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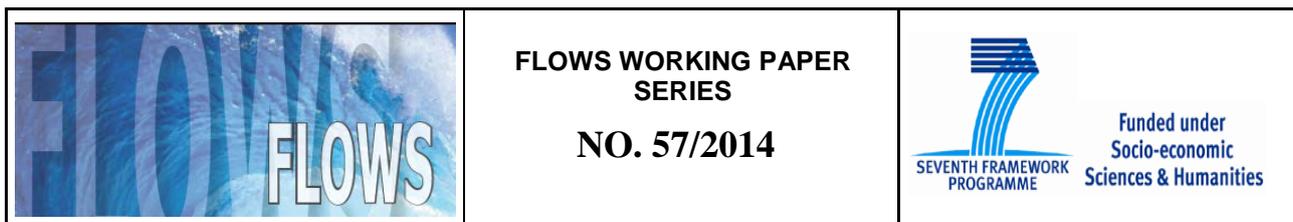
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The policy framework, policy formation and policy actors in Aalborg

FLOWS: Impact of local welfare systems on female labour force participation and social cohesion

FLOWS Working Paper

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About the FLOWS project:

The FLOWS project has been funded under the EU FP7 program, grant Agreement no: 266806. The project started January 1 2011 and ended April 30 2014.

The FLOWS project analyses the causes and effects of women's labour market integration, which is an issue that represents a major challenge for the European Union and its member states, and is supposedly also a precondition for the sustainability of the European social model. The overall aim is to analyse (1) how local welfare systems support women's labour market participation, as well as (2) the extent to which (and under which conditions) female labour market integration has contributed to the strengthening social cohesion. The project focuses on how public and private welfare services such as care and lifelong learning intended to support women's labour market integration have been designed; on how women of different classes, qualifications, ethnicities, and geographical locations have grasped and made use of such policies, and on how the increase in women's labour market integration has affected structures of inequality and social cohesion.

The study is based on in-depth analysis of eleven cities, i.e. one city in eleven different countries. The cities/countries are: Brno/Czech Republic, Aalborg/Denmark, Tartu/Estonia, Jyväskylä/Finland, Nantes/France, Hamburg/Germany, Székesfehérvár/Hungary, Dublin/Ireland, Bologna/Italy, Terrassa/Spain, and Leeds/UK.

The FLOWS project is composed by 6 academic work packages:

WP 1: Degree and structures of women's labour market integration

WP 2: Local production systems

WP 3: The local welfare system

WP 4: Local policy formation/local political actors

WP 5: Survey questionnaire

WP 6: Women's decision making

WP 7: Social structures: cohesion or cleavages and segregation

This working paper series reports work conducted in the seven work packages.

1. Introduction

The Danish welfare state belongs to the cluster of Social Democratic and women friendly welfare states marked by relatively high female employment rates (Hernes, 1987; Esping-Andersen, 1990, 1999; Cox, 2004; Hvinden, 2004; Powell & Barrientos, 2004; Powell, 2007). In 2010, the overall employment rate among women 15-64 years of age was 71.1 (Eurostat), which is the highest female employment rate in the EU area.

The Danish welfare state is often associated with a notion of citizen based universalism, high standards, and territorial uniformity. This, however, primarily apply to cash transfers. In the case of welfare services, the municipalities bear the major responsibility for financing and running a long range of service programs such as kinder gardens, elder care institutions, educational institutions etc., and the municipalities (local government) have considerable autonomy to decide what local citizens are actually entitled to receive, which has caused huge local differences with regard to the provision of welfare services. In the case of care for seniors in Denmark in 2005, for instance, municipal spending varied from DKK 25,148 to DKK 61,651 per senior (65+) per year (between about €3350 and €8220), while the number of hours of long-term home care delivered varied from 2.0 to 13.6 hours per elderly per week (Jensen & Lolle, 2010). Such differences in the provision of welfare services have been facilitated by tendencies towards decentralisation over the last four decades (Kröger, 1997, Bjørnholt et al., 2008)¹, and in the case of welfare services it may actually be more appropriate to talk about a multitude of different ‘welfare municipalities’ (Kröger, 1997, 2009) as opposed to a single, uniform welfare state.

The high degree of autonomy among local policy makers is most often neglected in analysis of the main drivers behind welfare state developments. Very little is known about local policy processes or how ideas among local policy actors interacts with ideas and discourses at the national and international level. That is, for instance, we don’t know how local policy actors, who are supposed to implement EU policies and strategies, are actually influenced by trends towards Europeanization.

In this paper, focus is on municipal welfare services, and the paper is guided by the following research questions: How are international and national policy objectives translated and transferred into local policy? How are ‘personal’, ‘organisational’ and ‘administrative’ factors orchestrated in local policy processes? What are local criteria of “success”? To answer these questions the (Danish) municipality of Aalborg is under scrutiny, and the following welfare services have been selected as fields of analysis: child care, elder care and life long learning (LLL) and vocational training.

The paper is subdivided into two sections. The first section provides an overview of the overall policy framework. The second section gives an overview of vertical governance in Denmark. This mapping exercise is conducted by means of document studies. The third section identifies central local policy actors and gives a deeper understanding of local policy formation and horizontal

¹ Vabo (2010) argues that since the 2000s elements of centralization has reappeared in the Nordic countries due to increased focus on care policies and their role in the welfare state. These tendencies will be discussed in the desk study.

governance at the local level. This is done by means of in-depth semi-structured qualitative interviews.

2. Mapping policy framework

A1: Legal framework (eg social welfare law; gender equality laws; family/marital law, etc) supporting or restraining women's labour force participation

Economic theory and welfare research in general are in agreement about major factors which may facilitate the integration of women into paid employment. Economic theories assume that the hourly wage – or the net hourly wage (gross wages minus taxes plus welfare benefits) – is highly influential on the employment decision of women, while welfare theories presupposes that symbolic and institutional signals such as taxes, cash transfers and welfare services will guide the labour market behaviour of individuals. But besides supply side factors, demand factors also play a major role for women's decision to enter the labour market. In general it is thus assumed that women's labour force participation or labour supply is an out-come of, or reaction to, the following chain of factors:

Gross wages

- Relative price of home appliances
- Taxes
- + Tax deductions (for instance, deductions of work related costs such as transportation)
- + Cash benefits (quality of maternity leave etc.)
- + Welfare services (for instance, prize and coverage of day-care institutions)
- = Dispositional net income

Gender discrimination

Employment opportunities

Women's orientation towards the labour market

Immigration policies

⇒ Labour market behaviour/labour supply

Each link in the chain can be manipulated and it is generally expected that such manipulations (e.g. more or less welfare services) will change the “utility” or “opportunity structure” for labour market participation and thus affect the labour supply of women.

Women’s labour force participation, however, is not solely dependent on welfare state features. Demand side factors, including the demand for part-time workers, and legislation against gender discrimination are equally important. So are cultural attitudes and social norms, the family structure and demographic change. But even immigration policies and the relative price of home appliances affect women’s decision to participate in the labour market.

In this section, major factors which have supported the labour force participation of Danish women will thoroughly be reported.

Gross wages

In Denmark a statutory minimum wage doesn’t exist. Instead the wage is negotiated in the collective bargaining determining a de facto minimum wage. In 2008 the minimum wage was DKK 103 (€13.8) (Stenum, 2008). Women are in majority in the public service sector and the wage rates for unskilled women in the public sector are relatively high which can be seen as an economic incentive for women to work. Regarding the wage gap between the sexes several studies have confirmed a divide in the Danish labour market between male and female workplaces in which the average wage is lower than that of male workplaces, also when factoring in educational level and work experience (Wage Commission, 2010 and Albæk & Brink Thomsen, 2011). On average the male earnings were 44 % higher than women in Denmark in 2009, although when only factoring in employed individuals the difference is 28% (Statistics Denmark, 2011)². This could be viewed as a negative labour market incentive to women and the female workplace dilemma has been debated widely in Denmark e.g. at the collective bargaining of 2008 where the union Trade and Labour (FOA) and the Health Cartel³ united in a struggle for higher wages, but the high rate of women in employment in Denmark indicate that the wage gap isn’t a deciding factor.

Relative price of home appliances

As pointed out by Cavalcanti & Tavares (2008) the relative price of home appliances has an impact on female labour market activity over a period of time. Using their statistical data it is possible to show that a decrease in the home appliance price index by about 28 % from 1975 to 1999 in

² Part of this difference can be explained due to the fact that women in general work less hours pr. week than men.

³ The Health Cartel consisted of a mixture of health care workers e.g. nurses and psychical therapists. The members of both FOA and the Health Cartel to a large degree consist of women.

Denmark can explain about 11 % of the increase in the female labour market participation in that period (Cavalcanti & Tavares, 2008: 83)⁴.

Taxes

In relation to the Danish welfare mix the social policies are to a large extent financed through a progressive personal income tax system, and not through employers- or trade unions insurance contributions, and therefore it is the government/public that are paying and organising the social services (Jensen, 1996: 132-6). Progressive taxation is based on a steeply graduated system of taxation, where there is a distinction between bottom, middle and top tax. Furthermore it is essential to note that the tax system is based on the individual person and not the family as a whole, with means that in a marriage, a female is not placed in a secondary position compared to the male. Under a separate tax and a high progressive tax system, there is an incentive for increasing the family's disposable income which indirectly supports a high degree of female participation (Jensen, 1996: 136-9). Other things being equal, in the case of Sweden that practices the same taxation system as Denmark, for instance, it has been estimated that the husband can reduce his working hours with about 10 hours per week, and the family maintain its available income unchanged if the wife in return takes on a job for about 5½ hours per week (OECD 1990:163).

Tax deductions

In relation to the incentive for increasing the family's disposable income and what is supporting women's participation it is important to mention that it is possible to have a deduction or tax relief in addition to work. In general there is tax relief in terms of conveyance and membership of trade unions, moreover it is possible to redraw expenses in relation to work-life if; the expenses are necessary for ensuring and keeping the earned income, if the cost aren't for private consumption and well documented and the total disbursed surpass a lower limit of DKK 5000 (approx €750) a year (Assessment of income tax to the state Act, 2010: §9). Tax deductions include deduction of commuting.

Cash benefits

Several types of cash benefits are of relevance when it comes to recruiting or maintaining women for the labour market:

1. Part-time insurance against employment

The growth in the post industrial service sector has generated the opportunity for amongst other part time work (Berg, 1989). In 2006 the salaried Danish woman worked on average 34.13 hours a week which is somewhat two hours less than the Danish males; a figure that covers dispersion in working

⁴Cavalcanti & Tavares obtained the home appliance index from the New Chronos Database at the Statistical Offices of the EU. Other variables used in establishing the connection between the relative price index of home appliances and female labour market participation is growth of real GDP, government spending as a share of GDP, average male income and share of urban population (Cavalcanti & Tavares, 2008: 83-84)

hours due to the fact that having children reduces working hours for Danish women but not for the males (Deding & Filges, 2009). In Denmark membership of an unemployment fund is voluntary and the conditions for part time workers resemble that of fulltime employed, but with a lower benefit. The part time workers are seen as an integrated part of the labour market with full citizen rights. In 1970 the government passed a law enabling the right for part time insurance (in Denmark defined as 15-30 working hours on a weekly basis) securing employees in case of unemployment (Jensen, 1996). There is a right to unemployment benefit on the first day of unemployment contingent on the person having had a membership to an unemployment fund for one year and having worked for at least 34 weeks in the course of the last three years, in the case of newly qualified the latter demand is waived (Ministry of Employment, 2008). All things considered the option of part time insurance in Denmark enhances the opportunity of part time employment since the risk of poverty if unemployed is minimized. The proportion of women working part time has however declined since the 1970's.

2. Maternity and paternity leave

In relation to childcare one of the most vital laws supporting women's labour market participation is the law on maternity leave. The purpose is to ensure that parents with affiliations to the labour market have a right of absence in case of pregnancy, birth and adoption with special agreements in relation to the right for maternity leave payments (Maternity leave Act, 2009:§1). A woman has the right to leave the labour market 4 weeks prior to the estimated date of birth, henceforth the right and duty for 2 weeks of absence, and hereafter the right to 12 weeks maternity leave. The father of the child has the right for 2 weeks of absence and after that an opportunity to arrange paternity leave for 12 additional weeks (Maternity leave Act 2009: §6, §7). After the maternity leave parents have the option of parental leave where they can share 32 weeks of absence from the labour market, although the legal framework only allows 46 weeks with full unemployment benefits (Maternity leave Act, 2009: §9-10)⁵. The "Maternity leave Act" supports the female labour market participation, hence the legal framework enforce and give the opportunity for males to take more of the responsibility for the child. Furthermore the right to absence and special reimbursement agreements with the employer is to prevent discrimination given the civil status and age, but the law really supports female participation because it protect women from being dismissed during the pregnancy and the maternity leave (unless the employer have an other specific and documented reason for firing (Maternity leave Act, 2009: §39-43). In 1987 the government passed a welfare benefit for parents on receiving childcare subsidies from when the child is born to the age of 18. The subsidies are income independent and tax-free, but the level of the benefit is given in accordance with the child's age where e.g. the 0-2 year old gets DKK 4248 quarterly (approx €570) and the 15-18 year old receives DKK 2276 quarterly (approx €300) (Family allowance, child benefit and child support payment Act, 2010). The direct financial aid that all families with children under the age of 18 are entitled to irrespective of income was reduced in 2011 with 5 % and moreover it was decided that a

⁵ The different leave agreements combined means that women have the choice of leaving the labour market for a total of a little under a year.

family cannot receive more than DKK 35.000 (approx €4700) a year, no matter how many children (www.borger.dk). This perspective can influence women's participation negatively since women with more than two children are being strongly reduced in family allowance, which can affect the day care facility payment (user fee) and the economic incentive for working can be restrained.

Welfare services

Several welfare services are of major importance for the entry of women into the labour market.

