



Youth Guidance Centres
Regional Guidance Centres

Guidance in Education

- the educational
guidance system
in Denmark

eGuidance
and lifelong guidance

Facts & Figures



Population: 5.535 million; approx. 1.1 % of the total EU population (2010/11)

Young people (12 – 24 years): 810.087 (2011)

Percentage of a year group moving on from compulsory education to youth education: 97% (2008)

Percentage of a year group completing a youth education programme: 81% (2008)

Percentage of a year group continuing into higher education: 55% (2008)

Percentage of a year group completing a higher education programme: 47 % (2008)

Labour force (16 – 64 years): 2,650,000; 52% men, 48% women (2009)

Unemployment rate: 6.1 % (2011)

Unemployment rate (16-24 years): 5.1% (2011)

Unemployment rate (25-29 years): 9,2% (2011)

Sources:

Statistics Denmark

"Facts and Figures - 2009", Ministry of Children and Education

Ministry of Employment

Introduction

Provision of educational and vocational guidance for young people is given high priority in Denmark.

The Danish act on guidance aims to develop a transparent guidance system with easy access to high quality guidance services. Guidance is regarded as a continuous process that should help young people become more conscious of their abilities, interests

and possibilities, thus enabling them to make decisions regarding education and employment on a qualified basis.

Today The Ministry of Children and Education and the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Higher Education are responsible for guidance and have a controlling and coordinating role in relation to the guidance system.

This publication gives an overview of the key elements of the Danish guidance system in the educational sector which is primarily concerned with guidance services for young people.

An online version of the present publication is available at:
www.iu.dk/euroguidance-en

Guidance in Denmark

In Denmark there is an act on guidance covering guidance in the education system. The act on guidance supports the Danish Government's declared goals that by 2015, 95 % of all young people should complete a youth education programme and by

2020, 60 % should complete a higher educational programme. The Government wishes to make it easier for citizens to make realistic decisions about learning opportunities and careers – for the individual's own sake and for the good of society as

a whole. The Danish guidance system and changes made since the reform should be seen in this perspective. The Danish guidance system consists of different elements, which can be seen on the following page.



Key elements of the Danish guidance system are:

- Youth guidance centres that provide guidance services for young people up to the age of 25 years, focusing on the transition from compulsory to youth education or, alternatively, to the labour market.
- Regional guidance centres that provide guidance for students in youth education programmes and young people and adults outside the education system who wish to enter a higher education programme.
- eGuidance which can be reached by email, chat, phone or sms seven days a week from morning to evening. eGuidance is for all citizens – young persons and adults. eGuidance was launched January 2011.
- The national guidance portal: www.ug.dk is an ICT-based careers information and guidance portal. The portal helps people by finding careers information in order to make qualified decisions about education, training and careers.
- Adult educational centres which provide guidance for adults in the field of further adult education.

General legislation for guidance in Denmark covers guidance in the educational sector, especially guidance in connection with transition in the educational system.



The act defines seven main aims of guidance. According to these aims, guidance related to choice of education, training and career must:

- help to ensure that choice of education and career will be of greatest possible benefit to the individual and to society and that all young people complete an education, leading to vocational/professional qualifications;
- be targeted particularly at young people who, without specific guidance, will have difficulties in relation to choice and completion of education, training and career;
- take into account the individual's interests and personal qualifications and skills, including informal competencies and previous education and work experience, as well as the expected need for skilled labour and self-employed businessmen;
- contribute to limiting, as much as possible, the number of dropouts and students chang-

ing from one education and training programme to another and ensure that the pupil or student completes the chosen education with the greatest possible academic/vocational and personal benefits;

- contribute to improving the individual's ability to seek and use information, including ICT-based information and guidance about choice of education, educational institution and career;
 - help to ensure coherence and progression in the individual's guidance support;
 - be independent of sectoral and institutional interests.
- Therefore guidance shall be provided by practitioners with an approved guidance education or recognized competencies at the same level.

The last objective is to raise the quality level in Danish guidance, including an improvement of guidance counsellors' qualifications and competencies.

