

NATIONAL REPORT – DENMARK

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1 GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT VOLUNTEERING IN DENMARK

1.1 History and contextual background

Overall, the development of the voluntary sector in Denmark is **shaped by three fundamental factors**: the adoption of a democratic constitution; the emergence of the popular movements; and the formation of the welfare state. In brief, the democratic constitution lay the foundation for the very existence of the voluntary sector, the popular movements gave life and content to the organisations, and the welfare state defined a division of labour between the public, private and voluntary sectors (Habermann & Ibsen, 2005: 1).

The transition from traditional to modern society in Denmark was marked by agrarian reforms, industrialisation, urbanisation and the dissolution of the absolute monarchy and introduction of the Danish Constitution (Grundloven) of 1849. The process was accompanied by the decline of old support networks such as the Catholic Church, the emergence of new popular needs and attitudes, and the ability of new kinds of organisations to form in order to reflect and cater for these circumstances. **Citizens were now able to form associations for any lawful purpose without the approval of the monarch (The Danish Constitutional Act Section 78)**, and whilst the notion of joining together was nothing new, as demonstrated by the existence of guilds, the association was a new way of doing it. Associations rapidly grew in number and were seen in almost every sphere of society: political party associations; interest organisations (such as landlords' associations, artisans' associations, smallholders' association); trade unions; economic associations (savings banks, health insurance societies, co-operatives); philanthropic associations; sport associations; religious associations; etc. As a result, the history of the voluntary sector in Denmark is primarily the history of the associations (Habermann & Ibsen, 2005: 2).

The **late 19th century mass movements were the driving force behind the comprehensive network of associations that reflected the ideological and cultural identity of the movements**. The mass movements included among others the farmers' movement, the labour movement, the mission movement (the religious revivals of the Grundtvigian movement and Evangelical movement/Inner Mission), the temperance movement and the popular sports movement. The different movements would form their own associations to address needs and issues in areas such as finance, health, social care and leisure. With the origin in mass movements it is not surprising that associations came to enjoy a high membership rate, and even today the average number of association memberships per capita is still high in Denmark at 3.5 (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 147). The associations were dependent largely on voluntary work which is why associations still have a small share of paid staff compared to associations in other European countries. Core areas of activity in the Danish voluntary sector (as in the rest of Scandinavia) have historically been culture, leisure and sport, unlike other Western societies where they are more focused on social service, health and education. This is a reflection of the historic compromise between associations and the emerging welfare state as facilitated by the mass movements and their political outlets, the political parties (Habermann & Ibsen, 2005: 2-3).

Whilst voluntary organisations predate the welfare state their role has developed in conjunction with its formation and functional evolution. In the period leading up to the 1930s the relationship between the voluntary sector and the Danish welfare state can be characterised as one of liberalism, parallel efforts and the beginning of cooperation. Although associations had been established as a means of denoting interests and in opposition to the establishment, there were no great discrepancies between the state and the voluntary sector during this period, and parts of the sector (especially in the socio-

political field) attracted much political attention and received public subsidies at an early stage. That is, associations were seen as a means to perform different tasks and tackle social problems (Habermann & Ibsen, 2005: 3-4). The period between 1930 and 1980 can be characterised as one of extensive cooperation between the State and the voluntary sector, social rights thinking and universalism. The period got off to a good start for voluntary organisations for which the interwar years were a golden era of increasing numbers of organisations, significant membership growth and increased cooperation with the public sector. However, like in other European countries, Danish postwar thinking came to emphasise universalism and state responsibility for the prosperity and security of its citizens. This culminated in the 1972 Local Government Reform and the 1976 Social Assistance Act which rendered voluntary organisations practically invisible. The voluntary sector lost its problem solving credentials and started to function primarily as a collection of interest organisations which saw themselves of 'pioneers', 'new thinkers' and 'alternatives' to mainstream public sector provision. Only the self-governing institutions were still held in high regard and were identified in the 1976 Social Assistance Act as suitable partners in service provision to whom local authorities could allocate work for which they did not have the necessary capacity. In any case, public regulation of the sector and its contribution increased, even if it was still mainly characterised by voluntary initiatives and resisted further attempts at public and legislative control (Habermann & Ibsen, 2005: 4-5). The period since the 1980s can be described as one of new liberalism and civil society, with the change of government and wider ideological shift towards neo-liberalism posing serious questions regarding the financial sustainability of the welfare state as well as its capacity to solve a range of problems. This led to a rediscovery of the voluntary sector which now came to be seen as a legitimate partner for the public sector in a wider field than just that inhabited by the self-governing organisations. However, the increased legitimacy and support came at the expense of further public scrutiny and control which has affected associations' ability to provide a true alternative to public sector provision (Habermann & Ibsen, 5-6). This being said, those associations that do not perform public social service functions, e.g. the substantial voluntary sport sub-sector, still operate fairly autonomously despite dependence on public financial support.

1.2 Definitions

A definition of voluntary work has been provided in a pamphlet published by the Ministry of Social Affairs (Ministry of Social Affairs/The National Volunteer Centre, 2001: 5), according to which voluntary work is:

- **Voluntary or non-obligatory**, i.e. undertaken freely without physical force, legal coercion or financial pressure and no threats of financial or social sanctions (for instance being cut off from social security benefits or a social network) if the volunteer no longer wishes to continue the work.
- **Unpaid**. However, this does not preclude payment of remuneration for expenses the volunteer has incurred while carrying out the activities, such as travel and telephone expenses, or payment of a symbolic amount as compensation for the voluntary work.
- Carried out **for persons other than the volunteer's own family and relatives**. This distinguishes voluntary work from ordinary domestic activities and the informal care of family members.
- For the benefit of other people than the volunteer and his or her family. **The value that the work has for others makes it voluntary work**. This precludes participation in for instance self-help groups or participation as a mere member of sport clubs from being voluntary work.
- **Formally organised** – mostly in an association, although this need not be the case. However, ordinary helpfulness or spontaneous acts are not voluntary work.

1.3 Number and profile of volunteers

This section is based on the findings of the Danish study that formed part of the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector project. The Danish study consisted of three components: a survey of the population's participation in voluntary work and informal assistance based on a telephone survey undertaken in 2004; a study of voluntary sector organisations including their organisational structure, aims and financial circumstances; and a study of the voluntary sector's contribution to the Danish economy and labour market based on a separate national economic analysis together with data from the other two studies. The data stem from 2003 and 2004, and thus provide a snapshot rather than a time series analysis. However, the study is the most comprehensive piece of work on the voluntary sector in Denmark and its findings are still valid today.

Total number of volunteers

The population survey found that 38% of the population perform voluntary unpaid work, and that **35% of the population had done so in the last year, i.e. 2003-04** (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 41). It was decided to use the figure of 35% as the valid figure for the percentage of volunteers of the country's adult population, which in numerical terms amounts to **1.477 million people** between the ages of 16-85 (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 135).

Of the volunteers, **24% undertake voluntary work in more than one area of the voluntary sector, which is equivalent to 9 % of the population** (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 45).

Trend

There was an increase in the share of the adult Danish population engaged in voluntary work between 1990 and 1999. Various studies were undertaken but only two had comparable methodologies and data, and these showed **an increase in the share of the adult population engaged in voluntary work from 26% in 1990 to 38% in 1999**. The latter result matches the result of the 2004 population survey in which 38% stated that they do voluntary work without it necessarily having taken place within the last year. This tends to suggest that no additional growth has taken place between 1999 and 2004 (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 41-42).

The claim regarding a positive 1990s trend in volunteering is supported by **a decline in the number of people who state that they have never taken part in voluntary work among younger age groups**. Thus, in the 2004 population survey 44% among the 66+ age group stated that they had never volunteered, whereas the figure for the 50-65 year olds was 32% and the figure for the 30-49 year olds was 29%. For the 16-29 year olds, however, the figure had again increased to 41%, which may be down to the fact that a high proportion of the young have yet to become involved (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 65).

The 2004 survey of voluntary organisations showed that ca. **25% of local associations have experienced an increase in membership in the past 5 years, while ca. 20% have experienced a decline**, which means that more organisations report an increase than do the opposite. It is particularly organisations within the areas of Health, Social services and Sport which have seen an increase, whilst the losses have occurred in the areas of Business & professional associations, unions. Approximately **half of the national voluntary organisations reported an increase in membership over the past 5 years** with particular growth areas being Health and Environment. **Among the self-governing organisations approximately half reported an increase in users, pupils and other participants** (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 80-81). In addition, a study from 2000

showed that the average number of organisational memberships per person has grown from 2.9 in 1979 to 3.5 in 1998, and whilst membership is not equivalent to volunteers, it is a good indicator as volunteering in Denmark is highly membership based due to the historic origin of volunteering in membership based associations (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 147).

The **increase in volunteering can be explained by a number of factors**. First of all, a heightened sense of civic engagement and obligation partly brought about by increased media and political focus on volunteering. Secondly, an 'organisation syndrome' resulting from an increasing number of public sector organisations requiring voluntary contributions, e.g. committees in nurseries, schools and within care for the elderly. This kind of voluntary work is no longer simply brought about spontaneously but is defined in law as a legal requirement for some public sector organisations, although the volunteers are of course not subject to any compulsion. Thirdly, a growing number of voluntary organisations has caused an increase in the amount of voluntary work needing to be done and has therefore required more people to get involved. Finally, the elderly are healthier and more active now than in the past which might explain an increase in volunteering among this age group (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 148-49).

Gender

According to the 2004 population survey **38 % of men between the ages of 16-85 perform voluntary unpaid work as opposed to only 32% of women**. The difference in volunteering rate between men and women is particularly significant for the age groups between 45 and 75, whereas among younger age groups there is no significant difference between the genders, with the share of female volunteers even slightly higher among the 16-25 year olds (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 53-54).

There is also a statistically significant **difference between the participation of men and women in different areas of the voluntary sector**, with men being significantly more involved in sports associations and work within their local community compared to women, and women being significantly more involved in health and social service related work than men (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 46).

A number of **factors may explain these differences** between the genders. First of all, the education level among some age cohorts given that volunteering is generally associated with a higher level of education (see also the section on Education levels below). Since women of older generations have a lower education level than their contemporary men this may explain the lower involvement of older women. Likewise the higher educational achievement of younger women could explain why among younger people women are now more involved in volunteering than men. Secondly, men are traditionally very involved with sport, and this being a significant area of volunteering, one would expect men to have a higher degree of involvement in volunteering too. Finally, women are traditionally seen as carers and are more likely to be employed in health and social service type occupations. This may explain why these are the areas pursued particularly by women in voluntary work as women transfer their skills from one sphere to another (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 53-54).

Age groups

The 2004 population survey found the following differences in volunteering between age groups (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 56):

- 16-29 year olds: 32% do voluntary unpaid work.
- 30-49 year olds: 41% do voluntary unpaid work.

- 50-65 year olds: 35% do voluntary unpaid work.
- 66- year olds: 23% do voluntary unpaid work.

This shows that it is **the 30-49 year olds who are the most likely to be involved in volunteering**, but also that the perception that young people are not interested in voluntary work is not correct. However, **the effect of age on the propensity to volunteer depends on the particular area of volunteering**. There is a correlation between age and volunteering in education and leisure type activities (includes sport, culture and leisure activities), with younger people, and again the 30-49 year olds, more likely to be involved, but no correlation in the areas of health and social services, religion and humanitarian organisations. In the latter areas, older age groups are as likely as the younger, including the very active 30-49 year olds, to be involved (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 58-59).

Geographical spread of volunteering

There are no data available on regional spread in volunteering. However, the 2004 population survey showed a **correlation between volunteering and whether people lived in the capital, towns and cities or in the country**. Thus, among people living in the capital 31% volunteered, among those living in cities and larger provincial towns 35% volunteered, and finally, in smaller towns and in the countryside 37% volunteered (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 56).

Geographic location also affects the areas of voluntary activity that people tend to get involved with. Hence, those living in smaller towns or rural areas are more likely to become involved with Culture & recreation than those living in larger towns or the capital, while those living in the capital tend to be more involved with Development & housing than those living outside the capital. Length of stay in a place plays a part, as the longer one has stayed in a locality the greater the propensity to become involved with voluntary work, thus suggesting that being a part of a social network increases the likelihood of volunteering (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 54-55).

According to Bjarne Ibsen, co-author of the Danish Johns Hopkins study, the above **differences in overall propensity to volunteer are relatively small and it is likely that they are explained less by geography and more by demographic factors** such as differences in age and educational background between people living in the different places. It is also likely that regional differences would be of an equal magnitude and likewise explained by demographics.

Education levels

There is a **positive correlation between education level and propensity to volunteer** in the sense that the better educated people are the more likely they are to volunteer. Below is listed the share of people who volunteer within different education levels as found in the 2004 population survey (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 58):

- Students: 34% do voluntary unpaid work.
- No education: 25% do voluntary unpaid work.
- Vocational education: 36% do voluntary unpaid work.
- Short non-vocational education: 36% do voluntary unpaid work.
- Medium length non-vocational education: 42% do voluntary unpaid work.
- Long non-vocational education (e.g. university): 45% do voluntary unpaid work.

There is a statistically significant **correlation between education level and volunteering within all areas of the voluntary sector apart from health and social services where**

the difference is no longer statistically significant. For instance, among those with a long non-vocational (typically university) education 9% are doing voluntary work in the areas of politics and education whereas among those without any education the figures are 2% and 1% respectively. This compares to 7% and 6% respectively for these two groups in the areas of social service and health (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 58).

As we shall see in section 1.1.5 below there is also a strong correlation between educational background and the types of voluntary activities that volunteers are involved in.

Volunteer involvement by sectors

The 2004 population survey found **significant differences in share of the population volunteering in the different areas of the voluntary sector.** Sport is the area which enjoys the biggest voluntary effort by far with 11% of the population between 16 and 85 years of age volunteering in sport. After that there is a big drop to 6% for Development & housing and 5% for other Recreation activities. The following areas all attract 3% of the population as volunteers: Culture & arts; Education & research; Health; Social services; Business and professional associations, unions; and other. International activities and Religion each attract 2% of the population, and Environment and Law, advocacy & politics only attract 1% each (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 46).

Profile of volunteers by employment status

According to the 2004 survey there is **a strong and positive correlation between employment and propensity to volunteer, although those in work spend fewer hours on volunteering per month than those out of work** (see the section on Time dedicated to volunteering below). Thus, of those not in work 28% perform voluntary unpaid work, whereas among those working 1-40 hours per week 37% do and, finally, among those who work 40 hours or more per week 48% are involved in volunteering (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 55-56).

Volunteering therefore appears to attract the well educated who already work long hours. As such, **volunteering confirms social capital theories** according to which people transfer capital from one sphere of their lives to another, and where a high level of resources and activity in one sphere translates into a high level of resources and activity in others too.

Time dedicated to volunteering

The 2004 population survey asked respondents how much time they had spent in the last month on voluntary work. The **average number of hours spent in a month was 17.** However, this **average hides a significant variation.** Thus, of those volunteering within the last month 26% spent only 1-4 hours, 22% spent 5-9 hours, 24% spent 10-19 hours and 28% spent 20 hours or more. The average is therefore strongly affected by those volunteers who spent a large amount of time on voluntary work (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 48-49).

Looking at the **time spent by men and women respectively, this was fairly similar** with men spending 18 hours and women 16 hours per month (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 56).