1. Education

In general Denmark are among the countries with the highest level of participation in terms of life long learning and a continuous development of skills and competences, both in form of public and private investments. A very substantial part of the overall learning and competence development takes place in connection with work, while the government focus on those with the lowest level of formal education/training since they have the greatest need for, and barriers to education and for that reason they have the poorest opportunity of getting a job (Strategy for lifelong learning, 2007: 20-25). The "Active Employment Initiatives Act"⁶ supports both unemployed men and women in participating, but especially people with limitations in their work ability and in need for special help in order to find a job. This law is coordinated and implemented by local *job centres* and supports the connection between the job applicant and the public or private employers (Active Employment Initiatives Act, 2011: §1). In order to support labour market participation the job centres are responsible for organising and carrying out an individual and flexible contract course in regards to the citizen's qualifications, background, wishes and to the labour market demands and needs, where the purpose is to ensure a quick return to work (Active Employment Initiatives Act, 2011: §15). In order to increase the employment rate, each unemployed citizen with unemployment benefits, have the right to 6 weeks of self-choosen education, but all unemployed have an option and are being given an offer of guidance and upgrading of skills in forms of education, practical and work experience or lessons in Danish (Active Employment Initiatives Act, 2011: §26a-§32). The legal framework in relation to employment have a focus on both men and women, but in general it affects the female labour force participation positive, because the contract course focus on the individual person, in addition to their background, family relations and skills, therefore the opportunity for getting a job is increased, hence the flexibility in the local employment effort.

2. Labour market policies

The Danish labour market is extremely dynamic with a high turnover of

Jobs, around 30% of the workforce change jobs every year. Still, it costs workers virtually nothing to change jobs, as they do not lose any rights, such as their entitlement to paid holidays, pensions etc. and for companies it is relatively easy to dismiss employees thanks to procedures regarding

⁶ The Act was passed in 2003 and has been altered several times since.

notification etc. which are very flexible. Therefore Denmark is often highlighted as the prime example of this particular mix of a flexible labour market with a generous social security system. This achievement is often attributed to the so-called *flexicurity* model combining flexible hiring and firing rules for employers with income security for employees (Bredgaard et.al, 2009). The labour market performance has changed due to a series of reforms during the 1990s, where the main switch was from a passive focus of labour market policies to a more active focus on job search and employment. The policy tightened eligibility for unemployment benefits and their duration from 8 to 4 years in the 1990s as well as introduced workfare elements into unemployment insurance and social policies in general. The active labour market policy (ALMP) serves a two-fold purpose: to upgrade the skills of the unemployed, to avoid bottlenecks in the labour market, and to encourage the unemployed to remain active and search for jobs. The aim of the system is to prevent people from joining the ranks of the long-term unemployed. If a person is out of work for more than a year, his or her chances of getting a job decrease, and there is a risk of social exclusion (Andersen & Svarer, 2007). The Danish flexicurity model is therefore a result of the division of work and co-operation. It combines labour market flexibility built on collective and local agreements between the unions and the employer's organisations and social security with state benefits and unemployment insurance funds partly controlled by unions.

3. Care for children and elder

Compared to other EU countries Denmark has a high degree of female participation, to a large degree due to the welfare mix and the government's responsibility for the care of children and elderly, a principle which is formed into the "Social Services Act" (2010)⁷ and the "Day Care Facilities Act" (2011)⁸. The Social Services Act has a central role in releasing women from the care assignments at home, because the law forces the municipalities to bear the responsibility for the care for seniors and children with disabilities. In regards to care for the elderly the law supports the female participation hence the political aim of universalism and provision in the Act stipulating that the municipalities must offer personal assistance, care, food and help to support the necessary work at home. Furthermore the municipalities also bear the main responsibility for running the residential homes and nursing houses and in this context the government has taken over the main nursing and care giving role for elderly which minimize the responsibility of female members of the family. Denmark uses more resources on elder care than any other country in proportion to its population and percentage of seniors, and a large part of the seniors receive some sort of care (Bjørnholt et al., 2008). Care for elderly in Denmark is delivered as a public service and a citizen's right, in terms of home care and residential homes for those with more extensive needs, and the purpose is to help the elderly to stay in their own home so they can live as autonomous and self depended as possible.

⁷ The Act was initially passed in 1976, altered to its existing form in 1998 and has been altered several times since.

⁸ In 1964 the government introduced public child care (though in a reduced manner) and in 2007 the different laws concerning child care was merged into the Day care Facilities Act (Kremer, 2007). The policy has been altered several times since.

One of the consequences according to the public responsibility is that care for the elderly provided by spouses or family members has practically disappeared, but the majority of Danes have the opinion that elderly with needs should be taken care of by the public which leaves the family with minimum or no care functions, the so-called defamilization (Hantrais, 2004, Pfau-Effinger & Jensen, 2011: 8-13).

The Day Care Facilities Act also supports women's participation since the overall purpose is to give the Danish families an opportunity to choose between different types of day care facilities and support, balancing work and family life so both parents, and single parents, are part of the labour market. The municipalities are obligated by law to ensure that every child has a day care offer from the age of 26 weeks (Day Care Facilities Act, 2011: §1 & §23-24). This policy has a positive impact on women's labour force participation, because the public has the responsibility for ensuring that there is an opportunity for a quick return to the labour market, but also hence the norms and values that exist around the general society, where the institutionalization of child care, the concept of professional caregivers (pedagogues) and children playing and interacting with other children, are seen and believed in a way where children are better-off at day care than at home with their mother. The care ideals are crucial in a Danish context where the professional care is supposed to improve the child's upbringing, and therefore is a precondition for claiming the right to receive care (Kremer, 2007: 186-88 + 216). The most important section of the "Day care Facilities Act", hence women's participation, is the concept of "childcare guarantee" that should operate inside the local municipalities borders, and therefore the municipal council is obligated by law to establish and publish formal guidelines and directions for the application to admission in a day care facility (Day Care Facilities Act, 2011: §23). Childcare guarantee is crucial in this perspective, because the law indicates that it is a citizen's right to have the opportunity to put ones child into day care institutions, and therefore are the circumstances for women's labour force participation increased, but furthermore the guarantee also indicates that the day care offer must be in a geographical restricted area which additionally complement women's participation⁹. In addition to the overall purpose for this Act, to make work- and family life easy to balance and mix, the municipalities must offer day care facilities inside its own limits, so the distance between day care and home is minimize, moreover it should be taken into account that family's with brothers or sisters in the same age group should have the same day care offer (Day Care Facilities Act, 2011: §43).

Gender Discrimination

The legislation on gender discrimination and the equality of status and equal opportunity in terms of labour market participation in Denmark is framed in the "Sex Discrimination Act" where the main point is that both men and women are equal in every perspective of participation in society (Sex Discrimination Act, 2007:§1). The law requires equal treatment for both sexes, especially in terms

⁹ Dalskovs study shows that on average 84% of the 1-2 years attend day care outside the home, but there is a strong connection between the family's background and the amount of children without day care facility. Especially the family's origin, education and income have a big impact and therefore children of immigrants and unskilled workers/persons with low income are twice as often left without day care facilities (Dalskov, 2010).

of labour market participation like maternity leave and paternity leave, equal pay, and a law against discrimination due to the sex (Sex Discrimination Act, 2007: §1,§2). The law focuses on equal opportunities, but it is not just from a woman's perspective in terms of work life, hence the laws premise is to give men the same equal status in relation to family life and children. The principle of equal pay for equal work is essential in supporting women's labour market participation, and in the "Pay Parity Act" differential treatment is when a person because of the sex are being treated better or worse.

Employment opportunities

The loop-mechanisms of the integration of women into the work force in Denmark are structured around the characteristic patterns of interaction between the family, the welfare state and the labour market as mentioned above, but during the period between 1960s-1980s we find high rates of employment growth in the post-industrial sectors, especially in the public service sector (Kolberg & Esping-Andersen 1991). A high proportion of the jobs created in the public sector are located in labour intensive welfare and caring institutions. As women are in favour of jobs which are connected with taking care of people (Harris 1983:73), the new jobs created have been in accordance with the dispositions of women. We therefore assume that part-time work during the 1960s and 1970s has functioned as a "bridge" for the integration of women into paid employment in the Scandinavian countries (Nätti 1993). As such, the loop-mechanisms have changed the positions of women as workers, citizens and mothers.

Public Employees, per cent of the total labour force:



Statistics Denmark, 2011a.

The number of government/public employees grew rapidly in the 1970s, and since there have been around 1/3 of the total labour force working in the sector. The large public sector supports women's entrance and participation in the labour market in a two folded way; the sector is the employer and ensures that the overall legal framework supports women's opportunities and equal status in Society.

Women's orientation towards the labour market

The entry of women into the labour market has also had a profound impact on women's self-image and identity, and women's attitudes towards their position in society in general. In 1965, 82 per cent of Danish women could fully agree with the following statement: "Married women should not

work, if the effect is that a man becomes unemployed”, while only 19 per cent could agree with the same statement in 1987. In 1965, 80 per cent of Danish women could fully agree with the following statement: “It is the task of the housewife to take care of the children and do the housework”, while only 26 percent could agree with the same statement in 1987 (Togeby, 1989). These changes in attitudes clearly demonstrate that women’s role perception has changed radically between the 1960s and 80s. In the 1960s women considered themselves assigned to a marginal or subordinate position in the labour market and vis-à-vis the male breadwinner. By contrast, since the late 1980s (most) women have considered themselves to be on an equal footing with men, both with regard to wage labour and the division of housework.

Immigration policies

In relation to immigration policies a legal amendment from 2002 was passed where the main change/purpose was to create a stronger economic incentive for immigrants to participate on the labour market. Before the tightening and cutbacks of immigrant rights most social rights (access to welfare services and social transfers) depended only on legal residence in the country and not just in relation to labour market participation or citizenship. Furthermore the benefits were mostly tax-financed and there were few contributory schemes¹⁰. As a consequence of these laws, legal immigrants became a financial liability on the welfare state unless integrated into the labour market at once and thus were able to provide for themselves. Besides weakening economic incentives, due the social rights, the welfare state also contributes in creating barriers for the entry of especially low-skilled immigrants into the labour market due to high minimum wages. High levels of social transfer payments exert upward pressures on minimum wages. In turn, a high minimum wage tends to reduce the number of low-skilled jobs and to price low-skilled, low-productive immigrants out of the labour market, since immigrants cannot compensate for the lack of skills and productivity by accepting wages below the going minimum rate. Therefore the institutions of the Danish welfare state may well (especially before 2002) contribute in creating and perpetuating problems in particular with the position of non-western immigrants and their descendants to participate in the Danish labour market (Nannestad, 2004; Andersen et al. 2009). In 2002 shortly after the Liberal–Conservative coalition gained power they restricted the rights of immigrants in a number of ways: (1) refugee status will henceforth be granted only under strict conditions (not including those fleeing from war or famine); (2) permanent-resident permits will be granted after seven years of residence, instead of three; (3) residents are no longer permitted to bring in a foreign spouse under the age of 24; (4) spouses will not be allowed to join their partners in Denmark unless the couple have a sufficiently large income; (5) applicants for Danish nationality must demonstrate linguistic ability of a 14-year-old native etc.. The Danish immigration policies then became strict in comparison to other countries (Roemer & Van der Straeten, 2006 and Pedersen & Krogstrup, 2008). Besides restricting citizens’ rights the new legal framework also put forward strong economic incentives to participate by reducing and introducing new forms of social transfer, state aid/starting

¹⁰ One of these was/is unemployment benefits. But even with this scheme, contributions cover only a minor fraction of the total expenditures. The remaining part is tax-financed (Nannestad, 2004).

allowance/introduction payment, the transfers being approx 30-40% below the normal social transfer (Andersen et al. 2009). Furthermore there are requirements and a duty to be available for the labour market, and if a married couple, both or one part, receive social transfer they each must work 450 hours within the last 24 months to maintain the right to cash benefits, but from July 2011 the 450-hour rule was changed to a 225-hour rule. If both or one part works less than this they are not considered to be available and therefore lose the right to receive social transfer (Ministry of employment, 2011). In this perspective there has been an economic incentive for immigrant women to enter the labour market after the amendment of the legal framework, but there are still barriers in terms of education, language, skills, culture etc in order for them to have the same opportunities at the labour market as native Danish women. In this respect the employment rate for immigrant women have raised since 2000 though due to the financial crisis starting in 2008 the rate has dropped in accordance to the rest of the population.

Demographic factors

One of the most remarkable changes in relation to family life is that the family unit gradually has been reduced since women in general are giving birth to fewer children and at a much later age. This tendency affects the female labour market participation positive because the time period in a woman’s life with small children and care assignment are decreased and therefore it supports her own independence and opportunities on the labour market.

Fertility rate		Average age for first childbirth	
1960	2,54	1960	23,1
1970	1,95	1970	23,7
1980	1,55	1980	24,6
1990	1,67	1990	26,4
2000	1,77	2000	28,1
2010	1,87	2010	29,1

Statistics Denmark, 2011.

It is although crucial to mention that there is no causal relation between the fertility rate and the female participation rate, instead the development may be an expression of modernization processes in general (Jensen, 1996:110-1).

The family structure in Denmark has moved from a ‘housewife model of the (male) breadwinner family’ to a ‘dual breadwinner/dual carer model’ (Pfau-Effinger, 2004) and women have been defined as an integrated part of the work force so they are in principle considered to be self-supporting in as much as the individual is the basic social unit in social citizenship (Pieters 1990).

I.e. women are not considered to be dependent of their husbands. The relationship between couples has become more symmetrical. However, relationships have also become more unstable, and new (serial) types of families have been established (Moss 1988, Carlsen & Larsen 1993; Council of Europe 1995). In this perspective family legislation has been oriented towards a protection of individual rights i.e. legislation concerning marriage, divorce etc. In the case of divorce the welfare state may function as an alternative to dependency on a male breadwinner (The Social Commission, 1992).

In 2010, 40.2 per cent of all marriages ended in divorce. The calculation is made for the period 1980 to 2010 and the current divorce rate is the lowest in the past ten years. In 1989 divorce rates peaked with 44.5 per cent, while it was lowest in 1980 with 37.5 percent.



Statistics Denmark, 2011.

A2: Main governmental document (e.g. coalition agreement, government program, etc)

In February 2010 the Liberal-Conservative government published the document “Denmark 2020 – Knowledge, Growth, Wealth and Welfare”. The document outlines visions, goals and aims of the Danish welfare society for the years to come, and the document is important as it was supposed to guide government policies in all important aspects towards 2020.

Who form the coalition and date of introduction.

The document was prepared by the Liberal-Conservative coalition government. This government was able to stay in power between 2001 and 2011 with the continuous support of the Danish People’s Party. The Danish People’s Party is hostile to foreigners, especially Muslims.

During the process of analyzing “Denmark 2020” an election was held the 15th September 2011. An out-come of the election was that a new government was formed. The government is a coalition government composed by the Socialist People’s Party, the Danish Social Liberal Party and the Social Democrats as the lead partner. As will appear from section C it is the same coalition which forms the majority in the municipality of Aalborg.

In October 2011 a coalition agreement was published entitled “Denmark Stands United”. This document forms the basis for the government. It was, however, not published until after the analysis of “Denmark 2020” had been finalized. Still, to the extent possible we have made some additional references to “Denmark Stands United”.

