GUIDANCE AND OUTREACH FOR INACTIVE AND UNEMPLOYED

DENMARK
Guidance and outreach for inactive and unemployed – Denmark. Cedefop ReferNet thematic perspectives series.


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Guidance and outreach for inactive and unemployed

Many countries across the European Union (EU) have high levels of unemployment and of inactive adults. These phenomena are frequently associated with low levels of qualification and insufficient basic skills. They may also reflect lack of adjustment between skills demanded in the labour market and skills developed in formal education and training. In both cases up-skilling and re-skilling solutions could be explored to increase the employability of adults.

The national reports developed by ReferNet partners reflect efforts done by Member States to reach vulnerable groups affected by unemployment and inactivity and help them reengage in learning and employment. The reports refer, in particular, to measures which may include young adults not in employment, education or training (NEET) and adults undergoing long term unemployment (LTU), given their persistence in many countries and the high challenges these groups face.

The policy strategies and initiatives in focus shed light over ways to support the most vulnerable to find learning and qualifying solutions. Career guidance and counselling support to people with decaying skills, low levels of motivation and insufficient basic skills are addressed. Its instrumental role in providing information, identifying skills needs, clarifying career options and developing positive attitudes towards learning is made clear.

Whenever possible, outreach measures were described, addressing the ones who fall out of the scope of standard policies to support registered unemployed or recent education drop-outs. Many reports entertain an important discussion on the entitlement to social protection and its effectiveness in addressing the challenges of all demographic groups.

Lastly, Cedefop trusts that these reports will provide an important characterisation of current opportunities and challenges across the EU in establishing appropriate upskilling pathways for adults. Current European policy initiatives urge MS to integrate skills assessment measures with flexible learning and validation solution, where guidance services and outreach will necessarily play a key role.
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Way2go and Grantoftegaard: outreach in Denmark

This article sheds light on indicators and issues related to unemployment among two target groups: young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEET); and long-term unemployed adults (LTU). The article will describe the Danish social model and features of the Danish labour market that influence unemployment, as well as national policies, strategies and different stakeholders relating to unemployment. Finally, two initiatives to help the unemployed will be presented.
CHAPTER 1.
The Danish flexicurity model

The Danish labour market is based on a so-called flexicurity model, which is sometimes referred to as the golden triangle. As such, the labour market model is structured with a high degree of flexibility and social and financial security for workers, supported by an active employment policy. The flexibility characterising the model creates a high degree of job mobility, which means that employees are able to change jobs quickly and that there are relatively few restrictions on the hiring and firing of employees. The high degree of social and financial security means that workers receive financial support from the government if they are unemployed, which also leads to more workers changing jobs and trying out new challenges, since the financial security net minimises the risks.

Traditionally many economists criticise high levels of social and financial security, as they claim that it increases the numbers of additional long-term unemployed (Bjørsted og Smidt, 2017). However, the efficiency of the flexicurity model is ensured through the last aspect of ‘the golden triangle’, Denmark’s active employment policy, which guarantees that all unemployed workers receive offers of activities that can lead them back into employment, including guidance, offers of education, increasing skills levels, etc. (Beskæftigelsesministeriet, Flexicurity i Danmark [The Employment Ministry, Flexicurity in Denmark]).
CHAPTER 2.
Denmark’s active employment policy

The latest legislation on Denmark’s active employment policy was introduced on 1 July 2015. Its aim is to contribute to an effective labour market in four ways: 1) supporting workers in finding jobs; 2) providing a service to private and public employers who are looking for employees or who want to retain employees; 3) supporting the recipients of cash benefits, integration funds and unemployment benefits in finding work as quickly and effectively as possible, so that they can support themselves and their families financially; and 4) supporting people who, because of their reduced ability to work, have special needs in respect of their integration into the labour market (Beskæftigelsesministeriet, Lov om aktiv beskæftigelse [Employment Ministry, Act on active employment]).

It is the government, and more specifically the Danish Ministry of Employment, which takes strategic and legal decisions about employment policies in Denmark (Jobnet – Roller [Roles], 2015). The responsibility for the four tasks mentioned above and for implementing the employment policy has been given to Denmark’s municipalities, who have local job centres to undertake the specific tasks, or in special cases use external stakeholders, though the municipality remains responsible for implementing the law (Beskæftigelsesministeriet, Lov om aktiv beskæftigelse [Employment Ministry, Act on Active Employment]). There are 91 job centres distributed geographically all over Denmark (Jobnet – in English, 2015).

