Dansksimulatoren
Danish Simulator
Vejle (Denmark)

EU-MIA RESEARCH REPORT
Ole Jensen
COMPAS

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1. Introduction

EU-MIA (European Migrant Integration Academy) is a research-based co-operative learning and training initiative targeting and directly involving local stakeholders responsible for the development and implementation of local level integration policies in selected European cities.

The project is structured in three phases:

1. Background research, to create a repertoire of promising practices in the field of integration at city and neighbourhood level and selection of 10 Functioning Practices (FP) from throughout the European Union.
2. Fieldwork missions in the cities where the selected Functioning Practices are located, based on in-depth interviews with local stakeholders and the production of short videos.
3. Development of a cooperative learning kit based on the research component of this project which forms the basis of the training initiative Migrant Integration Academy.

We do not look for perfect models of integration policy which can be adopted wholesale across different city contexts, but we believe there is, across Europe, a wealth of successful initiatives carried out at city level and in partnership with civil society. Starting from this assumption, we define Functioning Practices (FP) not as the best practices on integration in Europe but as practices relating to successful initiatives that make an outstanding contribution to manage issues at hand.

The selection of Functioning Practices was based on three tools:

• literature review and web browsing;
• consultation of experts and city networks;
• nominations (including a majority of self-nominations) by local stakeholders through a Call for practices.

These were the criteria used for the selection of Functioning Practices[1]:

a. innovative and successful measures in any fields which have clear goals in terms of integration of people with a migrant background, be they migrant-focused or not;
b. measures carried out at local level;
c. measures involving public authorities;
d. live actions or recently closed actions, i.e. practices concluded within the past two years and consolidated measures that have been implemented for at least two years.

The following sections present the Functioning Practice 'Dansksimulatoren – Danish Simulator', an online platform developed in order to enhance Danish language training. But apart from a technologically advanced tool, DS should also be understood in the context of Danish integration policy that emphasizes language

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[1] For further details see http://www.eu-mia.eu/

training as a central part of the integration process. With the ambition to increase the capacity of individual migrants to participate in Danish society in mind, this practice is thus part of the Empowerment Strand of the Integration Academy held in Turin in February 2014.

The Empirical findings are based on analysis of official documents as well as interviews with key actors, stakeholders and beneficiaries[2]. The report is practically oriented given that its aim is to foster exchanges of functioning practices, learning from experience and development of knowledge-based policies: it analyses how the practice concretely works and assesses the main achievements and assets, on one hand, and pitfalls and difficulties, on the other hand. It ends with a look towards possible follow up and transfers.

2. Operational Context

This section will provide an overview over the recent patterns of immigration and the political discourses informing integration, with particular emphasis on the relationship between integration and Danish language competences as a perceived precondition for active citizenship.

2.1 Key characteristics: demographic mix, socio-economic indicators and main challenges

Denmark only became a destination for immigrants from outside the Nordic countries in the late 1960s and early 1970s with the arrival of guest workers, in particular from Turkey and Yugoslavia. Many of these settled on a permanent basis with their families, but the continued outsider status of these well-established minority populations is apparent in the manner in which Danish-born of the settlers routinely are referred to, in popular discourse and media representations, as 'second generation immigrants' (*anden generations invandrere*).

More recently, warfare and political unrest in different parts of the world triggered the arrival of refugees and asylum seekers from for example Iran, Sri Lanka, Somalia, Bosnia-Hercegovina, and Afghanistan. Tightening of immigration legislation in the early 2000s meant that the numbers of refugees and asylum seekers decreased markedly. By 2012, 10.4% of the Danish population was categorised as either immigrants (7.9%) or descendants of immigrants (2.5%). Whereas 67% of these derive from non-Western countries[3] and the number of non-Western immigrants have increased five-fold since 1980, the trends have shifted over the past years, and immigrants from other European countries constitute an increasing proportion of new arrivals.

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[2]   Please refer to Annex 1 for a list of interviews.

[3]   The category 'western countries' includes the EU countries, plus Andorra, Island, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Norway, San Marino, Switzerland, The Vatican State, Canada, USA, Australia and New Zealand. Non-western thus refers to all other countries. The 10 biggest non-western immigrant populations by nationality: Turkey, Iraq, Lebanon, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Pakistan, Yugoslavia, Somalia, Iran, Vietnam, Afghanistan.