What does it say about international (EU) guidelines concerning female employment, the informal caring load and educational support (LLL; training)

The “Denmark 2020” document does not mention or describe anything about the EU guidelines concerning female employment, the informal caring load and educational support, but instead it focuses on equal opportunities especially regarding immigrants and marginalized groups who are often described as unemployed and affected by the poverty cycle (Denmark 2020, 2010: 11-3). Instead “Denmark 2020” deals with the overall objectives and strategies for the development of the welfare state and in this context the EU is mentioned and described in forms of comparability in relation to economy indicators – as a benchmarking exercise. The ultimate goal is for Denmark to become an EU leading country in terms of integration, employment, education and to minimize the fiscal deficit (Denmark 2020, 2010: 20, 30, 34).

Neither “Denmark Stands United” refers to EU guidelines or targets concerning female employment. The document simply states that Denmark is a welfare society supporting the participation of women and men in the labour market (page 12 & 51) and that high labour force participation rates is a precondition for economic growth and wealth (page 65). As in the case of “Denmark 2020” the documents focus on equal opportunities more generally. It states that the government will improve housing and life conditions of the elderly (page 49), and that it will improve the quality of day care institutions (page 6 + 17) in terms of the number of staff per child and opening hours (page 17). Perhaps inspired by Gøsta Esping-Andersen it is argued that the

enrolment of children into high quality day care institutions is a precondition for successful schooling. The document also states that the government will invest more in research and education. Most educational measures mentioned in the document are targeting the age group less than 30 years of age.

As to EU “Denmark Stands United” promises that the government will live up to The Stability and Growth Pact and budget requirements in 2013. Still, EU plays a relatively large role in “Denmark Stands United”, but not so much as an ideal. Rather, “Denmark Stands United” puts forward lots of demands to policy changes in the EU, for instance in areas such as environmental policies, foreign policies, agricultural policies etc.

What does it say about women’s labour force participation

The “Denmark 2020” document does not mention the idea of more women working. It does, however, observe that the employment rate among female immigrants from non-western countries has increased by 80 % since 2001 – i.e. since the Liberal-Conservative government was formed (Denmark 2020, 2010: 6).

“Denmark Stands United” states that female employment is among the highest in the world. The document mentions that Denmark has gone a long way when it comes to gender equality, although it has gone the wrong way in recent years; especially in terms of wages etc. The labour market is gender segregated, which poses major challenges in terms of gender equality (page 65f). Therefore new measures are necessary. The government promises to introduce (1) measures increasing the proportion of women in boards of listed companies, eventual introduce quotas (as in Norway); (2) to earmark three month of total maternity/paternity leave to men; today paternity leave can be transferred to the women; (3) to establish a maternity fond for self-employed persons (who are not enrolled in the present maternity/paternity leave arrangements).

What does it say about discharging women from informal caring load child care and elder care provision)

No information available – neither in “Denmark 2020” nor in “Danmark Stands United”.

What does it say about LLL and training – how is LLL and training related to women’s entrance / return to the labour market in this policy document?

The “Danmark 2020” program does not refer to how LLL and training are related to women’s entrance/return to the labour market, but as pointed out there is a political focus on actively increasing and promoting employment initiatives. The program argues that new and special measures targeting the long term unemployment will be established. In this context immigrants and long term unemployed are described as the weakest groups in society in relation to jobs, not women in general. The government set the target of improving the opportunities for these groups by new measures to increase their opportunities on the labour market by upgrading (basic) skills, education

and a more frequently contact between the local job centre and the unemployed (Denmark 2020, 2010: 16-7).

In terms of LLL and training “Denmark Stands United” refers to education in general terms, i.e. without gender distinctions. The document sets several goals with regard to youth, i.e. people below 30 years of age. By 2020 95 % of all youth must have finished some sort of education (page 8).

Furthermore, the “Denmark Stands United” document advocate for an improvement of the qualifications in the labour force as a whole. The document announces that the government will initiate tripartite negotiations as to how education and training of adults workers can be enhanced; especially with regard to the unskilled workers. The goal is that more adults can be enrolled in the educational system to upgrade their skills (page 22). The measures could be summarized as follows: more training to the least educated part of the work force. It is expected that more education will improve job opportunities and improve Danish competitiveness.

During the Liberal-Conservative government activation has tended to change from a “human capital” to a “work-first” strategy. “Denmark Stands United” announces that the Social Democratic lead government will return to the “work-first” strategy (page 9f).

A3: National Action Plan of social inclusion or an operational program of human resource development partly supported by ESF (the OP-s are available for the 2007-2013 programming period for each country)

Title of the initiative and years of implementation

In 2008 the Danish Government published the “National Report on Strategies for Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2008 – 2010” NAP 2008-2010.

Purpose of this initiative

The purpose of the initiative is to give a description of how the Danish strategy is organised strategically and systematically. It is based on the NAP 2006-2008 and describes former and coming initiatives.

Description of the approach:

Who was the promoter?

Promoting the initiative was the Ministry of Social Welfare and the Ministry of Health and Prevention.

Who were the actors (stakeholders) involved in preparation of the doc – the decision-makers, secondary actors like NGOs, social partners like employers’ representatives, trade unions.

The Ministries made efforts to involve a wide range of stakeholders in formulating the priorities of the strategy. A conference was held in April 2008 with participation from relevant ministries, local and regional government organizations (amongst others Local Government Denmark), the Commission, the social partners, the Danish National Centre for Social Research (SFI) as well as voluntary organizations. The purpose of the conference was to give these stakeholders an opportunity to air their interests and ideas. In addition to this a website was created with the purpose of creating a public forum for ideas and debate.

How is the policy coordinated? (vertical along the levels of the government; horizontal – the inter-ministerial)

The policy is coordinated both horizontally and vertically. Horizontal coordination is necessary as several ministries are involved in issues regarding social inclusion etc. Vertical coordination is necessary since the municipalities are the main providers of social services (see section C).

Analysis of the policy doc:

What does it say about international (EU) guidelines

The initiatives in the report are described in accordance with the framework of the open method of coordination (OMC) in the EU, either already implemented as a part of the earlier NAP 2006-2008 or to be implemented in the coming years. There is also an appendix describing the targets of the OMC followed by a reference to the challenges for Denmark concerning this subject as described by the Commission and the Council of Ministers

What does it say about women's labour force participation

Concerning women's labour market participation, the report states that the employment rate for women in Denmark is higher than the EU-25 average also for elderly women (55-64 years).

What does it say about women as main informal carers and about discharging them from informal caring load (child care; elder care)

It is pinpointed that the specific Danish welfare model with comprehensive services for both the young and the elderly is meant to ensure, “*families' freedom of choice in relation to labour market affiliation and full labour market participation, independently of whether the employee has relatives in need of care...*” (NAP, 2008: 9). A distinctive characteristic is thereby to put emphasis on the *family* as a whole as opposed to women as a specific group indicating that equality in a Danish perspective isn't restricted to issues of female equality, an analysis supported by Borchorst & Siim (2000). However the recommendations from the Commission caused the social partners to introduce paid leave on the second day of a child's illness in 2008, and attempts to eliminate long waiting for proper social housing for the elderly to further promote freedom of choice.

What does it say about LLL and training – how are LLL and training related to women's entrance/ return to the labour market?

As before the need to devote special attention to immigrant women and education is stressed.

B. Overview of a local policy document (e.g. development plan of the city; coalition agreement))

The municipality of Aalborg doesn't publish a written "government program" or "coalition agreement". The municipal council of Aalborg, however, has adopted an overarching policy for Aalborg in the so-called *Development plan 09*. Characteristic for this plan is a focus on a coherent area usage and environmental considerations (The Planning Act LBK nr. 937). The municipal council, however, decided not to include considerations as to where to place and localize future public service institutions such as child- and elder care institutions in the 09-development plan (Development Plan09, 2009: 24). Therefore, there is a strong focus on psychical planning.

What does it say about international (EU) guidelines

The document does not mention the EU guidelines. The references to the EU are restricted to environmental issues such as Natura 2000.

What does it say about women's labour force participation

The policy document does not mention anything about female labour market participation or life long learning and vocational training. This is probably because the task of planning labour market measures, to define goals and performance requirements is assigned to a total of four Regional Labour Market Councils. At the municipal level the role of the Local Labour Market Council is to supervise and counsel the local Job-centre, which is in direct contact with job-seekers.

Although child and elder care institutions does not form part of the "Development plan 09" the plan do mention principles of proximity in relation to care facilities. This can indirectly be seen as promoting women's labour market participation. If care facilities are close to the home it will minimize transport time in bringing children to the day care institution. Also there is a focus on transport, including public transport, which in some reports is seen as somewhat gender biased due to the circumstance that more women than men are responsible for bringing and picking up their child from day care facilities (Laustsen & Sjørup, 2003) combined with the structural aspect of men in general having a higher need to use the family car an account of more extensive commuting (Transport Council, 2000). A focus on better transport can therefore be seen as an indirect support on female labour force participation.

What does it say about discharging women from informal caring load?

No information available.

What does it say about LLL and vocational training –how do they/does it relate with women and the labour market?

No information available.

C Overview of the governance system

Describe the legal basis of the governance system

The date for local elections in Denmark is defined by law, in contrast to parliamentary elections, where the election date is decided by the prime minister within a maximum of four years since the last election. The law on municipal elections states that municipal and regional elections must be held every fourth year on the third Tuesday in November. The last municipal and regional election was held on November 17th 2009. At the local level, there is no statutory barrier for representation in the municipal or regional council. This is also in contrast to the national level, where the barrier is 2% of the popular vote. However, since council seats are distributed proportionally, there is always an indirect barrier for representation. This indirect barrier is 3,22% of the votes in Aalborg as a consequence of there being 31 city council seats in Aalborg. The table below displays the results of the latest municipal election in 2009.

Distribution of the 31 seats in Aalborg's city council (2009 election)

Socialist People's Party	5	Denmark's Liberal Party	9
Social Democrats	12	Conservative People's Party	2
Danish Social Liberal Party	1	Danish People's Party	2
Supporting parties to the mayorship	18	Opposition parties	13

The Social Democratic mayor ship has a comfortable majority with 18 city councilors backing the mayor ship, ranging from the Danish Social Liberal Party, a centre party, to the Socialist People's party on the left. Aalborg has always been a major stronghold for the Social Democratic Party, where the party has been in power ever since 1925. While the party traditionally is strong in all major cities, Aalborg and Copenhagen are the only cities where the party has held the mayor ship without interruption since before World War 2. Aalborg was one of the few municipalities where the party resisted its popular decline in recent elections until the latest election in 2009, where the party lost more votes than was the case in most other municipalities. This was counterbalanced by a surge in support for the Socialist People's party.

A characteristic feature of the Danish public sector is that it is one of the most strongly decentralized public sectors in the world along with the other Nordic welfare States, and responsibility for many of the core welfare services are placed at the municipal level (Pallesen 2003). The most important foundations and cornerstones for present day political and administrative divisions between the three levels were chiselled out with the municipality reform of 1970, which simultaneously decentralized welfare state responsibilities to a large extent (Bogason 1995). Another municipal reform, which entered into force in 2007, established responsibilities for different policy areas as they can be seen in the table below. This reform largely moved former regional responsibilities to the state and municipal levels, while simultaneously abolishing their

right to impose taxes (Local Government 2005B). As can be seen from the table below, the municipalities are responsible most of the core welfare services while the regions, on the other hand, have largely been left with health care after the latest reform in 2007.

Distribution of policy responsibilities between political levels in Denmark

Municipalities	Regions	State
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Payment of welfare benefits - School education - Care for the elderly (homes and centres, etc.) - Child care - Employment policy (with state) and integration of immigrants - Management of cultural institutions - Dental service and psychiatry - Specialized services for disabled, etc. - Roads, traffic and public transportation - City planning and development (including trade/business, local tourism) - Environmental protection and clearance/permissions - Treatment of waste water and refuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Healthcare (excluding dental service and psychiatry) - Some forms of specialized education - Possibilities of managing services and institutions for disabled, etc. in agreement with municipalities. - Regional development planning (including tourism, culture, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Universities, further education and youth education - Unemployment insurance and employment policy (with municipalities) - National church, justice and foreign policy - Immigration - Taxes, VAT, duties, etc. (collection and administration) - Subsidies for cultural institutions - Agriculture, fishery and foodstuffs - Environmental regulation and planning - National infrastructure

Sources: Local Government Denmark (2005), Ministry of Interior and Social Affairs (2005)

However, municipal autonomy is not absolute within the above policy areas. State and municipalities enter into yearly agreements regarding overall expenditure growth, and then

municipalities can prioritize within this expenditure framework. Similarly, the state can impose limits on taxes. For example, the previous right-wing government in Denmark imposed a “tax stop” on municipal taxes, meaning that municipal income taxes were not allowed to increase on average. When it comes to payment of welfare benefits, the level or generosity of these are nationally regulated, but the payment of these is a local responsibility. National regulation or standards are of course also to be found in other municipal welfare services.

On the other hand, municipal autonomy can be found in areas beyond the law-regulated policy areas mentioned above. What we may translate as “municipal authorization” applies to initiatives not defined or regulated by law (Mogensen & Silic 2004). In short, it is a developed practice where the municipalities can engage in certain local measures not defined by law when these are limited to the municipality. The practice is based on the understanding that a municipality has an independent authority to manage its own economy and financial means within the limits of the municipality. Historically, policy areas that are today defined by law have often started as areas considered being within this “municipal authorization”, and what is considered to be included here is subject to dynamic change. Broadly speaking, the authority typically includes support for non-profit initiatives concerned with the local community, or how the municipality conducts its economic activity within the framework of local business. Specific present day examples are financial support for local associations run by volunteers concerned with culture, sports, religion, politics or the like. Others are buying and selling of property or municipal production of goods and services for own use.