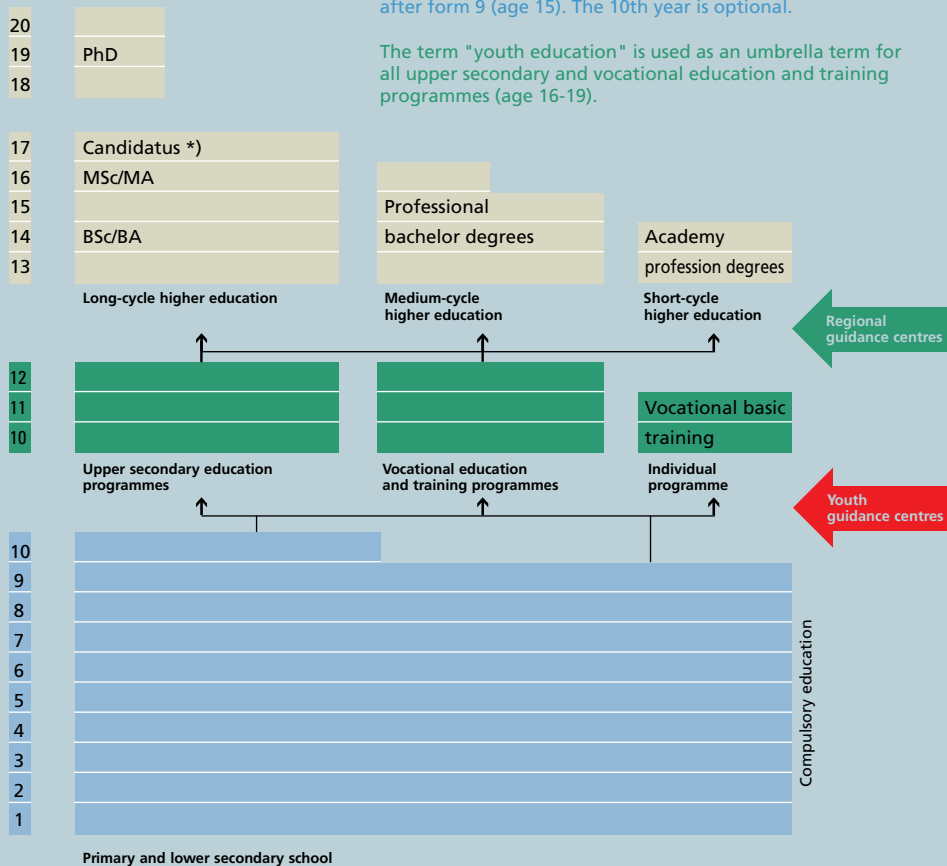
Independent Guidance Centres

There are three types of centres which are independent from sectoral and institutional interests:

- 51 Municipal Youth Guidance Centres ("Ungdommens Uddannelsesvejledning", UU) provide guidance in relation to the transition from compulsory education to youth education.

- 7 Regional Guidance Centres ("Studievalg") provide guidance in relation to the transition from youth education to higher education.
- eGuidance provides guidance to all citizens via various virtual communication channels: chat, telephone, SMS, e-mail and Facebook.

No. of years



*) Some programmes last more than 2 years

Youth Guidance Centres

The 51 youth guidance centres are distributed among the 98 municipalities in Denmark. Each centre covers a “sustainable” area in terms of geographical distance and quality; quality referring to number and variety of youth education institutions in the area as well as the management structure of the centres.

According to the Act on Guidance, all 15-17 year olds have an obligation to be enrolled in an education, employment or other activities designed to ensure that they will get an education. The youth guidance centres also assess the extent to which young people have the academic/vocational, personal and social competencies to begin and complete an upper secondary education.

The municipal youth guidance centres provide guidance services for young people up to the age of 25 years, focusing on the transition from compulsory to youth education or, alternatively, to the labour market. Their main target groups are:

- Pupils in lower secondary school (forms 7 to 9) and pupils attending the optional form 10
- Young people under the age of 25 who are not attending or have not completed a youth education programme.
- Other young people under the age of 25 who seek out guidance in relation to youth education programmes or employment.
- Young people with a special need for guidance concerning choice of education, vocation

and career. This is a diverse target group of young people with various problems related to the continuation or completion of an education programme.

