Adult Education in Denmark

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Current. Structural Changes and New Strategies for Adult and Continuing Education

Structural and contents changes are part of a continuous development in the adult and continuing education area (ACE) in Denmark. It is necessary to change and qualify the workforce to a knowledge-based, flexible and innovative production, and the society and its citizens to new sustainable and coherent ways of life. Various new political initiatives will support this process. In 2011, Denmark is working towards consolidating and expanding the structural changes, which had been implemented as of 2009. The function of the Council for Adult and Continuing Education (ACE), established in 2009, is to give advice to the Minister of Education on topics and situations which are of importance to the adult and continuing education area. In May 2010, the council issued a booklet “Strategiske fokusområder” (Strategic Focus Areas), which included a forecast predicting that Denmark would within a few years face a shortage of qualified workers (with relevant competences) with simultaneous layoffs among unqualified workers. In 2011, the Council has carried out a follow-up of this work, which includes a focus on digitalisation of the adult and continuing education area, its connections to the economic and employment policies, and steering and increasing the supply of AMU training (see below).

In the political agreements of recent years, including the government’s 2010 restoration package, the ACE effort is to a great extent directed at work-related competence development. The non-formal sector has a weaker representation in the new centres for adult education than formal general and vocational education. Within the ACE area, the focus is on people with short or no education or vocational training and vulnerable target groups such as “older teenagers”, vulnerable people with employment, unemployed and men. Work is continuously in progress to develop and qualify validation and evaluation of previously acquired knowledge and skills with a view to enabling ACE participants to complete their education faster, cheaper and more meaningfully. Work on validation and evaluation of previously acquired knowledge and skills is underway in both the non-formal education system and at all levels of the formal education system.

In 2011, the Danish parliament passed a new adult education law, which among other things ensures more influence for educational institutions. The changes in the law were inspired by the recommendations given by the adult education committee, established by Home Secretary Bertel Harder in 2009, in its final report in 2010.

The organisation and structure of the formal ACE area focuses on strengthening the flexibility and mobility between education programmes, and furthers cooperation across sectors by establishing tighter links between education, business and employment policies. One way of doing this is through politically decided cooperation and merging of education institutions into larger units. In 2011, cooperation in the 13 ACE centres, which were established in 2010 with the purpose of strengthening motivation and enabling ACE, especially for people with or without vocational training, is being consolidated and developed. The ACE centres offer a flexible, well-organised and
efficient education, which benefits both workplaces and workers. The centres work to develop the cooperation between education institutions, users and organisations, as well as strategic cooperation with regional growth forums, job centres and employment agencies. By contacting an ACE centre, companies and citizens can get all the advice they need from one single source. The tasks of the ACE centres include carrying out comprehensive and goal-oriented outreach guidance and counselling activities covering all the education options offered at ACEs, clarifying competence development needs for companies and employees, and coordinating general education and vocational training efforts. The work carried out by the ACE centres builds on the experiences from 22 advice centres, which were discontinued and evaluated in 2009.

The previously established six regional growth forums aim to assess the regional and local growth conditions, to set up a regional company development strategy and establish relationships with EU, state and municipal politicians. In the regional growth forums, players from business-furthering agencies and education institutions (ACE centres) cooperate to prioritise and direct education funding and to propose co-financing of regional business development activities.

In 2008, eight University Colleges (professionshøjskoler) were established to cover the need for Professional Bachelor's degrees in their areas, which could be a region or part of a region. The colleges are required to offer Professional Bachelor’s degrees and further/specialised education needed in their area, and they must adjust their education provision to the need in their area. Continuous accreditation of existing and new education programmes is ongoing at University Colleges, universities and other institutions of higher education.

Between 2004 and 2007, the Danish government supported the establishment of national knowledge centres, which in cooperation with both local and regional public and private companies are required to contribute to growth and welfare through quality development and innovation of processes, organisations and contributions. The government funding to the national knowledge centres is time-limited. Some centres have been evaluated, while others are scheduled for evaluation, and one centre will be discontinued during this process, but new ones are continuously being established.

The Danish qualification framework for lifelong learning (NQF) has been developed, and via the EQF it can be related to the qualification frameworks from the other European countries. Implementation of the Danish NQF has been done for several qualifications, and the implementation work continues.