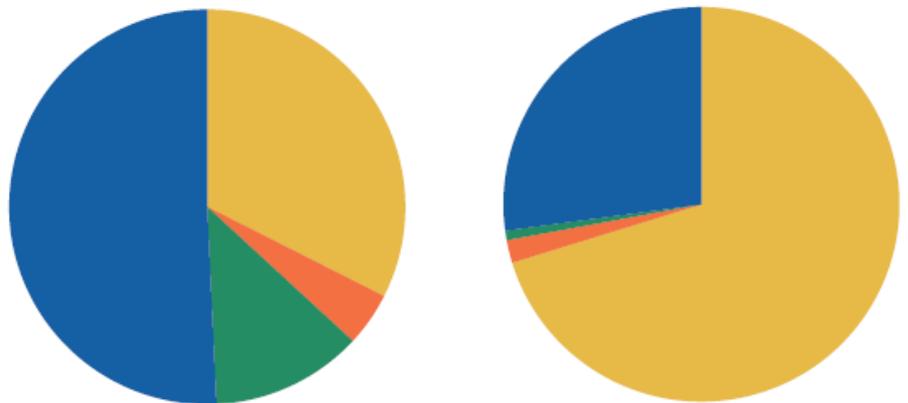
Turning to financing and taxes, the central feature is that the municipalities and the state define their own separate income taxes, while the municipalities also decide on property taxes. As mentioned before, the regional level no longer have the authority to impose taxes. Municipal income taxes are not graduated according to income, i.e. everybody pays the same locally defined percentage, while state taxes are divided into a progressive system of bottom, middle and top level taxes. Many of the municipal responsibilities come with some form of state subsidy. For example, in some cases, the state finances a share of the municipal expense regarding payment of welfare benefits. In addition, the state allots a general “block grant” to the municipalities, largely based on the number of inhabitants (Ministry of Interior and Health 2009a). Regional expenses are almost exclusively covered by the state. These subsidies and grants by the state are also apparent in the charts below, where we distinguish between expenditure responsibilities (as it follows from the previous table) and expenditure financing.

Distribution of public expenditure responsibilities and expenditure burdens (2009)

Expenditure Responsibilities

Expenditure financing

- State
- Social funds (unemployment, etc.)
- Regions
- Municipalities



Source: Statistics Denmark (2011B)

The charts clearly reflect how the municipalities are responsible for running most of the dominant welfare services, but also how the state through its grants and subsidies to municipalities and especially the regional level actually finance most of the Danish public sector.

In addition to grants and subsidies from the state, the individual municipal economy is also very much influenced by economic equalization schemes between municipalities with the purpose of lessening disparities in economic means. There are three main types of municipal equalization schemes; the first is aimed at reducing overall disparities between all municipalities, the second is a similar scheme limited to Copenhagen (municipalities in Copenhagen are also included in the first scheme) and the third is aimed at support for municipalities with exceptionally high structural deficits (Ministry of Interior and Health 2009a).

The municipalities can take out loans, but only for specific purposes singled out by national proclamation in accordance with the law. The current proclamation defines some very specific and narrow areas such as utility supplies and modernization and renovation of utility use (energy savings, etc.) as well as general urban renewal (Ministry of Interior and Social Affairs 2009b). There is no open access to take loans in order to finance welfare services in general. The state has to grant a dispensation for loan taking for other purposes than those defined by the proclamation. However, annual loan pools are decided upon in negotiations between the state and the municipalities, and individual municipalities can apply for loans in these pools. Each pool has a specific purpose, and these can vary from investments in elderly care to investments in IT-upgrades, for example.

Policy makers and competences (who is accountable?)

Like other major cities in Denmark (in total five cities) Aalborg has a special kind of government. Aalborg is ruled by an *intermediate government*, which can be described as a mixture of magistrate

and committee government (Berg, 2004 and Engberg, 2008)¹¹. This type of government supports compromises and cooperation among political parties. At the local level party politics and ideology plays a minor role. Cross cutting political ideology political parties at the local level are most of all preoccupied by problem solving activities.

In Aalborg local government is subdivided into seven administrative areas (+ the Mayors office), i.e. The Mayors Administration, the Technical Administration, the Administration for the Elderly and Disabled, the Family and Employment Administration, the Administration for School and Culture, the Administration for the Utility Companies and the Administration for health and Sustainable Development.

In relation to each administrative area a municipal committee has been established; i.e. there are seven committees covering different administrative areas, and the committees are composed by politicians from the city council. The committees are both political and administrative units. The committees are responsible for implementing decisions which have been passed, either by the city council or the committee itself; the city council can thus delegate political authority to the committees (Local Government Act §17 paragraph 1; Ibsen, 2004 and Engberg, 2008). Furthermore, it is possible for the committee to delegate the responsibilities to the chairman of the committee. In this sense the daily responsibility can be said to be divided between the mayor and the chairmen of the committees, also known as *shared administrative management* (Local Government Act § 64a and Engberg, 2008).

The committee chairmen are elected on a proportional basis by the municipal council; not just by majority. This means that two out of seven committees/departments currently are led by opposition parties.

The Magistrate is the coordinating body of the local government. It is composed by the chairmen the seven committees as well as the mayor. The Magistrate makes decisions on matters and policies of an overarching nature such as the economic plan for the municipality as a whole. In general the Magistrate makes decisions in policy areas not confined to one single committee.

Binding rules, tasks and content

In contrast to welfare benefits, where the overall responsibility lies at the national level, the provisions of services in the Danish welfare state largely depend on local political decisions and priorities. In the service areas the welfare state is highly decentralized, i.e. there is a strong connection between political decisions making and financing responsibilities, which is also why municipalities have the right to levy taxes. This strong local autonomy has given rise to huge

¹¹ The Local Government Act stipulates that specific municipalities have the option of this form of government. A vast majority of the Danish municipalities are led by committee government (Local Government Act § 64).

variations in the quality and distribution of welfare services between municipalities (Jensen & Lolle, 2010 and Kröger, 2011).

Still, various forms of national legislation enforces on municipalities to provide services for local citizens.

In the case of day care facilities, the municipal council have the responsibility for ensuring the day care facilities and the overall cohesion between the day care offers (public/private), the amount of children in need of care, the user fee (although maximum 25 % of the cost) and the municipalities general child policy (Day Care Facilities Act, 2011: §3-§4). Furthermore there is a legal obligation to involve parents in the decision making concerning the chosen day care facility which is brought by a principle of choice where the main purpose is to ensure the quality of services by user influence and a share of the decision making (Bjørnholt et al., 2008). The law stipulates that parents with children in a public or private day care institution or with a public child minder must have access to set up a parent board in relation to each of the institutions. Employees in the institution shall be represented in the parent board, but the municipal council can decide whether or not employee representatives on the parent board should have voting rights. The parent board in a day care facility must establish principles for day care work and the use of a budget for day care centre within the targets and frameworks establish by the municipal council (Day care Facilities Act, 2011: §14-15).

The local municipalities bear the main cost of the day care facility and are responsible for the day care offers in strict accordance with directions and the demographic of the local community, but the parents own payment differs between municipalities and the parents income although maximum 25 % of the cost (Day Care Facilities Act, 2011: § 31). In general parents in Aalborg have a monthly cost for day care (0-2 year old) equivalent to DKK 2.255 (approx €300) and compared to the most expensive (Copenhagen, DKK 3.175 (approx €420)) and cheapest (Herning, DKK 1.968 (approx € 260)) municipality, the cost is relative affordable¹². The implementation, cost and quality of the social services, as described, are the municipality's responsibility, but the national level demands in relation to the cost and quality that the public providers are in competition with for-profit providers both in terms of child care and elderly care and other areas (Day Care Facilities Act, 2011: §80 & Social Service Act, 2010). An important task for the municipality is ensuring the existence of free choice between providers. There are different forms of free choice; it may be a free choice between different offers from the same supplier, or it may be a choice of offers from different suppliers where the different providers can be public institutions, private institutions, private companies or individuals. The liberty of free choice was not a policy demanded by the citizens in general, but a political decision at the national level where the purpose was to strengthen the quality of the welfare services, and therefore the local municipalities were obligated by law to ensure an opportunity of choosing between different offers that can be adapted to the populations different needs and wishes (Bjørnholt et al., 2008). In relation to day care facilities the free choice of provider was legalized in

¹² The data is collected on the website "the key figures of the local municipalities" The data is from 2010.

1998 in terms of an opportunity to choose between public and for-profit Child minding¹³ and in 2005 between public and for-profit “day care institutions” (Day Care Facilities Act, 2011: §19, §21 & §28).

Concerning elderly care, the national government have some specific overall rules for the services as described in part A₁, but the municipalities have considerable autonomy and room for manoeuvre when it comes to the actual extent and substance of the services, as well in situations where the decision of who is entitled to receive care. Still, there are national requirements for establishing quality standards every year and installing control mechanisms for ensuring the municipality’s own fulfilment of the standards (Fresch & Jensen, 2011). In terms of quality and the security of life and property the local municipality has a legal obligation to uphold a Senior Citizens Council (SCC) who is to be heard in consultation procedures on local political issues affecting the elderly (Protection of Legal Rights Act, 2011: §30-33). The municipality must ensure democratic elections for the SCC. The principle of involving citizens in the policy process is similar to the argument for the parent boards. As in the case of child care an important task for the municipality is ensuring the existence of free choice between providers. In 2003 the government introduced the free choice of provider in Danish homecare for the elderly in order to improve user autonomy and care and to cut costs by introducing competition between public and private for-profit providers. The local municipalities are to ensure and make it possible for private providers to operate along side the public providers. Furthermore it is made obligatory by law for the municipalities to enter contracts with for-profit providers so that the elderly can choose between one or more private and public providers. Regardless of the provider, the local municipality is paying for the care, in proportion to the care assessor’s evaluated needs for the individual citizen (Rostgaard, 2011: 1-3, Kröger, 2011: 1-3 and Fersch & Jensen, 2011: 3-5). This policy changes the way the elderly are portrayed and understood, from a client or patient role, to a figure of a consumer who makes free choices. The idea is that elderly in need of care can act as autonomous, self-reliant citizens who have the freedom of choice between different providers (Rostgaard, 2011; Pfau-Effinger & Jensen, 2011: 1-3). Even though the public social services has been challenged by private actors and institutions it is crucial to notice that it is still the local municipality who has the overall responsibility to control and fulfil the legal obligations and the main local political agenda, regardless of the level of privatisation.

In relation to the Active Employment Initiatives Act (2011), the Minister of Employment can lay down rules concerning the implementation of different initiatives in terms of pilot- and development strategies that can diverge from the provisions of this Act, but the main responsibility rest with the municipal council. It is the municipal council who decides how the municipality should plan and perform the employment effort which is being managed by the local job centre as described in A₁. A mode of governance, to ensure the results and effects of the employment strategy, is to involve different actors in the policy making in an interaction with the national

¹³ *Child minding* is an arrangement whereby private approved childminders, subsidised and/or employed by the local municipality take care of a group of children in their own homes. Denmark has targeted this service towards the smallest children (0-2 year olds).

Employment Council, the Regional Employment Council and the local Employment Council. The Employment Region monitors and analyzes developments in the regional labour market and makes this knowledge available to job centres and other relevant stakeholders on the labour market. The Minister of Employment has created four government Employments Regions, where the regional director is appointed by the Minister, the State/government therefore monitors and analyzes the employment regions labour market trends and the efforts to promote employment in the job centres in order to ensure results and effects of the intervention (Responsibility for and Management of Active Employment initiatives Act, 2010: §1-8, §13). The Local Employment Council is made up by certain policy actors stipulated by law such as the social partners and members of the municipal council (for more information see part 2, B₃).

D. Overview of policies regulating child and elderly care, LLL and training on the local level

Legal basis for the local administration

As mentioned above, decentralization is a central element in the Danish welfare state giving the municipalities a high degree of autonomy. As mentioned earlier the Municipality of Aalborg is ruled by an intermediate government and has the right to levy taxes. In an intermediate government the municipal council assigns the committee the right to manage the daily tasks of the municipality (Local Government Act §17 paragraph 1; Ibsen, 2004 and Engberg, 2008) and therefore the committee holds the responsibility of implementing the policies passed by the Committees and/or the municipal council. In certain matters the committee delegates the responsibilities to the administration or the chairman of the committee (who is also the chairman of the administration in question and a member of the Magistrate). In reality the implementation is mostly delegated to the administration which the three cases clearly show (see part 2). As an example the Family and Employment Administration consists of two committees; the Family and Social Committee and the Employment Committee. The former passes general policies concerning childcare but has to include the municipal council if the policy includes building or closing care facilities. The criteria can be said to be build on a proportional scale leaving relatively small decisions up to the committee whereas more influential decisions are to be brought to the municipal councils attention. The same can be said for the Employment Committee where many policies are passed by the committee but due to a political wish of prioritizing the Employment Plan (in which the strategy for reaching a higher level of employment in the municipality is situated) this policy is adapted by the municipal council and as with other policies implemented by the administration. Concerning elderly care the Administration for the Elderly and Disabled consists of the Committee for the Elderly and Disabled and is based in the same manner as the family and Social Committee and implemented by the administration.

Child care: overview of the provision:

The national basis for the provision of child care is as mentioned earlier put forward in The Day Care Facilities Act, 2011:§1, §3 & §23-24 where the municipalities are obliged by law to form a

strategy for the day care provision providing care for children after the age of 6 months. The law prescribes that the municipality makes care arrangements inside the municipal borders and as with other social areas the Municipality of Aalborg governs by a principle of subsidiarity so that the care facility is close to the citizen's residence and in the same school district, dividing the municipality into four overarching areas of placements¹⁴. In addition to this, the waiting period for day care must not exceed four weeks from when the parents sign up. These provisions should, at least in theory, further female employment ensuring a fast return to the labour market and a limited transport time when dropping off and picking up your younger children. In practise however the municipality has had minor problems in keeping with this due to irregularities in the development of the population forcing the municipality to disregard the principle of subsidiarity (Municipality of Aalborg, 2011). Furthermore it isn't possible to assess the average age of children enrolled in day care in general due to the varieties in care opportunities where about 20 % of all children (0-2 years) as of January 1. 2011 attended in private child minding (Child Care Guarantee 2012-2013). It is important to clarify that there are three different day care offers in the municipality of Aalborg; day care institutions or public/private child minding. The day care institutions are public and vary in size, but the principle is that there are employed pedagogues and childcare assistants in public buildings to take care of the child. Another possibility is child minding where the care offer is given in the child minders own home; this form of provision can due to the principle of free choice be in terms of public or private. There is a clear distinction between the levels of freedom in the daily work between the public and private child minders. The public child minders are subjected to more demands in terms of the working environment and cannot reject to take care of any children if the chemistry and relation between the parents and the child minder is not functioning. The private child minding has more levels of freedom in terms of choosing a special concept of care (e.g. the food must be ecological), but they are not in addition to the child guarantee directly stipulated by the municipality, the parents must themselves seek information about the private day care offers, hence the law only stipulate that there is the opportunity of free choice inside the municipalities boards.