There is **some correlation between age and time spent on volunteering,** with the 16-29 year olds spending 20 hours per month, the 30-49 year olds spending 15 hours per month, the 50-65 year olds spending 19 hours per month and those aged 66 and over spending 18 hours per month. Hence, while there are most volunteers among the 30-49 year olds this age group spends slightly less time on volunteering. Possibly as this group also tends to be

fulltime employed and have young families. **Contrary to popular perception young people are indeed involved in volunteering and actually spend the most time on this of all age groups** (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 56).

Whilst there is a positive correlation between education level and the propensity to volunteer, once involved with volunteering there is less systematic difference in the amount of time people spend on it. Thus students, people with no education and people with a long non-vocational education (e.g. university) all spend on average 20 hours per month, and people with a short non-vocational education spend 19 hours per month. However, those with a vocational training background and a medium length non-vocational education spend less, contributing respectively 13 and 16 hours per month (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 54, 56).

Again, whilst there is a positive correlation between employment status and volunteering, once involved in volunteering **those out of work manage to spend more time on it than those in work.** Those not in work spend 20 hours per month, those working 1-40 hours per week spend 15 hours per month and those working 40 hours or more per week spend 17 hours per month (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 56).

The extent of volunteer involvement can also be measured in full-time equivalent posts. Measured like this the different areas have the following **share of full-time equivalent posts out of the total full-time equivalent posts that voluntary work in Denmark amounts to** (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 135):

- Culture & recreation: 49.0% of voluntary sector full-time equivalent posts.
- Social services: 7.6% of voluntary sector full-time equivalent posts.
- Other: 7.1% of voluntary sector full-time equivalent posts.
- Bus. & prof. associations, unions: 6.3% of voluntary sector full-time equivalent posts.
- Development & housing: 5.9% of voluntary sector full-time equivalent posts.
- Religion: 5.9% of voluntary sector full-time equivalent posts.
- Law, advocacy & politics: 5.3% of voluntary sector full-time equivalent posts.
- Education & research: 4.5% of voluntary sector full-time equivalent posts.
- International activities: 3.8% of voluntary sector full-time equivalent posts.
- Health: 3.3% of voluntary sector full-time equivalent posts.
- Environment: 1.3% of voluntary sector full-time equivalent posts.
- Philanthropy: not available.

As can be seen Culture & recreation benefit from nearly 50% of all time spent on voluntary work, and thus demonstrates the point made in section 1.1.1 that **the voluntary sector in Denmark is dominated by sport, culture and leisure activities** rather than Health and Social service activities as is seen in some European countries.

1.4 Number and types of organisations engaging volunteers

There is no register of voluntary organisations in Denmark, so one of the reports under the Johns Hopkins project undertook to conduct a registration of organisations in order to get an overall picture of the spread and composition of the voluntary sector as well as to generate a population of organisations to be used for the organisation survey. It was decided to use organisations in the County of Funen, as the county is representative of the rest of the country apart from the capital, Copenhagen. Hence, there will be a slight bias in the results when seeking to generalise for the capital (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 72).

Definition of voluntary organisations in Denmark

The Danish report under the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project uses the definition of a voluntary organisation set out for the international research project: it is an institutionalised reality; private and non-governmental; not-for profit; self-governing; and with non-compulsory participation. Based on these criteria, which are now generally recognised in Danish research and public administration, the following types of voluntary organisations are found in Denmark (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, 2006: 25-30):

- **Associations:** That is, unions of people or other organisations or unions with a common aim or common interests, which are organised and managed by ordinary democratic rules and procedures.
- **Self-governing institutions:** The concept of “self-governing institution” is specific to Denmark and unknown elsewhere. These institutions can be hard to differentiate from wholly public or private organisations. The self-governing institution is not an organised collaboration like an association. It owns itself, so to speak, and there is no other owner than the “purpose,” which is entitled to any surplus in the event of the institution being dissolved. Self-governing institutions focus on values and freedom in their delivery of services. In the eyes of local authorities, self-governing institutions are seldom regarded as “voluntary,” because they are mainly financed by public funding and rarely have volunteers.
- **Funds - charitable foundations:** These are assets deposited (separately) by an independent board of directors for specific purposes. The fund concept is, however, not defined in legislation, as the concept is so well established that there is no need for a legal formulation. Based on “custom and practice,” the characteristics of a fund are as follows:
 - an asset(s) separated from the overall fortune owned by the founder.
 - independent management (a board) disposes of the assets.
 - the fund is regarded as an independent legal entity.
 - the fund (not the founders’ heirs, for example) owns the rights.

In addition to this, the fund has to live up to the criteria for voluntary organisations in terms of objectives, statutes, management and “permanence.” Permanence in this context means that the fund has to make regular payments in pursuit of the fund’s objectives.

Number of voluntary organisations and distribution per sector

The 2004 organisation survey for the Johns Hopkins project showed that there are ca. 65,500 local voluntary associations, 6,800 self-governing organisations, 6,600 funds/charitable foundations, and 3,000 national voluntary organisations (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 74). In total there are 81,900 voluntary organisations.

These are distributed across sector areas in the following way:

- **Local voluntary associations:** Culture & arts: 9.1%; Sport, exercise & dance: 25.1%; Leisure & hobbies: 18%; Education & research: 4.8%; Health: 2.7%; Social services: 5.9%; Environment: 1.2%; Development & housing: 10.7%; Law, advocacy & politics: 7.1%; Philanthropy: not applicable; International activities: 1.6%; Religion: 0.7%; Business & professional associations, unions: 11.8%; Other: 1.3% (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 77).

- **Self-governing organisations:** Culture & arts: 7%; Sport, exercise & dance: 13.2%; Leisure & hobbies: 2.9%; Education & research: 20.5%; Health: 3.2%; Social services: 29.7%; Environment: 0.8%; Development & housing: 21%; Law, advocacy & politics: 0.8%; Philanthropy: not applicable; International activities: 0; Religion: 0; Business & professional associations, unions: 0.7%; Other: 0 (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 77).
- **Funds/charitable foundations:** Culture, Sport & Leisure: 23.6%; Education & research: 33.6%; Health: 18.6%; Social services: 42.1%; Environment: 5.7%; Development & housing: 10.7%; Law, advocacy & politics: 0.7%; Philanthropy: 25%; International activities: 1.4%; Religion: 1.4%; Business & professional associations, unions: 7.1; Other: 9.3% (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 77).
- **National voluntary organisations:** Culture & arts: 4%; Sport, exercise & dance: 6.3%; Leisure & hobbies: 18.4%; Education & research: 2.1%; Health: 9.6%; Social services: 3.6%; Environment: 1.8%; Development & housing: 0.6%; Law, advocacy & politics: 1.6%; International activities: 5.9%; Religion: 2.1%; Business & professional associations, unions: 41.6%; Other: 2.3% (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 77).

Trend

There is a lack of comparable time series data on trends in the number of voluntary organisations in Denmark as different studies have used different research methodologies. However, according to the 2004 organisation survey 51% of local and national associations and self-governing organisations were established between 1975-2004 and a quarter was set up between 1990-2004 (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 78, 80). This **suggests a significant growth in the number of organisations in the 1990s and early 2000s**. That being said, there are no data on the number of disbanded organisations and therefore no evidence as to the net situation. It is therefore possible that rather than growth it could be a case of organisational exchange (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 78). However, **if the area of sport is representative of the situation in the voluntary sector overall there has been growth, as a separate study of sport has shown a net increase in the number of sport associations of 8%** (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 79).

The newer associations are found especially within the areas of Health, Social services and Development & housing. The newer self-governing organisations are found especially within the areas of Leisure & hobbies, Culture & arts, Social services, Sport, exercise & dance, and Business & professional associations, unions. The newer national voluntary organisations are found especially within the areas of Development & housing, Health and International activities (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 80).

It appears that **the number of organisations that wish to promote a particular religious or ideological message may have declined in the last couple of decades**. Such organisations are more likely to be found on the national arena rather than locally, which may also indicate a more recent division of labour between local and national organisations and the objectives they pursue (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 156).

Types of organisations engaging volunteers

There are no data for the share of organisations in respectively the voluntary, public and private sector that host volunteers, but there are data for **where individual volunteers do their voluntary work** (Koch-Nielsen, Skov Henriksen, Fridberg & Rosdahl, 2005: 59):

- 86% of volunteers do voluntary work in the voluntary sector.
- 16% of volunteers do voluntary work in the public sector.
- 5% of volunteers do voluntary work in the private sector.

- 2% of volunteers do voluntary work in the Danish Church.
- 4% of volunteers do voluntary work in an organisation classified as other.

It is apparent that the **vast majority of voluntary work is performed in the voluntary sector**. The reason why the figures come to a total of more than 100% is that some people do voluntary work in more than one sector.

Below is depicted the **level and significance of volunteering in the different types of voluntary sector organisations** (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 82-83):

- In **local voluntary associations**, which make up ca. 80% of all voluntary sector organisations (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006:153) and thus represent the majority of the sector, voluntary work figures in the following way:
 - **80% of associations use solely voluntary and unpaid staff.**
 - In each association an average of 50 hours of voluntary work per week is performed.
 - **91% of all work in associations is voluntary.**
 - The majority of volunteers (79%) are members of the association in which they volunteer. Hence, **volunteering is very much a membership based activity**, although there has been an increase in the number who volunteer without being a member (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006:153).
 - Salary & remuneration costs amount to 7% of total costs.
- In **national voluntary organisations** voluntary work figures in the following way:
 - 51% of organisations use solely voluntary and unpaid staff.
 - the organisations estimate that an average of 145 hours of voluntary per week is performed (although this is a very uncertain estimate).
 - salary and remuneration costs amount to 18% of total costs.
- In **self-governing organisations** voluntary work figures in the following way:
 - 25% of organisations have no paid staff.
 - In each self-governing organisation an average of 55 hours of voluntary work per week is performed.
 - 33% of all work in self-governing organisations is voluntary.
 - Salary and remuneration costs amount to 48% of total costs.
- In **funds/charitable foundations** a very small share of labour is voluntary and there is only very limited and imprecise information available on this.

The Danish Johns Hopkins study provides a sub-sector distribution of voluntary organisations (within the areas of Education & research, Social services, Development & housing, etc.) but not a functional distribution on e.g. service provision and advocacy. However, one can get a sense of the importance of the service function, as 77.4% of the voluntary sector's production based contribution to GDP stems from two areas, Education and Social Services (which also earned the majority of total voluntary sector income). Far behind the two came Business & professional associations, unions and Culture & leisure. Together these four areas accounted for more than 90% of the voluntary sector's production based contribution to GDP, and in all of these areas the primary activity is service production (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 131-32, 141). Hence, we can say

that **service provision is the most significant activity** for voluntary sector organisations in Denmark.

1.5 Main voluntary activities

The 2004 population survey provides information on the **share of the population involved in different types of volunteering activities** (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 45, 47):

- Administration: 31% (includes committee work at 18% and secretariat & admin function at 13%).
- Other practical work (relating to e.g. the secretariat function and events/activities): 17%.
- Information: 11%.
- Acting as contact person: 11%.
- Training/mentoring: 10%.
- Fund raising: 8%.
- Campaigning/lobbying: 4%.
- Legal advice/advocacy: 4%.
- Personal social support to beneficiary: 1%.
- Helpline functions: 2%.
- Other 5%.

Volunteering is **multifunctional** and volunteers report involvement in on average three different types of activities.

As can be seen from the list, **organisational and administrative tasks** accounted for the most frequently stated involvement. It is therefore the substantial organisational and administrative work that lays the foundation for whatever external voluntary work is to be carried out (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 45). The organisational and administrative work made up a particularly large proportion of the voluntary work in the areas of Education & research and in Development & housing with 74% and 79% of volunteers in these two areas spending time on Committee work, and 31% and 44% spending time on Secretariat and admin functions. In the areas of Culture & recreation (sport, leisure and culture) there is also a significant amount of **training/mentoring and practical work** such as team management, with 50% and 41% of volunteers in this area stating that they were involved in these two types of tasks. In the area of Politics (here including Law, advocacy & politics, International activities and Business & professional association, unions) the focus is not surprisingly on **providing information**, with 54% of volunteers in this area being involved in information provision. In the areas of Health and Social services it is **practical work** that is the other big activity in addition to organisational and administrative tasks, with 35% of respondents performing practical work (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 48).

There is a **correlation between age and education level and the propensity to get involved in different types of voluntary activities**. Thus, the 30-49 year olds is the age group with the most involvement in all types of activities, while young people only have comparable levels of input into training and fund raising, and the elderly having significantly less involvement with all types of activities. Likewise, the better educated are the most involved with all types of activities, with the most striking difference being Committee work in which 29% of those with a long education take part while this is only the case for 9% of those with no education. The difference is minimal and not statistically significant when it comes to practical activities, with respective percentages of 17% and 15% for these two

groups. **Gender based differences appear in the areas of committee work and training where fewer women than men are involved** (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 59).

2 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Main public bodies and other organisations involved in volunteering

Main public body responsible for volunteering

There is no single ministry overall in charge of volunteering in Denmark. Instead the responsibility for volunteering is split between different ministries according to their area of responsibility. Thus, the **Ministry of Interior and Social Affairs** as responsible for social service is also responsible for voluntary work in this area, whilst the **Ministry of Culture** is responsible for culture and sport and therefore for volunteering within the sport sector. Finally, the **Ministry of Education** is responsible for popular education and the law that obliges local authorities to financially support a range of voluntary activities in popular education, including sport associations and work of an educational and recreational nature with children and young people.

The **Ministry of Interior and Social Affairs** have responsibilities in the areas of legislation, policy making and funding. Being responsible for legislation on social affairs, including social service, the Ministry's legislative responsibility includes the contribution made by voluntary sector organisations working in the area. The legislation that sets out the general framework for support for voluntary work in social services is the Social Service Act (1998) Paragraph 18 (for more on this see sections 2.3 and 3.1 below). A specific ministerial responsibility under the Act is to lay down guidelines for the reporting that is done by local councils on the local development in voluntary social work as well as guidelines for the central government follow up. The Ministry also formulates policy on social service, including a range of initiatives in areas where voluntary organisations operate. Finally, the Ministry acts as a funding body in relation to voluntary social work, either on its own or in collaboration with other ministries.

The **Ministry of Culture** is overall in charge of culture and sport. However, since parts of the culture and the vast majority of the sport sector in Denmark are based on volunteering, with voluntary organisations historically acting as independent associations, they are treated as autonomous organisations in whose work the Ministry does not interfere in a regulatory manner. In its capacity as policy maker the Ministry of Culture focuses on the role played by sport in society. This has three dimensions:

- Cultural dimension: It is in the associations that children learn about democracy and what is acceptable behaviour, i.e. how we best interact with each other. The Ministry sees it as one of its priorities to protect and support democracy and thereby the voluntary associations that make up the realm of sport.
- Social dimension: Participation in sport and sport associations helps break down social barriers as participants do something together with others regardless of ethnic origin and social status. Football is probably the sport with the most ethnic minorities represented, and as a team sport is ideal for integrating people despite their many differences.
- Health: This dimension has been paid more attention in recent years following documentation of the health effects of exercise.

