

*Non-Government
Expert Report on Social
Inclusion in Denmark
Report no. 1*

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1. Introduction

1.1. The Objectives of the Report

The intention of this report is to comment on the Danish policy intervention against poverty and social exclusion. The report is structured according to the guidelines and Terms of Reference issued by the European Commission, DG Employment and Social Affairs.

The report covers the following issues:

- Implementation of the first National Action Plan on Social Inclusion (NAP/incl.) to date
- Assessment of the main political measures and institutional arrangements in place, mobilisation of all participants, and changes in the context and political priorities
- Presentation of the policy changes in the social policies to date and implementation of new policy measures
- Mapping of the most recent developments in research, especially concerning policy relevant social inclusion indicators
- An overall view of partnership and of the public debate on poverty and social exclusion in Denmark.

This report is written by the Danish consultancy firm, PLS RAMBOLL Management.

In coherence with the NAP/incl. 2001-2003 the report describes the Danish government's strategy and implementation from a social policy point of view. The report is based on data from published sources such as research articles and reports, government documents (acts, proposal, guidelines), press releases, newspaper debates, and peer discussions with practitioners and observers of the social policy field.

1.2. The Structure of the Report

The current report is divided into four chapters.

Chapter 1 introduces the report.

Chapter 2 compares the policy fields outlined in the Danish NAP/incl. 2001/2003. In each policy field, we summarise (i) the objectives, (ii) the implementation, including policy measures and institutional set-up, (iii) our assessment of the implementation, and finally we list the most important research or policy documents concerning the policy field. Prior to this overview we describe the main political and policy changes in Denmark in the period covered.

Chapter 3 provides an overall view on the public debate concerning poverty and social exclusion in Denmark

Chapter 4 summarises the findings of the report.

2. Assessment of Implementation of the NAP/incl.

2.1. Background on Political and Policy Changes in Denmark

2.1.1. The 2001 national elections

Without question, the most important political change in Denmark came after the November 2001 elections, where the Danish Liberal Party and the Conservative Party rose to power and formed a two-party government supported by the right-wing Danish People's Party. The latter earned, for the first time, significant influence on national decision-making. This landslide victory enabled the right-wing coalition to forge policy without prior negotiations with the former government's parties: the Social Democrats and the Liberal Democrats.

2.1.2. The new government agenda

With the establishment of the new government, a new political agenda was also defined.¹ The new agenda also addressed a number of issues regarding social policy directly or indirectly:

¹ A Danish version of the new political agenda, *Vækst, velfærd – fornyelse*, is to be found at www.bm.dk/regeringsgrundlag/regeringsgrundlag.asp. Furthermore, the political results so far are described at the website of the Government modernization programme, www.moderniseringsprogram.dk/visArtikel.asp?artikelId=5190

- An explicit objective was to help the weakest and most marginalized members of society through the reform programme “Mutual Responsibility”
- To enhance the quality in the delivery of social services, especially pertaining to the elderly
- To institute a cross-cutting policy concerning the delivery of social services with the individual freedom of choice (e.g. house-cleaning services for the elderly, choice of residence, day care for children, etc.)²
- To extend flexible maternity/paternity leave to 12 months (within nine years of child’s birth) and terminating the previous parental leave programme³
- To create more flexible jobs and reduce the number of anticipatory pensions
- To increase involvement of volunteer organisations in the solution of social problems
- To grant permanent residence in Denmark only after seven years of legal residence for all immigrants, regardless of nationality
- To shorten of duration of case handling in asylum cases
- To limit family re-unification by implementing stricter financial, housing, and residential regulations
- To strengthen the legal rights of all citizens regarding dealings with public services, including those pertaining to the social sector⁴.

2.1.3. Changes in the institutional set-up

The formation of the new government saw a considerable reshuffling of ministerial institutions and responsibilities. In relation to areas regarding social policy, the reshuffling implied the formation of a new Ministry for Refugee, Immigration, and Integration Affairs and the Ministry of Employment. The Ministries of Health and Interior merged to become the Ministry of Interior and Health, and the Ministry of Housing was closed down with its areas of responsibility allocated to the Ministry of Economic and Business Affairs, the Ministry of Refugee, Immigration, and Integration Affairs, and the Ministry of Social Affairs. As a result, the Ministry of Social Affairs lost a number of areas of responsibilities to the Ministry of Employment and the Ministry of Refugee, Immigration, and Integration Affairs.

² This implies that e.g. elderly can choose from both private and public providers of cleaning services to offer the services they are accorded by the social services.

³ See section 2.4 for further detail.

⁴ This may include access to making complaints, transparency and defining standards for casework. See section 2.8 for further detail on social services.

By the turn of the new year 2001/2002, the government announced that a number of expert councils and institutions supporting policy-making, including the National Narcotics Council, were to be terminated. This included many councils and institutions within the field of social policy.

However, in matters pertaining social policy, the Council for Socially Vulnerable (*Rådet for Socialt Udsatte*) was established in 2002 as an independent body to monitor the development of the government's policy (especially concerning the Action Plan "Mutual Responsibility"). The Council should act as an advisor and provides input to policy-making to the government regarding socially marginalized people, and publish an annual report on the developments in the area as well. Furthermore, the Ministry of Social Affairs has as of 1 June 2003 established the Agency for Social Service. The agency will monitor the use and delivery of social services in the fields of elderly, children and youth, and disabled people.

2.2. The Activation Approach and the Inclusive Labour Market

2.2.1. Objectives

This section will focus on the social policy aspects of the activation approach to the labour market as this field is covered by an independent, National Action Plan on employment.

One overarching concern for creating a more flexible and diverse labour market is the ageing of the workforce and the imminent reduction of the workforce. This structural trend can only be counterbalanced by reducing the number of retirees and long-term unemployed and/or by importing labour from abroad.

The objective of the Danish strategy is therefore to integrate more people in the ordinary work force through enhancing a socially inclusive labour market. The government's aim is to increase the labour force by 87,000 in 2010 (3% of the labour force). Latest statistics show that the labour force consisted of 2,891,388 persons in 2001.⁵

2.2.2. Implementation

Growth in GDP has slowed, with the risk that diversity of the labour market will also be affected by resulting cutbacks and job losses currently experienced in Denmark. This

⁵ Statistics from *Statistisk tiårsoversigt 2002*, Statistics Denmark.

may result in short-term economic focus in the corporate sector rather than social inclusion and responsibility. Recent figures show that the unemployment rate is currently rising.

In the meantime the Danish activation approach has undergone several structural and methodical changes. The most important is to standardise the rules and procedures for recipients of cash benefits and unemployment benefits. Cash benefits are provided by the municipality in which recipients reside, while unemployment benefits are provided by unemployment insurance (*A-kasse*) administered by a trade union.

Regional Labour Market Councils (RAR) comprising union and employer representatives from a number of relevant trades, and representatives of the municipalities in the county are in place, whilst the Regional Employment Service services as secretariat for the RAR.

The strategy, organisation, and division of responsibilities of the partners in the RAR, and especially between the Regional Employment Services and the municipalities are based on regional needs. 4 million EURO has been allocated to cooperation projects directed at organising models for this work in the most efficient and effective way.

Similarly, Municipal Coordination Committees (*koordinationsudvalg*) are encouraged to collaborate across municipal borders⁶. The Committees have reportedly been established in all municipalities. Among others they are encouraged to establish job-creation centres together.⁷

While Coordination Committees are reportedly established in all municipalities (or across municipal borders) and Regional Labour Market Councils are established in all counties the partnership structure is in operation at, at least, a formal level. The exact constitution of the councils depends on local conditions, e.g. what trades are predominant in the region. As of yet no recent evaluation of their overall use has been published.

Key questions that remain unanswered in this respect are:

⁶. An evaluation of the organization and implementation is imminent. The evaluation is carried out by CASA (Center for Alternative Societal Analysis). Reportedly the use of the councils differs significantly as does the level of participation of the social partners.

⁷ Coordination Committees comprise among others representatives from trade unions, employers' association, and the integration council. The committees are not related to the Regional Labour Market Councils (RAR).

- The level of participation of the Committee's members
- The kind of actions initiated by the Committee's
- The level of support (financial/human resource/political) from the municipal government(s)
- The Employers' Union's commitment to job creation
- The Trade Union's commitment to find/create (marginalized) job opportunities for non-members
- Difference of use in municipalities with different demographic, socio-economic, and industrial characteristics.

Furthermore, the Activation Act also stipulates that private enterprises or actors can be used in the provision of jobs.

2.2.3. Cash benefits and activation

The government has maintained the previous government's emphasis on an active labour market policy. However, focus has been shifted from activation to job provision and job search.

This approach has been further streamlined by a reduction in the methodical "toolkit" that can be used by social workers. The approach contains three measures that can be seen as steps towards employment in the first labour market.

- Active commencement (counselling and skills upgrading)
- Introduction to work place (internship)
- Work place learning/upgrading (public subsidy to wage, special conditions for employment)

These measures regroup more than 30 different programmes that have previously been in use.

For all unemployed persons, compulsory individual action plans ("contracts") must be issued and activation must commence within one year of unemployment⁸.

⁸ One major objective is the early identification within six months of unemployment.

Lack of proficiency in the Danish language has been identified as a major barrier for immigrants and refugees. Now, proficiency must be assessed quickly and language courses are provided for enable immigrants and refugees to attain employability.

Furthermore the Internet portal www.jobnet.dk, available to all stakeholders, highlights the competencies possessed by all unemployed through on-line CVs. The intention is that the measure should also specifically target jobs for socially disadvantaged and vulnerable groups such as disabled persons.

In addition, different steps have been taken to survey and study the legal rights of the client/citizen in the provision of social services in such cases.

2.2.4. Assessment

The government's objective to create further employment has so far not succeeded. This may, though, possibly have more to do with the stagnating global economy and the demand for labour rather than failure in the measures and actions taken by the government.

Currently, the government is far off its target of increasing the labour force by 87,000 individuals. Pressures on wages in 2001 indicated that demand for labour exceeded supply in a number of areas. This indicates that in the short term an increase of 87,000 may be difficult to attain without a concerted strategy to counter structural barriers.

The reform of the activation approach has generally been well received by the social partners and the municipalities. However, the implementation of appropriate cooperation models still holds a number of unanswered questions.