In cooperation with the school principals, the youth guidance centres organise guidance activities at schools – close to the pupils. Teachers are responsible for the provision of general careers education from form 1 to form 9, but the youth guidance centres serve as a source of coordination, inspiration and further development in this area. Guidance specifically related to the transition from compulsory to youth education is the responsibility of the youth guidance centres – but it is provided at the pupils’ schools. The aim of the guidance process is to develop the pupils’ self-knowledge and ability to make decisions regarding education and career. It is concluded with the drawing up of an individual transition plan in form 9, describing plans and objectives after compulsory school.

Introduction courses to youth education can take place in form 8. Bridge building and mentor schemes are important tools in form 9 and bridge building also in form 10. In form 9 bridge building is an optional activity



targeted pupils who are in doubt about the coming educational choice. In form 10, bridge building is an obligatory activity for all pupils.

The centres are obliged to establish contact with young people under the age of 25 who have not completed a youth education programme and are outside the education system or the labour market. Together with the individual young person, the guidance counsellors discuss different opportunities and schemes that may help them get back into education, training or employment.

The youth guidance centres are funded by the municipalities, and the municipal councils in a particular area define the overall framework for their centre's activities within the scope of the act on guidance. The daily management and responsibility for the provision of guidance activities is ensured by the managers of the centres, whose sole focus is provision and continuous development of youth guidance services in their area.

Quality assurance is emphasised in the guidance reform. Transparency in relation to the youth guidance centres' activities and results are important in order to assure a high level



of quality. Objectives, methods, planned activities as well as the performance of each centre are thus to be published on the Internet. Furthermore, the Ministry of Children and Education has developed a set of guidelines that the centres have to use when they set up their own quality assurance system. As a minimum, this system has to include figures concerning the scope, results and effect of the guidance provided, as well as procedures for annual self-evaluation of the centres by means of user and employee surveys.

Cooperation across sectors is a key issue in the act on guidance. The aim is to ensure a coherent guidance system and a regular exchange of experiences, knowledge and best practice. The youth guidance centres are thus obliged to cooperate closely with primary and lower secondary schools and youth education institutions in the area, as well as with local businesses and the public employment services.

UU Sjælland Syd

– a Youth Guidance Centre

CASE STORY

By Manager
Uffe Tvede Hansen

Our main aim is to give every young person the guidance and support that he or she needs in relation to education-, training- or job-related decisions. Individual and group guidance sessions for pupils in lower secondary schools are provided at the pupils' schools. We arrange introduction courses at different youth education institutions for all pupils in form 8, work placement periods for all pupils in forms 8, 9 and 10 (one-two weeks per year) and bridge building courses for form 9 for a week. There are two-week bridge building courses at different youth education institutions for all pupils in form 10. We are

in close contact with enterprises and the social partners in our area and we act as a mediator when schools want to visit e.g. a specific type of enterprise or if they wish to invite representatives from enterprises, trade unions or employers' organisations.

"Our guidance counsellors have become much more conscious of their profession, and they express a wish to work towards greater professionalism"

As for young people outside the education system, we have three

local offices in the three municipalities, located in places that are easy to find for young people. Any young person is welcome to visit us at our offices or to contact us via phone, e-mail or SMS to make an appointment for a guidance session. Our website provides all relevant contact details. We are informed automatically when a young person drops out of school or college, and we then contact him or her to discuss available options. Furthermore, our own administrative system regularly reminds our guidance counsellors to contact the young people whom we consider to be "at risk" for various reasons.



