drop out of

(2)
"frafald til fastholdelse"
(Dropout for Containment)
published by the Ministry of
Education, 2005
pub.uvm.dk/2005/frafald

(3)
Lov om vejledning om valg af
uddannelse og erhverv, LOV nr.
298 af 30/04/2003

(4)
Lov nr. 95 af 18/02/2004 and
"Hvad Virker", ("What works")
Published by the Ministry of
Education in 1999
www.pub.uvm.dk/1999/hvadvir
ker/1.htm

(5)
Koch I. & Bechmann Jensen T:
"Anonym Rådgivning af børn
og Unge" (Anonymous
Counselling of children and
Young people), Sikon, Cph.
1999

(6)
www.social.dk/det_sociale_syst
em/forskning/Forskning_om_n
egativ_social_arv.html

secondary school (7). Social and cultural background seems to play an important role on whether the individual can meet the increasing demands and expectation in the educational system and at the labour market (8).

In Denmark factors such as geography seems to play a minimal role as an indicator for disadvantaged youth. Being a small country, most young people leaving compulsory school either travels on a daily base or moves to a nearby region to study further. The only exceptions is Islands more isolated (i.e. Bornholm) from where, young people seeking education after secondary school might have to move from their home/living area to be able to attend.

Youth un-employment

Table 1. **Youth Unemployment in Denmark: Percentage of unemployed workforce (Rate):**

	Total	Men	Women
2003	9,9	10,7	9,1
2004	8,2	8,8	7,5

Fuente: Eurostat

Table 2. **Percentage of unemployed population (Ratio):**

	Total	Men	Women
2003	6	6,2	5,9
2004	5,6	6,2	4,9

Fuente: Eurostat

Table 3. **Unemployment rates by highest level of education attained (%) in 3rd quarter of 2003 between the age 15-24:**

	Male	Female	Total
ISCED 0-2	13,2	9,4	11,5
ISCED 3-4	7,0	9,1	8,1
Total	10,8	9,8	10,3

Fuente: Eurostat

Table 4. **Unemployment rates by highest level of education attained (%) in 3rd quarter of 2004 between the age 15-24:**

	Male	Female	Total
ISCED 0-2	9,0	7,0 u	8,2
ISCED 3-4	9,0	7,9	8,4
Total	10,5	7,5	9,1

Source: Eurostat. U= Uncertain data see Eurostat for further explanation.

The focus in Denmark is not youth unemployment but young people without education.

The demand for uneducated labour force is decreasing and the level of education seems to be the most important aspect in predicting subsequent labour market integration in Denmark.

The **change of work forms** also creates a risk of becoming disadvantaged. Various forms of non-standard work such as part-time jobs and contract work are supplanting full-time jobs.

Many people, especially young people, have difficulties being integrated in the labour market in full-time jobs, but are instead hired in non-standard jobs characterised by insecurity and lower salary.

(7)
 "En ny chance til alle". (New Chance for everyone) published by The Ministry of Integration, 2005
www.inm.dk/publikationer/En_ny_chance_til_alle/index.htm
 and the NAP Denmark 2004

(8)
www.social.dk/det_sociale_system/forskning/Forskning_om_negativ_social_arv.html
 (Research on negative Social Heritage)

In Denmark there is no definition of a **youth labour market**, but some branches of trade involves more young people than others. In hotels and restaurants more than 50% of the Employees are under the age of 30 (9).

2. Policies regarding disadvantaged youth

Education is the crucial qualification for entering the labour market, why **most policies concerning disadvantaged youth are aimed at school and education**. Everybody regardless of their social and economic heritage should have the opportunity for education (10).

This education policy must be seen in a global context, where education and knowledge play a dominant role according to competitive power regarding national interests. But the increasing tendency to individualisation involves a dilemma, when the increasing struggle for competitive power not only means a differentiation but also marginalization (11).

Secondary education (in general):

- **Decentralisation of secondary education** – decentralisation in this context both applies to the use of grants and largely also to the establishment of the contents of the secondary education programmes. It is the aim of this decentralisation to make the education system more flexible, to improve the quality of the programmes and support an optimal resource allocation.
- **A common structure** for ordinary secondary education and vocational education has been introduced to make it possible to **transfer credits** for parts completed in one programme to other programme(s) (12). This can be seen within a European context, in which a system of combining modules of education makes it possible to change directions and to build ones own education. One problem arising from this is, that learning is split up into more specialised courses - not necessarily containing competencies in general except competencies in certain fields or themes, individually organised. A problem connected to this is, that the responsibility on the quality of education moves from the single educational institution to a responsibility of either the individual herself or the educational system as a whole.
- Introduction of **reforms** in general within secondary education (13).

