

**Denmark's Contribution to the 2008
Joint Council/Commission Report on the
Implementation of the Work Programme
"Education and Training 2010"**

Copenhagen, May 2007

Annexes:

1. Denmark's strategy for lifelong learning
2. Figure concerning the Danish adult and in service training system
3. Examples of best practice

Note: reference DK/2005 refers to Denmark's 2005 contribution to the 2006 report

Chapter 1: Presentation of the national lifelong learning strategy

1.1. Current stay of play:

1.1.1. Whether a lifelong learning strategy was established in your country by the end of 2006, and if not what is the timetable for its establishment,

In autumn 2006 the government laid down a coherent strategy for lifelong learning in Denmark. The report of the Danish Government, "Denmark's strategy for lifelong learning – Education and Skills Upgrading for All", which has been forwarded to the EU Commission, is appended for general information (Annex 1).

The national strategy for lifelong learning is to a considerable extent based on the government's extremely important work in the Globalisation Council in drawing up the globalisation strategy entitled "Progress, Innovation and Cohesion– Strategy for Denmark in the Global Economy" (2006) (<http://www.globalisering.dk/page.dsp?area=52>), as well as the subsequent broad political agreement: "Agreement on future prosperity and welfare and investments in the future". This agreement and the political "Agreement on the implementation of the globalisation pool" in autumn 2006 created the basis for the long-term, coherent development of human resources in Denmark up to 2012, which is to contribute to overall educational and competence enhancement for everyone in Danish society.

1.1.2. Plans for future adjustment, completion or modification of the strategy,

The strategy, which is to be implemented gradually in the period between 2007 and 2012, is to enhance the capacity and quality of adult and in service training efforts. The main points in the implementation of the strategy are as follows:

- Proposals for new legislative initiative are to be presented in the Danish Parliament 2006/2007.
- Implementation of new initiatives financed from the globalisation pool in 2007-2009.
- Tripartite discussions (the government and the social partners) in 2007 concerning the future financing of adult and in service training.
- Political negotiations with the parties to the welfare agreement concerning the principles for the implementation of one billion DKK extra for vocationally oriented adult and in service training.
- Scrutiny of new legislation in 2009/2010.
- Evaluation of new initiatives (globalisation pool) in 2009 with a view to political discussions on the impact and continuation of the initiatives and prioritisation of new initiatives for the period 2010- 2012.

1.1.3. Any obstacles encountered in the establishment of your strategy,

No significant obstacles have been noted to the establishment of the strategy, which is based on the wide-ranging inclusion of all relevant stakeholders as well as broad political backing.

1.2. Comprehensiveness, coherence and relevance:

1.2.1. Which systems and levels of education and training are covered,

It is the aim of the government that lifelong learning should be promoted for all and within all areas where human knowledge, skills and competences are developed and applied. For this reason the strategy includes initiatives pertaining to all levels in the education system from pre-primary to higher education, general and vocationally oriented adult and in service education and training, learning and competence development, in the workplace, in adult liberal education, and in association activities and recreational pursuits, as well as educational activities for vulnerable target groups on the labour market, including the unemployed and refugees/immigrants.

1.2.2. The challenges addressed by the strategy, including improving the efficiency and equity of education and training systems, and how these have been identified (evidence base),

The strategy is a concerted response to the challenges to Denmark posed by globalisation and technological development, and that have been identified in the context of comprehensive analytical work in connection with the work of the Globalisation Council and the work in the “Tripartite Committee on lifelong skills upgrading and training for the whole of the labour market” established by the Government (cf DK/2005 section 3.1.2). The most important challenges addressed by the strategy as follows:

- A well-qualified workforce is needed. This is decisive for securing competitiveness, welfare and cohesion, especially because the demands concerning the general and professional competences of the workforce will increase while the demand for manpower with low or narrow competences will fall in the years to come.
- The competences of the workforce must be increased at all levels. More people must have a qualifying education or training and significant improvement is needed in adult and in service training efforts, not least in order to improve the situation of early school leavers.
- The size of the workforce must be increased, also with those who today find it difficult to gain a footing on the labour market. The workforce is also aging and the inflow is less than the anticipated exit from the labour market.
- There is a need to develop the quality of education and training at all levels for it to be in a position to meet current and future needs for competences and new knowledge in the enterprises, on the labour market and in society. Education and training must be world class.
- There is a need for greater cohesion between the various educational pathways and levels so that the individual can flexibly acquire qualifications and competences and all young people can get an education with global prospects.
- There is a need for the education system to be spacious with room for all. Far too many drop out today and more must complete their education and training faster to make efficient use of the resources.
- There is a need for continuous participation by more adults on the labour market in adult and in service training, and for competence development in the enterprises to be strengthened. Many, in particular unskilled, older employees, those with inadequate reading and writing skills and those who are bilingual, either do not participate in adult and in service training or do so to a far lesser extent than other groups on the labour market.
- There is a need for enterprises to boost their investments in learning and competence development. This applies to small and medium-sized enterprises in particular.

1.2.3. The priorities for action and policy development within the strategy, in the light of these challenges,

The strategy comprises the following prioritised objectives for the development of education and training efforts and participation in lifelong learning:

- A coherent education system from pre-school class to higher education is to contribute to all acquiring good basic skills, a qualifying education and a solid foundation for lifelong learning. There must be equal opportunities and room for all.
- Education and training programmes must be world class. The education system is both to foster talents and be spacious in relation to those whose prior qualifications are less good. Quality must take pride of place and education and training must meet society's needs.
- There must exist relevant, high quality adult and in service training courses for all on the labour market matching the needs and that also focus in particular on the need of early school leavers for lifelong skills upgrading. It is a common responsibility that everyone on the labour market continues to educate themselves throughout their whole lives.
- Systematic competence development at places of work must be strengthened in both public and private enterprises. Increased public and private investment in employees' in service training and competence development is to make a contribution to improving the individual's competences and enhancing the development of the enterprises.
- Possibilities for guidance and consultancy are to be improved and to contribute to ensuring pupils, students and adults the best possible preconditions for educational choice and participation in lifelong learning.
- All types of education and learning must take their point of departure in and build on the individual's knowledge, skills and competences. In the field of adult and in service training new and better possibilities must be created for rendering visible and recognising the individual's overall actual competences.
- Coherent educational pathways must exist as well as transparency in the education system that contribute to targeted education and lifelong skills upgrading and that underpin the best possible utilisation of public resources.
- The education and training courses must contain a global perspective that contributes to strengthening internationalisation and cooperation with the world around us.
- Stronger higher education environments must be created that are to contribute to higher quality in education and knowledge development, and better frames and preconditions must be developed for the interaction of education institutions with enterprises and other relevant actors.

To realise the general objectives of education and lifelong skills upgrading, the government has prioritised a large number of specific targets and initiatives within the individual educational areas, in adult and in service training, in liberal adult education and recreational activities etc. and in employment efforts (cf section 1.3.).

The strategy also includes prioritisation of a number of crosscutting focus areas that encompass: 1) Guidance and consultancy, 2) Recognition of prior learning, 3) Cohesion and transparency in the

education system, 4) A global perspective in education, 5) Stronger academic education institutions, and 6) Partnerships on education and lifelong skills upgrading.

1.3. Main policy measures:

1.3.1. The main policy measures in the strategy and how they fit together,

The measures referred to are linked by the above-mentioned crosscutting focus areas.

Pre-primary education:

- Language assessment is to be introduced for all children at the age of 3 and again at the age of 6 when they start in the pre-school class so that the education and teaching can take its starting point in individual language qualifications.
- Pedagogical curricula are to be drawn up in all day-care services, and subject-divided teaching in Danish is to be introduced, in particular reading in the pre-school class.

Primary and lower secondary education:

- Compulsory school attendance is to be extended from 9 to 10 years' schooling by making pre-primary education a compulsory part of primary and lower secondary education.
- The evaluation culture is to be strengthened by the introduction of ten national tests in the course of a school process, and an individual plan of action is to be introduced. Primary and lower secondary education final examinations are to be made compulsory and the number of examination subjects increased.
- Plans of action for fundamental subject areas are to be drawn up: reading, mathematics, natural science and English, and new teacher training programme is to be launched that ensures better quality in the education and targeted in service training of teachers and head teachers in primary and lower secondary education.

Upper secondary education:

- The municipalities will be responsible for contributing to ensuring that all young people complete an upper secondary education, inter alia by means of better guidance and improved educational opportunities for young people whose pre-qualifications are inadequate.
- Vocationally oriented upper secondary education is to be strengthened, inter alia through in service training of teachers and better school environments.
- Efforts for more work placements in vocational education and training are to be stepped up in both private and public enterprises, inter alia by means of a national campaign in cooperation with trade and industry and professional organisations.
- More flexible pathways and educational opportunities are to be introduced in vocational education and training that are to provide for all pupils, both the strong and the less able.
- Graduation of vocational education and training is to be introduced that meets the needs of the labour markets, so that all young people can get an education suiting their qualifications and improving the possibilities for access to higher education.

Higher education:

- New bachelor and practice oriented education courses are to be developed.

- Medium-cycle higher education is to be gathered in fewer multi-subject university colleges with academically strong and modern educational environments.
- Short-cycle higher education is to be made more attractive and flexible and be targeted to the needs of the labour market, and pathways of access from vocational education and training are to be improved.
- New, attractive education programmes in science, technology and health are to be developed.
- Elite Masters' programmes are to be developed to allow the most able students to reach a level of the best in other countries.
- Quality is to be enhanced at all levels in higher education, inter alia by means of increased in-service training of teachers and accreditation of all higher education.
- The admission system and the organisation of study courses are to be altered so as to promote earlier study start and swifter completion of studies.

Adult and in service training:

- Guidance and consultancy to be strengthened vis-à-vis the employed and the enterprises.
- Better and simpler access to recognition of actual competence to be ensured within all publicly financed adult and in service training, from preparatory adult education and training to diploma level (lowest in service training level at higher level – cf annex 2).
- Significant efforts to increase the number of participants at reading, writing and mathematics courses for adults. The courses offered are to be made more flexible and the possibilities for combining reading, writing and mathematics courses with adult vocational training are to be better utilised.
- Better services for bilinguals who have problems with the Danish language are to be developed in the area of Danish courses for adult immigrants and in the fields of other general and vocationally oriented adult education programmes with a view to those involved being able to manage better on the labour market and as fellow citizens.
- Adult and in service training courses inter alia in adult vocational training are to be made more attractive, targeted and flexible in relation to the needs of the individual and the business sector.
- A better and broader range of qualifying adult education courses is to be developed in the special higher education system for adults (diploma level to Masters level).
- The number of adult apprentices, who can achieve vocational education competence, is to be increased by means of public subsidies.
- Safeguarding the framework conditions of institutions, more flexible participant payment and a new model for financing compensation in vocationally oriented adult and in service training are to be discussed with the social partners and the parties to the welfare agreement.
- Systematic competence development in small and medium-sized enterprises is to be furthered in both public and private enterprises, among other things by developing methods and tools.
- Increased public and private investment in adult and in service training is to be promoted.
- The development in adult and vocationally oriented in service training efforts is to be monitored by the development of an indicator system.

1.3.2. Outline the measures designed to address progress towards EU benchmarks, including any national targets in these areas,

The many concrete initiatives, financed inter alia by the extra funds that have been allocated (cf section 1.3.3), are to contribute to the fulfillment of the national targets set up within the individual education and training areas in 2010 and 2015, respectively. Fulfillment of the national targets will ensure progress in the common EU benchmarks.

