



Faculty of Social Sciences

FAOS



# SOWELL – Quadrilemma, main challenges and local cases (Denmark)

**Mikkel Mailand, Nana Wesley Hansen  
and Frida Lilli Schlanbusch Nørkjær**

FAOS – Employment Relations Research Center  
Department of Sociology, University of Copenhagen

*SOWELL final conference, December 7, 2022*



## 1. Quadrilemma, the main challenges and case selection

### ***The quadrilemma - pressure in LTC higher than in ECEC***

- Labour shortages are more severe, budget/user reduced more
- Working conditions harder (work intensification) but pay similar
- Pressure on service quality is higher and service coverage is lower

### ***Social dialogue initiatives main challenge: labour shortages***

- Contrary to recession post-2008 numerous social dialogue initiatives
- Institutional set-ups are very similar > explanation for higher LTC frequency (so far) likely higher problem pressure in LTC than in ECEC
- ECEC: More focused on skill than labour shortages. LTC the opposite
- In ECEC: highest profile initiative minimum staffing (service quality)

### ***Selection of local cases - main and additional challenges***

- Recruitment problems (+ work intensification and service quality)

## 2. LTC local cases

### ***Ikast-Brande municipality, project 'Erantis'***

- Focus: *service quality*. Core: multi-task *self-governing teams* (alternative to top-down taylorist time-management) and *user-choice*
- Possible additional effects on working conditions/sick leave
- Strong inspiration from NL, funded by the Danish Health Authorities
- Among recommendations from pilot: User-choice important everyday; User meets as few employees as possible; Extra rehabilitation effort

### ***LTC case Herning municipality, multicase: recruitment projects***

- Initiative 1: *Recruitment and retention* of student at schools for social- and health care workers – cooperation between 5 municipalities
- Initiative 2: Recruitment strategy (covering eldercare workers)
- Five action points in initiative 2: Migrant labour; Flexibility across branches; Education environment and quality standard for education; Employment of student still under education; Senior policies



### 3. ECEC local cases

#### ***City of Copenhagen, recruitment and retention initiative***

- 2,8 million euro yearly/4 years for recruitment and retention results in a collective local agreement in 2021:
- *Recruitment and retention measures:* one-off bonuses 2000 euro to newly qualified/to pedagogues 8+ years empl. + senior initiatives
- Other municipalities followed, neighbors critique wage competition

#### ***Elsinore municipality, the Free Municipality Experiment***

- Government initiative 2020. Free of the day care act/local rules: Try out new initiatives to improve *service quality* for same money
- No extra funding, but minimum staffing ratio to be implemented with additional funding
- Initiatives in 14 of the 26 day care institutions. E.g. local day care center hires extra pedagogue to strengthening quality of learning



## 4. Comparing the cases and learning from them

### ***Status and budgets***

- Cases still work in progress > no final evaluations yet
- Budgets includes investments. Facilitates cases.

### ***Scope and processes***

- LTC cases: More initiatives and more actors included
- Well received, but LTC cases TU/employees worried about burdens

### ***Actors***

- 3 cases: TUs secondary (but still important) actor. 1 case: TUs main actor. Municipality main actor in all cases. Other actors in 3 cases

### ***Decentralization and link to national level***

- 2 cases: Decision includes more competences to local management and/or frontline personal. 2 cases: Explicit relation to national level

### ***Recruitment > service quality***

- Likely positive effects, but no straightforward causality proved