About the gymnasium reform it is said, that this to a greater extent will individualise secondary education and focus will be on individual learning processes and project work, and less collective classroom-teaching. The question is which consequences this will have for disadvantaged youth, whether it will mean further pressure and consequently widen the gap between the advantaged and disadvantaged youth.

Vocational Education:

The Danish vocational education system alternates between school education and vocational training, which means, that **there exists no distinctly vocational training** (14).

(9)
Danmarks Statistik (Statistics of Denmark)

(10)
www.social.dk/det_sociale_system/forskning/Forskning_om_negativ_social_arv.html

(11)
Retention in Vocational Education in Denmark -A best practice study published by The Ministry of Education 2005
pub.uvm.dk/2005/retention/

(12)
Retention in Vocational Education in Denmark -A best practice study published by The Ministry of Education 2005
pub.uvm.dk/2005/retention/

(13)
LOV nr. 95 af 18/02/2004

(14)
Retention in Vocational Education in Denmark -A best practice study published by The Ministry of Education 2005
pub.uvm.dk/2005/retention

“Vocational” education is in general organised in one of the following two ways:

- **School-based:** In which education starts in school. After 1/2 to 2 years the pupil applies for apprenticeship in a company and finishes the education in the company (15).
- **Practice-based:** The student signs in a contract with the company before attending school education. Education alternate afterwards between practice and academic education (16).

The total number of students who were enrolled in vocational education was in 2004 97.496 whereas the majority chose the school-way (17). There are approximately 44% of a year group that chooses a vocational education (18).

To ease the transition from vocational school to labour market, **initiatives considering apprenticeship** have been established. The background for these initiatives is the fact that some students, especially ethnic minority students, have difficulties in finding an apprentice place. This is a problem because of the fact, that apprenticeship is an important and integrated part of the education. Because of limited access to apprenticeships, students drop out of education. The aim is therefore through dialogue with the labour market to create more new places. Finally in those cases where the demands for apprenticeships are greater than the supply, work shops in the schools have been established as a replacement for apprenticeships in companies (19).

The problem is that the number of apprenticeship-placements is dropping. There are 9000 fewer apprenticeships in 2005 than in 2001 (20) and the numbers of apprenticeships based within schools are rising:

Table 5. **Development in vocational education; Number of pupils**

Year	1998	2004
School-based	25712	17775
Practise-based	57506	71974
School-based apprenticeships	1524	7747

Source: Danmarks Statistik

The government reckons to **reintroduce vocational training i.e. apprenticeship without academic education** in order to minimise dropouts especially among ethnic minority youth, who represents a large percentage of dropouts (21)

60 % of ethnic minority youth drop out, whereas the percentage dropout for ethnic Danes is 32 %. As mentioned earlier, mainly due to the fact that there are problems in providing apprenticeship placements for ethnic minority young people. The willingness to work for integration of ethnic minority youth in Danish companies is doubtful. However the problems also have to do with the lack of motivation or even trusting that it is possible getting placements among young immigrants. They seem to give up in advance as they know from peers and others which difficulties they are facing (22). Another possible explanation could be the lack of relevant support from families (23) and the interest of ethnic minority youth to earn money as soon as possible, being involved in legal or illegal business.

(15)
Retention in Vocational Education in Denmark -A best practice study published by The Ministry of Education 2005
pub.uvm.dk/2005/retention

(16)
Retention in Vocational Education in Denmark -A best practice study published by The Ministry of Education 2005
pub.uvm.dk/2005/retention

(17)
Danmarks Statistik

(18)
Ministry of Education.

(19)
Ministry of Education.

(20)
Danmarks Statistik

(21)
The Government Platform 2005

(22)
Ungdomsforskning årg. 3, nr. 3 & 4, Dec. 2004; Unge i tal og tekst

(23)
It is often necessary to be familiar with the Danish education system and labour market to support a young person in his or her education in a realistic and relevant way.

- **A new guidance reform** came into force the 1st of August 2004. The primary reason for this initiative is the fact that it shall be much easier to find and choose respectively education and occupation. The main target group for this reform is disadvantaged youth. This because of the acknowledgement that young people with few or fewer resources to a greater extent, need help in navigating through a more and more individualised education system. Ideally the Danish education system represents a democratic system where everything is possible to everybody, but practically it seems that the individualised education system demotivates young people with few resources, because they might be overwhelmed by all the existing possibilities and demands (24) or because the individual possibilities are in contradiction to their perception of how the better opportunities are actually distributed, meaning, that cultural and social background still plays a major role. Through extensive guidance it is therefore sought to guide the student through education which seems to be a necessary prerequisite in order to become a fully member and participant of the Danish society.

In accordance with the regulations (25) disadvantaged youth are young people between 19 and 25 years old, who are not in education or in job. Young people whose life situation suddenly changes, young people with physically or psychological handicaps, people who attend special classes or receive special education, people with heavy social problems and not least ethnic minority youth.