1.3.3. Allocation of resources to main policy measures, including any national targets for more/more efficient use of funds and the use of EU funds to support lifelong learning (e.g. Structural Funds, European Investment Bank),

With a broad political agreement concerning future welfare and an agreement concerning implementation of a DKK 15 billion globalisation pool, the Danish Government has provided funds for extensive initiatives targeted at education, upgrading the skills of the workforce etc for the period 2007-2012. The extra funds are to finance quality development, teacher training, and guidance etc as well as expanded educational capacity at all levels of the education system. In the area of adult and in service training the extra funds is to finance, among other things, increased participation in general and vocationally oriented adult and in service training, including funds for strengthening adult guidance efforts etc. A further DKK 1 billion has been allocated under the globalisation pool for increased vocationally oriented adult and in service training on the condition that the social partners, by means of collective agreements, assume greater financial responsibility for enhanced education and training efforts.

1.3.4. Measures to change attitudes to learning,

Cf section 1.3.5.

1.3.5. Strengthening evidence-based policy making, using a culture of evaluation, leading to innovation in education and training,

With a view to strengthening evidence-based educational development, an indicator system is to be developed for adult and in service training efforts. It is to contribute to the enhancement of overall monitoring and development in relation to the political objectives for the activities.

Furthermore, in 2007 a national centre for competence development is to be established, which is to support the development and impact of overall adult and vocationally oriented training. As part of its research and dissemination activity, the centre is among other things to collect knowledge about the impact of education and training and provide fresh knowledge concerning, inter alia, adult guidance, types of learning, and how to enhance the motivation of adults and enterprises for education and training.

1.3.6. Measures to target the needs of disadvantaged people (e.g. immigrants, ethnic minorities, the disabled),

It is the government's objective that a special effort should be made in relation to the unemployed and persons with a different ethnic background with a need to train and upgrade their labour market skills. This is to take place by means of the following initiatives, among others:

- A better job rotation scheme that includes, among other things, a special job rotation payment for enterprises utilising the scheme.
- Improvement of the subsidy scheme for enterprises entering vocational education and training agreements with adults.
- Initiation of pilot schemes for screening the reading and writing skills of the unemployed. The scheme will be targeted at persons with short or no education and training.
- Young unemployed persons between 18 and 30 years of age who do not already have any education and training should as far as possible be encouraged to take a regular education on ordinary terms.
- A new chance for all– special efforts in relation to passive recipients of cash benefits and starting allowances who have been in receipt of these payments for more than 1 year.
- The government has entered an agreement with the municipal partners and the social partners that gives immigrants better opportunities for learning to speak Danish and acquiring practical skills and qualifications.

A basic course in labour market Danish for immigrants is to be developed. The course will be organised on the basis of the needs of the labour market and possible subsequent participation in, for example, adult vocational training or general adult education.

1.4. Development, implementation and dissemination of the strategy

1.4.1. Coordination and consultation mechanisms involving all relevant stakeholders,

Cf points 1.1.1 and 1.1.2.

1.4.2. Implementation arrangements, including publicity and dissemination.

Cf section 1.1.2 concerning implementation. The national strategy for lifelong learning will be published in the form of a booklet that will also be made available on the Internet at the end of June 2007. The strategy is to be implemented by means of a number of action plans and concrete initiatives, for example an action plan for adults' reading skills, which are linked to the different areas and levels of education and training in the education system and within the field of adult and in service training. In addition, in 2007 and 2008 a national campaign is to be implemented on lifelong learning with special focus on adult learning including, among other things, TV programmes, the press, websites and local/regional information activities in order to further participation in lifelong learning.

Chapter 2: Implementation of transversal policy objectives

2.1. The establishment of national qualification systems and frameworks (in line with the European Qualifications Framework), and the elimination of obstacles between levels and systems,

The government's strategy for Denmark in the global economy and the political follow-up to this emphasises the improvement of transparency and cohesion in the whole of the education system and the enhancement of lifelong learning. In the area of vocational education and training it is recommended that a qualifications framework be established that supports graduation and renders

visible pathways of access to higher education. There is work in progress in the field of higher education to revise the existing national qualifications framework connected to the Bologna cooperation.

The above indicates the establishment of an overall Danish framework for qualifications. This could support lifelong learning in relation to Danish education and training qualifications as a whole. It could simultaneously link Danish education and training qualifications to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

An inter-departmental working group has been set up to make proposals for the establishment of an overall national qualifications framework. The working group has been asked to consider the following, among other things:

- How could such a qualifications framework be designed?
- How can Danish qualifications be linked to a European Qualifications framework (EQF).

The working group is expected to complete its work in the form of drawing up an outline of a Danish qualifications framework by the end of 2007.

2.2. Identification and validation on non-formal and informal learning,

It is the government's objective that in the area of adult and in service training better possibilities should be established for the individual to have his or her knowledge, skills and competences evaluated and recognised, irrespective of where they have been acquired. This is to contribute to furthering adult participation in adult and in service training and improve adults' possibilities on the labour market. This is to take place by means of the following initiatives, among others:

- Implementation of legislation concerning increased recognition of actual competence in adult and in service training from general adult education to diploma level, which will enter into force 2007/08.
- Quality assurance of competence assessment by educational institutions and recognition of actual competence, including the introduction of complaint procedures.
- Development of simple and easily accessible documentation tools that can be used by the individual for identification (clarification) and description of his/her actual competences acquired through working life and spare time activities. The tools will be made available on the Internet, inter alia.

It is the objective of the government that in the slightly longer term recognition of actual competence should be strengthened in the rest of the education system. Work is being initiated on this now.

2.3. Widely accessible lifelong guidance policies and systems,

Guidance services for young people are to be strengthened and professionalised. It is the government's objective that guidance at all levels of the education system should provide the young person with a qualified basis for choosing an education that is in agreement with his/her own wishes and abilities and

with society's need for a qualified workforce. The guidance is to contribute to strengthening bridge-building between the educational levels.

Guidance and consultancy on adult and in service training options for the employed and enterprises must also be improved. It is the aim of the government that guidance should contribute to strengthening and qualifying the demand on the part of both employees and enterprises. Outreach guidance and consultancy efforts are to be strengthened for the groups with the greatest obstacles to participation. Proposals from committee work concerning future guidance efforts in adult and in service training with special focus on the needs of early school leavers for guidance and consultancy for enterprises are to be discussed with a number of political parties in spring 2007.

A professional bachelor degree course in educational and vocational guidance is to be established. (Cf also DK/2005, section 2.3 on the Guidance Reform from 2004)

2.4. Measures to reinforce transnational mobility in all sectors, including through the removal of administrative and legal obstacles, the implementation of Europass, or by the provision of financial or other support.

The government's 2006 "Progress, Innovation and Cohesion Progress, Innovation and Cohesion—Strategy for Denmark in the Global Economy" contains mobility promoting measures in several areas of education. In the field of vocational education the objective is to create world class vocational education and training, including strengthening global, vocationally oriented competences, and:

- On this basis, the Danish government wishes to boost international student mobility in vocational education and training, and has presented a Bill aimed at increasing the mobility of students and teachers.
- From summer 2007 an internationalisation taximeter is to be introduced at the vocational colleges similar to that used in higher education. This will give the institutions a broader basis for incorporating a possibility for the school-based part of the teaching in several vocationally oriented upper secondary education courses to be situated abroad. Simultaneously, a subsidy is to be introduced for the institutions of vocationally oriented education to strengthen their possibility of including foreign guest teachers in their courses of instruction.
- From summer 2007 the range covered by the Danish scheme for Work Placement Abroad (PIU) will be extended to include countries outside Europe (cf DK/2005 concerning Work Placement Abroad - PIU).

To further the mobility of students in higher education, also to make effective use of international education programmes, the following schemes have been established:

- A web portal has been set up for young people on international mobility and on the possibilities for studying outside of Denmark - www.udiverden.dk.
- The procedure for foreign students' access to studying in Denmark has been made more flexible, including procedures for obtaining a residence and work permit.

- A web portal has been set up about study options in Denmark for foreign students. The portal also provides information about all practical matters such as residence and work permits in connection with study or work placement in Denmark-www.studyindenmark.dk.
- The objective of the government' 2006 strategy concerning Denmark in the global economy: Progress, Innovation and Cohesion, April 2006, is that more Danish students should have the possibility of educating themselves abroad and that more good students should come to Denmark. The objective is to be fulfilled by means of a large number of initiatives, including the following:
 - The higher education institutions should include targets for internationalisation in their development contracts, including targets concerning numbers of Danish students studying abroad and targets for participation by the institutions in the global education market and for how to improve teachers' language competences. In addition, targets should be set up in the development contracts for the range of education programmes and subjects in English.
 - The government has, moreover, presented a Bill aimed at making it easier to study abroad. In the terms of this Bill, from 2008 a far greater number of students will be able to receive grants for studying abroad. The grants must be used for paying study fees at an educational institution abroad for up to two years. The two-year foreign grant can either be used for a period of study abroad as part of a Danish higher education programme or for a whole Master's degree programme abroad. The period of study must give full credits in the student's Danish education programme. Students in short-cycle higher education may, however, only receive a grant for a maximum of a one-year period of study abroad. Grants for a whole Master's programme must be approved on the basis of requirements concerning quality and relevance.

Chapter 3: Implementation of policy objectives in schools, higher education, vocational education and training, and adult education

3.1. Elements to be reported on for all levels (schools, higher education, vocational education and training, adult learning):

3.1.1. Governance and leadership of education and training institutions (eg organisational and administrative reforms, autonomy and accountability measures, public/private initiatives),

Primary and lower secondary education:

The amendment to the Act on Primary and Lower Secondary Education in 2006 emphasised the responsibility of the local authorities for primary and lower secondary education. This most recent amendment specifies that it is the duty of the local authority to keep a close watch on the outcome of the work of the primary and local secondary schools.

From 2007, the individual local authority is to draw up an annual quality report describing the municipality's school system, the academic level of the schools, the measures taken by the local authority to evaluate academic level, and follow up by the local authority on the latest quality report. If

it emerges that a school is experiencing large-scale problems, the local authority is obliged to draw up an action plan. The Ministry of Education has the authority to direct the local authorities to draw up an action plan if the local authority itself does not take the initiative.

On 1 September 2006 a new Council for Evaluation and Quality Development of Primary and Lower Secondary Education was established, and it is charged with following, evaluating and advising the Minister for Education on matters concerning academic level and educational development in primary and lower secondary education and youth education as well as the benefits derived by pupils from the teaching. The Council is, moreover, to evaluate the school's ability to contribute to combating pupils' negative social heritage and their ability to increase the integration of pupils with a different ethnic background than Danish. (cf also DK/2006, section 2.3).

The Council is served by the newly established Agency for Evaluation and Quality Development of Primary and Lower Secondary Education. The new agency is responsible for the final examinations in primary and lower secondary education and the new national tests as well as for consultancy and guidance of the local authorities in their work with quality and supervision in primary and lower secondary education. It is also responsible for supervision of content in free primary schools.

General upper secondary education:

In connection with the transition of the upper secondary schools to independent status as per 1 January 2007, in 2006 and 2007 the Ministry of Education held a number of courses on managerial development. The participants comprised the heads and deputy heads of the schools. Examples of course titles: 'Management and economy', 'Management and the law', and 'Strategic management'. (Cf DK/2005, section 2.2, where the reform of general upper secondary education is briefly described).