Table 1. Immigrant population in Denmark 2012, by nationality

Country	Immigrant population	Descendants	Total	Proportion of all immigrants and descendants in Denmark
Turkey	32,379	28,011	60,390	10.4
Poland	28,043	3,677	31,720	5.5
Germany	28,584	2,891	31,475	5.4
Iraq	21,197	8,627	29,884	5.1
Lebanon	12,012	12,267	24,279	4.2
Bosnia-Hercegovina	17,580	4,765	22,345	3.8
Pakistan	12,079	9,563	21,642	3.7
Somalia	9,951	7,161	17,112	2.9
Former Yugoslavia	10,501	6,048	16,549	2.9
Norway	14,882	1,438	16,320	2.8
Iran	12,883	3,327	16,210	2.8
Total	441,538	138,923	580,461	100

Source: Danmarks statistik 2012

Since 2001, the aim of the centre-right government has been to conduct what it has referred to as a 'firm and fair immigration policy', i.e. to reduce the number of new immigrants so as to make it possible to give those immigrants who are in Denmark a fair chance to become integrated (Møller Hansen 2012: 117). This has resulted in a significant reduction in the number of immigrants arriving in Denmark as well as a shift in the profile and status of new arrivals, with a drop in the number of refugees and an increase in immigration from European countries. Additionally, the tightening of family reunification rules resulted in significant reductions of immigrants from some sending countries, with the number of Pakistani immigrants halved in the period 2002-2010.

The rate of employment (*beskæftigelsesfrekvens*) is a key parameter of integration, closely related to the government-led ambition of immigrants as contributors to, as well as beneficiaries of, the welfare state. Whereas the employment rate of all immigrant groups consistently has been below the employment rate of 'native Danes', trends have fluctuated considerably. So whereas the employment rate of 16-64 year old non-western male immigrants in 1996 was 40%, it had increased to 62% in 2008 – as compared to 80% among the native Danish population. Significantly, onset of the 2008 recession caused a drop among all groups, though most sharply among descendants of non-western immigrants.

Table 2. Employment rate (%) among immigrants 2012, by nationality

Nationality	Male	Female
Turkey	61	42
Germany	**63**	**58**
Poland	**68**	**61**
Iraq	41	27
Bosnia-Hercegovina	50	48
Norway	**58**	**55**
Iran	53	44
Great Britain	**69**	**58**
Pakistan	60	32
Lebanon	42	22
Afghanistan	48	36
Immigrants from Western countries	**62**	**56**
Descendants, Western countries	**64**	**66**
Immigrants, non-Western countries	52	43
Descendants, non-Western countries	53	54
Native Danes	75	72

Source: Danmarks Statistik 2012.

There are, however, also significant differences between immigrants of different nationalities, as shown in table 2. Immigrants and descendants from Western countries typically have higher employment rates than those deriving from non-Western countries. This is hardly surprising as many immigrants from Western countries have come to Denmark for employment purposes, whereas many non-Western immigrants have been forced to leave their countries of origin due to warfare and/or persecution. Among non-western immigrants, the employment rates among immigrants from Ukraine, Vietnam, Thailand and Sri Lanka top with employment rates between 59% and 62%, as opposed to immigrants from Iraq, Lebanon, and Somalia, with employment differences between 29 and 35% (Danmarks Statistik 2012: 34). At the same time the proportion of immigrants in unemployment or otherwise dependent on benefits is significantly higher than among the majority population.

2.2   Policy context

In Denmark integration is conceived as a multi-facetted process where the central elements are employment, education, Danish language skills, settlement and the experience of being citizens in society (Møller Hansen 2012: 117). In line with the emphasis on integration, the Danish government formulated the following aim for the integration policy: 'to create a framework for a society where *diversity* and *personal freedom* thrive and where there is *solidarity about fundamental values*; a society where the right to choose and shape one's own life is respected, where there is scope for cultural and religious display and where the individual contributes as an active citizen; and a society where violation of its basic values carries consequences'(ibid:

105). This ties-in with an explicit emphasis on language competence in order to ensure that 'immigrants and refugees receive a better *education and good knowledge of Danish*.' These are not just important gateways to the labour market; they also increase the opportunities for participating as active citizens in a social and democratic context and for understanding and connecting with society and the community of which the individual is a part' (in Møller Hansen 2012: 105-106). There is, accordingly, a clear emphasis on the empowerment of the immigrant in order to enable these to participate in Danish society.