For the municipal day care the average age for enrolment is 11 months. In the review of the national documents concerning child care it was showed how there in Denmark exists a social bias in the use of child care where especially children of immigrants, un-skilled and low income families have a lower rate of enrolment in day care outside the home. On the grounds of conversations with informants there is reason to believe that the same conditions are present in Aalborg.

In 2011 the presupposed percentage of children in day care outside the home was 72 % for the 0-2 year olds and 98.7 % for the 3-5 year olds indicating that in spite of difficulties in the public care system a vast majority of the children in Aalborg are enrolled in day care outside the home albeit

¹⁴ Prior to 2009 the municipality was divided into 6 districts which inevitably meant that the districts were smaller and therefore the child care closer to the parental residency. As a part of a management restructuring policy "The Future of the Public Day Care" the number of districts was lowered raising criticism about the larger districts.

probably with a social bias. The local provision of childcare therefore supports female labour market participation to a large degree.

Elderly care: overview of the provision

As mentioned in the national desk study review the legal basis for elderly care is defined in The Social Services Act § 83, paragraph 1 and 2, obliging the municipalities to ensure care when it comes to personal assistance, care, food service and practical assistance to support the necessary work at home. Since 1998 it has been stipulated that these services be explained in a quality standard report each year (Bjørnholt et al., 2008) which is also the case in Aalborg. The reports describe the rights of the elderly in general terms and are communicated to them through the municipality's website. In Aalborg 40 % of the elderly (67 or older) receive some sort of care which for a great part is practical help such as cleaning. The care ranges from 52 minutes to 5.45 hours a week (Municipality of Aalborg, 2010). There is a difference in the market share for the private sector being largest in the case of practical assistance (approx. 30 %) and lowest when it comes to personal help (approx. 13 %). The municipal service provision for the elderly is an important tool in lifting the women from their caring responsibilities due to the fact that the municipality takes part in securing the basic needs for the seniors freeing the women to take part in the labour market. This is also due to the attitude held by the Danes that the state should take care of the elderly as referenced earlier and almost every respondent in this study expressed this attitude. Critical voices from interest groups¹⁵ have however expressed dissatisfaction with the service level provided by the municipality due to the political decision not to offer thorough cleaning (Hearing statement, 2010 and Stenbro, 2010). In principle this could lead to a bigger workload for the women of the family but there are however the possibility of purchasing additional services by the private providers of eldercare for which this cutback shouldn't be seen as crucial.

LLL and training: overview and provision

As mentioned in the review of the national documents a rather large part of LLL and vocational training happens at the place of employment and is subsidized by the state through the special VEU (adult vocational training) arrangement, which gives an opportunity to apply for economic/financial support in terms of adult education and training, but is only given to programs at a vocational level. For that reason the municipality mainly deals with training of the unemployed which is organized by the job centres. Aalborg Job Centre produces an employment plan each year on the backdrop of certain focus areas announced by the Minister for Employment, in which strategies for reducing the level of unemployment is the main subject. Unemployed women who are ensured through an unemployment fund have the right to engage in six weeks of self-imposed education by private suppliers whereas both the ensured and uninsured unemployed attend an individual guidance course determining their need for upgrading their qualifications. The website of the jobcentre and the

¹⁵ Especially involved in this is the NGO Dane Age and the Senior Citizens Council which is a voluntary organization dictated in the Social Services Act. Their expenses are held by the municipality.

municipality offers a host of opportunities and a diverse range of actors are involved in upgrading of the unemployed and in practise many unemployed women without employment insurance attend the independent institution “Kvindedaghøjskolen” which is a non-residential folk high school for women whereas the employed women mostly attend trade schools or the Labour Market Training School (AMU). It is hard to answer in a clear-cut manner whether this way of organizing the upgrading of women supports female labour market participation or not. It is also worth noticing that the right-wing government on the national level has removed focus from upgrading skills through educational programs to company internship programs with duration of up to three months due to an argument claiming that solely upgrading skills is an ineffective way of helping people (in general) with a return to the labour market. This development has also taken place in the Municipality of Aalborg¹⁶.

¹⁶ For more information, see part 2, B₃

Methodological considerations concerning the qualitative interviews

Choosing the case and the respondents include deciding on a focal point for your analysis. This introductory section recaps some of the considerations that have been addressed during the process.

The specific content of the policies chosen for the mapping of cases (section B₁₋₃) will be elaborated in the study but characteristic for the specific policies is a practice-oriented element affecting the daily lives of women and altered on a yearly basis. An implication of this choice is however not selecting an overarching strategic policy where perhaps it would seem more natural to incorporate a broad spectrum of interests. The problem with selecting an overarching policy is that it by nature is *overarching*, covering all subjects in the administration in question which for the Administration for Family and employment in praxis means children till the age of 18 including all schooling, afternoon activities and such. The overarching policies will however be included in the section on policy formation (A₃) and to the extent that it affects the selected policy for analysis. The respondents were chosen using the snowballing method (Myers & Newman, 2006) trying to capture as many different angles on the policy formation as possible. In addition to this some were selected due to their official status. This includes politicians, the administrative staff and private actors. Concerning childcare the respondents are: the chairwoman of the Family and Employment Administration and chairwoman of the Social Committee¹⁷, the department head of the Family and Employment Administration and the chairwoman for the Private Child minders. The first two are selected on account of their formal status and the chairman of the Private Child minders due to the fact that the private sector has had a large increase in numbers during the last four years potentially giving them a larger influence on municipal policy. In elderly care the respondents are the councillor of the Administration for the Elderly and Disabled, the district manager for Elderly Care North¹⁸ and the chairwoman for the Senior Citizens Council (NGO). As opposed to the case on childcare a district manager was chosen as a representative from the public administration having a different role than that of the department head. The Senior Citizens Council (SCC) was chosen due to their statutory right to be heard in consultation procedures. LLL and vocational training is situated within the Family and Employment Administration whereby the majority of the actors interviewed in relations to childcare also was asked questions on LLL. In addition to this the manager of the Job and Guidance Team (a department within the central Job centre), the head of the trade union Trade and Office, Northern Jutland (HK Northern Jutland) and the deputy manager of the independent institution “Kvindedaghøjskolen” which is a non-residential folk high school only admitting women, was interviewed. The reason for selecting the municipal manager is due to his experience in forming the employment plan and his earlier job function as the head of the Equality

¹⁷ This respondent is also the chairwoman of the Local Employment Council which is an institutionalized dialogue between employer organizations, trade unions, educational institutions and the municipality.

¹⁸ As mentioned elderly care in Aalborg is divided into 5 districts, each with its own management who serves as a day to day manager reporting to the department head of the Administration for the Elderly and Disabled

Unit¹⁹. The head of the trade union was chosen due to the fact that 77% of that unions members are women, 10% of the long term unemployed workers in Aalborg are members of HK (Employment Plan 2011, 2011: 7) and that the respondent is a member of the Local Trade Council. The last respondent is the deputy manager of Kvindedaghøjskolen which is one of the only institutions in Aalborg only comitted to upgrading womens qualifications.

The advantage of the combination of respondents is the broad spectrum that is covered. In interviewing politicians, the administrative staff and private actors in regards to all three policy areas there is a high chance of uncovering if, how and on which level the cooperation takes place and thereby gaining a unique insight into the local policy formation and its diverse actors. A disadvantage caused by the selection of respondents is the fact that the intra political committee power structure isn't fully covered since only the chairwoman of the committee has been interviewed. This facet has however been analyzed in earlier studies, e.g. Berg & Pedersen (2001) asked politicians in three of the largest cities in Denmark to evaluate the following statement, "*The committee meetings give me great influence on the sector*". In Aalborg 90 % of the elected committee members agreed to this statement²⁰. In spite of their perceived level of influence the chairwoman forms the committee agenda in cooperation with the department head of the administration giving them a great deal of influence in nature. Despite of the interesting elements in studying the internal affairs of the committees the focal point for this study is on a wider group of actors wherefore the selected respondents are adequate.

¹⁹ A unit placed within the National Labour Market Authority offering advice on equality to local actors (Ministry of the State of Denmark, 1999).

²⁰ Their influence is however dependent on knowledge of the cases to be decided, the committee members' ability to overcome the workload combined with their regular job and the ability to take part in coalition building (Berg, 2005).

A. GENERAL PART

A1. CONSTRUCTION OF THE SITUATION ON THE CITY LEVEL

What are the first spontaneous thoughts / impressions related to the words ‘women’s employment’ in your city?

When asking the respondents about their impressions concerning female labour market participation most of them had trouble answering this question due to the fact that women in Denmark are seen as a natural part of the workforce. After having given the question some thought comments on women’s occupation such as carers, nurses and secretarial work surfaced and one common concern was the lack of women in top management despite a rising level of education, particularly amongst women. On the basis of these utterances it seems that women’s status as a part of the labour market was by no means questioned but that a segregated labour market exists as a cultural factor in the Danish labour market which other studies have also demonstrated (The Wage Commission, 2010 and Albæk & Brink Thomsen, 2011). The observations on the lack of women in top management can perhaps be interpreted as a result of the 2008 national campaign called “Charter for more women in management” where companies from the public and private sector signed the charter agreeing to work for equal opportunities for the sexes in relations to management (http://www.kvinderiledelse.dk/charter_paa_engelsk.asp). The Municipality of Aalborg is among the companies who have signed this charter.

The councillor of the Family and Employment Administration explains female labour market participation in the municipality as following, “*A vast majority of us women are a part of the labour market, and far most of us identify with it. I actually believe we do so because we’re a blue-collar city. In a lot of families it was a necessity, the women had to work, from back in the day.*” (Councillor of the Family and Employment Administration and chairwoman of the Social Committee: 5.49). Traditionally the labour market in Aalborg has been dominated by heavy industries amongst others Aalborg Portland, the largest concrete manufacturer in the world which has been a big part of the city’s sense of self. This perception is also to be found in the quotation where women’s employment is connected to the identity of the city as a whole.

Many women are tied with caring responsibilities. What do you think to what extent and how these responsibilities restrict employment opportunities of women with small children in your city?

“It is a barrier. That I believe, or complicate every day life (...) but if it’s just a problem for the women. That I don’t know. It is one of the issues we [HK Northern Jutland] devote our time to without it being gender specific. But that doesn’t change the fact that in real life it probably is the mother who is faced with the biggest dilemma.” (Head of the trade union Trade and Office Northern Jutland: 0.50)

The above-mentioned quote is a good way to sum up the opinion of the majority of the respondents. There is a consensus amongst the respondent in viewing caring responsibilities as a problem

restricting employment possibilities, especially for women. The main problem being that care responsibilities for children at most times is very time specific e.g. in bringing and picking up children from day care or putting them to bed at night. At the same time some of the respondents mentioned the organization of child care in Aalborg as really good in helping to reduce these restrictions due to the many options between public and private day care and facilities with different opening hours both in the public and private providers. Child care has traditionally been viewed as the mother's job, but the cultural norm concerning that seems to have changed, at least as expressed by these respondents where the chairwoman for the Senior Citizens Council (SCC), who was oldest respondent, talks of a change in norms towards to a higher degree becoming a joint responsibility. This view was also held by the head of trade union HK who didn't necessarily see caring responsibilities as a gender issue. In this respect it is worth keeping in mind that 77% of the members of that particular trade union are women which in reality mean that many of the issues taken up by HK would in fact have a gender specific nature.

Caring responsibilities is however not just an issue that the family alone has to cope with. Also some employers take a responsibility in easing the care responsibilities. In the administrations in the municipality of Aalborg there has been developed a "maternity leave settlement arrangement" to make sure that the costs for maternity leave does not become an insurmountable burden on the work place so that women and men have equal opportunity in getting a job²¹.

What do you think to what extent and how the informal care responsibilities restrict employment opportunities of women who take informally care of elderly family members in your city?

In comparison to the responsibilities of child care, practically all the respondents mentioned that the responsibilities to care for elderly family members in no way restrict female employment as much as care responsibilities for younger children. In addition to this none of the respondents thought of elderly care as the main responsibility for the family. As the councillor of the Administration for the Elderly and Disabled puts it, "*There lies a very implicit expectation in society that the society takes care of my old mother.*" (Councillor of the Administration for the Elderly and Disabled: 4.26). This quote must be said to be in line with the cultural attitudes of the rest of society where a vast majority believe that the public should take care of the frail elderly (Pfau-Effinger & Jensen, 2011). This does not mean that people do not help the elderly, but in contrast to care responsibilities for children the care for elders is less time specific as the basics are covered. The care responsibilities becomes visiting, thorough cleaning and light maintenance. One respondent argues that the Danish cultural attitudes on this particular issue are starting to be adopted by immigrants who don't traditionally share these values, meaning that more elderly immigrants receive elderly care. The respondent ascribes this to the higher level of education by the women giving them the motivation to enter the labour market.

²¹ This arrangement was introduced in 2005 and all the municipalities in Denmark have an arrangement as such (Local Government Denmark, 2005).

How do you estimate the options of life long learning (LLL) and training related to women's better return to the labour market after having a break – in your city?

The options of LLL and training related to a better return to the labour market for women were rated as poorly by most of the respondents, an underlying and contributing factor for both men and women being the economic climate and lack of jobs. In somewhat opposition to this standpoint was the chairman of the Private Child minders arguing that especially in Aalborg the possibilities are very rich, but she agrees that the economy inhibits people from upgrading their skills. The most important reason for the poor options for LLL and training is however to be found in the political climate. As the department head of the Family and Employment Administration puts it, "*There is a distance to it [LLL]. Every time you speak of the unemployed taking part in some educational training they [the politicians] say: It's too expensive and the effect is too low.*" (Department head of the Family and Employment Administration: 18.08). The head of the trade union Trade and Office Northern Jutland chimes in with this argumentation arguing that the jobcentres have to place the unemployed in company internship programs instead of training²². The councillor for the Administration for the Elderly and the Disabled expressed in her interview the political climate, that both the head of HK and the department head of the Family and Employment Administration talks about by uttering that training alone is fruitless and practically only company internship programs is effective.

As with childcare and elderly care there also exists an element of cultural attitudes in the field of LLL where mostly the female respondents point out that maybe the men are just more minded at upgrading their skills, a statement that the head of the trade union Trade and Office Northern Jutland however doesn't agree with.

²² In principle company internship programs is a form of training, but it is by the trade unions widely criticized for being a source of free labour not creating any extra jobs. In addition to this the head of the trade union Trade and Office Northern Jutland and the manager of the Job and Guidance Team argue that regular educational training (not related to a specific job) has diminished.

A2. ASSESSMENT OF THE POLICY MEASURES

What are the main political measures regulating reconciliation of work and family life of women and their employment options at the central (national) level?