Broadly speaking, the unemployed can obtain two different types of financial unemployment support, depending on their actual situation. This includes unemployment benefits for those who belong to an unemployment fund) and cash benefits, the latter being a basic allowance for those without unemployment insurance (Municipality of Copenhagen – What are my Rights, n.d.). Unemployment insurance is a voluntary scheme administered by private associations (Ministry of Employment – Unemployment Insurance in Denmark, n.d.). In order to receive financial support, the unemployed are required to register as such on the first day of unemployment, show they are applying for several jobs a week and check job postings advertised in the job centre every seventh day to prove that they are seeking work and are available for the labour market. Moreover, there are several requirements concerning attendance at meetings with the job centre and the unemployment association for those who
are members (*Beskæftigelsesministeriet, Lov om aktiv beskæftigelse* [Employment Ministry, Act on Active Employment]).
According to Sørensen (2016), the number of Danes under 25 years old who are not enrolled in education or training and do not have a job is increasing. In 2005, 8.3% of the target group was in the NEET category, a figure that rose to 12.4% in 2015 (Sørensen, 2016). According to CEDEFOP’s (2012) report ‘Vocational education and training in Denmark: a short description’, unemployment increased from its lowest point in 34 years at 2.8% in 2008 to 7.3% in 2011 as a consequence of the global economic crisis. According to the report, young people aged 15-29 have been particularly vulnerable to unemployment, and among 15-24 year olds with low educational attainment, the unemployment rate was as high as 51.8% in 2010 (CEDEFOP, 2012).

However, the CEDEFOP report ‘Statistical Overviews on VET: Denmark’ from (2016) states that the NEET index rate for 18-24 year-olds was 53 compared to the average index of 100 in the EU, that is, almost half the NEET rate in the EU (8.4% compared with 15.8%). Furthermore, the unemployment index rate for 20-34-year-olds was 66 compared to the EU average index of 100, which corresponds to an 8.6% unemployment rate compared to the EU average of 12.9% (CEDEFOP, 2016).
In the report *Andelen af ledige i Danmark er den laveste i EU* [the number of unemployed in Denmark is the lowest in EU], the long-term unemployed are defined as those who have been unemployed continuously for more than a year. Bjørsted and Smidt (2017) state that the long-term unemployed in Denmark account for 19.4 % of total unemployed, the lowest rate in the EU. According to Bjørsted and Smidt (2017), the relatively low percentage of LTUs in Denmark compared to other EU countries can be explained by the Danish flexicurity model, which contributes to the rapid re-employment rate due to flexibility, security and the active employment policy. The diagram below shows the trend in long-term unemployment in Denmark from 2009-2016.

**Figure 1**
CHAPTER 5.
Existing national employment strategies

The report ‘Labour market information in lifelong guidance’ (2016) states that there within the last three decades a shift has occurred towards a more active labour market policy. The aim of the more recent reforms has been to upgrade the skills of the unemployed in order to equip them to take advantage of future job opportunities while still receiving unemployment benefit. Consequently, various activation programmes have been introduced, including general and vocational guidance, assistance with job searches, individual job-oriented action plans, private and public job training, education, leave schemes, job rotation and job-sharing (Labour market information in lifelong guidance, 2016).

Moreover, as part of the active employment strategy, the job centres have four activation offers to support the unemployed in finding work, namely mentoring support, guidance and upskilling, internships or voluntary work, and employment with subsidized wages (Beskæftigelsesministeriet, Lov om aktiv beskæftigelse [Employment Ministry, Act on active employment]).

According to Bjørsted and Smidt (2017), the security part of the flexicurity model has been decreased, as is evident from the reduced period in which the unemployed can receive unemployment benefits and the decreased amount of money they receive each month. According to Bjørsted and Smidt (2017), increasing security for the unemployed can lead to decreased flexibility on the labour market because fewer people have the courage to change jobs, and consequently the unions will demand longer termination periods, which can result in employers not hiring as many people as they might otherwise have done. As a result, Bjørsted and Smidt (2017) argue that decreased security will lead to more LTUs because labour market flexibility will be decreased.