Significant here is the emergence of Danish language training as a priority of integration policy. Whereas language training has been available to 'guest workers' since the 1970s, it is only since the late 1990s that the provision of language training and the training of teachers has been properly resourced, from 2010 accompanied by a course on Danish societal conditions and Danish history and culture. All immigrants living in Denmark are entitled to free Danish language training for three years, and this applies to both newly arrived immigrants covered by the Integration Act (refugees and reunified people), and other immigrants, i.e. EU citizens.[4] Furthermore, the enrollment in language training can also be required by statutory agencies as a pre-condition for the receipt of welfare benefits.

Local authority structures and key stakeholders

It was not until the 1999 Integration Act that Danish municipalities were tasked with contributing to the integration of newly arrived immigrants, but the municipality level (*kommune*) has become key to implementation of the Integration Act as well as policy initiatives that are adapted to the specific local context.

Vejle kommune is, with a population of 110,000, the 6th biggest local authority in Denmark. With an approach to integration that was based on the competencies of the individual immigrant, and close cooperation between statutory agencies under the municipality umbrella, in particular local schools, Vejle's integration effort was in 2004 selected by the Ministry for Integration as one of nine 'good stories of integration' (Ministeriet for Flygtninge, Indvandrere og Integration 2004). More recently, in 2011, Vejle was given the 'Integration Municipality of the Year' award.

VIFIN: Videnscenter for Integration (VIFIN – Resource Centre for Integration) was established by the municipality of Vejle in 2002. As part of the municipality, VIFIN belongs to the municipal department for Education and Learning. The composition of VIFIN's board illustrates the ambition to reach beyond the municipal realm. Whereas the board is headed up by the mayor of Vejle, there are also representatives from the labour unions, the employers as well as the municipal 'Integration board (*Integrationsraad*)[5]. VIFIN has, since its inception, been involved in a wide range of integration projects, both nationally and EU-wide, and it has also pioneered a range of IT-based language training tools.

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[4] Corresponding with this Danish drive, mother tongue teaching of school children has been downgraded. In 2002, state-subsidies for mother tongue teaching were withdrawn, and the provision of mother tongue teaching was made subject to municipal decision-making and budgeting

[5] The 2001 immigration act provides local municipalities with the opportunity (but not the obligation) to establish integration boards with the purpose of advising local authorities on issues relating to local integration policy initiatives. The integration boards consist of local residents with migrant background, elected local counsellors, and local government representatives.

Language schools (sprogcentre**):** A total of 52 language schools are located across Denmark, typically in cities and bigger towns. They are all approved by the Ministry for Children and Education, and apart from the three levels of Danish teaching, many also offer introductory courses to Danish culture and society. Teaching is free for EU citizens as well as individuals covered by the Integration Act, but the composition of the student population is contingent on global dynamics, Danish legislation and the demands of the Danish economy. Table 3, referring to student uptake at Vejle language school, provides an idea of these fluctuations. Whereas the student population in 2006 was dominated by refugees, the 2008 and 2013 figures were dominated by labour migrants.

Table 3: Student numbers at Vejle language school in selected years (five biggest countries of origin)

2006		2008		2013	
Iraq	13% (53)	Poland	21% (134)	Poland	18% (131)
Afghanistan	10% (41)	Thailand	6% (42)	Syria	7% (49)
Serbia/Montenegro	7% (26)	Germany	5% (34)	Romania	5% (39)
Thailand	6% (22)	Syria	4% (30)	Latvia	5% (36)
Somalia	5% (19)	Phillippines	4% (29)	Germany	4% (32)

Source: Sprogcenter Vejle 2013

But the tables also 'hide' a very multifarious student population. The five biggest countries, in terms of student numbers, have not made out more than 41% of the total student population in any of the years. Obviously this diverse picture also translates into challenges to teaching provision.

