

# **Approaches to Cultural Diversity in the Danish Education System: The case of public schools**

## **A European Approach to Multicultural Citizenship: Legal, Political and Educational Challenges**

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### **1. Introduction**

Previous work package reports on Denmark in this project have already discussed the Danish type of belonging and the resulting ‘civic/culturalist assimilation’ approach to cultural diversity and concomitant legislative and political responses (See WP1 and WP2). The field of education in general and primary school education in particular, is no exception to this tendency. As no group constituency favours any notion of multiculturalism – which is associated with illiberalism and value relativism – no or very few of the standard multicultural legislative

initiatives for the preservation of language, culture, and religion are seen in Denmark. Yet the system of Danish public education is facing cultural and linguistic diversity every day in a way that has to be dealt with. In a Danish political context of lacking political will to any significant degree of diversity politics this makes this sphere interesting as one of the areas in which the growing foreign/Muslim presence shows the most and in which the host society is directly confronted with cultural differences. Broadly speaking, while in the past problems of migrant integration into the school system was much neglected, the area is presently very high on the political agenda and considerable administrative effort and financial resources are channelled towards solving the problems at hand.

The number of foreign or *bilingual* children (the latter is the term officially used for immigrant children and means that their mother tongue is not Danish) has risen from only about a few thousands (2.000-4.000) in 1970 to around 60.000 at present (Kristjansdottir 2006, Ministry of Integration 2006). Now, around 10 per cent of the children in Danish schools are bilingual. Many of these children, however, and in line with the relatively ethnically and socially segregated nature of residential areas in the major Danish urban areas, attend schools with much higher percentages of bilingual children. Surveys have revealed that the degree of educational success measured as achieved skills levels in both spoken and written Danish language and other subjects are very poor and lower than in other European countries. Indeed, less than 50 per cent of the bilingual children's leave the primary school with results that qualify them to proceed to higher education (OECD 2003). This is the worst aspects of a more generally perceived (but also politically disputed) malaise of what is one of the most expensive national primary school systems of the world – i.e. that it seems incapable of reversing the social inequalities in levels of achievement. It appears to produce a large (and mediocre – in such fields as reading, spelling, math, and historical knowledge) middle group, a (too) small elite, and a disturbingly large low end group (15%), which is dominated by boys – from immigrant backgrounds *and* less privileged, and non-academic, backgrounds – who get no education beyond primary school, and are much more likely to be unemployed (Ministry of Social Affairs, 2003: cpt. 9).

This has caused alarm and called for political reactions. It is by now a normal perception among politicians and in the national debate that the cultural and linguistic differences, espe-

cially pronounced when it comes to children with a Muslim background, cause substantial problems for the functionality of foreign children in the school system. Migration related diversity is thus largely seen as a problem to be solved by its diminution, and the school system is seen to have failed in the task of integrating the immigrant children because it has failed in the task of diminishing the differences between native born and foreign children. This report will discuss the relative absence of policies, let alone discourses of multi- or intercultural accommodation in the Danish school system – particularly at a central level. It will also assess the important steps taken in recent years to address low achievement levels among migrant children – by any standard the most pressing problem, whatever one’s position on models of migrant inclusion. However, it will also question some of the ambivalences of these steps and the way that these reflect a specific Danish ‘take’ on migration management in schools. Finally – by way of conclusion – it will present some critical remarks on the paradoxes of a Danish public school system which, while understanding itself as the spearhead of egalitarian modernism appears to reproduce exactly the types of social differences and segregations most abhorred in Danish political culture.

The report concentrates on policies of integration and diversity in the Danish ‘folkeskole’ (primary and lower secondary school, six to fifteen years approximately). We look initially on developments of the way in which policy on primary schools at governmental level has responded to and conceptualised increasing ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity, focusing on central debates and policy formulations. In particular, we briefly trace three elements of discourse – familiar from the analysis of overall political debates in the WP1 & WP2-reports – concerning, respectively, a certain ‘renationalisation’ (and indeed a re-christening) of the public school; a new emphasis on ‘citizenship’ (*medborgerskab*); and – above all – the discourse of low achievement, employability and social cohesion. This latter aspect, in turn, is closely integrated to what is probably the largest theme, which can be extracted from the politics of educational integration in Denmark, i.e. the question of language education. The linguistic approach to diversity has been dominant in two ways. First, it appears in the development of “Danish as a second language,” which aims at providing foreign children with a Danish language level comparable to that of native speaking Danish children. Secondly, it concerns the much discussed training in mother tongue, which began to be offered to foreign children as early as 1975 but, significantly, was abolished in 2002. Then follows a short discussion of the

rather decentralised and pragmatic ‘diversity management’, which does take place in schools with high numbers of immigrants such as the *Nordgård* school in the Aarhus suburb Gjellerup. Finally, we move out of the realm of the public primary schools and examine the religiously and culturally specific schools that exist in Denmark as a consequence of the long-standing tradition of creating so-called “free schools”, which are independent but state funded schools run by groups of parents, and which have become controversial as a result of the utilisation of this structure by Muslim immigrants.

## **2. Data**

This report, as other EMILIE-reports, focuses on the relationship between general and more sector-specific policy discourses on multicultural educational challenges and on the other hand the changes in policy; placed on the background of real developments in school attainment levels and pedagogical challenges in Denmark. The data used for this report, apart from more general theoretical literatures, consist of the main Ministry of Education policy papers, the laws and regulations governing the area, many newspaper articles, and a number of previous expert treatments of the problems at hand (in particular (a) a large literature on the controversies of Danish and mother tongue language teaching, and (b) existing analyses of the political discourse on education and diversity in Denmark). Also for the report in depth interviews, using a common list of questions, were carried out with six respondents in the field: A ministerial civil servant, a school rector, a mayor with special responsibility for primary school education in Copenhagen, a teacher in teaching college, and two educational experts and public commentators (see the names in ‘Interviews’ below).

## **3. The Danish ”folkeskole”**

‘Folkeskole’ literally means ‘folk school’ or ‘people’s school’, as in the German *Volkschule*. We will translate it to primary school, even though ‘folkeskole’ both covers primary and lower secondary school. The philosophy guiding the principles behind the Danish ‘folkeskole’ has changed over time, just as the specific understandings of these principles have always been stakes in political contests. Always a major component of modern nation building, the ‘folkeskole’ has often constituted high politics in Denmark, seen by politicians to contribute, if not determine, the winning or losing of parliamentary elections.

The Danish public school system facilitates compulsory education in 9 years<sup>1</sup> of all children in Denmark, regardless of citizenship (but *not* refugees with pending asylum applications), from age 7. A publicly financed pre-school kindergarten year ('class 0') is considered as an integrated preparation. While some children do an optional 10<sup>th</sup> grade year, the secondary school system includes a three-year period of general high school or different types of vocational teaching. The typical number of years at school is thus 13-14, counting preschool and depending on the optional 10<sup>th</sup> year. However, a disturbing 19% of all young receive no education after 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> grade (Ugebrevet A4, no. 29, 2007).

Growing out of the reformed Lutheran church, and the requirement to learn the catechism, prayers and hymns, which facilitated very early mass literacy, laws governing the structure and purpose of compulsory primary school education have been in place in Denmark since the age of absolutism. Whereas the earliest regulations strongly emphasised the inculcation of faith and Christian civic virtues ("good and decent people, according to evangelic-Christian teaching, and ... useful citizens of the state" is an expression from the 1814-law's preamble), the onus after the loss of Schleswig to Germany (1864) was decidedly nationalistic, particularly in the subjects of history and Danish. The 1903-law saw the advent of a more homogenous, science-based state-controlled, school, meeting the requirements of an industrialised and modern society, and a law in 1937, based on social democratic and liberal ideas of the period, sought a less national romantic emphasis, though the Lutheran basis remained unchallenged. Laws after the second world war (1958 and 1975) were influenced by modern reform pedagogy, gradually creating a more egalitarian school – which in Denmark significantly translated to an *un-divided* schools with less and less use of examinations and tests, particularly in the first 7 years (Nielsen 2003).

From the sixties onwards a corresponding emphasis has been placed on the school's role in the democratisation of society. The change of paradigm is visible in the reform of the law on primary schools in 1975, when national and Christian values were exchanged with democratic principles as the value foundation behind the school. The aim of democratic education was combined with the egalitarian aim of ensuring social and economic equality in society through a homogenising and equality seeking school (Kristensen 2002). However, in the wake

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<sup>1</sup> However, *School attendance*, incidentally, is not legally required: parents are allowed in principle, given a range of requirements, to teach their children themselves.

of criticism of student performance, in the nineties, the focus on social equality has been deemphasised a little in favour of a more individualist and difference-oriented education, especially taking students' different skills levels into consideration and focusing on individual 'competences'. When the first Pisa evaluations from OECD in 2000 showed a poor level of Danish students' reading and writing skills compared to those of other EU countries the liberal/conservative government began a turn towards more 'old fashioned' methods of education, underlining discipline, nationally fixed curricula, evaluation of results, and an increase of the number of lessons in certain subjects. Despite these developments, the Danish school system is still in several ways, more anti-authoritarian, less formal and structured as regards content and methods, and also less demanding in terms of homework and exams (the students are still not marked until grade 8) than in most European countries.

### **3.1. The challenge: Employment and 'cohesion'**

Bilingual children, as already noted, generally do much poorer than native born pupils. Hardly 50 per cent of them appear to read well enough to proceed to higher education after finishing primary school. Moreover, foreign origin students' drop-out rate from higher education is high compared to that of native students and foreign students in other European countries (PISA-evaluation results by OECD, 2003).