In addition to the main political measures, the majority of the respondents referred to the way the Danish labour market is organised especially regarding the maternity and parental leave which actively supports the female participation in general and the woman's right to work after pregnancy. Furthermore the Sex Discrimination Act was mentioned as an important political tool to increase equality between the sexes, and in this perspective the national campaign "Charter for more women in management" is also mentioned. In terms of the reconciliation of work and family life, the Councillor of the Administration for the Elderly and Disabled focus on the Social Services Act which in her view creates a safety net for all citizens. Still, the councillor of the Family and Employment Administration and of the Social Committee and the Department head of the Family and Employment Administration query the values of the national level and prioritizations in regards to the employment rate and the social dimension of people's life. The critique is that the national level is more focused on the employment rate and on the businesses and industry, than on the social dimension and the reconciliation of work and family life, a principle that is new in a Danish context, "*Put in other words, the social effort must be integrated on the basis of the employment centres*" (Department head of the Family and Employment Administration: 8.44). The "new" principle is a consequence of the employment effort implemented at the local job centres under the recent government (the liberal and conservative parties, 2001-2011) where it is made clear that the main focus is to get people employed, before the municipality deals with social problems. This ranking is however questioned because there have been a tradition to solve the social problems before demanding job seeking.

What are the measures provided on the local level in your city supporting women's entrance / return to the labour market?

The majority of the respondents answered this question by claiming that this theme is not a matter of gender, but the local measures is provided for both sexes since the labour market is under pressure, and the main task is therefore to ensure enough qualified workers in different industries in accordance to the demands of the labour market. The measures provided only for women, which is mentioned, is in relation to the "Charter for more women in management" and the "maternity leave settlement arrangement". Here the department head of the Family and Employment Administration and the district manager for Elderly Care North described how they actively try to improve working conditions for women and offer them better opportunities due to their own context as a workplace dominated by women and the importance of a good work environment. In general all of the respondents were relatively positive in terms of female opportunities at the labour market, if women themselves want to make an effort. This perspective however is far from the councillor of the Family and Employment Administration and of the Social Committee who holds an opposing point of view. Her general attitude is that the municipality of Aalborg should do more to support and protect women's opportunities to enter the labour market, especially single mothers. One of her

main proposals to support single mothers is to improve public transportation since the majority of users are females. The improvement of the public transportation could reduce time spend on the road in dropping of and picking up children in day care since it is the majority of women who are responsible for that assignment (Transport Council, 2000). *"This also means something in regards to the housing policy. That we [the politicians] create attractive housing close to where there are many jobs, because again, it is here we can minimize transportation, so we [the politicians] can get women to work more"* (Councillor of the Family and Employment Administration and chairwoman of the Social Committee: 19.09).

How is the child care organised in your city?

See the description in mapping the policy framework, part D. Additionally all of the respondents focused on the division in districts (the principle of subsidiarity) and the increased use of the private child minders.

Who are the child care providers?

There are a number of different providers in the municipality of Aalborg; public/private child minding and day care institutions, and when asking this question the majority answered that there has been an increase over the last couple of years in people choosing the private child minders offer. However the councillor of the Family and Employment Administration and of the Social Committee and the department head of the Family and Employment Administration acknowledged that this development isn't a question of their local political priorities which have come to the increasing level of private child minding, but a matter of the national level's demand of the opportunity of free choice. *"It's a must that [the municipality] should provide grants if there is someone who wants to set up an offer, but it does not change the attitude here, if you go to the councillor here, she is fervently opposed to the private child minding"* (Department head of the Family and Employment Administration: 8.55). The councillor is in favour of the public child minders offer²³ due to the differences between the amount of regulation and supervision where the private child minders is characterized by having more levels of freedom in relation to the organization of the daily care. Therefore she criticizes the lack of supervision with the quality of the care. Still she recognizes that *"Child minding has the advantage that they often can be in the local neighbourhood, although there is no basis for a day care institution. In this way we minimize the transportation time"* (Councillor of the Family and Employment Administration and chairwoman of the Social Committee: 21.23). Although there has been a boost in private child minding there hasn't been the same development in accordance to the day care institutions from the 3-5 year olds.

Are there age limits set to children in child care provision?

²³ This perspective will be further interpreted and discussed in relation to the councillor of the Administration for the Elderly and Disabled view on free choice, in the question related to the respondent's main political ambitions in social care policy.

As mentioned the Municipality of Aalborg must provide a day care offer for children at the age of 0-5, and in that time period there is a division between the 0-2 and the 3-5 year olds. If the respective child is not ready to continue to the next step (or school) it is possible for the child to stay at the same level of care for one more year, or until he/she is ready to continue.

What are the obstacles that the mothers face by entering / returning to employment?

See the description in question number two. In addition to that the chairwoman for the Private Child minders expresses that the way the care is organised supports the female participation because the free choice of providers make the selection of day care more individual and in terms of the family's own values and as a consequence the parents are more likely to put their children in day care which increase their options and opportunities at the labour market.

How is the elderly care organised in your city?

See the description in mapping the policy framework, part D. Otherwise the respondents highlighted that the elderly can choose between two types of providers once an assessor employed by the municipality has evaluated their needs.

Who are the elderly care providers?

There are in principle two forms of elderly care; nursing houses and practical/care assignments in private homes. The nursing house is an institution with individual rooms for the elderly, with an opportunity to get professional help all and every day. The practical/care assignments are connected to the principle of ensuring that the elderly can stay in their own homes for as long as possible (before being located in nursing houses) and thereby be more independent. The level of assistance is given in accordance to the quality standards for help at home, evaluated by a public assessor. In relation to the practical help and care there are two types of providers; public and private. There are around 15 different private providers in the municipality and they have in the recent years gained market share in relation to the practical assistance to support the necessary work at home (30%). However the public care is still the main provider when it comes to comes to personal assistance and general care (80-85%). In contrast to the councillor of the Family and Employment Administration and chairwoman of the Social Committee, the Councillor of the Administration for the Elderly and Disabled was very positive about the principle in general, because it leads to competition. This perspective on free choice is followed by the district manager for Elderly Care North who also expressed that the competition contributes to a greater professional pride because when other private actors can take over public functions, it provides a greater incentive to work and raise the quality of the service. In addition to the division of the market share he describes, *“One actually follows the ordinary market economy, i.e. the one of practical assistance, and there we are in full competition”* (The district manager for Elderly Care North: 15.02).

What are the obstacles the women with informal care responsibilities face by entering / returning to employment?

See the description in question number three, general part. In general all the respondents did not feel that this form of policy creates obstacles for women's employment, on the contrary this policy just increase the female employment rate hence the public care assignments traditionally is a "woman's job" and still the majority of the employees in this field is women.

How is LLL organised in your city?

At first it is important to mention that the majority of the Danes upgrade their skills in relation to work, and in this perspective a special policy is established called "job-rotation". Job-rotation happens when an employee upgrades his or her skills during the day and an unemployed person holds the job in the meantime giving that person on-the-job training. It is not possible to clarify in numbers how widely distributed this policy are, but all of our respondents acknowledge that there is a tendency to make use of this arrangement.

In terms of the unemployed the local jobcentre is responsible for the concept of LLL and here the policy is organized by dividing the unemployed into three different match-groups in accordance to their individually education, skills and work experience and how this match with the labour markets demands and needs. Match-group 1, is the majority and the ones how are able to enter the labour market without any upgrading of skills, it is also important to mention that insured have the right to 6 weeks of self-imposed education. Match-group 2 and 3 are unemployed with different (and also personal) barriers to enter the labour market. In addition to the question on how the national level regulates the balance between work and family life the manager of the Job and Guidance Team supported the councillor and the department head of the Family and Employment Administration in their assumption about the new principle in the employment effort. The manager of the Job and Guidance Team describes that traditionally match-group 2-3 were connected to the department of social policy and match-group 1 was connected to the department of employment (35.20). The way LLL is organized in terms of match-groups has enlarged the amount of responsibilities and people for the jobcentres to activate, but the main focus is to help unemployed to find a job, and hereafter if this is not possible, help them to upgrade their skills in accordance to the needs of the labour market. *"The rules of the employment effort, which, incidentally, is unreasonably complicated (...) It [the effort] is not given in accordance to the needs, it goes according to standards. (...) No one is allowed to fall through the safety net. Everyone gets an offer"* (Department head of the Family and Employment Administration: 33.47). In terms of LLL the local jobcentre is cooperating with different educational institutions.

Who are the learning providers?

There are a number of different providers, mostly private or self-governing educational institutions. These institutions must have a contract with the municipality, stipulating that the jobcentre can allocate unemployed in one of their LLL programmes. If such a contract do not exist, it is not possible for the local jobcentre to hire them to the assignment. The local cooperation-agreement between the jobcentre and the educational institution is the formal way of organising the effort. To regulate, develop and adjust the courses the two stakeholders hold biannual meetings and besides that the deputy manager of "Kvindedaghøjskolen" expresses that there is a close connection

between the advisory personnel in the daily work. An example of one of the learning providers is the self-governing institution “Kvindedaghøjskolen” which is one of the educational programmes targeted women, especially young single mothers, but in general LLL courses is not divided between the sexes. One of the main providers is the “labour market-educations” (AMU) which is an umbrella organization with a lot of different vocational training/education encompassing everything from mechanic to social and health care assistant courses.

Is the women’s return to employment a topic to be taken into consideration by designing the courses?

The manager of the Job and Guidance Teams first response was to point out that the main perspective to be taken in to consideration is, as put in the annual employment plan, “*We are very conscious about not to lead women into stereotypes. We will not contribute to sustain the gender-segregated labour market*” (The manager of the Job and Guidance Team: 10.48). Furthermore he explains that the employment rate for women in the municipality of Aalborg is somewhat better than the men’s and predict that women in general will be more prepared due to their higher educational levels in the future. The biggest problem, as he sees it, lies in terms of men with short or none education hence the “low worker industries” are outsourcing.

“Kvindedaghøjskolen” is an institution only designed for women. The deputy manager explain that they have 79 women at the moment (out of a total of 676 long term unemployed in the Municipality of Aalborg (Jobindsats.dk)) and there is a great diversity among their educational level and working experience, but the institutions main focus is to help the personal development of each to increases their opportunities to enter the labour market and help them to create a social network. One of Kvindedaghøjskolen`s own initiatives is to set up a “maternity leave café”, where the purpose is to create a safe and comfortable environment for women with small children (and especially singles) to meet.

A3. POLICY FORMATION

How are the policy actors (stakeholders) involved in policy design, preparation and implementation in your city (e.g. in elaboration of the development plan of the city)? Are there any practices of institutionalised dialogues (e.g. committees, pressure groups, e.g. of service providers)? If yes, what are the means of carrying out the dialogues?

As mentioned in the desk study review (part B) policies in the Municipality of Aalborg are constructed in the relevant administrations and therefore the institutionalised dialogues take place within that forum. Generally seen the administrations join in institutionalised dialogues when it comes to policy design and preparation while the debate on implementation is more of an ad hoc nature, initiated by both the administrations and the different stake holders both within and outside the administration.

In the case of the elderly the Social Services Act prescribes that the Senior Citizens Council (SCC) is to be involved via consultation procedures (which happens in writing) whenever the municipal council wishes to adopt new legislation concerning the elderly. All expenses to uphold the SCC and the dialogues are held by the municipality. In addition to this the SCC and the political committee within the Administration for the Elderly and the Disabled has annual meeting every fall about which the chairwoman of the SCC states, *“The political committee meets with the SCC and the local SCC councils every November, and we have learned that if we don’t... this might sound a little pompous, but if we don’t do anything, then we’ll get a proposal from the councillor and just have to stand by and watch. But that we’ve learned. We put items on the agenda.”* (Chairwoman of the SCC: 17.31). The department head of the Family and Employment Administration and the manager of Elderly Care North agreed with this statement arguing that it is possible to gain influence through the institutionalized dialogues, but the sooner you exercise your influence, the greater it can be.

In the case of LLL there exist a countless number of dialogues some more formally institutionalized than others. There is a statutory Local Employment Council (LEC) in every municipality in Denmark and four regional ones. In these council representatives from the social partners, the Immigration Council, the Trade Council²⁴, the Disabled Peoples Organisations Denmark and the municipal council sit. In Aalborg the councillor of the Family and Employment Administration is the chairwoman of the LEC. During the preparation of the yearly employment plan (which will be analyzed in part B₃) the LEC and the politically elected Employment Committee meet and this meeting is by the manager of the Job and Guidance Team described as a key element in forming the policy and have become an institutionalized dialogue however not statutory. In addition to the statutory dialogues there exist dialogue forums concerning Adult Education and Training (VEU)²⁵ cooperation, job-rotation forum and others. A joint characteristic of these forums is the focus on a specific task and the jobcentre has biannual meetings with almost all the adult education institutions

²⁴ In every municipality there is a Trade Council with the purpose of ensuring growth.

²⁵ VEU is an umbrella organization for the adult educations much like LO is for the trade unions.

discussing their course catalogue. These biannual meetings are confirmed by the deputy manager of “Kvindedaghøjskolen” a dialogue that the day folk high school is obliged to call to if they wish to have the meeting. The manager of the Job and Guidance Team assesses that the jobcentre uses a vast amount of resources on these forums and dialogues underlines that comprehensive dialogues with external partners is a tradition in Aalborg sought out by other Danish municipalities. This procedure was confirmed by the head of the trade union HK and partly by the deputy manager of Kvindedaghøjskolen who does not have a right to be heard in consultation procedures concerning the employment plan.

An example of the ad hoc communication that takes place between the administration and the stakeholders is found when looking at the Private child minders who frequently has meetings (mostly by telephone) with employees of the administration discussing *anything and everything* (chairman of the Private Child minders: 8.12). This regular contact was pinpointed by many of the respondents outside the administration as positive and another word used by many to describe the communication with the administrations was their receptiveness.

The purpose of the institutionalized dialogues and consultation procedures is to create *ownership* among the policy actors leading to a more effective policy. This point was made by a vast majority of the respondents. As the head of the Family and Employment Administration puts it, “*All experience show that if you choose to say ” We really don’t care about all their views” the result is as might expected because then it takes longer for it [the policy] to work properly and we don’t create what everyone is talking about - ownership.*” (Head of the Family and Employment Administration: 40.40).

What is the main ambition of your party / institution / organisation / group in social care policy on the city level? How do you assess the opportunities to reach your aims? What are the main restrictions?

