



Disability policy action plan 2013

One society
for all



ONE SOCIETY FOR ALL	3	MORE KNOWLEDGE AND IMPROVED EFFECT	34
		Knowledge about key objectives	36
VISIONS FOR DENMARK'S DISABILITY POLICY	4	Prevention and rehabilitation initiatives	36
		Improved basic data on disabilities and effect	39
CITIZENSHIP AND PARTICIPATION	10	COHERENCE AND QUALITY	42
Respect for difference	12	Clear and holistic social legislation	44
Increased inclusion in civil society and cultural life	14	Strengthened cooperation between sectors	45
Democratic participation	17	Flexible and trust-based citizen plans	46
		Renewed focus on specialised initiatives	48
EDUCATION AND TRAINING	20	INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS, NEW TECHNOLOGY AND IMPROVED ACCESSIBILITY	50
Increased inclusion in primary and lower secondary school	22	Independent with innovative technology	52
Primary and lower secondary school to challenge all pupils	24	Accessible it solutions	53
More people to complete an education	25	Improved physical accessibility	54
More people to participate in adult and continuing education	27		
EMPLOYMENT	28		
Reforms that mean more people in work	30		
Special initiatives for disadvantaged unemployed people	32		

One society for all

In my capacity as disability-coordinating minister, I am pleased to present the Government's new disability policy action plan "One society for all". With the action plan, the Government presents its visions for the disability area and lays the tracks for the activities in the area of disability policy for many years to come.

The Government's objective is clear. We will work for an inclusive society characterised by diversity, equality and respect for difference. A society in which everyone makes a concerted effort to dismantle barriers to equal participation in the community, where everyone is given the best possible terms for making decisions about their own lives. And a society in which responsibility and opportunities are in equilibrium.

This is the foundation for the three overall visions in the first chapter of the action plan. The visions rest on the disability policy objectives and principles that have been setting the course in the area for many years and direct a new bright spotlight on inclusion as an underlying value for disability policy.

The action plan is based on a strong ambition to enhance diversity and inclusion in society and help the individual realise his or her potential and contribute to the community. An ambition that applies to all areas of society and which is underpinned by six concrete key action areas that will be in specific focus in the coming years.


Each concrete theme will be considered in the light of the visions. Central ongoing initiatives – marked by a tick – and current forward-looking or completely new initiatives – marked by an exclamation mark – will be presented for each theme.

The action plan looks both backwards and forwards because the Government intends to ensure continuity as well as innovative thinking as regards the disability area. Most importantly, this action plan means that we are taking a giant leap in the direction of a more diversified and inclusive society – one society for all.

Minister for Children, Gender Equality, Integration and Social Affairs

A group of children are sitting on a train, looking out the window. The child in the foreground has a long, thick braid with a purple hair tie. The child next to them is wearing a plaid shirt. The child in the background is wearing a purple striped shirt. The train is green and brown.

VISIONS
FOR DENMARK'S
DISABILITY POLICY



The Government wants a society in which children, young people and adults with disabilities share the same opportunities to realise their potentials and the same responsibility for their own lives as other citizens.

INCLUSION

Inclusion is about ensuring that everyone enjoys equal opportunities and can take part in community life. The key is to be able to participate in and belong and contribute to the community – irrespective of who you are.

The Government wants a society in which children, young people and adults with disabilities share the same opportunities to realise their potentials and the same responsibility for their own lives as other citizens. An inclusive and diverse society based on respect for difference and where the resources and opportunities of the individual are supported. But also a society in which responsibility and opportunities are in equilibrium and where the individual does what he or she can to participate in and contribute to the community. In brief, a society where the disability policy is founded on the individual's meeting with the surroundings – not functional impairment.

This being the case, the Government will aim at promoting equal opportunities, citizenship, increased autonomy, respect for difference and equal treatment – objectives that are also seen in the general principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Disability results from the interaction between people with functional impairment and attitudinal and environmental barriers in society. This appears, e.g., from the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Danish disability policy must underpin a reduction of barriers and promote development towards a fully inclusive and diverse society.

Moreover, the Government has a clear ambition to ensure optimum application of resources in the disability area. The reason is that increased awareness of the effects of the large number of initiatives is a clear precondition for being able to develop the area also in future and making a real difference for people with disabilities. And finally because resources are scarce and because priorities are needed also in the disability area.

A key point in the Government's disability policy is a general overall objective to create increased inclusion in society. Inclusion is about ensuring that everyone enjoys equal opportunities and can take part in community life. The key is to be able to participate in and belong and contribute to the community. Inclusion is also the most important tool for ensuring good and independent lives for people with disabilities.

Denmark has a solid platform for boosting the desired development as we have already been working in the right direction for many years. For example, Denmark was able to ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities without any qualifications in 2009.

But the Government wants to maintain focus on how the area can be developed on an ongoing basis. This is why we, with this action plan, set out visions and objectives that can lay down the framework for disability policy development in all areas of society.

The Government has set out three overall visions to underpin the objective of promoting inclusion and equal opportunities. In the future, the visions must lay down the framework for general policy development in all areas of society and ensure that the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities are incorporated where relevant into the development of public strategies. Long term, the visions must maintain interdisciplinary focus on the disability area and provide a foundation for the Government's future work on the continued implementation of the convention.

VISION 1

THE GOVERNMENT WILL WORK FOR A SOCIETY RESPECTING DIFFERENCE, IN WHICH ALL PEOPLE ARE INCLUDED EQUALLY AS CITIZENS IN THE MANY COMMUNITIES OF SOCIETY.

A diverse and inclusive society presupposes respect, recognition and inclusion as well as protection against discrimination.

This being the case, the Government wants to create a cultural change helping all people find a natural place in the many communities of society – regardless of disability.

The Government will therefore aim at increasing the participation of people with disabilities in education, work and civil society so that everyone has a chance of being part of the community at school, in the workplace or in association activities.

VISION 2

THE GOVERNMENT WILL WORK FOR A SOCIETY THAT SUPPORTS PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN ACHIEVING INCREASED AUTONOMY AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR OWN LIVES.

Real inclusion presupposes that the individual person with disabilities has influence on and responsibility for his or her own life. Autonomy, co-determination and responsibility can, for instance, be supported by physical and digital availability as well as by thoroughly tested welfare technology. Therefore, the Government intends to help people with disabilities make their own choices and take responsibility for their own lives as well as contribute to society as best they can.

Therefore, the Government will continue to support the idea of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities for reasonable accommodation and universal design so that availability forms part of future transport solutions, new construction and digital solutions.

VISION 3

THE GOVERNMENT WILL WORK FOR A SOCIETY WITH FOCUS ON THE INDIVIDUAL'S RESOURCES AND IN WHICH PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ARE SUPPORTED IN REALISING AND CONTRIBUTING THEIR FULL POTENTIAL.

The strongest platform for equal inclusion is achieved when the individual citizen develops, maintains and utilises his or her competences. Therefore, the Government will promote the development and dissemination of (re) habilitation initiatives capable of achieving real progress for the individual citizen and paving the way for an independent, active and participating life.

And that is why the Government will work to acquire, develop and disseminate knowledge about people with disabilities – not least knowledge about how the individual's resources can be maintained and enhanced so that everyone has a chance of contributing their full potential.

UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Since its ratification in 2009, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has given Denmark a new and important framework for disability area work.

When ratifying the convention, Denmark also took on international obligations constantly to aim at ensuring that people with disabilities can benefit fully from the human rights and the fundamental rights of freedom and at promoting the respect for the dignity of people with disabilities.

Therefore, the Government will in the parliamentary session 2013-14 present a bill to the Danish parliament on

accession to the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

This will enable people with disabilities and other citizens to appeal to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities about any violations of the convention when a case has been conclusively settled nationally.

Denmark's adoption of such a right of appeal means that citizens have an extra possibility of having their cases heard. Accession to the optional protocol thus constitutes another element in the protection of the rights of people with disabilities.



OUR FUTURE FOUNDATION

Four fundamental principles of disability policy:

In Denmark, the work on disability policy has been based on four special fundamental principles of disability policy for a number of years:

the principle of equal treatment, the principle of compensation, the principle of sector accountability and the principle of solidarity. These principles are still valid, but need to be seen in a broader and more contemporary context.

Principle of equal treatment:

Equal treatment means that everyone must have the same opportunities for realising their dreams and potentials. This is not necessarily to be achieved by treating everyone in the same way. We are all born with differing capabilities and, sometimes, equal treatment can only be achieved by treating people differently – by applying the large number of different factors which, in the specific situation, are of importance to achieving equal treatment for the individual.

Principle of compensation:

Compensation is granted to overcome the barriers that prevent children, young people and adults with disabilities from participating in community life on an equal footing with everyone else. For instance, compensation may be given in the form of a permanent aid such as a wheelchair or a prosthesis, but may also be given in the form of special educational assistance or personal and practical assistance. And compensation is far from having to be static.

As the objective of compensation is to dismantle barriers, we need to look more than previously at whether the compensating services can help create progression and development for the citizen – and thus help achieve the ideal goal of the need for compensation being reduced or disappearing completely in the long run. Compensation should therefore be seen as a means to achieve the overall objectives – not as an objective in itself.

Principle of sector accountability:

The principle of sector accountability is about distributing responsibility in the disability area. All public authorities are responsible for making their facilities accessible to people with disabilities and for embedding disability policy aspects in policy development in the respective areas. First and foremost, however, the principle should be regarded as a tool for ensuring inclusion. We will only be able to achieve real inclusion of people with disabilities by incorporating the overall disability policy principles into the general policy development in all areas of society. This is why the principle of sector accountability is essential for really enabling us to move the disability policy agenda – both in the short and long term.

Principle of solidarity:

The principle of solidarity means that the majority of social services – also in the disability area – are paid for through taxes and, fundamentally, should be offered free of charge to the citizens in need of assistance. Moreover, increased awareness of the effects of the large number of initiatives is a clear precondition for us being able to develop the area also in future and ensuring that we make a real difference for the people with disabilities in question.

A photograph of two men in Shell uniforms. The man on the left is wearing a white short-sleeved button-down shirt with a Shell logo on the left chest and 'V-Power' on the right chest. He has a name tag and is smiling. The man on the right is wearing a red long-sleeved shirt with a Shell logo and a high-visibility yellow safety vest over it. He has his right arm around the shoulder of the man in the white shirt. The background is a doorway leading to a hallway. The entire image has a dark blue overlay.

CITIZENSHIP AND PARTICIPATION



The meeting between people with and without disabilities must be equal, without prejudice and inclusive.

Equal inclusion presupposes that people with and without disabilities meet without prejudice and from a starting point of mutual respect, awareness and tolerance.

Denmark is known as an open society actively working to combat discrimination and prejudice. We share a range of basic convictions that underpin respect and tolerance. And we boast a long-standing, proud tradition of engaging in associations and other communities of interest across age, gender and social backgrounds.

Even so, we still need to contemplate whether we can do more to support the mutual understanding and strengthen diversity in the civil society.

For this reason, the Government will also in future strive to ensure that meetings between people with and without disabilities are based on openness and respect for difference.

The Government will actively underpin cooperation between the players of the civil society to promote diversity in society's communities and institutions.

And the Government will improve the framework enabling people with disabilities to live independent lives where they can, on equal terms with others, participate in and contribute to the many democratic actions in society.

The work undertaken in these key action areas must support the continued implementation of the objectives of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities for awareness-raising, respect for the dignity and autonomy of people, equality and participation in community life.

RESPECT FOR DIFFERENCE

Objective: The meeting between people with and without disabilities must be based on recognition and respect.

Even though Danish society is both open and tolerant, we are probably still inclined mainly to seek the company of others who resemble us.

This may of course be rooted in conventional thinking or intolerance. But it is no doubt just as much a question of insufficient awareness of the possibilities of creating more diverse communities – and a lack of attention on the many things that we all have in common and too much attention on the aspects that, on the face of it, make us different.

A significant reason is probably that many Danes only rarely meet people with disabilities in their everyday lives – and the people with disabilities only rarely appear in the media

by virtue of occupation, expertise and interest rather than their disabilities.

In the areas of both education and employment, Denmark is currently working actively to promote inclusion of children, young people and adults with disabilities – e.g. via the large reforms of primary and lower secondary schools, the disability pension scheme, the flexible working arrangements and the social assistance system. The reforms will mean that people with and without disabilities will meet more often in the natural communities arising at schools and workplaces. And when we meet and get to know each other, we also create an improved basis for a community spirit based on mutual respect and sympathy.

In this way, the large-scale reforms underpin the attitudinal changes that play a key role in the work to promote inclusion of people with disabilities.