The generally drawn conclusion on the basis of the OECD results is that the 'integration' of foreign children in the primary schools has failed. Nobody, certainly, can dispute that these figures are truly disturbing. This has set off an alarm bell in educational politics and called for a change of direction. On the national political level, the chosen direction is certainly not a step towards a greater accept and integration of cultural diversity – rather, such (misunderstood) accept is at times represented as the culprit. Whether either causes or solutions to the predicament have much to do with 'culture' in the first place, may in fact be questioned, as we shall go on to discuss in the conclusion of this report. The chosen direction is rather a series of steps towards a larger degree of what characterises integration policies generally in Denmark: homogenisation and control, based on a dual perceived threat if the integration of foreign children is not improved significantly: One is the creation (growth) of a class of uneducated, unemployed, and marginalised immigrants living on public support. This threat is

clearly a real one. And another is the dissolution of the 'cohesion' of Danish society, converting society into a patchwork of segregated groups:

If the local authorities don't get a grip on integration and diffusion of foreign children on the schools of the country, Denmark will face a huge problem in ten years. [...] And then we will see a previously unseen popular dissolution, where we shall lose the cohesion ['sammenhængskraft'] of the Danish society, if things do not get better<sup>2</sup> (Gregersen 2005, quoting Minister of Education Bertel Haarder).

In 2004-5 a new plan was initiated for the integration of bilingual children, from the age of three and through primary school. It followed the general line in the government's integration politics, linked support for basic values with education and employability.<sup>3</sup> And the OECD results have incited a reform, which is targeted at improving foreign origin students' educational levels significantly. This has led to a progressive plan with the final aim of equalizing the skills, in particular Danish language proficiency, and education levels of immigrants to that of Danes - in order to improve the immigrant employment level, and minimise welfare dependency

It is the government's aim to improve integration. There must be general support for the basic values in society such as democracy and gender equality. More immigrants must get a job and young immigrants and second generation immigrants must get an education to the same extent as Danish students, and we must put an end to the creation of ghettos<sup>4</sup> (A brief definition of the government's integration plan, Uddannelse 5/2005, introduction).

The new plan established to meet the educational challenges regarding bilingual children contains the following major initiatives (which will be elaborated further in the following):

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<sup>2</sup>Hvis ikke kommunerne får styr på integrationen og fordelingen af indvandrerbørn på landets skoler, står Danmark med et kæmpe-problem om ti år. [...] Og så vil vi se en hidtil uset folkelig opløsning, hvor vi mister sammenhængskraften i samfundet, hvis ikke det bliver bedre. Mens det kun er 14 pct. af de danske børn, der går ud af skolen og ikke får en uddannelse, er det over 50 pct. af de tosprogede.'

<sup>3</sup> See especially the government's plan on integration of foreigners: A new chance for everybody (En ny chance til alle) from 2005.

<sup>4</sup> 'Det er regeringens mål, at integrationen skal forbedres. Der skal være almindelig tilslutning til samfundets grundværdier som demokrati og ligestilling mellem kønnene. Flere indvandrere skal i arbejde, de unge indvandrere og efterkommere skal have en uddannelse i samme omfang som danske unge, og der skal gøres op med ghettoiseringen.'

- Mandatory preschool language stimulation from the age of three
- Reinforcing the subject ‘Danish as a second language’
- Dispersion of bilingual children in order to prevent high concentrations in some schools
- Reformation of the education of teachers, improving the teachers’ knowledge about bilingualism and techniques of language stimulation
- The creation of so-called ‘all-day-schools’

### **3.2. Discursive components of ‘integration’ in Danish public schools**

Denmark has recently witnessed a ‘turn to citizenship’ in the shape of a series of restrictions to the access of citizenship with citizenship contracts, declarations, and tests. The turn to citizenship discourse, and more specifically, towards the emphasis on ‘universal’ liberal values, practices and duties, along with – above all – the competences needed to be flexible and employable, rather than a passive welfare recipient, has been noted as a more general European trend (Jopke 2006). This trend, at least in Denmark, is also however, tied to intense debates on meanings of ‘belonging’ and national values, and entails correspondingly specific emphases on distinct ‘virtues’ in ways that put in question Jopke’s notion of an end to ‘national models’ (Mouritsen 2006). This discursive development is no doubt caused in large part by the increasing presence of foreigners, particularly with a Muslim background. The conceptualization values and virtues, and of terms and conditions tied to citizenship – what it takes to be ‘one of us’ is relatively new in Denmark. In some ways, the *structure* of these conceptualisations reflect a national trajectory, whereby the cultural nation (ideas of which have change a lot since the early age of nationalism) emerged in close connection with democratisation and political liberalisation, so that civic principles and democracy are closely interlaced with the cultural meaning of Danish senses of nationhood. WP2 discussed at length how this is reflected in the recent debates on citizenship and ‘our common values’, which tie both civic and cultural values to the same concepts, categories and histories, with *common language, smallness, homogeneity, the “folk” (and ‘folkelighed’), democracy, and egalitarianism* making up important narrative clusters. Danish style egalitarianism is further tied to the highly distributive *welfare state* which can be viewed as the socio-economical expression of (and, importantly, requirement for) a type of solidarity based on cultural homogenisation and ‘sameness’. The welfare state is both a mutual insurance scheme and a system of mutual symbolic recognition where dignity and equal status depends on one’s abilities to contribute – chiefly

through one's capacity to work and pay taxes (WP2 p. 5). This association between liberal egalitarian values and blurred civic/cultural homogeneity holds a dominant discursive position regarding the perception of what constitutes the Danish people, although it may take on a number of different forms (Mouritsen 2006).

These structural features of Danish political culture may also be found in discourses on education, where, in similar manners, the universality of liberal principles of liberty, democracy and equality is often 'crowded out' by particular (postulated) Danish cultural traits. Jens Erik Kristensen puts it this way:

...it is unfortunate when the domestic debate on primary schools more often than not tends to nationalise (and thereby culturalise and particularise) common democratic and legal ideals that we share with the rest of the civilised world. They are presented as special Danish values and woven into the national identity politics whereby they lose their politically integrative potential (Kristensen 2002).<sup>5</sup>

Yet, other influential voices in the Danish debate speak of the need to emphasise democratic and political values in a less culture-restricted way as what primarily must constitute cohesion in a Danish society of diversity and globalisation pressures:

The political community makes the society stick together. Therefore I believe that political integration is required demanded from those who come here. At the same time one must distinguish between political and cultural adaptation - and the Danish have a long tradition of mixing those up (Schmidt 2005, quoting Ove Korsgaard).<sup>6</sup>

As we shall see, the cultural-national (including the national-Christian), the citizenship based, as well as the ambiguous blurring of these components are all stable elements also in the discourse on education in Denmark. Neither in its more traditional national-cultural nor its civic

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<sup>5</sup> '... [det er] uheldigt, når man i den hjemlige folkeskoledøbet ofte forfalder til at nationalisere (og dermed kulturalisere og partikularisere) de almene demokratiske og retsstatslige idealer, vi deler med resten af den civiliserede verden. De fremstilles som særlige danske værdier og spindes dermed ind i den nationale identitetspolitik, hvormed de mister deres politisk integrative potentiale'.

<sup>6</sup> 'Det politiske fællesskab holder samfundet sammen. Derfor mener jeg, at der kræves politisk integration af dem, der kommer hertil. Samtidig bør man skelne mellem politisk og kulturel tilpasning, og det har danskerne en lang tradition for at blande sammen'.

neo-republican versions do these discourses sit well with any notions of multiculturalism or recognised cultural pluralism, which remain associated with segregation and value relativism, and opposed to integration. And *integration* – which, in Denmark, is close to what is usually understood as assimilation (Hamburger 1989; WP2, p. 16) – remains a key concept, also in the context of education, which in Denmark as elsewhere, is regarded as a pivotal arena for the maintenance of social ‘cohesion’

In the words of pedagogical scientist Bolette Moldenhawer: “The keyword in the policy of integration of bilingual children in Denmark is adaptation” (Interview with Bolette Moldenhawer). And according to former Mayor of Youth and Education in Copenhagen, Per Bregengaard: “what in my opinion characterises integration in Denmark is assimilation. That they must become Danish. It is not characterised by a cultural integration and what I would call multiculturalism on a common ground” (Interview with Per Bregengaard).

### **3.3. The primary school as an educator in national culture**

Hence, at the beginning of the nineties, the presence of foreigners caused a revival of the *national* aims of the school. In 1993 the preamble of the law was changed so that it said

the primary schools, in cooperation with the parents, must give the pupils knowledge and skills, which [...] render them *familiar* with Danish culture and history, give them an understanding of other countries and cultures (...) (first part of the preamble of the Law on primary schools 2006, italics added)<sup>7</sup>.

Apparently, this change – in what is a very often quoted passage in Danish debates on the school – was intended to mark, though subtly, that Danish national culture would enjoy a privileged status compared to other cultures in children’s education (Kristensen 2002; interview with Bolette Moldenhawer), although these other cultures are also of course noted for the first time.

