

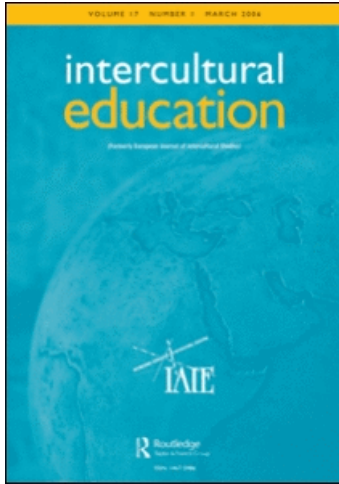
This article was downloaded by: [Biseth, Heidi]

On: 20 November 2009

Access details: Access Details: [subscription number 917014365]

Publisher Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



Intercultural Education

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t713393965>

Democracy and education in a multicultural Scandinavia: what mandate is designated to educators?

Heidi Biseth ^a

^a Oslo University College, Faculty of Education and International Studies, N-0130 Oslo, Norway

Online publication date: 19 November 2009

To cite this Article Biseth, Heidi(2009) 'Democracy and education in a multicultural Scandinavia: what mandate is designated to educators?', Intercultural Education, 20: 3, 243 — 254

To link to this Article: DOI: 10.1080/14675980903138590

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14675980903138590>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Full terms and conditions of use: <http://www.informaworld.com/terms-and-conditions-of-access.pdf>

This article may be used for research, teaching and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, re-distribution, re-selling, loan or sub-licensing, systematic supply or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The accuracy of any instructions, formulae and drug doses should be independently verified with primary sources. The publisher shall not be liable for any loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.

Democracy and education in a multicultural Scandinavia: what mandate is designated to educators?

Heidi Biseth*

Oslo University College, Faculty of Education and International Studies, PO Box 4 St. Olavs plass, N-0130 Oslo, Norway

This paper investigates how education legislation in Denmark, Norway and Sweden define democracy, especially in relation to a complex society with diverse linguistic, religious and cultural practices. What tasks are assigned to educators through education policy documents pertaining to democratic values? The analysis points out that the designated mandate is normative and emphasizes the political nature of education. Furthermore, there is room for improvement in democratic features of education systems in Scandinavia.

Denne artikkelen undersøker hvordan lovverket og tilhørende regelverk i Danmark, Norge og Sverige definerer demokrati, spesielt relatert til et komplekst samfunn med ulike språk, religioner og kulturelle praksiser. Hvilke oppgaver relatert til demokratiske verdier er gitt til lærere gjennom de politiske dokumentene? Analysen viser at mandatet gitt er normativt og understreker utdanningens politiske natur. Videre er det rom for forbedring av de demokratiske aspektene i utdanningssystemene i Skandinavia.

Keywords: democracy; citizenship education; multicultural education; Scandinavia

Introduction

In *Intercultural Education*, Volume 19, Number 2, Mandt (2008) contributed an essay entitled 'The quality framework in Norway'. This essay was placed under the section on examples of best practice. Mandt's essay focused on Norwegian education legislation pertaining to the importance of social and cultural competence, facilitation of inclusive education, pupil participation, promotion of democratic virtues and skills, etc. However, the paper simply quoted policy documents, listed political ideals and omitted any 'actual practices' taking place in everyday school life. Furthermore, only some of the legislation was used, making Mandt's analysis primarily prescriptive in nature.

This paper focuses on a more critical and comparative analysis of the Education Acts and legislative regulations in three Scandinavian countries. This analysis investigates what kind of democratic assignment the education sector is given in Scandinavia, especially in relation to the multicultural environments in which they operate.¹ This task is undertaken by analysing education legislation and legislative regulations in Denmark, Norway and Sweden. Using a comparative design enables the author to locate points of commonalities and differences in education objectives (Stromquist 2002). In

*Email: heidi.biseth@lui.hio.no

addition, experiences drawn from each country can be useful and benefit the others. Why choose to compare the Scandinavian countries? Scandinavian countries share a number of characteristics: historical, political, societal, cultural and linguistic. This makes a comparison possible, based on roughly equivalent standards, while also noting that they have unique and different traits. Furthermore, some researchers (e.g. Ball and Larsson 1989; Wiborg 2004) argue that political tendencies in Scandinavian countries are factors that have contributed to an unusually extensive comprehensive and unified school system in all three countries. In addition, Denmark, Norway and Sweden are countries that often use similar models, perform relatively well and similarly on the PISA test (OECD 2007), and frequently compare themselves with each other.