In addition, the Government will in 2013 realise an awareness-raising campaign aimed at increasing knowledge about people with disabilities and foster an understanding and respect for their rights.

The campaign is also meant to contribute to combat stereotypes and prejudices relating to people with disabilities, one means being media and educational activities targeted at children and young people.

"It is not a disability..."

The campaign challenges prejudices and spotlights the abilities, resources and everything else that has nothing to do with functional impairment of people with disabilities.

On Facebook, all people can tell their own stories about living life to the fullest – regardless of disability. The good stories are communicated by a campaign bus touring the entire country.

Read more at facebook.com/deterikkeethandicap



But the Government intends to do much more to dismantle cultural and attitudinal barriers so that people with disabilities can participate in and contribute to the community to a greater extent. Not least because the establishment of mutual respect and elimination of prejudices are key tools in the work to prevent discrimination against people with disabilities.



Alter opinions and root out prejudice

The Government will develop a long-term strategy to promote a positive attitudinal change in society and improve the basis for an equal meeting between people with and without disabilities in all spheres of society.

The strategy must be developed in close consultation with central, relevant players in the disability area. The work will thus be embedded with the Danish Disability Council.



This is why activities are launched to prepare a long-term strategy for attitudinal change in relation to people with disabilities.

The Government also intends to make a special effort as regards discrimination against people with disabilities. Discrimination of any kind is completely unacceptable.

The Government therefore wants to increase the mandate of the newly established anti-discrimination unit in the areas of integration. The anti-discrimination unit will also have the mandate to engage in discrimination against people with disabilities.



Anti-discrimination unit in the disability area

The Ministry of Children, Gender Equality, Integration and Social Affairs will appoint an anti-discrimination unit to focus on discrimination and differential treatment – both in relation to new Danes and people with disabilities.

For example, the unit will be investigating the extent and nature of discrimination against people with disabilities and plan initiatives to prevent and reduce the extent of discrimination against people with disabilities. The work of the anti-discrimination unit must be coordinated with other disability policy initiatives targeted at equal treatment and prevention of discrimination.

Furthermore, the Minister for Children, Gender Equality, Integration and Social Affairs has launched a national survey of hate crimes, which, e.g., will look at the extent to which crimes are committed where the disability of the victim is most often the decisive factor. The work of the anti-discrimination unit should be considered in the light of this survey.

The Government is also striving to promote equal treatment and equal opportunities for people with disabilities in the health area – e.g. in the work with the Government's long-term objective of increased equality in health.



Equality ambassador corps

The invitation to become equality ambassadors is for everyone: mayors, chairmen of patient societies, professionals and the man on the street. Each ambassador must give an account of three specific initiatives which they have launched or will launch to improve equality in health.

The disability perspective is also represented in the discussion about inequality and several ambassadors focus on equal access to health for people with disabilities.

Read more at
www.lighedsambassadør.dk

A specific initiative is the appointment of equality ambassadors in the health area. The Minister for Health and Prevention has thus invited all interested parties to become equality ambassadors and commit themselves to supporting a concerted effort against inequality in health.

INCREASED INCLUSION IN CIVIL SOCIETY AND CULTURAL LIFE

Objective: The community between people with and without disabilities must be strengthened through new alliances between the players in civil society and through better access to cultural facilities and services.

Participation in associations as either member or volunteer paves the way for new communities and networks. At the same time, a joint commitment, talent or interest is the optimum starting point for an equal meeting between people, irrespective of whether they are disabled or not. By strengthening the diversity in the many communities of the civil society, we will be able to take a giant and significant leap towards a more inclusive and equal society.

The Government's objective is to enhance the opportunities of active citizenship in mutually committing communities.

Together with the world of volunteering, the Government has prepared a new charter for the interaction between the volunteer world and the public sector. People with disabilities and their organisations will also be heard and involved in the upcoming implementation of the volunteer charter.

The charter highlights different types of volunteering and focuses on everyone having something to contribute. Through dialogue, the volunteer world and the public sector must lay down the framework for individual commitment and shared commitment so even more people can become active fellow citizens.

New volunteer charter

The charter for interaction between the volunteer world and the public sector sets out new visions and framework for the cooperation. For instance, the charter focuses on the diversity of the volunteer world and the potential of increased cooperation and an improved mutual dialogue between the volunteer world and the public sector.

Read more at
www.frivilligcharter.dk



Partnerships with civil society in the health area

The health of Danes is a joint matter and requires the involvement and co-responsibility of both citizens and civil society.

Therefore, the Minister for Health and Prevention will allocate DKK 120 million for partnerships with voluntary associations, private players and the business community. Via specific initiatives and measures, the partnerships must underpin the national targets for the health of the Danish people over the next 10 years.



In the health area, the Government has initiated a partnership strategy in which volunteer associations, private players and the business community set up specific partnerships to support the fulfilment of the national targets for the development of the health of the Danish people.

The partnership strategy forms part of the fight against inequality in health where the Government will set national targets for the development of the health of the Danish people over the next 10 years .

The Government would like the welfare solutions of the future to be found in much closer interaction with the civil society and on the basis of much closer cooperation with the citizens.

Co-creation will be a supporting concept in tomorrow's welfare development. When public players join forces with volunteers/voluntary associations to solve a task, both parties apply their unique competences. This is co-creation and means that the sum of the efforts made exceeds what the individual parties each bring to the task.

Denmark's disability organisations are characterised by being well organised and knowledgeable, having a large number of members and reaching the broad audience of people with disabilities. That is the reason why they are key players in the establishment of comprehensive efforts aimed at people with disabilities.

By means of new alliances and enhanced cooperation with civil society's other players, the disability organisations will, to an even higher degree than today, be able to help further citizens' participation in society and strengthen their autonomy and thus their possibilities of assuming personal responsibility.

The Government wants to focus on how to strengthen the role of civil society in the disability area. This being the case, a think-tank will be appointed, charged with devising a strategy aimed at establishing new alliances in civil society in support of the inclusion of people with disabilities. Moreover, the think-tank will have the mandate to look at how the agenda of co-creation in the disability area can be strengthened.



New alliances in civil society

The Government will set up a think-tank to design a strategy for new alliances between disability organisations and other parts of civil society.

The goal is to apply the competences of the disability organisations and the other parts of civil society to bridge the gap between people with disabilities and the world of volunteering and underpin the agenda of co-creation in the disability area.

The Disabled Peoples Organisations Denmark will head the work of the think-tank.



Civil society plays an important role as regards achieving an open and mutually beneficial meeting between people with and without disabilities. Because committed volunteers can give people with disabilities new opportunities for active and independent lives based on common interests.



Best Buddies...

... forms friendships between people with and without mental disabilities of all ages.

Friendships represent a pleasure, experiences and mutual respect, and a friend is one who you laugh with and trust.

Read more at www.bestbuddies.dk

Already at this point, we see many fine examples of this – e.g. the "Best Buddies" friendship project of the national association LEV for people with mental disabilities.

Another fine example is the Social Development Centre SUS' project with IT volunteers, who teach IT to residents at accommodation facilities to enable them to use the social media and Skype for communicating with friends and family.

The development of the fine, interest-based contact between people with and without disabilities holds a huge potential. Therefore, the Government wants to boost and qualify voluntary activities in the disability area by applying the special competences of volunteers – both professional and more private/life stage-based competences.

The Government will therefore set up a pool to support the development of voluntary activities so that volunteers can, to an even higher degree, help promote social inclusion and the experience of improved life quality of people with disabilities.



Voluntary professionalism

The Minister for Children, Gender Equality, Integration and Social Affairs will set up a pool for boosting and qualifying voluntary activities in the disability area by applying the special professional or private competences of volunteers.

The pool is also to support socially responsible private companies in their efforts to increase focus on volunteering in the disability area.

To many people, participating in cultural life is an important element in a good and active life. Moreover, meeting people at cultural events or sharing media experiences can provide a framework for equal, interest-based meetings between people. Thus, the Government has a key objective of ensuring that people with disabilities are empowered to participate in cultural life on an equal footing with everyone else – an objective which also appears from the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The opportunity of participation depends on the physical accessibility to cultural institutions and other cultural facilities. However, communication accessible to people with disabilities must also be developed and provided, e.g. in relation to exhibitions at museums. This is why the Minister for Cultural Affairs has launched three new initiatives aimed at easing access to cultural life for people with disabilities.



Easier access to cultural facilities:

- **Accessibility labelling of cultural institutions:** The Minister for Cultural Affairs will launch a campaign in which government cultural institutions and state-recognised museums receive a label according to a recognised scale, which indicates the accessibility to the individual institution for the seven defined groups of people with disabilities.
- **Enhanced communication:** The Minister for Cultural Affairs will collect and disseminate best practice examples of mobile technology solutions capable of enhancing the museums' communication to user groups with special needs.
- **Better film experiences:** In concert with the Danish Film Institute, the Minister for Cultural Affairs will launch experiments with audio description and subtitling of new Danish films in select cinemas to improve the film experience for visually impaired and hearing-impaired people.

In addition, the Government wants to support people with disabilities in their use of the public service offers in TV and on the radio that we all share. This being the case, the Government will thus focus regularly on improving DR's and TV2's public service offers for people with disabilities in tandem with the development of new technological communication means.

DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION

Objective: It must be easier for people with disabilities to exercise their democratic rights.

The possibility of participating actively in democracy and making your voice heard is a fundamental right in the Danish society. Therefore, equal access to participation in society,

not least in politics and public life, is also a key benchmark of inclusion and equal treatment of people with disabilities.

Not all people with disabilities have the same opportunities for contributing to and participating in democracy as people without disabilities. The reason may be concrete barriers in the surrounding world, e.g. in the form of a lack of physical access to participation in democratic assemblies, public meetings or elections, or a lack of focus on accessibility for people with disabilities in general, e.g. when meetings are held or when information and election materials are prepared.

For many years, these challenges have been in the spotlight, and a range of tools and solutions have been developed and disseminated to help people with disabilities take active part in society and democracy.

Citizenship projects



The National Board of Social Services has prepared an education package for specifically planned youth education programmes (STU). The teaching provides the participants with knowledge about their rights and tools for using them as active fellow citizens in society.

"That's the best we learned about – because it's about our lives. But also difficult, because you suddenly need to be an adult and say what you mean."

Statement by a young man at STU.



The citizenship project of the Ministry of Children, Gender Equality, Integration and Social Affairs is a fine example. The project offers people with cognitive functional impairment knowledge about citizenship and their own rights and the skills to apply this knowledge.



Mastering courses for people with mental disabilities

The Minister for Children, Gender Equality, Integration and Social Affairs will help more people with mental disabilities know their rights and participate as active fellow citizens.

This is to be achieved by developing the education programmes developed in the citizen project for the specifically planned youth education programmes so they benefit a broader target group.

Another example is the quality model for social supervision. In future, the assessment of social facilities will, for instance, look at whether they help give citizens the social competences needed to form social relations and live an independent life.

Strengthening of local disability councils



The Minister for Children, Gender Equality, Integration and Social Affairs will introduce a project to serve as inspiration for the members of the disability councils and a sounding board in the work performed by the disability councils.

In 2014, the National Board of Social Services will hold two training and networking days in each region where all members of the disability councils are welcome, and it will also set up an electronic network for the disability councils where they can find advice and inspiration.

Democratic participation is thus also about participating in and having influence over very near decisions of importance in everyday life.