As sport is increasingly seen as a means to achieving social policy objectives the Ministry of Culture sometimes focuses efforts on particular groups in society, and will often

collaborate with the Ministry of Interior and Social Affairs on sport projects with a social dimension. The Ministry of Culture's role as funding body is very straightforward as the historical independence of voluntary associations means that the Ministry provides the funding but does not interfere in how it is spent. The share of the gambling proceeds that is allocated to the Ministry according to the Gambling Act of 2006 it therefore passes directly to the national sports confederations and others for them to spend according to their priorities. This arm's length policy is what is meant by the term autonomy in sport in Denmark.

The **Ministry of Education** have legislative, policy making and funding responsibilities. It is the responsible ministry for the Act on Popular Education of 2000 which obliges local authorities to fund voluntary popular education (for more on this see sections 2.3 and 3.1 below). The Ministry's policy making focus relating to volunteering is on popular education, i.e. education that enables participants to gain knowledge and enlightenment but not specific qualifications, a significant share of which has historically been provided by voluntary sector organisations. In Denmark, sport is defined as popular education and is the major recipient of popular education funding.

Other public bodies involved in volunteering

The other public bodies involved in volunteering are local authorities, the National Volunteer Centre and the Volunteer Council.

Local authorities support the voluntary sector according to the prescriptions laid down in the Social Service Act and the Popular Education Act.

In the case of **social services**, local authorities shall collaborate with voluntary social organisations and associations by setting aside on a yearly basis an amount of funding to support voluntary social work. Each local authority shall also define the framework for its collaboration with the local voluntary sector (Social Service Act 1998, Paragraph 18), which enables local authorities to be quite specific about their priorities and the requirements they impose on voluntary organisations and their work. Finally, local authorities are obliged to report on the social services work undertaken with the funding, and therefore also on the work performed by the voluntary sector in this area.

In the case of support for **popular education**, local authorities set up Popular Education Committees to distribute the funding available for popular education. The Committee is made up of seven members of whom a minority represent the local authority and a majority represent a broad section of organisations working in the areas of popular education for children, young people and adults. While the Act contains a general definition of popular education, and thus what can be supported, there are no specific requirements or priority areas identified, and there is no opportunity provided for the local authority to lay down its own. Hence, there is significant autonomy for the Popular Education Committee (with its majority popular education sector representation) in the distribution of funds, and for voluntary sector organisations in the way they spend the funds.

In addition to the funding role, **some local authorities have decided to become more closely involved with the operational side of the voluntary sector**. Some have employed consultants to provide various kinds of support for the local voluntary sector while others have set up local volunteer centres off their own bat or in collaboration with local voluntary organisations. Even where the local authority is not directly involved in the creation and running of volunteer centres they often provide in-kind support such as assistance with web design and audit of the volunteer centre's annual accounts. Another side of the engagement with the voluntary sector is the move by many local authorities towards formulating 'volunteering policies' in collaboration with local voluntary organisations (Skov Henriksen, 2008: 11-12).

The **National Volunteer Centre** is a self-governing organisation, i.e. an independent unit with its own supervisory board, which was set up by the Ministry of Interior and Social Affairs in 1992 to service voluntary social service organisations. Although a self-governing organisation it is subject to legislation and defined as a public agency. The core funding of the centre is Government grants with only a small percentage deriving from the services it provides. The Centre supports voluntary work and organisations working in the area of welfare (health, social services and humanitarian assistance) and more recently culture and sport throughout Denmark. Its main activities are: 1) Consultancy; 2) Training and education; 3) Development of organisations and networks; 4) Conferences; and 5) Knowledge of the voluntary sector – nationally and internationally. The Centre also provides a very informative website which includes a database with information about a range of voluntary social organisations in Denmark.¹

The **Volunteer Council** (Frivilligrådet) was set up by the Minister of Interior and Social Affairs to advise The Ministry and Parliament on the role that voluntary sector organisations can play in addressing social challenges. The Council has status as a government agency and is funded by The Ministry. The Council focuses on the following areas of work: 1) Funding of voluntary work, including development of a new model for this that can ensure the sector's financial sustainability; 2) Capacity building of the voluntary social service sector; 3) Collaboration between the voluntary social service sector and other parts of the voluntary sector for the benefit of the sector overall and societal cohesion; 4) Participation and access to voluntary social work with the aim of developing a vibrant voluntary social service sector and promoting active citizenship and social inclusion.²

Organisations that promote volunteering, facilitate cooperation and exchange of information

Volunteering and voluntary sector organisations are supported by local volunteer centres and a number of umbrella organisations.

The network of 55 **local volunteer centres** has evolved over time, with the first three set up in 1989 at the initiative of The Ministry of Social Affairs. There was no coordinated plan for their role, geographic coverage or funding, and they have therefore sprung up when funding and local initiative happened to be available. As a result, they are a very diverse heterogeneous set of organisations (Skov Henriksen, 2008: 12).

The rationale behind local volunteer centres has changed over time. For the first three centres the aims were defined fairly loosely as giving citizens the opportunity to volunteer and supporting local volunteering and voluntary organisations within social service. With an unemployment rate of 9.5% at the time, volunteering came to be seen as an alternative to normal paid employment, and volunteer centres as the brokerage service between people needing meaningful activity and voluntary organisations needing volunteers (Skov Henriksen, 2008: 1). Since then, the focus of volunteer centres has been redefined a number of times coinciding with additional funding becoming available and new centres being set up, most recently in 2005 when the network was extended by means of a three year development fund. Currently the rationale behind local volunteer centres is the following (Skov Henriksen, 2008: 4):

- Volunteer centres are to **improve the infrastructure of the local voluntary sector**, i.e. those structures and institutions which foster more dense networks and strategic alliances between local organisations as well as between the public and voluntary sectors. Volunteer centres do so by, among other things, coordinating local initiatives.

¹ <http://www.frivillighed.dk/Webnodes/English/296>

² <http://www.frivilligraadet.dk/om%20raadet/>; <http://www.frivilligraadet.dk/Debat%20aktuelt/>

- Volunteer centres can **improve the problem solving capacity of voluntary social organisations** through offering training and consultancy for volunteers and their organisations.
- The 2005-08 funding stream was to enable a reorganisation of the volunteer centre network to ensure a better fit between the network and the new local authorities following the 2007 municipal reform which reduced local authorities from 275 to 98. With the current 55 volunteer centres there is now a centre in every second local authority. The effect is a **concentration of resources in bigger centres and a more even geographic distribution of them** throughout the country.

The lack of prior coordination or political drive behind the process is evident from the way centres have come about. Thus, 51% of local volunteer centres have been set up by a private individual or a group of private individuals on their own, and 13% by a voluntary association or group of voluntary associations on their own. 18% have been set up by local government in cooperation with voluntary associations, private individuals or others, whilst only 7% have been set up by local authorities alone. Finally, 4% have been set up by a private individual or group of private individuals acting together with one or more voluntary associations (Skov Henriksen, 2008: 5).

As far as governance is concerned, 95% of the centres control their own budget and close to 90% are run by an independent board on which only 20% of centres have local government representation. The government's intentions regarding relatively autonomous centres have therefore become reality. Financially, 90% of centres are supported by local government funding, accounting for on average 40% of centre income, and 75% are supported by central government funding, accounting for on average 36% of centre income. This fairly narrow revenue structure is one of the biggest challenges for the volunteer centres (Skov Henriksen, 2008: 6-8).

Best practice guidelines have now been developed for volunteer centres, according to which centres should (Skov Henriksen, 2008: 8-9):

- Connect people to volunteering opportunities.
- Support local social innovation and development.
- Provide support and consultancy to existing associations and organisations.
- Create networks among citizens and associations.
- Provide information and support to citizens and users.
- Organise self-help groups.

Not all centres perform all the roles, but following implementation of the three year development programme in 2005 more centres do, and more public funding is now granted on condition that the guidelines are being adhered to. That is, the best practice guidelines are increasingly being used as performance indicators, with the centres moving away from earlier activity oriented work to being **local vehicles for improving the infrastructure of the voluntary sector and building its capacity**. As such local volunteer centres are becoming intermediate and hybrid bodies between local government, citizens and voluntary organisations whose role it is to support and encourage more and increasingly qualified volunteering. The increased professionalisation and homogenisation of centres - together with greater acknowledgement of the contribution of civil society organisations and the challenges for the public sector in meeting citizens' diverse welfare needs - have made it more likely that volunteer centres will gain the necessary long-term financial and political commitment (Skov Henriksen, 2008: 10-12).

Umbrella organisations for voluntary sector organisations exist especially in the area of sport (with the main national sports federations being Sports Confederation of Denmark

(DIF), Danish Gymnastics & Sports Association (DGI) and Danish Association of Company Sport (DFIF)), who service their member organisations in a number of ways.

In comparison there are relatively fewer membership based umbrella organisations within voluntary social work, one exception being the **Volunteer Forum** (Frivilligt Forum) which is a national membership based organisation. It is a relatively new organisation which provides advocacy for the sector, works politically on behalf of it and offers conferences and seminars to stimulate debate and awareness. They have about 90 members most of which are national organisations. There are other umbrella organisations which operate on a national level and cover volunteering in for instance youth work (The Danish Youth Council/Dansk Ungdoms Fællesråd) and popular education (Danish Adult Education Association/Dansk Folkeoplysnings Samråd). These organisations support their member associations by promoting volunteering and providing training and capacity building, and are typically funded through membership fees, grants and transfers from central government (European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy, 2005: 5).

Volunteer Centres and Self-help Denmark (FriSe: Frivilligcentre og Selvhjælp Danmark) is a national association of volunteer centres and self-help groups which provides advocacy for its members and seeks to influence the conditions under which this part of the voluntary sector operates. It does so through representation on local authority and national government working groups looking at volunteering and self-help, through raising awareness and promoting debate locally, undertaking project work and providing consultancy and support for voluntary organisations, e.g. on fund raising.

Affiliation with European umbrella organisations/networks

Little information was available on the affiliation of Danish voluntary organisations with European or other umbrella organisations. The National Volunteer Centre is a member of CEV, but no other Danish organisation is. According to the National Volunteer Centre there are probably some voluntary organisations that are members of UNV, but it is not clear which ones or how many they are.

Sports associations and their national federations are members of European and international umbrella organisations like UEFA and FIFA, and some social service organisations are, e.g. an organisation working with the elderly (Ældresagen), but again there is an absence of named Danish organisations and/or named European and international links.

2.2 Policies

National strategy/framework for volunteering

There is **no overarching strategy** for volunteering covering the sector in its totality, as the approaches to volunteering and the voluntary sector are sub-sector specific, e.g. social service organisations and sports and leisure organisations are the responsibility of different ministries and are treated differently.

There are, however, political statements made that relate to the sector as a whole. In 2001 the '**Charter for interaction between Volunteer Denmark/Associations Denmark and the public sector**' was signed by representatives of the voluntary and public sector. It identified the following objectives (Ministry of Culture, 2001: 1):

- To provide the individual citizen with the best conceivable framework for participating actively in community coalitions and to strengthen the forces of social cohesion.
- To help build respect for the diversity of goals and forms of organisation in Volunteer Denmark/Associations Denmark.
- To strengthen and develop the interaction between Volunteer Denmark/Associations Denmark and the public sector while respecting their differences.

- To maintain and develop the efforts of Volunteer Denmark/Associations Denmark to promote the development of society, the welfare of community coalitions, and the individual's quality of life.
- To promote volunteer efforts and make them more visible.

More recently this has been echoed, but also further developed to include interaction with the private sector. Thus, the **2007 Quality Reform** identifies the following government objectives for the voluntary sector³:

- A visible and competent sector.
- Development of partnership working and collaboration between voluntary organisations and local authorities/the public sector.
- Development of collaboration between voluntary organisations and the private sector/private companies.
- Easy and simple access to become and to work as a volunteer.

While these documents offer a general vision for the voluntary sector, they could not be described as strategies for its development.

In the case of sport, whose very foundation is voluntary work, there are strategies for elite and non-elite sport but no specific strategies or initiatives on volunteering as such. The reason being that a strategy is seen as unnecessary given that sport is synonymous with volunteering, and that anything that is done to support sport will therefore automatically support volunteering.

Opinion is divided as to whether an overarching strategy should be developed. Some commentators believe so, but point out that a strategy would have to recognise autonomy as a prerequisite for the voluntary sector's ability to develop and offer a true alternative to public sector provision. Currently, different areas of the voluntary sector operate under different conditions, with the sport sector enjoying extensive autonomy in for instance spending decisions, whereas an area like social service is much more regulated. As a result, **it might be difficult to design a strategy that can encompass all areas of the voluntary sector and still be meaningful and useful.**

National targets and reporting arrangements for volunteering

There are **no national targets** for volunteering in Denmark and **no overall and coordinated monitoring of volunteering** in Denmark. Individual agencies or organisations like the Ministry of Interior and Social Affairs, local authorities, the National Volunteer Centre and the Sports Confederation of Denmark (DIF) collect data, but there is no systematic and collective monitoring arrangement.

Examples of data collection are:

- The yearly Paragraph 18 (Social Service Act) review conducted by The Ministry of Interior and Social Affairs which is not a monitoring exercise as such but more focused on identifying trends and looking at particular aspects and themes of funding provision.
- The reporting by voluntary organisations of membership numbers to sports confederations and local authorities, e.g. for drawing down funding under the Popular Education Act which offers a certain amount of funding per member taking part in an activity.

³ see Ministry of Interior and Social Affairs website <http://www.ism.dk/Temaer/social-omraader/frivillig-sektor/Sider/Start.aspx>

- Sports Confederation of Denmark (DIF) studies of the sports sector.

Whilst there is no requirement that voluntary organisations register in official state records, they must have a CVR-number and a NemKonto if they wish to receive money from the public. A CVR-number is a registration number for all businesses and the NemKonto is an account all citizens, companies and associations are obliged to have, which can be used for various financial transactions and pay outs (communication with National Volunteer Centre).

There have been calls from some researchers and organisations for monitoring of the population's participation in voluntary activities and of the voluntary sector's use of funding, but so far nothing has been introduced. However, it is possible that the Ministry of Interior and Social Affairs decides to introduce monitoring in the future.

International policies

EU policies have no or only marginal impact on national strategies on volunteering. However, there may be particular areas of voluntary work or individual organisations that are influenced by EU policies, but so far this kind of impact has gone unnoticed by the interviewees for this report. It was suggested that in future there may be an impact of the European Year of Volunteering 2011.

As sport specifically is not part of the EU treaty but only talked about in informal articles and discussions **EU policies and programmes do not have any impact on sport in Denmark.**

2.3 Programmes

Voluntary work and voluntary organisations virtually disappeared from the political debate in the 1960-70s but were rediscovered in the 1980s and have since figured much more prominently. Politicians often speak about the role that volunteering and voluntary organisations play in society (e.g. contributing to democracy and social integration) and in providing particular services, but opinion is divided as to the commitment to translate the celebratory speeches into concrete policy and action. While the government points to declarations and political programmes aimed at improving the conditions for the voluntary sector and promoting volunteering, some observers and organisation representatives feel the need for more specific initiatives and a greater awareness of voluntary sector needs. It has been suggested that the focus on the sector may have been more sustained and in-depth earlier this decade than it is at present, although it is difficult to verify this. While some action has been taken to combat the challenges for the sector the feeling is that there is scope for more (communication with interviewees).

Key national programmes that stimulate volunteering at national level

Below are listed the main national policies and programmes for stimulating volunteering in Denmark.