According to a newly published report from Local Government Denmark (KL), the municipalities have improved the procedures for offering activation to newly arrived refugees and immigrants. The report shows that the activation is now initiated at an earlier point of time compared to the situation in 2001.⁹

⁹ *Undersøgelse af kommunernes aktiveringsindsats og den virksomhedsrettede integration* (Examination of the municipalities activation effort and the enterprise oriented integration), Local Government Denmark May 2003 <http://www.kl.dk/data/1025317/Rapport%20aktiveringsundersøgelse%202003.doc>

As will be seen in section 2.3.2., the number of light and flexible jobs actually rose in the period 2000-2002 thus indicating that the risks for social marginalisation and exclusion from the labour market in fact was reduced.

While data are still not available preliminary reports suggest that the Local Coordination Committee are implemented in different ways ranging from a merely formal institution to an active and committed partnership for the labour market's social partners. Other examples indicate that participation and commitment is difficult to assure from the social partners.

Some criticism has been directed at the municipalities for their implementation of language courses for refugees and immigrants. This criticism concerns the levels of differentiation in language proficiency, not taking into account the very different backgrounds and learning abilities of those attending the courses. In some instances, objections have been raised that the language courses maintain the individuals on public transfer payments rather than facilitate employment when immediate labour demands arise.

As for the immigrants on the labour market unemployment rate is still significantly higher for immigrants and their descendants¹⁰. However, in the past 10 years the unemployment rate has declined from 25,5 %in 1992 to 11,5% in 2001. The figures indicates that immigrants also benefited from the relative growth in prosperity during the 1990s. However, figures from Statistics Denmark also show that 53% of 16-66 year old immigrants and their descendants partook in the labour force (of whom 47% were employed) compared 76% of the remaining population. The figures also show that participation in the labour market is in fact declining from 70% in 1985 to 53% in 2001.

Thus, a number of structural barriers still exist. The large majority of immigrants find employment in blue collar jobs and only a small percentage have higher education and find employment in corresponding jobs.

Also, the educational and gender characteristics of the national groups constituting the immigrant population on the labour market are also very different. Some nationals such as Iranians and Vietnamese are over-represented when pursuing higher education while e.g. the Somali population have achieved little participation in the Danish labour market.

¹⁰ Statistics Denmark figures indicate that the unemployment rate in 2001 for the general population was 5,2% whiel it was 11,5% for immigrants and their descendants.

Despite several pilot projects spearheaded by the Danish Public Employment Service and campaigns by Foreningen til nydanskere på arbejdsmarkedet (Association of New Danes on the Labour Market) supported by a foray of large companies¹¹ barriers still persist when hiring employees with foreign background. Causes referred to are the companies' hiring procedures, lacking language skills and formal education of the applicants, and to some extent the attitudes of the other employees in the organisations.

2.2.5. Documentation

- Ministry of Employment: *Aktiv indsats over for ledige, beskæftigede og virksomheder*, *Beskæftelsesministeriet* (Active measures for unemployed, employed and companies)
http://www.bm.dk/aktiv_beskaeftigelsespolitik/default.asp
- Ministry of Employment: *Brug for alle på arbejdsmarkedet* (A need for all in the Labour Market)
http://www.bm.dk/det_rummelige_arbejdsmarked/default.asp
- Ministry of Employment: *Flere i arbejde* (More people in jobs)
http://www.bm.dk/flere_i_arbejde/default.asp

2.3. Public Pension Schemes

2.3.1. Objectives

The new government has continued the reform of the anticipatory pension reform¹², which was agreed on in December 2000. The purpose of the reform is to reduce the number of anticipatory pensioners through the creation of as many light and flexible jobs as possible in the private sector. Light and flexible jobs are specially designed for vulnerable groups who cannot attend to ordinary jobs.

As to the old age pension, the government has increased the support given to the disadvantaged old age pensioners.

2.3.2. Implementation

The number of anticipatory pensioners has been decreasing since 1998. According to the Ministry of Social Affairs, there were 262,000 anticipatory pensioners by 1 January

¹¹ See the association's home page: <http://www.foreningen-nydansker.dk/>

¹² See footnote 13 for a definition of anticipatory pension.

2001 compared to 273,000 in 1998¹³. The anticipatory pension system has been reformed with effect from 2003. The reform significantly simplifies the anticipatory pension system. It includes a number of initiatives making it more attractive to employ persons with reduced capacity for work.

The main purpose is to ensure that people who have residual capacity for work are actually given a chance to prove their ability in the labour market, possibly through a government-subsidised job. Thus, the reform aims at reducing the number of new anticipatory pensioners by creating light and flexible jobs to the vulnerable groups¹⁴.

In relation to the anticipatory pension reform, a criterion for the awarding of anticipatory pension was introduced. The awarding now takes place after an assessment of the working capacity. This assessment is referred to as the working capacity method (*arbejdsevne metoden*). The method is based on an activation-oriented approach, aimed at transforming passive resources (resources that cannot be directly applied to the labour market) into active resources through support and training. The application of this method is supposed to enable caseworkers to make a more qualified judgment of their clients' capacity for work. Moreover, it is aimed at creation job possibilities for people with reduced capacity for work.

The method is based on the elaboration of a resource profile for the individual where his or her material/economic conditions, labour market relevant social network, personal competencies, professional competencies, and health issues are mapped and taken as point of departure for assessing the individual's work capacity.

As regards the old age pension, a supplementing benefit to the disadvantaged old age pensioners was introduced by an act of December 2002. This benefit supplements the ordinary old age pension. The purpose of the benefit is to increase the living standards of pensioners without savings. The benefit amounts to 5000 DKK per year (670 Euros).

¹³ The terminology used above: anticipatory pension is the social pension delivered to individuals unfit for the labour market. Early retirement pension is for individual taking early retirement eligible for individuals ranging from 60/62 years old until retirement age at 65 years old. Old age pension denotes the pension available to all individuals 65 years or older. The level of pension depends on the level of personal income.

¹⁴ The reform has been welcomed by the Danish Confederation of Trade Unions and the Danish Employers' Association alike

2.3.3. Assessment

It is not yet possible to assess the impact of the anticipatory pension reform. Presumably, the reform will result in a lower influx of new anticipatory pensioners than would otherwise have been the case. The creation of light and flexible¹⁵ jobs has been quite successful according to StatBank Denmark. The number of such jobs has increased from 15,311 in the last quarter of 2000 to 27,576 in the last quarter of 2002. No figures have been published that describe the development in recent months.

The Danish system has incorporated a certain level of flexibility enabling individuals to gradually leaving the labour market or re-entering the labour market. The measure has proved effective in period where demands for labour exists. However, it is doubtful whether the same results could have been achieved without seeking to affect corporate attitudes by focusing on the corporations' sense of social responsibility through e.g. the local Coordination Committees at the same time

Regarding the introduction of the working capacity method, there has been some debate as to whether it actually improves the case working. Some say the method is applied at the expense of an individually based judgment, while others argue it actually ascertains equity and professional case handling.

As to the supplementing benefit for the disadvantaged old age pensioners, the amount may seem somewhat symbolic and is not expected to have a very significant impact. Overall, the average personal income of people above 65 years has increased from approximately 122,200 DKK (16,293 EURO) in 1997 to 134,167 DKK (17,889 EURO) in 2000¹⁶. When controlling for differences between gross and net income the pattern is consistent. The Ministry of Finance figures also indicate that the disposable

¹⁵ By light and flexible jobs (skånejob and flexjob) we define jobs that are acknowledged to be held by persons with less than full work capacity. Light jobs are typically held by individuals that receive anticipatory pension and work approximately 12 hours per week. This individual is allowed to earn up to 7,000 EURO per year without seeing her pension reduced. Flexible jobs is an ordinary employment in a 37 hours per week position where the employer receives a subsidy to pay the wage of the employee. The duration of the subsidy by the public authorities varies.

¹⁶ An analysis of the income distribution in Denmark shows that income differences between social groups are increasing as a consequence of the rise in real estate prices in the period 1994-2000. The increase in the elderly people's income matches the population average in the period 1983-2000- While the low income group remains constant in the period 1987-2000, the individuals the group consists of has changed significantly. See Ministry of finance: 'Income Distribution and Incentives 2002' (2003) <http://www.fm.dk/db/filarkiv/5936/incitamententer.pdf>

income level of old age pensioners rose regardless of including or excluding capital income. This has been the overall economic trend since 1983-2000, The Ministry of Finance defines net (disposable) and gross income as follows: The sum of personal income and capital income makes the gross income... [and the] disposable income [is made] by subtracting personal taxes and allowances for private pension payments.”¹⁷

Regarding the low income group, the Danish Ministry of Finance has conducted a random sample survey of 3,3% of the Danish population, the so-called ‘Law Model Population’ (‘Lovmodelbefolkningen’), from the years 1993 to 2000. This sample has been used in several reports, among others ‘Income Distribution and Incentives 2002’ referred to above.¹⁸

This study also focused on the low-income group, defined as the part of the population, in a given year, with a disposable income of less than 50% of the median income of the entire population.¹⁹ Parts of the analysis of the low-income group are published in the report ‘The Economically Worst Positioned Public Pensioners’.²⁰

This report shows that the elderly make out a smaller group of the low-income part of the population than e.g. students. This emphasises the fact that old age does not in itself increase the risk of poverty.

Table 2.1. The age distribution of the low-income group, 2000²¹

	Persons in Number	The low-income group (Pct.)	The share of the population of the age group (pct.)
Under 18 year-old	47.550	16,0	21,7
18-24 year-olds	158.670	53,6	8,2
25-29 year-olds	29.490	10,0	22,4
30-39 year-olds	26.100	8,8	
40-49 year-olds	13.320	4,5	13,9

¹⁷ <http://www.fm.dk/db/filarkiv/5936/incitamententer.pdf> (p. 71)

¹⁸ See also footnote 16. <http://www.fm.dk/db/filarkiv/5936/incitamententer.pdf> (p. 69)

¹⁹ The report refers to this definition as the usual international definition (<http://www.fm.dk/db/filarkiv/5936/incitamententer.pdf> p. 64)

²⁰ Ministry of Finance: ‘The Economically Worst Positioned Public Pensioners’. <http://www.fm.dk/1024/visPublikationesForside.asp?artikelID=5042&mode=hele>

²¹ <http://www.fm.dk/1024/visPublikationesForside.asp?artikelID=5042&mode=hele> p. 7

50-59 year-olds	9.180	3,1	14,0
60-66 year-olds	4.140	1,4	6,8
67+	7.350	2,5	13,0
Total	295.800	100	100

Another major point of the report is the comparison of the 10% with the lowest income within three different groups: all 67+ (the pensioners), all 25-59 year-olds and 25-59 year-olds in full time employment in 2000. A comparison of the equivocated disposable income of these lowest income groups shows that the economically worst off of the 67+ have an average disposable income of DKK 5,000 (EURO 673) more than the 10% with the lowest income among the group of 25-59 year-olds. The result is summed up in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2 The average income among the 10% with the lowest incomes, equivocated disposable income, 2000²²

67+	25-59 year-olds	25-59 year-olds in full-time employment
69.300 DKK (9227 EURO)	64.300 DKK (8654 EURO)	80.700 DKK (10861 EURO)

The average income of the 67+ does not include a number of special benefits for pensioners such as medical, transport and heating benefits. These benefits are not equivalently available for other low-income groups such as students. Everything equal this would make the old age pensioners relatively better off than other low income groups.