As part of the Bologna process, Denmark has introduced accreditation systems. Since 2008, accreditation has been done of all post-secondary education, and the education administration screens and evaluates new applications each year.

**Current Figures. Adult and continuing education.**

Gross unemployment (net unemployment plus persons who are participating in activation programmes and are considered to be available for work.) rose in May by 2,600 to 161,900, equivalent to a rise from 5.8 to 5.9 percent of the work force in relation to April. The figures show a slight drop in relation to the overall 2010 figure of 163,900 gross unemployed people (seasonally adjusted number of unemployed full-time workers), which is equal to 6.0 percent of the work force. The unemployment situation in 2010 was characterised by longer unemployment periods.
Continuing education activity in Denmark is high. In the period of 2004–2009, nearly every third person in the population aged 25–64 participated in an education activity for four weeks before the poll (31.6%), including both publicly financed, internal workplace and private education, plus vocational courses or a form of leisure time teaching. Participation has continued to rise in recent years. Compared to a number of European countries, Denmark is at the top. In this respect, Denmark is in line with other Nordic countries (Finland, Iceland and Sweden) where the proportion of the population participating in ACE is also considerably higher than in other EU countries.

A brief historical outline
The teaching of youngsters and adults outside the formal system has a longer tradition in Denmark. For example, the first Danish folk high school was founded in the middle of the 19th century, and the first educational association, AOF, was established in 1924. After World War II, several educational associations were established, and they often organise leisure-time education.

The concept of ”Adult education” is a relatively new phenomenon and is built on previous traditions. It was thematised from the 1950’s, 60’s and the beginning of the 70’s. As a result of the employment market need for qualified workers, vocationally oriented adult education and competence-yielding general adult education were developed as areas separate from leisure-time education.

General adult education has its origins in the tradition of folkeoplysning such as the competence-yielding single subject courses launched in 1968 and the network of adult education centres, ACEs, established in the 1980s. Non-formal adult education has also inspired the development of other adult education provision which the formal system did not have the structure, capacity or interest in organising. Therefore, the fields of special education and immigrant education/Danish as a second language were developed by the independent adult education associations. The establishing of non-residential folk high schools around 1980, too, had its foundation in adult education associations and the women’s movement.

In the field of vocational education, general adult education and education organised by trade unions were supplemented with state-financed vocational training courses (AMU) around 1960.

In 1989, a Law on open education was adopted, which made it possible for adults to select individual education elements from the vocational competence-yielding education system and receive the same qualification as they would if they were doing the same element in full-time education.

During the 1990’s, the political focus on adult education increased, and in 1996 came the first version of the parallel competence system, which still exists today (see Figure 1).

The Education System
Today, there are ample opportunities for continuing education within the formal education system and within folkeoplysning. The two areas have different conditions relating to economy, organisation and purpose, and they are therefore described separately here.

1 The term folkeoplysning is difficult to translate into English because no corresponding concept exists in English-speaking countries. The most frequently used translations are ‘liberal adult education’ or ‘popular adult education’. In this translation, the original Danish term is generally used.
However, it should be noted regarding the previous section that even if the different types of education institutions and education programmes are described separately, this is not a fully comprehensive picture of the reality. Increasingly, resources are being invested in creating more cross-sectional cooperation, flexible possibilities for participation in education modules, transfer of qualifications between education programmes, and validation of previously acquired vocational competence and other relevant experiences.

**Det parallele kompetencesystem= The parallel competence system**

**Det ordinære uddannelsessystem= Ordinary education system**

**Videregående uddannelse = Higher education**

Erhvervsakademi uddannelser mv.= Business academy programmes etc.
Professionsbacheloruddannelser= Professional Bachelor’s degree programmes
Universitets bachelor uddannelser = Bachelor programmes taught at university