The **2007 Quality Reform** included five initiatives directly aimed at supporting volunteering and voluntary sector organisations (Regeringen, 2007: 42):

- **Strengthening of the Volunteer Council:** Its area of work was expanded beyond the existing social service remit to also include culture and sport. The Council was also strengthened financially with an increase in core funding from 3 to 4 million DKr per year until 2012.
- **Local authority volunteering policies:** A working group has been set up to assist local authorities in developing more coherent policies on volunteering. The intention

is for policies to encompass the public, private and voluntary sectors and to cover a wider area of volunteering than has previously been the case, i.e. in addition to social service they should also include culture and sport.

- **Change to the funding structure** for the 220 million DKr that the Ministry of Interior and Social Affairs allocates to voluntary organisations on a yearly basis: A working group has been set up to look at this and its report is due in October 2009.
- **Offer of placements in voluntary organisations:** A working group has been set up to look at placement options in the voluntary sector as part of 16-19 education. Everybody will be offered a 20 hours placement outside school hours, and one placement option will be in voluntary work. It has not been decided if the placement will appear on the final certificate, but students will get a diploma for their participation. The working group is due to report in the Autumn 2009 and the aim is that placements will be available from the beginning of 2010. A campaign has been launched to promote it.
- The government is encouraging individual **public sector organisations to more systematically emphasise voluntary work when recruiting** new staff. For central government this was written into the Administrative Personnel Guidance (Personaleadministrativ Vejledning) in June 2008. It has been requested that local and regional authorities implement the initiative during 2009.

A number of **studies have been initiated and/or funded by the Ministry of interior and Social Affairs** in recent years. These are:

- The **Danish study under the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project** which was co-ordinated by the Ministry and co-funded by it and five other ministries. The aims of the study were to: identify the size and nature of the voluntary sector in DK; examine and explain the development of voluntary organisation; examine and explain similarities and differences among voluntary organisations within different sectors of society; and examine and explain differences between the voluntary sector in Denmark and other countries. The report was published in 2006, but even if it has become an invaluable source of information on the voluntary sector in Denmark it does not appear to have generated actual political follow-up.
- **Documentation of the quality and benefits of voluntary social work** study: The National Volunteer Centre was funded to undertake an analysis and a method to enable the identification of quality and benefits of voluntary social work. The report was published in May 2009, but it is not clear if it has had any impact as far as policy, programmes or funding is concerned.
- The **yearly Social Service Act Paragraph 18 review**: This examines local authorities' use of Paragraph 18 funding in order to identify trends in distribution. The review always includes a thematic report, which this year looks at how local voluntary organisations view the collaboration with local councils, i.e. the collaboration that the Paragraph 18 funding is supposed to promote, and which the government has recently been keen to expand.
- Study of "**Volunteering policies and Collaboration**": A 3 year study of the collaboration between voluntary social organisations and local authorities undertaken by the National Volunteer Centre, with a Midterm report published in 2009.

Since the late 1980-90s when various ministries introduced a number of pilot and development programmes as part of a strategy to promote development and innovation from the bottom up, the focus on the role of the voluntary sector has increased and has developed into a more **deliberate strategy for promoting collaboration between local authorities and voluntary organisations** (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 145). This can be seen in research projects like the one above and in increased funding for project

work where local authorities and different parts of the voluntary sector collaborate on addressing social issues.

The **government has formulated objectives on voluntary work with particular target groups**, i.e. the disabled, refugees and immigrants, at risk groups, the elderly and those suffering from dementia. This has been complemented by research looking at the different groups and their needs, as well as by funding for a range of initiatives including some that involved contributions from the voluntary social sector.⁴ However, as the initiatives are activity focused rather than focused on the provider, i.e. voluntary organisations, their support for the sector could be said to be indirect. Early 2000 projects include a Grant Programme for Development of Voluntary Social Work, which in its directives for 2001 and 2002 asked for new initiatives taken by or with participation of ethnic minorities, and the Government statement "Towards a New Integration Policy" in 2002 which included the expectation that ethnic minorities are involved and participate in civil society associations (Hjære & Koch-Nielsen, 2003: 1-2).

The voluntary sector infrastructure has been strengthened by creating a **recruitment portal** for the voluntary sector, www.frivilligjob.dk, and a specific **office dealing with volunteering within The Ministry of Interior and Social Affairs** (the Office for Family, Civil Society and International Relations). The latter was intended to signify official commitment to the voluntary sector agenda and to provide a focal point for work on volunteering.

In the case of sport, the situation is a bit more fluid as in theory all policy programmes will have some degree of impact on volunteering given that sport is built on voluntary effort. It has been decided to follow an inclusive approach when outlining policy programmes and initiatives which impact on volunteering in order to not miss out on information.

A working group of Ministry of Culture representatives and representatives of local authorities and sport organisations was set up to look at non-elite sport and its challenges. A report was published in March 2009 and the Ministry is now looking at concrete initiatives to address the challenges. Actions coming out of the report include a number of **sports related objectives in the 2007 government programme** (e.g. improved collaboration between local authorities and sport associations on projects that address social objectives like social integration and prevention).

A number of individual policies and initiatives have been developed by the Ministry of Culture which were initially aimed at improving conditions in the sport sector. However, as some of these are of a more general nature they have benefitted other parts of the voluntary sector too. These are:

- SATS funding streams (administered by the Ministry of Interior and Social Affairs) which provide **funding for social objectives that are sometimes addressed through sports projects**. Sports associations can bid for this project funding on their own or in collaboration with local authorities or other local organisations.
- **Evaluation of proposed legislation with respect to its impact on the voluntary sector**. The aim is to ensure that new laws do not have unintended effects on voluntary work and make this unnecessarily difficult (Ministry of Culture, 2001: 2). Opinion is divided, though, on how comprehensively this rule is being applied.
- The working group The Beating Team (Tæskehødet) was set up by the Ministry in 2002/03 to look at barriers to volunteering and how to address these. The outcome of the group's work were:
 - **Abolition of 'The Sausage Rule'** (Pølsecirculæret) which in the past meant that everybody involved in producing food in sport and other voluntary associations,

⁴ See <http://www.ism.dk/Temaer/social-omraader/frivillig-sektor/regeringens-maalsætninger/Sider/Start.aspx>

including volunteers, had to go on an eight hour food hygiene course. It was an administrative burden and took up valuable volunteer time.

- A **voluntary, non-profit organisation no longer has to declare income to the local tax authorities** provided the income is used for the benefit of the organisation's non-profit and public utility aims and not given away to any individual for his/her personal gain.
- **Increase of the threshold for VAT registration by voluntary organisations** to a level which means that the vast majority of organisations have become exempt from VAT. Previously VAT accounting was a big administrative burden for the sector.
- **Improvement in the opportunity for recipients of unemployment benefit and early retirement benefit to do voluntary work.**
- **Simplification of reporting of membership:** Previously sport associations had to use different forms for reporting to the sports federations and various public bodies about their membership numbers. This was cumbersome and time consuming, so standardised forms were designed.

As the sport sub-sector enjoys significant autonomy, to the extent that The Ministry of Culture could be seen to make policy through the sports confederations, the Sports Confederation of Denmark (DIF) priorities are in many ways as important as government policy. DIF's main objective is to safeguard and promote sport founded on voluntary work, and its current 4 year programme identifies the following as the **main areas of work for DIF** (DIF/Olympisk Komite, 2006):

- Simplification and lightening of the administrative burden on associations
- Improvement of sporting facilities
- Increase in local authority funding for sport.

Programmes promoting/supporting volunteering at regional and local level

There is a fine line between efforts to delegate tasks to the voluntary sector and efforts to promote and support volunteering. This becomes particularly evident at local level where the majority of voluntary work takes place, and where the majority of the public sector funding for voluntary work is distributed. Below we have taken an inclusive approach to efforts to support the sector at local level.

The majority of the support is not so much programme driven as ongoing and legislated. This is the case for the support that the sector receives from local authorities in accordance with the Social Service Act paragraph 18 and the Popular Education Act. **The Social Service Act obliges local authorities to collaborate with the voluntary social service sector** according to a framework developed by the individual authority and followed by a yearly funding allocation. The aims are to improve interaction between voluntary social work and local and county authority social provision, to improve conditions for voluntary social work and to make the voluntary contribution more visible in local communities (Habermann & Ibsen, 2005: 7). While these aims are being achieved the collaboration has also led to an increasing institutionalisation of voluntary social work (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 76, 145). **The Popular Education Act obliges local authorities to provide subsidies and accommodation for exam-free education (lectures, study groups, etc.), and sport and leisure activities provided by the voluntary sector.** While this provides the sector with significant support it has also amounted to a "de-municipalization" of such activities. (Habermann & Ibsen, 2005: 7).

In addition to the funding provided under the Social Service Act and the Popular Education Act local authorities also **administer SATS funding available for social service projects, including projects that involve local voluntary organisations as service providers.**

As mentioned in section 2.1. above, local authorities also offer more **operational support**, including local authority consultants, various kinds of support for volunteer centres and development of volunteering policies in collaboration with the voluntary sector. All of which demonstrate that local authorities have moved beyond the level of symbolic support for the sector and is engaging with it in real terms.

Although there was no nationally coordinated plan for creation of a network of local volunteer centres the availability of various funding opportunities and political and legislative measures all contributed to their emergence. Thus, the late 1980s SUM Programme provided financial support for the first three volunteer centres in 1989, while more centres were established through funding schemes in the 1990s and most recently the 2005 SATS stream. With the introduction of the Social Service Act in 1998 and the obligation that local authorities collaborate and financially support local voluntary organisations additional local authorities chose to do so by supporting a local volunteer centre (Skov Henriksen, 2008: 2). Again, the 2007 municipal reform provided a focal point for development of the volunteer centre network as centres could now better cover the fewer local authorities and command greater resources (Skov Henriksen, 2008: 1-2, 4).

Finally, there are a huge number of **projects at local level run by local voluntary organisations on their own or in collaboration with local authorities** whose exact funding streams it has been impossible to identify. However, they go to show that the voluntary sector is an increasingly integral part of service provision in Denmark.

Programmes promoting/supporting volunteering at transnational level

No Danish programmes appear to be in place for supporting volunteering at transnational level.

Some EU programmes focusing on particular target groups will at times involve voluntary sector participation, but these are not programmes specifically for promoting and supporting the voluntary sector in Denmark or for transnational work.

3 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

3.1 General legal framework

Specific legal framework which exists with respect to volunteering

In Denmark there is **no single piece of legislation that defines and governs volunteering and voluntary organisations.** However, there are a number of laws and rules that together do so by specifying the requirements that voluntary organisations need to meet in order to for instance be declared legal, eligible for public sector funding and entitled to various tax breaks.

The following four pieces of legislation underpin the voluntary sector in Denmark.

- The **Danish Constitution of 1849**, Paragraph 78 enshrines the right to form associations: “The citizens have the right without prior permission to form associations for the benefit of any legal purpose”.⁵

⁵ <https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=45902>

- The **Act on Social Service of 1998**, Paragraph 18 places an obligation on local authorities that they support and cooperate with voluntary organisations working within the area of social service:⁶

“The local council shall collaborate with voluntary social organisations and associations.

Section 1. The local council shall set aside on a yearly basis an amount of funding to support voluntary social work.

Section 2. The framework for the collaboration is defined by the individual local council.

Section 3. The Ministry of Social Affairs lays down guidelines for the reporting done by local councils on the local development in voluntary social work as well as guidelines for central government follow-up.”

- The **Danish Act on Popular Education of 2000** obliges local authorities to support voluntary and non-voluntary organisations working in the area of popular education:⁷

Paragraph 3. To qualify for support the independent (of the public sector and others) popular education activity has to be provided by a popular education association with the required statutes for its work.

Paragraph 5. The local authority's Popular Education Committee decides whether an association meets the requirements that entitle it to support. The committee in charge of the voluntary association is responsible for the use of the received funding and accommodation vis-à-vis the local council and for accountancy and documentation for the activities. The association has to submit a yearly report describing the popular education activities undertaken, including any fees that participants may have paid, although the local council can decide that this is not needed. A popular education association cannot be a commercial enterprise and any profits generated through fees shall be used in accordance with the purpose of this Act or for public utility purposes.

Paragraph 6. Support can go to voluntary and non-voluntary popular education associations. The local council defines and distributes a specified amount of funding on a yearly basis.

Paragraph 14. Prescriptions regarding voluntary popular education activities: The aim of the activities is to strengthen popular education and thereby the ability and inclination of the association's members to take responsibility for their own lives and to participate actively in and be engaged in society. The voluntary popular education work encompasses sport as well as philosophical and society oriented activities for children and young people under the age of 25, and, if the local authority decides, also activities for adults over the age of 25. Support for voluntary popular education comes as subsidies paid for work with children and young people under the age of 25 and, if the local authority decides, also for people over the age of 25, in the areas of sport and philosophical and society oriented activities .

Paragraph 21. Local authorities provide accommodation free of charge (including for electricity, heating, cleaning and necessary equipment) for activities in the area of sport and philosophical and society oriented activities. The associations benefitting from this need to comply with the rules governing subsidies laid down in the law but it is not a precondition that the activity itself is subsidised by the local authority.

⁶ <https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=20938>

⁷ http://www.socialjura.dk/index.php?id=2815_18&cat=1&showpage=1&cHash=71b84c6f75#7661

Paragraph 34. The Popular Education Committee consists of 7 members of whom a minority represent the local authority and a majority represent a broad section of organisations working in the areas of popular education for children, young people and adults.

Paragraph 38. The Popular Education Committee distributes the subsidies and allocates the accommodation under this law.

- The **Gambling Act of 2006** lays down the rules relating to gambling, including licence and distribution of the proceeds of gambling. The following sections are relevant to this report:⁸

Paragraph 2. Licence is only given to one company providing games.

Paragraph 3. The shares in the company are distributed in the following way: 80% for the state, 10% for Sports Confederation of Denmark (DIF) and 10% for Danish Gymnastics & Sports Association (DGI).

Paragraph 6. Specifies the allocation of the proceeds of gambling to different ministries and how these ministries are again supposed to allocate their shares to different organisations and purposes. The Act allows no ministerial discretion in the allocation.

Self-regulation in relation to volunteering

There are **no provisions in legislation or any codes of conduct for self-regulation** by the voluntary sector.

3.2 Legal framework for individual volunteers

In Denmark there is no legal definition of volunteering, and **volunteers do not enjoy a specific status in legislation**. Thus, for the purpose of for instance honorarium, expenses, insurance or criminal record checks (for volunteers working with children under 15 years of age) volunteers are subject to the same rules as people in paid employment. Any legal issues concerning volunteers are solved on a case-by-case basis (Hainsworth, 2005: 4; communication with interviewees).

Provisions for specific categories

There is no legislation that specifies that citizens are allowed to perform voluntary work, although the Constitution grants all citizens the right to form voluntary organisations. There is no legislation, on the other hand, which bars anybody from performing voluntary work, although **restrictions apply to people who receive unemployment benefit, social assistance and early retirement benefits**.

