

TEACHER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING FOR INCLUSION

Policy Mapping Grid: Denmark



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Further information about the Teacher Professional Learning for Inclusion (TPL4I) activities is available on the [TPL4I web area](#).

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Secretariat
Østre Stationsvej 33
DK-5000 Odense C Denmark
Tel: +45 64 41 00 20
secretariat@european-agency.org

Brussels Office
Rue Montoyer, 21
BE-1000 Brussels Belgium
Tel: +32 2 213 62 80
brussels.office@european-agency.org

www.european-agency.org



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SECTION 1: WIDER POLICY CONTEXT

Wider policy context

For this mapping, the answers are based on the public primary and lower-secondary school (*Folkeskole*).

After the legislation in Denmark all children and young people should be offered the support needed to thrive, develop and get further education.

All children in Denmark of compulsory school age are subject to the same school legislation.

By a change of law in 2012, more learners in the public primary and lower-secondary school (*Folkeskole*) should be included in mainstream school classes with the necessary support and professional challenges. This is the main content of the concept of inclusion in Denmark.

Differentiation of teaching, team formation, supplementary education and co-teaching can be used to support learner development and learning as much as possible in mainstream school classes. These are important elements and challenges in inclusive education in Denmark.

In addition to this (and a number of opportunities for support), inclusive education is supported by special resource staff, internally and/or externally.

With the reform of the primary and lower-secondary school (*Folkeskole*) that came into force in 2014, clear goals have been set for the development of the primary and lower-secondary school: All pupils should be as capable as they can, the importance of social background must be reduced in relation to the academic achievements, and the learners' well-being will be improved.

Municipalities and schools must offer all learners, including learners with special needs and disabilities:

- a teaching provision that meets their educational needs;
- a school day that is organised to take due account of the learners' special needs and needs for support.

These rules and objectives are reflected in teacher education, continuing education programmes and capacity building projects in municipalities and schools.

These rules and objectives lead to a framework of professional development for inclusive education.



SECTION 2: VISION AND MAIN PRINCIPLES OF TPL4I POLICY

2.1 Policy vision

Policy priorities	Findings
2.1.1 Policy is guided by a vision that all teachers (i.e. student teachers, beginning teachers, experienced teachers, teacher educators) can access career-long professional learning opportunities regarding the principles of inclusive education	–
2.1.2 Policy is guided by a vision that all teachers receive education regarding their role and collaboration in and contribution to inclusive education	–



Policy priorities	Findings
2.1.3 Policy is guided by a vision that all teachers receive education regarding their pedagogical responsibility to promote the interaction, learning, participation and collaboration of all learners	–

Evaluative comments for 'Policy vision'

–

2.2 Main principles

Policy priorities	Findings
2.2.1 Teachers' professional learning is defined in policy as a prerequisite for inclusive education	–
2.2.2 Policy states that the principles and practice of inclusive education should be part of initial teacher education	2.2.2.1. Initial Teacher Education programme (primary and lower-secondary school teacher): 'The teacher's foundational competences' is subdivided into two clusters: 'Pedagogy and the teaching profession' and 'general education'. 'Pedagogy and the teaching profession' prepares



Policy priorities	Findings
	<p>the student for developing the fundamental teaching competences needed to ensure the pupils' learning, development and wellbeing.</p> <p><i>It consists of four areas of competence:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Pupils' learning and development</i>• <i>General teaching proficiency</i>• <i>Special needs and remedial training</i>• <i>Danish as a second language.</i> <p>(Eurydice, National Education Systems, Denmark, Initial Education for Teachers Working in Early Childhood and School Education)</p> <p>2.2.2.2</p> <p>Regarding Teacher Education programme (primary and lower-secondary school):</p> <p>The purpose of the programme is that the student acquires the knowledge and skills necessary to be a professionally, pedagogically and didactically competent teacher in the Danish primary school, according to the purpose of the primary school.</p> <p>Teacher Education programme and the basic competences:</p> <p>1) Pedagogy and teacher professionalism, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) student learning and development;(b) general teaching competence;(c) special education and(d) teaching bilinguals.