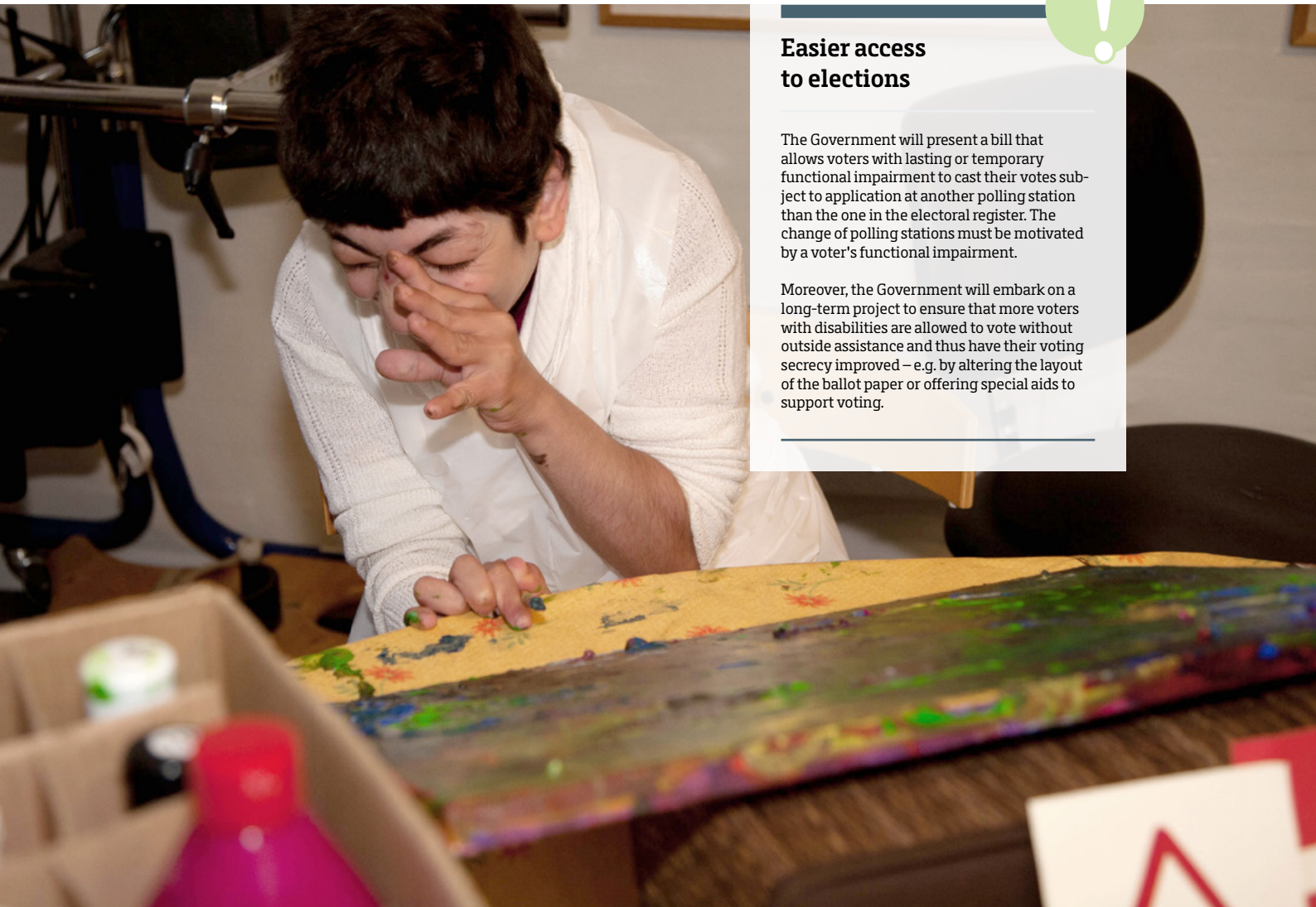
Participation in tenants' democracy

The Minister for Housing, Urban and Rural Affairs will look into whether any physical or communicative barriers exist preventing people with disabilities from participating in the tenants' democracy in social housing.

Decisions that are often made by the local authorities responsible for planning disability policy initiatives in a number of very central areas.

For the purpose of ensuring that people with disabilities are heard in local policy processes, a disability council has been appointed by all local authorities in Denmark, which advise the local council in matters of disability policy and which may present proposals for the development in the area. The disability councils include both representatives from local disability organisations and representatives appointed by the local authorities. The Government intends to strengthen the disability councils to support local policy activities in the disability area.





Easier access to elections

The Government will present a bill that allows voters with lasting or temporary functional impairment to cast their votes subject to application at another polling station than the one in the electoral register. The change of polling stations must be motivated by a voter's functional impairment.

Moreover, the Government will embark on a long-term project to ensure that more voters with disabilities are allowed to vote without outside assistance and thus have their voting secrecy improved – e.g. by altering the layout of the ballot paper or offering special aids to support voting.

Tenants' democracy is a key area in the social housing sector. Tenants' democracy ensures tenants influence and co-determination as regards decisions about their everyday lives. However, a well-functioning tenants' democracy requires that there are no barriers to the tenants' possibilities of taking active part in the tenants' democracy. For people with disabilities, this may include both physical and communicative barriers.

The Government therefore wants to support the possibilities of people with disabilities of taking part in the tenants' democracy.

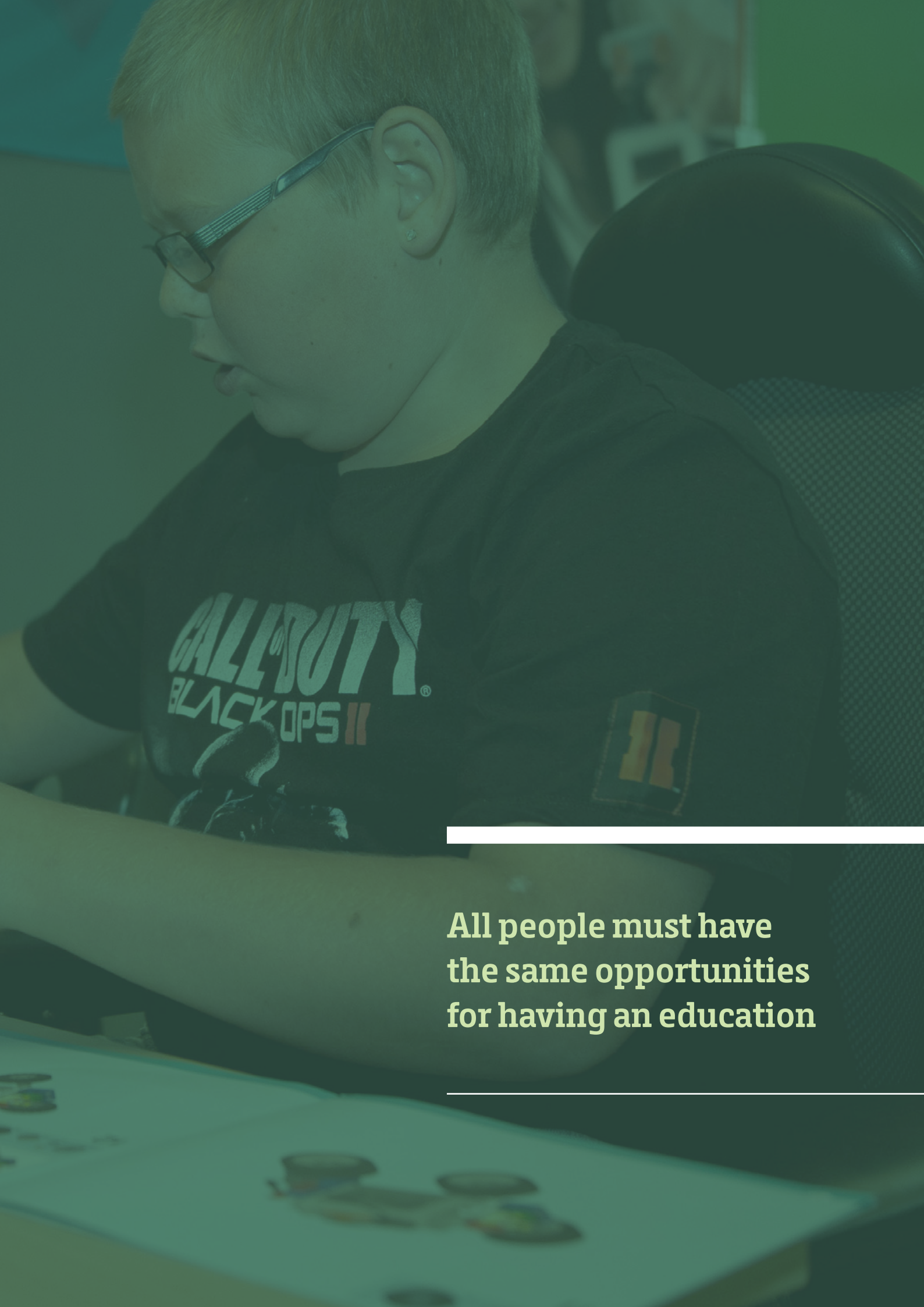
The possibility of and right to active participation in democracy and being heard is not least about the right to cast your vote to have a say in political decisions affecting all of society.

However, room for improvement also exists when it comes to participation in elections, not least in the light of the many new possibilities offered by technological developments.

Therefore, the Government will continuously focus on how to facilitate access to participation in elections so that people with disabilities can contribute to and have influence over Danish democracy on the same terms as everyone else.



EDUCATION AND TRAINING



**All people must have
the same opportunities
for having an education**

Schools are a significant focal point in children's development and preparation for becoming part of a diverse society. It is a fundamental value for the primary and lower secondary school that it is designed to have room for all children in the community. School must challenge all pupils to become as competent as possible and ensure all pupils improved academic benefits from teaching – regardless of their qualifications.

School must also develop children's personal and social competences so they all become committed citizens in a living democracy. A key element in the agenda of education and training is to provide children and young people with a solid platform for respecting difference and appreciating diversity in society. This strengthens the foundation for equal inclusion of all children in the school community.

The Government wants to support this development. Therefore, an ambitious agenda has been set for a reorganisation to increased inclusion in the primary and lower secondary school. A larger number of pupils with special needs must be included in the general education at the same time as their academic results are improved and their welfare maintained. Inclusion is a question of ensuring that the child has a feeling of being a valuable participant in the social and academic community, and that is key to learning and developing.

Teaching and special educational initiatives in primary and lower secondary school must encourage more young people with disabilities to embark on a youth education programmes because, today, an education is a condition for being off to a good start in life. The Government aims for children and young people in Denmark to be the best educated generation in the history of Denmark.

The Government's target is that 95% of all young people must complete at least one youth education programme and that 60% of all young people must complete a higher education programme. The education programmes must be of high quality, regardless of which youth education programmes the young people choose. Moreover, all young people must be encouraged and helped as much as possible in relation to their qualifications and potentials.

According to the latest figures, 92% of a year is expected to complete at least one youth education programme. Now, the Government wants to include the last per cent and thus give the education programmes a quality lift. The objective is to ensure that all young people acquire the key academic competences required in the labour market and in higher education and that all realise their potentials to an even greater extent.

Specialisation increases in youth education and higher education programmes. This increases the need for individual compensation, but a review must also be made of the possibilities of using the experience of inclusion in primary and lower secondary school as a platform – also by exploiting the many possibilities offered by technological developments.

Furthermore, the Government wants to create excellent opportunities for allowing adults to enhance their qualifications and retrain to obtain the competences needed. This also applies to adults with disabilities who failed to jump on the education and training wagon at the first opportunity.

Targeted initiatives to see more people with disabilities through the education system support the continued implementation of the articles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities for the right to education in the general education system, the right to living independently and being included in society and the right to gain a living by work.

INCREASED INCLUSION IN PRIMARY AND LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOL

Objective: In 2015, the percentage of pupils in general education will have risen to 96%.

The Government aims for primary and lower secondary schools which, in every way, reflect the diversity seen in society. Primary and lower secondary school must be for everyone, and it is essential that all children feel appreciated and welcome in school. All children must have the feeling of being part of the children's community seen in classes in primary and lower secondary school.

In the agreement on the local authorities' economy for 2013, the Government and the local authorities have set a clear ambition for inclusion in primary and lower secondary schools. The goal is for more children to be included in general education, for the academic level to be improved and for the welfare of the pupils to be maintained.

As a basis for the work on increased inclusion, the Government has made a legislative amendment about an inclusive primary and lower secondary school. The new delimitation of remedial instruction paves the way for a more flexible framework for schools' planning of the inclusive teaching.

The Government and Local Government Denmark will monitor the local authorities' reorganisation process for increased inclusion and have launched a representative study in 12 local authority areas during the period 2013-2015. The purpose of the study is to document the pupils'



Inclusion development projects

- Development and testing of initiatives where pupils support an inclusive learning environment outside class, e.g. by having classmates or older pupils help pupils with special needs.
- Development and testing of exemplary education programmes with focus on differentiated teaching and pupils with special needs. The project concentrates on the subjects Danish language and mathematics in fifth form.
- Development project with focus on how the individual disciplines can promote inclusive learning environments for all pupils.
- Development and testing of learning programmes for pupils with special needs who can participate in general education through social mastering strategies.
- Development and testing of a qualifications enhancement programme for teachers to boost their knowledge about inclusion and pupils teaching other pupils.
- Study of new digital learning types and educational theory and practice to strengthen inclusion and differentiated teaching and the development of specific teaching aids to be made available to schools and local authorities.
- Identification of large-scale local development projects with a view to compiling knowledge about local initiatives aimed at increased inclusion.
- PhD project to improve the inclusion knowledge base. On the basis of research, guidelines will be prepared for the local authorities for exemplary planning, completion and assessment of inclusion projects.



academic results and welfare and to focus on competence development, inclusion-promoting management models and support for inclusion.

In support of the objective of inclusion, a range of initiatives have been introduced to facilitate the local authorities' re-organisation.