The insertion of nationalist values in the education policy mirrors the general politicisation of culture and national values in Denmark as a reaction to the perceived menace of multicultural-

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<sup>7</sup> § 1. Folkeskolen skal i samarbejde med forældrene give eleverne kundskaber og færdigheder, der: [...] gør dem fortrolige med dansk kultur og historie, giver dem forståelse for andre lande og kulturer (...).

ism. When the liberal/conservative government came into office in 2001 it became a matter of priority to stress that Danish culture and values and those of other ‘cultures’ are not of equal worth and importance, at least in Denmark. The most evident reason for this recent emphasis is of course the government’s reliance on the votes of the nationalist party, the Danish People’s Party. As pedagogical consultant in the Ministry of Education Tina Fehrmann says:

We have a supporting party that upholds Danish values to a large degree. That is a very evident reason. [...] It is true that they are not spoken of as something we must promote equally [Danish and foreign cultures and values]. What is in focus is *Danishness*. It is the respect of the cultural particularity. And this is how it is. That is how the Danish people have chosen their government. [...] But I do think that being the small country that Denmark is, with such a small population, that also a future government would hold on to what is precisely this Danish particularity (Interview with Tina Fehrmann, Ministry of Education)<sup>8</sup>

Echoing this, the government reinforced the rehabilitation of the nationalist aims of education, emphasising the importance of subjects as history and Christianity as “carriers of Danish culture” (Minister of education B. Haarder 2007). According to the government, different ‘culture carrying’ subjects, such as history lessons and Christianity lessons serve the purpose of cultural identity construction, and must – according to the government – be revised and improved: “The subject history is to me first and foremost a narrative of destiny, about the self-perceptions of the peoples, in this case that of the Danish” (ibid).<sup>9</sup> This shows further in a recent debate on the subject ‘Knowledge of Christianity’. The Danish primary schools have a long tradition of teaching in Lutheran Christianity with the bible as the point of departure, but in a non-preaching way. But spokesmen and women of secularism have long argued for exchanging Christianity lessons with lessons in religion, equalizing different religions in a school where different religions are represented. Hence, the subject for a long period of time was called ‘Religion’. This would furthermore eliminate any confusion about whether Chris-

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<sup>8</sup> ‘Altså vi har den regeringssammensætning, vi har nu. Vi har et støtteparti, der værner meget om de danske værdier. Det er en oplagt grund. [...] Det er rigtigt, det bliver ikke italesat som noget, der skal fremmes på lige stor vis. Altså, det er danskheden, der er i fokus. Det er respekten for den kulturelle egenart. Og sådan er det. Det er sådan, som befolkningen i Danmark har valgt deres regering. [...] Men jeg tror nu nok, at man med sådan et lille land, som vi er, med sådan en lille befolkning, at dér vil også en kommende regering arbejde meget for at holde fast i lige præcis det, der er den danske særegenhed’.

<sup>9</sup> ‘Faget historie er for mig at se først og fremmest en skæbnefortælling, der handler om folkenes, herunder danskernes, selvforståelse’.

tianity is preached and taught to the children which is a standard perception by Muslims (Interview with Per Bregengaard, former Mayor on Youth and Education of the Municipality of Copenhagen). After a political dispute, this suggestion was turned down by the minister of education and the terms of the subject Knowledge of Christianity were tightened with an argumentation that clearly shows the fear of cultural/religious relativism of the dominating discourse:

In the preamble of the law on primary schools it says that you must be familiar with Danish culture and have knowledge about other cultures. Therefore it seems logic that it is called lessons in Knowledge of Christianity and not lessons in religion, and that it is the biblical story, which is the core. Children must, naturally, obtain knowledge about other religions, but it is senseless to talk about equalising and changing lessons in Christianity with lessons in religion. We can never become as familiar with Buddhism, Judaism, or Islam as we are with Christianity (Haarder 2006)<sup>10</sup>

The conceptual sliding from ‘culture’ to ‘religion’ and the use of an exclusive Danish-Christian ‘we’ is noteworthy and typical for the discourse. The government underlines that lessons in Christianity are lessons in Danish *culture* which, on the same level as history lessons, are of paramount importance for the Danish children in order to build their national identity. It is most probably the case that the teaching of Christianity *is* free from ‘preaching’ in a traditional way, contra the fear of Muslim parents – if only because most teachers are relatively young, typically secularised non-churchgoers themselves. Since 1937 the possibility of exemption from lessons in Christianity has existed. The far right has wished to remove this possibility, but this has been turned down because it would force a change of the subject in a religiously even more neutral direction with the abolishment of psalm singing. Furthermore it would incite more Muslim parents to choose entirely Muslim schools for their children, and this would, it is argued, have disintegrating effects. Instead of removing the right to exemption, the government has tightened the demands put on those seeking exemption, introducing

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<sup>10</sup> ‘I folkeskolens formålparagraf står der, at man skal være fortrolig med dansk kultur og have kendskab til andres kultur. Derfor er der en vis logik i at det hedder kristendomskundskab frem for religionsundervisning, og at den bibelske fortælling er kernen. Børnene skal naturligvis også have kendskab til andre religioner, men det er meningsløst at tale om ligestilling og om at ændre kristendomskundskabet til religionsundervisning. Vi kan aldrig få den fortrolighed med buddhisme, jødedom eller islam, som vi har det med kristendommen’.

an obligatory meeting in which the parents must argue satisfactorily for their point of view and guarantee that they will carry out the teaching in religion themselves.

### **3.4. The primary school as an educator in citizenship and civic values**

In parallel with the nationalist discourse the ‘civic turn’ in Danish politics is also appearing in educational politics, possibly in a more outspoken way than in other areas. The second part of the preamble of the law on primary schools has it:

The primary schools must prepare the pupils for participation, taking responsibility [*medansvar*], rights and duties in a society of freedom and democracy [*folkestyre*]. The school, therefore, must be characterised by intellectual freedom [*åndsfrihed*], equality, and democracy (Preamble of the Law on primary schools 2006)<sup>11</sup>.

Civic and democratic values as primary aims of children’s education are not new in the law on primary schools, but in recent years they have been extracted and underlined in a different way than previously, which bears on the mentioned perception of the endangered position of the ground values of Danish society. In fact a small change of emphasis may be taking place, *away* from democracy in terms of democratic decision-making towards active, responsible citizenship more generally. Hence a small change in the newest formulation of the preamble from “prepare the pupils for co-decision making [*medbestemmelse*]” to “prepare the pupils for participation [*deltagelse*]”, which reflects a criticism of a somewhat *too* anti-authoritarian school, where pupils had too much of a say in matters which they were not old and mature enough to decide. However, the main rhetorical thrust here is the emphasis on standing firm on, and re-enforcing ‘our Danish values’, which, here, are very much civic ones. Hence, in his speech at the annual meeting of the liberal party in 2004, the Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen initiated an attitudinal campaign:

I had never imagined that I would be in a situation in which I had to underline the fact that the preamble of the law on primary schools says that the children must be raised to embrace democracy. In Denmark we have grown accustomed to these words as something, which was written [in the preamble] merely because they sounded good. But I must surely

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<sup>11</sup> ‘Folkeskolen skal forberede eleverne til deltagelse, medansvar, rettigheder og pligter i et samfund med frihed og folkestyre. Skolens virke skal derfor være præget af åndsfrihed, ligeværd og demokrati’.

say that I have become incredibly happy about this preamble (Prime Minister A.F. Rasmussen, 2004)<sup>12</sup>

Since the Prime Minister's speech the Ministry of Education has produced a number of guidelines that deal with how to teach children in the questions "what is exactly freedom? What is open mindedness? What is democracy?" that the Prime Minister put forward in his speech. For the government and other producers of this discourse the reason why this civic value foundation is no longer taken for granted in Denmark lies with "the pressure within the Danish society, a pressure from groups, who have entered the Danish society and who do not recognise nor respect the basic values upon which Danish democracy is built." (Rasmussen 2004). The government has recognised that: "democracy is not something that you are born with. You have to demonstrate in front of the children what citizenship means, and that we have a right to vote etc. (...) and the children must understand that it is something that you have to fight for" (Interview with Tina Fehrmann, Ministry of Education).<sup>13</sup> In the publication "Training in democracy" (Ministry of Education 2006) the Minister of Education is quoted:

We must fight the democratic blindness. We can see that a growing number of young people have no clear conceptions of democracy and this has caused problems that surprise everyone. It is not only immigrants but also Danish children<sup>14</sup>

In 2004 this understanding of a democratic values being under pressure was very much articulated in relation to *freedom of speech*. This was fuelled by a number of incidents. In 2004 the Liberal party's 'freedom price' was given to the Dutch Muslim writer and critic of Islamic views on women's position, Ayaan Hirsi Ali. This was seen as an act of provocation by many Danish imams. Before this, a university teacher was physically assaulted for having read aloud from the Koran during classes at the Carsten Niebuhr Institute. These and similar episodes fuelled a fear that 'Danish liberal values', especially freedom of speech and expression,

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<sup>12</sup> 'Jeg havde aldrig forestillet mig, at jeg skulle komme I den situation, at jeg skulle understrege, at folkeskolens formålsparagraf siger, at eleverne skal opdrages til demokrati. Vi har i Danmark vænnet os til, at det var noget, man skrev, fordi det lød godt. Men jeg skal sandelig love for, at jeg er blevet utroligt glad for den formålsparagraf'.

<sup>13</sup> 'Demokrati, det er ikke noget, man er født med. Altså, man bliver nødt til at italesætte og demonstrere over for eleverne, hvad et medborgerskab betyder, at man har stemmeret osv. [...] det her skal børnene altså forstå. At det er noget, man skal kæmpe for.'