A common denominator among the respondents was that their main ambition concerning social care policy in Aalborg is helping and working with the marginalized citizens. Especially the councillor of the Social Committee and the Family and Employment Administration who is a social democrat and the department head of the Family and Employment Administration elaborated this statement by listing specific policies where the marginalized citizens were taken into consideration which can be seen as an indication of the marginalized being actively considered when forming a policy. The councillor for the Administration for the Elderly and Disabled stressed free choice between providers as the main ambition of the liberal party in Aalborg arguing that people have different needs and wants which in her view best can be considered when having multiple providers of service. The clash between these views can best be explained by the councillors’ different political beliefs causing the social democrat to speak of securing the marginalized and the liberal councillor to speak of competition between public and private providers in order to fulfil the citizens’ needs. Since the policy on free choice between providers already has been activated this ambition is easily met at the local level, especially in the Administration for the Elderly and Disabled where the councillor is pro free choice. The subject of free choice between providers is however not as

widespread in the Family and Employment Administration where several of the respondents points to the fact that the councillor in that administration is somewhat opposed to private providers due to the lower restrictions put onto them by the municipality.

In addition to the above-mentioned all the respondents from the administration (including the politicians) mentioned leadership as the main precondition or restriction to reaching their ambition at a local level. The department head of the Family and Employment Administration, "*What I make sure is that the things we decide, whether decided by politicians or my self, actually happens. And create documentation saying that we are actually capable of seeing things through successfully.*" (Head of the Family and Employment Administration: 43.16). These comments can be seen as a reaction to the public debate in Denmark where many politicians on the national level have argued that there are too many administrative employees in the service sector and not enough actually performing the services (Dahler-Larsen & Ejersbo, 2003 and Kellermann, 2011).

B. MAPPING POLICY CASES

B1: MAPPING A CASE: CHILD CARE POLICY

Title of the policy regulation and year of introduction (if possible)

The title of the policy is the *Child Care Guarantee 2012-2013*. The policy is altered/ revised every year to fit the needs of the families in Aalborg and the population development. It was chosen due to its central position and impact on the cohesion of the families' everyday life.

Child care guarantee as a whole was passed as a law in 1998. The municipality of Aalborg introduced the law in 1996 as a test-municipality before the government decided to widen the concept to all the municipalities in Denmark (Andersen, 1998: 138).

Why was the policy needed on the city level? Who expressed the need?

Generally seen there was a consensus among the respondents concerning child care that the key reason for the policy is a well functioning labour market where everyone participates. In addition to this the policy is a way for the administration to communicate the service level of the municipality to the citizens also regarding pedagogical methods where it has been a tradition in a Danish context also to focus on the pedagogical aspect of care ever since day care institutions were introduced in the 1960s (Kremer, 2007: 186-188). In the end the policy is also prescribed by the Day Care Facilities Act.

How was the policy vertically coordinated?

The Day Care Facilities Act prescribes that the municipalities must provide day care from the age of 26 weeks and assigns a place of care within four weeks of the parents signing their child up to receive care (see part A1 in the desk study review for more information). Otherwise there is a large degree of decentralization in the vertical coordination of the policy which makes the local coordination extremely influential. The municipal council determines the staffing, the parent's user fee, though a maximum of 25% of the cost and the inspectorate within the municipal part of the day care. The managers in the four districts are responsible for the economic development in their district and the day to day management. The principles of the day care as a whole are decided by the central board of parents representing all parents (with children in municipal day care whether it is an institution or **child minding**). The manager of each day care institution is responsible for the day to day management of the particular institution and the local parent board in the institution is meant to offer advice to the local management (Family and Employment Administration, 2011).

Which policy actors and how were involved in the policy design and preparation phase?

Potential stakeholders and their strategy/ practice of their involvement

The responsible committee for the child care guarantee is the Family and Social Committee. Other potential stakeholders for this policy is the municipal council since they are formally involved if the guarantee means building or closing day care facilities due to diverging population growth. A

unique factor concerning the policy is that it is based on annual population projections on moving patterns within the municipality, projections in which only the administration and the Family and Social Committee are involved. The outcome of the projections however leads to a broader debate where other actors can become involved. The trade union BUPL – Danish Union of Early Childhood and Youth Educators and FOA - Trade and Labour are potential stakeholders since they have an interest in keeping proper working conditions for their members, the joint consultative committee where the employees of the child care facilities and administration take part in the development of the policy and the central parent board who has an interest in securing good care for their children. The child care guarantee policy also involves the private child minders arrangements whereby it would be plausible that the Private Child minders Organization was involved in the process but this is not the case in Aalborg. Instead the organization is to a larger degree involved in the day to day implementation.

Ambitions /platforms of stakeholders

In general the department head of the Family and Employment Administration argues that the politicians regardless of political identification are highly involved in trying to arrange day care within the stipulations from the Day care Facilities Act. The trade unions ambition is to protect their members in securing good jobs.

Methods /means for communication /cooperation / negotiation

The negotiation concerning this policy took place in the Family and Social Committee and also in the municipal council. Another relevant policy in this matter is the policy for the Future of the Public Day Care (2009) because the result of those negotiations has influenced the result of the future day care guarantees due to the structural changes in management that followed as a result from it. In that policy there were discussion forums with the central parent board for the day care facilities and a hearing procedure which in this case also included meetings where the trade unions were very active.

“Hierarchy” of the involved stakeholders (was that based on formal status /power, authority, competence?)

In the case of the *Child Care Guarantee 2012-2013* the hierarchy can be said to based on more than just one form of logic. The pivotal actors in this respect turned out to be the administration and the politicians where the other political actor (the chairwoman of the Private Child minders) was not involved in the process. If having had the opportunity to interview more respondents in the field (e.g. one of the aforementioned trade unions) maybe the result would have been different²⁶. Since part of the policy by nature is of a somewhat technical character the administration is a big part of

²⁶ In this respect we searched the two trade unions local webpage where their hearing statements are normally entered and did not find any regarding this policy. Another factor that supports our analysis is that the trade unions were mentioned as external partners in general, not concerning this particular case.

forming it about which the department head of the Family and Employment Administration says, *“If we as an administration wishes to have a good relationship with the politicians we have to come up with good solutions (...) consequently, there is a control, you might say, between the civil service and the political system.”* (Department head of the Family and Employment administration: 52.17). Implicit in this quote lies an understanding of the administration having a large influence on the policy and which options are considered but ultimately dependent on the politicians. Therefore the politicians’ formal status as the decision makers is also relevant in this case since they are held responsible by the public and often contacted by unsatisfied parents. Besides the regular members of the committee the councillor of the committee was mentioned as an extra influential actor. This statement is strengthened by the fact that the status of the councillor was mentioned in all three cases and by almost all the respondents as a highly influential actor.

What adaptations did they need to make?

Due to irregular moving patterns the municipal council had to decide whether or not they wanted to place extra care facilities in both specific rural areas and the inner city. In this case the decision was to defer the decision on what to do on a long term basis and instead have the Family and Social Committee draw up a short term plan. This decision was agreed upon by a unanimous municipal council and the ones who have to adapt in this case will in the end become the parents who have to wait for a permanent solution to be made. Over the last couple of years the demand by the parents for day care nurseries has increased. This demand is reflected in the appliance to the nurseries in every day life. To meet this demand the municipal council decided with this policy to build more nurseries although nurseries are more expensive for the municipality than **child minding** due to extra costs concerning buildings, maintenance and so on. For parents this however means adapting to longer travel time since establishing the nurseries require a certain number of children in need of care.

Where did policy actors look for examples / guidelines (e.g. the thematic priorities of the social OMC)?

In Denmark there is a formalized cooperation/discussion forum including the six largest cities. This cooperation takes place in concern to all fields and at all the administrative levels and when asking the respondents where they look for examples (whether it being child care, elderly care or LLL) this is the primary forum. Regarding the EU and the social OMC the department head of the Family and Employment Administration stressed that the EU is non-existent at the local level when not integrated at the national level. In other words the social OMC isn’t taken into consideration when forming the day care guarantee. Another reason for this could be that Denmark more than meets the goals in the OMC concerning child care. This does however not mean that the administration doesn’t look for examples at an international level where the pedagogical methods of Italy were highlighted.

Which policy actors were involved in the implementation phase?

In the implementation phase the main policy actors are the administration at all different levels. As the department head of the Family and Employment Administration puts it: *“That’s my job. They [the politicians] make the decisions, I have to make sure the decisions are realised”* (Department head of the Family and Employment Administration: 42.00). In somewhat opposition to this the councillor of the Family and Employment Administration stresses that the administration is very much involved but that the phase to an extent isn’t concentrated on a particular policy actor but also involves the politicians since the parents and the private child minders contacts both the politicians and the administration. This statement was supported by the chairwoman of the Private Child minders.

How is the policy organised, funded and delivered?

The policy is organised as described in part one section D where it is says that the municipality is divided into four districts offering care for the child in their own district which happens in over 80 % of the cases. If this is not possible the child is placed in a neighbouring district although still within the municipal boarders²⁷. The policy is funded by the municipality and a user fee by the parents on maximum 25 % of the cost.

Does the policy work (keep the women’s employability in focus)? Why does / or does not the policy work?

In regards to women’s employability all the respondents stressed that the policy works and two crucial factors in it working is the high quality of the care and the amount of different offers of care arrangements. It would however be a mistake to credit the policy alone as the reason for the high female employment rate due to the fact that it is a mix of many policies where balance between family and work life and equal opportunities are a factor which was pointed out by the councillor of the Family and Employment Administration.

What lessons can be drawn about the experience for cross-border transfer?

An important lesson about this policy and the policy process would be the process of defining the goals for the quality in day care jointly regardless of which form of care as stressed by the councillor of the Family and Employment Administration. In Aalborg this happens at the municipal level. At the national level the systematic in offering every family guaranteed child care is an important factor.

■ MAPPING A CASE: ELDERLY CARE POLICY

²⁷ As mentioned earlier the Day Care Facilities Act only stipulates that care has to be offered within municipal boarders not within certain districts in the municipality. If the parents wish to put their child in day care in another municipality e.g. because it is closer to their workplace the opportunity exists.

In terms of choosing a central case in relation to elderly care, we have decided to focus on the policy *Quality Standards 2011 – for help at home*. The standard has an effect on the nursing houses minimum requirements, but especially in terms of the individual help at home, where the level of care is decided by a public assessor in accordance to the quality standard. Therefore is the main focus for the case the practical/care at home, also given the fact that it is in this form of care (not nursing houses) that the private providers have a market share in the municipality of Aalborg.

Title of the policy regulation and year of introduction (if possible)

The title of the policy is the *Quality Standards 2011 – for help at home*. The policy is altered/ revised every year to fit the needs of the elderly and disabled in Aalborg and the population development. It was chosen due to its central position and impact on the cohesion of care for the elderly and disabled in everyday life.

Quality Standards as a whole was passed as a law in 1998 and was introduced the same year (Bjørnholt et al., 2008: 225).

Why was the policy needed on the city level? Who expressed the need?

In general there was a consensus among the respondents that the care for elderly is a key social service in maintaining their dignity and to be as autonomous and self depended as possible. In addition to this, the policy is a way for the administration to communicate the service levels of the municipality to the elderly, disabled and their relatives, so they know what to expect, how and the costs. *“The quality Standard is an informative labelling, as the stores have items on their shelves, so have we [the municipality] products on the shelves at the municipal area. I actually think it is really healthy”* (The district manager for Elderly Care North: 26.00). The district manager further explains that the law requires that the politicians discuss and in the end puts a label on the minimum requirements for every form of service in relation to the personal assistance, care, food and help to support the necessary work at home. The policy is also prescribed by the Social Services Act (especially §83(1-2)). For more information see the part A₁ of the desk study review.

How was the policy vertically coordinated?

The Social Services Act prescribes that the municipalities must provide; (1) personal care and assistance, (2) help and support for necessary practical tasks in the home (3) and food service to persons who, due to temporary or permanent physical or mental function or special social problems can not perform these tasks. (See part A1 in the desk study review for more information (§83 (1-2)). As mentioned the national level further demanded in 1998 that these services should be revised every year in a quality standard to fit the needs and communicate the offers and opportunities. Otherwise there is a large degree of decentralization in the vertical coordination of the policy which makes the local coordination extremely influential. The municipal council determines the minimum of the quality, but the different managers of the five districts can always make the quality better, if it is economically feasible. As the councillor puts it, *“It's the law, one can say, that says; there must be a quality standard, and then you [the municipality] can do it as you like”* (The councillor of the

Administration for the Elderly and Disabled: 24.21). She further expresses that the municipalities in general have a positive attitude towards this demand, because the quality standard is a good tool and frame for the administration in the daily work and also for the citizens who then have all of the relevant information's. The chairwoman for the Senior Citizens Council (SCC) and the district manager for Elderly Care North share this opinion, and the chairwoman points out that every time a decision about the level of care has been given or refused it is described in accordance to the quality standard and the overall service policy of the municipality of Aalborg.

Which policy actors and how were involved in the policy design and preparation phase?

Potential stakeholders and their strategy/ practice of their involvement

The responsible committee for the quality standard is the Elderly and Disabled Committee. Other potential stakeholders for this policy are the municipal council since they are formally involved if the quality standard when building or closing elderly care facilities due to diverging population growth and development. The potential stakeholders are the Committee, the administration, the managers from the five districts and the SCC in cooperation with the different local community groups, but in terms of response to the hearing procedures the process happens in writing.

Ambitions /platforms of stakeholders

As mentioned the Senior Citizens Council is not a political organisation, who have an ideological point of view, on the contrary the formal role is to act as a speaking tube for the elderly and to make a closer connection and understanding of the needs and politics between the local municipality and its citizens. As formulated by law the SCC must be involved via consultation procedures whenever the municipal council wishes to adopt new legislation concerning the elderly, but in terms of the Quality Standard the hearing process is communicated via writing. The SCC has more direct (via face to face meetings) influence in terms of other policies concerning the elderly, that are more general and not altered/revised every year, an example of this is the "Policy for Senior Life".

The councillor of the Administration for the Elderly and Disabled is positive towards the concept of free choice, but the private stakeholders is not according to our respondents involved in the preparation of the Quality Standard. However the private institutions should as well as the public institutions act in accordance with the policy and in that point of view it would be an advantage for the private providers if they were involved in the construction of the standards.

Methods /means for communication /cooperation / negotiation

As mentioned above, the SCC has to be involved in policies concerning the elderly, but the methods of involvement depend on the form of the policy. The communication can be in writing, in meetings face to face with the politicians and the officials or in publicly organised community meetings. The form of communication in terms of the Quality Standard happens in writing. The district manager for Elderly Care North argue in favour of the SCC stating their involvement as a stakeholder is essential hence their formal role, but their influence is biggest in relation to more general policies then in terms of the annual revisions.