According to Torney-Purta (2002), an ideal type of civic education in a democracy should enable students to acquire knowledge about the political system, recognize the strengths and challenges of democracy, the rights and duties of a democratic citizen, and prepare students to participate in respectful discussions about important and potentially controversial issues. Scandinavian societies have historically used the schooling system as a means of instruction and transmitter of democratic values and practices (Jacobsen et al. 2004). As a result of immigration, school environments have become increasingly complex, especially in urban areas of Scandinavia, thus creating unique challenges to democratic values, which are put to the test when the majority meets the 'foreigners' (Honig 2001; Kymlicka 2001). Approximately 10% of students in the compulsory grades in Denmark and Norway have a mother tongue other than the national language (Undervisningsministeriet 2008; Statistisk Sentralbyrå 2007). The number in Sweden is approximately 16% (Skolverket 2008). Most of these students have immigrant backgrounds, as a result of parents' moving either for labour purposes (e.g. Turkey and Pakistan) or as refugees (e.g. the Balkans, Somalia, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan). The unified school systems make sure that all students, regardless of differences in socio-economic, cultural, linguistic or religious backgrounds, attend public schools.

Some theoretical underpinnings

The following discussion is based on some tendencies in the current debate on democracy, education and multiculturalism. The selection of theoretical approaches is the author's, and not based on the background of the legislation.

Held (2006) describes democracy as a multifaceted concept based on a history of both the celebration of the end of random rule and an anxiety that democracy could mean rule by a mob. The guarantee of basic rights equally to all citizens, whether belonging to a minority or to a majority in society, constitutes the bedrock of a democratic system (Beetham and Boyle 1995; Held 2006). This is one of the underlying commonalities present in many definitions of the concept. Furthermore, Torres (1998) makes a clarifying division between democracy as a 'method' and democracy as 'content'. Democracy as a method is concerned with the governance and distribution of power, because it involves political representation, voting and elections. The system of free elections functions as a corrective to those in power. This is similar to Held's description of democracy as 'an end', i.e. democratic politics as a means of protecting citizens from arbitrary rule (Held 2006). Democracy as content, according to Torres, involves citizens' participation in public affairs and thus implies that the people have power to take part in decisions regarding their own lives in the wider society (Torres 1998). In other words, participation in both political and social life is

important for its own sake, and thus democracy is a means of self-realization (Biesta 2006; Held 2006).

In a deliberative model, political actors not only express preferences and interest. They also engage with one another regarding how to balance these under circumstances of inclusive equality. A sense of equality is fundamental to democracy. People must believe that their voices will be heard, and they must be able to communicate effectively (Noddings 2007). Communication is thus an aspect of democratic life, and the development of communicative and linguistic skills is imperative in order to gain equal capability for public functioning (Englund 2000).

A key issue in democratic societies concerns the relationship between democracy and inclusion. The latter is described by several as the possible core value of democracy (e.g. Allan 2003; Biesta 2007; Gundara 2000). The very language of inclusion suggests that someone is including someone else. It also suggests that someone is setting the terms for inclusion and that it is for those who wish to be included to meet those terms (Biesta 2007). A major strength of democracy lies in how it is able to cope with these tensions and foster community bonds (Amadeo et al. 2002).

The Scandinavian countries claim to have established strong democratic traditions. Democratic societies tend to emphasize education as a tool for the strengthening of democracy by preparing the young for their future roles as citizens (Biesta 2006; Howe and Covell 2005; Osler and Starkey 2005). Schools are the institutions in which children first develop their ideas about the rights and responsibilities of citizenship (Howe and Covell 2005). Furthermore, education enables a broadening of people's understanding of others through acquired knowledge, which is crucial in the development of a democratic society and culture (Held 2006). Harber (2004) claims that democracy and peace are the fundamental goals of education and that development of the appreciation of diversity and acceptance of the inherent humanity of all individuals are important elements of citizenship education. In addition, Banks (2005) indicates that democracy is concerned with attitudes, values and behaviours. He also describes 'effective' citizens in diverse democratic societies as those who have positive attitudes and behaviours toward individuals from different racial, ethnic, social class and language groups, and participate in equal-status contact situations with them.