Vocational education and training:

The government has presented legislation concerning a number of amendments to the Act on Vocational Education and Training, inter alia on a common framework for vocational education and training, basic social and health education, and agricultural education, gathering the three forms of education under one framework act from August 2007.

A number of initiatives are to be launched in continuation of this. Better educational coverage should be possible through strengthened analysis and forecasting activity, making it possible to react more swiftly and efficiently to new requirements and needs for educational coverage etc.

The proposal also includes an enhanced education guarantee, as it will be a requirement of the educational composition in the accesses to vocational education and training that suitable, mobile and actively work placement seeking pupils are assured of the possibility of being able to complete a training within the access where the pupil has started.

The general objective is that 95 % of all young people in 2015 complete a qualifying education. Vocational education and training has a special role in this context. Against this background, all institutions offering vocational education and training are charged with presenting an annual action

plan for increased completion by pupils. The action plan must contain the school's targets and planned initiatives and be made public on the school website.

The government has presented legislation concerning strengthened local authority responsibility for ensuring that all young people complete a youth education, among other things by means of better guidance and improved educational provision for young people with inadequate prior qualifications.

Adult and in service training:

With a point of departure in the mapping of efforts in the field of adult and in service training, the government and the social partners have agreed to establish a number of goals to strengthen future efforts (cf also section 1). The goals have been selected with a view ensuring socio-economic prioritisation of adult and in service training efforts while also ensuring ongoing monitoring of the efforts. On this background, a number of indicators have been set up to illustrate whether the goals are being realised. Work on the indicators is at present at the establishment stage.

Higher education:

As a follow up to the government's strategy for Denmark in the global economy, a reform has been adopted of education institutions for medium-cycle higher education. All professional bachelor programmes are to be gathered in seven big university colleges as per 1 January 2008 (however eight until 2012). The seven professional bachelor colleges will be created by merging the existing 17 Centres for Higher Education (CVU) and single-faculty institutions offering medium cycle programmes. The aim is to strengthen the professional standards of the education programmes and to create attractive study environments that draw and retain even more students in a challenging, stimulating environment and thus contribute to the overall goal of ensuring that at least 50% of all young people complete a higher education programme. Like the existing Centres for Higher Education, the professional bachelor colleges will have the status of independent institutions and will have a single-strand management structure, where the Board will be the highest authority of the college and the head of the institution will undertake the day-to-day management. An exception has been made for two Danish engineering colleges which will have to enter into a university college no later than 2014

Cf also DK/2005, section 4 on the University Reform.

3.1.2. Stimulating private investment from enterprises, households and individuals,

Vocational education and training:

The government's strategy for lifelong learning in adult and in service training comprises, inter alia, promotion of both public and private investments in adult and in service training.

To realise targets and focus areas, with a broad political agreement in 2006 the government allocated DKK 2 billion extra over a five-year period for adult and in service training. DKK 1 billion of this sum was allocated to strengthening vocationally oriented adult and in service training on the proviso that in the collective bargaining in spring 2007 the social partners would assume greater financial responsibility for enhanced adult and vocationally oriented education efforts. In 2007 the government and the social partners are to discuss the manner in which extra public investments can be implemented in the light of

agreements between the social partners and how adult and in service training and competence development in the enterprises can be strengthened.

3.1.3. Widening access, and improving equity of participation, treatment and outcomes, especially for disadvantaged learners (e.g. migrants, ethnic minorities, the disabled)

Primary and lower secondary education:

Targeted efforts are in progress to enhance standards in primary and lower secondary education and to make special efforts in relation to bilingual children and children from education-hostile environments. The government has listened to advice and recommendations from international and national evaluations of the Danish primary and local secondary school. The key words in efforts by the government have been: Enhancement of standards, strengthened evaluation and follow up, and a clear division of responsibility.

The amendment to the Executive Order concerning Danish as a second language, which entered into force on 1 January 2006, made clear that teaching in Danish as a second language must, as a point of departure, be provided as a dimension in the general instruction or organised outside of the framework of the class, so that the pupils do not miss the teaching in other subjects when receiving supplementary teaching in Danish as a second language.

Danish as a second language has become a permanent main subject in the new teachers' training programme. In addition, teaching and knowledge about bilingual pupils are to become components of all main subjects from now on.

The amendment to the Act on Primary and Lower Secondary Education in spring 2006 opens the possibility of referring bilingual pupils to a school other than the local school with a view to strengthening the Danish language competences of these pupils, if they have a significant need for language support.

The implementation of the reform of the Danish local authority structure gave the municipalities, as per 1 January 2007 full responsibility for specialised teaching in primary and lower secondary education. This strengthens the local authorities' possibilities for coherent efforts for pupils with special needs. From 2006 it has been stressed that specialised teaching is to take place either as an integrated part of the class teaching or be organised outside the framework of the class to avoid the pupils missing teaching in other subjects.

In coming guidelines on primary and lower secondary education efforts for pupils whose development requires special consideration or support, it is specified that as a consequences of the amendment to the Act on Primary and Lower Secondary Education in 2006 individual plans of action must now be drawn up for all primary and lower secondary educations pupils, also including pupils receiving special needs education. In the case of this group of pupils, the individual plan of actions should, furthermore, specify the agreements that have been entered with parents on the scope, content and organisation of the specialised teaching. There should also be specification of the auxiliary means deemed necessary for the pupil to achieve the best possible benefit from the teaching and reflections on how to coordinate the specialised teaching with the rest of the class teaching. From 7th grade, there should be reflections

on how to organise the pupil's overall teaching in order to provide the pupil with the best possible opportunities for completing the final examinations in primary and lower secondary education at the end of 9th grade. The aim of this is to create equitable opportunities for all pupils.

Cf annex 3 for examples of materials/best practice.

General upper secondary education:

All qualified pupils can enter general upper secondary education, and the schools strive to have as many pupils as possible complete their upper secondary education, inter alia by using student guidance counsellors. Almost all pupils who drop out of upper secondary education commence another course of education.

Vocational education and training:

The Bill to amend the Vocational Education Act, cf 3.1.1, introduces the graduation of the vocational education and training system in order to create levels in the systems which each represent a job profile relevant to the labour market. Also a graduated system will increase the possibility of young people with weaker qualifications to complete a vocational education and training programme.

A new apprenticeship scheme in the vocational education field has proved a great success since its commencement in August 2006, not least as a means of attracting and retaining young people whose academic qualifications and interests are weak. The pupils start with one year at an enterprise with the possibility of supplementing with necessary school teaching from the basic training course along the way. This opens new possibilities in the social and health area that are attractive to both the pupils and the local authorities, who award the jobs.

It is proposed that basic vocationally-oriented training (egu) be revised through a statutory revision that is expected to enter into force in August 2007. This will provide pupils who have difficulty in completing general vocational education with an educational opportunity that is improved and strengthened.

At the same time it is proposed that the rules concerning production schools should be revised, also to come into effect from August 2007. Production and vocational schools must work more closely together, and production schools will have the possibility to implement parts of the basic programme of vocational education and training if a cooperation agreement has been entered with a vocational school.

Drop out from vocational education and training among young people with a different ethnic background is considerably greater than among ethnic Danish pupils. For this reason, in addition to the general initiatives designed to increase completion in vocational education and training, different special initiatives have been launched that are to contribute to increased completion, also among pupils with a different ethnic background than Danish: 1. Trials with a mentor scheme set the stage for ethnic pupils who have started out well functioning as role models for other youngsters with an ethnic background. 2. Initiatives for retaining bilingual and practically oriented young people in vocational education and training (project completed 2006). 3. Special efforts to find and retain work placements for bilingual

pupils (DKK 35 million in 2005-09). 4. Development of the subject of vocationally oriented Danish as a second language. 5. A Task Force with a focus in 2006-07 on strengthening the vocational schools' targeted efforts to retain young people with a different ethnic background than Danish.

Adult and in service training:

One of the government's initiatives is a strong effort to increase the number of participants at reading, writing and mathematics courses for adults. The target figure is 40,000 participants a year. DKK 40 million a year is to be allocated to enhanced outreach efforts as well as better guidance and consultancy. The courses are to be made more flexible and it should be possible to combine them with adult vocational training to a higher degree.

The government has, moreover, taken the initiative to improved proposals for bilinguals with problems with Danish being developed within Danish training courses for adult foreigners and within other general and vocationally oriented adult education programmes with a view to these adults managing on the labour market and as fellow citizens.

Another government initiative is for adult and in service training courses in, among other things, adult vocational training to be made more attractive, targeted and flexible in relation to the needs of the individual and the enterprises.

Higher education:

Admission from vocational education and training to short-cycle higher education is to be strengthened. There is to be direct access to a vocational academy education programme from relevant vocational education and training of 3 years or more, and preliminary courses are to be organised for students who need to improve their chances of completing a vocational academy education programme. In addition, new professional bachelor and practically oriented education programmes are to be developed, aimed at private trade and industry in particular.

3.1.4. Measures to address gender aspects in education and training

Primary and lower secondary education:

PISA has demonstrated that gender is not insignificant in the Danish primary and local secondary school, neither among ordinary pupils nor special needs pupils. Political initiatives have not been taken in this area, but the Ministry of Education issues a regular publication about the extensive special needs education in primary and lower secondary education. A new element this year is the gathering of information about gender distribution and bilingual pupils.

3.1.5. The use of learning outcome based approaches for the definition and design of education and training objectives, standards and curricula, and their relevance to the needs of society and the economy

Primary and lower secondary education:

On the basis of the PISA outcomes, OECD's report on primary education in Denmark in 2004 and reports from the Danish Evaluation Institute on ongoing evaluation of the benefit pupils derive from their teaching and differentiation in teaching, the government and the parties to the agreement have

implemented a number of amendments to the Act on Primary and Lower Secondary Education in 2006. (Cf sections 3.1.6 and 3.2.2)

General upper secondary education:

In connection with the reform of general upper secondary education, the goals in the individual subjects have been amended so as to emphasise the pupils' competences to a higher degree.

Examination papers will likewise be formulated so as to test the pupils' competences to a greater extent.

Higher education.

The Danish qualifications framework for higher education is based on learning efficiency and has now been functioning since 2003. It has been used for curriculum reforms at the universities in connection with the introduction of a new set of rules for university programmes. In vocationally oriented higher education, projects on the application of the qualifications framework have been implemented, including the learning efficiency concept. At present the qualifications framework is undergoing revision and a new version is expected to be adopted in autumn 2007.

3.1.6. Quality assurance systems

Primary and lower secondary education:

In spring 2006 a number of amendments were adopted to the Act on Primary and Lower Secondary Education with a view to strengthening the quality and raising the standards:

- It was made very clear that the ongoing evaluation of pupils' benefit from the teaching must be undertaken in relation to the subjects' intermediate and end objectives
- Requirements concerning the drawing up of a minimum of one individual plan of action per pupil per year with the current status and targets for the coming teaching
- Introduction of 10 national tests during the pupil's school process
- Compulsory final examinations
- Preparation of quality reports for the school system in each municipality
- Establishment of a Council for Evaluation and Quality Development of Primary and Lower Secondary Education.