<sup>14</sup> 'Vi skal bekæmpe demokratiblindheden. Vi kan se, at et stigende antal unge ikke har klare begreber om demokrati, og det har givet problemer, der har overrasket os alle. Det drejer sig ikke kun om indvandrere, men gælder også danske børn'.

were at risk. In 2006 this controversy peaked with the twelve drawings of Muhammad in the daily *Jyllands-Posten*, which supposedly were a manifestation of the freedom of speech, and which – as we know – created a major crisis with wide repercussions. But even though this development focused much on the threatening Muslim Other, the perception of the Danish liberal value foundation as being at risk was not only directed towards the Muslim population. It was also turned towards the supposedly weak defence mechanisms within the Danish population. The way to combat the threat from the outside was to build ideological fences, for example in the shape of education in democratic values.

In this way, the ‘civic turn’ of Danish identity discourse has echoed in a debate on the degree to which Danish students are taught civic values and virtues. The term *medborgerskab* (literally ‘co-citizenship’) has been used increasingly in educational policy-formulations in recent years and one could say that it is becoming a new paradigm. This is particularly evident in the above-mentioned guidelines on rights, duties and conduct in the public schools, which the ministry of education has provided to all children and their parents, not least aiming at those of foreign origin:

It is important that the pupils understand what it means to partake in the decision making, share responsibility, have rights and duties in a society with freedom and democracy; function in a society with intellectual liberty [*åndsfrihed*], equality, and democracy; become familiar with Danish culture; and understand other cultures (Ministry of education 2002)<sup>15</sup>

Again, the slide towards, or at any rate mixing with ‘culture’ – now from the civic direction rather than religion – is very telling (this was stressed in interview with Leif Brondbjerg).

A study of teachers’ attitudes towards teaching democratic values has been noted in this context. Apparently teachers focus insufficiently upon the importance of *teaching* democracy. According to the study, teachers perceive democratic education as deliberation, as a manner of communicating democratically and working in groups, whereas explicit teaching in political and institutional democracy is not viewed as particularly necessary, being perceived as a

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<sup>15</sup> ‘Det er vigtigt, at eleverne lærer at forstå, hvad det vil sige at have medbestemmelse, medansvar, rettigheder og pligter i et samfund med frihed og folkestyre; fungere i et fællesskab med åndsfrihed, ligeværd og demokrati; blive fortrolige med dansk kultur; forstå andre kulturer’.

matter of course,<sup>16</sup> possibly in line with a more general distaste among many Danish educators about overly ‘factual’ knowledge. This lack of explicit teaching in the democratic political system and values has led both the government and some educational scientists to call for more attention to citizenship and civic values and norms both in the education of teachers and in the curricula of primary schools as well as high school (Kristensen 2002, Korsgaard 2003). Again, the argument here is often that democratic and civic principles – and not cultural particularities – are the stuff which will ensure *cohesion* in a future, increasingly multicultural society. As a consequence, teaching in citizenship has now become a part of the education of teachers, and a regular Master in citizenship education has been created in part for this purpose. Thus, the role of the school as an educator of citizenship is now being discussed where previously it was more taken for granted. The most recent in this wave of initiatives aimed at democratic education is the creation of a *canon of democracy*. This is a list of great books, events, ideas, and texts which have been foundational for *Danish* democracy, liberty rights and – again “cohesion” (Statsministeriet 2007). This canon will come out in early 2008.

#### **4. A linguistic approach to migrant children**

Officially, foreign children were defined for the first time as a distinct group in the law on primary schools in 1975. To begin with, they were defined as *fremmedsprogede* (speakers of a foreign language), but in 1996 this was changed to *tosprogede elever* (bilingual pupils) to accommodate the terminology to international terms (Ministry of education 2006). The definitions reflect that officially, foreign children are only recognized in terms of their language, not through their cultural, ethnic, or religious distinctiveness. This is partly because of the antidiscrimination act in Danish law, according to which considerations based on ethnic or racial or religious classifications are perceived as illegitimate. But it means that on a legal level, it is only the *linguistic* challenges related to foreign children, which are regulated and dealt with. Politically, it has to do with the concept of integration in Denmark as it has been used throughout the years. The assimilative aim of the past decades’ integration policy has always outweighed the recognition of cultural diversity, which has been seen to be in opposition to the former. The Ministry of education’s publication “Organisation of the education of bilingual children in the primary schools” (Ministry of Education 2006) says that the goal of the

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<sup>16</sup> The “Democracy Project” carried out by Center for Videregående Uddannelser, CVU in Odense, see [www.folkeskolen.dk](http://www.folkeskolen.dk).

integration of bilingual children is to enable them to participate in the Danish educational system on the same level and premises and with the same results as native Danish children. The way to achieve that is first and foremost to ensure that bilingual children's Danish skills are adequate. The former mayor on Youth- and Education in Copenhagen, Per Bregengaard, puts it this way:

Language and culture hang closely together, and this of course means a devaluation of the background of the child if you don't take the cultural dimension of its linguistic identity seriously. And what is generally weighed on the cultural front is that they must acquire more of Danish culture, more integration, and there is no willingness to discuss their own culture in the Danish setting<sup>17</sup>

#### **4.1. Danish as a second language – former neglect and present attention**

National initiatives aimed at bilingual children are therefore, by and large, almost entirely focused on language training. In 1975 the national law on primary schools introduced additional training in Danish for bilingual children and training in native language as school subjects. It was by then optional and based on local authorities' evaluation of the single student's need for additional training. But serious criticism has fallen upon language training in its traditional form. Experts have shown how the local authorities responsible for the training and the evaluation of bilingual children's individual linguistic needs have carried out this task in an extremely arbitrary way. No curriculum has been made as is otherwise the normal procedure for all school subjects and pedagogical guidelines for the subjects have been missing until recently. Existing formulations of the subjects in the law on primary schools have emphasised that the extent of the language training for bilingual children subjects should be held at a minimum, and neither language training nor the screening of the children's needs has been done by professionals with special training in the field. There has been no local attempt at institutionalisation or evaluation of it. And lastly, even though additional Danish has been taught to foreign children for the past thirty years, a real, research based expertise in the field has not developed until the late nineties (Holmen 1999, Kristjansdóttir 2006, 2004). Educational scientist Bergthora Kristjansdottir has made a study of the development of the official

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<sup>17</sup> 'Sprog og kultur hænger sammen, og det betyder jo en nedvurdering af den baggrund, barnet har, hvis man ikke tager den kulturelle dimension af dets sproglige identitet alvorligt. Og det, som man generelt lægger vægt på, også på den kulturelle front, det er jo, at de skal have mere dansk kultur og det er mere integration, og at man ikke vil være med til at diskutere deres kultur i en dansk sammenhæng'.

formulation and implementation of educational policies concerning bilingual children during the last thirty years. Kristjansdottir shows a twenty five year long persistent lack of will to develop the two subjects Danish as a second language and training in native language. She also shows how the development of educational policy for bilingual children has been dominated by a lack of recognition, from the authorities' side, of the bilingual children's possible need to develop the non-Danish side of their identities, both in terms of language and cultural knowledge (Kristjansdóttir 2004, 2006, 2006a, 2007).

In 1995 the first pedagogic guidelines were formed concerning training in additional Danish for foreigners, now called *Danish as second language*. The change of name indicates that by the mid nineties, a new understanding of children's bilingual identity was emerging, which involved appreciation of the natural hierarchy between native languages and additional languages, learned at a certain age. Danish as a second language was given two compound forms: it is both an independent subject for children in need of additional linguistic training in order to follow the normal lessons in Danish, and it is an integrated part of all normal school lessons. But even though a certain understanding of the dual linguistic identity of foreign children has emerged, the main political objective all along has been for the children to learn Danish. A particular example that shows this is the cancellation of a proposed law formulation of the intentions with the law, which read:

The education (in Danish as second language, red.) must strengthen the pupils' self esteem developing their consciousness on bilinguality and multicultural identity as a personal and societal value (Law formulation quoted in Kristjansdottir 2004).

This formulation was abandoned by the ministry of education using the argument that it was too far from the intentions of the law. The main intention was for the children to learn Danish, not to develop their consciousness about their foreign identity, even the availability of such a consciousness has been recommended from various studies and expert groups, employed by the same ministry throughout the years 1994-1998.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> From 1994 to 1998 the government funded an investigation called the "Integration project", aimed at finding the best solutions to a better integration of children. The conclusions were, among others, that it was not recommendable to spread bilingual children in order to achieve integration. A positive effect on integration should be found in the pedagogical work by teachers trained in bilingual education. This as well as and other conclusions were never followed politically (ibid.).

Little attention was given to problems regarding the quality of language training until 2004 when a survey made by the Danish Evaluation Institute (EVA) presented politicians with alarming facts. Its conclusions echoed the criticism that had sounded from experts for some years: That local authorities did not have sufficient knowledge about bilingual children's need for additional linguistic support, that the teachers were not adequately trained to educate bilingual children in neither Danish as a second language nor regular school subjects, and that there was a lack of coherency between Danish as a second language and other subjects (Ministry of education 2004). The government then presented a new plan for initiatives aimed at bilingual children in the primary schools. This involved the expansion and improvement of Danish as a second language, which now has become the largest recent national initiative concerning bilingual children in primary schools, increasing the amount of, quality of, and obligations tied to Danish as a second language. The plan involved the following initiatives: 1) the insertion of mandatory preschool language stimulation that starts at the age of three (where previously this was voluntary and started at the age of four). Through either language screening or evaluation from the day care institution, every bilingual child must be tested in order to start training in Danish as a second language two years before starting school; 2) integration of Danish as a second language into all school subjects and also having it as a separate subject; 3) the creation of a special line of education in the subject 'Danish as a second language' in the education of teachers; 4) an extended possibility for the local authorities to send foreign children to other schools than the district school, if there is already a large number of foreign children attending the district school. This aims at spreading bilingual children in order for them to interact more with Danish children; and 5) the creation of "all-day-schools" which means that some schools with large numbers of bilingual children have changed their schedules so that the children spend all day at school and the spare time after-school activities are incorporated into a normal school day.