2.3.4. Documentation

Ministry of Social Affairs (2002): *National strategy report on the Danish pension system 2002.*

<http://www.sm.dk/eng/publications/dsp1pension180902/rapport.pdf>

²² <http://www.fm.dk/1024/visPublikationesForside.asp?artikelID=5042&mode=hele> p. 6

James Henry Weatherall (2002): *Vejen til førtidspension. En analyse af overgangen til førtidspension i befolkningen* (An analysis of the transition to anticipatory pension), Socialforskningsinstituttet, Copenhagen 2002.

<http://www.sfi.dk/sw852.asp>

Ministry of Employment (2002): *Arbejdsevnet metode* (Working capacity method)

http://www.depweb.dk/SpcPDF_Info/Arbejdsevnetmetoden2003.pdf

2.4. Working Life and Family Life

2.4.1. Objectives

It has been an objective of the new government to improve the conditions for combining working and family life of families with small children at all socio-economic levels. Furthermore, increased focus has been directed to providing elderly people with sufficient care. These objectives are to be accomplished by more flexible working conditions and an increased freedom of choice regarding public services.

2.4.2. Implementation

Several efforts have been taken in order to improve the conditions for the elderly as well as for busy parents trying to combine family and working life, thus also parents are considered among the vulnerable groups.

In May 2002, an act was put into force giving elderly people the opportunity to decide whether a private or a public service provider should supply their personal and practical aid. The aim of the act is to secure the quality of the aid. In addition, by an act of July 2002, elderly people are offered the freedom of choice in selecting a residence.

Also, by an act of April 2003, families with children have been given better opportunities of choosing day care in other municipalities. The subsidy given to families can now freely be applied all over. The purpose of this act is to supply the families with some geographical options, which could facilitate the combination of family life and working life.

The pre-school day care guarantee has been met by most municipalities. The result has been that waiting lists for day care have been substantially reduced, with the Municipality of Copenhagen being an exception to this pattern

2.4.3. Assessment

The impact of the changes in the service provision to the elderly and the day care options for those in danger of social exclusion has not been mapped at the present.

Preliminary reports from the largest municipalities suggest that the large majority of the elderly so far choose the services offered to them by the public sector rather than a private sector provider.

Little in terms of objectives and implementation appears to have been done that specifically targets people at risk of social exclusion in the area of reconciling working and family life.

2.4.4. Documentation

David Bunnage, Ole Gregersen, Eigil Boll Hansen, Nanna Meilbak, Merete Platz: *Kvalitet i ældreplejen* (Eldercare quality). The Danish National Institute of Social Research 2001

<http://www.sfi.dk/sw889.asp>

OECD (2002): *Babies and Bosses - Reconciling Work and Family Life (Volume 1): Australia, Denmark and the Netherlands*

<http://www1.oecd.org/publications/e-book/8102111E.PDF>

2.5. Educational Policy

2.5.1. Objectives

The government has presented an action plan in the field of education, the aim of which being to strengthen the academic level of secondary education, higher education, and adult and further education.

Furthermore, there has been an increase in focus on teaching Danish to the children of immigrants as a contribution to the overall integration.

2.5.2. Implementation

The government has proposed a change in the Labour Market Courses (*AMU*). The purpose is a better integration of the business sector with the adult and further education of the skilled and unskilled. The related acts will to be put into force on 1 January

2004. In relation to this initiative, the government has established a Council of Vocationally Oriented Adult and Further Education (*REVE*).

As regards the adult education, Denmark is characterised by a decentralised and complex structure that addresses many different target groups. But there has been an overall increase in the user's fee and an annulment of the support given to specialist courses.

In the field of vocational training, the government has proposed an act to increase the level of qualification and flexibility. The act is expected to apply as of August 2003.

Adults with social or mental problems who want to join the labour market can get training from Rehabilitation Centres (REVA). The centres are under county jurisdiction and offer a range of services including skills upgrading, work capacity assessment and social labour jobs. Lately, the work capacity assessments have increasingly been taking place in actual businesses rather than within the REVA centre. Social labour jobs include a number of vocational jobs from sewing to bicycle repair, automobile repair, and carpentry.

In the field of integration, Danish municipalities have been required since 1988 to provide Danish language stimulation of bilingual children. By 2001, 51,227 pupils were bilingual – corresponding to 9.1 % of all pupils²³. In 2002, the age limit for introductory Danish language stimulation was lowered from 4 to 3 years. This change took effect in January 2003.

As of 2002 the national government cut funding to first language courses for immigrant children. Some municipalities have opted to continue the funding for this service while other municipalities have terminated the programme.

Reports from 1999 show that immigrants and their descendants are still somewhat behind the average when it comes to educational attainment and also drop-out rates are higher²⁴. Among the general population 95% stays in the education system after upper-secondary school, compared to 89% of the immigrants and 87% of the descendants. The average completion rate is 75.9% among the general population, 64.1% among immigrants, and 62.3% among descendants. As for education choice, immi-

²³ Statistics from the Ministry of Refugee, Immigrant and Integration Affairs, <http://www.inm.dk>

²⁴ *Indvandrere og efterkommere i uddannelsessystemet* (Immigrants and descendants in the education system), Ministry of Education 2001, <http://pub.uvm.dk/2001/indvandrer/>. Figures from report.

grants and descendants in vocational training mainly choose service trade, while immigrants and descendants in further and higher educations choose health and technology. Among the 20-24 year old immigrants in further and higher education, Iranian and Vietnamese immigrants are more strongly represented.

1998 Figures show that the average educational completion rate for secondary and post-secondary for the population as a whole is 76%, while it is 64% for immigrant from non European/North-American countries.

To counter the in-equality in the acquisition in formal education 120 million DKK (EURO 16 million) were provided to projects targeting the educational inclusion of immigrant and refugee youth between 16-25 years old who entered the education system²⁵.

2.5.3. Assessment

It is not yet possible to measure the effects of the changes in the Labour Market Courses and the vocational training as data have not yet been collected and published. .

The increase in the user fees for adult education can be expected to have a negative impact on the number of participants from vulnerable groups since these are predominantly less well off.

In 2002, the language stimulation effort for bilingual children was the subject of an evaluation conducted by PLS RAMBOLL for the Ministry of Education. The report concludes that there have been positive effects on the linguistic and social development of the children. The lowering of the age limit had not been effectuated at the time of the evaluation.

Nevertheless, the longitudinal effects of the language immersion remain to be seen. At present it is still evident that immigrants and their descendants as a group lack behind the Danish population. However, the different educational attainments of various national groups point to the fact that the immigrant groups have very different educational resources which calls for a specific approach focusing on these groups' educational achievements. Thus, one of the greatest challenges in terms of social inclusion

²⁵ The project is currently being evaluated with a report due in the fall.

for immigrants is to better the educational attainment of the immigrant youth in higher education.

2.5.4. Documentation

Ministry of Education (2002): *Bedre Uddannelser* (Government action plan on education).

<http://pub.uvm.dk/2002/bedre2/01.htm>

Ministry of Education (2003): *Undervisningsministeriets sektoranalyse af ungdomsuddannelserne* (Sector analysis of secondary education).

http://www.im.dk/imagesupload/dokument/1.b.undervm_sektoranal_ungdomsudd.pdf

Ministry of Education (2003): *Undervisningsministeriets sektoranalyse af folkeskoleområdet* (Sector analysis of the folkeskole education).

http://www.im.dk/imagesupload/dokument/1.a.undervm_sektoranal_folkesk.pdf

PLS RAMBOLL Management (2002): *Evaluering af sprogstimuleringsindsatsen for tosprogede småbørn - folkeskolelovens §4a* (Evaluation of the language stimulation of bilingual children).

2.6. Urban and Housing Policy

2.6.1. Objectives

The urban and housing policy is aimed at marginalized groups in particular, in that it addresses vulnerable groups such as the homeless and disabled people. The new government regards the urban and housing policy as “crossing the borders” of different policy areas, which implies that the social problems have to be solved through an overall effort. In general, the existing urban and housing policy has been pursued.

As for handicapped accessibility, it has been an aim of the government to improve the housing conditions for the disabled persons. Therefore, an action plan has been introduced.

Currently, a new government proposal regarding the sale of public housing facilities is expected.

2.6.2. Implementation

The urban renewal project, based on an act of 1997, is still in force. The work has now been completed in several neighbourhoods. Also, the Danish Urban Regeneration Programme (*Kvarterløft*), aimed at turning around a negative development in certain neighbourhoods, has been pursued further. Due to the closing down of the Ministry of Housing, *Kvarterløft* is now under the Ministry of Refugee, Immigration, and Integration Affairs. So far, 12 projects have been initiated. The projects carry particular relevance for immigrants, refugees, and socially marginalized since two-thirds of the funding granted is targeted towards urban renewal in run-down areas, and the remainder towards activities in such fields as education, employment, the environment and the integration of ethnic minorities²⁶.

Overall, initiatives have been taken in order to improve the housing of marginalized groups such as misusers, mentally ill, and homeless people. According to the Government agenda towards socially marginalized, it aims to establish 300 temporary housing offers and 75 special rest home accommodations as well as to offer support to housing maintenance. In return, the Danish Council of Organisations of Disabled People estimates that the actual need is around 6000 homes for disabled.

In addition, the government has prolonged a 50% subsidy – started in 2000 - to the running of housing offers, which are based on appropriation from the psychiatric arrangement²⁷. The existing plan for homeless people has been continued. This includes the social service act, which requires the municipal authorities to offer shelter to homeless individuals without the ability to find housing for them selves²⁸. Housing support also encompasses measures such as helping the residents of temporary shelters to find a more permanent residence.