Biesta (2006) emphasizes that schools can neither create nor save democracy, only support societies in their democratic endeavours. Democracy is a task for education, a challenging task that is given to educators, and towards which educators, schools and other education institutions have to aspire (Biesta 2006). Cultural differences can be democratically acknowledged only on the basis of social equality and the protection of security and rights for all (Olssen, Codd, and O'Neill 2004).

Kjellin and Stier (2008) claim that the Swedish National Curriculum stipulates a set of 'fundamental values' for elementary education, assigning schools the task of educating 'democratic citizens'. Students are to be equipped with the tools necessary for dealing with the attitudes and values connected with citizenship. Bergesen (2006) claims that the Human Rights framework is acknowledged as the framework in which all Norwegian schools have to operate. This is in line with, for instance, Osler and Starkey (2005) and Beetham and Boyle (1995), who emphasize the strong relationship between human rights and democracy, as interdependent and mutually reinforcing factors.

Olssen, Codd, and O'Neill (2004) stress the pivotal role of education in the construction of a democratic society. In addition, education plays a significant role in the maintenance of democracy. We are not inherently democratic. This is a role that

needs to be learned. Therefore, how democracy is described in national legislation and legislative regulations reflects what kind of democratic assignment the education sector is given.

Methodological issues

The author has chosen to examine official legal texts, i.e. the Education Act(s) in each country and the legislative regulations² belonging to these Acts. The rationale for this sample is an assumption that legislative policy documents usually have a greater impact on everyday school life, as there may be judicial consequences if they are not complied with. Legal texts, as any other policy documents, are not unproblematic and often have an interesting story of how they came to be (Yang 2007). However, the quest is to determine the *de facto* democratic nature of the assignment given through the existing texts. Therefore, the background of each policy document has not been investigated. Furthermore, policies are never static or permanent, and they are only valid in certain contexts and within certain periods of time (Arnove 2003; Yang 2007). The sample of policy documents analysed in this research is stated in the Appendix.

Four themes have been chosen to be used as lenses in analysing the policy documents in question, because they capture some essential features in all the three national Education Acts and in the national curricula. The four themes are 'Access to education', 'Language', 'Religion' and 'Participation'. They will be presented in separate paragraphs with a small introduction discussing the relevance and justification for this topic as a theme in this research. In addition, these themes contain an aspect of knowledge acquisition and an aspect of skills acquisition. Furthermore, this will enable us to understand the difference between education *for* democracy, i.e. preparations, knowledge and skills, and education *through* democracy, i.e. both teachers and students in school acting democratically in relation to each other and displaying democratic attitudes (Biesta 2003).

Access to education

Public or civic tolerance, literacy and other values required for democratic functioning are often values conveyed through the education system. If education is to play a role in the support of democracy (Biesta 2006) and if there is a place for citizenship education (Howe and Covell 2005; Osler and Starkey 2005), access to education is essential to the development of democratic features.

All three countries have a system of free public schools. All children from age 6 or 7 to 16 must receive education which is to be individually adjusted for every student. Tracking³ usually starts after compulsory schooling. Both Denmark and Sweden have a system of nine years of compulsory schooling in addition to access to upper secondary education. In Denmark, access to upper secondary education as a preparation for higher education, the Gymnasium, is based on sufficient qualifications gained through the compulsory schooling system. Teachers and counsellors are the ones who assess whether they believe the student is qualified for this education track. If their assessment is negative, the student may opt for a 10th year, choose a vocational track or her/himself apply to take an entrance exam to the Gymnasium. In this situation, Danish students are very dependent on their educators to enter further education. All students in Norway have a legal right to free upper secondary education. They have to apply for further education themselves and do not need permission

from teachers, parents or the school once they are over 15 years of age (cf. Convention of the Rights of the Child). Admission is based on grades, but immigrant students with only a few years in the Norwegian education system may apply within a particular quota and gain admission with lower grades than the norm. In Sweden, all students are entitled to upper secondary education if they have results above the national minimum. This is sometimes difficult for students with an immigrant background, and they may enter individual programmes or risk not receiving any upper secondary education at all.

Adults or newly arrived immigrants are entitled to basic education, i.e. 9–10 years of schooling. This is recognized as a necessity for functioning in Scandinavian societies. Therefore, those that have not received compulsory schooling in their country of origin are entitled to this. In Norway and Sweden, this is provided free of charge in public schools. In Denmark, it is not necessarily free. Promoting basic education is done in order to help adults without education and newly arrived immigrants with limited education to access work and enable them to take responsibility for themselves in society. Sweden emphasizes the democratic aspect of teaching adults by stating that the activities within this kind of education have to be in accordance with basic democratic values such as respect for the value of each individual. Teachers have to promote equality between men and women, and actively work against racist behaviour (Skollagen 1985).