The Government has set up Inclusion Development, an outreach consultancy unit under the Ministry of Education to support the local authorities' reorganisation for increased inclusion in the area of day-care facilities, school and leisure-time facilities.

Moreover, the new Center for Inclusive Education and Special Needs Education must create an overview of existing knowledge and make it available as well as develop new knowledge about inclusive learning environments.

Inclusion Development cooperates closely with the Center for Inclusive Education and Special Needs Education to collect, develop and disseminate knowledge about how to create inclusive children's communities and learning environments in practice. For instance, the cooperation means that a common website has been set up (www.inklusionsudvikling.dk) as well as a knowledge network to create an overview of ongoing studies and pilot and development projects. In this way, the knowledge created locally can be made general so others can benefit from the experience.



Focus on children with special teaching needs

The Minister for Education has launched three initiatives aimed at ensuring the quality of teaching of children who do not attend general primary and lower secondary school:

- A project to develop and test quality indicators of education at special schools.
- A PhD project to ensure research-based knowledge about the cooperation between special school facilities and general primary and lower secondary schools.
- A project to help internal schools enhance the quality of teaching so that a larger number of young people placed in care can proceed beyond primary and lower secondary school.

PRIMARY AND LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOL TO CHALLENGE ALL PUPILS

Objective: Primary and lower secondary school must challenge all pupils to become as competent as they can.

All children must receive excellent teaching where the opportunities and abilities of the individual child develop as much as possible.



Early identification of reading, mathematics and language disorders

The Minister for Education will develop new tools to ensure optimum assistance for children having difficulties understanding languages or reading and doing mathematics:

- A cross-sectoral screening tool for language understanding to ensure continued assistance for pupils showing signs of language disorders, supplemented with exemplary teaching programmes for the planning of language understanding activities.
- A dyslexia test to identify pupils with dyslexia across education programmes – from lower secondary school over youth education programmes to higher education programmes. The aim of the test is to achieve a common academic and solid foundation for the participation of dyslexic people in the education system on equal terms with everyone else.
- A test for mathematics disorders to be used from the introduction period of school attendance and preparation of guidelines for dyscalculic pupils throughout school.

The Government will ensure the quality of educational services for the children with such vast educational needs that they cannot form part of general education so that these children are also challenged and become as competent as they can. This applies to both children receiving remedial instruction at special schools and in remedial classes and children and young people placed in care who are taught at the schools of the facility, also known as internal schools.

All children must have satisfactory educational services – also children with special needs for education. The Government therefore focuses significantly on early identification of special needs for education. The goal is to develop tools capable of providing early input to focus areas in education and thus of helping children with needs for special education so they can be included in general education.

A special effort needs to be made so that targeted initiatives are taken as early as possible in relation to difficulties with reading, doing mathematics and understanding languages as assistance in these central areas is vital for the pupils to have the desired benefit from education. Moreover, it may prevent pupils with these difficulties from having a need for remedial instruction.

MORE PEOPLE TO COMPLETE AN EDUCATION

Objective: Ninety five per cent of a year must complete at least one youth education programme and 60% of a year must complete a higher education programme.

All people who have the abilities must be encouraged to and given the opportunity to complete an education programme. A higher degree of education among people with disabilities



is an important step towards meeting the objective of inclusion, equal treatment and equal opportunities.

Today, great efforts are made to ensure that students with disabilities can participate in general education at all levels. To fulfil the Government's objective of the best educated generation ever, where all students are encouraged to realise their full potentials, a need still exists for focus on the development of new solutions that will benefit the students. For example, the development of new educational methods and new solutions for text accessibility may benefit all students in the form of better preparation and greater benefits of lessons.

The Government will therefore take further steps to increase and improve inclusion in youth education and higher education programmes by conducting a study of the existing subsidy schemes to ensure that the funds applied to support the opportunities to have an education are applied in the most appropriate manner.



Review of existing subsidy schemes

With an objective of increased and improved inclusion of students with disabilities in youth education and higher education programmes, an inter-ministerial working group will be set up consisting of representatives from the ministries of higher education, education and finance which, in a dialogue with key players in the area, is to review the existing subsidy schemes for students with disabilities with a view to designing future subsidy schemes optimally within the applicable economic framework. Moreover, the inter-ministerial working group will, in addition to a dialogue with key players in the area, involve the conclusions of the Expert Camp of Sammenslutningen af Unge med Handicap (association of young people with disabilities) in May 2013.



The everyday life of young students with a need for teaching materials in other media, particularly students with dyslexia and vision impairment, must be made easier, e.g. by improving the use of technological developments to ensure that the teaching materials on the educational institutions' teaching portals are in accessible formats.

The Government will therefore improve the support pupils and students having difficulties writing, reading and seeing.



Texts for all

The ministers for education and higher education will complete an analysis of how institutions of education use various text formats in, for instance, teaching portals and library solutions.

In addition, user-friendly guidelines will be prepared for the selection of formats, describing, for instance, how different formats provide compensation and interact with different aids.

Many young people with Asperger's syndrome complete an ordinary upper secondary school programme as individually integrated pupils in a normal class.


A limited group of young people with Asperger's syndrome, however, need to be in a class with few pupils and a highly structured school day to be able to complete a youth education programme.

Experiments with such special classes have been conducted since 2007.

Based on the experience from these experiments, the Government will introduce a permanent option of establishing special classes for pupils with Asperger's syndrome.

MORE PEOPLE TO PARTICIPATE IN ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

Objective: Adults with disabilities must also be given a good chance of enhancing their qualifications to acquire the necessary qualifications.



Special upper secondary school programmes for pupils suffering from Asperger's syndrome

The Minister for Education will make the scheme of special Asperger's classes in upper secondary school and Higher Preparatory Examination programmes targeted at pupils who cannot be individually integrated into general upper secondary school permanent.

Labour market requirements develop constantly and very rapidly in many sectors. So a large number of adults will also have a need for education and enhancement of qualifications to achieve or maintain an attachment to the labour market. However, some people with disabilities are in special need of assistance to complete an adult or continuing education programme

This being the case, the Government intends to create an overview of the options of participation in various forms of adult and continuing education for people with disabilities.

Against this backdrop, we can work to ensure an efficient and flexible system that help adults with disabilities achieve or maintain an attachment to the labour market and thus to achieve increased financial and personal independence.



Analysis of the area of adult and continuing education

The Government will appoint an inter-ministerial working group to identify challenges in the area of vocationally-oriented adult education or continuing training programme in relation to the inclusion of people with disabilities. Moreover, the working group will present proposals for how best to handle responsibility in the different areas and long-term proposals for developing the area within the existing economic framework,

EMPLOYMENT





**More people with disabilities
must realise their potential
through an active working life.**

Employment is a key element for people with disabilities to participate in and contribute to community life on equal terms with others. For the vast majority of people, the opportunities for a good life are improved through work, and it is important for children to see their parents as equal participants in community life.

Fewer people with disabilities or suffering from a longer-term health problem are employed than people without disabilities. For people with disabilities or suffering from a longer-term health problem, the employment rate was 43.9% in 2012 compared to 77.5% for people without disabilities or a longer-term health problem.

The Government wants to change that. The reason is that many gains can be achieved when more people with disabilities find employment. Even limited working capacity is of great value, both to society and the individual. Moreover, a diverse and inclusive labour market helps create natural and equal communities between people with and without disabilities and thus support respect for difference and equal treatment in society.

The Government therefore wants to increase the labour market attachment for people with disabilities and ensure that businesses, job centres and the individual citizen together contribute to increased employment. Because job centres, businesses and people with disabilities alike are responsible for making this happen.

The Government has introduced large-scale reforms of the employment area, e.g. to give people with disabilities a better chance of contributing to society.

One of several key objectives of the extensive work of rolling out the reforms is to transfer more people with disabilities out of passive income support and into employment.

This objective underpins the continued implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities for the right to gain a living by work, which the individual is free to choose or assume in a labour market and in an working environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to people with disabilities.

REFORMS THAT MEAN MORE PEOPLE IN WORK

Objective: As many people as possible must find employment, fewer are to receive disability pension.

The Government has introduced large-scale reforms, which in different ways support the intentions of including more people with disabilities in the labour market. The reforms of the disability pension scheme, the flexible working arrangement system and the social assistance system aim at having more people with reduced working capacity in work. The bills have been passed, but the full economic and attitudinal effects of the reforms will last long into the future.

Instead of passive income support, more people must have an attachment to the labour market and a possibility of providing for themselves. Denmark's employment initiatives are the same for all. There is no parallel system regulating initiatives aimed at people with disabilities.

The large-scale reforms completed comprise everyone.

So the employment system must aim at ensuring that everyone has a chance of finding a place in the labour market and does not distinguish between people capable of participating without full-time support and people in need of an extra effort to gain a foothold. Everyone must have a chance of and be responsible for contributing to the welfare society.

The Government calls for efficient, active employment initiatives and will, long term, implement a drastic reform of employment initiatives. This being the case, the Government has appointed a committee with Carsten Koch as chairman to review Denmark's employment initiatives.



Goals of employment initiatives

1. More young people to have an education.
2. Better and more comprehensive help for unemployed people just outside the labour market – fewer people as recipients of disability pension benefits.
3. Long-term unemployment must be combated.
4. Closer contact to and strengthened dialogue with local businesses.



The Carsten Koch Committee...

... must conduct an analysis of employment initiatives in Denmark and, for instance, make recommendations for the following:

- Employment initiatives helping unemployed people find permanent employment as soon as possible.
- Meaningful employment initiatives based on the needs of the individual unemployed person.

The analysis must shed light on the initiatives aimed at unemployed people and people facing challenges other than unemployment, including people who are not ready to enter the labour market and who also receive social assistance, sickness benefits, unemployment benefits or rehabilitation benefits, and this may include people with disabilities.

The committee must uncover the cooperation between businesses and the job centres and make specific recommendations for initiatives that can help involve more private businesses in active initiatives, including, e.g., an increase in the supply of private wage subsidy jobs and an inclination to assume greater social responsibility.

Reform of the flexible working arrangement and disability pension systems

Local responsibility for employment initiatives means that the local authorities play a key role in the work to fulfil the objectives of the reforms, also in relation to disability pension and flexible working arrangements. The initiatives of the local authorities are undertaken in cooperation with Specialfunktionen Job og Handicap, a national agency whose



primary task is to support local authorities' initiatives for people with physical or mental disabilities, as well as to advise key persons in the disability area in the local authorities.

The key role of local authorities also means that one of the central points in the reform of the flexible working arrangement and disability pension systems is a clear objective that the citizen's meeting with the local authority must be coordinated and comprehensive. The intention underlying the reform is also to abandon a system where people receive disability pension benefits instead of help to gain an active life.

Against this background, new resource-clarifying processes replace disability pension for people below the age of 40. Only in cases where a job is obviously not an option, will it still be possible to award disability pension benefits to people below the age of 40.

People below the age of 40 will instead be offered individual and comprehensive initiatives in a resource-clarifying process, and focus will be more on the individual and his or her resources. The

citizen and his or her working capacity are in the spotlight in inter-disciplinary initiatives adapted to and targeted at the needs of the individual.

Rehabilitation teams

The local rehabilitation teams must ensure improved coordination of initiatives across administrations and sectors so the individual citizen is offered holistic initiatives and that the overall resources are utilised optimally.

It is essential that the work undertaken by the rehabilitation team focuses on employment and education and that the initiatives, as far as possible, help the individual citizen gain a foothold in the labour market.



The Government has thus decided that all local authorities are to set up rehabilitation teams to facilitate improved co-ordination of initiatives and ensure the individual citizen comprehensive initiatives.

The restructuring of the flexible working arrangement scheme means, for instance, that employers will only be paying for the work that is carried out. That makes it easier and less bureaucratic to employ people who are only able to work few hours. This means that people who have very limited working capacity and thus are only able to work few hours gain an entrance to the labour market, which they did not previously have.



More people in flexible working arrangements

A number of initiatives aim at creating an extra 13,500 flexible working arrangements by 2016. The arrangements to be created will be arrangements with a small number of hours per week and arrangements with a higher number of hours per week.

To create job openings for people with poor working capacity, the Fund for Better Working Environment and Labour Retention has launched experiments with a flexible working arrangement bonus for businesses that employ a person in a flexible working arrangements for 10 hours or less a week. The first experience gained of the bonus indicates that a large number of businesses are interested in employing staff whose working capacity is less than 10 hours.

number of people with disabilities will have active working lives.

Social assistance reform

The social assistance reform means that activity-ready recipients of educational and social assistance must be offered comprehensive initiatives.