We cover a large region. Some staff members have coordinating tasks and some are responsible for cross-regional activities such as integration of young people from ethnic minorities or cooperation with regional educational institutions. However, the majority of our guidance counsellors work in one of our three municipalities. Still, it is important for us to continue developing a corporate spirit and to ensure that we move in the same direction. Consequently, we have monthly meetings and we have developed a set of common descriptions of our main tasks, practices and procedures for the entire UU. Together with more locally



oriented targets and action plans, the common descriptions are now collected in a new main description of our organisation

and our targets. We see these joint efforts as a way of ensuring the quality and dynamics of our work.

Readiness for upper secondary education

In order to commence upper secondary education (general and vocational), pupils in form 9 must be assessed ready regarding social, personal and academic skills. The guidance counsellor in cooperation with the teachers and parents carry out the assessment of whether a young person is ready for upper secondary education. Most pupils are assessed ready. However, if this is not the case, we will work out a plan in order for the young person to become

ready to take on an education for instance through bridge building courses. If the parents do not agree with the decision, the pupil has the option of attending a test at the general

or vocational upper secondary education institution. The education institutions will then decide whether they find the young person ready to commence an upper secondary education.

3 municipalities in the Southern part of Zealand with a total population of 160,000 people
25,000 young people (12-25 years old)
65 primary and lower secondary schools
31 full-time guidance counsellors are employed at UU Sjælland Syd

Regional Guidance Centres

Whereas the youth guidance centres focus mainly on guidance concerning the transition from compulsory to youth education, the seven regional guidance centres are responsible for provision of

- guidance in relation to the transition from youth education programmes to higher education; and
- information on all higher education programmes in Denmark and the possible occupations or professions that these higher education programmes may lead to.

The regional guidance centres' main target groups are:

- Students in youth education programmes
- Young people and adults outside the education system who wish to enter a higher education programme.
- Students in youth education programmes with an extended need for guidance concerning choice of education, vocation and career.

The regional guidance centres focus on the transition from youth education to higher education. They organise a wide

variety of educational and vocational guidance activities for students in upper secondary education including workshops, seminars, careers fairs, and individual and group guidance sessions. These activities take place at the students' schools.

The regional guidance centres cooperate with youth educational institutions in general and especially regarding young people with an extended need for guidance.

Young people and adults are welcome to call or visit the cen-



tres to get information about higher education opportunities or to make an appointment for a guidance session. On a regular basis, it is also possible to meet guidance counsellors from the centres at different neutral localities across the seven regions – e.g. at a public library – to ensure that geographical distance does not prevent people from getting access to relevant guidance services.

The seven regional guidance centres are funded by the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Higher Education and the Ministry has the overall responsibility for the centres. The centres have been selected after a call for tenders. The centres operate on the basis of a contract with the Ministry, in which the financial conditions are also specified.

An important part of the contract concerns the formation of a quality assurance system and the centres are required to carry out an annual report on the results of each centre's quality assurance system. A user survey of the Regional Guidance Centres must be part of the quality assurance



system in order to create the basis for a user-driven development parallel to experiences gained. Additionally, the quality assurance system has to include figures concerning the scope, results and effects of the guidance provided.

The performance of the centres is described in their annual activity reports, which are approved by the Ministry. The centres are obliged to develop a quality assurance system on the basis of

a set of guidelines designed by the Ministry.

Like the youth guidance centres, the regional guidance centres are obliged to cooperate with relevant partners in their region to ensure a coherent guidance system and a regular exchange of experiences, knowledge and best practice. Relevant partners include youth education and higher education institutions, the social partners and industry and commerce.

Studievalg København

– a Regional Guidance Centre

CASE STORY

By Deputy Manager and
Guidance Counsellor
Jan Svendsen

Our guidance services are related to choice of higher education. Guidance activities differ according to target group, but generally speaking, our main objective is to put our clients in a position where they themselves are capable of making qualified decisions regarding choice of higher education.

For students in general upper secondary education, which gives access to the entire range of higher education programmes, we offer at each school in our area:

- five obligatory workshops or seminars, focusing on the three steps of choosing higher education: motivation, overview and details. Tools developed by Studievalg København as well as IT-related working tools are used in the workshops in order to put the students in a position of being capable of choosing a higher education programme by themselves.