The indigenous Sami⁴ population exists in both Norway and Sweden, and they have access to schools with Sami as the language of instruction and a curriculum adjusted to their situation of having to learn two languages (i.e. Sami and Norwegian or Sami and Swedish). Educational legislation protects their distinctive cultural features, history and language, hence valuing the diversity among the majority population and the indigenous population (Opplæringsloven 1998; Skollagen 1985).

Language

There are several ways of approaching the issue of language related to multiculturalism in a democratic society. An obvious strategy is to emphasize the necessity of learning the national language(s). The education acts and national curricula in all three Scandinavian countries emphasize the importance of Danish, Norwegian or Swedish as subjects in school – for all students. These subjects promote language as a basis for personal and cultural development, the development of social competence, increasing the ability to understand democracy, and for democratic participation. Students are to be empowered to participate in discussions and state their own opinions. Furthermore, good oral, writing and reading skills in these national languages are described as necessary for active social engagement and functioning in working life. All in all, the description of these subjects occupies large spaces in the national curricula, which signals the significance ascribed to them. Interestingly, the subjects are described as important factors in the development of national citizens and as carriers of the national cultural heritage, not merely instruments of communication.

Danish and Swedish are supposed to be offered as a second language to students who have another mother tongue. According to Danish policies, this is to be taught in separate classes only if the students are not able to follow regular classes because of lack of linguistic competence in Danish, i.e. this subject is to be offered to support the development of Danish linguistic skills, not skills in the mother tongue. Furthermore, this subject is to promote the use of Danish language and understanding of Danish

culture and society. Once the student has sufficient Danish linguistic skills, the subject is no longer offered. Furthermore, the legislation recommends, not demands, the use of specially trained teachers. In Sweden, the director of each school has to decide on the need to teach Swedish as a second language, and if taught, it is to replace regular Swedish as a subject. Hence, the students may take this subject throughout compulsory education. Another option is for the students to choose this subject instead of other foreign languages. In general, Swedish teachers have to be sufficiently qualified for the subjects they teach, but it is not mentioned whether they have to have particular education training to teach Swedish as a second language.

From 1987 to 2007, Norwegian as a second language was a subject in Norwegian primary schools. The students could be evaluated in this subject after grade 10 and, in the beginning, this plan had similarities with enrichment models for bilingual education, in many ways also similar to the current situation for the Sami students in Norway. In 2007, Norwegian as a second language was replaced by a plan called Basic Norwegian for students with a linguistic minority background. This implies that the students should leave the plan as soon as possible, and there is no final evaluation in Basic Norwegian. Minority students are supposed to pass their exams at the same time and at the same level as students with Norwegian as their first language (F. Aarsæther, personal communication, September 17, 2008).

Linguistic competence in national language is considered important in the democratic societies of Scandinavia. How is this implemented when students have a mother tongue other than the national language? The policy of Norway is to provide education through the mother tongue if the student does not know Norwegian. A relatively rapid development of Norwegian linguistic skills is assessed by the Parliament as a means of integration. Therefore, students receive strengthened teaching in the Norwegian language. Once students have mastered Norwegian to a certain degree, they follow the regular classes. Furthermore, this is only available if there are qualified teachers in the school or municipality and for a limited time. Sweden does not offer education through the mother tongue *per se*, but students are offered the opportunity to study their own language as a subject as long as several students (and their parents) request it and a qualified teacher is accessible. It is also a voluntary subject, which implies that it does not necessarily have high status. Denmark promotes bilingual competence in its policy documents and describes the importance of knowing the language, culture and society in both the country of origin and Denmark. Mother tongue education is a subject that is to support cultural diversity and international understanding. However, this subject is only offered to students who have parents from other countries within the European Union, EEA⁵ countries, the Faroe Islands or Greenland. Furthermore, it is only to be offered if the same language is demanded by 12 or more students (and their parents) in a municipality and a qualified teacher is available. It is quite interesting that this subject is not considered of importance, given the relatively large population of immigrants from countries outside the above-mentioned countries. The author would suggest that support of cultural diversity and international understanding are important skills for all citizens in a democracy.