Danish as a second language is supposed to become a dimension of all subjects. This makes it necessary for teachers in each subject to be able to differentiate his or her teaching according to the presence of bilingual children in class. Teachers must be able to practice teaching with a foundation in bilingual pedagogy in the teaching of the bilingual children. In cases where this is not possible, an additional bilingual teacher with special competences in bilingual

pedagogy must attend each class. Additionally, where the need is too large to be met inside the regular classes, extra classes in Danish as a second language are provided (Interview with Tina Fehrmann, Ministry of education). This ambitious plan has been perceived by specialists in bilingual pedagogy as a significant step in the direction of recognition of an including rather than a neglecting approach to bilingual children and their linguistic and cultural distinctiveness: “clearly, the specialists in bilingualism have won a small battle with the recognition of Danish as a second language as a subject. It expresses that the school is trying to meet the inclusion of ethnic minorities” (Interview with Bolette Moldenhawer, pedagogical scientist, University of Copenhagen). But even though it is a step forward, the main purpose of increasingly considering children’s linguistic and cultural background is still that of equalizing their final results with those of Danish children.

## **5. Cultural diversity management in the primary schools**

As noted, the management of cultural and religious diversity is not regulated on national level. One reason for this is without doubt the strong tradition of decentralisation and local self determination in this field of Danish politics. Although the minister of education provides legislative frames and regulations of national public education, these are relatively broad, so that local authorities are able to run the primary schools with a large degree of autonomy: “This is an expression of liberal politics, saying that we provide some tools and inspiration, and then it is up to the locals to find their own solution” (Interview with Tina Fehrmann, Ministry of Education). But it is also because traditionally, multiculturalism and cultural and religious diversity are not perceived as either legitimate legal matters that have to be regulated, or as positive ideological stakes in Danish politics on immigration. According to the Ministry of Education it is against the very principle of equality to make laws that imply special treatment of individual students based on ethnic, cultural, or religious background (Ministry of Education 2004a). Instead, the concept “intercultural competence” is used: “at present we work with the concept intercultural competence, which is respect for the fact that people live in different ways, that these ways are equally valuable, and that you shouldn’t discriminate on grounds of different ways of living. [...] But when that is said, there is no one who prevents anyone in their cultural traditions or prevents them from promoting their culture” (Interview with Tina

Fehrmann, Ministry of Education).<sup>19</sup> At a national level, cultural diversity is thereby a question of anti-discrimination and not a question of cultural promotion or protection of cultural rights.

As a consequence, questions of the female head scarf, religious food prescriptions, recognition of the fast and religious holidays are viewed as matters of the private sphere, which fundamentally is free from political interference. Considerations regarding cultural and religious difference are rather seen as practical problems of accommodation of the private sphere in the public realm, which the schools must solve themselves. In many ways this has probably prevented strong politicisation of matters which could have sparked much controversy. There has been one recent incident with a child minder wearing a burka while attending the children. This caused a principled discussion on the national level, resulting in the decision that it was not acceptable, first, because of a need to protect children's ability to see and understand her expressions and secondly in order to counter any signal of suppression of women as represented by the burka. As a reaction to this event, pedagogical consultant in the Ministry of Education Tina Fehrmann says: "as in this case it is not unlikely, that some of these questions of religious clothing will come up for discussion if they begin to appear in the primary schools (i.e., female teachers wearing head scarves, SL/PM). But there is no expression of this for the time being."

This apparent neutrality towards cultural differences naturally has to be considered in relation to the concomitant developments in general value orientations, towards a larger degree of both nationalistic and civic and universal values, described in previous work packages and above in relation to educational policies. There has been a general tendency in the Danish discourse of belonging to construct the identity discourse on an antagonistic foundation, especially with reference to Muslim religion and culture as what we are *not*. This has been widespread in the media, especially forwarded by the Danish People's Party, and fuelled by incidents like the Muhammad cartoons. And this of course has effects on the neutrality towards cultural differences, also in the educational field. The various policy formulations on democratic conduct, rights, and gender equality (i.e. the publications "rights and duties in the pri-

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<sup>19</sup> 'Sådan, som der bliver arbejdet med det pt, så er det en interkulturel kompetence, altså det, at man har respekt for, at man lever på forskellig vis, og at det er lige værdifuldt, og at man ikke må diskrimineres, fordi man lever forskelligt. [...] Når det er sagt, så er der ikke nogen, der forhindrer nogen i kulturelle skikke eller få italesat det'.

mary school” and “Training in democracy”, Ministry of Education 2002 and 2006) are some of the most direct signs with implicit reference to the parts of Muslim culture, which are not acceptable in the Danish school system. According to pedagogical scientist Bolette Moldenhawer, new initiatives which acknowledge consideration of the linguistic and cultural background of the bilingual children, are all still based upon a “compensatory logic”, in the sense that they must compensate for the shortcomings or absences that the cultural and linguistic differences from Danish culture and language present:

The way that this is handled is with the purpose of cancelling these variations. [...] It is the prevailing institutional logic – they end up seeing differences as something that must be adjusted and which makes the children’s education more difficult. And I think that one of the explanations for this is the way that teachers measure what makes you a good student. There are some very strict cultural norms about right behaviour, which dominate the classroom, and if you differ from these you fall outside (Interview with Bolette Moldenhawer)<sup>20</sup>

The lack of national policies about concrete cultural diversity management doesn’t mean that the ministry of education is completely silent on these matters. It has produced a series of guidelines, which deal more broadly with integration than the linguistic approach (See for example the publication “Inspiration for a better integration in the primary schools”, Ministry of Education 2001). These contain examples of “best practise” of managing cultural diversity from different schools. The guidelines talk about questions such as managing the cultural differences in relation to lessons in Christianity, bathing after gym lessons, swimming lessons, religious holidays, the Ramadan, etc. They provide good advise on handling various problem situations, and one actually finds a relatively positive attitude towards accepting plurality and cultural diversity in pragmatic suggestions on ways in which the schools can accommodate a variety of religious and cultural claims. It states that: “The schools must be able to embrace pluralism so that they – where it seems fair - can meet the demands and needs of children and parents of a culturally different background” (Ministry of education 2003 p. 7).<sup>21</sup> But these

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<sup>20</sup> ‘Den måde, man håndterer det på, er med henblik på at udligne disse forskelle. [...]det er den institutionelle logik – man ender med kun at se forskellene som noget, der må justeres og som vanskeliggør deres skolegang. Et af forklaringerne på det er dét, der får læreren til at vurdere én som en god elev. Og det er nogle meget ensidige kulturelle normer for opførsel, som dominerer skolerummet, og hvis man varierer fra det, så falder man udenfor’.

<sup>21</sup> ‘Skolerne skal kunne rumme mangfoldigheden, så de – hvor det er rimeligt – kan imødekomme de krav og behov, som elever og forældre med en anden kulturbaggrund har’.

formulations are pragmatic and deprived of principled discussions of norms, values and rights.

Empirical evidence from different local authorities and schools shows a variety of different approaches to cultural and religious diversity. Consequently, one can find a quite significant level of multicultural policy without the legislative framing or political argument behind it. It would be too extensive to investigate how each Danish school manages diversity practically, nor is it within the scope of this report. But we have looked into some examples of schools that are most exposed to the challenge of cultural diversity.

## **6. Nordgårdsskolen**

One of these is the primary school Nordgårdsskolen, which is attended exclusively by foreign or bilingual children. It is situated in the area Gellerup which has the highest density of foreign or immigrant inhabitants in the municipality of Aarhus, the second largest city in Denmark. The area is perceived as a very large ‘ghetto’. Nordgårdsskolen tells a story about different features of the Danish management of the challenge of cultural diversity and multiculturalism. First of all, over the years, the school has been increasingly perceived as a black spot in educational politics of integration. Its percentage of foreign children has increased (to the present 100 per cent) and in the course of that development, Danish parents (and also the more well off or highly educated foreign parents) have withdrawn their kids in favour of ethnic Danish schools. Mainly because of this, the school faces the threat of closure. This echoes the main stream Danish educational politics concerning foreign children, which is about making “normal” Danish schools with Danish children “swallow” smaller numbers of bilingual children in order to integrate:

Certain institution and schools have – either because of their location or because of a lack of will and ability to attract children from the whole population – disproportionately many children of ethnic minorities. It is damaging to the process of integration, if the children only have a certain kind of friends, and if they do not get familiar with the norms and traditions, which prevail in the Danish society<sup>22</sup> (Ministry of integration 2003)

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<sup>22</sup> ‘Visse institutioner og skoler har - enten på grund af deres beliggenhed eller på grund af manglende vilje eller evne til at tiltrække børn fra hele befolkningen - uforholdsmæssigt mange børn med etnisk minoritetsbaggrund.