Other themes include motivation, the educational system and different higher education programmes, careers and entrepreneurship as well as admission procedures;

- group counselling sessions for students having difficulties choosing higher education;
- meetings where the parents are also invited;
- individual guidance for students at their school.

Through these events we ensure that the students are confronted with different perspectives on higher education several times during their two-three years in upper secondary education. Each guidance counsellor at Studievalg København is responsible for a number of schools. This ensures that the students become familiar with the guidance counsellor. At the same time, we remain "neutral



ground” in the sense that we do not know the students from classes. Many students consider this an advantage because they will not be met with preconceived opinions when they want to discuss their future possibilities.

For trainees in vocational education and training, which gives access to a limited number of mainly short-cycle higher education programmes, guidance counsellors at Studievalg København visit every vocational college in our region in order to inform about possibilities in the higher education system. The guidance counsellor delivers education presentations for each vocational education programme - ranging from mechanics to social health care assistants.

Both young people and adults are welcome to call, e-mail or visit us in our centre in central Copenhagen, which is open Monday-Thursday. Here we



offer both individual and group guidance sessions.

We give high priority to quality assurance and have developed client feedback and evaluation systems, which are used after our events. Continuous development of our services and staff training, i.e. regular supervision, are two other important areas. Apart from attending various further training courses, we also arrange

regular staff meetings where we discuss themes such as our services in general, specific events, or guidance methodologies.

“Our main objective is to put our clients in a position where they themselves are capable of making qualified decisions regarding choice of higher education”

**A region with a total population of 1.6 mio. people
118 youth education institutions
37,500 students in general upper secondary education
40,000 students in vocational education and training (VET)
17 guidance counsellors and 3 support staff members are employed at Studievalg København**

eGuidance

eGuidance was launched in January 2011 and provides individual and personal guidance to all citizens via various virtual communication channels: chat, telephone, SMS, e-mail and Facebook.

eGuidance is for everyone who wants information about education and employment and may also refer users to other guidance tools (www.ug.dk) and institutions for further guidance. eGuidance is especially targeted

resourceful young persons and their parents to give them easy access to independent information and guidance and hereby motivate the young people to continue the search and clarification process on their own.

eGuidance plays a central role as a guide to the national guidance portal, communicator of guidance information etc.

Facebook was first used in January 2012 and gives

eGuidance the chance to provide guidance in a common forum and to work with guidance in the social media. (www.facebook.com/eVejledning)

The users can contact eGuidance during days and evenings as well as on the weekends. Many people appreciate that they can get in touch with a guidance counsellor for example on a Tuesday evening or Saturday afternoon. Clients typically contact eGuidance with questions



relating to youth education, higher education or adult education. Questions posed are either specific or relate to doubts and worries about choice of education.

Sessions with eGuidance take place anonymously. Consequently, eGuidance cannot play a role in specific cases that for instance the youth guidance centres are responsible for. Clients appreciate the anonymity, which in many cases makes it easier for them to ask their questions.

eGuidance employs a smaller number of full-time counsellors and a larger number of counsellors, who work part-time for eGuidance and part-time at a youth guidance centre or at a regional guidance centre.



Examples of e-mails to eGuidance

Hi eGuidance counsellor

I would like to know which youth education is the best choice if I want to work with advertising and development of ideas. I hope for a quick reply.

Best regards, X

Hi,

I am writing to you since I am currently in an education programme that does not fit me. I am a trainee in a company and this summer I will finish this education programme. I therefore wish to seek new paths.

I am interested in psychology and pedagogy, I like to provide help to other people, but it must be within an area of interest to me. I would like an education which could lead to a job where helping others is a central aspect. I am considering the education programme for becoming a social worker, but I want to know if this is the right option within my areas of interest or I have overlooked other relevant education programmes?

Best regards, XX

National Guidance Portal



The national guidance portal: www.ug.dk launched by the Ministry of Children and Education is an ICT-based careers information and guidance portal. The portal provides citizens – young people and adults – with substantial careers information in order for them to make qualified decisions about education, training and careers.