The NEETs have a broad range of policies and goals available to them to influence the activation of the group. In February 2005 the Danish government set out two goals, namely that 85% of a youth cohort should complete an upper-secondary youth programme by 2010, and 95% should complete post-compulsory youth education in 2015 (Shapiro, Gam and Panton, 2005). On 1 January 2014 a new cash benefit reform was implemented, which among other things provided that all those under the age of thirty who have not completed an education leading to vocational competence, who do not have children living at home and who have the capacity to complete an education are required to identify one or more relevant courses that they will apply to within a certain period
of time. This requirement can be understood as one of the Danish government’s initiatives to reduce the number of NEETs (*Beskæftigelsesministeriet, Lov om aktiv beskæftigelse* [Employment Ministry, Law of active employment]).

Moreover, in January 2016 the Ministry of Education established an expert group assigned the task of formulating recommendations for how the preparatory education system in Denmark could be structured to fit the needs of the target group better and meet the goal of encouraging more young people to start and complete an education. The expert group’s analysis concluded that the existing preparatory education system is too complex and incoherent, resulting in many young people not being able to understand the requirements and their own opportunities to participate in activities that can lead to employment. The main conclusion of the report was that, in order to improve the educational system, more integrated, coherent and holistic efforts targeted at these young people must be implemented, meaning that institutions and organisations working with the target group on both the political and practical levels should collaborate and coordinate their activities more efficiently (*Bedre veje til en ungdomsuddannelse* [Better ways to a post compulsory education], 2017).

Moreover, the expert group recommends an enhanced focus on early career and education guidance, as well as more flexible structures to the preparatory system. Furthermore, the expert group recommends that admission to the various preparatory programmes should be based on the individual’s educational plan, rather than the existing practices of target group assessment or visitation. The expert group states that the responsibility for the preparatory programmes should be given to the municipalities and be governed by a unified management and financial model based on stable funding and reduced levels of bureaucracy. Finally, the expert group suggests that the goal of 95% of a youth cohort completing an upper secondary education by 2005 should be raised to 100%, while 90 percent of a youth cohort should still complete a post-compulsory education, the remaining 10 percent obtaining vocational competence through vocational experience (internships, vocational mentors etc.). However, this can only be realised if the focus on precisely the initiatives encouraging young people to obtain vocational experience is enhanced (*Bedre veje til en ungdomsuddannelse* [Better ways to a post compulsory education], 2017).

In May 2017 the Danish Government launched a reform of the preparatory system through its initiative ‘Believe in yourself – we do’ (*Tro på dig selv – det gør vi*). The proposal will be subjected to political negotiations in the autumn of 2017.
CHAPTER 6.
Danish guidance system

Outreach to school dropouts and the unemployed is systematized and institutionalized in the Danish guidance system. That is, at all educational levels guidance options are organized that are mostly focused on transfers between educational levels, preventing dropping out and unemployment and encouraging lifelong learning (1).

Already in lower secondary school, pupils meet guidance counsellors from the local youth guidance centre, who are responsible for guidance regarding the transition from lower secondary school to upper secondary school, including VET programmes. At the same time, pupils and their parents are given opportunities to visit the upper secondary schools, and the pupils can spend a trial period at the different type of schools. Pupils and their parents can also use the national educational website www.ug.dk (2) where all educational programmes are described and where they can learn more about what kind of jobs and further education the different programmes give access to. If pupils do not choose any form of upper secondary education or drop out altogether, until the age of 25 they are contacted by a guidance counsellor from the youth guidance centre, where they are motivated and guided in choosing and starting an upper secondary education programme or if necessary different kinds of preparatory programmes.

At the different upper secondary educational schools, if required students can obtain help from a mentor, a psychologist or others to complete the programme. At upper secondary schools they are obliged to guide students in the transition into further education, often into a four-year professional bachelor’s degree at a university college or a three-year bachelor’s degree at university. In this transition, students also have the opportunity to visit the different schools and to spend a short trial period at different colleges or universities. This is organized through cooperation between the guidance counsellors at the upper secondary schools and the guidance centres at the higher education institutions. Students can also use the national educational website www.ug.dk to navigate their choice of further education. At this level students can also use one of the seven regional

(1) For more about the educational guidance system in Denmark, see http://ufm.dk/en/publications/2012/files-2012/guidance_in_education_2012.pdf
(2) For English version, see https://www.ug.dk/programmes
guidance centres, where they can meet counsellors to help them in choosing and preparing for higher education.

Those who are looking for a job or who already have a job and are looking for further education opportunities at the diploma or master’s level can also obtain help from the guidance centres at the colleges and the universities. Here the choice of further education at the diploma and master’s level is made in collaboration with the job centre or the employer, who often pays part or all of the tuition fee.