But the failure to ensure ‘spreading’ in high density areas such as Gellerup has created a *de facto* situation where different approaches must be used. In the municipality of Århus, where the concentration of foreign inhabitants is very large in some socially troubled areas, it has been discussed whether to chose the strategy of spreading the children to other areas or creating local anchors in the areas with predominant migrant populations. The municipality of Århus has chosen to do both. Generally, the maximum limit of foreign children in a school class is 20 per cent. But three schools with very high concentrations of bilinguals have been exempted from the rule of spreading and have in stead become all-day-schools (schools that extend the normal schedule and include afternoon hours) which give special attention to the cultural and linguistic characteristics of the pupils. The all-day-schools, such as Nordgårdsskolen, are funded and allowed to run according to the special needs of their pupils, and they work in close collaboration with pedagogical teachers, psychologists, social centres and local police. They furthermore have specialised and foreign teachers in language support and Danish as a second language. According to the leader of Nordgårdsskolen, Rani Hørlyck, this solution is both a pragmatic way of dealing with the multicultural reality of the city and a step forward in a development towards an increased diversity politics:

The background has been that after many years they have acknowledged that the solution that was used here earlier was insufficient. (...) So, you can say that with the all-day-schools the first steps have been taken in relation to education. (...) It is until now the best offer that I have seen to meet the complexity and multiculturalism that characterises these areas (Interview with Rani Hørlyck).

Assessments of integration of bilingual children, which expand from the dominating notion of socialising the children into Danish language, norms, and values, and take on an approach of multicultural reciprocity, in the shape of explicit acknowledgements, accept, and practical work with cultural and religious diversity, are thus seen in empirical examples of schools that have what they call “a special intercultural pedagogical foundation” (ref?). The management of cultural diversity on the case school Nordgårdsskolen is described by the school leader

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Det er til skade for integrationsprocessen, hvis børnene kun har en bestemt slags kammerater, og hvis de ikke stifter bekendtskab med de normer og traditioner, der er fremherskende i det danske samfund’.

with the keywords “comprehensiveness” and “pragmatic solutions”. This means that the school seeks to consider religious or cultural traditions, norms, and values where it is possible, but it also seeks to balance them with the consideration of the child’s ability to get a maximum benefit from attending a Danish school. An example of this is the school’s success with offering guidelines about how to manage Ramadan (i.e. by limiting the fast for small children) in a way that doesn’t compromise the learning ability of the children. The notion of pragmatic solutions says a lot about the way that issues of multiculturalism are dealt with on the local school level in Denmark. Here, a certain understanding is seen of the need to embrace and incorporate cultural and linguistic diversity in order to reach and integrate the children. But at the same time little willingness is in evidence regarding more institutionalised considerations of, for example, Muslim religion, and certainly no loud claims are heard of traditional multicultural initiatives on the governmental level. This is to some degree explained by the quite strong ideology of local self determination, but not only this. There also seems to be some common sense opposition against exaggerating differences or understanding culture as fixed and unchangeable, which is probably a good thing, and very unlike what is evident in broader societal discourses. There is also no fertile ground at all for elevating cultural diversity issues to ideas of multiculturalism. In stead, what is ultimately chosen to guide and frame ‘comprehensiveness’ is more likely, again, to be values of democracy, gender equality, and anti-discrimination:

The most important thing is comprehensiveness. This is our keyword out here. We are comprehensive towards traditions and religions that the children and the parents wish to have considered. But when this is said, there must be some fundamental values that we all share and that nobody can be exempted from, like gender-equality and democracy. (...) So it is only when there is a challenge to those values or boundary-crossing acts take place that we interfere and limit someone’s traditional beliefs. We don’t wish bans, but instead pragmatic solutions (ibid).

Nordgårdsskolen sees itself as an island in the sea of “normal schools”. A special case with special expertise. It is the notion that the school possesses a special capacity and perception of integration which is still lacking in the surrounding society:

We are pioneers on this field and that is very challenging. But I think that in Denmark we have to try it out, because we don't have the experience and the solutions, so we have to look in other directions to see what they have done in other places. It is dangerous to think that you achieve integration just by putting children on a bus [sending them to another school than the one, they belong to, red.]. To me, integration is about a lot of things. (...) It is much a question about whether they can be accommodated at all on the other schools. Is there sufficient will and competences among teachers and Danish parents? We have a great advantage of because we have gathered the expertise out here, and I have some of the country's best teachers when it comes to educating bilingual children with this special intercultural pedagogical foundation that we use in all our subjects. Normal primary schools are not at all up to that (ibid).

When I am asked "who is Danish?", then I usually answer that Danish are those who live in Denmark because then we don't have to deal with the question of who is to define that. And I know that some people don't like it when I put it like that (ibid).

Despite the relative isolation of schools with much experience of cultural diversity management on the scale of Nordgårdsskolen, the leader of this school believed that the surrounding environment, both civil society in general and politician, was moving towards a higher levels of consciousness about interculturality:

I think that today we are passed that time when we questioned that a Muslim family doesn't eat Danish pork. We don't discuss that anymore. We don't discuss whether or not there should be separating curtains in the bathing rooms (bathing after gym lessons, red.). I experience that the private sphere is less the focus of attention than earlier, which is an extreme step forward (ibid)

It is funny, because just this January, I had a visit from Bertel Haarder [Minister of Education] to tell him about the all-day-school and so on. It was a very positive visit where we touched upon very concrete matters, and he said "tell me what you think you need in order to handle this task, because then there should not be anything in your way". (...) I have worked in this field for many years, and it has always been very much "we decide" (the politicians, red.). Now the attitude is more "we must get down at ground level and hear what it is they are doing" (ibid).

An observer might expect that the seeming contrast between a national lack of recognition of cultural diversity and the local need for such recognition would manifest itself with local school leaders. But it does not seem so strait forward. The leader of Nordgårdsskolen says:

The law of primary schools contains beautiful words and there is no doubt that they see it (cultural diversity, red.) as a potential. Another thing is how we transform this into practise. But much has happened now, with the subject 'Danish as a second language', in the education of teachers, and we talk about intercultural pedagogy in a way we haven't done in many years. (...) I am often asked if I want the law changed, so that it accommodates children as mine in a better way. I actually think that to a large extent I have the legal frame, which I need to make the school that is needed. The challenge lies in the every day work (ibid)

But, according to pedagogical scientist Bolette Moldenhawer, even though the developments noted are steps in the right direction, it still largely follows a "compensatory logic", which means that the overall purpose of the language training is to compensate for the missing Danish skills and equalise the linguistic competences of bilingual children with those of native Danish children.

## **7. Training in mother tongue language – and its abolition**

The cost of the growing effort - in the political planning of the primary schools - at improving bilingual children's *Danish* language and learning skills was the partial abolition of training in mother tongue language in 2002. We deal with this issue separately, since it has been one of the main themes in the debate on educational challenges.

Since 1976 local authorities have been obligated to offer training in mother tongue language at their schools. The decision in the mid seventies to offer training in mother tongue language to the group of an estimated 2.000-4.000 children was made with two things in mind. The primary reason for training was the perspective of repatriation. The second reason was the fact that the European Community was preparing a directive (77/486/EC) which provided guidelines concerning education in mother tongue language and culture to children of mobile workers within the community. These guidelines were extended to include children of guest

workers and refugees from third world countries in order not to discriminate children of different nationalities (Ministry of Education 2001). During the eighties and early nineties the repatriation argument gradually faded in favour of arguments about the value of knowing ones cultural and linguistic background, which followed the development of the EC formulations on the subject, and the terminology changed so that the previous definitions of children as 'foreign' or guest workers' children were exchanged with definitions such as 'bilingual children' with 'minority languages' living in a 'bicultural' context (Kristjánsdóttir 2006a). In 2001 the first pedagogic guidelines for training in mother tongue language were made. The new guidelines indicated increased awareness of both the cultural duality of the children's lives and the need for a solid linguistic foundation in order to learn Danish as a second language:

The purpose of training bilingual children in their mother tongue languages is to ensure that the children develop their entire linguistic and cultural competences and their knowledge of language as a source of insight, experience, and identification<sup>23</sup> (Ministry of Education 2001)

Development of the mother tongue language is one of the *primary* conditions for the children's ability to acquire a new language. Skills in mother tongue language therefore support the learning of Danish as a second language. The connection can be compared with Danish children's acquisition of English skills<sup>24</sup> (*ibid*, italics added)

Thus, to a certain degree, training in mother tongue language developed gradually into a degree of official appreciation of cultural diversity and linguistic duality. This was much inspired by international conventions, especially the UN convention of children's rights from 1989 and the mentioned EC-directive.

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<sup>23</sup> 'Formålet med undervisning i tosprogede elevers modersmål er, at eleverne videreudvikler deres samlede sproglige og kulturelle kompetence og deres erfaringer med sprog som en kilde til indsigt, oplevelse og indlevelse'.

<sup>24</sup> 'En udvikling af modersmålet er en af de væsentligste forudsætninger for, at børn kan lære et nyt sprog. Modersmålskundskaber støtter derfor indlæringen af dansk som andetsprog. Forhold i indlæringen kan sammenlignes med danske elevers tilegnelse af fx engelsk'.

However, the guidelines and formulations from 2001 were extremely short lived. In 2002 the new liberal/conservative government changed them dramatically, making the obligation to offer training in mother tongue language exclusively applied to children with parents from the EU, Scandinavian Countries, and Greenland. For children of third world origin it became a voluntary – and self-financed – option for the local authorities to chose. The new government to some critics thereby opposed itself to the principle of antidiscrimination that is mentioned in the EU directive and the UN convention for children's rights, which had prevailed in Danish policy since 1976. Additionally, the repatriation argument was revived in the goal formulation for the remaining training in mother tongue language (both the obligatory and the optional):

The purpose of training in mother tongue language is that the children acquire skills in order to be able to understand the spoken and written language and to express themselves orally and in writing. The training must also develop the children's linguistic conscience. The training must give the children an insight into the culture of their home country, among other things to ease the eventual return to this country, and to strengthen international understanding<sup>25</sup>

The partial abolition of training in mother tongue language came directly as an effect of the evaluation results from OECD, which showed a poor level of skills among foreign children, which directly led the government to conclude that teaching in mother tongue language did not have a positive effect on the children's Danish skills and integration in general, rather the contrary. The abolition was presented as a change of priority in favour of a creation of pre-school stimulation of children in Danish language.