Today, many people feel that they need to run the gauntlet between the public systems and that the initiatives are not coherent. The reform will change that. When the job centre assesses a citizen to be activity-ready, the citizen must be assigned a coordinating caseworker. The purpose is to ensure continuity and coherence in initiatives aimed at the citizen. The coordinating caseworker must ensure that initiatives are interdisciplinary and coordinated across local administrations and other authorities, and that the individual citizen receives optimum help to realise his or her employment goal.

The reform will be of great significance to people with disabilities who currently represent a substantial part of the target group for both disability pension and flexible working arrangements. The Government has a clear expectation that the reform will have the effect that a much higher

People having been hospitalised due to mental disorders must be offered mentors. The mentor will function as a discharge coordinator and contribute to making the transition back to everyday life and towards a job or an education as flexible as possible. Young people attending the youth education programme for young people with special needs (STU) will not in future have to show up for follow-up interviews at the job centres every two months, and activity-ready young people will no longer have to be available for employment, only for education.

SPECIAL INITIATIVES FOR DISADVANTAGED UNEMPLOYED PEOPLE

Some groups have more difficulty gaining a foothold in the labour market than others. The Government will therefore help disadvantaged unemployed people become attached to the labour market through targeted initiatives. A 2009 survey shows that own initiatives to find a job are the primary reason why people with disabilities have jobs. However, the survey also reveals that many unemployed people with disabilities have not applied for a job within the past year and that they do not think they can do more to find a job.

Also, the survey reveals that unemployed people with disabilities regard their functional impairment as a barrier to employment, while employed people with disabilities say that the labour market is inclusive in terms of employing people with disabilities. Finally, the survey shows that contact to the labour market influences the individual's assessment of his or her own working capacity in a positive direction. The Government collaborates with businesses to find new solutions for how to have more disadvantaged unemployed people in work.

A prime example of the collaboration is the Business Forum for Social Responsibility, which advises the Minister for Employment on businesses' social responsibility.

Improving the job search among unemployed people with disabilities and making standard initiatives the hub in initiatives aimed at people with disabilities still hold a great potential.

The Business Forum for Social Responsibility...

...is a cooperation forum of Danish business people whose principal objectives are as follows:

- Putting corporate social responsibility on the agenda in the political system.
- Inspiring more businesses to make an effort to prevent, retain and integrate disadvantaged groups in the labour market – e.g. by awarding the CSR People Prize to socially responsible businesses.
- Launching innovative projects for disadvantaged groups such as High:Five (ex-criminals), Route 25 (disadvantaged young people) and FleksPiloten (establishment of flexible working arrangement of less than 12 hours per week).





Project inclusion

Psychiatric Centre Ballerup has launched a research project known as INCLUSION for people with mental disorders as the degree of employment for that group is low compared to other groups of people with functional impairment.

The project runs until June 2017, and the Government intends to continue on the basis of any good experience from the project to have more people with mental disabilities find a job.

the belief that it is possible to find a job despite a given functional impairment.

Moreover, focus has been on turning around the attitude among unemployed people with disabilities from a barrier perspective to a possibility perspective and support

However, the Government also wants to support socio-economic businesses create jobs capable of including people having difficulties gaining a foothold in the labour market.

The Government has therefore launched investigations to identify socio-economic businesses and to make a socio-economic analysis of them. When the results will be available in the autumn of 2013, they will serve as input to the Government's deliberations of how socio-economic businesses can best be supported in future.

The objective of having more people with disabilities in work has broad political support. Therefore, the political parties behind the rate adjustment pool have been allocating funds to a pool for a number of years for the purpose of facilitating this objective.

The pool funds go to initiatives to help people with disabilities achieve or maintain an attachment to the labour market. The initiatives target people with disabilities of an age when they are ready to enter the labour market who have difficulties achieving or maintaining an attachment to the labour market.

In general, people with disabilities face special challenges in relation to reading and writing disorders. The Danish National Institute of Social Research's survey Disability and Employment shows that 15.3% of people with disabilities have problems reading or writing, while only 6.2% of people without disabilities have such problems.

Moreover, the employment of people with reading or writing disorders is generally significantly lower than of people without reading or writing disorders.

The survey shows that a lack of these qualifications may constitute a barrier to a job or an education. This being the case, the 2012 Finance Act allocates DKK 25 million to the completion of seven initiatives aimed at reading and writing problems.

Seven initiatives take a targeted approach to reading/writing difficulties

1. Easy access to self-testing
2. Free access to IT support tools for all citizens
3. Modernisation of website for dyslexic people and people with reading and writing difficulties
4. Training of employees in unemployment funds and job centres
5. Proactive initiatives vis-à-vis businesses
6. Testing of IT support tools for dyslexic young people and people with reading and writing difficulties
7. Information to citizens.



Stronger labour market attachment for people with disabilities

In 2013, the rate adjustment pool parties have allocated DKK 12 million in support of the labour market attachment of people with disabilities.

In 2013, focus was on the following areas:

- Development and testing of methods aimed at increasing the labour market participation of people with mental disabilities through local embedding.
- Involvement of civil society so local organisations and associations can play an active role to bring people with functional impairment closer to the labour market.
- Testing of new methods for strengthening the labour market attachment of people with disabilities and with reading and writing disorders.

A young girl with blonde hair tied back, wearing a dark t-shirt and a lanyard, is seated in a wheelchair at a table. She is focused on a task, using a pen to write on a piece of paper. The table is cluttered with various supplies, including a tray of colorful markers, a bottle of ink, and other writing materials. The background shows a classroom setting with other tables and chairs. The entire image has a blue tint.

MORE KNOWLEDGE
AND IMPROVED
EFFECT



Support to people with disabilities must spring from the individual's resources and support the individual in realising his or her full potential.

For many people with disabilities, support given at the right point in time is a precondition for achieving inclusion, equal status and increased autonomy. To achieve this, we must have adequate knowledge – not least knowledge about how resources and possibilities can be maintained and enhanced to strengthen the individual person's autonomy and independence.

When initiatives are based on enhanced knowledge and when systematic efforts are made to extend the use of methods with a documented effect, this is beneficial both to the individual and to the economy. The reason is that enhanced knowledge about target groups, needs, initiatives and effect make it possible to offer the individual the solution that benefits him or her the most – while public funds in the disability area are allocated where they benefit the most.

In other words, we have a strong interest in measuring the effect of what we do. This is why, via systematic data compilation, the Government will monitor the development of selected key indicators in the disability area.

The Government will work to ensure that activities have the clear objective of supporting the individual's mastering, active participation and progressive development – and that the methods we know are effective benefit the maximum number of people.

And the Government will strive to ensure that support to people with disabilities is provided on the basis of the current, optimum knowledge and that this knowledge is constantly enhanced and updated.

This trend not only underpins the Government's overall objective of promoting real inclusion for people with disabilities. It will also contribute to the continued implementation of the objectives set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to respect the individual's independence and dignity, support (re)habilitation and promote data collection and knowledge development in the disability area.

KNOWLEDGE ABOUT KEY OBJECTIVES

Objective: Developments in the disability area must be followed closely and systematically.

To follow the realisation of the Government's objectives of improved inclusion of people with disabilities, it is essential to create a better overview of developments in the disability area.

Therefore, the Government wants, on an ongoing basis, to document and follow up the inclusion of people with disabilities by measuring developments in three central areas: Education, employment and citizenship.

Diversity barometer



The Government is launching a diversity barometer to create an overview of the development of three key indicators and, in that fashion, follow up the Government's overall objective of increased inclusion.

The barometer will follow developments in relation to education, employment and citizenship.

PREVENTION AND REHABILITATION INITIATIVES

Objective: Initiatives targeted at children, young people and adults with disabilities must support mastering, autonomy and progressive development.

The Government wants to support a development where prevention and rehabilitation play a pivotal role in the disability area. Initiatives must be organised on the basis of the individual's resources and the current, optimum knowledge available in the area.

Valuable experience has already been gained for future use. For instance, in May 2013 the Minister for Children, Gender Equality, Integration and Social Affairs launched an

ADHD action plan...



... is a toolbox for local authorities that contains benchmarks and specific methods for improving initiatives aimed at children, young people and adults diagnosed with ADHD – all based on current, optimum knowledge with the focus on prevention and effect.

Read more at www.socialstyrelsen.dk

ADHD action plan where the focus is on initiatives holding a huge potential for prevention and effect.

Inspiration can also be found in the health area's "Learn-to-live-with programmes", which give people with chronic diseases tools for handling the special challenges the disease presents in everyday life. The concept is rooted in the assumption that the individual's own efforts and handling of the disease are of great significance for the effect of treatment and prevention of complications.

To support developments in the disability area in general, over the coming years the Government is going to launch a series of initiatives to generate knowledge about prevention and rehabilitation initiatives for specific target groups and identify the potential by spreading the initiatives.

A key action area will be support to families where one or more children have significant functional impairment. These families are often faced with special practical and emotional challenges, for which both parents and siblings may need support. A targeted support and information initiative can help both in the process of recognising that the family is not like everyone else and in relation to achieving a comfortable and well-functioning life. The Government will therefore roll out a project to strengthen and support families.

Mastering support to families with disabled children



The Minister for Children, Gender Equality, Integration and Social Affairs will launch an ambitious and long-term project aimed at developing and disseminating parent-training programmes and other mastering support to parents of children with disabilities. The project will also pilot-test a time-limited offer for families where they are given intensive mastering support during the first time after their child was born or acquired a disability.

The project will be implemented in partnership with the disability organisations.



The Government is also working to strengthen and qualify initiatives for families with children with disabilities on other fronts. For instance, the Ministry of Children, Gender Equality, Integration and Social Affairs is about to present new tools for needs identification and action plans targeted specially at children and young people with disabilities. The tools are being developed from existing methods, concepts and tools in the area to be fully compatible with the DUBU system, which by far the majority of local authorities already use for the provision of casework services in the children's area in general.

The tools will support professional quality, a systematic approach and result orientation in casework involving children with disabilities and, in this fashion, provide a basis for targeted, holistic and coherent initiatives for children and young people with disabilities. The tools are expected to be fully developed in the latter half of 2013, after which they will be made available to Denmark's local authorities.

The Government will also take steps to identify the methods that are best suitable to support young people with disabilities in obtaining an education. At the initial stage, we will focus on students with mental problems and development disorders. These young people increasingly apply for special educational assistance, and a need is experienced for being able to offer support that is more targeted at pupils and students with these types of functional impairment.



New forms of support for students with mental problems

- A continued effort to develop special educational assistance for students in higher education with mental illnesses and/or development disorders.
- A survey mapping out the support offered to students in youth education with mental illnesses and/or development disorders.
- Trial programme at 8-10 educational institutions where different forms of support are tested to examine how special educational assistance for students with mental illnesses and/or development disorders can best be developed in the youth education area.

we have very little knowledge about the effect of the numerous initiatives that are available to people with mental disabilities in accommodation facilities.

The Minister for Education will therefore launch a project whose purpose is to lay the foundations for qualifying the support.

Adults in accommodation facilities must also be offered rehabilitating initiatives based on resources and possibilities. However, in a Danish context

The Government wants to improve this. Partly to ensure that the initiatives offered actually support the affected citizens in maintaining and developing their skills to give them a good and independent life. Partly to ensure that the many funds allocated to the area are spent in the optimum manner.



Pilot project on initiatives in accommodation facilities for adults with mental disabilities

The Minister for Children, Gender Equality, Integration and Social Affairs will launch a pilot project to generate new knowledge about rehabilitation initiatives and methods targeted at adults with mental disabilities in accommodation facilities. The project is designed to support citizens in taking responsibility for their own lives, practising citizenship, realising their full potential and living their lives on their own conditions.

The Government has already taken quite a few important steps in the work on holistic and rehabilitating initiatives targeted at adults with disabilities, on which future initiatives can be built.

A prime example of this is the casework tool developed by the Ministry of Children, Gender Equality, Integration and Social Affairs in partnership with Local Government Denmark.

The method for identifying the needs of adults...

... ensures that socially disadvantaged adults and adults with disabilities are offered in-depth and systematic casework that covers all aspects of relevance to the individual citizen.

The method supports the level of legal protection and professional quality in casework practice, for instance by ensuring that the citizen is involved and consulted.

Read more at www.socialstyrelsen.dk



In the health area, the Minister for Health and Prevention has initiated the development of various tools to ensure a high level of uniformity and quality in health care activities. The Danish National Board of Health is for instance preparing two sets of guidelines on physiotherapy and occupational therapy for people with functional impairment resulting from cerebral palsy and acquired brain damage, respectively.

IMPROVED BASIC DATA ON DISABILITIES AND EFFECT

Objective: The citizen must be offered the solution that is most effective.


This is why the source data in the disability area needs to be improved, and action must be taken to disseminate methods that have an effect.