Kandidat uddannelser = Master's degree programmes *(Kandidat)*

Ungdomsuddannelse = youth education programmes

**Erhvervsfaglige uddannelser=Vocational education**

**Gymnasiale uddannelser=Upper secondary education**

**Voksen- og efteruddannelsessystem=Adult and continuing education system**

**Masteruddannelser=Master’s degree programmes**

**Diplom uddannelser=Diploma programmes**

**Videregående voksen uddannelser=(VVU degree) Higher education for adults**

**Grundlæggende voksenuddannelser (GVU) = Basic adult education**

**Arbejdsmarkedsuddannelser (AMU) = Labour market training**

**Højere forberedelses eksamen (HF)= A higher preparatory degree**

**Almen voksenuddannelse (AVU)=General adult education**

**Forberedende voksenundervisning (FVU)=Preparatory adult education**

**Voksenuddannelse= adult education**

**The formal education system**

The formal education system is divided into the ordinary education system and an adult and continuing education (ACE) system. In recent years, the system for continuing education has gone through a structural adjustment phase, and the education levels are now directly comparable to the ordinary system.

The publication [http://pub.uvm.dk/2008/taldertaler/helepubl.pdf](http://pub.uvm.dk/2008/taldertaler/helepubl.pdf) p. 8, figure 1, shows the Parallel education systems.
Adult and continuing education system (ACE). (See figure 1)

Preparatory adult education (FVU)
The purpose of the FVU is to give adults a possibility to improve and supplement their basic skills in reading, spelling and written presentation, as well as number understanding, counting and basic mathematic concepts. This gives opportunities for continuing education and strengthens the participants’ qualifications for taking an active part in all aspects of society.

FVU consists of the subjects: 1. reading, spelling and written presentation (FVU reading) and 2. number understanding, counting and basic mathematic concepts (FVU math). Both subjects are divided into steps and finish at a level corresponding to general adult education step 1. After each step it is possible to take a test. Participation in the teaching is free of charge, and placement tests are carried out before participants start their studies. In the latest revision of the laws governing the FVU, a possibility has been opened for the Ministry of Education to start trials with FVU teaching of English and IT.

Organisation for FVU
FVU is a state-financed education form, which ACEs are authorised to organise in cooperation with others. ACEs can make agreements (operational agreements) with a number of other institutions regarding the provision of FVU. They could be vocational schools, AMU centres, non-residential and residential folk high schools, production schools, language centres, domestic science and handicraft schools, and adult education associations. Furthermore, FVU may be offered by education institutions with AMU-approved activities, maritime training institutions, Social and health schools (SOSU), forestry schools, and education institutions with special teaching for adults. Other institutions entitled to provide FVU training include private institutions which had by January 1, 2001 entered into operational agreements with a county council on reading courses or dyslectic teaching, combined institutions regulated by laws on general upper secondary education and general adult education, and the Harbour School in Copenhagen. FVU is a flexible education form, both with regard to level, the time of day for teaching, its length and start times, and it is an example of education that can take place at an education institution and at workplaces. Read more (in Danish) at http://www.uvm.dk/Uddannelse/Uddannelses%20og%20undervisning%20for%20voksne/Uddannelses%20for%20voksne/Forberedende%20voksenundervisning/Fakta%20om%20FVU.aspx

Special education for adults
People with physical or mental and special educational support, who aim to remove or limit the effects of these handicaps (compensating special education). Special education for adults aims to compensate for, i.e remove or limit the effects of, a handicap. The compensating effect of this education form is created when the participant achieves strategies and methods, which as much as possible enable him/her to be part of society on the same conditions as people without handicaps. Education provision regulated by the law on special education for adults may consist of (special education) and/or special educational support, including advice and guidance to those involved.

Dyslectic education for adults
Dyslectic education for adults is especially adjusted education targeted to people who have fundamental difficulty understanding written text (dyslectics). Whether dyslectic education is the right option is evaluated by using test material provided by the Ministry for Education to the
education institutions. Dyslectic education for adults is provided under the law on preparatory adult education and dyslectic education for adults. The responsibility for providing dyslectic education for adults lies with ACEs in cooperation with a number of education institutions, which are able to offer dyslectic education for adults after entering into an operation agreement with an ACE (cf. FVU). The costs for the education are financed via state fare meter payments. There is no charge for the individual adult to participate in dyslectic education for adults.

Read more (in Danish) at http://www.uvm.dk/kommunalreform/specialundervisning/ordblind

Language centres, Danish as a second language
Language centres offer Danish as a second language for adult foreigners over 18 with the purpose of providing them with language proficiency to enable them to work or get an education in Denmark.