(For further details cf sections 3.1.1 and 3.2.2)

General upper secondary education:

In connection with the reform of general upper secondary education, all schools have been ordered to have and utilise a quality development and outcome evaluation system. The quality system is to encompass systematic and regular self-evaluations that are to be conducted once every 3 years, at minimum. In this connection each school is to draw up a follow up plan on the outcomes of the self-evaluation.

Higher education:

In addition to the existing quality assurance system, which takes its point of departure in the Danish Evaluation Institut (cf description of this in DK/2005 section 2.3.), the establishment of Danish Accreditation is the expression of a wish to achieve international quality assurance of all higher education. In spring 2007 new legislation was adopted concerning a system of accreditation for the

whole of the higher education sector. The new accreditation system introduces accreditation of all higher education programmes on a cyclical basis – both new and existing programmes. The accreditation will be based on a set of standards, including standards for labour market relevance and employability. The new accreditation system, its methods and procedures are to be in agreement with European standards and guidelines. The new accreditation institute is to be entered in the register of European quality assurance institutions, which is based on external evaluation.

3.1.7. Developing learning partnerships with stakeholders (policy-makers at national, regional and local levels, social partners, learners and representatives of civil society).

No comments.

3.2. Schools

3.2.1. Increasing investment in and strengthening pre-primary education,

Primary and lower secondary education:

In order to strengthen pre-primary education the Government is therefore working to present a Bill in this or the next parliamentary session. The Bill is based on recommendations from committee work on pre-primary education in 2006, and the main lines are as follows:

- Compulsory school attendance is to be extended from nine to ten years by making the pre-school class a compulsory part of the primary school.
- Introduction of teaching in Danish, especially reading, in the pre-school class with a fixed number of hours corresponding to one daily lesson and conducted by a teacher.
- Simultaneously, a new description of the teaching content in the pre-school class is to be introduced, where increased emphasis is laid on preparing to read.
- A compulsory language evaluation is to be introduced at the beginning of the pre-school class, to enable reading instruction, from the beginning, to take its starting point in the individual child's language qualifications and the principles concerning teaching differentiation.

In addition, a content description is to be drawn up of the activities in after-school care facilities.

3.2.2. Modernising school curricula and assessment arrangements (inter alia to address learning outcomes and the attainment of key competences)

Primary and lower secondary education:

Over the past year a number of initiatives have been implemented to modernise the school's objectives and assessment tools.

The preamble to the Act on Primary and Lower Secondary Education determines day-to-day teaching by formulating the objectives of the subjects, the common national objectives for the teaching (the subjects' intermediate and end objectives), requirements concerning primary and lower secondary education's final examinations in the individual subjects, curricula, and teaching guidelines. The preamble was modified in 2006, with the addition that primary and lower secondary education is to prepare the pupils for further education. Standards and the pupils' familiarity with Danish culture and history were also stressed.

The government has wished to strengthen standards in a number of subjects. For this reason action plan committees have been appointed concerning reading, the natural science subjects geography, biology and physics/chemistry, and in mathematics and English. A curriculum committee has also been set up in Christian studies, history and social studies. Each subject is described in a separate subject booklet under the title of “Common Objectives”. On the basis of the recommendations of the committees, at present a national action plan is being prepared for reading as well as action plans for natural science, mathematics and English. This will conclude with a scrutiny and review of these subjects’ Common Objectives in autumn 2007. Committee work has also been launched with a view to strengthening the practical musical subjects in primary and lower secondary education, which play a key role in the activity of the school. This committee work is expected to finish in autumn 2007, and will also result in a review of the subjects’ booklets.

The amendment to the Act on Primary and Lower Secondary Education in 2006 has now made it clear that the ongoing evaluation of the benefit pupils derive from the teaching, which has been a statutory requirement since 1993, is now to take place in relation to the intermediate and end objectives of the individual subjects.

The government has decided that a new marking scale is to be introduced, among other things to make it simpler to compare Danish and foreign marks. The existing 13-step scale is to be replaced by a new marking scale with 7 steps. On 1 August 2006 the 7-step scale was introduced in general upper secondary education. On 1 August 2007 the 7-step scale will be introduced in all other educational areas in which the 13-step scale is in use today (Cf <http://www.uvm.dk/nyskala/index.htm?menuid=15>).

From spring 2007 the final examinations in primary and lower secondary education at the end of 9th grade are compulsory, and history, social studies and Christian studies have also become examination subjects. The pupils are examined in a total of seven subjects, five of which are compulsory: written and oral Danish, written mathematics, oral English, and oral examinations in physics/chemistry. Two of the following subjects are also to be drawn by lots: one subject from the humanistic block, i.e. written English, French or German, history, social studies and Christian studies – which can be oral – and one from the natural science subjects, i.e. geography and biology, which will be written. Previously, the pupils themselves had to enrol for the examinations. This initiative has been implemented to ensure that the schools get a clear picture of whether all pupils have achieved sufficient skills and knowledge to be able to commence and complete a youth education programme.

A national evaluation portal opened on 1 March 2007, the aim of which is to support teachers in their work of evaluating the pupils’ benefit from the teaching. This gives teachers access to inspirational material for evaluation in the individual subjects, and there are examples of good evaluation practice and work with individual plans of action (cf www.evaluering.uvm.dk).

As part of the evaluation of pupils’ benefit from the teaching, the Ministry of Education is having a number of compulsory national tests prepared. The tests are to be used to enable the individual pupil’s acquisition of knowledge and skills to be followed, so that it is possible to a higher degree to organise teaching that takes its point of departure in the individual pupil’s strengths, weaknesses and potential. The pupils are to complete the following tests:

- Danish with a focus on reading in 2nd, 4th, 6th and 8th grades (cf also section 3.2.4.)
- English in 7th grade.
- Mathematics in 3rd and 6th grades.
- Geography in 8th grade.
- Biology in 8th grade.
- Physics/chemistry in 8th grade.

From the school year 2006/2007 tests in reading and in physics/chemistry are to be introduced in 8th grade, and mathematics in 6th grade. The other tests are to be introduced from the school year 2007/2008.

The tests are computer-based and adaptive. No pupils will have the same test, making it impossible to compare the results in the class. The tests are one among several educational tools for the teacher. They are to be used together with the outcomes of the evaluation that the teachers use as forward-looking indicators for use in planning further teaching. The outcomes are, moreover, to be used in the guidance of the individual pupil and will also be able to strengthen cooperation with parents. For this reason, the parents must receive written notification of the outcomes of the tests.

With a view to strengthening ongoing evaluation in primary and lower secondary education, the 2006 amendment introduced a provision to the effect that all pupils in the classes in lower secondary education are to have a written individual plan of action. The individual plan of action is to contain information concerning the outcomes of the ongoing evaluation in all subjects and the follow up decided on. The individual plan of action is to be drawn up a minimum of once each school year.

General upper secondary education:

3.2.2 cf 3.1.5

3.2.3. Addressing the specific learning /training needs of teachers (including pre-primary) to enable them to cope with their changing roles in the knowledge-based society,

Primary and lower secondary education:

On 1 January 2007 new teacher training programme came into force which is ensure better quality in the education. The main content is fewer and larger main subjects (two to three main subjects compared to four in the present programme), an age specialisation in the main subjects of Danish and mathematics and a compulsory choice between four fundamental main subjects. Students must choose a first main subject from among the subjects of Danish (age-specialised), mathematics (age-specialised), natural science/technology and physics/chemistry. Enhancement of natural science subjects in the education programme, enhancement of the pedagogical elements, and improvement of the interaction between standards and pedagogy.

Teaching practice periods have also been tightened up and the same applies to compulsory attendance and participation as the same time as an advisory number of classroom lessons hours has been introduced. Admission and level requirements for entering the education programme have been made more stringent. The requirement for admission to a main subject is now a documented upper secondary school level. This varies from the one main subject to the other.

The government has also desired to strengthen the in service training options of primary and local secondary schoolteachers and heads, so that the teachers and heads already working in primary and lower secondary education have even greater opportunities to acquire the competences necessary in a well functioning school. A higher standard requires qualified teachers. Simultaneously, studies have shown that the schools that function best are those with strong, visible leadership.

With a starting point in the recommendations of a working group consisting of the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Finance and Local Government Denmark, in the period 2006-2009 the government has allocated DKK 150 million for in service training of teachers of natural science, mathematics and English, DKK 55 million for the training of one reading counsellor per primary and local secondary school, and DKK 25 million for in service training of school heads.

The training of educators working in the pre-school class (pre-school heads) has also been reformed with a view to strengthening standards, providing time for thorough study and better opportunities for specialisation. The new training programmes are to enter into force on 1 August 2007.

3.2.4. Measures to reduce early school leaving, to increase rates of completion of upper secondary education, to reduce the proportion of low-achieving 15 year olds in literacy, and to increase the take-up of mathematics, science and technology subjects (EU benchmarks).

Primary and lower secondary education:

Several studies have shown that about 17 per cent of pupils exit primary and lower secondary education with such poor reading skills that they are evaluated as being without a functional reading ability. The government has therefore appointed an action plan committee concerning reading, which submitted its report already in November 2005. On the basis of the committee's recommendations, a national action plan for reading is at present in preparation. This will result in a scrutiny and review of the Common Objectives in the subject of Danish in autumn 2007.

Cf annex 3 for the best practice example: "School of the Month".

From the school year 2007/2008 all four compulsory national reading tests in 2nd, 4th, 6th and 8th grades will be introduced. The first test in Danish/reading in 8th grade will be introduced already in this school year. It will test three profile areas:

- Language comprehension
- Decoding/reading strategies
- Text comprehension.

The test is one of several educational tools for the teacher. Together with the results of the evaluation the teacher uses, they are to be used as forward-looking indicators for further planning of the teaching, so that it fulfils the needs and qualifications of the individual pupil to an even higher degree (cf also section 3.2.2.).

From the school year 2008/2009, the amendment to the Act on Primary and Lower Secondary Education concerning 10th grade enters into force, together with the Act on Choice of Education and Vocation. In future, 10th grade will be a school year targeted at youngsters who are not ready after 9th

grade to immediately commence a youth education programme because they need further qualification or educational clarification. In addition, 10th grade should be able to pick up young people who fall out of a youth education they have started on. Bridge-building to upper secondary education is to be made compulsory, and the teaching will be organised to a higher degree with a point of departure in the young person's training plan.

Cf annex 3 the best practice example on "Model municipality pilot project".

The government has appointed action plan committees in both mathematics and natural science. The recommendations of the committees will result in two action plans and a revision of the Common Objectives for the two subjects in autumn 2007. Cf point 3.2.2 under Common Objectives.

The government is now taking the initiative to a national strategy for the enhancement of natural science, technology and health to encourage more young people to take a training within these areas. For this reason, in March 2007 a working group was set up which will make proposals regarding the formulation of a strategy. The following themes will be discussed:

- Better cohesion between informal and formal learning environments
- Better cohesion between trade and industry and the education and training programmes
- Development of teaching content and form as well as the teachers' educational competences
- More women in technological and natural science education programmes
- The challenges of globalisation to education programmes in natural science and technology in the future.

Cf section also section 3.3.4.

3.3. Higher education

3.3.1. Measures to reinforce the knowledge triangle between education, research and innovation,

Cf section 3.1.1.

3.3.2. Any participation targets and measures to achieve them,

Cf section 3.1.3.

3.3.3. Measures to increase excellence,

Cf section 3.1.6.