Thus, a **person who receives unemployment benefit or early retirement benefit** is obliged to provide written information to the unemployment or early retirement benefit insurer about the nature and duration of any voluntary and unpaid work as well as about the voluntary organisation that the work is performed on behalf of. For this purpose voluntary and unpaid work is defined as work which could have been offered as normal paid work in the labour market. A person receiving unemployment or early retirement benefit can perform voluntary and unpaid *activities* which could *not* be offered as normal paid work in the labour market without having to inform the unemployment or early retirement benefit insurer about the activities. The benefit recipient can perform a weekly maximum of four

⁸ <https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=114734>

hours of voluntary unpaid *work*, i.e. work that could have been offered as paid work in the labour market, without any deductions in benefits as long as he/she is still actively seeking and available for work. However, if the number of hours exceeds four the unemployment and early retirement insurer will make a deduction in benefits, or in the worst case decide that the recipient is no longer entitled to it. It is possible for a recipient of unemployment and early retirement benefit to perform an unlimited number of hours of voluntary unpaid *activities* without deductions in benefit as long as he/she is actively seeking and available for work. (Answer from Ministry of Employment to questions posed in the Parliamentary Labour Market Committee, 2009; communication with the National Volunteer Centre).

A **person receiving social assistance** is obliged to inform the local authority (as the body paying out social assistance) about his/her wish to perform voluntary work. This work can only be of a nature that is not normally performed as paid work (i.e. it is of a nature similar to that described as activities in the case of recipients of unemployment or early retirement benefits). The local authority decides if the nature and extent of the voluntary work is compatible with the volunteer's obligation to actively seek and be available for work, and if the local authority decides that this is not the case deduction in or loss of entitlement to social assistance may occur (Answer from Ministry of Employment to questions posed in the Parliamentary Labour Market Committee, 2009).

All voluntary work is to take place in Denmark, i.e. leaving Denmark to carry out a voluntary service implies the loss of the corresponding unemployment and early retirement benefits and social assistance for the period of time the volunteer is abroad (Hainsworth, 2005: 6; communication with the National Volunteer Centre).

The following **rules exist for foreign nationals volunteering in Denmark** (Hainsworth, 2005: 6):

- Nationals from other Nordic countries have the possibility to stay in Denmark without any restriction. They are exempt from applying for work or residence permits and can therefore volunteer freely.
- EU/EEA citizens should obtain a residence permit from the local county authority or a residence permit from the Danish immigration service for stays of more than 3 months. Nevertheless a work permit is not needed in order to do voluntary or paid work.
- Third country nationals legally resident in an EU member state: citizens from several countries must have a visa in order to enter Denmark, and should generally have the right to remain in a EU country for three months. For longer periods, Denmark requires a residence permit and a work permit to be able to perform voluntary work.
- There is no specific type of visa or residence permit category for volunteers in Denmark. The entitlement granted depends on the criteria of the corresponding authority in charge of the application. In the absence of an appropriate category for volunteers, someone coming from abroad (if approved) would be granted a visa as a tourist, student, trainee or employee. The European Commission approved a proposal for a Directive on entry and residence conditions for students and volunteers on 7 October 2002. The proposal aims to facilitate procedures for third country nationals to stay in a European country when engaged in voluntary service. However, Denmark has opted out of this proposal.

People conscripted for **military service** can perform this with a voluntary organisation. (European Knowledge Centre for Youth Work, 2005: 4).

Support schemes and incentives

There are **no support schemes** available relating to for instance subsidies, taxation, procurement and insurance, and in the case of expenses there are no legal provisions

regarding reimbursement of these. Volunteers therefore rely on the voluntary organisations to cover expenses incurred through volunteering, and it is **down to an agreement between the volunteer and the organisation as to whether and the extent to which it happens** (Hainsworth: 4; Communication with National Volunteer Centre).

There are **no incentives to become a volunteer** at present but it is possible that the government's proposal regarding placement in a voluntary organisation as part of 16-19 education will provide an incentive for some young people.

Taxation rules on reimbursement of expenses for individual volunteers

Reimbursement of expenses is tax free, as it is for expenses incurred through normal employment. This is the case whether expenses are reimbursed subsequently or the volunteer is given an amount of money up front to cover future expenses. A new rule has been introduced according to which **a voluntary association can reimburse a volunteer up to a limit of 5,000 Dkr without the volunteer having to submit receipts for the expenses**. However, few volunteers reach this level of expense, and there is anecdotal evidence that associations still prefer to receive documentation for their own sake (Communication with National Volunteer Centre and other interviewees).

Nevertheless, the new rule means that in theory a undocumented reimbursement could be used as an unofficial wage, although the rule was introduced as a means of limiting the administrative burden on associations rather than to facilitate untaxed payment for voluntary services. There is anecdotal evidence that some sport associations use undocumented reimbursement of expenses to pay trainers and instructors, but no concrete evidence for this practice or for whether it extends beyond the sport sector (communication with interviewees).

Reimbursement of expenses does not need to be declared for tax purposes (communication with the National Volunteer Centre).

Taxation rules on rewards or remuneration for individual volunteers

There is **no tax exemption** for volunteers, so any income (reward, fee, honorarium) earned from volunteering is subject to and must be declared for income tax purposes, just as it would be if earned through normal employment. If it is a small amount earned in addition to one's main income it will be declared as B (additional) income and taxed accordingly. This is the case for all other income that is in addition to a main income, so not particular to honorarium or other types of income from voluntary work. Given that the vast majority of volunteers are unpaid the lack of tax exemption is not generally an issue for volunteers (communication with National Volunteer Centre).

3.3 Legal framework for organisations engaging volunteers

Obligation in terms of notification of volunteers

Voluntary organisations have a right not to pass on details about volunteers to public authorities, but if an organisation wishes to do so it would need to obtain the individual volunteer's permission beforehand (communication with The Ministry of Interior and Social Affairs and the National Volunteer Centre).

General taxation rules

According to the Law on Corporate Taxation voluntary associations **are exempt from paying corporate tax on all income apart from income deriving from commercial activity. However, even income from commercial activity is not subject to tax provided it is spent on or set aside for the benefit of the association's public utility**

functions, i.e. it is used within the organisation to fund its work and is not channelled to individuals for consumption unrelated to the organisation. **Income from commercial activity that is not used directly for the association's public utility functions is taxed** at the going corporate tax rate.

Self-governing organisations are taxed according to the Law on Foundations and Funds. However, a **self-governing organisation can apply to be taxed according to Corporate Tax Law and thus only have to pay tax on commercial income, and more specifically the share of commercial income that is not spent within the organisation.** To change tax status self-governing organisations have to agree to be subjected to central or local authority inspection.

Voluntary organisations are exempt from paying VAT on income from commercial activity below 50,000 DKr, and as a result most voluntary organisations are in effect VAT exempt as few have commercial income of such magnitude. If they have an income from a commercial activity of 50.000 DKr. or above they need to be VAT registered and pay VAT like all other organisations. Income from non-commercial activity is VAT exempt regardless of its magnitude.

For tax and VAT purposes commercial activity includes the following:

- Entry fees at events, advertising revenue and sponsorship from individuals who are not members of the organisation.
- Income from rental or lease of property.
- Income from events to which there is public access, e.g. bingo, lotteries, parties, shows and exhibitions.

Non-commercial activities include:

- Income from events just for the organisation's members.
- Income from interest on assets.
- Membership fees.
- Gifts.
- Subsidies from private or public organisations.

(DIF, DFIF & DGI, 2003: 4)

Taxation on fundraising depends on the nature of fundraising. Thus, when fundraising takes the form of a gift the income is not taxed as this is seen as a non-commercial activity. If it takes the form of sponsorship and is from an external source (i.e. not a member of the organisation) the income is taxed as it is seen as a commercial activity (DIF, DFIF & DGI, 2003: 4).

There are **no subsidies** linked to establishing voluntary organisations (communication with The Ministry of Interior and Social Affairs and the National Volunteer Centre).

3.4 Legal framework for profit-making organisations

There are **no legal provisions concerning the involvement of private organisations in volunteering.** This is so because volunteering is generally not legislated and because it is a relatively new area for private enterprises to get involved with. There are trials running in some private companies (as there are in public sector organisations) on promoting employees' participation in voluntary work, but these are relatively new and have not produced published findings yet (communication with the National Volunteer Centre).

Specific support schemes

There are **no support schemes available for private companies to allow employees to participate in volunteering activity** (communication with Ministry of Interior and Social Affairs and the National Volunteer Centre).

3.5 Insurance and protection of volunteers

Volunteers are treated as employees and are therefore **ensured either by the voluntary organisation or by the private company or public sector organisation** (if performed during working hours) that they volunteer for. There is **no legal obligation on the voluntary organisation to insure its volunteers** against risks of accident, illness and third party liability, and while the good voluntary organisation will do so, the expense may be too great for some to be able to afford it. **If no other insurance is available it is up to the volunteer to personally ensure that he/she is covered** by insurance (Hainsworth, 2005: 5; communication with the National Volunteer Centre).

4 ECONOMIC DIMENSION OF VOLUNTEERING

4.1 Funding arrangements for volunteering

National budget allocated to volunteering

The most recent figures available for this are those used for the Danish Johns Hopkins study which, according to the researchers involved in the study, are still valid today. **Total central and local government funding for the voluntary sector in 2003 was 42,164 billion DKr** (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: calculated on the basis of tables 5.2 and 5.3 on p122 & p124). There are no figures available for central and local government funding separately. Below are listed some of the main funding items.

There are no data available for the exact funding allocation for each sector area or for the geographic distribution of allocations by region and local authority area. However, the following figures show the **level of central and local government funding as a percentage of total income for each voluntary sector area** (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 124):

- Culture & recreation (incl. sport): 32.5% of total income.
- Education & research: 77.1% of total income.
- Health: 11.6% of total income.
- Social services: 79.0% of total income.
- Environment: 12.3% of total income.
- Development & housing: 5.8% of total income.
- Law, advocacy & politics: 27.6% of total income.
- Philanthropy: 20.2% of total income.
- International activities: 73.5% of total income.
- Religion: 19.8% of total income.
- Business, professional associations, unions: 1.4% of total income.
- Other: 23.1% of total income.

The **dependency on government funding varies between the different areas of the sector**, with Education & research, Social services and International activities being very dependent on it. Dependency also varies between different types of organisations. Thus, self-governing organisations derive half of their income from government funding whereas the associations only get ca. a quarter of theirs from central and local government (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 157).

The **main funding allocations for volunteering made by the Ministry of Interior and Social Affairs** are (communication with the Ministry):

- 220 million DKr per year allocated directly to voluntary organisations that provide social services.
- 50 million DKr for various kinds of voluntary social work (is earmarked by the Treasury for this purpose).
- SATS funding streams. These funding streams are administered by different ministries as the funding is targeted at work within social affairs, health and the labour market. The amount of SATS funding distributed by the Ministry of Interior and Social Affairs varies year on year, but is meant for social work, some of which will be provided by the voluntary sector. Recently local volunteer centres have been funded with SATS funding in the order of 47 million DKr for 2005-08.
- Funding for the National Volunteer Centre (Center for frivilligt Socialt Arbejde). The Centre receives core funding of 3.8 million DKr per year and ad hoc funding for project work.
- Funding for the Volunteer Council (Frivilligrådet) which is core funded by the Ministry and currently receives 4 million DKr per year.
- 143 million DKr in 2009/10 as financial compensation to local authorities in return for the authorities providing support for voluntary social services. Given its status as compensation the funding is not earmarked for voluntary social work, and although The Ministry of Interior and Social Affairs would like to see local authorities spend the money on voluntary social work there is no enforcement of this. As a result some local authorities spend much more than their allocation, while others spend less.

In accordance with the **Danish Act on Popular Education of 2000** local authorities support popular education through subsidies and help with accommodation. The vast majority of popular education funding goes to local sport associations which receive ca. 3 billion DKr per year (communication with DIF). However, other kinds of leisure activities for children as well as evening classes are also funded in this way. In addition, the Ministry provides a subsidy for pilot and developmental activities within the area specified in the Popular Education Act.⁹

The **Gambling Act of 2006 stipulates the following allocation of the proceeds from gambling**.¹⁰

- Paragraph 6 A. The majority of the profits, i.e. 66.44%, go to the Ministry of Culture, with the Ministry of Education receiving 12.67% and the Ministry of Interior and Social Affairs receiving 10.42%. The rest is distributed among other ministries in smaller shares.
- Paragraph 6 B. The Ministry of Culture shall distribute its share accordingly:
 - 7.59 % to Team Danmark (the elite sport organisation).

⁹ http://www.socialjura.dk/index.php?id=2815_18&cat=1&showpage=1&cHash=71b84c6f75#7661

¹⁰ <https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=114734>

- 25.11 % to the national Olympic Committee/Sports Confederation of Denmark (DIF).
- 22.88 % to the Danish Gymnastics and Sports Association (DGI).
- 3.41 % to the Danish Association of Company Sport (DFIF).
- 7.30 % to the Accommodation and Facilities Foundation.
- 8.20 % to the Foundation for Horse Racing.
- 25.51 % to cultural objectives.
- Paragraph 6 C. The Ministry of Education shall distribute its share accordingly:
 - 63.30 % to youth work (distributed by the Danish Youth Council, DUF).
 - 24.08 % to the national popular education associations and others.
 - 12.62 % to education and popular education..
- Paragraph 6 E. The Ministry of the Interior and Social Affairs shall distribute its share accordingly:
 - 46.97 % to disability organisations and associations.
 - 14.98 % to elderly organisations.
 - 30.04 % to the national voluntary social service organisations (this funding is distributed by the Ministry of Interior and Social Affairs following agreement by the Ministry of Finance).
 - 8.01 % to particular social objectives (this funding is distributed by the Ministry of Interior and Social Affairs according to prescriptions laid down by the Volunteer Council - Frivilligrådet).

Sources of funding for voluntary organisations

The **sources of income for the voluntary sector**, as a percentage of total sector income in 2003, were the following (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen: 123-24):

- National and local government grants: 43.7% (=10% above international average for the Johns Hopkins study countries).
- Membership fees and fundraising: 21.2%.
- Value of goods and services produced: 28.5%.
- Interest payments and capital transfers (donations and bequests): 6.7%.

The above is based on Statistics Denmark figures. Unfortunately this data set does not include information about income generated by organisations that do not have a CVR-number, and it does not contain complete information on philanthropy (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006:141).

The **dependency on each of these sources of funding varies considerably between the different areas of the voluntary sector**. In Education & research, Social services and International activities the majority of income derives from central and local government grants (over 70% in all three cases). In the area of Health organisations obtain the majority of their income from membership fees and fund raising (70.6%) and only a relatively small share from government grants (11.6%). This is very different from continental Europe where 90% of income for voluntary health organisations comes from government. Business & professional associations, unions obtain just over half of their income from membership fees and fund raising (52.9%), but also a significant share from production of goods and

services (37.9%). Organisations in the area of Culture & leisure derive their income in almost equal shares from government grants, membership fees & fundraising and interest payments & donations. In the area of Development & housing just over half of income is derived from production of goods & services (54.5%). Philanthropy differs from the other voluntary sector areas as interest payments & donations make up a significant share of income at 47.8%. Religious organisations also rely fairly heavily on interest payments & donations, e.g. from foreign church bodies, at 34.7% of total income, with the rest of their income fairly evenly split between government grants, membership fees and fund raising and production of goods and services (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen: 123-24).