The previous (above mentioned) formulations of the effect of training in mother tongue language by the Ministry of Education were thereby ignored, and the pedagogical arguments for a connection between training in mother tongue language and integration and training in native language and improved Danish skills were rendered illegitimate by the government and

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<sup>25</sup> Formålet med modersmålsundervisningen er, at eleverne tilegner sig kundskaber og færdigheder, således at de kan forstå det talte og skrevne sprog og kan udtrykke sig mundtligt og skriftligt. Undervisningen skal samtidig udvikle elevernes sproglige bevidsthed. [...] Undervisningen skal give eleverne indsigt i hjemlandets kultur, blandt andet for at lette børnenes eventuelle tilbagevenden til dette land, samt styrke den internationale forståelse.  
<http://www.faellesmaal.uvm.dk/fag/Modersmaalsundervisning/formaal.html>

the Ministry of Education. The former Minister of Education Ulla Tørnæs claimed that there was no scientific proof of such connections, and that further it “is in conflict with the value foundation of the Danish school to teach in another language than Danish” (Togeby et al. 2005). This claim mirrors the overall change in the value foundation behind the primary school and reveals ideological reasons behind the abolition expressed by the government long before gaining office. Training in mother tongue language constituted a continuation of non-Danish cultures and militated against the cohesion of society and, in the views of many politicians, particularly on the right, against the goal of a homogeneous Danish national identity: “Danish is the glue that unites us as a people”, one politician recently wrote in defence of abolishing training in mother tongue language also in Copenhagen (L. Frevert, Danish People’s Party, Jyllands-Posten 2006).

The present Minister of Education Bertel Haarder continues this line of argument, denying that training in mother tongue language has either to do with other disciplines in the primary school or with Danish skills and holds that it only aims at the foreign students’ knowledge about their original culture, which in view of Danish integration politics, is not a legitimate reason for maintaining it (Haarder 2005). Haarder claims that as long as there is no scientific proof for the connection between training in mother tongue language and improved Danish skills there is no basis for public funding. According to the minister, training in mother tongue language is damaging for integration of bilingual children as it holds them in cultural isolation:

..it will have the effect of being a cultural cage which impedes integration. Another argument is that it is not the children who wish to have training in mother tongue language but their parents. And it is not out of consideration of their Danish skills but more out of consideration of the family and the connection to the country of origin (Bertel Haarder, quoted in Schmidt 2005b)<sup>26</sup>

The minister is probably right to some degree – but the quote also indicates the way that ‘multi-cultural’ arguments concerning heritage or identity preservation are entirely discredited in Den-

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<sup>26</sup> ...det kommer til at virke som et kulturelt bur, som hæmmer integrationen. Et andet argument er, at det ikke er eleverne, der ønsker modersmålsundervisningen, men det er deres forældre, der ønsker den. Og det er ikke af hensyn til børnenes danskundskaber, men mere af hensyn til familien og børnenes tilknytning til hjemlandet.

mark, leaving only the strictly instrumental/pedagogic arguments for those in favour of mother tongue language learning.

But this change of direction from the highest political authorities has not gone by uncontested. The quarrel has been intense, and among linguistic and pedagogical scientist the abolition has been loudly criticised. The dispute is one between science and politics, where two different languages apply. The Danish government and its supporting Danish People's Party argue from an ideological position according to which Denmark *is* and is supposed to be a linguistically and culturally homogenous country, which is why integration largely means assimilation. Training in mother tongue language is maybe a nice possibility for immigrants, but as it does not have a proven effect on Danish skills it is a waste of time and a 'bad signal' to send to future Danish citizens. Further, there is a widespread 'zero sum' belief that learning mother tongue language means less capacity for learning Danish: "the government (...) perceives language learning as a bottle, in the sense that if there is something in the bottle, then there is less space for something else, and if you empty the bottle, then there will be space for Danish language" (Interview with Per Bregengaard). Political arguments behind the abolition of training in mother tongue language include "in Denmark the language is Danish", "children born and raised in Denmark can only have Danish as their mother tongue", "it is not fair that people remain bilingual throughout generations" or "training in mother tongue language throughout generation is an enormous obstacle for integration" (Hermansen 2000, Froberg, [www.ufo.dk](http://www.ufo.dk)). And there is a very widespread perception among Danish politicians – and not least the local ones – that training in mother tongue language is simply pulling in the opposite direction to integration, that is, to become "Danish":

The suggestion of training in mother tongue language is in my opinion almost anti-Danish. It pulls the immigrant children in the opposite direction. [...] SF and The United List (leftwing parties, red.) apparently do not wish for immigrant children to become Danish. Apparently, their suggestion is meant to 'increase the children's knowledge about the culture of their homelands' (Søren Jensen, local politician in the Municipality of Albertslund, quoted in Albertslundposten 2006)<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Forslaget om modersmålsundervisningen er jo næsten på kanten af at være antidansk. Det trækker indvandrerbørnene i den modsatte retning. [...] SF og Enhedslisten ønsker åbenbart ikke, at indvandrerens børn bliver danske for forslaget skal jo "være med til at øge kendskabet til oprindelseslandets kultur".

Such political views are accused of being totally unreasonable from a scientific point of view, according to which mother tongue language is not something you chose but something you have, and the truth of Danish society today is that a large percentage speaks and learns another mother tongue language before that of Danish. Pedagogical and linguistic scientists hold that the mother tongue language is the best – or only – base from which to acquire skills, both in Danish and other subjects (Froberg, [www.ufo.dk](http://www.ufo.dk), Togeby et al. 2005). But this has been denied by the government which claims that there is a lack of scientific proof. This denial in fact was supported by an investigation made by the Danish Institute of Pedagogy (DPI), which did not prove a connection between many years of training in mother tongue language and the bilingual children's Danish skills, although the investigation also pointed out that this to a large extent was caused by a poor quality of the training in mother tongue language (Ritzau 2000). Other investigations have later proved the opposite, a Danish one made by the School of Education, University of Aarhus, and an American study of the effects of training in native language that showed that bilingual children do much better if taught in either both their mother tongue language and the majority language or if only taught in their native language (Collier, V. & W. Thomas 2002). This inspired local school politicians in the second largest city of Denmark, Århus, to make an experiment teaching bilingual children in their mother tongue in all subjects. But the experiment was not allowed by the Ministry of education because of the above mentioned argumentation and belief that more training in mother tongue language equates less Danish language skills.

The critics of the abolition of training in mother tongue also claimed that it was against the principle of antidiscrimination to offer it to children within the EC and Nordic countries and not to others. But this claim of discrimination has been contested by the government with claims that the two groups of children are incomparable. As children from the EC are defined by the concept of mobile workers, which are supposed to return to their home countries, they fit the original purpose of mother tongue training, which was repatriation, whereas children of immigrants from third countries do not, as their purpose is to remain in Denmark:

I wouldn't call it discrimination, because we are talking about two separate groups (...) and the purpose of mother tongue training is now to ensure the mobile workers' children's possibility to maintain their mother tongue till they return to their home countries. And when you arrive as an immigrant or a fugitive (...) it is with the purpose of remaining here,

and then you have to learn Danish (Interview with Tina Fehrmann, Ministry of Education)<sup>28</sup>

Thus, in relation to the problem of discrimination, the purpose of repatriation is put forward by the government in their definition of training in mother tongue. And regarding the integrative purpose, understood as the recognition of culture and language of the children's origin and the promotion of their intercultural competences by the means of mother tongue training, it is said that: "we have turned the bucket so that we are saying that they are free to do that (promote their cultural and linguistic understanding, red.), and it is still the same idea. But it is not something that the government will support. The government wants to use the money elsewhere" (ibid).<sup>29</sup>

A few local authorities have chosen not to abolish training in mother tongue language, among others the local government of Copenhagen where it was maintained but given a different shape. Here, it was run as a part of normal classes of the youngest children and the content was changed, focusing on the life and particularity of minorities in Denmark rather than on the country of origin (Interview with Per Bregengaard, former Mayor of Youth and Education in Copenhagen). The argumentation used in Copenhagen was typical for proponents of mother tongue training:

Both national and international investigations show that training in mother tongue strengthens the linguistic and academic development of the bilingual child as well as the development of a secure identity. Apart from that, the training helps to limit the flow of bilingual children to the ethnic private schools (Mayor of Youth and Education in Copenhagen, Per Bregengaard, quoted in Berlingske Tidende 2002).

It can be said that the battle of mother tongue training shows an example of one of the ideological steps in a restrictive direction that have been typical for the liberal/conservative government's politics of immigration. But there has not been a strict political left-right division on the question as in the case of other tightening-ups of immigrant policies, and the big cen-

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<sup>28</sup> Det, der er sigtet med modersmålsundervisningen nu, det er, at man skal sikre vandrende arbejdstageres børn mulighed for at bibeholde deres modersmål i forhold til, at de skal vende hjem. Og når man kommer her til landet som indvandrer/flygtning, [...] så er det altså for at blive her, og så skal man lære dansk.

