**Study visit: An introduction to the Danish formal and non-formal educational system**

**Setting**

The Danish youth policy system is based on a decentralised model in which the responsibility for youth policy development falls within the relevant national sectors. This means that each municipality is responsible for implementing local youth policies and for providing the local youth organisations and educational institutions with resources to develop activities for young people. The system is adjusted to the local and regional needs and youth work is generally integrated in the educational system.

***During the study visit the participants will be introduced to the Danish formal and non-formal educational system and experience different educational institutions. The participants will learn about the diverse challenges and solutions in different settings and locations.***

**Key themes**

* Decentralising youth policy – looking at municipal youth work
* Bridging youth work and the educational system
* The youth guidance system – helping young people to find their way to employment and education
* Social and personal development
* Inclusion and reaching out to youth at risk
* Civic education, democracy, and active citizenship
* Combining formal and non-formal learning methods
* Employability

**A wide range**

The municipalities are key actors in implementing and coordinating this work, and they are also responsible for implementing efforts targeted at helping young people into employment or education. At the same time, the municipalities – through the Youth Guidance system – are required to perform systematic outreach and follow-up activities towards young people, who have not started or have stopped a secondary education.

***The participants will visit the following institutions:***

* Public schools
* Vocational schools
* Social authorities
* Youth schools, youth clubs, and other after school activities
* Second chance possibilities (10.-klassecentre)
* Youth guidance centres
* Production schools (Production schools are open to youth under the age of 25, who have not yet fullfilled a youth education or find it difficult to see a way forward in further education or job)

**A strong focus on civic education**

Civic education and active participation in democratic processes play an important role at all stages of the educational system according to the Danish Government. Hence, children and young people have to be involved in decision making procedures concerning their schools, training centres, universities etc. in order for them to experience from an early age that they can influence decisions and that active participation makes a difference.

***The study visit will focus on how the Danish educational system works with civic education at different levels. At the school level this will be illustrated by showcasing the methods used by the Danish youth schools when bridging formal education, civic education and personal development of young people.***

**A special focus on the unique Danish youth school**

Danish youth schools have existed in Denmark since the 1940’s. Every Danish municipality has at least one youth school. They are publicly funded and all activities are free of charge for young people. The youth schools combine formal and non-formal leaning methods and play a key role in the civic education of young people in after school activities. The youth schools are very different in their design but offer several similar activities:

* After school activities providing an informal space where young people can meet
* Creative, or practical voluntary classes in the afternoon, evening, and weekend
* Outreach work targeted at youth at risk
* Activities aimed at increasing awareness on youth democracy and active participation
* Formal education on different subjects
* Special needs education

The main target group is 13-18 years old but can include young people outside the target group when needed. Due to the vast selection of activities, classes, and a flexible approach to youth work and education, the Youth Schools have developed a range of methods to link youth work and the educational system successfully.

**Methods**

The study visit will be a combination of field visits to the above mentioned institutions as well as presentations from stakeholders and practitioners working in the field. Furthermore, the study visit will include partner building elements, an introduction to the Erasmus+ programme as well as some sightseeing and more informal time.

**Practicalities**

The study visit will be held in November in collaboration with Nyborg Youth School. The duration of the visit is 3 full days – with daily visits to different institutions.

The study visit will be facilitated by the Danish National Agency. The study visit will be carried out in close collaboration with local partners from Nyborg Youth School (and SALTO-YOUTH Participation Resource Centre).

**Target group**

Different stakeholders from the formal and non-formal educational field:

* Youth workers, leaders and administrators
* Teachers
* NGO’s
* Representatives from educational institutions

**Draft program**

**Day 1: Arrival day:** Participants arrive in Denmark and take a train to Nyborg, which will be the base for the Study Visit. The program will begin after dinner with a round of presentations and an introduction to the theme of the study visit.

**Day 2: Field visits:** The morning will be spent learning about how Youth Schools promote and work with Youth Democracy and active citizenship and visiting various school projects being organized by Youth Schools. The Youth School structure and their daily work will be presented and especially their inclusion work

* Education for at risk youth
* Special needs secondary education

The afternoon will offer visits at Youth Clubs and show their activities and their work with all sorts of kids and youngsters. We will look at how Youth Schools work together with the public schools in a broad range of ways.

The evening could be visits to various elective classes and activities hosted by Youth Schools. This could be

* + - Theatre programmes
    - Outdoor activities like hunting, fishing, adventure
    - Extra classes, such as Math, Danish, English
    - Art Programmes
    - Etc.

**Day 3: Field visits:** In the morning we will visit a local public School in Nyborg to learn about the Danish school system, how schools combine formal and non-formal learning and how they guide young people towards further education. Then we will visit Nyborg Gymnasium – a secondary school which offers a range of programs, including IB.

In the afternoon we will cross the Great Belt Bridge and drive to Næstved on Zealand, where we will visit Næstved Youth School and see some of their activities, such as local youth radio and youth art in public spaces.

**Day 4: Field visits in Odense:** In the morning we will visit a Production School in Odense which helps young people with social or learning problems prepare for jobs or education.

Then we will visit the Youth Schools in Odense, visit their 10th grade classes, which prepare teenagers for secondary school, and see how they have elective classes as part of the regular school day.

The afternoon will be available to visit Hans Christian Andersen’s Museum and other sites in Odense.

**Day 5:** **Departure day:** Departure from Nyborg by train to Copenhagen Airport