While the above data are still believed to be valid there will have been a change in the share of **donations**, as the financial crisis has reduced sponsorships. However, as these are primarily found within culture and sport large parts of the voluntary sector remain unaffected, although one needs to bear in mind that the sport sector is by far the biggest single voluntary sub-sector. As regards **Philanthropy**, Denmark is not a particular outlier at 6.7% of voluntary sector income, as most of the developed countries have on average of 8% of this. Instead it is the Anglo-Saxon countries with the high incidence of philanthropy that are the exception. As for international donations there are probably not many organisations in receipt of such. If anything, donations are more likely to go abroad, even if organisations like the Catholic Church and Greenpeace receive international donations through their head quarters. No interviewees were aware of EU funding specifically for voluntary organisations but stated that there might be some for the environment and international development which they were not experts on (communication with interviewees).

4.2 Economic value of volunteering

Income generated through volunteering

The Johns Hopkins study provides the most recent figures for income and is still believed to provide a valid picture of the situation. The sources of income for the voluntary sector in numerical figures and as a percentage of total voluntary sector income in 2003 were the following (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 123-124):

- Membership fees and fundraising: 21.1% of total income or 20,358 billion DKr.
- Value of goods and services produced: 28.5% of total income or 27,498 Billion DKr.

As was mentioned in 4.1 the above is based on Statistics Denmark figures which unfortunately do not include information about income generated by organisations that do not have a CVR-number, and do not contain complete information on philanthropy (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006:141).

Economic value of volunteering

The total *unpaid* voluntary sector workforce was **110,041 full-time equivalent staff in 2003**, which is equivalent to 3.1% of the total Danish workforce (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 138). The vast majority of unpaid voluntary work is performed in the area of Culture & recreation which benefits from 49% of the total unpaid voluntary sector work. In comparison the other areas of the sector benefit from 7.6% or less of total unpaid voluntary work (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 135).

The total *paid* voluntary sector workforce was **140,620 full-time equivalent staff in 2003**, which is equivalent to 3.9% of the total Danish workforce (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 138). The majority of paid staff are found in Education & research (36.2% of total paid staff in the voluntary sector), Social services (28.3% of total paid staff in the voluntary sector) and Business, professional associations, unions (14.5% of total paid staff in the

voluntary sector) (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 133-34). Paid work amounts to ca. 56% of total work input in the voluntary sector in Denmark, which sets it apart from the other Nordic countries where the paid work input is much less substantial (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 141).

The numerical economic value of *unpaid* voluntary work in Denmark in 2003-04 was **35.309 billion DKr**. This is calculated on the basis of the total number of FTE jobs of 1,650 hours per year and an hourly wage of 194.47 DKr. The hourly wage was set according to a calculated average wage for staff in social institutions and associations who perform work of a similar nature to that performed by the majority of volunteers in all sectors (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 139-140).

The Danish Johns Hopkins study did not provide an estimate of the economic value of the paid voluntary sector workforce.

Value of voluntary work as a share of GDP

The voluntary sector's production based contribution to GDP (measured as the total value of the sector's production minus the total costs involved in this production) came to **36,747 billion Dkr in 2003, which is equivalent to 2.6% of GDP** (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 121).

The majority of the sector's production based contribution to GDP stems from two areas, Education & research and Social Services (which also produced the majority of the sector's income), with 77.4% of the sector's production based contribution to GDP coming from these two areas in 2003 (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 132). This contribution was made with rather limited use of voluntary work as the share of full-time voluntary posts in these two areas out of the total voluntary workforce was only 12.1% (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 135). This is due to the fact that the majority of the work in these two areas is performed by self-governing institutions where the use of volunteers is limited. Far behind these two areas came Business, professional associations, unions and Culture & leisure at respectively 9.0% and 5.1% of the total production based contribution to GDP. Together these four areas accounted for 91.5% of the voluntary sector's production based contribution to GDP (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 131-32).

However, given that a large share of the voluntary sector income does not derive directly from production of goods and services but from **central and local government subsidies, membership fees, donations and other fundraising** it would be reasonable to include these significant sources of income in the calculation of the sector's contribution to GDP. Including the value of these additional sources of income adds **62,498 billion DKr and thereby an extra 4.5% of GDP** (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 130, 140).

When we finally add the estimated **value of the voluntary unpaid work** performed in the sector, i.e. **35,309 billion DKr, this again adds an extra 2.5% contribution to GDP** (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 140).

In total, the voluntary sector's contribution to GDP is therefore 134,554 billion DKr or 9.6% of GDP (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 140).

Provision of social services

There are no data available on the share of non-profit organisations successfully tendering for the provision of public contracts to provide SSGI, as the contracts are put out to tender by local authorities without any reporting arrangement in place. This year's Social Service Act Paragraph 18 review may provide some information but is not available until the end of November 2009 (communication with various interviewees).

Neither is there a figure available for the size of the voluntary SSGI sector measured as a percentage of GDP. However, the **size of the voluntary social service sector providing SSGI type services can be measured in other ways** (communication with interviewee):

- The **share of the population working with SSGI type services**: The Danish Johns Hopkins study showed that 5% of the Danish population volunteer in education, 3% in health and 8% in social service. Thus, of the total population 16% volunteer in SSGI type activities.
- The **share of the SSGI sub-sector (i.e. employed and volunteers involved in voluntary sector organisations working in the areas of education, health and social service) out of total number of employees in Denmark**: 14% according to the Danish Johns Hopkins study. Most of the SSGI employees and volunteers are involved in social services, after which comes education, and only a few are involved in health. The equivalent share for Sweden is 4%. The reason why it is higher in Denmark is the existence of self-governing institutions which belong in the voluntary sector although they may not have many volunteers working in each organisation. This is also why 85% of those working with SSGI type services in Denmark are paid staff.
- The **share of SSGI type voluntary sector income out of total voluntary sector income**: ca 25%.

In the absence of data for the share of SSGI contracts going to the voluntary sector it is equally difficult to assess the trends. **The trend is likely to be upward in the future** as municipal reform (merger of local councils into larger entities thus reducing the number of councils from 275 to 98) has given councils an incentive to introduce efficiency savings. For instance, the number of state schools is being reduced through mergers thereby creating fewer and larger schools. However, in response parents are setting up more self-governing schools to serve their local areas, and given that access to this is very good in Denmark, with self-governing organisations receiving an 85% state subsidy of their running costs, this is likely to become an increasingly popular alternative. Finally, the Ministry of Interior and Social Affairs has stated that it wishes to make it even easier to establish self-governing institutions to perform welfare tasks, so there is political backing for the voluntary sector in SSGI provision (communication with interviewee).

The contribution of voluntary sector organisations in the delivery of SSGIs, as perceived by stakeholders, can be grouped under three headings:

- A personalised approach in service provision, as volunteering is about relationships between people, i.e. focusing on the beneficiary and doing something out of personal interest and inclination rather than because one is paid to do it.
- Equality between service provider and service user. It is a more equal relationship between service provider and user if the former is a volunteer, as a volunteer is not part of an organisational hierarchy and working in an official capacity. As a result, the service user may feel better able to divulge information to a volunteer working under an oath of silence than to a public sector employee who might (have to) report back to a service manager.
- Providing variety in the supply of services, i.e. service users are presented with an alternative and, provided equal access, can choose which alternative suits them best. By providing an alternative voluntary sector organisations can also teach the public statutory sector new ways of doing things which can lead to public sector service development and reform.

This being said, some interviewees stated that it is sometimes hard to tell the difference between services provided by voluntary sector organisations and public sector organisations, such as in the case of self-governing as opposed to public sector nurseries. This is partly due to the increasing demands and requirements laid down by central and local government for social services, which pose a limit to the differentiation that is possible for voluntary organisations to offer. It is also due to the fact that the self-governing organisations, which dominate the voluntary sector provision of SSGI type services, are in the majority staffed and thus not actually provided by volunteers. For many employees, working in a self-governing organisation can be little different from working in a public sector organisation. It was suggested that maybe services provided by the Church of Denmark show greater differentiation than many self-governing institutions do, as the former have retained their ideational influence to a greater extent.

Issues of service substitution and job substitution

Given that 84% of government grants and funding for the voluntary sector went to the three welfare areas Education & research, Social services and (by a smaller amount) Health in 2003 it looks as if **there might be a political strategy of using the voluntary sector to offer supplementary or competitive services as an alternative to those offered by the public sector** (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, eds., 2006: 125). Some of the interviewees backed up this perception, whilst others refuted it on the grounds that there were clear rules regarding what is public sector responsibility and that there was no deviation from these.

However, one interviewee stated that welfare provision by voluntary organisations is **part of the government's strategy for reforming the welfare state and curbing public expenditure**. What the public sector can no longer provide, e.g. a visiting service at the hospital or additional help with school work for some children, the voluntary sector is being asked to pick up. Unfortunately the details are not always properly thought through, as in the case of volunteers coming into schools to work with particular groups of children. A problem arose when this activity was transformed from being an additional and informal help to being written into the national curriculum, which meant that teachers were asked to monitor the number of children and their progress following volunteers' intervention. The additional control and performance monitoring of volunteers' effectiveness have not surprisingly made volunteers pull out of the scheme as they did not take kindly to being performance monitored on doing the children and staff in the local school a favour.

Another interviewee agreed that voluntary organisations were being used to substitute withdrawn public services, although possibly only in the case of smaller less expensive service areas. Hence, there are examples of one week reading in the papers that a local authority has cancelled the council run meal delivery service, and the next week reading that the same authority has asked a voluntary organisation to start it up again. It is becoming more common now as local authorities are financially stretched following the recent municipal reform which meant that local authorities were made to cover a wider geographical area whilst expected to make efficiency savings. It is not an issue in itself that voluntary organisations are providing services, but the reasons for transferring former public undertakings to the voluntary sector should be proper and the services offered of appropriate quality.

Opinions are divided on whether there is a risk of job substitution with one interviewee insisting that this should not happen due to the clear rules on the responsibility of the public sector. However, even this interviewee accepts that the issue is being discussed in some quarters. Other interviewees insist that there is job substitution taking place, even if there is only anecdotal information available to support this claim. It is believed to be happening in health care where local authority visiting services for hospitals and nursing homes are being replaced by voluntary sector ones, and in social services where the local authority budget for home help is being kept down by first asking the family of the person needing help, then a voluntary organisation and finally local authority staff to take on the job. With this kind of transfer of services comes an inevitable job substitution.

5 SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DIMENSION OF VOLUNTEERING

5.1 Key benefits for volunteers, the community and direct beneficiaries

Volunteers

According to the interviewees and the findings of the Johns Hopkins study, volunteering from the individual volunteer's point of view is about being part of the community and involved in an activity with other people, as well as about feeling one makes a difference to a particular cause. Hence, the added value is **social interaction and a sense of satisfaction that one has made a contribution and a difference in the world**. A minority will emphasise the added value of particular skills or personal development that can be useful for one's carrier, but this is of a less importance than the sense of **belonging to a community and the opportunity for self-expression** that voluntary work offers.

The community

Both volunteers and voluntary organisations emphasise the social and community benefits of voluntary work. Volunteering is believed to be about engagement in and taking responsibility for activities in the local community, and it is seen as relational in the sense that it builds relations between people (between collaborating volunteers, and between the volunteer and the beneficiary). As a result, volunteering **promotes democracy and social/community cohesion**, as it involves arbitration between potentially conflicting interests, concern for the common good, decision making, etc (communication with interviewees).

Being about participation and engagement beyond the actual activity (whether this is helping out in the local sports club or reading with school age children), and being about doing things collaboratively, volunteering can **facilitate social integration** of groups of people who would not otherwise feel included. This is why sport is increasingly seen as a

means of social integration of ethnic minorities who through membership of a sports club become members of a network, and learn about Danish society and democracy through having to work within the rules of a voluntary organisation or association (communication with interviewees; Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, 2006: 60).

Volunteering also **promotes social solidarity** as it is about people, and whichever job is performed by the volunteer is done out of a genuine concern for the person(s) whom he/she is assisting. The volunteer does things out of good will and not because of being paid for it (communication with interviewees).

The 2004 survey of voluntary organisations that was undertaken for the Johns Hopkins study looked at **how organisations perceive themselves**, which again reflects on the benefits that volunteering has for a community. The findings were as follows:

- **'Interest association'** (civil society as a clash of interests personified by interest organisations and corporatism): Only 1/4 of associations have been involved in public and political issues. Interest organisations are primarily found within the area of Business & professional associations, unions, and to a slightly lesser degree among Law, advocacy and politics, Development and housing, and Health. The national organisations are more likely to act as interest organisations, with ca. 1/2 stating they are involved in public and political issues (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, 2006: 92-93).
- **'Idea based association'** (civil society as a clash of values personified by popular and social movements): 2/3 of organisations think they are founded on values or ideologies of a spiritual, political or societal nature. However, it is primarily values which are generally agreed upon within Danish society, and most organisations do not see it as their objective to convert others to their beliefs. The organisations that most clearly belong in the category popular movement, i.e. are founded on particular ideologies and wish to influence others according to these views, are the religious, environmental, international, political and health related organisations. However, even among these it is only a very small share that see themselves in opposition to the dominant views in society (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, 2006: 99).
- **'Community association'** (civil society as social integration and communitarianism): In the case of 2/3 of the associations the geographical area of the association (where activities take place and members are recruited) is greater than a community (defined traditionally as a parish, local residential area, school catchment area, etc.), and only 1/5 of associations see themselves as local community organisations. For associations other than those in the area of Development and housing it is the activities and interests rather than the local community which are the concern. It is only a very small section of associations that believe it is the job of the association to solve social problems, and local community associations appear to think so even less than other associations. There appears to be little sense of obligation in relation to the issues faced by a local community. Hence, the notion of social integration/communitarianism appears to have little foothold in Danish society and among Danish voluntary associations (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, 2006: 103-104).
- **'Activity based association'** (civil society as social meeting place where social capital is generated and exchanged): For these organisations their contribution and importance derive from the internal life of the association, i.e. the activities the organisation puts on and the way in which it works. Their contributions are the lessons in democracy, trust, norms relating to cooperation and community, etc. that organisational life provides. This view has been a strong part of many organisations' self-perception for many years, and 34% of the voluntary organisations belong in this category, the majority of them working in the area of Leisure, Culture and Sport (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, 2006: 104, 113-114).

While noting the social cohesion benefits of volunteering one needs to also be aware of its **segregation effects**. These days voluntary work is often seen as a means of integration in a local community and in society more widely. However, voluntary work can be about the exact opposite, and certainly has been historically. Thus, in the 19th and early 20th century different social and religious movements (grundtvigians, the inner mission, the labour movement, the Tories, etc) established their own voluntary associations to provide for instance leisure, education and financial services to their members or followers. More recently patient associations are highly specialised in their focus on individual conditions and illnesses, and some leisure pursuits are catered for by different organisations despite in theory being about the same activity, e.g. there are three different climbing associations in Denmark focusing on different kinds of climbing. Hence, volunteers are sometimes engaging in their individual voluntary pursuit in a fairly insular way. As a result, one interviewee found that one of the main characteristic of the voluntary sector is differentiation rather than the homogeneity that some people have recently sought to impose upon it and identify as its *raison d'être* (communication with interviewee).

Direct beneficiaries

Research shows that it makes a difference to beneficiaries whether they are looked after by volunteers or by paid staff. That is why the home help service is typically performed by paid staff, whereas the visiting service is often best performed by volunteers. It is about why we see each other, i.e. is it because we wish to and enjoy it, or is it for professional reasons or because we have been paid to do so? **When the 'service' provided is of a personal nature and does not require specialist skills (e.g. medical or counselling) the genuine concern for another person rather than the professional approach is preferable to beneficiaries** (communication with interviewees).