All Scandinavian countries teach English as a foreign language. Moreover, a second foreign language is considered important, usually in secondary schools. The subject 'foreign languages' is given as a means of increasing linguistic and intercultural competence, a requirement in a globalized world. What languages are offered? Denmark, Norway and Sweden have similar policies here: French, German and Spanish are the

main languages taught. In Sweden, it is possible for students to choose their mother tongue as a foreign language if they have already received education in that language, and if a sufficient number of students request it. In Norway, the schools have to offer French, German, Spanish or Russian, but can also offer any other language as a foreign language. The main immigrant languages such as Arabic, Vietnamese, Punjabi, Turkish, etc are, if offered at all, only offered to those who already speak them, not to students with Danish, Norwegian or Swedish as their mother tongue. This sends a signal on the part of politicians in the Scandinavian countries as to what kinds of languages are considered valuable (Biseth 2009).

Religion

Religion is a concept rarely used in relation to democracy, except for freedom of religion as a human right (United Nations 1948), and human rights are an important aspect of democracy in Scandinavia (Bergesen 2006). However, this is of specific interest in the Scandinavian context, as all three countries have a long history of state religions and have given religion a particular place in the national education legislations and national curricula. How do education policies manage to cope with the diversity of world views in these countries?

The subject of religion tends to cover much of the 'multicultural understanding' in Scandinavian policies, hence making the subject important for investigation when discussing democracy in a complex society. The purpose of teaching Christianity as a subject in Danish compulsory education includes: to enhance the students' understanding of the religious dimension in the life of each individual; to access knowledge about the particular space of Christianity in Danish history and society; to enable students to express and discuss their own and other's world views; and to come to grips with diversity in society. The same goals apply to the compulsory subject Religion in the Gymnasium. Despite these good intentions, Christianity and Christian values have a hegemonic status. Furthermore, it is possible to be exempted from the subject Christianity if parents meet the Director, who will advise on the consequences of the exemption, and if parents agree to address the religious education of the student themselves.

Until August 2008, Norway had a subject entitled Christianity, Religion and Ethics, and promoted the view that this was a subject where all religions and world views were treated in an equal way. All students were expected to take part in such a balanced and neutral subject – the intention was not to allow 'opt-outs'. A verdict by the European Court of Human Rights⁶ has contributed to a recent change in the way the subject is taught. The title of the subject has been changed to Religion, World Views and Ethics. Exemption from certain practices in *all* compulsory subjects is now possible if parents and students feel they contradict their own values. Christianity continues to constitute a central part of the curriculum, which in itself is not necessarily problematic, but Christian values are regarded as the spine of the Norwegian education system, as the Education Act makes clear that the purpose of education is to, in collaboration and understanding with the parents, give the child a Christian and moral upbringing (emphasis added) (Kunnskapsdepartementet 2004).

In Sweden, religion is not a separate subject, but part of a block of topics together with geography, history and social science. Lutheran Protestantism is not given priority except to explain its influence on Swedish history and society. One purpose is to understand and reflect upon one's own life and environment, promote an open

discussion about issues related to belief and world views, and to problematize basic democratic values. Interestingly, exemption from the topic is not discussed. This could be because this subject is assessed to be fundamental in a diverse society and important in combating prejudice and racism.

National history and legislation tend to relate to religion in a particular way: by conveying national 'heritage' and values. In all three countries, Christianity (or Lutheran Protestantism) occupies a significant place, but education legislation differs. In the present study, it seems that this is one of the subjects where the three countries deviate the most in their politics.

Participation

Democracy involves citizens' participation in public affairs and thus implies that people have an ability to take part in decisions regarding their own lives and within the wider society (Torres 1998; Olssen, Codd, and O'Neill 2004). According to Beane and Apple (2008), a hallmark for schools in democratic societies involves structures and processes which create possibilities of participating in collaborative planning and decision making that affects the pupils' lives. Participation is also related to personal development of skills, e.g. openness, discussion, critical judgment and explanation of conclusions.

Analysis of policy documents shows that all three Scandinavian countries have legislation with a strong emphasis on democratic values as the foundation of education. A common aim is to create active and participatory citizens. Knowledge about democracy, democratic structures and institutions, elections, individual rights and duties is considered an important part of the education mandate. Furthermore, the schools are considered important arenas in which young people can gain experience of participation. In addition, students are to be empowered to choose further education and vocations, and hence empowered to influence their own lives. All countries have legislation which secures students the right to counselling and advice according to their academic results and occupational aspirations, and receive information about working life.