With regard to handicap accessibility, an act of 2002 aims at substantial improvement of the housing conditions and accessibility for disabled persons by increasing the support given by the *Landsbyggefonden*. For the period of 2003-2008, the amount available for support is 300 million DKK (40 million EURO). Furthermore, there has been an increase in the subsidy for the establishment of new residences for young

²⁶ A significant proportion of immigrants live in social housing in low income areas.

²⁷ *Regeringens psykiatraftale med de kommunale parter for perioden 2003-2006* (Government psychiatric arrangement with municipal parties 2003-2006), Ministry of Refugee, Immigration, and Integration Affairs March 2003, <http://www.im.dk/Index/dokumenter.asp?o=75&n=1&h=18&t=1&d=1840&s=4>

people with disabilities. The government has further set aside 112 million DKK (15 million EURO) for the period of 2001-2004 to improve their housing conditions. Between 2003 and 2005, the government will subsidise housing of young people with disabilities. In addition, the government supports an experiment concerning the education of accessibility consultants who are to function as advisers on accessibility needs during the construction phase.

A consequence of the change in government has been the closing down of a think-tank, *Byforum*, which among other things focused on the problems related to ghettos. The think tank has not been replaced by any other advisory body.

2.6.3. Assessment

In general, some significant changes have been made in the urban and housing policy within the recent years. Though, the programmes specifically targeting socially disadvantaged have not been subject to change. Still, the closure of the Ministry of Housing could be assumed to have a negative impact on the significance attributed to the field. For instance, closing down the think tank *Byforum* has weakened the focus on ghettos and thus on one aspect of social inclusion. The closure of the Ministry may also indicate a turn in policy where de-emphasis on the social policy aspect of housing policy prevails. This suggestion is further emphasised by Hans Skifter Andersen, senior researcher at the Danish Building and Urban research, according to whom the closure of the Ministry constitutes a significant downgrading of the urban and housing policy.²⁹

For example, the government's stated intentions regarding the sale of housing facilities is widely criticised. Most recently by the Council for Socially Vulnerable³⁰ who as observers fear that the sale will further stimulate "ghettoisation" and separate the housing issue from the overarching social policy measures available to decision-makers. If the law is passed this will mark a significant change in the government's capacity to act with social policy oriented measures and a break with a long standing pillar of housing policy for the past four decades.

²⁸ Informationsbrev om fortolkningen af husvildebegrebet og anvendelsen af § 66 i lov om social service (Informationletter on the interpretation of the homeless concept and the application of § 66 of the law on social service), Ministry of Social Affairs May 2003, http://www.sm.dk/lovgivning/retskilder/Dokumenter/skr_infobrev-husvilde2.htm

²⁹ Hans Skifter Andersen: *Ny regering: By- og boligpolitikken er afgået ved døden*, the Danish newspaper *Politiken* 5 December 2001.

³⁰ *Rådet for Socialt Udsatte advarer mod salg af almennyttige boliger*, Newsletter from the Council for Socially Vulnerable May 2003, <http://www.udsatte.dk/visside.asp?id=100>

With regard to housing for disabled, a recent study regarding the de-institutionalisation introduced in the 1998 Social Service Act shows that construction of alternate space is essential if the intentions of the law are to be fully implemented³¹. Nevertheless, national government funds to support municipal government construction of housing facilities were not fully spent.

2.6.4. Documentation

Danish Building and Urban Research conducts ongoing and recently finalised research projects concerning urban firms, urban social development, urban restructuring and regeneration, and urban organisation and governance.

www.by-og-byg.dk/english/research/urban_development_and_policy/research_projects.htm

Ministry of Economic and Business Affairs (2003): *Forsøg i byfornyelsen* (Report on experiments in the urban renewal)

http://www.ebst.dk/bolig_forsoeg

Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs (2002): *Best Practice*

<http://www.inm.dk/imagesUpload/dokument/Best%20Practice.doc>

Ministry of Social Affairs (2002): *Det fælles ansvar – Regeringens handlingsprogram for de svageste grupper* (Government agenda towards Socially Marginalized)

<http://www.sm.dk/netpublikationer/2002/p3detf050302/dfa.pdf>

Ministry of Economic and Business Affairs (2002): *Handlingsplan for handicapområdet* (Action plan in the field of handicap)

<http://www.oem.dk/publikationer/html/handicap/index.htm>

³¹ *Evaluering af erfaringerne med institutionsbegrebets ophævelse på handicap-området, 1998 – 2002* (Evaluation on the experiences of the removal of the institution concept in the field of disability, 1998-2002), COWI/SUS September 2002.

2.7. Health Policy

2.7.1. Objectives

The main objective of the new government in the field of health has been the implementation of the free choice in the selection of which hospital to be treated at. Furthermore, the new government has supplied the hospitals with extra resources, earmarked for the reduction of waiting lists and investments in equipment.

In 2002, a new public health programme was introduced called *Sund hele livet* (Stay healthy your whole life). In general the programme is a continuation of the former programme, although it differs in some respects such as the increased focus on vulnerable groups. When speaking of these groups, the programme mainly refers to the Government agenda towards socially marginalized (further described in chapters 2.6 and 2.8) yet mentions the importance of targeting the education of health sector staff towards the problems faced by the vulnerable groups. Furthermore, the programme stresses the need of an interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral approach.

2.7.2. Implementation

By an act of March 2002, the free choice of hospitals was further expanded. If the waiting times before admission to hospital surpass two months, the patient can freely choose between a number of private hospitals in Denmark as well as a number of hospitals abroad.

The new public health programme, emphasises the prevention of major public health problems such as diabetes, smoking and cancer. Also, it is noted that special attention should be given to improving health among the most vulnerable groups, but this statement is not further specified³² As to the organisation of objectives, the programme encourages the development of partnerships between voluntary organisations, municipalities, counties, workplaces, etc.

In 2001, 80 million DKK (10.7 million EURO) spread over 4 years was earmarked to a strengthening of the health sector. The availability of 24-hour treatment for misusers has received high priority. Furthermore, 30 million DKK (4 million EURO) a year has

³² Furthermore, research concerning the state of health within different groups is not available.

been set aside to reduce the waiting time for treatment of mentally ill children and young people.³³

2.7.3. Assessment

At present, the reduction of the waiting lists is making itself felt and this development benefits the vulnerable groups as well as the rest of the population. It is yet to be seen whether the growth in the private health sector will influence the social equality as to the quality of treatment.

Currently, no research or evaluations assess the implementation and effects of the measures taken in 2001. However, increased attention has been given to models for cooperation between the health sector and the social sector. One example is preventive measures and organisation regarding suicidal persons.

In the field of immigration and health care, recent developments have focused more specifically on delivering health care to different immigrant group by producing information in a number of languages spoken in the counties. No special attention appears to be given to using translators or other kind of linguistic facilitation in the actual treatment situation.

2.7.4. Documentation

Ministry of the Interior and Health (2002): *Sund hele livet 2002-2010* (Stay healthy your whole life - public health scheme)

<http://www.folkesundhed.dk/media/sundhelelivet.pdf>

Ministry of the Interior and Health (2002): *Barrierer for mere effektiv arbejdstilrettelæggelse på sygehusene* (Obstacles to more effective working arrangements at Danish hospitals)

<http://www.im.dk/publikationer/barrierer/index.htm>

Ministry of the Interior and Health (2003): *Sektoranalyse på sundhedsområdet* (Sector analysis of the health area)

http://www.im.dk/imagesupload/dokument/6_sektoranal_sundhedsomr.pdf

³³ *Vejledning for ansøgning om midler i 2003 til behandling af alkoholmisbrugere* (Guidance on the application for funds in 2003 for the treatment of alcohol misusers), Ministry of the Interior and Health October 2002, <http://www.im.dk/Index/dokumenter.asp?o=85&n=1&d=1682&s=4>

2.8. The Most Vulnerable Groups

2.8.1. Objectives

The general objectives and commitment towards helping the most vulnerable groups in society appear to have been somewhat affected by the change in government.

The objectives remain as stated in the NAP/incl.:

- Contributing to increasing the labour supply (A more inclusive labour market)
- Improving self-support and preventing marginalisation (Strengthening individual opportunities of personal development, activation and social integration)
- Ensuring reasonable financial support without jeopardising the incentive to take up employment

In fact, the government's action plan, "Mutual Responsibility", reinforces the government's commitment to strengthening its interventions. Most notably it underlines the responsibility towards these groups . As stated the government's objectives are:

- Strengthening public sector interventions
- Strengthening the participation of voluntary social work
- Creating new forms of interaction between public and voluntary actors
- Strengthening intersectoral cooperation within the public sector and the voluntary organisations

The primary measures are preventive social work and individualised solutions to the social problems. The emphasis on voluntary social work is not new and such collaboration is supported in Social Service Act of 1998 (see section 2.11).

The target groups defined as the most vulnerable in the NAP/incl. are:

- People with special social problems
 - Homeless people
 - Drug misusers
 - Alcohol misusers
 - Mentally ill people
 - Suicidal persons
 - Prostitutes
- Disabled people
- Ethnic minorities

- Children and young people with special needs.

2.8.2. Implementation

In general the implementation of the different measures have been consistent with the description in the NAP/incl. 2001/2003. This commitment has been reinforced by the new agreement that 317 Million DKK (46 million EURO) will be allocated to larger cities to fund initiatives over the next six years (*Satspuljemidler*)³⁴. The funds will be directed at temporary shelters/housing, alternative elderly care, provision of care and activity services, and strengthen the voluntary social working in the urban areas³⁵.

In brief, the implementation of measures on the different target groups can be described as follows:

2.8.2.1. People with special social problems

Recently an evaluation of the social service delivery to the homeless, misusers, and mentally ill has been completed assessing the kinds and impact of different kinds of social work provided by the public sector³⁶.

Homeless people

A number of initiatives have been and will be funded over a four-year period. The funded projects are incepted with government funds, while municipalities increase their share of funding every year in a three-year period.

Since the mid-1990s, a number of measures have been taken to improve the facilities for homeless people in terms of shelters, emergency care, alternative elderly care, special services provided to homeless individuals with multiple social problems, and development of methods to work with homeless people.

The current National Action Plan expires by the end of this year. As of yet, no new Action Plan has been published.