Because of the fact that the reform is new, there is no statistics considering the distribution of the different groups in the counselling system except for the distribution of ethnic youth. Figures from Copenhagen Youth Counselling show that ethnic youth account for 26.8 % of the distribution in Copenhagen. However it must be taken into account that ethnic minority youth represent a larger percentage of youth in general in Copenhagen, which of course to some extent distorts the overall picture. Another explanation for the apparently large number could be the fact that the new guidance reform specifically is targeted towards disadvantaged youth, among these ethnic minority youth, and therefore one could argue, that the measure has worked for this particular group. In continuation of this argument different initiatives illustrate that much is done to reach ethnic youth in terms of counselling.

(24)
"De skal selv finde ud af det, og det er der mange der ikke magter - om udsatte unge i en individualiseret tid" (It is up to themselves to find out - on youth at risk in times of individualisation) (2005), Noemi Katznelson

(25)
Lov om vejledning om valg af uddannelse og erhverv, LOV nr. 298 af 30/04/2003

(26)
"udsatte unge i erhvervsuddannelserne" (Youth at risk in Vocational training) (2005), Noemi Katznelson

In many municipalities there exist special counselling centres only for ethnic youth. Here, the counselling is often managed by counsellors with another ethnic background than Danish, which promotes a better understanding considering life conditions etc. Further more there exist a lot of web-based guidance offers specially targeted ethnic youth. In spite of this wide range of counselling and guidance opportunities ethnic youth still represents the highest drop out rate - especially in vocational education structures (26).

The problem in most cases is that the guidance offers only become offers to those pupils who by them selves actively seek information and counselling, i.e. more strong pupils/youngsters, both socially and academic, and it can thus be questioned whether ethnic youth really have an educational choice. It certainly depends on their individual competencies.

- In some municipalities this **guidance obligation has been exceeded**. There

are municipalities, which provide active reach-out counselling considering further education possibilities, and labour market situation up to two years after the pupil has left primary education. In addition young people who face special difficulties in their transition from primary school are offered a more personally organised counselling. Counselling is offered until the student has reached a gratifying situation (27). "Gratifying" is the official criteria, but this of course can be interpreted in different ways. Optimally both the counsellor and the young person are satisfied with the pathway and means chosen, but in the end of the day also any placement relevant or irrelevant to the young individual could be seen as "Gratifying/satisfying" from a bureaucratic level.

- The increasingly de-standardised transition from education to labour market, results as mentioned above, in an increased individualisation, where more and more decisions has to be taken alone. The strong focus on responsibility for own learning disregards the need for a strong socially and culturally ballast to deal with this kind of responsibility which exist within individualised educational structures. **This individualisation is reflected in the implementing and use of individualised action plans.** In general individualised action plans are implemented in many contexts, among these within compulsory school settings, under guidance settings both on local and regional levels, and at employment services. Competencies of the pupil in question are described and aims are put up. Thereby it should be possible early to identify weak and strong aspects of the pupil and find ways and methods to act upon these.
- The government (inspired by the PISA results) reckons to introduce more tests in primary education in order to identify academic weak pupils as early as possible. But as it is often pointed out regarding these kinds of tests, the question is whether these test actually tell us something about competencies of the pupil or simply tells us something about the pupils skills in test-taking.

Activation:

A special effort towards disadvantaged youth regarding activation came into force the 1st of January 1999 (28). Young people without qualifying education are activated much earlier than before, and the activation profit is halved in order to motivate the young people to (re)-enter education or labour market. The effort seems to have worked, regarding statistics but not necessarily individually. The number of unemployed young people has dropped. More Young people on welfare benefits are implemented in the educational system or on labour market after this new legislative reformulation and the number of young people on activation welfare have dropped:

(27)
Ungdommens
Uddannelsesvejledning,
(Educational guidance of
Youth) Silkeborg Kommune.

(28)
Arbejdsmarkedsreformens 3.
fase, (Labourmarket Reform, 3
rd. fase) jf. Ministry of
Employment and
www.ams.dk/publikationer

Table 6. **Number of unemployed aged 18- 29:**

Year	1984	2004
Men	66006	17710
Female	55836	33563
Total	121842	51273

Source: Danmarks Statistik

NB. Even though the amount of unemployed young people seems to have dropped dramatically, it has to be taken into account that the overall number of people aged 18-29 has decreased significantly over the past 20 years. Approximately there are 20 % less people in the age group in 2004 than in the mid 80'ies. (Source: Danmarks Statistik.)