There is a debate about the benefits to children and young people of engaging with volunteers rather than professionals like teachers, social workers and youth workers. Some people argue that by engaging with volunteers who come from all walks of life, bring different values, and use their everyday language rather than a professional (perhaps slightly sanitised) language is **a form of socialisation** in itself. It introduces children and young people to so-called 'normal' people and teaches them about the world outside the protected realm of the school and nursery (communication with interviewees).

Volunteering and the voluntary sector also offer **choice and variety in the supply of services**, which is preferable provided everybody enjoys the same degree of access to these. Also, since voluntary organisations and volunteers do not have to comply with quite the same range of norms, rules and regulations as the public sector does, they can do things a bit differently. For instance, rather than having to work according to a pre-defined action plan for a particular client or service volunteers can (usually) treat beneficiaries as individuals instead of as a project that needs to succeed (communication with interviewees).

Finally, an important aim of voluntary organisations is to **empower beneficiaries** by supporting them in different ways to live active and fulfilling lives. In this way the voluntary effort becomes a means to social inclusion and not merely about delivering a particular service (communication with interviewees).

Contribution to economic and social policy goals at national level

There is no doubt that volunteering and the voluntary sector contribute to economic and social policy goals.

Financially, **the sector contributes 9.6% towards GDP**, although the value of voluntary labour itself contributes only 2.5% towards GDP (see section 4.2 above).

However, the main contribution is not financial but social in the form of the sector's **significant impact on social cohesion and inclusion/integration**. Depending on the particular area of the sector volunteering also promotes **inter-generational dialogue and active ageing**. In fact, this might increase over time as there is a tendency in some parts of the sector that volunteers stay involved for much longer than in the past, partly as there is so much work to be done and not enough volunteers coming forward among the younger generations. This is for instance the case in sport where the volunteer workforce is ageing. The voluntary sector also contributes significantly to **sustainable development** and **humanitarian aid** both in local communities and through the work of organisations with an international focus (communication with interviewees).

The government is very aware of the contribution of the voluntary sector as illustrated for instance by its keenness to involve sports associations in health and social integration projects and to develop collaborative working between the voluntary sector and local authorities. Its '**Charter for interaction between Volunteer Denmark/Associations Denmark and the public sector**', whilst not the strategy document that some people would like it to be, captures very well what the government sees as the contribution of the voluntary sector (Ministry of Culture, 2001: 2):

- It contributes to the welfare and quality of life of the individual, the many and society as a whole.
- It promotes contact among people with different backgrounds through activities in community coalitions.
- It promotes interest in the common good and has decisive significance for a vital democracy.
- It helps develop competencies crucial to democratic understanding, the formation of public opinion, cooperation, leadership and organisation.
- It can blaze new trails for the public sector and contribute to the development of society.
- The voluntary sector's contribution to the development of Danish society takes its starting point in individual human beings who are inspired and encouraged to take responsibility, together with others, for themselves and their fellow human beings.

There is, however, an interesting difference between how the different areas of the voluntary sector relate to the public sector: **in the area of social service the voluntary sector is seen as a supplement to the public sector, whereas in the area of sport, leisure and culture the public sector is seen as a supplement to the voluntary sector**. This has implications for the sense of autonomy and self-understanding in the different areas of the voluntary sector (communication with interviewee).

5.2 Factors that motivate individuals to volunteer

As is evident from the above, volunteering is about being part of a community and doing things together with other people. It is about contributing to or promoting a cause, whether this is keeping the local football club going or visiting the elderly in the local residential home. For some it is about personal development, although few see volunteering in an instrumental way as providing experience to put on the CV. To get involved one usually has to be touched by a cause personally or through family, e.g. many people get involved with the local sports club when their children start using it. Or one may have come into contact with it through work, e.g. people who have worked in the social services sector sometimes go on to volunteer in this area after having retired.

The 2004 population survey for the Johns Hopkins study asked volunteers **why they got involved with voluntary work**. The findings were as follows (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, 2006: 61):

- Was asked to/chosen: 58%.
- Out of personal interest or awareness of circumstances of close relative: 54%.
- Emerged from prior membership of the organisation: 17%.
- Out of necessity/"someone had to do it": 16%.
- A wish to be part of a social network: 12%.
- As a result of job or education: 6%.
- Had spare time: 5%.
- As a reaction to injustice: 3%.
- As a result of an advert: 2%.
- As a result of TV programme or newspaper article: 1%.
- A coincidence: 1%.
- Other: 2.

There is a **correlation between age and the reasons given for volunteering**, as the older a volunteer is the more likely it is that he/she has become a volunteer as a result of being asked or chosen. For the 16-29 year olds the share of volunteers who had been asked or chosen was 47% whilst it was 69% for the 66+ age group. The opposite is the case when it comes to the reason 'Personal interest or awareness of circumstances of close relative' which is a reason given by 59% of the 16-29 year olds but only 37% of the 66+ year olds. A possible reason for this age related difference could be that older generation is more conscious of and driven by a sense of obligation than the younger generation who is more likely to think that pure interest is a legitimate enough reason for volunteering (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, 2006: 63).

There is little difference in the reasons for volunteering given by men and women. The only statistically significant differences are that men are more likely than women to become involved as a result of membership of an organisation (20% compared to 14%), possibly reflecting the greater involvement of men in sports which is often a club activity, and are also more likely to become involved as a result of job or education (7% compared to 4%) (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, 2006: 64).

There is no statistically significant difference in reasons given by people with different educational backgrounds. Although the young and those with long (university) educations are a little more likely to state interest as the reason for getting involved, and students and those with no education being slightly more likely to mention a wish to be part of a social network as the reason (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, 2006: 64).

The Johns Hopkins study concluded that even if there does not appear to be significant inequalities in volunteering it is evident that **human capital (particularly education), social capital (social networks) and cultural capital (the emphasis placed on volunteering as a value in itself) are crucial for an individual's involvement with the voluntary sector**. Participation in the voluntary sector is not simply driven by the need for integration and solidarity, but also - and not least - by a fear of exclusion and marginalisation, as well as the wish to safeguard one's position and status as long established privileges. As a result, participation is determined by socioeconomic status and corresponding resources and interests (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, 2006: 151).

6 VOLUNTEERING IN THE CONTEXT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

6.1 Recognition of volunteers' skills and competences within the national educational and training system

There is **no formal national recognition or accreditation** of voluntary work but there are **individual arrangements where volunteering counts** (communication with interviewees):

- Applicants get points for voluntary work, as for all other work relevant to the intended degree, when applying for a university place through University Application Stream 2.
- Where university courses include placements those at voluntary organisations are treated in the same way as placements in public and private sector organisations. The way the placement counts towards the degree varies from course to course and university to university. Some universities credit placements as a stand alone unit of a degree; one university mentions the placement on the graduate's exam certificate without it counting separately towards the degree; at another university the student will be tested in his/her placement, with the test result forming part of the course mark; finally, at one university the placement will count towards the required number of points for a term for some courses.

Copenhagen School of Social Work (Den Sociale Højskole) offers students the possibility of placements in self-governing organisations and has introduced a course module containing some information about voluntary social work. However, neither involve an actual accreditation.

Work is currently taking place to develop **placement options in the voluntary sector as part of 16-19 education**. Everybody will be offered a 20 hours placement outside school hours, with one placement option being voluntary work. It has not been decided if the placement will appear on the final certificate, but students will get a diploma for their participation. The working group is due to report in the Autumn 2009 and the aim is that placements will be available from the beginning of 2010. A campaign has already been launched to promote it (Regeringen, 2007: 42).

At an operational level the government is **encouraging individual public sector organisations to more systematically emphasise voluntary work when recruiting** new staff. For central government this was written into the Administrative Personnel Guidance (Personaleadministrativ Vejledning) in June 2008. It has been requested that local and regional authorities implement the initiative during 2009. Generally, the perception amongst interviewees was that **voluntary work is seen as bonus on a CV** for instance for university jobs but especially in the private sector (Regeringen, 2007: 42).

However, the perception amongst interviewees was that **volunteering is still not as widely recognised in policy as in countries like the USA** where they have for instance volunteer days.

6.2 Education and training opportunities for volunteers

The kind of support and training that volunteers receive depends on the area of voluntary work and the organisation the individual is volunteering for. **Most organisations offer some kind of training**, although most do not have sufficient funds for long courses. The large voluntary organisations usually have their own training programmes. Whether the organisation is small or large there is generally **a lot of mentoring and supervision** taking place (communication with The National Volunteer Centre).

Training in particular areas of voluntary work or in particular skills is offered by the National Volunteer Centre. These courses are funded by Uddannelsespuljen (The Education Pool) administered by the Volunteer Council and are therefore free for the voluntary organisations to use. As a result they are very popular with the sector. There are numerous courses in very different subjects, including 'Evidence based coaching', 'Crisis psychology', 'Ethics in voluntary work', 'The experienced advocate', 'Conflict resolution and communication' and 'Development of volunteers in small and medium sized organisations'.¹¹

Training in practical organisational work (e.g. fundraising, finance, admin and organisational issues) is also offered by the National Volunteer Centre. However, as this is paid for by the voluntary organisations themselves it is not taken up by nearly so many organisations as the aforementioned courses.¹²

A range of **conferences** are organised by the National Volunteer Centre, other organisations supporting the voluntary sector as well as voluntary organisations themselves which all help to promote the personal and professional development of volunteers.

7 EU POLICIES AND VOLUNTEERING

7.1 EU policies and national policies in the field of volunteering

According to the National Volunteer Centre there is **no systematic data collection that captures the impact of EU policy on numbers of volunteers, finance and capacity building, and no other evidence that suggests the existence of such an impact either**. All interviewees agreed that there was **no noticeable impact of EU employment, social, youth, active citizenship, education and training policy** on volunteering and the voluntary sector in Denmark, and that one of the reasons for this was that voluntary work takes place in such a decentralised context, i.e. in the many voluntary associations at local level. It may be that there is some impact on policy shaping within voluntary organisations, but a new piece of research with a sample of these would be required to ascertain this (communication with interviewees).

In the case of sport, this is not an area in the EU treaty but is only talked about in informal articles and discussions. As a result, only EU competition policy has an impact on sport in Denmark (see section 7.2 below.).

7.2 EU Internal Market policy and the financing of voluntary organisations

This is **the area where the EU has the greatest impact on the voluntary sector, and it is not a positive one according to some interviewees**, as the internal market policy is believed to inhibit the activities of the sector in a number of ways.

The Services Directive

EU rules regarding public contracts are applied fully in Denmark, i.e. **all contracts over 200,000 euro for services and 5 million euro for works are put out to tender**, and there are **no special conditions applied to voluntary sector organisations** all of which bid on an equal footing with all other organisations (communication with the National Volunteer Centre).

¹¹ [http://www.frivillighed.dk/Webnodes/Kurser+\(Uddannelsespuljen\)/473](http://www.frivillighed.dk/Webnodes/Kurser+(Uddannelsespuljen)/473)

¹² <http://www.frivillighed.dk/Webnodes/da/Web/Public/Tilbud+%26+aktiviteter/Kurser+%28Foreningsh%F8jskolen%29>

There is no doubt that the **EU rule on sending contracts over a certain amount of money out to tender has made it much more difficult for smaller organisations to get involved**. In a tender process the following typically happens (communication with interviewee):

- Organisations are required to provide bank guarantees, which is not easy for small organisations obtain.
- Organisations commit to a certain level of service output (e.g. number of participants completing a training programme). If there is a shortfall in output organisations will only be paid for what they have provided (i.e. the actual number of trainees completing the course), which could cause a revenue shortfall given that the organisation will have had virtually the same costs in delivering the service regardless of the number of non-starters and drop outs. It is therefore necessary to have a financial cushion to soften this kind of impact, which few voluntary organisations do, and some organisations have therefore come close to bankruptcy.
- With tendering a range of large for-profit companies enter the scene. These have a much greater capacity and capability which voluntary organisations cannot compete with. As a result, even some of the large voluntary sector organisations have virtually stopped bidding for SSGI contracts.
- The application process is so demanding now that many voluntary organisations have to recruit consultancies to write their tenders. This means that the organisation has spent the first couple of hundred thousand DKr even before the work has got under way, and thus wasted money which could have been more appropriately spent on social services.

Given that some voluntary organisations have started to pull out of tendering for SSGI type contracts there is clearly an impact, although it is impossible to determine exactly how significant it is (communication with interviewee).

According to one interviewee the Ministry of the Interior and Social Affairs is working on proposals to make it easier to set up self-governing organisations that can perform welfare tasks. It might therefore be a logical next step to also develop specific procurement rules that ensure that these organisations stand a realistic chance of winning contracts (communication with interviewee).

Competition policy

Opinions were divided as to the impact of EU competition policy on volunteering and the voluntary sector. Some interviewees thought that the impact was negative because the compulsory revision of the Gambling Act due to the current monopoly status of the national pools company has caused financial uncertainty for the sector. Another interviewee did not believe that EU competition policy posed any threat to voluntary sector funding, and finally some interviewees did not have an opinion either way (communication with interviewees).

According to one interviewee the change to the Act will probably mean that voluntary organisations will have to be funded in other ways than by means of the gambling profits, for instance via the annual government budget. This is likely to come with more strings attached, which amounts to a greater regulation of voluntary work. Hence, **the impact of EU competition policy could be to reduce the amount of funding available for voluntary organisations and to push these into a more regulated relationship with their public funders**. Whether a reduction in resources or potential greater regulation will impact on the extent of volunteering is an unknown, as one has to distinguish between the circumstances within which voluntary work is performed and voluntary work itself. Circumstances may be less favourable, but the voluntary work may not necessarily decline (communication with interviewee).

Another interviewee did not share the above concerns and stated that **a partial liberalisation of gaming is on its way not just because of EU pressure but also because the current monopoly is untenable given the existence of internet gaming providers** who do not pay taxes and therefore lose the government, and the voluntary sector, important gaming revenues. A proposed new model is to allow more gaming providers to enter the market on the condition that they obtain licences. They will be registered and pay VAT and tax, a percentage of which will go to the voluntary sector, including sport. The aim is to ensure that the voluntary sector does not lose out, and the different ministries involved with the work on revising the Act are looking at what is being done on gaming in other countries in order to ensure that Denmark ends up with the most favourable regulation possible (communication with interviewee).

There does not, however, appear to be a general sense that the **rules on state aid** clash with the allocation of grants, subsidies and donations. In fact, the rules on donations have been relaxed so that gift aid is now recognised and one can get a tax rebate for donations up to 1,000 Dkr when donating to voluntary organisations. According to one interviewee the current government is keen to promote corporate social responsibility and may also have changed rules to facilitate this (communication with interviewees).

There may be some tension, though, in the case of professional sports, which many local authorities would like to support although they are not allowed to subsidise commercial enterprise. As a result, they instead provide support in the form of a sponsorship or by developing facilities that local football or handball clubs, even with significant commercial income, could not afford to build themselves. A local authority may for instance build a large sports hall and rent it back to the club at a certain subsidised price. A working group looked into this and found that this sort of arrangement was not a case of indirect support even if criticism was raised of a couple of cases. However, the question was raised by one interviewee if the case of a local authority building a fancy new stadium for the local football club, only to see the club relegated to a lower division with accompanying income loss and inability to pay the rent on the new facility, does not amount to indirect support of a commercial enterprise (communication with interviewee).