3.3.4. Measures to increase the number of graduates in mathematics, science and technology (EU benchmark).

It appears from the Government's "Strategy for Denmark in the Global Economy: Progress, Innovation and Cohesion", that more young people must complete a higher education in the fields of natural science, technology or health. To achieve this goal, many initiatives have already been launched on the different levels in the education system. But better coordination of the initiatives is necessary so that they underpin the national objectives to a far higher degree than today. There is, therefore, a need

for a national strategy for the enhancement of natural science, technology and health in the whole of the education system. The national strategy is being drawn up by a broadly composed working group with representatives from the entire education system. The working group is expected to submit its report in november 2007. (cf also section 3.2.4).

Cf annex 3 for the best practice example: "Engineers have to lend their name to a lot".

3.4. Vocational education and training and adult learning

3.4.1. Measures to improve the quality and attractiveness of vocational education and training and of adult education,

Since 2003 there has been a strong increase in the number of work placements. One important reason is the positive economic cycle with a low unemployment rate. Consequently, the share of pupils in school work experience has more than halved because they have found jobs. The very positive employment frequency characteristic of Danish vocational education and training must be maintained and strengthened. This positive development must continue. Therefore, the public sector must assume a greater share of the responsibility for training, and the share of vocational education pupils in the state is to rise by at least 25% by the end of 2007. The government has imposed a quota on all ministries. The quota established for the Ministry of Education covers schools, education institutions and agencies, and if the quota is not filled, the ministries' allocation of funds will be reduced by a sum corresponding to the expenditure for a trainee.

The attractiveness can be increased by means of an education guarantee (cf section 3.1.1.), and there should be clear pathways through the education programmes for pupils with weaker qualifications also (cf section 3.4.3.).

3.4.2. Measures to reinforce the link between VET and labour market needs including early identification of skills needs, improving the relevance of curricula and qualifications,

Cf section 3.1.1 and 3.1.2.

3.4.3. Opening up pathways to further and higher education,

It is the objective of the government to challenge the strong pupils in vocational education and training, inter alia by offering them supplementary education that enables them to start on short-cycle or medium-cycle education without any unnecessary obstacles. There must also be a clear progression and higher education perspective for those receiving vocational training. The relatively low number with a vocational training continuing to further studies is to be increased.

3.4.4. Addressing the specific learning / training needs of vocational and adult teachers and trainers to enable them to cope with their changing roles in the knowledge-based society

In connection with the reform of vocational education and training, over the next 3 years a large sum is to be committed to the continued education and skills upgrading of vocational teachers. The schools are to draw up plans for in service training efforts and will thereafter be able to receive grants from the ministry to implement their activities. In service training is to contribute to achieving the overall

objectives that more are to fulfill and to maintaining the high academic standard. For this reason increased cooperation with work placement enterprises and other enterprises is to take place..

3.4.5 Measures which reinforce social partner involvement in training, in particular sectoral approaches to skills and qualifications

Reference is made to section 3.1.2 on the government's pool for strengthened adult and in service training on the proviso that the social partners assume greater financial co-responsibility for strengthened adult and in service training efforts. The government and the social partners are also in agreement that systematic competence development in small and medium-sized enterprises should be furthered, among other things by the development of methods and tools.

3.4.6. Enhancing access and opportunities for learning among the disadvantaged, and alternative pathways, including for early school leavers

Cf section 3.1.3.

3.4.7. Measures to increase the rate of adult participation in lifelong learning, and to reinforce key competences among adult learners and older people whether employed or not (EU benchmark)

Reference is made to initiatives mentioned under sections 2.2, 2.3 and 3.1.

Annex 1

Denmark's strategy for lifelong learning - Education and lifelong skills upgrading for all

The Government's report to the European Commission

February 2007

This report has been prepared by the Ministry of Education with contributions from the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, the Ministry of Employment, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Economic and Business Affairs, the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs and the Ministry of Family and Consumer Affairs.

Foreword

The Danish Government has initiated extensive educational reforms aiming at ensuring Denmark's continued growth and prosperity in the years to come.

The reforms shall ensure improved quality and cohesion in education and training – from pre-school to higher education and in adult education and continuing training. The aim is to create a world-class education system and having everyone participating in lifelong learning. It shall help develop Denmark as the leading knowledge society in a globalised world.

Excellent development and learning opportunities for children, young people and adults shall strengthen personal development, employment and active participation in society of the individual. Everyone shall be challenged in a learning process which develops inventiveness and pleasure in being able to improve oneself continuously. This is crucial for raising the level of education and strengthening competitiveness and cohesion in Danish society.

Lifelong learning has to be promoted in the many settings in which people acquire new knowledge and gain useful skills. This applies in education, at work, in liberal adult education and in association and leisure activities. This is a shared responsibility for all. This will give us the best prospects of raising the skills and competences in Denmark and of having world-class lifelong learning.

With this report the Government is presenting Denmark's strategy for lifelong learning and the initiatives and actions prioritised for the future. It is the Government's contribution to a realisation of the common objectives of the Lisbon strategy.

Bertel Haarder

Minister of Education

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1. Introduction

In 2004 the European Council endorsed the report “*Education and Training 2010 – The success of the Lisbon strategy hinges on urgent reforms*”. The message of the report is that extensive educational reforms and targeted investments in lifelong learning are crucial for achieving the common goal that in 2010 the European Union shall be “*the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion*”. At the same time the European Council called upon Member States to develop integrated national strategies for lifelong learning by 2006 as an important contribution to achieving the ambitious target.

With this report the Government is presenting Denmark’s strategy on lifelong learning. The strategy covers the development of all forms of education, teaching and lifelong learning and skills upgrading for all – in the education system, in adult education and continuing training, at work and in the many other settings in which people learn and develop their knowledge, skills and competences.

The national strategy for lifelong learning is mainly based on the Government’s globalisation strategy “*Fremskridt, fornyelse og udvikling – Strategi for Danmark i den globale økonomi*” (“Progress, renewal and development – Strategy for Denmark in the global economy”) published in the spring of 2006. The overall aim of the globalisation strategy is to make Denmark a leading knowledge society with strong competitiveness and strong cohesion. Education, lifelong skills upgrading, research and innovation at the highest international level are crucial for achieving this aim.

The broad political agreement on future welfare policy and the agreement on the implementation of the globalisation fund in 2006 have established the goals and framework for a long-term, integrated development of human resources in Denmark. Extensive investment in the education system and strengthened efforts in the area of adult education and continuing training will contribute to an overall enhancement of education and skills for everyone in the Danish society.

The implementation of Denmark’s strategy for education and lifelong skills upgrading is based on all relevant players taking co-responsibility. The Government and the social partners agreed that it is a shared responsibility to ensure lifelong skills upgrading for everyone in the labour market.

The Government’s strategy for education and lifelong skills upgrading shall contribute to future-proofing Denmark. At the same time, it is a contribution towards the realisation of the common European objectives of education and lifelong learning, and with this report the Government also wishes to make its contribution to the development of strategies and tools for lifelong learning in the European Union.

2. Denmark as a knowledge society – towards new goals and challenges

2.1. Global challenges

In an increasingly globalised economy Denmark's competitiveness and cohesion are preconditions for a regeneration of the welfare state. Globalisation creates a more open world which provides opportunities to increase prosperity and to create better jobs. At the same time globalisation is accompanied by a process of increased integration which links the economies of countries closer together through increased trade, cooperation, investment and movement of labour across national borders. This applies both in Europe and in relation to the rest of the world.

The knowledge, inventiveness and efforts of people, together with our ability to continuously develop, produce and sell new goods and services, are the key to exploiting the opportunities presented by globalisation and technological development.

Denmark has a strong point of departure with, by international standards, high employment, low unemployment, relatively equitable income distribution and a generally high level of education. At the same time, the Danish labour market is very flexible and international studies suggest that Denmark is among the countries with the highest level of competitiveness and is one of the countries which invest most in the development of human resources. Danish society is also based on shared fundamental democratic values and an historic tradition of change through dialogue and cooperation.

Globalisation and technological development presents a number of significant challenges. For Denmark, as indeed for European countries and other OECD countries, a well-qualified labour force is crucial to ensuring competitiveness and prosperity. This means that the demands on the general and vocational skills of the labour force will grow, while demand for low-skilled labour will decline in the years to come. Continued growth in the economy is also dependent on increasing the labour force. Everyone is needed in the labour market. This includes those who currently have difficulty keeping a foothold in the labour market. Also, the labour force is ageing, and the new intake into the labour market is smaller than the expected departures. This also presents us with a challenge.

The skills of the labour force must therefore be increased at all levels. More people must have a qualifying education, and more people need to pass through the education system and out into the labour market faster. And there is need for a significant increase in the adult education and continuing training effort, not least in order to raise the level of those with the lowest level of education.

In order for Denmark to become a leading knowledge society and maintain its position as one of the wealthiest countries in the world, Denmark must have world-class education and everyone must have good opportunities and the desire to acquire new knowledge and useful qualifications and competences throughout their lives.

2.2. Education for all – Denmark's globalisation strategy

It is the Government's aim that Denmark shall be among the most attractive countries in the world to live and work in - also in 10 and 20 years from now, in which everyone has the best opportunities to unfold their abilities and create prosperity for themselves and for others.

In the spring of 2006, in response to the challenges of globalisation, the Government presented an overall strategy for the future-proofing of Danish society. The strategy is based on the results of the work of “*Globaliseringsrådet*” (the “Globalisation Council”) and “*Trepartsudvalget om livslang opkvalificering og uddannelse for alle på arbejdsmarkedet*” (the “Tripartite Committee on lifelong skills upgrading and education and training for all in the labour market”) set up by the Government.

The national globalisation strategy “*Fremgang, fornyelse og tryghed - Strategi for Danmark i den globale økonomi*” (“Progress, innovation and cohesion – Strategy for Denmark in the global economy”) comprises 350 specific initiatives which together entail extensive reforms of education and research programmes and substantial improvements in the framework conditions for growth and innovation in all areas of Danish society.

The Government’s globalisation strategy focuses in particular on training and lifelong skills upgrading. A high level of educational attainment and good opportunities for lifelong learning are among the most important preconditions for strong competitiveness and for everyone to be able to actively participate in the labour market and in society.

It is the Government’s aim that Denmark is to have world top level education and that everyone shall participate in lifelong learning. The overall aims of the educational reforms are that:

- All children shall have a good start in school;
- All children shall achieve good academic knowledge and personal skills;
- 95 per cent of all young people shall complete a general or vocational upper secondary education in 2015;
- 50 per cent of all young people shall complete a higher education programme in 2015; and
- Everyone shall engage in lifelong learning.

The Government has with the political “*Agreement on future prosperity and welfare and investments in the future*” among a majority of the parties in the Folketing (Danish Parliament) created the basis for structural reforms to ensure future prosperity and welfare and investment in the future. A further DKK 15 billion has been set aside over a six-year period for new long-term investment in education and lifelong skills upgrading up to the year 2012 as an increased contribution to achieving the targets which have been set.

In the spring of 2006 the Government and the social partners drew up a joint final document on lifelong education and skills upgrading for everyone in the labour market. The Government and the social partners agree on the need to enhance skills and to strengthen adult education and continuing training. This is a shared responsibility for employers, employees and the public authorities.

2.3. Objectives for lifelong learning

It is the Government’s aim that lifelong learning shall be promoted in all parts of society and in all areas in which the knowledge, skills and competences of people are developed and put to use. This applies at all levels and in all parts of the education system, in adult education and continuing training, in the

workplace, through liberal adult education and in association and leisure activities etc. It is a shared responsibility for everyone.