Danish teaching – structures and objectives

It is key to effective language training that the teaching provided takes into account, and build on, the educational level of the students. As demonstrated in table 3 (above), the composition of the student population can fluctuate hugely, and there are often significant differences between educational attainment of, on one hand, students from Afghanistan and Somalia, and, on the other hand, from EU accession countries.

Dansk uddannelse 1 (DU1): This is the level for students with little or no prior schooling. The aim of the course is to enable the student to get by in Danish and gain a sufficient understanding of Danish society. Whereas DU1 is the level with the lowest number of students, these are probably also the most challenging students, with the highest risk of becoming marginalised in Danish society. In 2010, 7.4% of students followed DU1. 93.3% of students derived from non-Western countries.

Dansk uddannelse 2 (DU2): Is for those who have had only limited schooling in their native country, and who need to speak and write Danish for employment purposes and/or in order to enrol in a short education. In 2010, 41.6% of students followed DU2.

Dansk uddannelse 3 (DU3): is the level for those who have 12 years of schooling, or more, behind them, and are comfortable in at least one foreign language, apart from their native language. The test that concludes level 3 provides access to further education in Denmark. In 2010, 51.0% of students were on DU3.

As outlined in the text box, Danish training is subdivided into three levels, according to the educational qualifications of the students. Each level, consisting of a number of modules, is concluded by an exam, and in order to qualify for Danish citizenship, the DU3 exam has to be passed.

In 2010, a total 49,602 students took part in the language courses, an increase of almost one-third in comparison to 2008 (UVM 2012). 49.8% of all students derived from non-Western countries. Whereas student numbers have increased at all three levels in the period 2008-10, the proportional increase has been higher for DU2 students, with a 43% increase.

Table 4. Students enrolled in state-sponsored language training 2010, by nationality and level ('western countries' in bold).

#	DU1	DU2	DU3
1	Thailand (13.4%)	**Poland (18.6)**	**Germany (8.9)**
2	Turkey (11.4%)	Phillipines (6.6)	**Poland (8.1)**
3	Iraq (9.5%)	Turkey (6.5)	China (5.2)
4	Afghanistan (9.3%)	Thailand (5.5)	**Lithuania (4.3)**
5	Somalia (5.3%)	**Germany (4.7)**	**Romania (4.2)**
6	Pakistan (5.0%	**Romania (3.8)**	Phillipines (3.1)
7	Syria (5.0%)	Ukraine (3.6)	Ukraine (3.1)
8	Myanmar (4.5%)	China (3.0)	**USA (3.1)**
9	Iran (3.8%)	**Lithuania (2.9)**	**Great Britain (3.0)**
10	China (3.6%)	Iraq (2.8)	India (2.9)
Others	29.2%	41.9%	54.2%
Total	100%	100%	100%
Total	3,814 students	21,354 students	26,224 students

Source: UVM 2012

As it is evident from table 4, DU1 – the level for students with limited previous education – is dominated by students from non-western countries, some of them countries with a recent history of political unrest. Among the higher levels, western countries (in bold) are much more prevalent. But, similar to previously presented data sets, the very significant 'others' category indicates that the student mass is constituted by many different nationalities.

3. The Functioning Practice: 'Dansksimulatoren – Danish Simulator'

This section will focus on the development and use of the Dansksimulatoren (DS), an internet platform developed in order to strengthen Danish language and culture teaching and learning.

3.1 Objective and methodology

The aim of the project was to develop a virtual 3D platform that can teach immigrants a better understanding of the Danish language and culture, with particular emphasis on pronunciation. Furthermore, the interactive approach that is key to the design of DS contributes to a more effective, user-led learning process, enabling the students to learn Danish at a time and place of their choosing (anytime/anywhere). By thus enabling the student to learn more independently, an added ambition was to reduce the need for teacher resources, and thus reduce financial costs[6].