³⁴ *Rapport om udmøntning af Pulje til socialt udsatte grupper* (Report on the implementation of Fund to socially vulnerable groups), Ministry of Social Affairs April 2003,

<http://www.sm.dk/netpublikationer/2003/p4udsattepulje2404/rapport.doc>

³⁵ *317 mill. kr. til socialt udsatte i storbyerne* (317 Million DKK to socially vulnerable groups in the larger cities), Press release from the Ministry of Social Affairs April 2003, http://www.sm.dk/nyheder/index_pressemed.html

³⁶ *Brugere, de professionelle og forvaltningen* (The users, the professionals, and the administration), Institute of Local Government Studies – Denmark, May 2003, <http://www.akf.dk/dk2003/pdf/brugerne.pdf>

Drug and alcohol misusers

Based on pilot projects in five municipalities, a handbook for Municipal Action Plans and Policies Towards Alcohol has been produced. The responsible unit is the National Board of Health, Centre for Health Promotion and Prevention.

A survey undertaken by the Danish Resource and Information Centre on Alcohol³⁷ shows that 78% of the Danish municipalities have not yet surveyed the alcohol problems existing in the municipality. In more than half, no one is appointed as responsible for the problem despite the fact that half of the Danish municipalities assess alcohol to be a problem.

Currently, the Danish Resource and Information Centre on Alcohol is undertaking studies on the impact on alcohol in the activation of unemployed, documenting that targeted activation actually works. In addition, measures have been taken in providing funding for pilot projects to improve the capability to treat misusers in the health sector (e.g. emergency wards).

Mentally ill people

The government has implemented a renewal of existing and construction of new wards for the mentally ill in accordance with the Psychiatric Agreements I and II. In addition to the renewal and construction of wards, the Psychiatric Agreement for 2003-2006 includes the following objectives:³⁸

- Strengthening the social psychiatric offers to children and young people
- Strengthening the social psychiatric offers to people with both mental disorders and drug abuse.
- Continuation of housing support
- Promotion of coordination, research, and quality development in the field of psychiatry.

Furthermore, a number of counties and municipalities have in the period commenced the implementation of increased collaboration between the social sector and the health sector, more flexible delivery of social service, faster information flow regarding

³⁷ The Centre will form part of the new Resource and Information Centre for Socially Vulnerable.

³⁸ *Regeringens psykiatraftale med de kommunale parter for perioden 2003-2006* (Government psychiatric arrangement with municipal parties 2003-2006), Ministry of Refugee, Immigration, and Integration Affairs March 2003, <http://www.im.dk/Index/dokumenter.asp?o=75&n=1&h=18&t=1&d=1840&s=4>

the client's case, and increased user involvement regarding the case, and through formalised councils for users and relatives.

Suicidal Persons

Funds have been allocated to support pilot projects aimed at preventing suicide in the target groups, youth, misusers, and elderly in the period 2001-2003. The projects differ in character ranging from health sectors procedures and capacity development, inter-sectoral cooperation and other. The pilot projects are being monitored and evaluated. The final evaluation will be completed in 2004.

Responsible unit is the National Board of Health, Centre for Health Promotion and Prevention.

Prostitutes

According to the government action plans, existing measures will continually be supported, including the existence of the National Resource and Information Centre for Prostitution, PRO-Centre³⁹.

Some specialised projects, concerning e.g. foreign female prostitutes have been initiated. The centre contributes to the mapping of the extent of foreign prostitutes in Denmark in order to prevent and restrict the traffic in women. Also, the centre aims at securing support and aid for the women concerned. The work is to be completed in 2005.⁴⁰

Disabled people

One of the key changes with regard to disabled people is the "Basic Rate Reform". The reform was mandatory as of January 2002 stipulating a basic rate follows the individual regardless where the individual lives and that the municipal government covers the costs up to the level of the basic rate⁴¹. This instrument provides municipal authorities with an incentive and means to assess whether expenditures and quality coincide.

In addition, the Ministry of Social Affairs have contracted five large studies in the field of disability concerning the provision of social services to families with children with

³⁹ The Centre will also form part of the new Resource and Information Centre for Socially Vulnerable

⁴⁰ *Pro-centrets årsberetning 2002* (Annual report from the Pro-centret 2002),

<http://www.pro-centret.dk/Udgivelser/Aarsberetninger/Pro2002.pdf>

⁴¹ The Social Appeal Agency's website on the surveillance of basic rate, <http://www.dsa.dk/grundtakst/index.htm>

disabilities, user involvement of such families, the use of individual action plans, the impact of de-institutionalisation, and effect of economic compensation for disability.⁴² All studies concern the implementation of policy changes made as a consequence of the Social Service Act of 1998. The results of this research show that there is a significant need for professional development for social work and care providers in this area. Nevertheless, the results indicate that implementation of the Social Service Act is gradually taking place.

Ethnic minorities

With the establishment of the new government, a new Ministry for Refugee, Immigration, and Integration Affairs was formed. The Ministry took over responsibilities from, most significantly, the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Interior, and the Ministry of Social Affairs⁴³.

Since the Integration Act entered into force in 1999, municipal governments have assumed control over the public integration responsibilities and offer special introduction programmes lasting three years. The programmes are based on individual action plans and must include instruction in the Danish language and knowledge about the Danish society's modus operandi. The social assistance (the introduction transfer payment) provided to newcomers is reduced compared to the assistance provided to residents and will remain so for the first three years of residence⁴⁴. The level of household income is thus very low unless one or more members of the family manage to find employment.

⁴² *En familie med handicap er ikke en handicappet familie* (Evaluation of social services to families with children with disabilities), PLS Rambøll Management May 2001.

§111 planer – et godt redskab i indsatsen overfor voksne med nedsat funktionsevne? (Evaluation of the personal plans following §111 in the Service act), PLS Rambøll Management November 2001.

Evaluering af erfaringerne med institutionsbegrebets ophævelse på handicap-området, 1998 – 2002 (Evaluation on the experiences of the removal of the institution concept in the field of disability, 1998-2002), COWI/SUS September 2002.

Evaluering af bestemmelserne om magtanvendelse og andre indgreb i selvbestemmelsesretten (Evaluation of the provisions on uses of force and other interventions in the right of self-determination), Poula Heldt Rådgivning 2002.

Der er ingen der kommer og fortæller mig, hvad jeg har ret til (Nobody tells me what services I have the right to), Danish National Institute of Social Research 2001.

⁴³ As of 1 January 2003, 257,709 foreign persons lived in Denmark, (4.8% of the population). When second-generation descendants are included the figure is 430,689 citizens persons (8%).

⁴⁴ Several municipal authorities and NGO have complained that the introduction transfer payment cannot economically sustain individuals let alone a family.

The Act has been changed in some respects since the establishment of the Liberal-Conservative government in power⁴⁵. The changes address the continued influx of foreigners through marriage to residents. The changes stipulate that the couple must document higher level of connection or attachment to Denmark than the country of the other spouse. Furthermore, the Act stipulates that appropriate housing, employment, and financial acumen must be in place.

While the government has been careful to avoid the term “discrimination”, human rights groups and other NGOs have announced that they are monitoring the implementation closely to see whether systematic differences are made between Danes and immigrants and their descendants.

2002 figures indicate that the law has been effective as the arrival of asylum seekers (from more than 10,300 in 2000 to 6,660 in 2002) and residence granted on the basis of marriage have been reduced (from more than 10,000 in 2001 to around 8,100 in 2002).

The preliminary impact of the Integration act was evaluated in 2000, but has not been evaluated since. However, research on a number of different measures, such as the language courses offered, has taken place. Furthermore, a think tank established by the previous government has issued a number of publications including demographic prognoses predicting the integration challenge to Danish society will increase in the years to come⁴⁶. Also, the Ministry of Refugee, Immigration, and Integration Affairs has recently launched a database (*Integrationsdatabasen*), which contains the research that has taken place within the field of integration, thus improving the sharing of knowledge in this field.⁴⁷

As Greenland Inuit population are Danish citizens they are not officially conceived of as ethnic minorities and no specific integration measures were directed towards them⁴⁸. It is estimated that approximately 7,000-7,500 Inuit live in Denmark. Little is known about this group, but this has been partially remedied by a recent study docu-

⁴⁵ Notably, the term ethnic minority is not used in policy or public debates. The terms “foreigners”, “immigrants”, and “refugees” are used.

⁴⁶ *Indvandring, integration og samfundsøkonomi* (Immigration, integration and the economy), Report from the Ministry of Interior and Health October 2002, <http://www.inm.dk/publikationer/indvandring/index.htm>

⁴⁷ Integration database, <http://www.inm.dk/integrationsdatabasen/index.jsp>

⁴⁸ Likewise, Danish society has not had a public debate on its colonial past in Greenland. This may partly have to do with the fact, the Greenland enjoys a considerable degree of political autonomy concerning its domestic affairs through the so-called “Home-rule”.

menting that the group generally are integrated in Danish society, but are lower than the population average concerning a number of welfare parameters such as educational attainment and employment. Also, a majority have experienced some form of discrimination and identify Danes' attitude towards them as the greatest threat to active citizenship in Denmark⁴⁹. Estimates on how many are socially vulnerable range between 200-900 when defined as unemployment, substance abuse, and homelessness. In the winter 2002/2003 a White Paper on Socially Vulnerable Inuits living in Denmark was published⁵⁰. The paper recommends that, among others, greater sensitization regarding cultural and linguistic issues should be in place and public measures should be more differentiated to the different target groups and social problems within the group.

Children and young people with special needs

The field of vulnerable youth⁵¹ has been subject to continued discussions over the past years as has the notion of negative social inheritance⁵². In fact comparative studies have shown that social mobility is less frequent in Denmark than in other countries.

Recently, a study was carried out by the Danish National Institute of Social Research on social prevention measures for vulnerable children and youth. The study showed that the social work concerning placements and other interventions lacked basic legal and methodological criteria.⁵³

The fight against negative social inheritance is supported by the KID project where 25 million DKK (3,2 million EURO) supports projects taking place between 2003 and 2004. The projects must concern professional development in day care to counteract negative social inheritance.

⁴⁹ Lise Togeby (2002): *Grønlandere i Danmark. En overset minoritet (The Inuit of Greenland. An Overlooked Minority)*. Aarhus University Press.

⁵⁰ Ministry of Social Affairs (2003): Hvidbog om socialt udsatte grønlandere i Danmark (White Paper on Socially Vulnerable Inuits Living in Denmark).

⁵¹ The term is often used sporadically in the political and professional debate, but it generally denotes youth with some form of delinquency, behavioural problems, and who tend to find themselves excluded from institutional programmes such as school, youth clubs, and others.