The activation of unemployed young people started in the late eighties as the "Youth Effort" and special policies for people under 30 still exists, but the policies had such a huge impact on the unemployment rate, that activation policies now exist for all unemployed. In the overall picture people being activated are angry or at least sceptical towards the activation- policy. For a number of years it was in everyday language referred to as "Stupid at work" instead of the official name "young at work" (young and stupid are close in pronunciation in Danish). The scepticism stems from the attitude, that people activated often feels forced into (more or) less relevant work or schemes, not really being taken seriously and not leading to any real opportunity to be integrated in ordinary work/education. Officially the activation policy is regarded as successful. People being activated do not count as unemployed in the unemployment statistics.

One can argue that the Danish activation policy is a success because of the fact, that it is implemented to a great extend. But when quality is evaluated instead of looking upon the quantity of the effort, it is questionable whether activation can be evaluated as a success when used as a **coercive measure**. Therefore different (often local) initiatives are established in terms of turning the activation effort into a **participation** process. This means that the activated to a greater extend have influence on his/hers activation course.

Disadvantaged youth, i.e. young people without a secondary education or without any contact to the labour market, can be activated in an education course in a **production school** (29). Young People below the age of 25 can regardless of whether they receive unemployment benefits from the state or activation benefits from the local authorities be activated after a period of three months of unemployment. 30 hours per week are offered, but the education provided at production schools is not formally qualifying for neither jobs nor further education, but gives instead the pupil alternative learning experiences (30).

Summarising

The newly formed Government has published their Government platform 2005, which include several reforms concerning education and therefore also youth unemployment. The major goal is that everybody should finish a secondary education. The government will accomplish this by:

- Create more placements (apprenticeships, financial state-supported work in companies)
- Reward firms, who create extra placements (apprenticeships)
- Reinroduce Practice Apprenticeship (Where schooling can take place in the firm).
- Reduce school leaving, especially in vocational schools
- Focus on the responsibilities of the parents

(29)
See best practises

(30)
"Produktionsskolerne i Danmark
- et resume",
(Productionschools in Denmark
- a resum e)
www.undervisningsministeriet.
dk and Annex IV in this report.

- Increase the responsibilities of the municipality
- The unemployed shall be referred to education or job instead of unemployment benefit (activation)
- Increase the possibilities to bring along qualification in vocational schools for ethnic minority youth
- 10th. Grade shall be targeted to qualify transition of disadvantaged pupils to secondary education (Young people in general should move on to get a youth education after finishing 9th. grade)

In the Implementation and update report on the NAP/Inclusion (31) as well as in the Government platform many initiatives are designed as either "sticks or carrots", meaning for instance that benefits are cut down or the tolerance of letting pupils stay in school (10th.grade) or young people in education is lowered. Young people are activated earlier than before and pupils/young people are obliged to make action plans from primary school and onwards. On the other hand more opportunities for counselling, guidance and freedom to choose educational path are provided.

The main concern regarding education is double and focused on both providing enough opportunities for young people to get an education as well as trying to speed up the time used in the educational system.

As "sticks" and "carrots" are often used at the same time, it is hard to be certain of the impact of a single initiative. The overall picture is easily blurred in a way, which makes both evaluation and necessary adjustments difficult.

Even though within the Government Platform and the NAP/inclusion, intentions are good regarding further inclusion of disadvantaged people - a number of points could be mentioned, regarding the possible implicit problems.

Denmark has a fairly long tradition for trying to implement the idea of Life long Learning as well as trying to tailor an educational program individually regarding both young and adult people (32). Many efforts has been carried out regarding social and cultural projects, the former "Open Youth Education", the Production schools etc. as well as implementing a pedagogy involving non-formal learning and more participation from pupils/students. This approach has to be seen as a result of a longer development.

During the past 5-7 years and especially after the new liberal government came into power in 2001, this perspective is mixed with a more radical view underlining the societal need for more young people to be formally educated and qualified in a shorter period of time. As predictions for the future tells that larger proportions of the population will reach the age of pension and withdraw from the Labour Market and that the number of young people entering the Labour Market will decrease (33), some kind of panic seem to have entered into the administration.

Continuation schools (in which young people attend after finishing primary school for one year living together with peers in the school), 10th grade in primary school, alternative ("Free") schools etc. are put under pressure. As these kinds of schools having a non-formal learning curricula and serving as a room for personal and social development are not in a direct manner

(31)
The NAP/Inclusion 2003-2005
Denmark June 2005

(32)
National actions to implement
Lifelong Learning in Europe,
Eurydice 2001

(33)
The NAP 2004 and
Government Platform 2005

qualifying youth formally, they are regarded as an extra service, which is not efficient enough.

Therefore initiatives are taken, that only disadvantaged young people should enter these alternative practices, whereby the often very successful combination of disadvantaged youth and youth with more promising futures is getting spoiled or harder to maintain.