The portal provides comprehensive and up-to-date information on:

- youth education and training programmes
- higher education programmes
- occupations/professions
- labour market issues
- study programmes taught in English at Danish colleges and universities

The portal provides different types of guidance tools facilitating the choice of education, occupation and careers. The portal also provides specific entries for different target groups:

- young people seeking youth education programmes
- young people seeking higher education programmes
- persons seeking adult education programmes
- parents wanting to support their children in their choice of education

From the portal you can easily find and reach the regional guidance centres, the youth guidance centres, eGuidance and the educational institutions. It also gives access to important and updated information, guidance tools and relevant websites. The portal is being updated on a day to day basis in order to have new and updated information available all the time. Users have the possibility of receiving electronic newsletters whenever there are relevant news in the field of guidance, education and labourmarket.

Guidance in Relation to Completion of Education within General and Vocational Upper Secondary Education

The upper secondary schools (Gymnasiums and VET colleges) are obliged to support students in a way that enables them to complete their education. Students enrolled in an upper secondary school will therefore have support from the school staff such as teachers, guidance counsellors or other professional staff members supporting students in various ways. The institutions are free to choose their methods and choose the appropriate staff to support students in completing their education.

Educational institutions cooperate with the youth guidance centres and the regional guidance centres in order to have coherence in guidance. This cooperation has a general and also a more specific perspective regarding students at risk of dropping out of education



Guidance in Higher Education

Guidance in the Course of Academy Profession Programmes and Professional Bachelor Programmes

The academies of professional higher education and university colleges are obliged to support students in a way that enables them to complete their education. Students enrolled in an academy profession programme or professional bachelor programmes will therefore need support from the school staff

such as teachers, guidance counsellors or other professional staff supporting students in various ways.

The institutions are free to choose their methods and choose the appropriate staff to support students in completing their education.



Guidance at the Danish Universities: Completion and Career Guidance

The universities offer students at bachelor and master level guidance about their current programme, about access requirements for master and PhD programmes and about subsequent

employment opportunities. Each university is free to decide how and by whom this guidance is offered. In general, completion guidance and career guidance is divided between different bodies.

The universities publish and maintain instructions about bachelor and master programmes with examples of professions and jobs that these programmes may lead to. They also provide information about options and recommended configurations of the programme of interest to the student, including choice of master programme after completion of a bachelor's degree.

Furthermore, the universities have an obligation to give students who have been delayed in their studies special guidance in order for them to continue their education.



Guidance for Adults

Denmark has a long tradition of improving the competencies of the workforce beyond compulsory stages of education. In fact, the notion is that learning is a lifelong occupation. There are a number of opportunities for adults wishing to receive education and update their competencies.

13 Centres for Adult Education and Continuing Training (VEU-centres) offer guidance related to a wide range of education programmes to adults, either employed or unemployed. Some of the programmes provide a second chance to people who left compulsory school without the necessary exams. Others offer highly specialized continuing vocational training courses (AMU) or general upper second-



ary programmes (VUC). As part of this adult educational system there is a provision of guidance.

At the centres guidance counselors provide free and non-binding career guidance to companies as well as to individuals. People

in employment or outside the labour market can get an overview of the various education and training programmes. They will receive an individual plan for their further education and training, which can lead them towards their career target.



National Dialogue Forum

Denmark has a long tradition of cross-sectoral cooperation on guidance issues at national, regional and local levels. At national level, this tradition is continued through a National Dialogue Forum. The purpose of the Dialogue Forum is:

- to develop and enhance the level of quality in Danish guidance services, and
- to secure a close dialogue between the Minister and relevant organisations, institutions, guidance counsellor associations and individuals holding a leading position in Danish guidance.

The National Dialogue Forum has three to four annual meetings where issues such as best practices, experiences, new ideas and innovative thinking within the field of guidance are discussed. In between meetings, the Dialogue Forum members have the opportunity to continue discussions – or initiate new ones – on an ICT-based discussion board.