⁵² Social inheritance is defined by the social reproduction of behavior from parents to offspring regarding income, education, behavior, values, habits, and other. For further explanation, see the Ministry of Social Affairs, http://www.sm.dk/socialarv/hvad_er.html

⁵³ Else Christensen & Tine Egelund (2002): *Børnesager – Evaluering af den forebyggende indsats* (Evaluation of the preventive measures in children cases), Danish National Institute of Social Research 2002.

In relation to negative social inheritance, the KABU programme (quality assessment project on placements of children and youth) has also been inaugurated from 2002-2004⁵⁴. 75 million DKK (10 million EURO) has been allocated to projects improving the quality of institutions and placement procedures.

The programme is constituted by a number of projects aimed at achieving the following objectives: (i) development of quality criteria in placement, (ii) development of social work methods in placement process, (iii) data collection on thematic issues, (iv) development of impact indicators, and (v) development of dissemination and implementation tools.

The youth sanction came into force under the Penal Act in July 2001. As of yet only a limited number of youth between 15-17 years old have been sentenced to undergo the 2 years of treatment stipulated in the Youth Sanction.

In sum, the Danish government's efforts to combat social exclusion have taken many guises. However, since the 1998 major reforms in the social service act, the changes have generally not been legislative in their character. The resources devoted to this have to a larger extent been devoted to cementing these policy changes in fieldworkers' practice and by supporting such development through government sponsored, or co-financed programmes.

2.8.3. Assessment

While acknowledging the results of recent studies and research the Ministry of Social affairs has established a number of measures to promote the help to vulnerable groups. However, the discussion of burden sharing between local and national level of government is predominant in this regard.

The government has demanded from local government that taxes do not soar whilst demanding more efficiency, and that local authorities are actually implementing the regulations of the law. Meanwhile, the local authorities argue that an increased set of policy demands are imposed on them whilst no funding opportunities are present for their implementation. Currently, the national government has limited means to control and sanction municipalities that do not meet the standards in e.g. the social services act.

⁵⁴ As of yet no ex-ante or mid-term evaluation has taken place.

A Council for Socially Vulnerable People has been established to act in an advisory capacity to the Ministry⁵⁵. The Terms of Reference of the Council does not make any reference to the fourth Nice objective.⁵⁶ The Council is as mentioned an independent council and it has already established itself in this role with regard to opposing the government plan's regarding the sale of social housing facilities. Nevertheless, upon the Council's appointment the parliamentary opposition voiced critique of the Council's constitution and to the extent the Council was going to act as an independent observer.

Within the next month the Danish Resource and Information Centre for the Socially Vulnerable will be established. The centre will be a merger of several different resource and information centres such as that of Alcohol, the Information centre of Greater Copenhagen, and the Pro Centre for prostitution. The impact on the work carried out by the separate institutions is yet to be seen.

Furthermore, the Agency for Social Service is likely to play a pivotal role in monitoring the counties' and municipalities' responsibilities. Initially, the Agency will only monitor social services for the elderly, children and young people, but will be expanded to all areas of social services.

Recent studies concerning the preventive social work in the area of youth, evaluations concerning different measures in the field of disability such as de-institutionalisation, and the use of individual action plans, all point in the same direction: Many municipal social workers and caseworkers do not meet the procedures and responsibilities as they are defined in the Social Service Act. This lack of systematic implementation of the Act is both an administrative, professional, and legal problem.

Correspondingly, the Ministry of Social Affairs has established the "Method Magazine" to disseminate good professional practice and disseminate research results in the social policy field. Furthermore, it appears to be a new legislative tendency that specific methods are devised to ensure the law is implemented with the intended effects.

Recently, a legal rights research programme was established to survey current practice and promote professional attention to the special conditions surrounding legal

⁵⁵ Council for Socially Vulnerable People: www.udsatte.dk. A representative of the Danish LO is on the Board.

⁵⁶ The fourth Nice objective is to promote the participation and self-expression of people suffering exclusion, to mainstream the fight against exclusion, and to promote dialogue and partnerships between all relevant bodies, public and private (European Commission, http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/soc-prot/soc-incl/15223/part1_en.pdf).

rights in the provision of social services for the most vulnerable groups. This is in line with the government Action Plan⁵⁷.

In terms of government expenditures, a recent survey carried out by a Danish consultancy in all counties and six municipalities, representing 2/3 of the population, showed that municipal and county authorities' expenditures for social marginalized groups rose by 8% from 2002-2003⁵⁸. The survey also showed that the provision of housing services (permanent residence, shelters, etc.) declined by 11%, while expenditures on psychiatric patients rose by 12%, on people with disabilities by 11%, and on drug misusers by 9%, while expenditures on alcohol misusers rose by 2%.

In other words, public expenditure on socially marginalized people has increased over the last year. The distribution, however, appears to be uneven between different target groups. However, it is not evident, whether this constitutes a pattern or is a result of annual budgetary fluctuations.

2.8.4. Documentation

Ministry of Social Affairs (2002): *Det fælles ansvar – Regeringens handlingsprogram for de svageste grupper* (Government agenda towards socially marginalized)
<http://www.sm.dk/netpublikationer/2002/p3detf050302/dfa.pdf>

National Board of Health/Sundhedsstyrelsen (2000): *Alkoholpolitiske handleplaner – en håndbog for kommuner* (Handbook for Municipal Action Plans on Alcohol)
<http://www.sst.dk/publ/Publ2003/alkoholpolitiskehandleplaner/index.htm>

Ressource and Information Centre for Alcohol/Videnscenter for Alkohol (2001): *Alkoholproblemer – En kortlægning af kommunernes indsats* (Alcohol-related problems – mapping the municipality effort)
<http://www.alkoholviden.dk/images/files/Alkoholproblemer.pdf>

⁵⁷ A web site will be launched imminently.

⁵⁸ Council for Socially Endangered (2002): *Undersøgelse af ændringer i den kommunale og amtskommunale indsats i forhold til socialt udsatte grupper for 2002-2003. - Analyse gennemført i alle amter og de 6 største kommuner* (Survey of changes in the municipal and counties' measures directed at socially vulnerable in 2002-2003. – An analysis of all counties and the 6 largest municipalities), <http://www.udsatte.dk/pdf/rapport1.pdf>

The methodology used was subject to considerable critique by some observers, which led to the Ministry of Social Affairs stating that they found the results viable.

Ministry of Social Affairs (2003): *Statusrapport om sindslidende 2001* (Report on the mentally ill)

<http://www.sind.dk/upload/statusrapport.pdf>

Ministry of Social Affairs: *Commissioned research 2001-2003*

http://www.socialministeriet.dk/dansk_socialpolitik/index_kvalitet.html

Ministry of Social Affairs (2002): *Socialpolitisk redegørelse 2002 – De udsatte grupper* (Report on the vulnerable groups)

http://www.sm.dk/netpublikationer/2002/udsatte_grupper_sam/udsatte_grupper_sam.pdf

Council for Socially Endangered (2002): *Undersøgelse af ændringer i den kommunale og amtskommunale indsats i forhold til socialt udsatte grupper for 2002-2003. - Analyse gennemført i alle amter og de 6 største kommuner* (Survey of changes in the municipal and counties' measures directed at socially vulnerable in 2002-2003. – An analysis of all counties and the 6 largest municipalities)

<http://www.udsatte.dk/pdf/rapport1.pdf>

2.9. Information Technology

2.9.1. Objectives

It is an aim of the government to further improve the conditions for the disabled people when it comes to the Internet and the digital labour market. Therefore, in December 2002 the government launched an action plan, *Handicap ingen hindring (Disability is no hindrance)*, including the following initiatives:

- The establishment of a fund contributing to the development of special equipment for communication services.
- Strengthening the work of the Danish Centre for Accessibility (*Dansk Center for Tilgængelighed*).
- Improving the supply obligation to secure the disabled a safe access to modern technology.

2.9.2. Implementation

The implementation of the action plan involves the establishment of a fund of 5 million DKK (670,000 EURO), which will support the development of special equipment for communication services, for instance software relevant to the disabled and talk synthesis. Furthermore, the strengthening of the work of the Danish Centre for Accessibility (*Dansk Center for Tilgængelighed*) is achieved by giving the centre 2 million DKK (270,000 EURO) to improve the knowledge and counselling on IT accessibility. As to the supply obligation to secure the disabled a safe access to modern technology, a committee also representing the telecommunication companies will be set up to discuss the possibilities for a modernisation of the rules for supply obligation services (forsyningspligtsydelser) to the disabled.

The implementation of the action plan is based on cooperation between the government, organisations for the disabled, and the telecommunication sector. A steering committee is established consisting of representatives from these groups to secure a follow-up to the plan and to act as advisory body. By 2004, this committee is to contribute in the making of a status report on the action plan.

2.9.3. Assessment

Since the action plan for the disabled was launched only 5 months ago, the effects remain to be seen. Yet the action plan in itself is evidence of an increased attention given to this field. Also, the establishment of a steering committee presumably has a positive effect on the level of follow-up to the action plan.

2.9.4. Documentation

Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (2002): *Handicap ingen hindring! Handlingsplan for handicappedes IT- og telebrug 2002* (Action plan for the disabled). http://www.videnskabsministeriet.dk/fsk/publ/2002/handicap/Handicap_ingen_hindring.doc

2.10. Preserving Family Solidarity

2.10.1. Objectives

The attention given to troubled children and young people has increased in order to keep them in the family. Also, the reform of the support system (the basic rate reform)

has been carried out. As for handicapped, seriously ill, and elderly people, a number of measures have been taken in order to preserve family unity.

2.10.2. Implementation

Throughout the 1990s, the attention and means given to prevent external placement of children and young people increased considerably. The number of preventive measures taken such as family support social workers, proactive street level social work, and new methods for family counselling (*familierådslagning*) has increased significantly. The new government has continued this policy by launching a project on the best ways to work with these vulnerable groups at a conference in March 2002. As mentioned in chapter 2.8.2.1, a recent study has shown that the social work concerning placements and other interventions lacked basic legal and methodological criteria.

The basic rate reform was decided upon in May 2001. The reform altered the payment structure between local and country authorities regarding the support of threatened children and their families, and handicapped persons. The purpose of the act was to place responsibility and payment at the same authority.