The Government's strategy for education and lifelong skills upgrading, which covers all forms of education and learning, shall support and promote individual personal development, employment, active citizenship and participation in society.

The strategy includes the following principle objectives:

- A coherent education system from pre-school class to higher education must provide the opportunity for everyone to acquire good basic skills, a qualifying education and a solid foundation for lifelong learning. There shall be equal opportunities and room for all.
- Education must be world-class. The education system shall foster talent and be more accommodating to weak learners. Quality has pride of place and education shall match the needs of the labour market and the society
- There must be relevant, high quality adult education and continuing training for everyone in the labour market which matches the needs and also puts particular emphasis on the need for lifelong skills upgrading for those with the lowest level of education. There is a shared responsibility to ensure that everyone in the labour market is engaged in lifelong learning.
- Systematic competence development in the workplace should be strengthened in both public and private enterprises. Increased public and private investment in continuing training and competence development for employees shall contribute to improving the skills of individuals and strengthen the development of the enterprises.
- Opportunities for guidance and advice must be improved and help ensure the best possible conditions for pupils, students and adults to choose education programmes and participate in lifelong learning.
- All forms of education and learning should be based on and build on the knowledge, skills and competences of individuals. In the area of adult education and continuing training new and improved opportunities shall be created to make visible and recognise all of an individual's prior learning.
- Coherent education paths and transparency in the education system are to contribute to targeted education and lifelong skills upgrading and support the best possible use of public resources.
- A global perspective in education must contribute to strengthening internationalisation and cooperation with the world around us.

- Stronger higher education environments is to be created, in order to contribute to higher quality in education and knowledge development, and a better framework and conditions shall be developed for interaction between educational institutions and enterprises and other relevant players.

In order to realise the overall objectives of education and lifelong skills upgrading, the Government has prioritised a number of specific goals and initiatives within the overall education system and in the area of adult education and continuing training.

Lifelong learning is also being supported and promoted through actions and initiatives in a large number of other areas. This applies to, among others, efforts in the area of employment and integration, business oriented policy initiatives and not least in the area of liberal adult education and in association and cultural activities.

The Government's strategy for education and lifelong skills upgrading makes new demands and presents new challenges with regard to the future organisation and development of the education system and adult education and continuing training. It makes new demands on educational institutions and enterprises and on the way in which relevant players can all contribute to the further development of a culture of lifelong learning. A particular challenge is to strengthen the interaction between the education sector, working life and the learning which takes place in leisure time.

A realisation of the extensive reforms is based on all relevant players taking co-responsibility and making an active contribution. This applies to national authorities, the social partners, educational institutions, enterprises, liberal adult education providers, voluntary organisations and municipal and regional players etc. It is therefore the Government's aim to strengthen dialogue and partnerships between all players. This is crucial in order to realise Denmark's strategy for education and lifelong skills upgrading.

3. A world-class education system

A well-qualified and highly educated workforce plays a crucial role in an increasingly globalised knowledge economy. A well functioning education system based on everyone having excellent and equal opportunities to acquire useful qualifications and competences is thus an important cornerstone of strong competitiveness and a flexible labour market and of an individual's opportunity to actively participate in society and in the labour market.

It is the Government's aim that the education system, from pre-school class to higher education, shall ensure that all young people receive a high-quality education and a solid foundation for engaging in lifelong learning. The education system shall also contribute to promoting a culture of learning which promotes creativity, independence and responsibility.

The quality of education shall be enhanced at all levels so that it lives up to current and future needs for competences and new knowledge in enterprises, in the labour market and in society. There shall be a greater cohesion between the various education pathways and levels, so that individuals can obtain qualifications and skills in a flexible way, and all young people shall have an education with a global outlook. The education system shall be inclusive, so that there is room for everyone – far too many drop out today. And more people shall pass through education faster so that the resources are used efficiently.

Facts about the Danish education system:

- More than 99 per cent of all children attend pre-school class, including 93 per cent of all six-year olds.
- More than 80 per cent of a youth cohort completes an academic or vocational education programme, of which 38 per cent complete a vocational education programme.
- 45 per cent of a youth cohort completes a higher education programme.
- There are no tuition fees for state upper secondary education and higher education, and the State provides educational grants and state-guaranteed loans.
- Total state expenditure on education amounted to DKK 123 billion in 2005, corresponding to 8 per cent of GDP.

The Government has laid down the following specific targets and initiatives concerning all levels in the education system – from pre-school to higher education at university level.

3.1. Pre-school

Day-care facilities and pre-school class play a very important role in the personal, intellectual and social development of children. And a child's linguistic development has particular importance for the way it

cope in education. This applies not least to children of an ethnic background other than Danish. It is therefore important to improve cohesion between day-care facilities and basic school.

It is the Government's aim that all children shall have a good start in school. This shall be achieved through the following initiatives in particular:

- Language assessment is being introduced for all children at the age of three and again at the age of six at the start of the pre-school class, so that the education and teaching can be based on the linguistic abilities of the individual.
- Compulsory education is being extended from nine to ten years of schooling by making the pre-school class an obligatory part of basic school.
- Curricula are being prepared in all day-care facilities.
- Subject-based teaching in Danish, especially reading, is being introduced in the pre-school class.

It is also the Government's aim to ensure a better transition to basic school by, among other things, clarifying objectives in legislation regarding child day-care.

3.2. Compulsory basic school

Good basic skills and competences are a vital basis for acquiring new knowledge and skills and engaging in lifelong learning. The Danish Folkeskole (primary and lower-secondary school) has many good qualities and pupils like going to school. But it is a major challenge that one in six children leave school with insufficient reading skills and that the academic level of the Danish Folkeskole is not quite as high as in other countries with which Denmark usually compares itself.

It is the Government's aim:

- That all pupils shall have good academic skills and knowledge;
- That the Folkeskole shall provide pupils with knowledge and skills, promote creativity and independence and prepare them for further education;
- That the pupils shall be among the best in the world in four basic subject areas: reading, mathematics, science and English; and
- That all young people gain knowledge and skills which provide them with the basis for taking an active part in a globalised world.

Reforms in the Danish Folkeskole include, among others, the following initiatives:

- A new paragraph regarding the objectives on basic compulsory school clarifying that the aim is to prepare for further education, and stressing proficiency and the pupil's familiarity with Danish culture and history.
- The culture of evaluation is being strengthened through implementation of national tests and personal pupil plans is being introduced.
- The final exams are made obligatory and the number of subjects including exams is being expanded.
- The laying down of action plans for basic subjects: reading, mathematics, science and English.

- The responsibility of the municipalities is being clarified, including the task to make annual quality reports stating the quality in the basic compulsory schools.
- A new teacher training education programme aiming at ensuring better quality and increased opportunities for specialisation and a targeted effort in continuing education of teachers and school managers.

The Government has allocated DKK 230 million for continuing education of teachers and school managers for the period 2007-2009.

3.3. General and vocational upper secondary education

Good basic qualifications are crucial for everyone to be able to cope in the labour market and to be able to continue learning. The needs for a well-educated labour force will also increase in the coming years. It is therefore crucial that upper secondary education, general as well as vocational, is attractive and challenging and that it offers good opportunities to all young people. This applies not least to vocational education and training, which must provide young people with good employment opportunities.

Almost all young people begin upper secondary education, either a general education programme or a vocational education and training programme. However, too many drop out of the education programme. The proportion who completes upper secondary education is currently around 80 per cent. The drop-out rate is particularly high for vocational education and training programmes. There is a need, therefore, for more young people, not least young people of a different ethnic background, to complete a qualifying upper secondary education providing access to further education or the labour market. It is important that more young people are guided and motivated to engage in education.

It is the Government's aim:

- That all young people shall have a qualifying education (at least 85 per cent of all young people shall complete an upper secondary education in 2010, and at least 95 per cent in 2015);
- That upper secondary education shall be attractive and of the highest quality;
- that the general education programmes shall provide pupils with good academic and general skills so that more can complete a higher education programme; and
- That vocational education and training programmes shall challenge the most talented pupils and provide them with increased opportunities for further education. At the same time vocational education and training programmes shall provide realistic training opportunities for weak academic learners.

Reforms in the area of upper secondary education include, among others, the following initiatives:

- Municipalities shall be responsible for helping ensure that young people complete a general or vocational upper secondary education through, among other things, better guidance and improved educational provision for weak learners.
- Vocational education and training shall be strengthened through, among other things, continuing training of teachers and better school environments.

- Efforts to increase the number of practical training places in vocational education and training shall be increased in both private and public enterprises through, among other things, a national campaign in cooperation with business and organisations.
- More flexible pathways and education programmes will be introduced in vocational education to meet the needs of all pupils, both the strong and the weak. In this regard the assessment of prior learning is an important and integral tool of vocational education and training.
- Vocational education and training will be divided into steps corresponding to the needs of the labour market, so that all young people can obtain an education which is suited to their abilities, and providing improved opportunities for access to higher education.

Within the agreement on implementing the globalisation fund DKK 750 million are to be allocated for quality development in vocational education and training for the period 2007-2009 and almost DKK 7 billion to increase the education capacity in upper secondary education until 2012.

3.4. Higher education

A highly educated labour force plays a central role for innovation and growth and thus for dynamic development in society. Denmark's future competitiveness and prosperity depends to a large degree on our ability to develop new things and to exploit our know-how in the global market place. Denmark shall therefore have world-class education, and it is crucial that more young people acquire a higher education and that they complete their education programmes faster.

Today 45 per cent of a youth cohort completes a higher education programme. This is lower than in many other countries, and far too many drop out. There are also practical barriers to credit transfer which limit the opportunities to build on a completed education programme. There is therefore a need for greater cohesion in higher education programmes and between vocational education and short-cycle higher education programmes. There is also a need for new, more vocational higher education programmes and education at the highest international level which match the needs of the labour market. At the same time it is crucial that the academic and educational quality of higher education programmes is strengthened.

It is the Government's aim that:

- At least 50 per cent of a youth cohort shall have a higher education in 2015;
- The quality of short-cycle and medium-cycle higher education programmes and university education programmes has to match the best in the world;
- All higher education programmes shall have a content which matches the needs of society;
- All young people shall complete an education programme with a global perspective;
- Young people shall be encouraged to begin higher education programmes earlier; and
- The education programmes shall be organised so that delays are kept to a minimum.

The Government will, among other things, take the following initiatives in relation to higher education programmes:

- New profession-oriented and practice-oriented education programmes will be developed.

- All institutions providing medium-cycle higher education will be concentrated in few multi-disciplinary university colleges with academically strong and modern study environments.
- Short-cycle higher education programmes will be made more attractive and flexible, they will be targeted towards the needs of the labour market and access to them from vocational education and training will be improved.
- New attractive education programmes will be developed in the areas of science, technology and health.
- Elite master's education programmes will be established so that the most talented students can be on a par with the best in other countries.
- The quality shall be improved at all levels in higher education through, among other things, increased continuing training of teaching staff and accreditation of all higher education programmes.
- The admission system and the organisation of education programmes shall be changed in order to promote earlier commencement and a faster completion of education programmes.

As part of the implementation of the globalisation funds, more than DKK 4 billion has been allocated up to 2012 for initiatives aiming at enhancing quality and expanding teaching capacity in higher education. This includes DKK 150 million for teacher training for the period 2007-2009 in short and medium cycle higher education, and DKK 220 million for new teaching methods and teacher training in long cycle higher education in universities.