A particular brand of participation in Scandinavian schools is through different governing bodies. Both Denmark and Norway have legislation related to students' participation in the running of the school through School Boards.⁷ Additionally, students in Denmark have a right to establish a Student Council to discuss issues of significance to the students. This has been developed further in Norway, as all schools must have Student Councils, and a curriculum is set up for a subject related to this from grades 8 to 10. This subject aims to develop an understanding of democracy and democratic participation with the intention of contributing to active participation in society. Sweden has legislation promoting Class Councils. All students are members and are supposed to discuss with their teacher issues of importance to them. At first glance, the policy of student participation in different bodies and councils seems to reflect high levels of democratic participation. However, what is decisive in this is what issues the students actually can decide on and to what extent they are allowed to influence the schools and lectures they attend. Furthermore, it is of interest to what extent the student representatives in the different bodies are representative of the actual student population in each school, e.g. gender, religious background, linguistic background and age. This cannot be revealed through analysing policies but must be investigated further through practice in schools.

The above-mentioned issues relating to participation are not restricted to schools with a high percentage of immigrant students. They relate to all students, irrespective of background. However, students with an immigrant background may need more support than others to be able to participate owing to linguistic obstacles, lack of knowledge about educational and vocational opportunities, etc. Although all students are to receive counselling about future education and job possibilities, support to participate in other ways in everyday school life is not mentioned specifically for this group in the legislation. Then it becomes questionable whether students with an immigrant background have possibilities of developing their participatory skills within the education system equal to those who master both the language and the system.

Conclusion

Education is fundamentally political in nature, and there is a continuing need to examine and challenge content and form. All decisions in the education sector carry ideological and philosophical weight, and these are in turn communicated to the students, either directly or indirectly (Nieto 2004). Through this analysis of the Scandinavian legislation, the immediate impression is that ‘ideal civic education’ is the mandate in the education sector, somewhat similar to what Mandt (2008) describes. Although the Scandinavian countries have education legislation strongly promoting issues of democracy and multiculturalism to a large extent, there is still room for improvement.

Some education policies show signs of what Banks (2005) calls a ‘mainstream-centric curriculum’. Gender equality is emphasized in Scandinavian legislation, and human rights are mentioned as core values. However, other forms of diversity, e.g. cultural and linguistic, are not visible as core values in what is supposedly an inclusive education system. The author would claim that this prevents all the students from learning about valuable alternative perspectives. Furthermore, this may marginalize the experiences and cultures of minorities. The current analysis shows that the Scandinavian democratic ideal is part of the mandate given to the education sector. However, this does not reflect the diversity of the population. Hence, there are still a number of significant issues to be discussed in order to improve the democratic character of education systems. Moreover, official documents are not necessarily representative of what is going on in the classroom, and further investigation on how the mandate is practised by the Scandinavian educators is necessary.

Notes

1. The concept ‘multicultural’ in this paper is used to describe the *diversity* of the pupils’ backgrounds, e.g. linguistic and religious.
2. National curricula tend to constitute part of the legislative regulations.
3. Tracking in this text refers to the point where students specialize in different streams, e.g. vocational education, academic education.
4. The Sami are recognized as an indigenous population. They live in the northern part of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia.
5. European Economic Area: EU and Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein.
6. The European Court of Human Rights has ruled against Norway in this. See Folgerø and others – Norway (No 15472/07) Judgment 29.6.2007 [GC].
7. A School Board usually consists of representatives from the school staff, representatives from parents and representatives from the students.

Notes on contributor

Heidi Biseth is a research fellow at Oslo University College, Faculty of Education and International studies. She is currently working on a research project comparing Scandinavian multicultural school environments and investigating the democratic mandate given to the education sector and how educators perceive and practice their task as custodians of democracy.