Several measures have been taken in order to preserve family unity as regards handicapped, seriously ill, and elderly people. By October 2002, there was an improvement of the conditions for taking care of disabled or seriously ill family members in that it is now possible to take a leave of absence of up to 6 months. Also, the rules for taking care of handicapped children at home have been improved as of December 2002. Furthermore, by an act of July 2002, elderly people have been given more options in deciding where to live, hereby improving the possibilities of staying close to relatives.

2.10.3. Assessment

In spite of the augmentation in the number of preventive measures taken towards children and young people, the number of external placements remains fairly steady. Latest statistics shows 13,641 external placements in 2000.⁵⁹ Whether it would have increased without the improvement in the preventive measures remains unanswered. Presumably, increasing the flexibility of the administrative arrangements through the basic rate reform will have a positive impact on the case working.

⁵⁹ ⁵⁹ Statistics from *Statistisk tiårsoversigt 2002*, Statistics Denmark.

As to the measures taken regarding the handicapped, seriously ill, and elderly people, they constitute a significant improvement in the conditions for preserving family unity in a vulnerable situation.

In institutions, councils for users (where relevant) and dependents must be organised (*Brugerråd, Pårørenderåd*). However, results so far are not unequivocal. NGOs and NPOs are not automatically represented, but many parents or dependents are members of the NGOs representing their interests.

2.10.4. Documentation

Ministry of Social Affairs (2000): *Rapport om konsekvenser af grundtakstfinansiering* (Report on the consequences of basic rate financing)

<http://www.sm.dk/netpublikationer/grundtakst/alt.html>

Steen Bengtsson & Nina Middelboe (2001): *Der er ikke nogen der kommer og fortæller hvad man har krav på – forældre til børn med handicap møder det sociale system* (The encounter between parents with disabled children and the social system).

The Danish National Institute of Social Research, Copenhagen 2001.

Else Christensen & Tine Egelund (2002): *Børnesager – Evaluering af den forebyggende indsats* (Evaluation of the preventive measures in children cases).

The Danish National Institute of Social Research, Copenhagen 2002.

Ministry of Social Affairs (2000): *Rapport fra udvalget til undersøgelse af udgiftspresset på særlige foranstaltninger på børne- og ungeområdet* (Study on expenses on preventive and placement measures in the field of children and young people)

http://www.sm.dk/publikationer/index_born.html

2.11. Voluntary Social Work

2.11.1. Objectives

While the former government recognised the importance of voluntary social work, this dimension has been assigned even further importance by the new government. The establishment of the programme “Mutual responsibility” is but one intervention in this vein.

The field covers the voluntary social work as carried out in NGOs and NPOs.

2.11.2. Implementation

In December 2001 a "CHARTER FOR INTERACTION BETWEEN VOLUNTEER DENMARK/ASSOCIATIONS - DENMARK AND THE PUBLIC SECTOR" was published. The brief charter outlines the general constitutional, legal, and societal consideration regarding volunteer work, stressing that its intervention should not replace public interventions but remain a critical collaborator and adversary to the public sector. The charter also covers voluntary social work.

As written in the NAP/incl., a survey of voluntary work using the NPO method devised by researchers at Johns Hopkins University was planned for 2001. The survey is currently in tender. The comprehensive survey is expected to take place in the period 2003-2006. The research project will take part of the comparative CNP study.

Despite government intentions, budgeted public support to voluntary social work actually declined by 10% between 2002 and 2003. The funding is primarily channelled through municipal social authorities that provide funding for events/projects/associations⁶⁰.

2.11.3. Assessment

The emphasis on voluntary labour is increasingly acknowledged by the public sector as a vital counterpart. However, a study from 2000 shows the role of voluntary social work has not changed in about half of all Danish municipalities.

Despite, the government emphasis on the importance of voluntary labour, no changes have been made to the Social Service Act concerning voluntary social work. As mentioned, funding to the area has in fact declined in 2003.

Consequently, the Danish Committee on Volunteer Effort and the Centre for Volunteer Work remain the two key institutions in the data gathering and dissemination of knowledge on voluntary work.

⁶⁰ Despite this reduction in funding, there is no evidence that suggests a shift towards more unpaid work by charity organizations.

In sum, the field of voluntary social work is currently in a state of transition where it is likely that research precedes policy intervention. It is likely, given the current government's intentions, that further funds will be provided to the area in the future.

2.11.4. Documentation

Henning Hansen & Finn Kenneth Hansen (2000): *Kommuners og amtskommuners samarbejde med frivillige sociale organisationer - en redegørelse for lov om social service § 115 i 1999* (The cooperation between municipalities and county council district and the voluntary social organisations)

http://casa-analyse.mondosearch.com/cgi-bin/MsmGo.exe?grab_id=244818&EXTRA_ARG=&CFGNAME=MssFind%2Ecfig&host_id=1&page_id=88&query=%C2%A7115

Minister for Gender Equality (2002): *New Action Plan for Gender Mainstreaming 2002-2006*

<http://ligestillinguk.itide.dk/Files/PDF/actionplan.pdf>

3. Overall View on Public Debate on Poverty and Social Exclusion in Denmark

The preoccupation with social marginalisation has been long-standing in Danish social policy. However, the policy approach and measures have changed from institutionalisation towards inclusion. The public expenditures on social policy also reflect a relatively high level of commitment. In 2002, 23% of all public expenditures were spent on social policy related matters. This equals 12% of the GDP⁶¹. As evidenced in the survey delineating public expenditures on socially marginalized, the public expenditures have risen by approximately 8%.

The recent developments in policy-making indicates a growing preoccupation on behalf of the ministries towards specifying exactly what methods should be employed when assessing a person's need for social assistance in the Act⁶². This legislative measure indicates a preoccupation towards ensuring legal protection of the citizen,

⁶¹ See http://www.sm.dk/dansk_socialpolitik/index_tal.html - erstattes med COM-link

⁶² See e.g. <http://www.funktionsevne.dk>, www.arbejdsevne.dk, and *Metodemagasinet* no. 2 2003 (publication by the Ministry of Social Affairs, available online as of 1 July, or by contacting the National Danish School of Social Work, metode@dsh-k.dk).

equal basis for decisions in social cases, and mainstreaming standards and practices for social work across municipalities. This has, as mentioned, been a major barrier when implementing the Social Service Act of 1998.

Some debate continues to resurface as to what extent the government has launched a new social policy. Some critics from NGOs argue that there has been a shift in policy from a general social policy towards specific target groups. The critique of the policy is that individuals at risk of social exclusion must be conceived in one of the target groups to have their social problem recognised. Proponents for the policy argue that policy measures are more targeted and effective thus ensuring an efficient allocation of means within the social policy field. The question arises whether the policy can be conceived as “new labels” on the existing policy or whether the policy represents some new altogether. It is the assessment of PLS RAMBOLL Management that the policy on the most vulnerable groups (e.g. homeless, drug abusers) has not changed significantly in terms of its content. However, for ethnic minorities a stronger focus on participation in the labour market is discernible in the government’s policy.

3.1. Public debate regarding social marginalization

In recent months discussions regarding (negative) social inheritance has prevailed. This debate has partially been prompted by comparative studies indicating that Denmark is not successful in breaking negative social inheritance. This has also prompted the Ministry of Social Affairs to delineate what policy interventions are in place to fight negative social inheritance on its website⁶³.

However, the topic that is singled out in the public debate is still the integration of immigrants and refugees. Over the past two years different themes on this matter have surfaced including educational attainment, labour market integration, undeclared work, crime rates, family reunification, and (lack of) social integration into mainstream Danish society. Most recently, this has resulted in a new government strategy on the issue of integration, that will be dealt with in the second report.

3.2. The use of the NAP/incl.

The author assesses that the NAP/incl. has not been used as an overarching strategy plan coordinating the implementation of the policy in different fields. First, no organisa-

⁶³ Ministry of Social Affairs: <http://www.sm.dk/socialarv/>

tional structure was put into place to coordinate such a concerted strategy. This must be seen as a minimum requirement if coordination and complementarity was to be achieved across several ministerial areas. Second, neither an overarching implementation plan has been put into place, nor has a tendered evaluation of the Action Plan's results taken place. Thus, voicing the EAPN reports for Europe as a whole, the general tendency in Denmark the dissemination and information of NAP/incl. has been very quiet⁶⁴. Thus, so far the NAP/incl. at present has produced virtually no public awareness, no media interest and little national parliamentary interest or awareness about the NAP/incl.⁶⁵ It should also be mentioned that on behalf of the Ministry of Social Affairs not much appears to have been done to further consultation and debate about the Action Plan in the course of its implementation. One observer also suggest that NGOs concerned with social inclusion have shown little interest in European social policy and have thus shown litte interest in the NAP/incl. Likewise, the Danish Anti-poverty network has led a quiet existence and has not prevailed in the public debate.

Nevertheless, the author assesses that the majority of the measures described in the NAP/incl. have been implemented to varying extents. In the field of an active labour market policy it is evident that the measures had been implemented and the implementation has been successful in creating a number of new flexible and light jobs. One may also argue the new attitudes and partnership structures are institutionalised. However, current economic conditions may endanger the progress made as corporations look toward consolidating and cut costs rather than focus on their social responsibilities. New figures will tell to what extent these "alternative" jobs are in fact sustainable in times of stagnating economic growth.

Likewise, the overarching goal of creating 87,000 new jobs before 2010 the government has as of yet not been successful in attaining this objective as unemployment is in fact on the rise.

In the field of integrating immigrants and refugees a number of problems still persist. Despite an increase in the rate of employment, a larger share of 16-66 year old immigrants are outside the labour force and dependent on social assistance. To date, immigrants and their descendants also trail the population average in terms of educational attainment. Similarly, graduation rates are lower and drop out rates are higher.

⁶⁴ This seems to reiterate a general European pattern. See http://www.eapn.org/default_en.html, see page 9

⁶⁵ *ibid.*, p. 11

Recent reports also suggest that the percentage of homeless immigrants is on the rise. This is engulfed in a public debate, where opinion polls persistently state the integration of immigrants as one of the central political problems facing society.

While no unambiguous assessment presents itself, it is evident that a number of barriers challenge future policy making in terms of further social inclusion of immigrants and their descendants in the labour market, in educational institutions, and in leisure and voluntary organisations pervading Danish civil society.

The partial attainment of the NAP/incl policy objectives may have to do with the policy changes and reprioritising that occurred as consequence of the change in government in November 2001. In any case, the Action Plan summarises the objectives and their intended implementation in the different fields. Given the distribution of decision-making power and sectoral responsibility across several ministries, the lack of concerted focus on the target groups and coordination is hardly surprising.