Policy priorities	Findings
	<p>2) General education: Christianity, life enlightenment and citizenship.</p> <p>Regarding inclusion, the following academic objectives are set in the rules on teacher education:</p> <p>The student teacher can</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop learning environments for students and groups, taking into account differences in learning conditions and learning objectives. • observe, support and challenge students' social, emotional and cognitive development. • use communicative frameworks and methods so that conflicts, social problems and bullying are the starting point for positive reformulations so that inclusion and socialization processes are optimized while supporting the development of the individual student. • differentiate teaching according to students' prerequisites and potentials. • reasonably choose specialised educational and inclusive efforts and collaboration with the school's internal and external resource persons. <p>(Order on the professional Bachelor's in primary teaching)</p>
<p>2.2.3 Policy states that beginning teachers should receive appropriate education and support to enable them to acquire the knowledge, attitudes and skills for inclusive education</p>	<p>–</p>



Policy priorities	Findings
<p>2.2.4 Policy ensures that experienced teachers receive appropriate education and support to enable them to acquire the knowledge, attitudes and skills for inclusive education</p>	<p>–</p>
<p>2.2.5 Policy states that specialist teachers and other professionals (e.g. speech and language therapists, multilingual education teachers and other professionals who work in schools) receive appropriate education and support to enable them to acquire the knowledge, attitudes and skills for inclusive education</p>	<p>2.2.5.1</p> <p><i>Special education legislation outlines the qualifications required from the educators and teachers involved. For teaching infants, teachers must have completed initial training as teachers or educators, as well as a special one-year course in special education at the Danish University of Education.</i></p> <p><i>Teachers with specific course training provide special needs assistance in primary and lower-secondary school up to the tenth grade. Social educators with similar prerequisites may provide special needs assistance in pre-school classes. The same applies to special needs assistance in subjects or areas with co-ordinated education, pursuant to the Folkeskole Act.</i></p> <p>(European Agency, Country Information for Denmark, Teacher education for inclusive education)</p> <p>2.2.5.2</p> <p><i>Special education follows the basic principle that if the teacher is responsible for all the teaching of one or more pupils, they must have completed a course of education qualifying them for the given task. If teaching is a supplement to mainstream teaching in one or</i></p>



Policy priorities	Findings
	<p><i>more subjects, there are no particular qualification requirements. It is not formal, but real qualifications that are important.</i></p> <p>(European Agency, Country Information for Denmark, Teacher education for inclusive education)</p>
2.2.6 Policy states that teacher educators working in university education departments or pedagogical institutes should be trained and committed to the inclusive education agenda in their courses, as understood in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the European Disability Strategy	–

Evaluative comments for ‘Main principles’

–



SECTION 3: GOALS AND CONTINUUM OF SUPPORT FOR TPL4I POLICY

3.1 Goals

Policy priorities	Findings
3.1.1 Policy states that all teachers should have qualifications that reflect an inclusive education agenda	–
3.1.2 Policy states competence areas for inclusive education for all teachers working at different levels of education (e.g. professional development of all teachers to facilitate their involvement in co-teaching, planning together, developing differentiated materials collaboratively, etc.)	<p>3.1.2.1</p> <p><i>The new collective agreement 2011 for teachers in the municipalities, which have been agreed upon between the Danish Union of Teachers (Danmarks Lærereforening) and Local Government Denmark (Kommunernes Landsforening), contains elements of an individual continuing professional development plan.</i></p> <p><i>The agreement states that the school leader and the teacher together work out a continuing educational professional plan. The goal is to make sure that the resources are used for education which is relevant in relation to the challenges the teachers meet in their teaching.</i></p> <p><i>The plan is thought of as a simple tool to prioritize and maintain focus on education, which qualifies teachers' work even more. The result of this agreement is seen as the first step towards a securing of the right to continuing professional development for teachers.</i></p> <p>(Eurydice, National Education Systems, Denmark, Continuing Professional Development for Teachers Working in Early Childhood and School Education)</p>



Policy priorities	Findings
	<p>3.1.2.2</p> <p>According to the agreement between the Danish Union of Teachers and Local Government Denmark (KL – the association and interest organisation of the 98 Danish municipalities):</p> <p>The school leader and the teacher together work out a continuing educational professional plan. The goal is education which is relevant in relation to the challenges the teachers face in their teaching.</p> <p>The plan is thought of as a simple tool to prioritise and maintain focus on education, which qualifies teachers' work even more.</p> <p>3.1.2.3</p> <p><i>Danish teachers are free to participate in in-service training activities also referred to as continuing professional development.</i></p> <p><i>A great part of the in-service training possibilities for teachers take place at the university colleges, which have departments in many cities in Denmark. Here, in-service training is offered in forms of courses, diploma degrees and other competence rewarding in-service training (e.g. supplemented main subjects, guidance programmes, school librarian programmes etc).</i></p> <p>(Eurydice, National Education Systems, Denmark, Continuing Professional Development for Teachers Working in Early Childhood and School Education)</p> <p>3.1.2.4</p> <p>Danish teachers can participate in in-service training activities also referred to as continuing professional development. Many in-service training possibilities for teachers take place at the university colleges, which have departments in many cities in Denmark.</p>