“Hierarchy” of the involved stakeholders (was that based on formal status /power, authority, competence?)

“We can bring it [proposals] to the municipal officials, but primarily to the politicians” (The chairwoman for the Senior Citizens Council: 16.09). There is a strong indication towards the politicians placed in the elderly and disables Committee as the main stakeholders and especially the councillor of the Administration for the Elderly and Disabled since she is a politician placed in the committee and in contact with the administration every day. The power structure (so it seems) is therefore based on the formal status, *“It is clearly the politicians who sit in the elderly and disables committee (...) and then you can say that I am sitting here daily, it gives a certain influence [power]”* (The councillor of the Administration for the Elderly and Disabled: 25.26).

Although it is important to notice that the SCC has much influence, especially due to fact that their participation in decision making is prescribed by law and the municipality is paying for the organisation. Both the councillor for the Elderly and Disabled Administration and the district manager points out to the SCC as one of the most important stakeholders hence their role as the speaking voice of the citizens and formal act like a liaison between the elderly and the municipality. Furthermore the municipal officials are a strong stakeholder in terms of formulating the quality standards, but this perspective is not put forward by the respondents in terms of elderly care.

What adaptations did they need to make?

The Quality standard 2011 didn't entail a lot of adaptations, but the chairwoman of the SCC emphasised that over the last 3-4 years there have been some major cutbacks in the quality of the care because the municipality had to cut down expenses. Furthermore she explained that it could be an advantage if the officials underscored the modifications to make it easier for the stakeholders to participate in the construction of the policy. Besides the focus on alterations the main perspective for the SCC is to make sure that the Quality Standards are understandable and a help for the elderly and their relatives in terms of knowing which rights they can expect and demand.

The councillor of the Administration for the Elderly and Disabled expressed the same attitude towards the purpose of the policy and additionally she wished for the policy to be even more specified which could be accomplished by dividing the standard into two documents, one addressed to the administration of the municipality and one for the citizens.

Where did policy actors look for examples / guidelines (e.g. the thematic priorities of the social OMC)?

In relation to this question all the respondents directed attention to the formalized cooperation/discussion forum including the six largest cities in Denmark. This cooperation takes place in concern to all fields and at all the administrative levels. Furthermore the politicians and the SCC are also involved in this form of communication across municipality borders. However the district manager for Elderly Care North clarified that; *“I actually think that we're pretty good at making our own policies, according to our local needs, circumstances and conditions”* (The district

manager for Elderly Care North: 29.17). In addition to the answers from the relevant respondents the EU and the social OMC guidelines is not integrated or considered at the local level in terms of elderly care.

Which policy actors were involved in the implementation phase?

In the implementation phase the main policy actors are the administration at all different levels. *“It is to a grate extent our district managers in the geographical areas that are carrying out these things to the leaders of the employees, and to the managers of the grants.”* (The councillor of the Administration for the Elderly and Disabled: 27.47). This statement was supported by the district manager for Elderly Care North; *“It’s my responsibility; first, to ensure that all suppliers in relation to elderly care can live up to/meet the requirements stated in the Quality Standard”* (The district manager for Elderly Care North: (30.34)). Furthermore he explains that the public employees are used to working in accordance with several different policies, which minimize his load of responsibility hence their qualifications and effort.

How is the policy organised, funded and delivered?

The policy is organised as described in part one section D where it is says that the municipality is divided into five districts offering care for elderly in accordance with the rights as formulated in the Quality Standard. It is a citizen right to receive practical help, food and care, but the extent of the service and the needs of the individual are evaluated by a public assessor in accordance with the Quality Standard. Hereafter the elderly must decide which form of provider to choose (public or private) hence the introduction of free choice presumes the existence of an easy and real opportunity for exiting, a choice that enables users to express dissatisfaction with the care provider in a new way. In Aalborg there is a difference in the market share for the private sector being largest in the case of practical assistance (approx. 30 %) and lowest when it comes to personal help (approx. 13 %).

Does the policy work (keep the women’s employability in focus)? Why does / or does not the policy work?

In regards to women’s employability the councillor of the Administration for the Elderly and Disabled stressed, *“It enhances, because it sets up a level, but I think it’s just as much for the men’s sake as for the women’s”* (The councillor of the Administration for the Elderly and Disabled: 31.35). Still, she recognizes that the municipal service provision for the elderly (as well in terms of day-care) is, but especially was, an important tool in lifting the women from their caring responsibilities due to the fact that the municipality takes part in securing the basic needs for the seniors freeing the women to take part in the labour market.

What lessons can be drawn about the experience for cross-border transfer?

When asking this question two essential perspectives were described; to involve and listen to all relevant stakeholders and to have a capable and competent management. An important lesson concerning this policy and the policy process would therefore be the process of defining the goals

for the quality in elderly care in cooperation with other stakeholders. The councillor of the Administration for the Elderly and Disabled focused on promoting ownership and political responsibility, but considered that the primary lesson was that all relevant stakeholders are heard. The district manager for Elderly Care North's primary focus is in relation to his own status in terms of good management, the essential reason for high quality standards as he explains is if the employees are competent, reliable and good at what they do, but that requires an attentive management which at the same time encourage the employee's own independence.

B3: MAPPING A CASE: LLL & TRAINING

Title of the policy regulation and year of introduction (if possible)

The title of the policy is *Employment Plan 2011*. The policy is altered/ revised every year to fit the political prioritisations from the Minister of Employment and local considerations. It was chosen due to its central position and impact on the opportunities for LLL and vocational training.

The policy was introduced as a part of the Structural Reform in 2007 where new municipal jobcentres were to take over the responsibility for the expenses for unemployment benefits, activation benefits and activation of the ensured unemployed by 2009 (Bredgaard and Larsen, 2009: 12).

Why was the policy needed on the city level? Who expressed the need?

The respondents see the Employment plan as an overall strategy for the employment effort and in the end the policy is prescribed by the Active Employment Initiatives Act. The manager of the Job and Guidance Team expressed how this policy initially caused reluctance amongst the employees at the jobcentres but eventually, at least in Aalborg, has become an important tool. In this respect it is worth noticing that the policy was introduced simultaneously with many structural changes which could also influence the employees' perception of it.

How was the policy vertically coordinated

The policy is vertically coordinated in the way that the Minister of Employment declares certain goals/prioritisations for the employment effort. These goals are translated into the employment plan where the actors at the municipal level has the option of adding additional local goals (the manager of the Job and Guidance Team however argued that it is very rare that the municipalities add extra goals due to the extent of the national goals). The employment plan is afterwards operationalised into specific goals in each department under the jobcentres. In this process there exist both elements of centralisation and decentralisation, but on account of the statement by the manager at the jobcentre it would seem that the centralisation effect is stronger than the decentralisation.

Which policy actors and how were involved in the policy design and preparation phase?

Potential stakeholders and their strategy/ practice of their involvement

In this case there are two central actors The Local Employment Council (LEC) and the Employment Committee (EC). The LEC is prescribed by law and consists of representatives from several interest groups: members of the municipal council, The Confederation of Danish Employers (DA), The Danish Confederation of Trade Unions (LO), The Confederation of Professionals in Denmark (FTF), The Danish Confederation of Professional Associations (AC), Disabled Peoples Organisations Denmark (DPOD), the Danish Medical Association (PLO), the municipal Council for Integration, the unemployment funds and the municipal Trade Council. The LEC holds official meetings every other month. The EC consists of the elected politicians from the municipal council.

The practice of the actors' involvement is as mentioned earlier that the LEC and the EC meets annually to discuss the plan after which the administration deals with them separately. Actors like "Kvindedagshøjskolen" is not a part of this process but is instead expected to seek influence in the private forums for the education institutions where the trade unions are represented.

Ambitions /platforms of stakeholders

The platform of the stakeholders varies depending on who they represent. For LO and the local trade unions the ambition is to preserve jobs for their members, for DA the ambition is to ensure a qualified labour force and for the municipal actors the ambition is to make Aalborg an attractive city and thereby creating economic growth.

Methods /means for communication /cooperation / negotiation

As mentioned earlier the LEC and the EC meet once a year in concerning the employment plan. The cooperation takes place at many different levels in the administration where in addition to the above-mentioned the administration also sits down with the educational institutions biannual to discuss their course catalogue. (For more information see part 2, A₃)

“Hierarchy” of the involved stakeholders (was that based on formal status /power, authority, competence?)

The LEC and the EC have the overall responsibility and control over the economy which demands a high level of cooperation, however the respondents didn't express any major conflicts or contrast between the priority areas. The employment plan is highly prioritized in the municipality as a whole which is underlined by the fact that all the councillors from the different administrations participate in the construction of the policy, indicating the policy's general value and signal formal power behind the effort. Even though the politicians have the formal status and power the manager of the Job and Guidance Team accentuates the same statement as the department head of the Family and Employment Administration in terms of the official's important role in forming and making the policy concrete, *“We must contribute with knowledge, professionalism and objectivity. Then the politicians' can contribute with attitudes and opinions”* (The Manager of the Job and Guidance Team: 33.25). There is a kind of hierarchy based on competence since a part of the policy by nature is of a high technical character the administration is a big part of forming the employment plan, as

he further explains when the officials present an idea or offer comments/remarks the politicians and relevant stakeholders are attentive to their proposals. Still, it is essential to mention the importance of a strongly committed politician, *"If Mai-Britt [the councillor of the Family and Employment Administration and chairwoman of the Social Committee] is there, that does something to the meeting. Everyone knows that! She has a decisive influence, she can set an agenda."* (The Manager of the Job and Guidance Team: 57.00).

What adaptations did they need to make?

As described in how the policy is vertically coordinated, the Minister of Employment declares certain goals for the employment effort each year and this must be incorporated into the local employment plan which over the last couple of years have regarded long term unemployment and youngsters. Beside the prioritisations given by the minister, the respondents indicated that there aren't many adaptations made from year to year, but there is a critical approach towards the economic focus which affects the opportunities for education and an upgrading of skills for the unemployed. There has been a decrease in the reimbursement system and a political focus on trainee positions in corporate environments and job rotation, which affects the municipality's financial latitude in terms of what kind of education or trainee courses they can offer. All of the respondents stressed that they are aware of the economic situation, but still they are concerned and wishes to increase the educational effort.

Where did policy actors look for examples / guidelines (e.g. the thematic priorities of the social OMC)?

As mentioned in relation to child care and elderly care there are formal co-operation forums including the six largest cities and this forum is also used in relation to the employment plan, but the manager of the Job and Guidance Team question, as the only one of our respondents, the forums quality and applicability hence the different municipalities own willingness to promote their best practices, and not their failures.

When asking about the EU and the social OMC the respondents are in relation to LLL more aware of EU's position and role. The head of the trade union HK, Northern Jutland had a lot of knowledge about EU guidelines, because the trade union has a national department regarding EU policies and especially towards social dumping, but at the local level the EU is not a central actor. This perspective indicates, as the cases of child care and elderly care, that the EU level isn't a central actor at the local level; instead the influence is more noticeable at the national level. The deputy manager of the independent institution "Kvindedagshøjskolen" distinguished from the rest of the respondents while the institution at a daily basis is connected to a EU project called "Sirius" which is a project dealing with art in everyday life.

Which policy actors were involved in the implementation phase?

As with the two previous cases the implementation concerning the employment plan mainly takes place in the administration on different administrative levels where the goals of the plan are divided

into specific target management contracts in each department. The head of the trade union HK, Northern Jutland also points to the stakeholders as influential in this process being the ones who have to cooperate with the administration in fulfilling the goals e.g. in Aalborg the administration wishes to place more unemployed persons in job-rotation courses, a wish that could not be fulfilled unless the employers are willing to send their employees to LLL courses and take in unemployed to cover their job functions in the meantime.

How is the policy organised, funded and delivered?

The policy is organised as described in part one section D and in the question on how LLL is organized in part two section A₂. The coordinator and main actor is the local job centre but there are a number of different providers, public and private companies to contribute with trainee positions and private or self-governing educational institutions. The formal way of organising the effort between the municipality/jobcentre and the educational institutions or public/private companies is a local cooperation-agreement. The municipality have the overall responsibility for the economy and the implementation of the policy, but there is a reimbursement scheme from the national government which enforce the municipality to focus on trainee positions in a corporate environment and job rotation at the expense of educational and personal development courses. The deputy manager of the independent institution “Kvindedaghøjskolen” explains; the municipality gets a higher reimbursement if the individual effort ends in employment or job trainee and an increasing smaller amount is giving if the effort only obtains educational courses. The national government focus is to get unemployed as fast as possible back in employment, and the different educational providers are now been measured on how effective their effort are in accordance to this prioritize (The deputy manager of the independent institution “Kvindedaghøjskolen”: 6.30-7.21).

Does the policy work (keep the women’s employability in focus)? Why does / or does not the policy work?

When asking the respondents whether or not the policy works at enhancing women’s employability there was a consensus around the perception that one can conclude that it does work, but (as also mentioned in the case of child care) that the effect can not be reduced to this one isolated policy. In addition to this the head of the trade union HK, Northern Jutland stated that the policy wasn’t discussed in a gender specific manor which could be a result of the high employment rate among women in Aalborg. This view was echoed by the manager of the Job and Guidance Team who pointed out that the unemployment for men is actually a bigger problem at the moment and that in the past reducing female unemployment had been a central goal. All the respondents still however pointed to gender neutrality as an important factor in the employment plan.

What lessons can be drawn about the experience for cross-border transfer?

The manager of the Job and Guidance Team is generally positive towards the Employment Plan and has a lot of lessons that could be drawn, but his main centre of attention is regarded the cooperation-process and the level of the stakeholder’s engagement and commitment. The cooperation-process must be divided into the different levels of administration and status; it is important that all relevant

stakeholders participate, but at their own level. Furthermore he argue for the value of a well coordinated administration, but the tradition in the municipality of Aalborg to involved all of the councillors from the different departments in the EC indicate the high level of importance this annual policy have to the municipality as a hole. The importance of this policy is supported by the national government in the annual demands for the policy, *“The frame from the Minister is good enough, I think, they will not say that locally, but it forces us to look at certain tracks”* (The manager of the Job and Guidance Team: 53.52).

The head of the trade union HK, Northern Jutland agrees with the manager in terms of involving and listening to all relevant stakeholders, because the Employment Plan has more effect if every stakeholder cooperate and support each other. Furthermore he attach great importance to the fact that Northern Jutland and the municipality of Aalborg is famous for the willingness and tradition for cooperation.

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