The education provision comprises three education programmes:

- Danish-language programme 1 is adapted to people who are illiterate in their native tongue or unable to read the Latin alphabet. The programme prepares students without vocational training for work.
- Danish-language programme 2 is adapted to students who have attended school for only a few years in their home country. The aim is to enable the student to obtain an educational qualification in order to get a job.
- Danish-language programme 3 is for students who can reach study competence through learning Danish at the language centre.

The figure below is an illustration of the teaching model at the language centres.
http://www.emu.dk/erhverv/flygtningeogindvandrere/danskandet/spormodel.doc

AVU – General adult education
General adult education offers adults over 18 years of age a chance to improve their knowledge in a number of general subjects. "General" means that the education does not aim for a particular job or subject area. General adult education, which takes place at ACEs, gives adults an opportunity to supplement or refresh their general school education and take tests. Teaching takes place both during the day and the evening, and courses start several times a year. Some places have continuous admission.

Education contents Each ACE should offer the following core subjects: Danish, Math, English, German or French, Natural Science and Social Science subjects. Furthermore, the centre may offer a number of other subjects such as History, Philosophy, IT subjects and Psychology. The teaching is done as single subject teaching and the students take one or several subjects at a time. The subjects may finish with tests that give the same rights to students to enter the next education level as the public school tests after the 9th and 10th grade.

A higher preparatory degree, HF ACE, also offers single subject education at a general upper secondary school level (HF), and the students can thereby qualify for admission to post-secondary education.

In 2005, an upper secondary school reform was implemented, which also affected the superior steering of HF and its subject contents and subject areas. In connection with this, the EVA Dansk
evaluation institute carried out a number of studies and evaluations in 2008, covering both subject evaluations, subject area evaluations and a joint evaluation of the upper secondary school reform. The report was issued in December 2008.
Read more (in Danish): http://us.uvm.dk/voksen2/vuc/?menuid=351215

AMU – General adult vocational training courses
General adult vocational training courses are brief education programmes whose purpose is to satisfy the need of people without or with vocational training for vocational adult and continuing education. General adult vocational training courses give competence according to nationally defined standards in the general competence descriptions, and may be incorporated into education programme structures or make up part of a basic vocational qualification. AMU has a very broad and flexible supply of vocational adult and continuing education consisting of general adult vocational training courses and selected single subjects from vocational education, agricultural education and basic social and health education. In principle, admission to AMU is free and it is possible for employee teams with different educational backgrounds to participate together in an education programme, such as when new technology or a new work organisation is implemented. Thus, AMU is a flexible offer, which can satisfy the need of the individual company for a certain employee group and the individual participant through validation of prior knowledge.

The main target group is people with or without vocational training. The education programmes are designed with this target group in mind; moreover, this group is entitled to ACE compensation.

GVU – Basic education for adults
With basic education for adults (GVU), the students can combine work experience with practical courses and thereby complete an education at a professional level. Through GVU, the individual participant will reach the same goal and the same professional level as for the corresponding youth education. GVU is not a new education programme. Rather, it is a framework within which earlier education and work experience, supplemented with vocational education elements and AMU education, may be combined into a formal professional qualification. AMU education may be part of the activity in a GVU. People starting a GVU must undergo a competence evaluation at an educational institution or AMU centre to have their prior learning and skills recognised. On the one hand, the competence evaluation should evaluate the courses the individual has taken, and on the other hand evaluate skills and competence acquired through employment or other relevant experience. When the competence evaluation has been made – possibly after a competence-demonstrating period of up to 14 days – a competence certificate is issued, stating what parts of the vocational training programme the applicant has already mastered.

GVU education programmes comprise, for example, training programmes in trade and technology (VEUD), social and health education (SOSU), basic pedagogical education (PGU) and education in agriculture and shipping.