Policy priorities	Findings
	<p>Here, in-service training is offered through courses, diploma degrees and other competence rewarding in-service training.</p> <p>Some continuing education is dedicated to inclusive education and special education with various relevant approaches.</p>
3.1.3 Policy states that all teachers' professional learning opportunities consider teacher competences for inclusive education	–
3.1.4 There is a formal strategy for promoting dialogue between ministries, regional/local authorities/municipalities and teacher educators to agree on the requirements of teachers' professional development opportunities for inclusion	–
3.1.5 There is a mechanism to ensure that all professional learning opportunities available to teachers are aligned with national- and local-level policy goals for an understanding of inclusive education	–



Policy priorities	Findings
3.1.6 There are strategies to ensure that local-level professional opportunities for teachers are flexible/adaptable to local school contexts and school development plans for inclusive education	–
3.1.7 There is a medium- and long-term review strategy for teachers' professional learning opportunities to ensure they meet system requirements for an inclusive education system	–

Evaluative comments for 'Goals'

–



3.2 Continuum of support

Policy priorities	Findings
3.2.1 There is a strategy to ensure a continuum of diverse professional learning opportunities for inclusive education – for pre-service, beginning and experienced teachers, as well as teacher educators and support teachers – across all levels where teachers work	–
3.2.2 There are strategies for developing leadership competences (e.g. school leadership or learning support leadership roles) for inclusive education in all relevant professional learning opportunities	–
3.2.3 There are mechanisms to support schools/higher education institutions to develop strategic plans for teachers' professional learning in inclusive education	–



Policy priorities	Findings
3.2.4 There are strategies to support effective collaboration and joint work between schools and higher education institutions/universities	–

Evaluative comments for 'Continuum of support'

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SECTION 4: CAPACITY BUILDING, FUNDING AND MONITORING OF TPL4I POLICY

4.1 Capacity building

Policy priorities	Findings
4.1.1 There are strategies to increase the capacity of all schools/higher education institutions to support all teachers to engage in professional learning activities on inclusive education	4.1.1.1 <i>The Ministry of Education has supported municipalities and schools to implement the new legislation and to improve the level of inclusive education by forming a task force and a knowledge centre to collect information, to initiate and support research programmes and to disseminate ideas, information and knowledge.</i> (European Agency, Country Information for Denmark, Systems of support and specialist provision)
4.1.2 There is a mechanism to facilitate dialogue between all teachers/leaders/other stakeholders to develop a shared understanding of inclusive education as an approach that ensures high-quality learning opportunities for all	4.1.2.1 <i>For special education in schools (that is, special needs support for more than nine hours a week), in special classes and special schools, the head teacher has the obligation to follow procedures for special needs education with input from external specialists, the educational-psychological service (PPR) and other specialists. Schools are obliged to follow up on the development of children referred to special educational assistance. They meet at least once a year to discuss necessary adjustments, i.e. continuation, alterations or discontinuation of the assistance.</i> (European Agency, Country Information for Denmark, Systems of support and specialist provision)



Policy priorities	Findings
	<p>4.1.2.2</p> <p><i>In 2012, Denmark established several systems to support schools and municipalities to increase their abilities to offer quality-based education and to reduce the need to send students to special needs education. These include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>Establishment of a task force giving advice directly to schools and school administration on how to improve inclusive education strategies in practice. This task force is based in the Ministry of Education.</i> <p>(European Agency, Country Information for Denmark, Systems of support and specialist provision)</p>
4.1.3 There is guidance on how teachers working in mainstream school settings/higher education institutions can understand and enact inclusive education	–
4.1.4 There are guidelines that support all teachers to collaborate to support all learners	–



Policy priorities	Findings
4.1.5 There are guidelines on how methods of quality assessment, school evaluation, inspections and other accountability measures contribute to planning/identifying priority areas of professional learning activities for inclusive education	–
4.1.6 There are strategies to support schools/higher education institutions to build strong leadership teams that are aware of the inclusive education agenda	–
4.1.7 There are incentives stated in policy for all teachers to engage in professional learning activities for inclusive education	–
4.1.8 There are strategies stated in policy to develop the role of specialist teachers as a resource for mainstream schools	4.1.8.1 <i>Special schools are, to some degree, used as advice givers in municipalities. Teachers from special schools can be used for coaching and supervision, together with educational experts from educational-psychological services, which are established in all municipalities. The tendency is that schools try to attract specialists to work within the schools themselves. (European Agency, Country Information for Denmark, Systems of support and specialist provision)</i>