The design and methodology of DS is based on experiences with digital pronunciation training and the Tactical Language and Culture Training System, first developed by the American armed forces. The platform consists of three integrated parts: Speech recognition/pronunciation trainer; skill building; gaming. These three parts share a narrative set in nearly Jelling, approximately 15km from Vejle. The narrative relating to the Danish king Harald Bluetooth (c. 930-986 AD) and the runic stones in the Jelling mounds where the name 'Denmark' is used for the first time. The use of DS thus involves an introduction to central aspects of early Danish history.[7]

Speech recognition/pronounciation trainer: The Speech recognition/pronunciation trainer enables the student to pronounce Danish words and receive feedback from the built-in pronunciation trainer that is programmed to identify areas where the student faces pronunciation problems.

Skill building: This section consists of 25 sessions, divided into five units. Based on the experiences of the fictional character Bob, an American journalist from Hawaii, the student is confronted with different aspects of Danish culture and everyday language. In order for the platform to be as 'realistic' as possible, the developers aimed to be make the spoken Danish in the programme as fast-flowing as the language that the immigrant will encounter in the context of everyday life.

Game: Each of the five units mentioned above is concluded with a game set in an environment that can be recognised from the previous section. Bob is given a number of tasks to complete. These tasks are identical to language practices that were central to the particular unit. By playing the game, the student thus revisits the content of the particular skill building sessions.

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6   For a short introduction to the platform (in English), click this link: http://dk-sim.dk/da/presentation.html (accessed 24.09.2013).

7   The runic inscription reads: 'King Harald bade these stones to be made after Gorm, his father, and Thyra, his mother. The Harald who won the whole of Denmark and Norway and who turned the Danes to Christianity'. The logo of the cable-free Bluetooth internet connection consists of the Nordic runes for Harald Bluetooth's initials.

3.2   Chronology and funding of activities

The total cost of DS amounts to DKR 9,421,829, or 1.25 mill Euros. The development of the platform was financed by the fund for investment in labour-saving technology (*Fonden til investering i arbejdsbesparende teknologi*), and the financial sustainability of the project should be viewed in the context of the potential for scaling up the use of the platform which is projected to lead to reduced teacher resources. Whereas the fund in 2012 was renamed as the fund for welfare technology (*Fonden for velfærdsteknologi*), the funding source has, together with the projected reduction in teacher resources that was part of the initial motivation, had some long-term consequences.

DS is, however, also meant to generate its own revenue, with both language centres and individual users having to pay a fee for access to the platform. The fee payable was contingent on the size of the language centre, starting from DKr 30,000 per year (approximately 4,000 Euros), with a private user paying DKr 1,500 per year (200 Euros).[8]

3.3   Outcomes and barriers

Table 5 outlines the uptake of DS. The chosen periods correspond to the Danish academic year, running from August to June. Whereas the number of participating language centres increased rapidly from the 2011-12 trial period, there has been a dramatic decline in relation to the present school year. Though the table not necessarily provides a full picture, as it does not include individual users, the projected scaling up of the DS has obviously met some challenges.

Table 5. Uptake of DS by language centres and students

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Participating language centres	4	16	1*
Number of students	177	300	50

Source: VIFIN
*: DKR was also used by a 'youth school' (ungdomsskole), specifically targeting 16-19 years olds.

The emphasis on financial savings, which also has been central to media coverage, may have been detrimental to take-up of the platform. Whereas the evaluation was based on data deriving from trials carried out on three language schools, the platform was in September 2013 only in use on one language school.

Due to their role as accredited providers of Danish teaching, the language schools are key to the dissemination and uptake of the Danish platform. But as one of the underlying aims of the platform – and one of the funding criteria – was to make Danish teaching more cost efficient by enabling students to work on an individual basis (whenever, wherever), one of the success criteria is the potential man-hours that can be saved. In other words, the successful uptake of the platform depends on the language schools, more

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specifically language teachers who, in turn, may lose their jobs. Significantly, a language teacher stressed that the decision to invest in the platform had been made by the management, not by teachers.

The co-developer of DS (herself a highly experienced language teacher) stressed that it had never been the intention for the platform to replace teachers, but rather to provide an additional tool, and thus enhance and stimulate teaching practices. But both the media coverage of the launch and the first thorough evaluation had focused on potential financial savings.