References

- Allan, K. 2003. *Inclusion, participation and democracy: What is the purpose?* Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic.
- Amadeo, J.-A., J. Torney-Purta, R. Lehmann, V. Husfeldt, and R. Nikolova. 2002. *Civic knowledge and engagement: An IEA study of upper secondary students in sixteen countries*. Amsterdam: The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement.
- Arrove, R.F. 2003. Introduction: Reframing comparative education: The dialectic of the global and the local. In *Comparative education: The dialectic of the global and the local*, 2nd ed, ed. R.F. Arrove and C.A. Torres, 1–23. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Ball, S.J., and S. Larsson. 1989. *The struggle for democratic education: Equality and participation in Sweden*. New York: Falmer Press.
- Banks, J.A. 2005. Approaches to multicultural curriculum reform. In *Multicultural education: Issues and perspectives*, ed. J.A. Banks and C.A.M. Banks, 242–64. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley.
- Beane, J.A., and M.W. Apple. 2008. The case for democratic schools. In *Democratic schools: Lesson from the chalk face*, ed. M.W. Apple and J.A. Beane, 1–29. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Beetham, D., and K. Boyle. 1995. *Introducing democracy: 80 questions and answers*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Bergesen, H.O. 2006. *Kampen om Kunnskapsskolen*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- Biesta, G.J.J. 2003. Demokrati – Ett problem för utbildning eller ett utbildningsproblem? *Utbildning och Demokrati: Tidskrift för Didaktik och Utbildningspolitik* 12, no. 1: 59–80.
- Biesta, G.J.J. 2006. *Beyond learning: Democratic education for a human future*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm.
- Biesta, G.J.J. 2007. ‘Don’t count me in’. *Democracy, education and the question of inclusion. Nordisk Pedagogik* 27, no. 1: 18–31.
- Biseth, H. 2009. Multilingualism and education for democracy. *International Review of Education* 55, no. 1: 5–20.
- Englund, T. 2000. Deliberative samtal som värdegrund – Historiska perspektiv og aktuella förutsättningar [Electronic Version], 15. <http://www.skolverket.se/publikationer?id=752> (accessed July 9, 2007).
- Gundara, J.S. 2000. *Interculturalism, education and inclusion*. London: Paul Chapman.
- Harber, C. 2004. *Schooling as violence. How schools harm pupils and societies*. Oxford: Routledge Falmer.
- Held, D. 2006. *Models of democracy*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Honig, B. 2001. *Democracy and the foreigner*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Howe, R.B., and K. Covell. 2005. *Empowering children: Children’s rights education as a pathway to citizenship*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Jacobsen, B., F. Troels Jensen, M.B. Madsen, M. Sylvestersen, and C. Vincent. 2004. *Den Vordende demokrat: En undersøgelse af skoleklassen som demokratisk lærested*. Århus: Aarhus Universitetsforlag.
- Kjellin, M.S., and J. Stier. 2008. Citizenship in the classroom: Transferring and transforming transcultural values. *Intercultural Education* 19, no. 1: 41–51.
- Kymlicka, W. 2001. *Politics in the vernacular: Nationalism, multiculturalism and citizenship*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Mandt, G. 2008. The quality framework in Norway. *Intercultural Education* 19: 177–82.
- Nieto, S. 2004. Critical multicultural education and students’ perspectives. In *Multicultural education*, ed. G. Ladson-Billings and D. Gillborn, 179–200. Oxford: Routledge Falmer.
- Noddings, N. 2007. Education and democracy in the 21st century. *Nordisk Pedagogik* 27, no. 1: 8–17.
- OECD 2007. *PISA 2006: Science competencies for tomorrow’s world*. Paris: OECD

- Olssen, M., J. Codd, and A.-M. O'Neill 2004. *Education policy: Globalization, citizenship and democracy*. London: Sage.
- Osler, A., and H. Starkey. 2005. *Changing citizenship: Democracy and inclusion in education*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Skolverket 2008. *Skolor och elever i grundskolan läsår 2007/2008* [Schools and pupils in compulsory school 2007/2008]. <http://www.skolverket.se/sb/d/1638> (accessed August 30, 2008).
- Statistisk Sentralbyrå 2007. *Elevar med morsmålsopplæring og særskild norskopplæring, etter fylke. 1. Oktober 2006* [Number of students with mother tongue education and adjusted teaching in Norwegian]. http://www.ssb.no/emner/02/barn_og_unge/2008/tabeller/skole/skole0300.html (accessed August 30, 2008).
- Stromquist, N.P. 2002. *Education in a globalized world: The connectivity of economic power, technology, and knowledge*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Torney-Purta, J. 2002. The school's role in developing civic engagement: A study of adolescents in twenty-eight countries. *Applied Developmental Science* 6, no. 4: 203–12.
- Torres, C.A. 1998. *Democracy, education, and multiculturalism: Dilemmas of citizenship in a global world*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Undervisningsministeriet 2008. *Tosprogede elever i grundskolen 2006/2007* [Bilingual pupil in compulsory school 2006/2007]. <http://www.uvm.dk/statistik/grundskole/tosprogede/2006/index.htm?menuid=551005> (accessed August 30, 2008).
- United Nations. 1948. *The Universal Declaration on Human Rights*.
- Wiborg, S. 2004. Education and social integration – A comparative study of the comprehensive school system in Scandinavia. In *Utdannelse på tvers av grenser: Komparative studier. Education across borders: Comparative studies*, ed. E. Buk-Berge, S. Holm-Larsen and S. Wiborg, 205–16. Oslo: Didakta Norsk Forlag A/S.
- Yang, R. 2007. Comparing Policies. In *Comparative education research: Approaches and methods*, ed. M. Bray, B. Adamson, and M. Mason, 241–62. Hong Kong: Comparative Education Research Centre, The University of Hong Kong.