Policy priorities	Findings
	<p>4.1.8.2</p> <p>Much capacity building is based on collaboration and knowledge sharing between specialists and actors in mainstream inclusive education, for example, between the school and external specialist from the educational-psychological service. Also, special schools are, to some degree, used to give advice in municipalities. Teachers from special schools can be used for coaching and supervision, together with educational experts.</p> <p>Currently, there is a great interest in co-teaching (Marilyn Friend) in Denmark. This can be beneficial to the class and to the knowledge sharing at school as a whole.</p>
<p>4.1.9 There are strategies to promote professional learning for inclusion in teachers' common competence areas (e.g. experienced teachers and specialist teachers are expected to engage in professional learning activities that promote inclusive education pedagogies, such as co-teaching)</p>	<p>–</p>
<p>4.1.10 There are competences for professional learning in inclusive education for all teachers</p>	<p>–</p>

Evaluative comments for 'Capacity building'

–



4.2 Funding

Policy priorities	Findings
4.2.1 There are financial incentives to encourage all schools/higher education institutions to develop policy and action plans for teachers' professional learning for inclusion	4.2.1.1 The Ministry of Education has established 'a financial state fund for development and research promoting inclusive education for students in special needs education' (European Agency, Country Information for Denmark, Systems of support and specialist provision). 4.2.1.2 The Ministry of Education supports municipalities and schools to improve the level of inclusive education by having a group of outgoing counsellors and an office that collects, initiates and supports research programmes and disseminates ideas, information and knowledge.
4.2.2 There are mechanisms for systematic data collection on expenditure on teachers' professional learning that informs cost-effectiveness issues	–
4.2.3 There are flexible resourcing mechanisms that foster teachers' professional learning at school level	–

Evaluative comments for 'Funding'

–



4.3 Monitoring

Policy priorities	Findings
<p>4.3.1 There is a comprehensive accountability framework for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of teacher professional learning for inclusion activities</p>	<p>4.3.1.1</p> <p>Denmark has established several institutions and monitoring groups with the aim of evaluating the quality of support systems for learners and the outcome of schooling. The Danish Evaluation Institute (<i>Danmarks Evalueringsinstitut – EVA</i>) is:</p> <p><i>... an independent institution conducting research for the development of quality in education for kindergarten children and for schools and educational institutions. Every year, this institution examines educational matters and evaluates them through national reports. This institution has played a central role in establishing reliable knowledge in the field of special needs education and evaluating support systems in Danish schools. EVA has contributed to give schools and authorities knowledge about schools' outcomes and has recommended changes to improve quality in education.</i></p> <p>(European Agency, Country Information for Denmark, Systems of support and specialist provision)</p> <p>4.3.1.2</p> <p>EVA is an independent Danish governmental organisation that is responsible for the evaluation and quality development of all parts of the Danish education system from day care to universities. In some projects, this also includes teacher professional development and competences.</p>



Policy priorities	Findings
4.3.2 Monitoring mechanisms ensure that inequalities in access to professional learning opportunities at regional or organisational levels are addressed	–
4.3.3 There are mechanisms to support schools/teacher education departments/higher education institutions to have ownership of review and improvement processes in relation to teachers' professional learning	–
4.3.4 There are mechanisms to share and analyse data to inform improvement processes in relation to teachers' professional learning at national and local level	–
4.3.5 There is data available on whether teachers are engaged in professional learning that is relevant to the level of education they teach	–



Policy priorities	Findings
4.3.6 There are mechanisms to ensure that teachers' professional learning contributes to improving inclusive education practice at school level/the level of a teacher education department or higher education institution	4.3.6.1 <i>In 2012, Denmark established several systems to support schools and municipalities to increase their abilities to offer quality-based education and to reduce the need to send students to special needs education. These include:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Establishment of a knowledge centre for inclusion to ensure the collection of experiences from successful schools and research for better inclusion. This unit is based in the Ministry of Education, and it communicates and initiates new knowledge and information about quality in inclusive education and in special needs education.</i> <p>(European Agency, Country Information for Denmark, Systems of support and specialist provision)</p>

Evaluative comments for 'Monitoring'

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