Regarding the ethnic minority youth, the challenges of education and employment seems to be very hard to handle. Both regarding males and females and especially the young ethnic minorities females, many young people do drop-out of the education system.

For a lot of ethnic minority youth no problems arise, but for a large number there seems to be a mismatch of the educational system and both the ethnic background of people as well as their (both young people and their parents) trust in the Societal efforts and possibilities.

In many respects Denmark increasingly holds a very strict attitude towards ethnic minorities regarding both entering Denmark and regulating behaviour as they have entered. Even though the amount of ethnic minority immigrants in Denmark is not very high in comparison to a number of other European Countries (app. 8 percent) and even though the Danish education system is known for displaying tolerance - the challenge to Society of integrating ethnic minority youth is big.

The dialogue with young people and understanding of the situation in which ethnic minority youth is confronted seems to get less and less priority. In stead more and more demands are put on also ethnic minority youth for entering and finishing a qualifying education and assimilate to a Danish reality (Labour Market demands as well as social behaviour). Employers are more reluctant to employ ethnic minority youth both in general as well as regarding apprenticeship placements. In Public Schools in Copenhagen some portions of ethnic minority youth are transferred to other schools to lower the percentage of pupils with other ethnic origin than Danish - which heavily contradicts the principle of a free choice of public school. Limits are put on housing companies regarding the percentage of "foreign people" living in certain buildings etc. The threat of punishing ethnic minority people (and in some respects even their families) for acts of criminal behaviour by sending them back to where they (or their families) originate from are parts of the ongoing public debate from politicians.

Individual considerations appear to be taken less important regarding ethnic minority youth than regarding youth in general.

Ethnic minority Youth could be seen as caught up between the wishes and aspirations of parents, peers and Society, all pointing into different directions.

Both Ethnic minority and Danish disadvantaged youth are facing a political atmosphere, which is changing direction towards more demands put on the individual in order to gain good possibilities.

3. Best Practices

Best practices mentioned in the following part 2 are chosen as being broad and quantitative substantive political initiatives. A number of more limited projects and initiatives are taken separately across the Country and quite a number of these could be seen as more pedagogical well-structured, planned and carried out. On the other hand many of these projects only have a limited number of young people involved as well as the ongoing praxis of the projects are vulnerable regarding getting financed and secured (34).

Guidance and counselling

1st of august 2004 a new Danish Guidance Reform came into force. The primary reason for this initiative is, that the intention to make it much easier for young people to find and choose education and occupation, respectively. The guidance considering secondary education is placed under the municipalities, while guidance considering professional education and occupation is gathered under the regions. In continuation of this new initiative, a new common guidance education is supposed to replace former guidance education forms in order to qualify the training of counsellors. The main aims of the reform are:

- Guidance shall help ensure that choices of education and career will be of greatest possible benefit to both the individual and society.
- Guidance shall take into account the individual's interests and personal qualifications as well as the anticipated need for qualified labour and self-employed businessmen.
- Guidance shall be targeted especially at young people with special needs for guidance.
- Guidance shall contribute to a reduction of drop-out rates.
- Guidance shall contribute to improving the individual's ability to seek and use information about choice of education and career.
- Guidance shall be independent of institution- and sector specific interests.
- The qualifications and competencies of guidance counsellors shall be improved.

In order to optimise the qualifications of the counsellors, a Centre of expertise for guidance has been established under The Ministry of Education. Activities in the centre has, among others to do with: Collecting examples of best practice, initiating analyses, surveys and experimental activities, coordination among different types of services and quality development.

The specific training of guidance-counsellors is carried out as one common training programme, offered by 6 Centres for higher education. The Training programme is equivalent to 6 months full-time studies. Minimum entry requirements for participants are that they have completed 2-year higher education programme and have 2 years of relevant working experience.

Content of the training programme includes training courses in guidance

(34)
For a particular interest in some of these initiatives and the societal conditions they have, see Walther et al. 2006

theories, methods, ethics, ICT, etc. Training courses in labour market conditions, the education system, development of society and business, etc. And finally the programme includes training courses in different target groups, human development, learning theories, etc.

There exists no specification at the moment on how many cases each counsellor shall manage.

* Two types of guidance centres are established.

46 youth guidance centres where guidance in relation to transition from compulsory to youth education is offered. Municipalities fund and have the overall responsibility for the centres. At each centre a manager employed is responsible for the daily management. The centres are obliged to cooperate with primary/lower secondary schools and youth education institutions in the area, regional guidance centres and local business life and public employment services.

7 regional guidance centres offers guidance in relation to transition from youth education to higher education.

The majority of the centres are consortia of different educational institutions. They are obliged to cooperate with partners in their regions such as youth education and higher education institutions, youth guidance centres and social partners and industry and commerce.