Vocational education programmes are at present being reorganised and a reform dating from August 2007 has created a legislation framework for VEUD, SOSU and agricultural education programmes. GVU education may be pursued at vocational schools, business academies, SOSU schools, agricultural and maritime institutions.
Read more (in Danish): http://us.uvm.dk/erhverv/gvu/gvu_hvad_hvem_hvordan.htm?menuid=350510
VVU – higher adult education, KVU, PD, Master

KVU, short-cycle higher education programmes, comprise a range of education programmes including Academy Profession degrees. Short-cycle higher education programmes for adults exist in the following areas:
The trade area, health, pedagogy and administration;
Diploma programmes, PD;
Diploma programmes, PD, are continuing education programmes. Usually their scope is equivalent to one year of full-time studies at bachelor level, corresponding to 60 ECTS points.
Diploma programme are built in modules, which may be taken together or individually and with a possibility for flexible selection. Admission to a diploma programme requires a minimum of two years’ work experience. The education emphasises a connection between the participants’ practical experience and qualifications in the profession.
PD is offered at business academies and University Colleges in the following areas: pedagogy, social science, technology and healthcare.

4 Danish Adult Education Authority (DFS). The Board’s report for the DFS operation in 2007, p. 2
5 Danish adult education authority. The Board’s report for the DFS operation in 2007, p. 2

Master’s Degree

With regard to level, these programmes correspond to long-cycle higher education programmes offered within the ordinary system. Master’s degree programmes are offered by universities, schools of economics, etc. Master’s degree programmes are offered under the university legislation provisions for part-time education. Master’s degree programmes are offered both as a regulated course, where the student signs up for the entire degree, and as individual modules, where the student attends an individual teaching module followed by an examination. The participants pay for the course and the possibility for financial support in the form of state adult education support (SVU) is limited.

The purpose of the Master’s degree programme is to develop the participants’ professional and personal competences on a scientific basis to enable them to assume highly qualified posts in companies, institutions etc. The entry requirements into a Master’s degree programme consist of a previous degree at bachelor level, at least two years’ relevant work experience and relevant study competence. As a regulated period, the Master’s degree programmes are part-time studies taken over a period of two years, and most of the participants study and work at the same time. The degree is completed with a Master’s project, which can be based on the students’ current work situation. The scope of Master’s degree programme is usually equivalent to one year of full-time studies (60 ECTS points).
(special source: www.dpu.dk)

Accreditation

All vocationally oriented higher education programmes must be approved by the Minister of Education. From January 1 2008, applications for approval of new education programmes are handled by the Ministry of Education, and a prerequisite for approval is that the programme has been accredited by the Accreditation Council. The handling of applications for approval of new education programmes is based on a number of minimum requirements. The minimum requirements are set up as checklists, which can be used when writing applications and measure the quality and relevance of the programmes.
New education programmes are continuously developed in various areas and at different levels, and from January 1 2008 the following require accreditation:

- Business academy educations,
- Professional Bachelor’s degree programmes,
- Continuing adult education programmes (VVU),
- Diploma programmes,
- Master’s degree programmes.

Non-formal education: *folkeoplysning* (liberal/popular adult education)

*Folkeoplysning*, which includes evening schools and education associations, the folk university, residential and non-residential folk high schools, *efterskole* (residential schools for teenagers aged 14-18), domestic science and handicraft schools and associations, was mentioned in the Ministry of Education report “Denmark’s strategy for lifelong learning” in 2007”. The report states that lifelong learning is not only a task for the education system, but is also supported and furthered through initiatives, ”not least within the spheres of *folkeoplysning*, associations and culture”4

*Folkeoplysning* is hereby invited at a superior level to contribute to the contents of the strategy, but has not been given a place as a player on equal terms with other providers of general education. In the Board report for the Danish Adult Education Authority it says that ”there is no provision for *folkeoplysning* in the funding intended to facilitate the adult and continuing education reform”…” and it is not included in the goals for adult and continuing education which have been set up to measure the activity and the effect of the investments”. This tendency that *folkeoplysning* in reality is given a smaller role is, as previously mentioned, also discussed as a serious consequence of the savings in the government’s 2010 restoration package.

*Folkeoplysning* uses current themes such as validation of prior knowledge and skills, guidance issues, motivation for education, democracy and citizenship, consumer consciousness, and climate and health promotion. It offers a wide range of creative and cultural subjects, as well as courses which strengthen basic skills such as reading, math and writing skills. The activities are often presented in a form that facilitates increased personal self-esteem and self-confidence. This is in line with the government strategy for lifelong learning, but in order for *folkeoplysning* to become acknowledged more formally as an equal player, it is an important challenge to document the contribution made by it. This task has started in several areas and the legislation has created initiatives which concern *folkeoplysning*.