It is crucial for the Government to have a fundamental knowledge about people with disabilities to be able to develop and improve conditions for the individual person. The area has been characterised by insufficient basic data for years because the disability area has no data registered at the level of individuals (civil registration numbers) as is the tradition in other areas.

Moreover, the Government wants to secure the best possible results of initiatives. But today, well-described methods with a documented effect only account for a limited part of the combined initiatives in the area. A potential therefore exists for disseminating the existing evidence-based methods and in enhancing the other combined initiatives to achieve a more systematic approach and documentation of effects.

As part of the work at disseminating this agenda, the Government has established a partnership with Local Government Denmark, which will assist local authorities in delivering knowledge-based and effective initiatives. The goal is that local authorities use methods and efforts with a documented effect and work systematically to verify whether the assistance

works – also in the disability area. The methods applied will not only have a scientifically documented effect, but will also be methods whose effect has been documented in practice.



Strategy for knowledge about social methods in the disability area

Within the next five years, the Ministry of Children, Gender Equality, Integration and Social Affairs will map out knowledge about the effect of social initiatives for people with disabilities, partly to disseminate the use of well-known effective methods, partly to identify and fill 'knowledge gaps' in the area. The initiative will assist local authorities in working more systematically with documented methods.


In the long term, the Government will launch a strategy for knowledge in the social area to secure a new and enhanced knowledge base for initiatives – also in the disability area.

Besides, the Government and Local Government Denmark have a shared objective of improving data in the disability area and have concluded an agreement on improved and coherent documentation in the disability area.

Over time, the employment area has seen the implementation of many projects on disability and employment issues, but no comprehensive overview of the existing knowledge is available today. This is why the Government wants to collect and systematise knowledge from research and experience from projects to ensure that new initiatives in the disability area can always be based on the current best knowledge.


The Government is also working continuously to improve data in the educational area. This is for instance seen from the fact that the Minister for Education has launched a data warehouse project, which will generally improve the data and evidence basis in the educational sector. The work on the data warehouse will, in the long term, involve a systematic approach to improve data on day-care facilities and instruction of children and young people receiving special educational assistance, which can provide the basis for ensuring that initiatives in the area are knowledge-based.

Moreover, the Government has launched an analysis of the possibilities of establishing a data warehouse in the social area in keeping with the strategy for knowledge-building in the social area. A forthcoming data warehouse will here be able to collect information about who receive, what initiatives, when and at what price. These data must be linked



The documentation project...

... will mean, among other effects, that the quality of the national documentation is strengthened through analyses at the level of individuals and that the method for identifying the needs of adults is disseminated.



Systematisation of knowledge in the employment area

The Ministry of Employment is launching a literature review to provide an overview of research-based studies on disabilities and employment.

Moreover, an initiative will be launched for the collection and registration of data from projects focusing on employment for people with disabilities.



with data on the effect of initiatives in the form of information about, for instance, education and employment. A data warehouse in the social area will in this manner offer full-scale documentation of initiatives in the social area, which can provide a basis for enhanced and more systematic knowledge about the effect of initiatives.



Transition to youth education for students with non-cognitive disabilities

The Minister for Education will launch a study of educational patterns for students with non-cognitive disabilities. The study is a follow-up to a corresponding study from 2009.

The Minister has also set up a programme on the inclusion and development of pupils, a panel comprising about 4,000 7th grade pupils in 2013/14, to be followed over a period of three years. The programme will accumulate comprehensive knowledge and, among other contributions, provide analyses of the share of pupils with disabilities who complete the school-leaving examination and the pupils' experience of inclusion.

and the results will provide a valuable knowledge base for the continued work to create increased inclusion of children with disabilities in primary and lower secondary school.

Furthermore, the Government strives to ensure enhanced knowledge about educational patterns among children with non-cognitive disabilities – a group who, as demonstrated by earlier studies, have a lower degree of education compared with same-aged children without functional impairments. The Minister for Education therefore wants to launch a study of educational patterns for this group and will in that connection focus on aspects such as children's and young people's own experience of inclusion at school.

To generate knowledge about employment conditions for people with disabilities, since 2002 the Ministry of Employment has commissioned the study "Disability and Employment" from the Danish National Institute of Social Research. The studies throw light on developments in the number of people with disabilities or suffering from a longer-term health problem and compare employment trends for people with and without disabilities.

The Government will conduct a follow-up on this study in 2014 and will this time extend its scope so that it also examines the important question of the significance of education for labour market attachment.

The Minister for Education has also launched a study which will systematically follow up local authority initiatives in connection with the transition to increased inclusion in the period 2013-2015. The purpose of the study is to document developments in the pupils' academic results and welfare,

Monitoring developments in employment and educational levels



In 2014 the Minister for Education will conduct an analysis of developments in employment and educational levels among people with disabilities.

The Ministry of Employment's study entitled "Disabilities and Employment" casts light on employment trends for people with disabilities.


In future, the study will be extended to include the educational perspective, as well, which will make it possible to follow the significance of education for the level of employment and the trend in the level of education.

Finally, the Government wants to improve knowledge about the health condition of people with disabilities as part of the general health policy objective of ensuring the best possible treatment for all patients and preventing and combating inequality in health.



Knowledge about the health condition of people with disabilities

The Government wants to focus on the health condition of people with disabilities, including people with mental disabilities. The National Institute of Public Health (SIF) will therefore uncover how data from SIF can be used for this purpose.



COHERENCE
AND QUALITY

People with disabilities must experience public initiatives that are cohesive and of high quality.



All public authorities are responsible for ensuring that their services are accessible to people with disabilities and for embedding disability policy aspects in the development of policy in the respective areas. This is why today we see a large variety of initiatives targeted at people with disabilities. We should be proud of that. However, it also engenders a massive need for coordination and cooperation between the various sectors.

All sectors must work towards the same goal to avoid using resources on double work and unnecessary bureaucracy. In the end, it is all about ensuring comprehensive, inclusive and targeted initiatives for the individual citizen. This will ensure the quality and create the basis for allocating the funds in the disability area to where they benefit the most.

Accordingly, a need exists to continuously assess whether we can do things in a more simple and coherent manner and whether we can do an extra effort to ensure that the citizen's meeting with the public sector is positive – and not least that the citizen experiences being included in the decisions on his or her future.

The Government will therefore strive to simplify the rules in the social area so that legislation supports the goal of comprehensive and effective initiatives.

We therefore intend to strengthen coordination between various ministries and seek new solutions to cross-sectoral issues.

The Government will therefore initiate cooperation with Local Government Denmark, Danish Regions and the disability organisations to improve the citizens' meetings with the public system and we will take initiatives to support the quality in local-authority casework.

Following the evaluation of the local government reform, the Government will launch initiatives aimed at continuing offering high-quality, specialised initiatives to children, young people and adults with severe disabilities in the future.

The work undertaken in these key action areas must support the continued implementation of the objectives of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities for habilitation and rehabilitation, respect for the dignity and autonomy of people, equal opportunities and inclusion.

CLEAR AND COMPREHENSIVE SOCIAL LEGISLATION

Objective: Social legislation must be transparent and comprehensive.

It is paramount for the individual citizen that the social initiatives provided are coherent and assist in ensuring the citizen a positive development. The starting point must be the individual person's overall situation so as to adapt initiatives to individual needs and circumstances – even if such needs are complex and diverse. Assistance must be flexible and initiatives must be followed up regularly – in close cooperation with the citizen.

This places massive demands not only on local-authority caseworkers, but also on the rules governing the casework.

The Government therefore intends to simplify the provisions on adults of the Act on Social Services to support the objective of ensuring efficient, targeted and flexible initiatives that match the individual citizen's needs in a better way.

This work is ongoing and the Government expects to present a new bill on this amendment in 2014. Local Government Denmark, the disability organisations and other central stakeholders will be included in the work on an ongoing basis.



New Act on Social Services with increased focus on development for the individual

Legislation will be simplified so that the social initiatives for disabled adults become more comprehensive and results-oriented to ensure that the social initiatives make a difference.

Everyone must engage in efficient and targeted initiatives matching the individual citizen's needs and assisting in progress and positive development. This must be realised via increased focus on rehabilitation.

STRENGTHENED COOPERATION BETWEEN SECTORS

Objective: Coordination and development of the disability area must be strengthened through improved interministerial cooperation.

Sector responsibility and the many existing initiatives in the disability area engender a need for a mutual understanding of the cross-sectoral challenges and close cooperation and coordination across sectors.



Strengthened interministerial cooperation

Disability policy cooperation between Danish ministries will be strengthened, and a better framework for coordinating and cooperating across sectors will be created.

In practice, this will be realised with new terms of reference for the Interministerial Committee of Civil Servants on Disability Matters which focus on knowledge sharing and create a springboard for finding common solutions to interministerial challenges.

The Government therefore wants to improve the framework for joint coordination and knowledge sharing in the area via strengthened and more targeted cooperation between ministries on

the Government's disability policy.

Objective: Access to aids must be made less bureaucratic.

Many people with disabilities need an aid. This may be an app for their telephone that helps them organise their daily lives, a cane for the blind to help them find their way or a wheelchair so that they can get around. It may also be aids that are used in school or at work such as a speech synthesis that reads text from a computer.

Aids often offer the individual citizen a greater degree of independence and autonomy and may even render other types of public assistance superfluous. In many cases, the right aid may be decisive for a person with a disability being able to complete an education programme and have an active work and leisure life.

Since aids play such a key role in many people's lives, the road to receiving an aid should not be long and difficult, especially when people switch sectors or go from one life stage to another.

The Government therefore wants to create more flexible transitions in the aids area. This problem is not new, and previous attempts have been made at finding a solution.

The reason why we have not succeeded yet is mainly the ensuing complex challenges because responsibility for giving aids is shared between many authorities, sectors and players.

The Government will therefore set up an interministerial working group which, based on national and international experience, must examine how access to aids for people with disabilities can be made easier across life stages and sectors.



Cohesive aids management

The Government will establish an interministerial working group to identify possible ways of improving cooperation and simplifying the aids area, e.g. by considering the potential of establishing interdisciplinary aids centres.

This work must result in specific recommendations for the Government concerning a new organisation of activities in the aids area, which must:

- Create increased continuity for the citizen during transition periods.
- Increase the professionalisation of activities by obtaining the newest knowledge about aids and making it available to citizens, educational institutions, workplaces and other relevant parties.
- Strengthen coordination in the aids management by allowing various sectors to work more closely together.



Objective: The transition from one education programme to another must be more flexible.



Aids for education and training

In 2013, central government special educational support schemes were changed so that aids follow the student from one education to the next.

Moreover, time limits have been set for case-work in schools and educational institutions.

Accordingly, in January 2013, the Government established aids services in youth education programmes so that students with dyslexia can get help immediately.

The Government wants to continue creating more flexible transitions in the education system where timely and sufficient support is decisive for a good start for young people with special needs.

The Government wants to create a more flexible transition between education programmes so that aids follow the students from one education to the next.



Flexible transitions between education programmes

- **Earlier screening for dyslexia:**
The Minister for Education wants to give Ungdommens Uddannelsesvejledning (youth guidance centres) access to screening for dyslexia before acceptance into a youth education programme. The advanced screening makes it possible for institutions to have support ready when the young people start on the programme.
- **Systematic disclosure of information:**
The Minister for Education will charge the youth guidance centres with passing on information about special needs and previous support measures to the youth education programmes. This means that the receiving education institution receives all available information when an application for special educational assistance is submitted and is able to set the framework before the young person starts the programme.

FLEXIBLE AND TRUST-BASED CITIZEN PLANS

Objective: The citizens must experience the meeting with the public system as inclusive, comprehensive and trust-based.

The local authorities are charged with providing most of the initiatives and services the public sector offers people with disabilities. The local authorities therefore play a pivotal role in many people's lives. At the same time, the regions are a key player both in the health area and in the specialised social area. It is therefore paramount to the individual citizen that the meeting with the local authorities and regions is experienced as inclusive, comprehensive and trust-based.

The citizens and the public players therefore have a clear, shared interest in ensuring that the necessary fields of expertise play together to find solutions to the individual citizen's challenges. At the same time, a strong mutual desire exists that the solution springs from the citizen's own desires, resources and needs.

The central government, regions and local authorities have long listed cooperation and coherence across sectors high on the agenda so that the initiatives launched become more targeted and coherent and so that resources are spent in the best way possible.

This is reflected in the seven principles for cooperation to modernise the public sector agreed between the Government and the parties in the public labour market in June 2013. For instance, the principles must support the development of new forms of government with focus on trust and cooperation which actively include the citizens' resources and commitment and focus on openness, knowledge and results for the individual citizen.