4. Lifelong skills upgrading for all

The constant changes in the labour market and in society continuously make new demands on the skills and adaptability of individuals. Participation in adult education and continuing training helps individuals to participate actively in the labour market throughout their lives. The competitiveness of Danish enterprises and the quality of services is largely dependent on investment in continuing training and competence development. Increased effort in adult education and continuing training at all levels, promoting lifelong skills upgrading for all, is therefore necessary for the development of Denmark as a leading knowledge society and plays an important role in the national strategy for lifelong learning.

Denmark is one of the countries with the highest level of participation in adult education and continuing training, competence development at work and liberal adult educational activities during leisure time. Both public and private investment in the development of new qualifications and competences are among the highest in Europe. A very substantial part of the overall learning and competence development takes place in connection with work. And there is a well-established practice of the social partners, through collective bargaining, entering into agreements concerning the competence development of employees and educational planning in enterprises.

Public sector efforts in the area of adult education and continuing training play an important role in the development of the qualifications and competences of the labour force, and provide opportunities for all groups in the labour market and in the population – from the low-skilled to those with higher education.

Publicly financed adult education and continuing training includes, among other things, general adult education, vocational adult education and continuing training up to and including vocational education and training level (labour market training, basic adult education etc.) and a further education system for adults at three tertiary levels. In addition, a number of educational provisions are provided for marginalised target groups.

Facts about adult education and continuing training:

- 60 per cent of the labour force participated in a learning activity in 2004, in either public, private or company programmes.
- It is estimated that 600,000 people participated in public general or vocational adult education in 2004, corresponding to over 20 per cent of the labour force.
- Grants are provided by the State and tuition fees are charged for most adult education and continuing training programmes. Educational grants are provided for a number of education programmes.
- In 2004 expenditure amounted to a total of DKK 5 billion, of which DKK 2.7 billion for educational activities, DKK 1.6 billion for special allowances, with employers contributing DKK 1 billion, and DKK 0.7 billion financed through tuition fees.
- Total public and private expenditure for adult education and continuing training is estimated at DKK 15 billion in 2004.

*Extent and expenditure relating to liberal adult education, day high schools, evening schools and Danish language teaching for foreigners is not included in the overview.

4.1. Goals and actions for adult education and continuing training

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

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

The Government and the social partners agree that the strengthening of efforts in the area of adult education and continuing training is a shared responsibility:

- Individuals are responsible for continuously developing their competences and adaptability in the labour market.
- The task of enterprises is to ensure the development of the competences of employees in line with the needs of the enterprise and the requirements of the labour market.

- The role of the social partners is to contribute to the development of the competences of the labour force and of enterprises as places of learning at work.
- The role of the authorities is to provide a good framework, relevant education programmes of high quality and the necessary incentives to ensure that everyone in the labour market has good opportunities to participate in adult education and continuing training.

After close dialogue with the social partners, the Government has laid down the following goals for efforts in the area of adult education and continuing training:

- Everyone shall engage in lifelong learning.
- The effort in the area of adult education and continuing training shall be effective and flexible. It shall support good job opportunities for individuals, good competitiveness in enterprises and high employment and prosperity in society.
- Adult education and continuing training shall provide everyone with opportunities to improve competences – not least those with the lowest level of formal education.
- Adult education and continuing training should reflect changes in the qualification requirements and needs of the labour market.

Efforts will be concentrated on the following actions:

- Efforts are to be strengthened for all groups in the labour market, from the low-skilled to highly qualified specialists. The aim is an increase in the overall competences of the labour force.
- Greater emphasis must be placed on those with the greatest need – the low-skilled and those with literacy and numeracy problems. The aim is that more people with the lowest level of formal education shall participate in vocational adult education and continuing training.
- Fundamental general skills in the labour force must be strengthened. The aim is that more people, especially those with the lowest level of formal education and marginalised groups, including bilinguals, shall participate in general qualifying education.
- New forms of governance and funding are to be developed. The aim is better utilisation of resources and increased investment in adult education and continuing training.

The fulfilment of the goals for increased efforts in the area of adult education and continuing training is based on close dialogue with the social partners and the development of partnerships between all relevant players at all levels in society.

4.2. Key initiatives

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

- Guidance and counselling for workers and enterprises is to be strengthened.
- Better and easier access to recognition of prior learning is to be ensured in all publicly financed adult education and continuing training from basic adult education to diploma (bachelor) level.

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

In order to realise targets and action areas the Government has set aside an extra DKK 2 billion over a five year period for the area of adult education and continuing training, within the context of a broad political agreement. Of this, DKK 1 billion has been set aside to strengthening vocational adult education and continuing training, subject to the condition that in forthcoming collective bargaining the social partners accept greater financial co-responsibility for an increased effort in the area of adult education and continuing training.

In 2007 the Government will discuss with the social partners as well as with the political parties behind the Welfare Agreement how extra public investment can be used in the light of agreements between the social partners, and how adult education and continuing training and competence development in enterprises can be strengthened.

5. Cross-cutting actions for education and lifelong skills upgrading

The extensive reforms in education and adult education and continuing training shall help everyone to complete an upper secondary education and more people to receive higher education and to significantly increase participation in adult education and continuing training. Improved guidance and recognition of prior learning, greater cohesion in the education system and the improvement of quality in education will play a particularly important role in achieving these objectives. In the light of this, the Government has placed special emphasis on the following actions:

5.1. Guidance and counselling

Guidance for young people shall be strengthened and professionalised. It is the Government's aim that guidance at all levels in the education system shall provide young people with an informed basis for choosing an education programme which corresponds to their own desires and abilities and to society's need for qualified labour. The guidance shall also contribute to strengthening bridge-building between the levels.

Guidance and advice concerning opportunities for adult education and continuing training for workers and enterprises shall also be improved. It is the Government's aim that the guidance effort shall contribute to strengthening and informing the demand from both employees and enterprises. For the groups which have the greatest barriers to participation, the outreach guidance and advice effort shall be increased. Better and more informed guidance for young people and adults shall be promoted through, among other things, the following initiatives:

- Increased guidance at all levels – in the basic compulsory school, upper secondary education, higher education and in relation to the adult education system.
- The establishment of a professional bachelor degree in training and vocational guidance.
- New initiatives to reinforce the guidance effort in adult education and continuing training with particular emphasis on the need of those with the lowest level of formal education for guidance and advice from enterprises.

5.2. Recognition of prior learning

It is the Government's aim in the area of adult education and continuing training to create better opportunities for individuals to have their knowledge, skills and competences assessed and recognised, regardless of where they were acquired. This shall help promote participation by adults in adult education and continuing training and improve their opportunities in the labour market. This shall take place through, among other things, the following initiatives:

- Implementation of legislation on increased recognition of prior learning in adult education and continuing training, from general adult education to diploma level, which will enter into force in 2007/2008.
- Quality assurance of competence assessment and recognition of prior learning by educational institutions, including the introduction of a right of appeal.
- Development of simple and easily accessible documentation tools which individuals can use to identify, clarify and describe their prior learning obtained during work and leisure activities. The tools shall also be made accessible on the Internet.
- A nationwide information campaign on new and existing adult education and continuing training specifically targeted at bilinguals, and on opportunities for immigrants to have their competences and previous education recognised.

It is the Government's aim in the slightly longer term to also enhance the recognition of prior learning in the mainstream education system.

5.3. Cohesion and transparency in the education system

Cohesion and transparency in the education system is to be promoted. It is the Government's aim that there shall be easy transition between all levels in the education system and opportunities to transfer credit, and that the education system shall be transparent and accessible to all. This is to be implemented through, i.a., the following initiatives:

- Better bridging between basic compulsory school, upper secondary education and higher education. An enhanced guidance effort shall contribute to fulfil this aim.
- Better opportunities for credit transfer in the education system and increased recognition of prior learning in adult education and continuing training. Among other things, a right of appeal shall be introduced for decisions concerning credit and recognition of prior learning.
- Greater transparency and cohesion in the education system shall be promoted through the development of a coherent national qualifications framework which will include the existing framework for higher education. A coherent national qualification framework shall at the same time help improve comparison and recognition of qualifications between Denmark and other European countries.

5.4. Global perspective in education

All young people shall complete an education programme with a global perspective, and many more young people shall spend time studying abroad. This is important because scientists, workers and enterprises increasingly cross national borders and cooperate with other countries. This makes demands on our abilities to succeed globally and on our understanding of other cultures. It is therefore the Government's aim that education shall provide young Danes both with strong academic competences and with a global outlook. This shall be promoted through, among other things, the following initiatives:

- English teaching is to be strengthened in upper secondary education and pupils shall participate in teaching projects with an international outlook.
- A new system of scholarships for study abroad will be introduced for young people in higher education.
- Higher education institutions will be obliged to set targets for the internationalisation of education programmes.
- An improved free place and scholarship scheme will be introduced to attract more talented foreign students to Denmark.

5.5. Stronger professional educational institutions

Stronger training institutions are to be developed. It is the Government's goal to create fewer and stronger institutions with large academic breadth and high quality. This shall help develop and future-proof education and training, and help strengthen knowledge development and innovation through interaction with research and enterprises etc. This is to be implemented through, i.a., the following initiatives:

- Voluntary mergers between universities and sector research institutions.

- All medium-cycle higher education programmes will be gathered in six to eight multi-disciplinary regional university colleges.
- A national accreditation system will be introduced for higher education programmes.
- A pilot project in 2007 on regional competence centres in the area of adult vocational education and continuing training.

5.6. Partnerships in education and training and lifelong skills upgrading

Partnerships in education and lifelong skills upgrading shall be strengthened. It is the Government's aim that all – national, regional and local players – shall be involved in and accept co-responsibility for ensuring that the strategy is broadly anchored in Danish society.

The Government and members of the Globalisation Council have entered into a framework agreement on binding partnerships which may help convert the strategy into concrete action.

The partnerships shall include specific agreements on how business and organisations can and will participate in cooperation projects and initiatives. Partnerships in the area of education and competence development can help strengthen the quality of and demand for education and adult education and continuing training and can help strengthen regional efforts to promote growth and business development.

6. Lifelong learning in liberal adult education and in association and leisure activities

Denmark has a long and historic tradition of liberal adult education and association life. This has helped develop our democracy and cohesion. It has also helped creating a learning culture, which is based on individuals desiring to learn and accepting co-responsibility for their own learning and personal development.

Danish society is undergoing great changes at the moment. It is therefore crucial that everyone can keep up with social developments and can take an active part in democracy and the community to ensure cohesion in society. New knowledge and skills are being acquired in many different contexts which are of importance for the personal development of individuals and their opportunities to participate in the labour market and in the life of the community.

Liberal adult education and voluntary work within the framework of associations play an important role in the development of both individuals and society. This includes, among other things, folk high schools and liberal adult educational associations offering adult education in the form of evening school, day high schools and study circles etc., or voluntary work in associations in the form of activities for children and young people.

Facts about liberal adult education and association life

- 50,000 participated in a residential folk high school in 2004, with Government grants totalling DKK 432 million. The first folk high schools were set up through popular movements more than 150 years ago.
- 675,000 participated in evening school education programme in 2004, with municipal grants totalling DKK 175 million.
- A third of the population performs voluntary work.
- The number of voluntary organisations is estimated at over 83,000 local associations, 6,200 foundations, almost 8,000 self-governing institutions and around 3,000 national organisations.
- A charter for interaction between the Danish voluntary/association sector and the public sector was drawn up in 2001 by a working group comprising politicians and representatives of the voluntary sector.