A few examples:
A motivation study conducted by the Danish Adult Education Authority (DFS) concluded, among other things, that adult education motivates education and strengthens the participants’ personal and professional competences.

With the law on increased validation of prior knowledge passed in the Danish Parliament (Folketinget) on June 6 2007, competences acquired in the third sector can now be demonstrated and documented as real competences in relation to education and work. Both the association for non-residential folk high schools and education associations cooperate with DFS to develop tools for validation and documentation of prior knowledge in the third sector.
The latest law on folk high schools has an opening for parts of formal competence-yielding educations to be directly included in the folk high school studies, and the government granted 3 MDK a year in 2006 - 2008 for the schools to try out these new possibilities. Extra funding was allocated for organising qualification-yielding folk high school courses, linked to a mentor programmes, and for the folk high schools to take an active part in integration projects. In the spring of 2008, the folk high school association in Denmark received 19.9 MDK from the so-called “Satspuljen” pool reserved for vulnerable groups for a project where young people with insufficient prerequisites for completing a youth education could attend studies which form part a vocationally oriented youth education qualification during their time at a folk high school.

Non-residential folk high schools and education associations are not included as relevant cooperation partners in the agreements on the new ACE centres in the same way they were in the local adult guidance networks.

The legislation is also open for the possibility that education associations can work with flexible education forms and study circles as a major part of the joint activity.

**Evening schools**

Evening schools *(aftenskole)* provide adult education with the purpose to increase the individual’s general and professional knowledge and skills ”to strengthen the ability to take responsibility for his/her own life and to be actively involved in the society”. Activities may include teaching, lectures and more flexible and adjusted forms, and activities that further discussions. Evening schools enjoy a high degree of freedom with regard to subject selection, idea foundation, teacher qualifications, teaching forms and course length – many evening school activities actually take place during the day! The education does not give formal competence.

Participants pay 2/3 of the cost and the municipality pays max. 1/3, and provides the premises free of charge. The prerequisite for this support is that the evening school is established as an adult education association with regulations and a board. There are around 2,500 such associations spread over the country – and a majority of them are linked to one of the five larger countrywide adult education associations. Some associations offer a single course or two, some have established a choir as an association, others have specialised in areas such as languages or exercise subjects. Others again, especially in the larger cities, offer courses around the year in the entire subject range as their main activity, often in conjunction with other activities they undertake in cooperation with an employment agency, the social welfare service, etc.

The five countrywide adult education associations are:

- AOF – the workers’ education association;
- DOF – The Danish education association;
- FOF – The people’s education association;
- LOF – The liberal education association;
- NETOP – Network for education.

The adult education law, section I, deals with the main activities of evening schools.

For more information: Jubii.dk/indeks/Uddannelse/kursusudbydere/aftenskoler and www.dfs.dk

A non-residential folk high school is an independent, private institution, which offers teaching for the purpose of adult education or furthering of employment for adults between the ages of 18 and 60. In common for all non-residential folk high schools that they have activities for groups of
people and in different subjects and activities. Non-residential folk high school participants are not residents at the school, and teaching normally only takes place during the day, which suits most adults’ daily life. Purpose, subject range and environment are similar to those of a regular folk high school. This means that several perspectives are emphasised simultaneously: the human aspect, knowledge/subject matter and the social aspect. The target group is ”people in a situation of transition”. ”Most of the students are people with a short education, who are in a vulnerable situation in today’s society”. (Special source: Excellence for non-residential folk high schools, 2003, p. 5). The activities are targeted to clearly defined groups, such as unemployed refugees and immigrants or unqualified young people who have dropped out of an education. An ever-increasing participant group is young people who prepare themselves at the non-residential folk high schools for admission to a formal education programme in a creative field, and this means that some non-residential folk high schools still have a very specialised subject profile. It is part of the idea with non-residential folk high schools to increase the participants’ opportunities in relation to education and work. Guidance, education motivation and validation of previously acquired knowledge and skills are important elements in the work of non-residential folk high schools. The teaching is organised in such a way that it does not require the participants to have previous schooling or a professional background. Non-residential folk high school teaching does not result in a degree. However, several non-residential folk high schools offer preparatory adult education (FVU) besides their general non-residential folk high school teaching.