The objective can also be supported by focusing on the massive potential that lies in using IT to support work in the social area and making it easier to share relevant knowledge across the public sector. The desire to create greater coherence in casework by means of new digital tools is therefore a theme in the joint public strategy for digital welfare.



Guide to parents of children with a physical or mental disability

This guide outlines the key offers of assistance and support and refers to additional knowledge sources – in both current rules and relevant information material.

Parents can also find key information addressing the specific age of their child.

The guide can be ordered or downloaded at: www.socialstyrelsen.dk

Moreover, in the past years, various initiatives have been conducted targeting parents of children with disabilities, which have aimed at improving how parents meet and cooperate with the local authorities.

A good example is the KIFA project under which a number of local authorities have tested specific tools to improve cooperation between the authorities and parents of children with disabilities.

As a specific and targeted tool for parents of children with disabilities, the Minister for Children, Gender Equality, Integration and Social Affairs has also developed a guide which informs about offers of assistance and support.

Another example is the bill presented by the Minister for Children, Gender Equality, Integration and Social Affairs that will make it possible for the local council to offer young people with severe disabilities and placed in a foster family a chance to stay with their foster family between the ages of 18 and 23. The purpose is to respond to the young people's need for support in the safe environment of their foster family and thus contribute to a good transition to adult life in e.g. accommodation facilities.

Even if both the Government and Local Government Denmark have launched many initiatives, many people with disabilities still encounter challenges in their contact with the public system.

The Government therefore wants to strengthen cooperation between the public players so that central legislation and local government to a greater degree than today support a development towards more coherent and inclusive initiatives.

Therefore, Local Government Denmark and the Ministry of Children, Gender Equality, Integration and Social Affairs will launch long-term partnership with the regions and other central players to improve the

framework for planning initiatives in the disability area. The partnership falls under the partnership agreement in the social area and will, among other things, take its departure in the objectives of this action plan and Local Government Denmark's social policy initiative 'Invest before it is too late'.

Partnership cooperation in the disability area



Local Government Denmark and the Ministry of Children, Gender Equality, Integration and Social Affairs will launch a targeted partnership aimed at improving the meeting between disabled children and the public sector.

This work will e.g. focus on comprehensive initiatives, user influence and increased trust and be based on input from people with disabilities and their organisations as well as Danish Regions and other central stakeholders.



Task force for the disability area

The Minister for Children, Gender Equality, Integration and Social Affairs will set up a task force in the disability area to offer assistance to the local authorities in managing their initiatives for people with disabilities.

The services are tailored to individual local authority needs and may vary from assistance to handling specific cases to more elaborate development programmes.

Objective: The quality of local-authority casework must be strengthened.

The Government therefore wants to increase focus on the quality of local-authority initiatives in the disability area to ensure that the right decisions are made to a greater degree. The Government will therefore establish a task force to assist the local authorities in handling cases in the disability area.

RENEWED FOCUS ON SPECIALISED INITIATIVES

Objective: The requisite specialised services and skills must be available, and the knowledge base must be developed for the benefit of quality.

The local government reform placed the citizen at the centre and anchored assistance to the citizen in one place, viz. the local authority, which became the citizens' public sector access point. The evaluation of the local government reform has shown that the new distribution of duties and responsibilities for the most part works well, but that areas exist in which the task solution is not optimum.

The Government therefore intends to take various initiatives to ensure the highly specialised initiatives for children, young people and adults with comprehensive and complex support needs.

The Government will give central government a strengthened role in supporting and coordinating highly specialised initiatives and knowledge sharing in the social area and in the remedial instruction area. The objective is to ensure local authorities access to the highly specialised services and skills needed and to ensure that these services are developed dynamically as the needs change.



New national coordination structure

The Government will establish a new national coordination structure, which authorises the National Board of Social Services to identify target groups and special initiatives that require increased coordination between local authorities to ensure and develop the highly specialised knowledge and work.

At the same time, the National Board of Social Services will be tasked with creating a national overview of the specialised initiatives as well as a systematic knowledge base on target groups needing a highly specialised effort. This gives the National Board of Social Services a strong basis for engaging in a dialogue with the local authorities about the specialised initiatives. Initially, focus will be aimed at specialised initiatives for people with complex brain damage and severe eating disorders.

At the same time, the Government wants to ensure increased coordination of special counselling and knowledge development in the remedial instruction area by pooling responsibilities with the National Organisation for Knowledge and Specialist Consultancy (VISO).

The Government also wants to launch various initiatives in the health care area such as targeted rehabilitation plans and a strengthened role for the hospitals. Some initiatives will strengthen the initiatives for persons with complex and comprehensive rehabilitation needs.

These initiatives build on the National Board of Health's pathway programmes from 2011 which outline the overall rehabilitation initiatives targeting children, young people and adults with acquired brain damage. The pathway programmes are prepared in cooperation with the expert companies, regions, local authorities, general practitioners and user organisations.



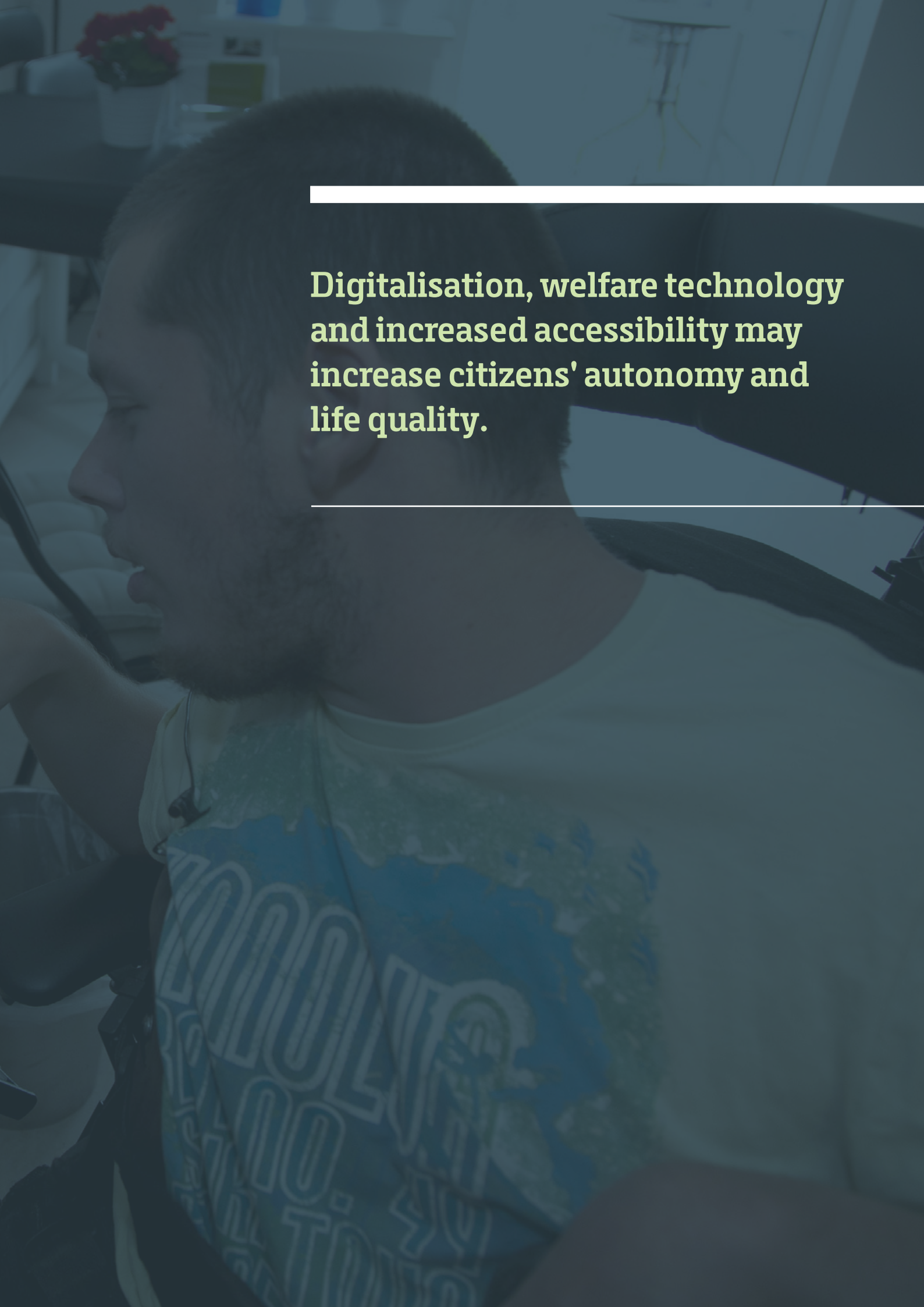
Increased professionalism in occupational therapy and rehabilitation services

To step up rehabilitation and occupational therapy initiatives, the Minister for Health and Prevention will:

- Develop a stratification tool for targeting occupational therapy and rehabilitation services in relation to the citizen's needs.
 - Strengthen the hospital's authority to describe and set deadlines for occupational therapy and rehabilitation initiatives for the group of citizens with very comprehensive and complex rehabilitation needs.
 - Develop assessment guidelines and health care quality criteria for rehabilitation of citizens with very complex rehabilitation needs.
-

A person is seen from the side, interacting with a computer monitor. The monitor displays a grid of icons. The scene is dimly lit, with a blueish tint. The person's hand is on the right side of the monitor. The background shows a desk with various items, including a mouse and a keyboard. The overall atmosphere is professional and focused on technology.

INNOVATIVE
SOLUTIONS, NEW
TECHNOLOGY
AND IMPROVED
ACCESSIBILITY

A man with a beard and short hair is shown in profile, sitting in a wheelchair. He is wearing a white t-shirt with a blue graphic design. He is using a prosthetic right arm to hold a smartphone. The background is a blurred indoor setting with a potted plant and a window. The image has a dark blue overlay.

Digitalisation, welfare technology and increased accessibility may increase citizens' autonomy and life quality.

New technology and innovative solutions affect many aspects of our everyday lives and create new opportunities for both individuals and society in general. This is for instance the case in the aids area where technological solutions may make people with disabilities more independent and give individuals the chance of a more independent and active life. It is also the case in the development of social media and other Internet-based communication forums where people can meet and share interests and experiences across physical and social boundaries.

New technology contributes to supporting the objectives of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on inclusion, accessibility and autonomy for people with disabilities. At the same time, the use of new technology may contribute to ensuring that public sector resources are used where they have the best impact.

For citizens and society alike, clear gains can be made from new technology and increased digitalisation. Investing in these areas enables us to reduce welfare costs while increasing quality. However, a precondition for reaping the benefits is that the new solutions become easy to use for all.

Digital and welfare technology solutions may open new avenues allowing people with disabilities to participate in community life on equal terms with others. The Government also wants initiatives to dismantle more classical physical barriers to participation in society and inclusion by continuing the focus on the accessibility area.

Overall, the Government wants to give people with disabilities greater influence on their own lives and make it easier to participate in and contribute to society.

The Government will therefore set an ambitious course for the use of new technology and innovative solutions – in cooperation with local authorities and regions.

The Government will strive to make digital solutions accessible to people with disabilities, so that the digital transition supports equal treatment and autonomy in the disability area.

And the Government will therefore work to improve physical accessibility in buildings, accommodations, adjacent urban spaces and public transport.

INDEPENDENT WITH INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY

Objective: Well-tested technology must give people with disabilities greater autonomy in everyday life and contribute to increased inclusion in society.

Most people consider being able to manage on their own a privilege. Welfare-technology and digital aids can enable people with disabilities to handle more everyday tasks without any help from others.

The Government therefore wants to set an ambitious course for joint public work to disseminate and use digital and welfare-technology solutions in the educational, social and health care areas. The framework for this work is e.g. the joint public strategy for digital welfare presented in September 2013.

This work springs from positive experience already gained from e.g. the Danish Public Welfare Technology Foundation. Through the past years, the Government has thus supported testing of various technological solutions in the disability area aiming at giving people with disabilities a greater degree of independence and autonomy.

One good example is the use of eating assistance robots for physically disabled residents in accommodation facilities.

Eating assistance robots are a welfare-technology solution that allow people with considerable physical functional impairments to eat by themselves and make them much less dependent on help from others than they would otherwise have been. The robots have been tested in eight accommodation facilities with positive results.

Even if welfare technology activities have been on the agenda for several years, the local authorities' activities in the area remain characterised by pilot tests.

Experience shows that certain challenges exist in implementing the technology properly and maintaining new work routines. To reap the benefits of new technological solutions, both citizens and staff must know the new

technology and feel safe using it. This transition does not come about by itself. This area will therefore be strengthened in the coming years and several well-tested technologies will be implemented nationally.