The Dialogue Forum is headed by a board of three persons, one of whom is the chair of the forum, all appointed directly by the Minister for Children and Education. Currently, the Dialogue Forum consists of individual members as well as representatives from member organisations and ministries, appointed for a period of three years. Examples of member organisations are:

- National employers' organisations, unions and trade organisations
- Guidance counsellor associations
- Youth organisations
- Municipal authorities.



Training of Guidance Counsellors

One of the objectives of the Danish guidance system is to improve the qualifications and competencies of guidance practitioners in order to professionalise Danish guidance services. Consequently, one common training programme is offered to guidance counsellors from all sectors. It is a requirement that educational guidance practitioners complete the diploma programme in educational and vocational guidance. Alternatively, guidance practitioners with extensive experience in the field can apply for assessment and recognition of their competencies and prior learning.

Five Centres for Higher Education across the country offer the training programme on a part-time basis. It is equivalent to 12 months full-time studies and consists of three basic modules, two optional modules and a diploma project. It has a value of 60 ECTS points. The basic modules are:

- Careers guidance and the guidance practitioner (career- and guidance theories and methodologies, ethics, use of ICT in guidance, practical training etc.)
- Careers guidance and society (general theories of globalization, labour market conditions and policies, the education



system and educational policies, development of society and business etc.)

- Careers guidance and the individual (human development and learning theories and approaches). Different target groups are in focus: Generally young people and adults, but also more specific groups in need of guidance.

The optional modules have more specific focus and students elect modules, which are relevant in their guidance practice. The diploma project is defined by the student. The training programme is offered as an adult

learning programme and corresponds to a diploma degree. Entry requirements are, as a minimum, a completed short-cycle (two-year) higher education programme and two years of relevant working experience. Furthermore, it is possible to follow a master programme in guidance at the Danish School of Education, Aarhus University. Both training programmes are offered within the framework of the Danish adult education and training system. They are aimed at and adapted to adults who already have another higher education degree and two years of relevant work experience.

Centre of Expertise for Guidance

The Ministry of Children and Education is responsible for the development and running of a national centre of expertise for guidance. This includes activities such as collecting examples of best practice and knowledge within the field of guidance, quality development, coordination among different types of guidance services, and initiating

analyses, surveys and cross-sectoral experimental and developmental activities.

To support and disseminate information about these activities, there is a virtual resource centre, which is specifically aimed at guidance counsellors (www.vejledningsviden.dk). The virtual resource centre includes

an electronic news service, on-line articles on relevant themes, a virtual library, links to relevant legislation, information about best practices, recent research activities, surveys and analyses etc. within the field of guidance.

International Perspectives

Lifelong guidance is on the agenda in many international fora, and the main aims and components of the Danish guidance system are very much in line with the EU and OECD recommendations on guidance policies and practices.

The Danish Ministry of Children and Education is also aware of the importance of promoting an international dimension in Danish guidance. International activities for guidance practitioners are initiated by the Danish Euroguidance centre, placed in the Danish Agency for Universities and Internationalisation, an agency within the Danish Ministry of Science, Innovation and Higher Education. The Euroguidance Network includes national centres in 33 European countries

and is partly funded by the EU through the Lifelong Learning Programme. The network supports the development of the European dimension in educational and vocational guidance and promotes mobility, mutual awareness and cooperation between guidance services in Europe.

Furthermore, The Ministry of Children and Education is part of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (<http://ktl.jyu.fi/ktl/elgpn>) and plays an active role in developing guidance within the EU. This is done in cooperation with representatives from The National Dialogue Forum.



Further Information

The Danish education system:
www.eng.uvm.dk

Studying in Denmark:
[www. Studyindenmark.dk](http://www.Studyindenmark.dk)

Working in Denmark:
www.Workindenmark.dk

The Euroguidance Centre in Denmark:
www.iu.dk/euroguidance (in Danish) or
www.iu.dk/euroguidance-en (in English)

Enquiries concerning guidance in Denmark
may be addressed to:
euroguidance@ui.dk

The Euroguidance network:
www.euroguidance.net

The European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network:
<http://ktl.jyu.fi/ktl/elgpn>





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