2019

The new Danish Government’s paper of political understanding

August 2019

After the general election on 5 June 2019, the Danish Social Democrats (Socialdemokratiet) has formed a minority government.

The government has written a paper of understanding with the title “Fair direction for Denmark” together with its three supporting parties the Socialist People’s Party (Socialistisk Folkeparti), the Red-Green Alliance (Enhedslisten) and the Social Liberal Party (Radikale Venstre).

The paper of understanding between the four parties can be described as a prerequisite for the government formation and presents a number of initiatives.

In the paper, the four parties signify a new political direction for Denmark. The ambition is to implement the initiatives, described in the paper, during the government’s term in office and preferably in a broad cooperation with the other political parties in the Danish Parliament (Folketinget). The new government will respect previous political agreements.

The paper of understanding focus on several areas including “Education”. The overall intention regarding education is the government’s policy to pursue a child-, youth-, school-and education policy, which makes Denmark the world’s best country for a child.

The following paragraph summarizes some of the main intentions presented in the paper of understanding:

- The government will present an ambitious plan for children. The aim is to improve the condition for the children and staff in day-care institutions through a long-term investment plan until 2025, which interlinks staffing, quality and management.
- The government intends to strengthen the primary and lower secondary level education (Folkeskolen) in several ways.
- The government intends to look into the financial aspects regarding education, e.g. the present yearly budget-cutbacks on education.
- The government will present a plan for better geographical coverage of welfare education, access to youth education and ensure the closure-threatened adult education centres. The aim being to ensure education in the whole of Denmark.

The paper of political understanding (in Danish):  
A new political agreement enables a shorter school day for the youngest pupils in municipal primary and secondary school

March 2019

The government, the Danish People’s Party, the Social Democrats, The Socialist People’s party and the Social Liberal Party have come to an agreement about the length of the school day in the municipal primary and lower secondary school (Folkeskolen).

The pupils who attend grade 0-3 previously had to receive a minimum of 1000 hours of compulsory curriculum. With the new agreement, the school week is shorten by two hours and fifteen minutes for the pupils who attend grade 0-3. In addition to this, the municipality has the authority to shorten the school day further for the pupils who attend grade 0-3. Finally, the agreement means that supportive education gets a quality boost.

The initiative releases teaching resources that must be used on extra teachers in the classroom. Under special circumstances, the opportunity to shorten the school day are made available for other forms.

The schools has to submit an application when they want to shorten the school day for a class. The municipal council approve the school’s application for one year at a time. The municipality can choose to delegate the approval of the application to the municipal administration, the school boards or school heads.

Furthermore, the school boards supervise the schools activities and make sure that the released resources are used on extra teachers in the classroom.

For more information (In Danish), please consult following links:

Afkortning af skoledagens længde [3]

Ny aftale om folkeskolen giver de mindste elever en kortere skoledag [4]

2018

New strategy for natural science subjects

April 2018

The Danish government has launched a new strategy to strengthen the natural science subjects in primary school and lower and upper secondary education. The idea about a national science strategy was first presented in the 2016 agreement about improving upper secondary education. The agreement stated:

"In cooperation with stakeholders, a science strategy, which ensures better coherence between natural science education in primary school, lower and upper secondary education and higher education, is to be made. Furthermore, the cooperation with business must be strengthened."

Afterwards a strategy group and an advisory group were set up. The strategy is based on the recommendations of these two groups.

In March 2018 The Minister of Education and the Minister of Higher Education and Science presented
The strategy.

The overall aim of the strategy is to increase the students’ interest and skills in natural sciences, and get more students in upper secondary education to specialise in the STEM-disciplines. DKK 180 million is earmarked for the new strategy. The strategy includes:

- Stronger natural science skills at all class levels. National campaigns about natural science shall increase the students’ interest in natural science
- Improved academic standards for natural science teachers. E.g., money will be earmarked for a new university master degree specifically for teachers in natural science subjects
- Development of new procedures to challenge and maintain natural science interest among particularly talented students.

The new strategy for natural sciences is consistent with the government’s “strategy for Denmark’s digital growth” and the ambition of increasing the number of students with an education and skills in technology, IT, natural science and mathematics.

For more information (in Danish), please consult the following link: DKK 180 million to new natural science strategy

2017

In 2018 the possibilities for students with an International Baccalaureate (IB) for admission to Danish a higher education programme will improve

September 2017

Most Danish higher education programmes have specific entry requirements such as specific upper secondary courses passed at a certain level or special grade requirements.

An analysis from the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education and Science shows that some of applicants with an International Baccalaureate (IB) have difficulties getting admission to Danish higher education programmes.

Due to this, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education and Science have decided to enhance IB Students’ possibilities to enter a higher education programmes in Denmark by introducing the following changes:

- The grade point average for students with an International Baccalaureate (IB) will be converted differently starting from 18 total points. This means that in 2018 an IB- diploma of 35 total points is converted to a Danish grade point average of 9.0 instead of the present 8.5.

- IB-Students with an IB Course Result of 18 total points or more can apply for Professional Bachelors Programmes and an Academy Profession (AP) programmes on equal footing with a person holding a two year long Danish Higher Preparatory Examination Course (HF) certificate.

- IB-Students with an IB Course Result of 18 total points or more, who wishes to apply for a Bachelor programme at a University, must supplement with single courses at Danish Higher Preparatory Examination Course (HF).
IB-Students, who hold an IB-Diploma of 24 total points or more, can still apply for all Danish higher education programmes.

These changes will be become effective for IB-Students applying for admission to a Danish higher education programme in 2018.

For more information (in Danish), please consult the following link: The access to higher education for students with an IB degree will improve [7]

**Political agreement introduces a practice-oriented dimension to the assessment of pupils’ readiness for upper secondary education**

The government and the Danish People’s Party have agreed to introduce a practice-oriented dimension to the assessment of pupils’ readiness for upper secondary education.

All schools are to assess their pupils’ readiness for upper secondary education. The assessment takes place in form 8 of primary and lower secondary school. The purpose of the assessment is to identify and provide adequate support to those pupils who need it to ensure that all pupils at the end of form 9 are in a position to start and complete an upper secondary educational programme.

The existing assessment focuses on pupils’ academic, personal and social competences. However, the government and the Danish People’s Party find that this assessment does not map out the full capacities of pupils. With the political agreement, the agreeing parties therefore aim to ensure a more balanced assessment of pupils by introducing a new practice-oriented dimension to the assessment. The government and the Danish People’s Party plan to put forward a motion for the amendment of the existing Consolidation Act on Guidance this autumn.

For more information (in Danish), please consult the following links:

Political Agreement on the introduction of a practice-oriented dimension to the assessment of pupils’ readiness for upper secondary education [8]

The Consolidation Act on Guidance [9]