Even though the centres are placed regionally they are obliged to manage nationwide counselling. The guidance ought to be independent of region-, sector- and institutions interest. It is expected that The Ministry of Education annually will spent 39 million Dkr. (5.5 mill. Euro) running the activities.

In addition a national guidance portal is established www.ug.dk, where information about education, training, labour market issues, professions and possibilities abroad are given. Every student is given a personal log-on and possibilities for a-mail based enquiry service are given.

Finally a national dialogue forum is established ultimo 2003. The main aim of this forum is to secure a dialogue across sectors and to develop the level of quality in Danish Guidance and counselling. 3 times a year 11 members and representatives from 12 organisations and 5 ministries meet to discuss the actual guidance taking place.

In order to evaluate and to quality control the new guidance reform, a quality-control-system has been established. The findings are published on the internet, where findings and results from the different centres can be compared. The system evaluates and controls methods, employee qualifications, effect and results of activities.

Evaluation of this quality-control-system concludes that a tightening of objectives are needed, especially when it comes to disadvantaged youth. The conclusion is that activities and objectives are not clearly directed towards disadvantages youth, which is one of the main aims of the new guidance reform. However it is too early to make manifest conclusions because of the fact, that the guidance system it self has not yet been evaluated, only the quality-control-system has.

Regarding guidance and counselling, specific numbers following the new guidance reform on how many young people who have access to and who uses this are hard to get any overview of. Therefore following figures are estimated annual figures based upon figures from August 2004 - December 2004.

Table 7. **Young people from 15-19 years in youth counselling in Copenhagen**

	Pupils in numbers	Percentage
In education	5316	73,3%
In job	718	9,9%
Target group	1223	16,8%
Total	7257	100%

Source: Youth counselling, Copenhagen December, 2004
Citizens between 15-19 years old in Copenhagen in total = 22.606

Table 8. **Young people in counselling distributed over language in Copenhagen**

Language	Pupils in numbers	Percentage
Pakistani/Indian	348	4,8%
Turkish/Kurdish	255	3,5%
Arabic	436	6,0%
African	143	2,0%
Yugoslavia	237	3,3%
Other languages	525	7,2%
Danish	5313	73,2%
Total	7257	100%

Source: Youth counselling, Copenhagen, December, 2004

As the figures above illustrate, there seem to be some problems in reaching marginalised youth, when it comes to guidance and counselling. This in spite of the fact, that the target group for the new guidance reform is disadvantaged youth.

In principle - most public guidance and counselling services are accessible for all young people, depending on their involvement in the education system and personal situation.

For some young people however guidance and counselling is not used or young people do not pay much attention to the service or the help they are receiving.

Reasons for not using the guidance service or for paying less attention can be many. Especially for disadvantaged youth - the guidance system sometimes provide poor guidance or counselling - i.e. regarding further education - when a counsellor points to an educational lower level for ethnic minority youth or especially for ethnic minority women. The gaps between the individual wishes of an education as well as individual competences and the ones counsellors point to in the guidance service might be very big.

This could be seen as a problem also stemming from policies for disadvantaged, where lower education opportunities as for instance social and health assistants are widened in order to absorb disadvantaged people.

When the guidance and counselling system is closely attached to the educational system it can be regarded as not very trustworthy, as the counsellor might at the same time be part of the teaching staff - and thereby

be seen as somebody talking from the perspective of the institution - no matter whether this is the case or not.

It seems that a growing part of the ethnic minority in Denmark have scepticism towards or even show distrust in authorities or public administrative systems.

Other guidance and counselling services - mainly the ones acting more autonomously are experiencing an increasing number of immigrant youth, who seek guidance and counselling.

In that respect one tendency is clear. If people are expected or even obliged to have guidance/counselling - disadvantaged youth (and especially ethnic minority youth) seems to be underrepresented. On the other hand guidance and counselling services sought on a voluntary basis and most often done in settings outside formal institutions attract more disadvantaged youth (including ethnic minority youth, which in these settings are overrepresented compared to the overall percentage).

Production schools

In 1980 a special initiative developed under the Ministry of Education to combat youth unemployment was taken. The initiative resulted in a new school form and a separate legislation came into force in 1985 (Act of production schools).

The production schools exist under a national framework but each school is free to interpret, construct and concretise aims and activities in order to meet special regional demands.

Even though the productions schools belong under the Ministry of education it also effects labour market situations. Young people who do not complete a youth education are offered new and different education possibilities and thereby they hopefully later will be integrated on labour market (35).

At the moment there exist around 100 production schools in Denmark and 1769 pupils are in 2005 enrolled in this form of education. The number of pupils has since 1st of January 2005 been decreasing because of the fact that the legislation has been reformulated so that only pupils who belongs under the production schools legislative target group can participate in this education form.