Overall, according to a newly published report by the Danish National Institute of Social Research, the number of people being marginalized from the labour market has been steadily decreasing over the last ten years. The report also shows that enterprises as well as wage earners have a positive attitude towards integrating vulnerable groups at the labour market.⁶⁶

4. Summary

During the implementation of the NAP/incl., the November 2001 election saw a change in government as the Liberals and the Conservative Party came into office. The change of government saw significant institutional restructuring that also affected the social policy field as some areas were assigned to new Ministries. Also, a number of advisory bodies and councils were shut down, whilst some new councils have been established.

The policies and their implementation as described in NAP/incl. have largely been continued by the new government, although some areas such as activation and cash benefit have experienced significant changes.

⁶⁶ Niels Henning Bjørn (ed.): *Indenfor – udenfor. Resultater og perspektiver fra Socialforskningsinstituttets forskning i integration og marginalisering*. Danish National Institute of Social Research 2003.

In some instances, the new government has emphasised the importance of some elements more than others, such as the importance of freedom of choice regarding the provision of public services, legal protection of the citizens and the importance of voluntary social work. Such policy orientation has led to some redirection of focus and funding, but they have not radically altered the general progress in the implementation of the NAP/incl.

In the following we summarise the main points regarding implementation and our assessment of the policy interventions in the fields addressed by the NAP/incl:

The activation approach

The Danish activation approach has undergone several structural and methodical changes. The most important is to uniform the rules and procedures for recipients of cash benefit and unemployment benefit.

The government has maintained the previous government's emphasis on an active labour market policy. However, focus has been shifted from activation to job provision and job search. This approach has been further streamlined by a reduction in measures for activation. They now comprise:

- Active commencement (counselling and skills upgrading)
- Introduction to work place (internship)
- Work place learning/upgrading (public subsidy to wage, special conditions for employment).

The intention is that an Internet portal should also specifically target jobs for socially disadvantaged and vulnerable groups such as disabled persons.

So far the government's objectives of creating further employment has not succeeded. This may, however, have more to do with the stagnating global economy and the demand for labour rather than failure in the measures and actions taken by the government. However, the number of light and flexible jobs actually rose in the period 2000-2002 thus indicating that people at risk for social marginalisation and exclusion of the labour market were in fact kept in some form of employment.

Public pension schemes

The number of anticipatory (social) pensioners has been for the past five years. The anticipatory pension system has been reformed with effect from 2003. The reform significantly simplifies the anticipatory pension system. It includes a number of initiatives making it more attractive to employ persons with reduced capacity for work.

In relation to the anticipatory pension reform, a criterion for the awarding of anticipatory pension was introduced. The awarding now takes place after an assessment of the working capacity.

It is not yet possible to assess the impact of the anticipatory pension reform.

As regards the old age pension, a supplementing benefit to the disadvantaged old-age pensioners has been introduced by an act of December 2002. This benefit supplements the ordinary old age pension. The purpose of the benefit is to increase the living standards of pensioners within savings. As to the supplementing benefit to the disadvantaged old-age pensioners, the amount seems somewhat symbolic and is not expected to have an overall impact.

Working life and family life

Several means have been taken in order to improve the conditions for the elderly as well as the conditions for combining family and working life, thus also considering parents among the vulnerable groups.

Maternity/paternity leave has been prolonged. Parents now have the option of altogether 52 weeks of leave while receiving full unemployment benefit.

The pre-school day care guarantee has been met by most municipalities.

Education policy

In the field of vocational training, the government has proposed an act to increase the level of qualification and flexibility. The act is expected to apply as of August 2003.

For adult with social or mental problems that are seeking to be integrated into the labour market REVA centres exist (Rehabilitation centres). The centres are under county jurisdiction and offer a range of services including skills upgrading, work capacity assessment and social labour jobs.

In the field of integration, the Danish language stimulation of bilingual children has been an requirement for Danish municipalities since 1998. In 2002, the age limit for introducing language stimulation was lowered from 4 to 3 years. This change entered into force in January 2003. Research on the language stimulation effort on bilingual children documents positive effects on the linguistic and social development of the children. The lowering of the age limit had not been effectuated at the time of the evaluation.

Urban and housing policy

The urban renewal project, based on an act of 1997, is still in force. The work has now been completed in several neighbourhoods. Also, the Danish Urban Regeneration Programme, aimed at turning around a negative development in certain neighbourhoods has been pursued further. The existing plan for the homeless has been carried on.

With regard to handicapped accessibility, an act of 2002 aims at substantial improvement of the housing conditions and accessibility for disabled persons by increasing the support given by the National Construction Fund (*Landsbyggefonden*). Furthermore, there has been an increase in the subsidy for the establishment of new residence for young people with disabilities.

In general, no significant changes have been made in the urban and housing policy within the recent years. Still, the closing down of the Ministry of Housing could be assumed to have a long-term negative impact

The government's stated intentions regarding the sale of housing facilities are widely criticised.

Health policy

The new public health programme, *Sund hele livet* (Stay healthy your whole life), emphasises the prevention of major public health problems such as diabetes, smoking and cancer. Also, it is noted that special attention should be given to improving health among the most vulnerable groups. As to the organisation of objectives, the programme encourages the development of partnerships between voluntary organisations, municipalities, counties, workplaces, etc.

In 2001, 80 million DKK (10.7 million EURO) spread over 4 years was earmarked to a strengthening of the health sector. The availability of 24-hour treatment of misusers

has is a high priority. Furthermore, 30 million DKK (4 million EURO) a year has been set aside to reduce the waiting time for treatment of mentally ill children and young people.⁶⁷

The most vulnerable groups

In general the implementation of the different measures have been consistent with the description in the NAP/incl. 2001/2003.

With regard to the different target groups the following developments have been taking place:

Homeless people

Since the mid-1990s a number of measures have been taken to improve the facilities for homeless people in terms of shelters, emergency care, alternative elderly care, special services provided to homeless individuals with multiple social problems, and development of methods to work with homeless people.

Drug and alcohol misusers

A handbook for Municipal Action Plans and policies towards alcohol has been produced. Responsible unit is the National Board of Health, Centre for Health Promotion and Prevention.

Measures have been taken in providing funding for pilot projects to improve the capability to treat misusers in the health sector (e.g. emergency wards).

Mentally ill people

The government has implemented a renewal of existing and construction of new wards for mentally ill in accordance with the Psychiatric Agreements I and II.

Furthermore, a number of counties and municipalities have in the period commenced the implementation of increased collaboration between the social sector and the health sector.

Suicidal Persons

⁶⁷ *Vejledning for ansøgning om midler i 2003 til behandling af alkoholmisbrugere* (Guidance on the application for funds in 2003 for the treatment of alcohol misusers), Ministry of the Interior and Health October 2002, <http://www.im.dk/Index/dokumenter.asp?o=85&n=1&d=1682&s=4>

Funds have been allocated to support pilot projects aimed at preventing suicide in the target groups, youth, misusers, and elderly in the period 2001-2003.

Prostitutes

According to the government action plans, existing measures will continually be supported.

Disabled people

One of the key changes with regard to disabled people is the "Basic Rate Reform". The reform altered the payment structure between local and country authorities regarding the support of threatened children and their families, and handicapped persons. The purpose of the act was to place responsibility and payment at the same authority. The reform was mandatory as of January 2002 stipulating that a basic rate follows the individual regardless where the individual is placed.

The results of research in the field show that there is a significant need for professional development for social work and care providers in this area.

Ethnic minorities

Since 1999, municipal governments have assumed control over the public integration responsibilities and offer special introduction programmes lasting three years. The programmes are based on individual action plans and must include instruction in the Danish language and knowledge about the Danish society's modus operandi.

The Act has been changed in some respects since the establishment of the Liberal-Conservative government in power. The changes address the continued influx of foreigners through marriage to residents. The changes stipulate that the couple must document higher level of association or attachment to Denmark than the country of the spouse. Further the Act stipulates that appropriate housing, employment, and financial acumen must be in place.

Discussions concerning discrimination persist. Ethnic minority NGOs point to discriminatory practices concerning marriage and family unification. They also point to the difficulties of finding employment in Denmark despite adequate qualification. They among others suggest that hiring be subject to discriminatory practices by the employers.

Children and young people with special needs

A recent study on social prevention measures regarding children and youth. The study showed that the social work concerning placements and other interventions lacked basic legal and methodological criteria.

The fight against negative social inheritance is supported by the KID project and the KABU programme has been begun.

In sum, the Danish government's efforts to combat social exclusion have taken many guises. However, since the 1998 major reforms in the social service act the changes have, generally, not been legislative in their character. The resources devoted to this have to a larger extent been devoted to cementing these policy changes in fieldworkers' practice and by supporting such development through government sponsored, or co-financed programmes.

In terms of government expenditures, a recent survey analyses municipal and county authorities' expenditures and conclude that public spending for socially marginalized groups rose by 8% from 2002-2003.

Information technology

It is an aim of the government to further improve the conditions for the disabled people when it comes to the Internet and the digital labour market. Therefore, in December 2002 the government launched an action plan, *Handicap ingen hindring (Disability is no hindrance)* Implementation. The action plan will support the development of special equipment for communication services.

Preserving family unity

The new government has continued the policy of strengthening the preventive and treatment measures available for vulnerable children and families. Also, several measures have been taken in order to preserve family unity as regards handicapped, seriously ill, and elderly people.

In spite of the augmentation in the number of preventive measures taken towards children and young people, the number of external placements remains the same.

Voluntary social work

In 2001 a "CHARTER FOR INTERACTION BETWEEN VOLUNTEER DENMARK/ASSOCIATIONS - DENMARK AND THE PUBLIC SECTOR" was published. This charter signifies the government's emphasis on voluntary social work.

Despite government intentions, budgeted public support to voluntary social work actually declined by 10% between 2002 and 2003. The funding is primarily channelled through municipal social authorities that provide funding for events/ projects/ associations.

The field of voluntary social work is currently assessed to be in a state of transition.

The above shows that a significant proportion of public spending is directed at fighting poverty and social exclusion in Denmark. 23% of public spending was channelled to the Ministry of Social Affairs. While this indicates a serious commitment to addressing the needs of the most vulnerable, it is the author's assessment that most objectives stated in the NAP/incl. are being addressed, but the NAP/incl. as a strategy paper cannot be said to be the backbone in a coherent strategy that addresses all fields and measures addressed in the Action Plan.