It is the Government's aim to increase the value placed on learning which takes place in liberal adult education and association and leisure activities, and to create much better interaction between liberal adult education and learning in association activities and leisure activities and learning in the formal education system and in the workplace. This requires, among other things, a more systematic effort to make visible and document non-formal and informal learning acquired through liberal adult education and voluntary work etc. It also promotes participation in lifelong learning.

Not least in the light of this the Government has taken the initiative to promote the interaction between education, liberal adult education and learning in association activities etc. through:

- A new Act on Folk High Schools in 2006 which makes it possible to elect lessons preparing for examinations or leading to qualifications as part of a high school course;
- The introduction of new legislation on the right to competence assessment and recognition of prior learning in adult education and continuing training based on, among other things, the fact that learning in liberal adult education and association activities should also be allowed to be included in the assessment of relevant competences for the purposes of adult education and continuing training;
- The development of documentation tools in cooperation with liberal adult educational organisations and representatives of associations and voluntary organisations which individuals can use to document competences acquired in liberal adult education and association and leisure life activities; and
- The introduction of the strategy “*Fra information til viden - 2006*” (From information to knowledge – 2006) in the library sector to actively support the learning of citizens.

7. Education and skills upgrading in employment and integration efforts

Danish society is at present characterised by growth and progress in all areas of economy. This also applies to the labour market where the level of employment is at an historic high level and where in many places there is a shortage of qualified labour. This means that many people who in the past had problems getting a foothold in the labour market have now found employment. This also applies to the long-term unemployed, people with disabilities, the socially marginalised and social groups which for other reasons have had problems getting started.

Everyone is needed in the labour market. This has created a need for an extraordinary effort to help more people to find work. It is the Government’s aim to make a special effort in relation to the unemployed and people of a different ethnic origin who need to train and upgrade their skills in the labour market.

This is to be implemented through, i.a., the following initiatives:

- An improved job rotation scheme which also includes a special job rotation benefit for enterprises using the scheme.
- An improvement of the grant scheme for enterprises which enter into vocational education and training contracts with adults.
- A pilot project on screening of the literacy skills of the unemployed. This will be aimed at people with little or no formal education.
- Young unemployed persons between the ages of 18 and 30 who do not already have a qualification are to be given the greatest possible encouragement to take a normal education programme on normal terms and conditions.
- “*Ny chance til alle*” (A new chance for everyone) – a special action aimed at passive recipients of cash benefit and starting assistance who have been recipients of benefit for more than one year.

- Together with the municipal stakeholders and the social partners, the Government has entered into a four-party agreement giving immigrants better opportunities to learn to speak Danish and gain practical skills and qualifications.
- A basic course in labour market Danish for immigrants is being developed. The course, which is being offered as a three-year trial under the Ministry of Integration, is being organised on the basis of the needs of the labour market and possible later participation in, for example, labour market training or general adult education.

8. The next steps

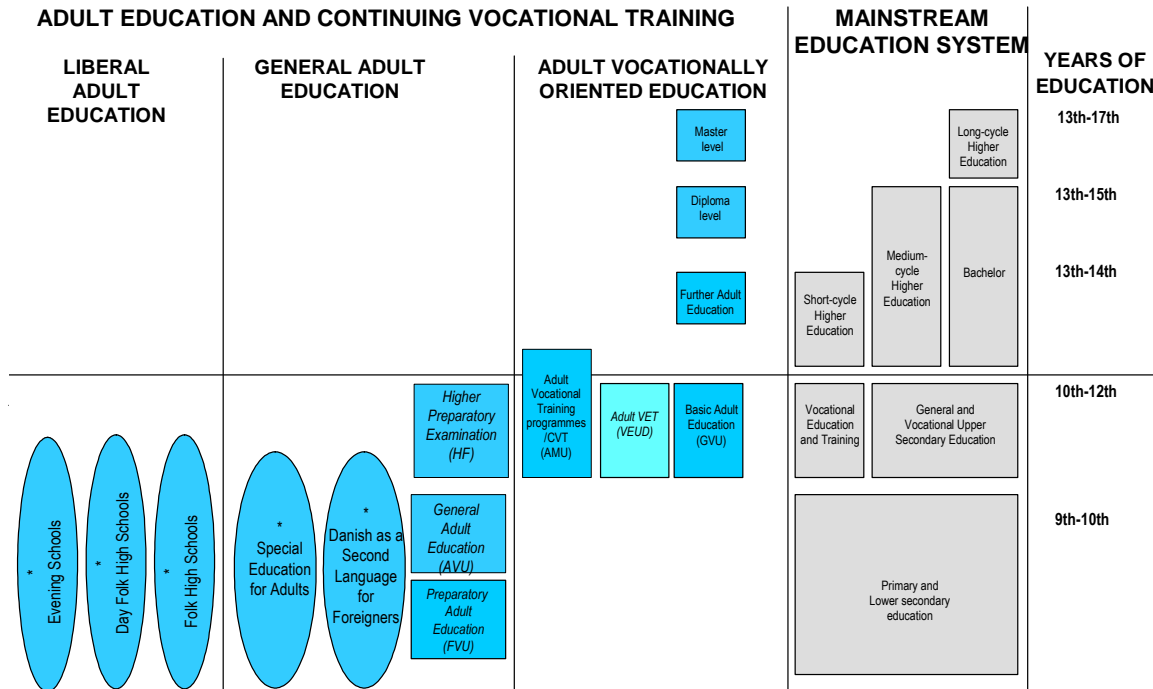
The implementation of Denmark's strategy for education and lifelong skills upgrading for all shall help to strengthen lifelong learning in all parts of the education system, in the labour market and in society. With a broad political agreement on future prosperity and an agreement on the allocation of the DKK 10 billion globalisation funds, the Government has created the framework for extensive initiatives aimed at education and skills upgrading of the labour force etc. This is a long-term strategy, to be implemented in the period 2007–2012, which is to improve both the quality and capacity of the education system as well as the area of adult education and continuing training.

The Government's implementation of the strategy includes the following main points:

- Proposals for new legislative initiatives shall be presented to the Folketing in 2006/2007.
- Implementation of new initiatives in 2006/2007 (financed by the globalisation funds).
- Tripartite talks (Government and the social partners) in 2007 on the future financing of adult education and continuing training
- Political talks with the political parties behind the Welfare Agreement on the principles for the allocation of DKK 1 billion extra for vocational adult education and continuing training.
- Monitoring of new legislation in 2009/2010.
- Evaluation of new initiatives (the globalisation funds) in 2009 with a view to political discussion of the effect and continuation of the initiatives and prioritisation of new initiatives for the period 2010-2012.

Annex 2

The Danish Adult Education and Training System



* The level can not be indicated precisely

Note: The drawing only shows levels, not extent of activities

Annex 3

Re section 3.1.3

Language screening for bilinguals

The Ministry of Education has initiated the development of language screening materials for small children and children/pupils who are bilingual. The language screening materials consist of two sets:

- The one set is to be used when the language development of small bilingual children is being assessed with a view to assessing the need for language stimulation.
- The second set is to be used in connection with assessing the need of bilingual children/pupils for teaching in Danish as a second language in connection with admission to school and changing schools.

The materials are at the free disposal of the local authorities from April 2007 on the Ministry of Education's website - <http://pub.uvm.dk/2007/sprogscreening/>.

Folders for bilingual parents

In May 2006 the Ministry of Education published the folders entitled "What does your child do in its leisure time?" in 5 different languages. The folders were sent to all municipalities for distribution to parents of bilingual children starting pre-school in August 2006. The aim of the folders is to inform bilingual parents about the importance of leisure time activities in relation to the acquisition of Danish and thus integration in Danish society.

The folders can be printed out in A4 size from the website of the Ministry of Education, where information is also available about the film "Danish as a second language – also in leisure time. A film about cooperation between the SFO and School" (SFO = after-school care facility).
<http://www.mastermedia.dk/html/Butik.html>.

Bilingual children's transition from day-care to school – a new net-publication

Starting school is a big step for all children, and it can be a special challenge for a child who has grown up with several cultures and languages. A new collection of articles from the Ministry of Education provides inspiration for local authorities, day-care facilities and schools in their work of planning bilingual children's transition from day-care to school.

The collection of articles: "Bilingual children's transition from day-care to school" is available on the Ministry of Education's website.

"This works at our school"

As part of the government's strategy to combat ghettoisation, the Ministry of Education has initiated the project: "This works at our school". The project was launched at the beginning of January 2006 and is to run until the end of 2007. The project includes collection of experience to date, development work and dissemination in the area of bilingual pupils in primary and lower secondary education. It consists of four sub-projects:

1. Collection of experience to date from schools with many bilingual pupils
2. Development of second-language pedagogy

3. Collection of experience to date concerning organisation and leadership
4. Enhanced parents' efforts.

New folder on evaluation of pupils with special needs

In April 2007 the Ministry of Education published material for inspiration: "We could try – evaluation in special needs teaching – best practice".

In the case of some pupils it is necessary to grant permission for the rules to be waived for taking the final examinations and tests in primary and lower secondary education, while in the case of other pupils it is necessary to completely exempt them from participation in tests and examinations. The benefit derived by these pupils from their teaching must be evaluated in other ways. This is a new task and a great challenge for both teachers and pupils. In the first instance, the publication is addressed to teachers with special needs pupils. It is intended to function to inspire teachers to evaluate pupils' benefit from teaching in other ways than the traditional ones. In addition, the desire is to inspire the teachers to incorporate the untraditional evaluation in their teaching during the whole period of schooling - <http://pub.uvm.dk/2007/vikanjoproeve/index.html>.

Re section 3.2.4.

School of the Month

Experience shows that that it is possible to change developments with goal-directed efforts. For this reason the Ministry of Education and the Danish Union of Teachers have combined forces to select the school of the month. In March 2007 this was, for example, Hjortespring School. With their programme: "Early insight, early action", since 2000 they have succeeded in doubling the number of sure, quick readers in 1st grade from 46 to 88 per cent. Among other things, they have introduced ongoing written evaluation of the child. This ensures systematic focus on the individual child, instead of all children receiving the same treatment in the course of the teaching.

Model municipality pilot project

In April 2007, Local Government Denmark and the Ministry of Education named 17 "model municipalities", all of which are participating in a development project with a view to fulfilling the government's objective that 95 per cent of all young people should complete a youth education programme in 2015. Today the figure is only 82 per cent. The 17 model municipalities are to collect experience with close cooperation between education institutions, including primary and lower secondary school, guidance counsellors, and trade and industry. Some of the tools that will be utilised are mentor schemes, increased utilisation of youth guidance and apprenticeship schemes. Experience from the project is later to be applied over the country as whole.

Re section 3.3.4.

Engineers have to lend their name to a lot

At the same time, the Ministry of Science and Technology in cooperation with the Confederation of Danish Industries and the Danish Society of Engineers is now launching an image-creating campaign in relation to the engineering profession and technological higher education. The aim of these efforts is

long-term attitude changing treatment to create greater interest in and knowledge about the engineering profession and technological higher education programmes with the aim of increasing admission to engineering degree programmes. The campaign is to be launched with the main message that ” Engineers have to lend their name to a lot” and is to run from spring 2007 to the end of 2008. DKK 9 million has been allocated to the campaign.