Before this new legislation came into force, the production schools were admitting a broader group of pupils, which means that "strong" pupils whom are considered strong enough to be integrated in traditional education system, were admitted to these schools, mostly as a result of poor (or lack of) guidance from school and education counsellors. This acknowledgement has resulted in a lawfully obligation for school counsellors to consider whether the pupil in question is included in the primary target group i.e. academic weak pupils or whether other (qualifying) alternatives than production schools should be taken into consideration.

The production schools are funded through partly municipal funds: A basic grant is given by local authorities or/and by the county council. The grant is obligatory in the establishment of the school and the amount of the obligatory grant is the same across municipalities. Local authorities can

(35)

An alternative to production-schools, more into arts and media were The Open Youth Education, which unfortunately were closed down in 2005. For details regarding this school form, see Walther et al. 2006

however give optional additional grants. In 2004 the municipal funds made up 43.824 EUR.

The other funding is through state funds: State subsidies are given towards running costs, including education costs, building costs etc. State subsidies are fixed according to annual finance budgets. In 2004 the State funds made up 9.958 EUR per one-year nomination.

Pupils are not entitled to ordinary grants (SU (36)), but receive a “school-grant” from the school, which is to be considered as payment for working with production outputs. For pupils under 18 years the grant is 67 EUR for pupils over 18 years the grant is 134 EUR pr. Week, which is comparable to the “SU”. The grant is considered a taxable income. If the pupil is late or do not show up, the school can make a reduction in the payment.

For pupils in activation specific rules exist considering the distribution of funds between municipality, state and employment service.

Through education the main goal is that each pupil get the opportunity to develop ones own life competency. Focus is not only on academic skills but also and in particular on social, personal and physical skills. Life competency is achieved through lifelearning and through a qualifying process. Life-learning is a psychological adoption to norms, values etc. existing in society. It is a “hidden” curriculum or process which is often difficult to verbalise and to predict and organise.

The qualifying process is a process where knowledge and more formal skills are acquired. The two learning processes are organised through two forms of teaching: Workshop teaching and ordinary teaching. Every young individual is free to organise an individual course which fits to the student in question. The course can always be changed in the process. For some students it is more important to develop social and personal competencies, for others a strengthening of knowledge and skills seems most important. Courses are organised according to meet the individual qualifications sought by the young person. The qualifying process is not only formal which is seen in other educational contexts but do also involves in- and non-formal learning.

The primary target group is young individuals below the age of 25 who has not started or finished a secondary education. In the beginning productions schools were only for young unemployed. Now everyone without a secondary education can be accepted on the schools.

Young people below the age of 25 can regardless if they receive unemployment benefits from the state or activation benefits from the local authorities be activated after a period of three months of unemployment. 30 hours per week are offered.

From the 1st quarter of 2004 to the 1st quarter of 2005 there has been a decrease in the annual pupil activity on 5 %. This is primarily because of the fact that admission with state funds only applies to students who are considered to be in the target group. Whether the student is considered within the target group or not is a decision, taken by a counsellor according to the new guidance reform.

(36)

Most students in Denmark are entitled to receive a study grant from the State (SU). It is only barely enough to live on, but can be supplied both by cheap loans and a limited earning from working. The study grants are fixed depending on age and time of studying. The system is introduced in order to make it possible for anyone – regardless of family

- Young people within the target group are regarded as belonging to one of the following groups:
- Young people having difficulties in acquiring academic skills and difficulties in getting a qualifying education.
- Young people who has started but never finished a youth education, neither in gymnasium nor vocational.
- Young people with massive social or behavioural problems.
- Young people who of one or another reason can not find their way into the ordinary education system.

The production schools are built upon the idea that learning takes places through production work shops. The basic premise is learning by doing. Everything which is produced or manufactured is most often getting sold no matter if the product is a material product, a service product or for instance music- and plays. The important thing is that the young people get recognition for their work.

It is also important that each task fits the student in question. The task shall both be challenging but also reinforce sense of confidence, which means that the task must not be too difficult, but at the same time difficult enough to motivate and facilitate learning.

Different workshops are offered depending on the specific school. Examples are carpeting, canteen, building construction, electronics, fitness and health, administration, tourism, textile, media, drama, metalwork etc. The workshops are coordinated both with each other but also with other production schools and the local community.

In addition to practical or thematic workshops students are taught math, language, ICT etc. All classes are voluntary. Finally the students can do 4 weeks apprenticeship in public or private contexts or participate in an exchange program. The apprenticeship period can be prolonged if the young individual is regarded and feels that he or she benefits from it.

Every young individual participate continuously in the organisation of his or hers stay at the school.

No testing or exams are held and new students can start any time during the whole year. Students can parallel with their stay at the school attend classes in a qualifying education, up to 12 hours per week. This is an opportunity widely used.