<sup>29</sup> Der har man vendt bøtten om og siger, at det må de da gerne... det er stadigvæk den samme idé. Men det er ikke noget, man understøtter, man vil hellere bruge pengene på anden vis.

tre-left party, the Social Democratic Party, has been in favour of the abolition several times since the dispute began some ten years ago. This might owe to the general assimilative philosophy of integration that has been prevailing. But when all this is said, the generally growing recognition of the importance of bilingual pedagogy, especially regarding Danish as a second language, has also left its traces upon the way that training in mother tongue language is spoken of:

In the new guidelines about the organisation of Danish as a second language, there is a paragraph called ‘utilisation of the mother tongue’, because we are actually very interested in promoting the children’s possibility to use their entire linguistic competences in their learning, preferably with the support of a bilingual teacher (Interview with Tina Fehrmann, Ministry of Education)<sup>30</sup>

The twenty-seven years of mother tongue training may resemble an example of ‘multicultural incorporation’ in Danish education policies. But to conclude this would be to exaggerate its intentions, in that this policy – contrary to elsewhere – never really, or only for a very short time and in restricted policy circles, existed out of an explicit appreciation of the cultural value of diversity let alone the *right* of citizens to have their mother tongue protected. Previously, mother tongue training had the sole aim of preparing foreign children for their return to their country of origin. Since then it has increasingly also been aimed at improving their linguistic foundation and thereby their learning capabilities, but the goal of repatriation still remains in the goal formulation of the subject.<sup>31</sup>

## **8. Muslim ‘free schools’**

The rather strictly regulated and assimilative educational norms concerning bilingual children in the primary schools dominate the picture of how educational challenges, posed by immigration, are handled in Denmark. But the existence of state financed, private religious and cultural minority schools is a quite significant exception to this tendency. Reflecting the liberal tradition of self determination in Danish culture, legislation allows anyone (typically groups

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<sup>30</sup> I den vejledning (om organisering af dansk som andetsprog, red.) der er der et afsnit, der hedder ‘nyttiggørelse af modersmålet i fagundervisningen’, fordi vi er faktisk meget interesserede i, at eleverne får lov til at bruge hele deres sproglige kompetence i fagundervisningen, gerne tilknyttet en tosproglig lærer.

<sup>31</sup> To be found at: <http://www.faellesmaal.uvm.dk/fag/Modersmaalsundervisning/formaal.html>

of parents representing a minority religion, nationality, or a specific pedagogical ideology or philosophy) to establish their own schools, called 'free schools', as long as they live up to general and quite loose regulation. The free schools receive 75% of the expenses that a normal public school receives from the state. Hence, they are affordable for most parents.

The law on free schools dates back to 1855, having its origins in the constitution, which established that attending a school is not compulsory in Denmark, but to receive education is. The law was based on principles of parental rights, minority rights, and educational freedom. Barring on the tradition of popular self determination and freedom, free schools enjoy a very protected status, and proposals of larger control of them are always discussed thoroughly. The establishment of free schools to a large degree has been used by minorities such as Jews, Catholics, or Germans. But over the years a large number of free schools have been created, based on specific pedagogic or philosophical value foundations, some of them quite controversial in the views of the public (for instance a number of schools based on a mixture of revolutionary Maoism and council democracy which allows very little privacy to either teachers or pupils). However, over the past thirty years, immigrants with Muslim origin have joined in creating free schools based on their cultural and religious particularity. The first Islamic free school was established in 1978. Since then about twenty free schools have been established, often based on a specific national origin, and less often on Islamic religion in general.

Seemingly, the free school as an institution resembles a good example of a multicultural institutional accommodation to fulfil minority needs. In effect it is – with all the attendant dilemmas of whether to have multicultural accommodation inside common state schools, or having it as institutional exceptions. But the intention is not multicultural if by this is meant an institution or an initiative aimed at protecting cultural diversity per se. Possibly the point is a minor one in practice, but the intention originally was a liberal one of protecting the right to self determination of groups. The idea of the free schools was born as a protest against the state church control of the Danish public school, by sects, both Lutheran and catholic who resented this. It also established a possibility for a popular *national* (and no longer only or primarily Christian) public school to be created. The conditions for state funding of the free schools rest on the principles of a strong separation of opinions or ideologies and academic practice. This in effect means that the state and government in principle does not care about ideological po-

sitions as long as schools abide by the rules setting up academic and administrative standards (Korsgaard 2002). In 1933 the social democratic Minister of Education underlined this in his response to a leader of a folk high school with Nazi sympathies and, saying that “a man has the right to demand the state dissolved, (...) as long as he does not use illegal means to fulfil his wish” (quoted from Korsgaard 2002). Thus, the practice and value foundation that is underlying the free schools provide the Muslim population with a good basis for creating their own educating institutions. And the Muslim schools cause great satisfaction among the foreign children and their parents.

But since the creation of Muslim free schools this right to self determination has been under political pressure. One reason has been the occasionally low quality and lack of qualified teachers of certain schools – factors that also have caused non-Muslim free schools to come under scrutiny in the past. More recently, however, this picture has been partly reversed by anthropological and quantitative research indicating that in pupils of many Muslim free schools perform *better* than Muslim students in main stream schools. Reasons cited are a mixture of more traditional, curriculum-and-test-oriented forms of teaching (strongly favoured by immigrants who see this as a means to upwards mobility for their children) and the absence of such stigma and (racialised) cultural prejudice from teachers which exists in main stream schools. The argument that such pupils may become more isolated from Danish society is weakened to the extent, first that the default option of the students in question would be public schools which are already heavily dominated by non-Danish children, and secondly, that students in the Muslim school get *more* exposure (because they are more active and less marginalised, and because teachers, half of which have a Danish background make a point of this) to critical discussion about mutual stereotyping (Ihle 2007).

But another important reason is certainly the context of politicisation of the Muslim minority. The principle behind Muslim free schools simply conflicts with the chosen politics of integration, according to which any segregation is problematic. Or in other words, the difference represented by Islam is more conspicuous and unacceptable than any differences which have previously been accepted as legitimate aspects of Danish society – to be accommodated by the private schools. One specific reason is the fear of growing anti-western Islamic propaganda after 9/11. In the late nineties the inspection at Muslim free schools was intensified be-

cause of fear of economic dependency from larger organisations in the (undemocratic) countries of origin – indeed that some of them would be seedbeds of fundamentalism and even terrorism. Normally, free schools have been free to appoint an inspector themselves from outside the school to control the schools finances and educational quality. But due to the fear of economical abuse and ideological propaganda, the Ministry of Education has established its own mechanisms of control. As a consequence, a few schools were shut down, one because of its dependency of a Palestinian organisation, another because of a poor quality of education.

Hereafter, a number of reductions were made to the freedom of education in these schools, starting with making Danish the prescribed teaching language. 1999 saw a large increase in the number of applicants for these schools from Muslims. This caused political concern that Muslim children would become isolated from the rest of society. The Muslim free schools constituted an increasingly sore point in Danish politics. In 2002, in the aftermath of 9/11 and fuelled by the fear of Islamic and anti-western extremism, it was discussed whether Islamic schools, suspected of having more or less extremist attitudes, should continue to be legal and state funded. The debate centred on a perceived dilemma between democratic self-determination and the rights of parents and minorities and on the other hand the necessity of educating children in the democratic values of society. The government was in favour of the latter and the law on free schools was changed in 2002 to include a paragraph saying that “based on the principles about human rights and fundamental freedom rights following the European convention of human rights, the schools must prepare the children for a life in a society of freedom and democracy.” The law goes on to say – in a manner which reflects the public school preamble, but with a few significant additions that “The schools ... shall prepare the children to live in a society such as Denmark, which is based on liberty and democracy, and strengthen the pupils’ familiarity with and respect for fundamental human and freedom rights, including equality between the sexes” (Law on free schools 2006).

## **9. Conclusion**

This report has attempted to create an overview of the most pertinent discourses and related policy developments regarding the approach to cultural diversity in the Danish primary and secondary school system, including the free schools. Overall, the situation is characterised by a number of key aspects, each of which has been discussed in the previous pages. First, by a

continuing and general scepticism of 'real' cultural diversity, including policy accommodation of specific needs (although part of the picture here is also a quite widespread and depoliticised, pragmatic development of 'working solutions', which in some cases go quite far towards de facto multicultural accommodation). Cultural diversity in Denmark is seen as an obstacle to civic equality and individual autonomy – even as the freedom of religion is continually stressed, also in this sector. Secondly, by a broadly shared new 'civicness' and emphasis on citizenship education, as a response to fundamentalist leanings. Thirdly, by an emphasis, shared by mainly right wing political forces, on the need to transmit 'national' Danish culture. Most importantly, fourthly, is the emphasis on language – often linked to culture and cohesion, but most importantly to the possibility of a more smooth labour market integration. In this, as a number of other areas, primary and secondary education of immigrant children has recently become a very important focus point for Danish politicians – and for public spending – in ways which may allow a measure of optimism regarding the future.

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## **Interviews**

Tina Fehrmann – Pedagogical consultant at the Ministry of Education, Department of Primary Schools and Public Information

Randi Hørlyck – Director at the primary school Nordgårdsskolen in Århus

Per Bregengaard – Mayor of Youth and Education in the Municipality of Copenhagen until January 2007

Bolette Moldenhawer – Pedagogical/educational Scientist at the University of Copenhagen, Faculty of Humanities

Leif Brondbjerg – Teacher at Aarhus Lærerseminarium (Teacher training college)

Ove Korsgaard – Senior lecturer and head of department at the School of Education, University of Aarhus