Focusing on those who are unskilled or who have completed a vocational education at the upper secondary level, Centres for Adult Education and Continuing Training (VEU centre) offer guidance on a wide range of programmes for adults, like preparatory courses (FVU), highly specialized continuing vocational training courses (AMU-kurser), VET programmes for adults (EUV) and further VET programmes (erhvervsakademiuddannelser). Centres for Adult Education and Continuing Training both offer individual guidance for those who are either employed or unemployed. These centres also offer guidance to companies who need to train specialized employees in special training courses or who need to draw up an overall education and training strategy for all the company’s employees. Adults also have the opportunity to use www.ug.dk in their choice of education, and they can also use https://www.veu-centre.dk/, which is more specialized in focusing on adult and further education and is where they can find information about their educational options and where they can study.

Next to these different guidance options, those who are looking for educational guidance at all levels can contact the e-guidance (eVejledning) by phone, SMS, mail, chat or Facebook in the day-time or at evenings and weekends. Here experienced guidance counsellors answer questions and offer ideas and guidance in choice of education and in how to navigate the educational system.

The strategy in the Danish guidance system is first of all to be aware of personal interests and qualifications and to ensure that choice of education will

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(1) https://www.veu-centre.dk/
(2) In this programme, students learn how to read, write, calculate and learn basic ICT skills to pass the examination at secondary level and manage everyday life.
(3) https://www.veu-centre.dk/shared/fvu-forberedende-voksenundervisning.html
(4) https://www.veu-centre.dk/shared/amu.html
(5) https://www.veu-centre.dk/shared/erhvervsuddannelser-for-voksne-euv.html
(6) https://www.ug.dk/evejledning
lead to a possible career to the benefit of both the individual and society. Next the strategy is aimed to help people complete their choice of education at the highest possible level, with a special focus on preventing changes in education or dropping out. Thirdly the strategy is to educate people to be self-reliant in their choice of education and career planning. The fourth part of the strategy is to offer a special focus for youngsters who have difficulties in choosing education or who need different skills to be able to start and complete an education. The last part of the strategy is to ensure coherence, progression and independent guidance on the part of the professionals at all levels. Overall, therefore, the aim of the Danish guidance system is to make people self-supporting and to reduce the amount of NEETs and unemployment.

The following two cases will illustrate how the framework of the Danish employment and educational strategy is carried out by means of practical initiatives that reach out to the two different risk groups.
CHAPTER 7.
Outreach case *Way2go*: preparation for VET programmes

One of the opportunities that NEETs can receive in the employment system is to be encouraged to participate in a guidance programme called *Way2go*, a collaboration between four VET schools in the Copenhagen area. Job centres in and around Copenhagen consult youngsters (9) for a thirteen-week programme, where they are guided in their choice of education and are prepared for participation in a VET programme. The participants typically come from two groups: those who can participate in an educational programme but do not want to do so, and those who want to do so but cannot.

Those who can but won’t participate might be more interested in unskilled work, undeclared work or illegal activities and see no reason to be educated. In *Way2go*, this group is motivated to see the opportunities in an education and to be guided in their choice of education. The other group, those who would like to be in education but cannot, often need educational skills and/or have personal and sometimes also social problems. In order to develop their educational skills, they are tested and offered individual training, where they learn to read, write, calculate and how to use ICT so they can pass the examination level at compulsory school and thus obtain access (10) to a VET programme. To develop as a person, each participant has a mentor helping them develop confidence, structure their everyday lives and be a part of an educational environment. Some participants are supported in managing their finances, their housing situation and transportation. To develop their social skills they participate in group-based work activities, and are trained in how to apply for an apprenticeship (11) and how to participate in an interview.

In *Way2go* there is a particular awareness of the transition between different parts of the educational pathways in a VET programme. The mentors first help

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(9) But any young person can voluntarily contact the institution.
(10) In Denmark, students have to pass a graduation examination in Danish and Maths to access a VET programme.
(11) Danish VET programmes are dual forms of education, and students have to find an apprenticeship. Most students find their apprenticeship on their own, but some also receive help from apprenticeship centres, where they are guided by apprenticeships supervisors.
the participants to start at Way2go by motivating them to be a part of the programme and to build social relations with other participants. At the end of the programme, each participant is offered a new mentor, with a different background, for support at the beginning of the VET basic programme. At the end of the basic programme, the participant is supported in finding an apprenticeship, which often works as a driver to complete the basic programme. Each participant will receive help from the mentor to get started at the main programme and at their apprenticeship. In all the transition periods, mentors support the participant in building social relations and are continuously committed to participating in the VET programme.