The production schools are independent institutions and are established locally or regional and are regulated by Ministry of education. Each school has a committee, a school principal and teachers. The Minister of education invigilates and supervises the work at the schools.

The productions schools are a result of a long term policy and exist under a well established framework. A continuously evaluation is taking place because of the state supervision. In addition OECD made an evaluation report in 1994 where they concluded that the production schools are

succeeding in motivation and challenging the young people in ways the formal education system can not.

A quantitative study carried out by the Ministry of Education shows that 35 % of those pupils who attended the production schools across the country in 1997-1998 are today integrated at labour market, 34 % are in education, 16 % are unemployed, 6 % are on leave, whereas information about the remaining 9 % is unknown. About 1/3 are doing the same job/education today as they did right after leaving the production school, whereas the rest has changed their path.

If you look upon 1998 re-absorption results for the same group of students shows that 1/5 are involved in SU entitled education, 1/5 are involved in other educational settings, 1/5 are integrated at labour market, 1/5 are either unemployed or in activation, whereas no information exist for the remaining 1/5.

The duration of stays at the schools seems important considering future paths. 50 % of students, who were involved for three months to 1 year, started an education right after leaving school, whereas Students who stayed for less than 3 months to a greater extend became unemployed.

Activation

Policy environment of good practice.

The activation programmes are parts of the Act of Active Employment Effort (Law no. 419 10/06/2003) and belongs under the Ministry of employment. Activation programs started as an initiative for young unemployed (Youth Effort) but are now effective for all unemployed with capacity of work, but there are special rules for activation of young people.

A) Structure

The employment effort is distributed among two parallel systems. The insured unemployed belong under the governmental employment service (AF) and the uninsured belongs under the municipality, which refer the unemployed to the governmental employment service (AF). Notice that this system will change as a result of a structure reform change in 2007, when the counties will be closed down.

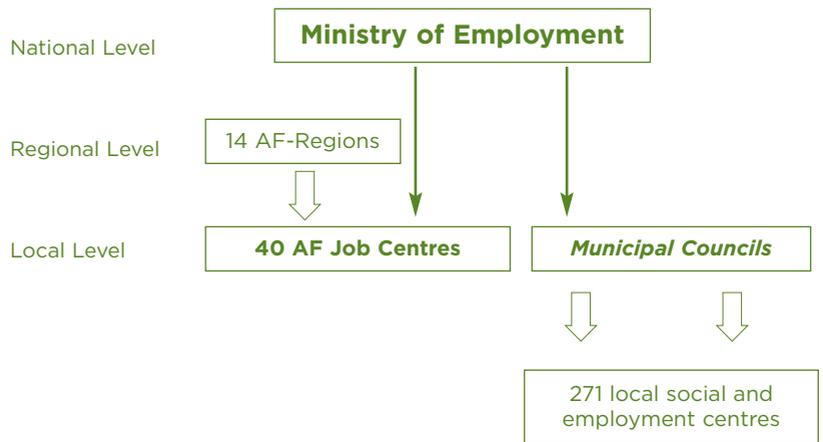
The governmental employment service:

The governmental employment service (AF) has 40 job centres situated all over Denmark. Each of the 14 counties has a governmental AF-region, which survey the efforts of the job centres. Each region holds a labour market council where different labour market partners are represented.

The municipality:

271 local social and employment centres which belong under each municipal council exist.

2.3 The system today:



Economy

Activation rules

In Denmark you are obliged to participate in activation otherwise your benefit will be deprived.

The Danish unemployment benefit-system (the insured):

If you are under 30 years old you have the right and duty to activation after 6 month unemployment and 12 month if you are older than 30.

Activation under the unemployment benefit system (the Government) can consist of an individual action plan, an individual education plan, apprenticeships or (further) education.

The Danish social benefit system:

People under the age of 30 have the right and duty to receive an employment offer not later than after 13 weeks of social benefit. (People over the age of 30 have the right and duty to receive an employment offer after 12 month).

- If you are unemployed under 30 and without an education that gives you permission to an unemployed insurance when the activation last 18 month and at least 30 hours per week.
- If you are unemployed under the age of 30 with an education the activation shall last 6 month at least 30 hours per week.

Activation under the social benefit system (The municipalities) can consist of guidance, action plan, job training, job rotation, education or voluntary work.

Percentage of young people in the two benefit system for at least for 6 month in 2004

• The Danish unemployment benefit system (the insured):

18-19 Years old	0,03 %
20-24 Years old	1,43 %
25-29 Years old	3,75 %
Total	2,3 %

Source: Danmarks Statistik

• The Danish social benefit system

18-19 Years old	3,13 %
20-24 Years old	4,77 %
25-29 Years old	4,42 %
Total	4,36 %

Source: Danmarks Statistik

These numbers do not include young people receiving salary grants

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