National implementation of welfare technology

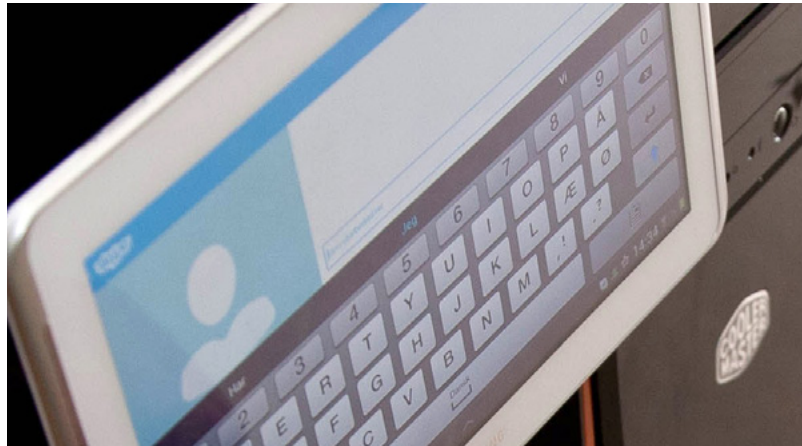
The Government and Local Government Denmark agree to support a national implementation of modern welfare technology solutions.

This will increase the independence of citizens and streamline casework. Initially, focus is on assistance for lifting, better use of aids, eating assistance robots and shower toilets.

The agreement on the local authorities' economy for 2014 is available at www.fm.dk.



The Government also wants to investigate whether we as society are sufficiently skilled at exploiting the new opportunities of laying out housing in a smarter manner. Smart home technology makes it possible to operate light, heating, windows, doors, the height of the dining table, etc. via remote. Daily tasks that previously could not be performed without the assistance of others can often be handled by the citizen by means of technological solutions. This increases independence, the ability to master one's own life and quality of life.



Joint public strategy for digital welfare

In September 2013, the Government, local authorities and regions launched a strategy for digital welfare which towards 2020 and through clear objectives and specific initiatives sets an ambitious course for disseminating and applying digital and welfare technology solutions that also benefit people with disabilities.

The strategy pivots around targeted dissemination of well-tested technology to increase the citizen's independence and quality of life.

In conjunction with the Strategy for Digital Welfare, the Government wants so make a targeted effort to strengthen the dissemination of well tested, digital and technological solutions for people with disabilities.



Better use of welfare technology in the disability area

The Minister for Children, Gender Equality, Integration and Social Affairs will establish a forum consisting of users, experts from the social area, technology experts and managers who must work to ensure better use of welfare technology in the disability area.

The objective is more efficient and coherent welfare services that comprehensively strengthen independence and inclusion in society.

ACCESSIBLE IT SOLUTIONS

Objective: Mandatory digital, public self-service solutions must be fully accessible to people with disabilities.

A still greater part of the communication between citizens and the public sector will become digital. The new digital solutions hold massive potential. Not just as a tool for modernising the public sector but also as a springboard for greater independence for people with disabilities and as a tool for increased equal treatment.

However, not all find it easy to use the new digital solutions. For instance, the transition to digital communication may imply challenges for people with cognitive and physical disabilities.

It is therefore crucial that the new solutions become easy to use for all. Otherwise they risk increasing inequality and dependence on others instead of having the intended positive effect.

It is a joint public objective that 80% of all written communication between citizens and the public sector must be digital by the end of 2015. It is therefore important to ensure that the solutions the public authorities make available are both user-friendly and accessible to people with disabilities.

As part of the implementation of the joint public digitalisation strategy 2011-2015, a special effort is made to ensure that the self-service solutions that are made mandatory also observe relevant user-friendliness and accessibility requirements.

The people involved must also have access to help to use the new solutions. And while we all may need guidance, even for public self-service facilities, the guidelines are not always equipped to allow the use through aids, and some people need different instructions due to e.g. a cognitive disability. The Government will therefore cooperate with the local authorities and civil society players to support people with disabilities using the new digital solutions.

To further support that both solutions and content are made naturally accessible, the Government will take the initiative to include IT accessibility in various relevant education programmes. This will ensure that newly educated staff at authorities and developers already know the importance of IT accessibility for people with disabilities when they get their first job.



Clear focus on IT accessibility

The Government will launch the following initiatives to improve IT accessibility for people with disabilities:

- Mandatory digital, public solutions must be made fully accessible to people with disabilities.
- Cooperation with local authorities and civil society to help people with disabilities use the many new public digital offers.
- Mainstreaming of IT accessibility as a specialist area in relevant education programmes to create general awareness of IT accessibility.

IMPROVED PHYSICAL ACCESSIBILITY

Objective: The physical barriers preventing people with disabilities from participating in community life, must be reduced on an ongoing basis, and the development of physical accessibility in society must be monitored closely.

Accessibility to physical surroundings is a key condition for all people to participate in community life. Physical accessibility is therefore a precondition for equal opportunities, autonomy, equal treatment and ultimately inclusion. Physical accessibility has always been pivotal in the disability policy agenda both for the Government, people with disabilities and their organisations. The Government wants to ensure that continuous focus is given to improving accessibility to the surrounding world.

ACCESSIBLE HOUSING AND URBAN SPACE

Objective: Accessibility in the social housing sector must be improved so that still more of the housing in the sector offers optimum accessibility.

The home is the primary setting for most of Danish citizens' lives. It is therefore important that everyone has a home in which they thrive and can move if their life conditions and housing needs change.

However, some people with disabilities have special requirements to their homes – especially in terms of accessibility. Small doors, considerable level differences and poor access from the outside are examples of conditions that make some housing ill suited for some.

For the past 10 years, accessibility requirements for housing have been tightened, meaning that the number of accessible dwellings has increased significantly.

In particular, the social housing sector has contributed significantly to a more accessible housing stock in new construction and through central funds for renovation and refurbishment from the National Building Fund.



Accessibility to public housing

- In public housing renovated between 2008 and 2010, the number of dwellings with good accessibility now constitutes 20-25% of dwellings after the renovations.
- As a result of a targeted effort, the number of new public housing with full accessibility has now increased significantly.
- An overall register of accessibility in public housing will be complete in 2015.



The Government and the National Building Fund cooperate to improve accessibility in social housing and to create an overview of accessibility in the sector.

This work will continue in the coming years. Accordingly, DKK 200 million have been earmarked annually in the period 2011-2016 to make social housing sector buildings more accessible to people with disabilities.

However, the Government wants to boost this positive development further.



Increased accessibility to social housing

The Government will work to ensure that the share of funds in the National Building Fund earmarked for enhancing accessibility in social housing will be increased to DKK 300 million in the period 2016-2020.

This marks an important step in ensuring that a greater part of social housing will be fully accessible to people with disabilities in 2020.

Objective: The accessibility to urban spaces near dwellings must be improved.

The sense of feeling at home and the importance of being able to move freely do not stop at the door step. Accessibility of the urban space around our housing is also decisive to ensuring that all people can move about and enjoy the same possibilities to participate in local communities.

The improvement and urban renewal of existing urban and housing areas, often include the renewal of urban spaces close to housing such as courtyards, local squares and parks in close proximity to housing areas and buildings.

The Government wants to uncover how the local authorities work with e.g. universal design in laying out and designing public urban spaces close to housing.

Improved urban spaces near dwellings

In 2014, the Minister for Housing, Urban and Rural Affairs will conduct a study of the local authorities' work with universal design in connection with the establishment and renovation of urban spaces near dwellings.

The outcome of the study may inspire new possibilities of supporting universal design work in the local authorities.

At the same time, the Government is working to uncover how to apply technological solutions in new ways to support people with disabilities in their everyday lives. The vision is that people with disabilities can use e.g. a smartphone to find information about the accessibility level of buildings and urban spaces, public gardens and facilities, including transport possibilities and cultural facilities.

Towards 2020, the Ministry for Housing, Urban and Rural Affairs will launch long-term initiatives to make it easier for people with disabilities to move about in their immediate environment.



Easy access to knowledge on accessibility

Until 2020, the Government will work to ensure that people with disabilities can use their smartphones or tablets to receive information about accessibility in urban spaces near dwellings.

More specifically, the Government initially wants to investigate how the accessibility level in buildings and physical grounds and surroundings can be recorded to allow the development of specific tools in the future.

ACCESSIBILITY TO BUILDINGS

Objective: The built environment must be accessible to people with disabilities.

Accessibility to physical surroundings is decisive for citizens to be part of society. This obviously also applies to accessibility to buildings. This area has therefore always been a key part of the disability policy agenda.

Accessibility for people with disabilities is prominent in building legislation, which, since 1972, has included specific accessibility requirements to buildings. These requirements have since been extended, so Denmark now has a building legislation that sets clear and ambitious accessibility requirements.

Accordingly, an excellent basis exists for ensuring that people with disabilities can use buildings without encountering physical barriers to accessibility. This applies to both new buildings and when buildings are rebuilt.

The current rules therefore ensure that the overall building stock is made accessible to people with disabilities as the stock is being renewed. The challenge lies in ensuring that the rules positively interact with the newest technologies and solutions in building so that new and future-proof solutions can be developed continuously.

At the same time, experience shows that it is now possible to make new buildings accessible without having to compromise on architectural and aesthetics requirements. The headquarters of Disabled Peoples Organisations Denmark from 2013 show that when the process and cooperation between the various parties are in focus, accessibility, beautiful architecture and good building economy can be united.

Still, we have a long road ahead of us before we reach the finish line. Studies from the Danish Building Research Institute indicate that knowledge of the Danish Building Regulations are not always sufficient. So despite clear and ambitious requirements, challenges remain in terms of ensuring the desired accessibility in new buildings.

Knowledge about the accessibility requirements and focus on which specific innovative solutions that can meet these requirements are needed.

The Government will therefore work to ensure that the current rules on accessibility to buildings effectively support innovative accessibility solutions. The Government wants to underpin the effort to inform and provide guidance about the requirements for accessibility in buildings. The Government will collect and disseminate experience in innovative solutions in the accessibility area throughout the construction industry and among public employers.



Increased focus on accessibility requirements of the Danish Building Regulations

To increase focus on the accessibility requirements of the Danish Building Regulations, the Minister for Climate, Energy and Building will launch two initiatives:

- An analysis of current rules in the building regulations which must:
 - Review current accessibility rules in the building regulations with a view to ensuring that they support the development of innovative accessibility solutions.
 - Collect and disseminate experience in innovative accessibility solutions throughout the construction industry and among public employers.
- A strengthened effort to provide information, guidance and advisory services.

In cooperation with the relevant parties, including Disabled Peoples Organisations Denmark and Institute for Human Rights, strengthened information, guidance and advisory initiatives will be launched with two main purposes:

- To inform about current rules.
- To collect and disseminate knowledge about specific innovative solutions in the accessibility area.

ACCESSIBILITY IN THE TRANSPORT AREA

Objective: Accessible transport solutions offering optimum mobility for all users must be developed.

Transport possibilities are decisive for the individual citizen's possibility of participating in and contributing to the many communities encountered in everyday life and for a diverse and equal society.

The Government therefore wants to create a transport system that is as accessible as practicable, while maintaining the functionality and efficiency of the overall transport system.

The objective of creating full accessibility in particularly public transport is an expensive and long-term project that cannot be solved immediately. It is therefore important that accessibility in a wide sense is integrated in all initiatives in the transport system to ensure that future improvements are made in the best and cheapest manner.



Transport policy for people with disabilities

The Ministry of Transport's accessibility policy outlines the principles applied in considering disabilities across the areas covered by the Ministry of Transport.

It also provides an overview of how to work specifically with accessibility in the Danish transport system.

It applies when making decisions on and preparing public service offers and when the legislative framework is established.

The Government will support this development by including accessibility in the long-term planning of the development in the transport area.

The Ministry of Transport's accessibility policy specifies that accessibility is important to consider when planning, building and renovating infrastructures.

This also applies when making decisions

Trains, infrastructure, metro and light rails with good accessibility



The Government wants to ensure as good accessibility as possible for the new light rail solutions in Aarhus and Ring 3 in Copenhagen. Moreover, the Government wants to ensure that considerations for people with disabilities are included in the acquisition of new trains, in connection with major station and platform alterations and new installations made using train funds from Togfonden DK.

More specifically, the Government will work to ensure:

- That the work involved in making the light rail systems uses accessibility panels, accessibility consultants, etc. to monitor the projects and discuss accessibility solutions.
- That the considerations for people with disabilities are included as a key parameter in the purchasing process when acquiring trains, in connection with major station and platform alterations and new installations made using train funds from Togfonden DK.

Disability policy action plan 2013

One society for all

2013/14 : 30

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