After thirteen weeks in the Way2go programme, 25% of the participants begin a VET programme. Another outcome is that many of the participants learn to read, write and calculate well enough to pass an examination for the first time. Some participants also manage to control their finances and housing situation so they will be able to study or work. Furthermore, some learn how to draw up a CV and how to apply for a job. In some cases, participants continue in a job as unskilled workers but plan to start in a VET programme at a later stage. For some participants, success can simply be experiencing that they can be a part of an educational programme and are able to build social relations which are new to some of them. Even though they may not start in a VET programme, they are directed to other training activities, which may bring them one step closer to starting an education or finding a job.
CHAPTER 8.
Outreach case Grantoftegaard: learning how to work by working

Grantoftegaard (12) is a socio-economic company in Ballerup in the capital region, an ecological farm with 840 hectares of local green areas in the city and normal fields for agriculture. The farm has cows, sheep and other animals and grows different kinds of vegetables, as well as having a small shop, a café and a canteen for the employees. There are thirty employees and room for 45 participants, whether school dropouts, the long-term unemployed, VET apprentices or students from colleges who want to learn about ecological farming and socio-economic entrepreneurship. The institution is also open to visiting kindergartens and school classes who drop in during the week and help out at the farm. At weekends, they also invite families to come and meet the animals.

Through their activities, the farm contributes to protection of the local groundwater, the grazing of recreational areas, education and the reemployment of both youngsters and adult citizens, teaching children and students about farming and selling their products to visitors, wholesalers and restaurants in the capital region.

The long-term unemployed who may be allocated to somewhere like Grantoftegaard by the municipality will often be unskilled and have a loose or no connection to the labour market. Often they have personal or social difficulties and sometimes also diagnoses that are not being treated. Some are using drugs or alcohol to cover up their difficulties or have disabilities preventing them from being employed. Furthermore, some of these adults are parents in dysfunctional families, who therefore find it difficult to live a structured everyday life.

When an adult is offered a period on Grantoftegaard for a thirteen-week clarification and guidance programme, she or he first meets with a guidance counsellor from Grantoftegaard and a guide from the jobcentre, who set out goals for the programme with a specific plan. At this meeting the guidance counsellor from Grantoftegaard will assess the needs and interests of the participant, and together they will find out which work area the person will be working in.

After this, the participant starts working with a small group of employees and other participants in a special work area such as care of animals, in the fields or

(12) Grantoftegaard has a website at http://grantoftegaard.dk/
in the kitchen. From this point on, therefore, the participant works on authentic tasks. The managers in each work group will be aware of the prior conditions of each participant when distributing work tasks. The participants will continuously work on small tasks that are meaningful because of their authentic and foreseeable character. The employees encourage the participants to be aware of their own successes giving the latter the important experience of being part of a work team, which often makes them develop more self-esteem. The participants work together with different professionals like farmers, managers or shopkeepers, and they also meet often with kindergarten teachers and people visiting the farm. In these ways, they will acquire an opportunity to experience different professions in action, which often helps them become aware of what kind of job or education they would prefer to follow in the future.

During their thirteen-week programme, most participants will attend the job-seeking workshop at Grantoftegaard, where the advisors support them in deciding how to go about finding a job and how to write job applications, including drawing up a CV. Participants also learn how to perform in a job interview.

Grantoftegaard has its own school in a specially designed school environment, where the participants typically work in small groups or individually, possibly shielded from others. They can be tested in their prior learning and are offered individual training (FVU), where they learn to read, write and calculate, and also learn how to use ICT to a level corresponding to the final examination of the compulsory school. For some of the participants this is a part of their programme at Grantoftegaard. Others are sometimes encouraged to try out the school while they are with ‘colleagues’ who attend school. Many learn how to read, write and calculate for the first time in their life.

Furthermore the guidance counsellors at Grantoftegaard sometimes set up meetings with some of the other services involved in the participant’s family. The guidance counsellors often take the initiative in establishing an overall strategy together with the other services, so that everybody is working in the same direction, including the participants and their own families.

After thirteen weeks, some of the participants are offered an extension of their stay at Grantoftegaard. If the guidance counsellor from the job centre identifies an improvement and is worried that the investment in the participant will be lost if an extension is not granted or if, after the programme, the participant is going to take up a short-term apprenticeship in a company, and that the chances of complementing this are improved, then an extension can be the solution.