Opinions of beneficiaries

The fieldwork included conversations with a number of students who had made use of DS. These were two US exchange students at the language centre in Vejle[9], two students (a Thai and a Ghanaian) at a language centre in Copenhagen, and a group of four students at a school in Silkeborg.

All students had only experienced the platform for a limited period of time. The two Copenhagen-based students were at DU2 level and had been part of a class that trialed the platform over a period of one month. They were both very enthusiastic about in particular the pronunciation part, and had also made use of DS outside schools hours. They felt that the platform had enabled them to become more familiar with spoken Danish, and thus helped them to participate more freely in conversations.

The external evaluation carried out October 2012 concluded that 'students appreciate the anytime/anywhere availability of the platform and the fact that it targets pronunciation and conversation. They feel that the platform constitutes a fun and modern educational tool which allows them to work in an individual and focussed manner (UNI-C 2012: 4).

3.5   Learning and evaluation

DS has overall been received and reviewed very positively. The platform was awarded the 2012 European 'language label' for innovative projects in language teaching and learning. In addition, two evaluations of the platform were carried out in 2012.

One focused on the applicability and appropriateness of DS as a training and learning tool (Nielsen 2012). The evaluation was carried out by a language teacher who generally was positive about the potential of the platform. She found that '…the skill builder seemed highly appropriate for users with a relatively long educational background and a good grasp of English' (Nielsen 2012: 5). This is at par with the objectives of the developers who specifically targeted DU3 students and used English as medium of instruction as this was the biggest common denominator of a very heterogeneous student population. But teachers also pointed out that made the platform less suitable for students with insufficient command of English. A teacher had also experienced that well-educated students who made use of the platform soon found themselves looking for more grammatical substance than what the platform could provide. 'They want some patterns', she said

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[9]   As the students selected for the interview were <18, the conversation was not recorded, and the names of the students have not been taken down.

The other evaluation was more in-depth, based on trials at three language centres.[10] Based on interviews with teachers and students, and with comprehensive analysis of potential economic savings, the evaluation identified technological 'teething problems' as well as cultural barriers concerning the nature of language training: 'The biggest barrier in relation to the student groups is probably that they feel pressured and want to learn Danish fast. They don't want to waste time, so technical problems, however small, can appear insurmountable not just for the students, but also for the teachers' (UNI-C 2012: 23). Whereas the game section is the most novel part of DS, it didn't receive many comments, with the evaluation arguing that '…this may be due to students' perception of what 'real' language training is. It is about practice and repetition under supervision of an authority, not gaming' (ibid).

This view was, however, not shared by some of the students interviewed. They had found the game section very entertaining, it had kept them going, and they felt they could relate to the fictional 'Bob' in Vejle. One language teacher suggested that there might age-specific considerations, with the older generation less familiar with non-traditional teaching methods.

The analysis of potential cost-saving aspects constituted a substantial part of the evaluation, and the evaluation concluded that the ambition to reduce teacher resources has '…not only been met, but is actually better than anticipated' (UNI-C 2012: 20). This is an important success in the sense that it meets one of the key objectives of the project. But it was also widely acknowledged that the emphasis on financial savings, as mentioned above, has proved a double-edged sword in relation to the key dissemination partner, the language centres.

This emphasis on potential financial savings has, however, overshadowed learning-related aspects concerning group interaction around the use of DS. A research project carried out by a Danish MSc student investigated the use of DS in a classroom context. It concluded that social interaction was very important for the way students engaged with DS, and '…dialogue between the students was also identified as a relevant parameter in order to connect the prototypical dialogues in the game and the spontaneous dialogue of everyday life' (Hautopp 2014). In relation to the role of the teacher, the study concluded that '…the role of the teacher was pivotal in order to connect the students' game experiences and central goals in the communication based language teaching' (ibid).

3.6   The next steps

As mentioned previously, the ambition is to scale up the use of DS. This has, however, proved significantly more difficult than expected, and none of the language centres that had taken part in the trials carried out 2011-12 made use of the platform at the time of the fieldwork in September 2013. Getting the language schools on-board did, accordingly, remain a key challenge for the project developers.

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10   An additional trial was carried out over a one month period at a language school in Copenhagen.