8 CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR VOLUNTEERING

8.1 Challenges for volunteering

This section is based on findings from interviews and the literature review, and includes challenges not just to developing volunteering but to volunteering as it operates today. The challenges are grouped under four headings: recruitment; administrative & regulatory issues; finance; and perception & expectations of the voluntary sector. There are inevitable overlaps between the different areas as challenges are often of a complex nature. However, attempts have been made to reduce repetition.

Recruitment

The organisation survey for the Johns Hopkins study showed that voluntary organisations had different **experiences with recruiting volunteers to their committees** (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, 2006: 84, 86-87, 114). Thus,

- 20% of voluntary associations stated that it was a big problem getting volunteers to join the committee and 39% stated that it was somewhat of a problem, whereas 37% stated that it was not a problem. It was seen as a big problem particularly among associations working in the areas of International activities, Sport and Health. It

appears to mainly be the organisations that are most heavily reliant on volunteers that find it a big problem, in particular the sports associations.

- Only 11% of self-governing organisations found recruitment of volunteers a big problem, 32% found it somewhat of a problem, while 57% did not see it as a problem at all. It was organisations within the area of Development & housing which mostly saw it as a problem, illustrating the high level of voluntary relative to paid labour in this area.
- 18% of the national voluntary organisations find recruitment to committee work a big problem, 43% think it is somewhat of a problem, while 39% do not think it is a problem. It is especially seen as a problem among Health type organisations.

Across the sector the results tend to suggest that it is a **problem recruiting volunteers to committee work**, although it is a big problem only for a minority of organisations. However, as the results only relate to committee work the findings may well have differed had it involved a wider selection of voluntary tasks. According to one interviewee the problem may not be huge at present but is **the main challenge for the future as the number of tasks that voluntary organisations perform increases in line with increased expectations, and because of the need for innovation and 'fresh blood'** which an ageing volunteer population brings.

The **reasons for the recruitment challenge** are extremely varied ranging from individual skills and capabilities to cultural change and legislation. Below are listed the main ones:

- **Volunteer capacity and capability:**
 - Being asked to be involved is a main route into volunteering. Hence, recruitment is hugely dependent on social networks and social capital. The more of this you have the more likely you are to be asked. However, for those with a lot of social capital the challenge is finding the time, as usually they also work fulltime and have children. The average of 10-15 hours per month among the most involved age group (the 30-49 year olds) is probably the utmost that people within this group can devote to voluntary work (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, 2006: 70).
 - The group with the most time tend to have fewer resources (social capital) and be less likely to be asked or be interested in volunteering. It is therefore essential that tasks are designed so that they appeal to and can be done by this group. It is also crucial to tap into the substantial resource among young people who are more willing than the elderly to become involved in volunteering for the first time and who have more time than the busy 30-49 year olds (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, 2006: 70).
- **Changes in our perception of knowledge:** Voluntary work is often performed on the basis of experiential knowledge while many other tasks/jobs are performed on the basis of professional knowledge. Voluntary social work is particularly affected by the preference for professional knowledge, and volunteers are often interviewed prior to their involvement and trained for their role. However, this gives the impression that volunteers and their experiential knowledge are not good enough. There is therefore a **tension between, on the one hand, increasing professionalization and demands placed on volunteers and, on the other hand, the ability of volunteers to meet these demands and remain willing to do so in an unpaid fashion**. This tension makes recruitment increasingly difficult (communication with interviewee).
- **Cultural change:**
 - **Individualisation:** We act less according to tradition and social norms and more according to our personal interests and needs. Our communities are less based on shared values and more on the solving of specific problems or tasks. This might make people feel less obliged to take their turn in the running of the local

football club or arts society, etc., and might mean that some associations die out as a result (communication with interviewee).

- Ever more volunteers are needed to meet the **expectations** of users (in the case of sports associations primarily parents who feel their children should be well looked after), which means a larger number of trainers and assistants are needed (communication with interviewee).
- It appears to be harder to recruit young people, possibly as **people have children later** and it is often through children that people get involved in e.g. the local sports club, and partly because **young people are less interested in association work** as they expect to be paid, are used to more short-term project work, or because they feel they are given insufficient responsibilities and interesting jobs to do unlike in other areas of their lives (e.g. when studying or doing paid work) (communication with interviewee).
- **Legislation:** The rules regarding **limits on the number of hours** of voluntary work that an unemployed person or somebody on early retirement can perform (i.e. 4 hours per week) poses a significant restriction on recruitment among these groups. A top level representative of the sport sector was quoted by one interviewee as saying that the rule was absurd when it means that a voluntary trainer who has been involved with a local football club for years has to stop or significantly reduce his volunteering when he suddenly becomes unemployed.

Administrative and regulatory issues

Administrative and regulatory issues include the following:

- **Professionalisation:**
 - There is talk of professionalisation of the voluntary sector, at least in comparison with other countries, as 56% of the total work done in/by voluntary organisations in Denmark is done by paid staff unlike in for instance Sweden and Norway where the figures are 22% and 36%. The reason for the high level of paid staff is the existence of self-governing organisations of which there are relatively few in the other Nordic countries (Boje, Fridberg & Ibsen, 2006: 154).
 - The voluntary sector is expected to assume responsibility for work that the State cannot handle, but after many years of seeing its role diminish, **the sector does not have the capacity to meet all these demands without bringing in professional expertise**. The professionalization and bureaucratization of the voluntary sector brings with it the risk of the voluntary element declining (Ibsen & Habermann, 2005: 6). A related issue is that the **increased regulation of services provided by the voluntary sector means that the sector's ability to provide novel or simply different services is being gradually reduced**. Hence, it may soon come to operate like a public sector service provider in disguise (communication with interviewee).
 - The **autonomy of voluntary organisations is under threat**. The more voluntary organisations are used as instruments to tackle issues identified by the State, and the more often they are “tempted” by government grants, the more the voluntary organisations’ view of themselves as independent advocates and innovative players is thrown into doubt. There seems to be an ever greater discrepancy between the expectations of the voluntary sector and its capacity and motivation to be turned into a public-sector entrepreneur. (Ibsen & Habermann, 2005: 6).

- An **increasing administrative burden**: The Ministry of Culture 'Beating Team' brought about some improvements in the burden of administration (e.g. raising of the VAT threshold, developing standardised membership/participant reporting forms, removal of the 'sausage rule'), but more rules keep cropping up. Currently the new criminal record checks (Børneattester) are placing an administrative burden on associations, which have been threatened that a system of control will be introduced if they do not comply with the requirement. The way the issue has been handled has not shown the greatest awareness of or regard for the way voluntary associations operate. There is also concern that trainers will have to be registered in future. Not only would this be cumbersome, but it would also be invasive and possibly turn some people off becoming involved. There is a **need to consider whether public authorities are using a sledgehammer to crack a nut in the interest of public safety** (communication with interviewee).
- There is **concern regarding a possible revision of the Danish Act on Popular Education** which is currently being looked at by a working group. Opinions are divided within the voluntary sector, with sports organisations keen to see a revision, albeit one that leads to separate legislation for the sport sector, and cultural organisations anxious about losing their current entitlement to local authority support laid down in the existing Act. There is a tendency among local authorities to be more prescriptive in what they want from voluntary organisations, and in times when local authorities have to make budget cuts (like now following the municipal reform) some organisations fear that local authorities will save money on activities that they do not regard to be of sufficient value, e.g. organisations working with homeless people may seem to provide better value for money than a voluntary theatre group (communication with interviewees).

Finance

Financial issues include the following:

- **Access to funding and facilities is a concern for 19% of voluntary leaders in sport**. The loss of earnings due to foreign bookmakers operating in Denmark via the internet, and the need to change the Gambling Act has created a fair amount of uncertainty. Even the introduction of a new Gambling Act will not provide a guarantee that income from gambling will revert to previous levels, as games providers may still decide to operate without a license and not pay tax. However, the reduction in profits from gambling has come after a significant increase in funding for sport since the mid-1990s and there is not currently a risk that revenues and funding will drop to a level equivalent to that received in the mid-1990s (communication with interviewees).
- **Sustainable funding**: There is a need for more core funding rather than the various different pots of project funding available at different times of the year with different application requirements and forms. The large voluntary organisations with a significant income from membership fees and national collections possibly cope better with fluctuations in funding than small organisations do. However, even some of the large organisations have lost members as people get involved in volunteering in different ways than previously, which means that the organisations have lost some of the cushion that they used to enjoy. It has to be recognised that it costs money to run an organisation, which cannot be covered by project funding. The local volunteer centres are a case in point: 90% of volunteer centres are supported by local government funding with this accounting for on average 40% of centre income, while 75% of centres are supported by central government funding with this accounting for on average 36% of centre income. This narrow revenue structure is one of the biggest challenges for the volunteer centres, as it makes them vulnerable to the absence of year on year funding and the frequent redirection in mission and tasks

that have accompanied different funding streams. A particular risk related to the lack of long term funding is that centre managers leave for permanent positions elsewhere (Skov Henriksen, 2008: 6-8, 12).

- Historically the voluntary organisations have been happy to pass on work to the public sector as the public sector's importance and the consensus on public responsibility for various tasks evolved. However, with changes to the role of the welfare state local councils have become responsible for prevention of social and health issues and have decided that they want the voluntary sector involved in this work. With this involvement comes **greater specification as to how the job should be done, and hence a threat that if it is not performed in the required way the work and the funding could be withdrawn** (communication with interviewees).
- **EU rules on sending contracts over a certain amount of money out to tender** have made it much more difficult for smaller organisations to win such. In a tender process the following happens: bank guarantees are required; the commitment to particular service outputs could lead to revenue shortfall if the expected numbers are not reached; large for-profit organisations enter the fray with whom voluntary organisations cannot compete; and the demanding application process requires expensive consultants to be bought in, thus losing voluntary organisations much needed funds up-front (communication with interviewee).

Perception & expectations of the voluntary sector

Issues relating to perceptions and expectations of the voluntary sector include the following:

- The voluntary sector was rediscovered during the 1980s and became gradually more institutionalised in the 1990s. In the 2000s there has been an increasing instrumentalisation of the sector, in the sense that it has been seen as an instrument for tackling problems or providing services that nobody else can. There is however, a need to recap what volunteering is about and to raise awareness of the sector among local authorities (staff and politicians) and the general public. **Local authorities are very focused on results/output and instant pay off on funding, and tend to forget the benefits relating to empowerment and democracy that spring from voluntary work. If this aspect is overlooked the sector will lose its unique characteristics and simply become a new, and not very different, vehicle of service delivery.** Indeed, raising awareness of voluntary work is likely to have a greater and more beneficial impact than pouring more money into it (communication with interviewee).
- **More than half of the voluntary leaders stated that it had become more difficult to be a sports leader in the last 5 years due to increased expectations** (research commissioned by the Sports Confederation of Denmark in 2004). One reason being the increased interest in involving sports associations in public health measures as a way of tackling health issues. However, this is not why volunteers become involved in the first place. Politicians and civil servants should recognise all the work volunteers do already, much of which will have a preventative effect anyway, instead of trying to draw associations into delivery of public health policy. If only enough support was given to the sports sector to do the work it is traditionally meant to do then a lot could be achieved. Alternatively, health projects could be focused on the larger associations with greater capacity, on the condition that they are paid specifically for the job (communication with interviewee).

Most significant challenge

It is difficult to assess which challenge is the most significant as different areas of the sector and different sizes and types of organisations have different experiences. However, it does **appear as if recruitment may not be as big a problem as one might think, and that it is an issue that organisations may have some time to develop their own strategies for**. The reasons being that more rather than fewer people are involved in volunteering now than 10 years ago, and that the main threat may not be felt until a few years from now when some of the current volunteers finally get too old to remain involved. However, this does not take away the challenge posed by legislation that restricts the number of hours of voluntary work that some benefit recipients can perform.

Based on the interviews it appears that the main challenges to the voluntary sector and volunteering lie in the areas of **administration & regulation** and funding. Although sport still enjoys significant autonomy other areas of the voluntary sector, and especially social services, education and health, are faced with increasingly specific demands and requirements regarding the nature and quality of their activities, not least as they are starting to take over welfare functions that were previously performed by the public sector. This poses challenges to the sector's capacity and capability and could result in greater professionalisation and loss of the defining characteristics of voluntary work, i.e. its ability to promote empowerment, development of relationships between people, and democracy. Ultimately, it also poses a financial challenge if organisations are not seen to be able to deliver and as a result have their funding withdrawn. Not surprisingly, the need for **sustainable funding** is high on the wish list of voluntary organisations, and the fact that some organisations are finding it harder to obtain public sector contracts due to EU procurement rules does not make the situation any easier. Although the intention behind revision of the Act on Gambling and the possible revision of the Danish Act on Popular Education is not a reduction in funding going to the voluntary sector, the organisations are understandably worried that at least for some this will be the outcome.

8.2 Opportunities for volunteering

Interviewees identified development potential in a number of areas, including support for volunteers, awareness raising, legislation and funding.

The **support for volunteers** need to be increased across the board, but it might make sense for government to target it specifically at the areas of culture, sport and leisure as these have the largest number of volunteers. When designing the support it needs to be taken into account that volunteers involved with these activities have not become involved in order to solve public health or other welfare problems. Hence, their particular interests and motivations should be the focus on any support measures that are developed. It would also be useful to build bridges between different organisations that work on related issues in order to avoid duplication and promote mutual learning and project development. Organisations and volunteers should be given a bigger role in identifying how to address the problems that we as a society wish to see addressed, instead of the public sector specifying the methods and intended outputs and outcomes beforehand. This would make for happier and more fulfilled volunteers, promote innovation and learning within voluntary organisations and facilitate knowledge transfer to the public sector.

A **campaign should be designed to raise awareness of voluntary work** and to explain about the huge amount of work that volunteers do on an unpaid basis. This might increase the public's appreciation of the sector and make people realise that there is a limit to what can be asked of volunteers who are already contributing a huge amount of time and energy to an activity. The Sports Confederation of Denmark (DIF) ran a campaign recently with the slogan "Thank a Volunteer" and something similar could easily be put in place by government.

There appears to be a need for a **coherent legislative framework** that encompasses all areas of the voluntary sector, unlike today where different rules govern for instance voluntary social work and sport. They are funded according to different Acts and with different degrees of autonomy in how the funding is spent, which can only become more confusing as sports organisations are increasingly drawn into public health and social service type projects. However, in developing new legislation it needs to be taken into account that voluntary organisations would much prefer not to be over-regulated and that the sector's unique characteristics could easily come under threat if this were to happen.

It would also be useful if the **proposal that ministries estimate the impact of new legislation on volunteering and the voluntary sector were to be implemented across the board**. To the interviewees it looks as if some ministries may do this but others not. As a result, it is still up to the voluntary organisations to spot where the problems are before legislation is passed by Parliament, which is obviously a demanding and time consuming task.

Finally, there is clearly a need to **change the structure of the funding** that goes to some parts of the voluntary sector in order to streamline the different allocations and to ensure greater sustainability through long term and core funding of organisations, including of the local volunteer centres. This would be particularly useful given the difficulties for some organisations in winning public sector contracts on a competitive basis following the introduction of EU laws on public procurement.

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Interviewees

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Ministry of Culture

National Volunteer Centre

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