At Grantoftegaard, all the employees are skilled professionals trained to work with people with personal and social difficulties. When the participants start at Grantoftegaard, they become a part of a working environment with ‘loose’
social conventions, but one where people meet during work and are committed to their jobs. At first they become a part of a small team and learn how to belong to a workplace by taking part in the work. It is here that they often make their first social connections. Later many of them build social relationships with others at Grantoftegaard, and they are prepared to be part of a working environment and the social life at a normal workplace. The employees at Grantoftegaard are aware of their relations with the participants and know their limitations concerning what kind of personal and social difficulties they can handle. The employees often know when one of the participants is ready to seek help, and then they are mostly able to guide the participant to the right kind of help. An important issue at Grantoftegaard is that the employees and the participants share the same social areas, though there also an awareness of how everyone is included in this (13).

The goal of most of the programmes at Grantoftegaard is that the participants are able to start a short-term apprenticeship in an ordinary company. This is the case for approximately 20% of the participants. To clarify other learning results, Grantoftegaard uses a scorecard developed together with other socio-economic companies working in this field. During the programme and at its end, the guidance counsellor at Grantoftegaard, the team leader and the participant will fill out the scorecard together in order to assess how the participant has developed during the programme concerning their personal and social competence, their skills, financial situation, health and housing situation. This assessment is used to show the progress of the participant to the municipality, which receives documentation regarding the results of their investment in the participant (municipalities finance the programme). On the other hand, from this assessment the participants can see that they are developing and that their efforts in working at Grantoftegaard are helping them become active members of society.

Some participants learn and develop a lot while staying at Grantoftegaard and thus move closer to a job or starting an education. To others they reach to the point where they realize that they need to seek treatment. Some reach a point where they are ready to take ownership of their own situation and to follow a strategy to find a better life.

Grantoftegaard has acquired positive experiences from opening up the farm to public visitors, even though it has different kind of participants in guidance programmes at the farm. This contributes to the development of an obligatory

(13) This is different from most institutions in Denmark, where teachers and students most often do not share the same social areas during lunchtime, thus creating a social distance between teachers and students.
working community where everybody, including the participants in social programmes, have a responsibility for taking care of the animals, the fields etc. and also for giving visitors a good experience at the farm. This is part of what makes Grantoftegaard a place of work and not an ‘institution’.

Furthermore Grantoftegaard has good experience of using social networking, on the one hand having formal agreements and contracts with the surrounding municipalities to rent fields and take in participants in guidance programmes. On the other hand, the guidance counsellors at Grantoftegaard use their networks in the municipalities to gain the latter’s relevant help and support for the participants, for example, help with their housing situation, rehabilitation or health issues.

The employees at Grantoftegaard also use their social networks to acquire new customers and greater public attention. This means that they work together with a local gristmill grinding spelt and grain into flour that is used in Meyer’s bakeries in Copenhagen and New York. For this reason, Meyer’s bakeries has introduced ‘Grantoftegaard’ as the name of a special bread. This is part of the history at Grantoftegaard and is a way to make it meaningful to the employees and participants who work on the farm.

Exit

The two examples above illustrate the core issue in outreach thinking and practice in Denmark. Both cases are characterised by locally interpreted implementations of the public employment policy, where certain pedagogical values and strategies are the focus.

Both examples also show how community-oriented approaches form the context in which groups at risk in the community receive outreach. It is essential to understand that practical outreach depends on a wide degree of cooperation with the public authorities. Participants are found and introduced to the outreach activities through close cooperation with job centres or guidance centres, which have knowledge of and insight into each person’s background and interests.

The concrete pedagogical initiatives are mainly constructed as holistically oriented interventions that aim to deliver support and solutions for persons at risk on a broad scale, including personal, social and vocational skills, whose delivery explicitly aims to give participants a coherent and authentic working life experience that is designed to lift and develop their motivations and qualifications for further education or a career.

The two cases also have different arrangements concerning professional involvement. Way2go is a project mostly based on vocational teachers, while Grantoftegaard has a professional organisation uniting teachers, social advisors and social workers.
The results of the two initiatives could be interpreted as limited if one simply looks at the bare figures. However, when looking at the participants and their life stories, the results are more complex to interpret. Both projects deal with participants with high levels of personal difficulties and for whom previous learning or work experiences are often negative. Seen in this light, the results are in fact encouraging.
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