When interviewed, the developer of DS, Thomas K. Hansen, clearly stated that the platform was 'finished, but not finished', and that there were plans for how the platform could be developed further. One potential future development highlighted by several respondents, concerned the choice of language of instruction. With the initial choice of language motivated by the decision to target DU3 students, and constrained by the available funding, English was the obvious choice for a working language. But this decision also meant that DU2 students with a less secure grasp of English found DS less accessible.

4. Conclusions

The aim of this report has been to document and analyse the use of a web-based platform as a means of Danish teaching that can supplement existing tools and also provide the student with more freedom to practice language training at a time and place of his/her choosing.

DS has a well-defined role in the Danish 'integration landscape'. Danish language skills are, together with education and employment, forefronted as key elements of the Danish integration process, with particular emphasis on the command of Danish as a pre-requisite for employment. Whereas language training in Denmark can be traced back to the arrival of guest workers in the 1970s, it has become a priority that has been pushed since the centre-right government came into power in 2001. Since then, immigrants to Denmark have been entitled to 3 years free Danish training, and this has since then been an expanding area of intervention, with the well-defined aim of ensuring a more effective integration and, by extension, empower the immigrant to become an active citizen in Danish society.

Effective language provision is, however, also impeded by the highly heterogeneous nature of the student population. This translates into both a very broad range of nationalities as well as an immigrant population that arrives in Denmark with very different educational baggage. DS is, against this context, widely recognised as a novel means of language training that provides the student with more flexibility (whenever/wherever). But as use of the platform is contingent on a good command of English, and target DU3 students, this also prevent many students from using it. Significantly, the educationally weaker students, who typically also are the ones facing the biggest barriers to integration cannot be expected to benefit from the platform in its present form.

The 50-plus language centres in Denmark are central to the provision of Danish training, and they are the key stake holders in relation to uptake of DS. This has, however, proved unexpectedly cumbersome. This is not due the doubts over the quality of the platform, but rather due to the framing of the platform as a cost-saving device – a framing that was reinforced by the first evaluation of DS which in particular addressed the issue of potential savings. This constitutes a significant problem, as the language centres that are expected to invest in the platform also stand the risk of losing jobs if the platform can be scaled up successfully.

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Annexes

Annex 1 - Interviews

Summary table with key facts on interviews:

#	Date	Name	Position
1	17.09.2013	Thomas K. Hansen	Project manager
2		Ib Jespersgaard	Head of VIFIN
3	18.09.2013	Hannah Bradbury	Student (DU3), Vejle Language School
		Rebecca Constant	Student (DU3), Vejle Language School
4		Elise Mau	Language teacher, Vejle Language school
5	19.09.2013	Kannaphat Nielsen	Student (DU2), Copenhagen Language School
		Mankattah Linda Araba	Student (DU2), Copenhagen Language School
6		Heidi Hautopp	MSc student
7		Tina Møller Kristensen	Language teacher and co-developer of DS
8	20.09.2013	Mariette Balsby	Language teacher, Silkeborg Ungdomsskole

The Partners

The **International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization** (ITCILO) is the consortium leader in charge of the implementation of the EU-funded EU-MIA project.

The consortium research partners are:
the **Centre on Migration, Policy and Society** (COMPAS) at the University of Oxford and the International and **European Forum of Migration Research** (FIERI).

If you want more information on the project please visit our website: www.eu-mia.eu or contact:

ITCILO	FIERI	COMPAS
Miriam Boudraa	Irene Ponzo	Ida Persson
Programme Officer on Labour Migration	Researcher	Research & Communications Officer
Social Protection Programme		COMPAS, University of Oxford
	Via Ponza, 3	
Viale Maestri del Lavoro, 10	10121 Torino - Italy	58 Banbury Road, Oxford, OX2 6QS
10127 Torino (Italy)	Tel. +39 011 5160044	Tel: +44 (0) 1865 612358
Tel: + 39 011 693 6359	Email : fieri@fieri.it	Email: ida.persson@compas.ox.ac.uk
Email: m.boudraa@itcilo.org		
	www.fieri.it	www.compas.ox.ac.uk
www.itcilo.org		