In 2006, 50 non-residential folk high schools with a total of nearly 3,500 students a year each had around 15,000 participants (on average 8 - 10 weeks). Read more (in Danish) at www.daghojskoler.dk, and Adult education law, section II https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=24314#A2

Folk high schools
Folk high schools offer adult students courses with the main aim of educating people in the spirit of folkeoplysning (“popular enlightenment”). Individual subjects or subject groups can have a prominent place, e.g. at a sports folk high school or an arts folk high school, but subject specialisation and skills learning may not exceed 50%. General education teaching must be at least half according to the law on folk high schools from 2003. The schools do not generally provide a formal competence-yielding education, but the new law has opened for the possibility to supplement the schools’ main activity with formal competence-yielding education, possibly as an element of the ordinary courses. The individual high school selects its own idea foundation, which is stated in the school’s regulations. Folk high schools are private institutions. They offer both short courses (less than two weeks) and longer courses (more than 12 weeks).

The student numbers have been more stable in the last three years. In 2007, there was a 1% increase of students compared to 2005 (3,332 students) and the same picture is seen for spring courses (3,516 students). In 2006, 73% of the target group was between 18 and 24, and the sex distribution was somewhat tilted with 57% women. The number of participants with an immigrant background was 445 in 2006, a marked increase compared to 2005. Folk high schools generally continue to struggle financially, and have implemented an action plan with goals for 2012. The goals include strengthening the folk high schools’ foundation among the people, political acceptance and to get 10% of the young people to complete a high school course. The pedagogical focus areas include strengthening of the cooperation with the formal education system, striving for high schools to be part of the development of validation of prior knowledge and skills, and continuing the work on a
"project for folk high school participation among young people without competence-yielding education". This work includes the 19.9 MDK grant from the "satspulje” pool, mentioned earlier.  
http://www.ffd.dk/media/153122/skriftlig_beretning.pdf

The folk high school law is a shorter version of the applicable law, called law on folk high schools, *efterskole* schools, domestic science and handicraft schools (free boarding schools).  
For more information: www.ffd.dk

**Danish University Extension (Folkeuniversitetet)**  
The Danish University Extension was established in 1898 and it is today a nation-wide adult education operation with a regional structure comprising four departments in the university cities of Copenhagen, Aarhus, Odense and Aalborg. Moreover, there are more than 100 local committees, which are responsible for running University Extension activities outside the university cities. These committees are administered by the four regional offices and a department for committees, which are not connected to the regions. Each department outlines its own programs, which also include education provision from the respective regional committees. The University Extension Board has the overall financial and professional responsibility for all university extension activities in Denmark. The purpose of the University Extension is to spread knowledge of research methods and results through adult education teaching and lectures.

All the institutions organising university extension activities are accountable to the University Extension Board appointed by the Minister of Education. The university extension branches disseminate information concerning methods and results from a very wide spectrum of research areas. The education does not give formal competence.  
The law on *folkeoplysning*, section III, deals with university extension activities.  
For more information: www.folkeuniversitetet.dk and www.uvm.dk

Read more: 
Facts and figures 2009 (available in English)  
http://www.uvm.dk/service/Statistik/Tvaergaenende/Tal%20der%20taler.aspx

Read more:  
"Denmark’s strategy for lifelong learning” (in Danish) http://pub.uvm.dk/2007/livslanglaering/  
“Strategic focus areas. Council for adult and continuing education – ACE council –May 2010” (in Danish)  
http://www.uvm.dk/~media/Publikationer/2010/Voksne/Strategiske%20fokusomraader%20-%20VEU-raadet/Strategiske%20fokusomrader_web.ashx  
"The Danish qualification framework for lifelong learning – a tool to give an overview of educations in Denmark” 2009/10 (in Danish)  
http://www.uvm.dk/~media/Publikationer/2009/Voksne/Kvalifikationsramme/Stor/100811_kvalitetsramme_livslang_laering.ashx  
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