Appendix: Legislation and legislative regulations

Denmark

- Folkeskoleloven [Education Act], LBK nr 1049 af 28/08/2007 C.F.R. (2007a).
 Gymnasieloven [Education Act for Upper Secondary school], LBK nr 444 af 08/05/2007 C.F.R. (2007b).
 Bekendtgørelse om formålet med undervisningen i folkeskolens fag og obligatoriske emner [National Curriculum], BEK nr 571 af 23/06/2003 C.F.R. (2003).
 Bekendtgørelse om procedureregler ved en elevs fritagelse for kristendomskundskab i folkeskolen [Regulation on exemption from the subject Christianity], BEK nr 809 af 16/07/2004 C.F.R. (2004).
 Bekendtgørelse om folkeskolens undervisning i dansk som andetsprog [Regulation on teaching Danish as a second language], BEK nr 31 af 20/01/2006 C.F.R. (2006).
 Bekendtgørelse om folkeskolens modersmålsundervisning af børn fra medlemsstater i Den Europæiske Union, fra lande, som er omfattet af aftalen om Det Europæiske Økonomiske Samarbejdsområde, samt fra Færøerne og Grønland [Regulation on mother tongue education], BEK nr 618 af 22/07/2002 C.F.R. (2002).

Norway

- KUF. 1996). *Læreplanverket for den 10-årige grunnskolen [National Curriculum]*. Oslo: Kirke-, utdannings- og forskningsdepartementet.
 Kunnskapsdepartementet. (2004). *F-13-04 Kunnskapsløftet [Knowledge promotion]*. http://www.regjeringen.no/upload/kilde/ufd/rus/2004/0016/ddd/pdfv/226866-rundskriv_kunnskapsloftet.pdf
 Opplæringsloven [Education Act], 1998-07-17 nr 61 C.F.R. (1998).
 Utdanningsdirektoratet. (2006a). Læreplan elevrådsarbeid [Subject curriculum pupil council work] [Electronic Version]. <http://www.udir.no> (accessed January 17, 2008).
 Utdanningsdirektoratet. (2006b). Læreplan fremmedspråk [Subject curriculum for foreign languages] [Electronic Version]. <http://www.udir.no> (accessed January 17, 2008).
 Utdanningsdirektoratet. (2006c). Læreplan KRL [Subject curriculum Christianity, religion and ethics] [Electronic Version]. <http://www.udir.no> (accessed January 17, 2008).
 Utdanningsdirektoratet. (2006d). Læreplan naturfag [Subject curriculum natural science] [Electronic Version]. <http://www.udir.no> (accessed January 17, 2008).
 Utdanningsdirektoratet. (2006e). Læreplan norsk [Subject curriculum in Norwegian] [Electronic Version]. <http://www.udir.no> (accessed January 17, 2008).
 Utdanningsdirektoratet. (2006f). Læreplan samfunnsfag [Subject curriculum social studies] [Electronic Version]. <http://www.udir.no> (accessed January 17, 2008).
 Utdanningsdirektoratet. (2008). Læreplan religion, livssyn og etikk [Subject curriculum Religion, world views and ethics]. <http://www.udir.no> (accessed August 31, 2008).

Sweden

- Skollag, 1985:1100 C.F.R. (1985).
 Gymnasieförordningen, 1992:394 C.F.R. (1992).
 Grundskoleförordning, 1994:1194 C.F.R. (1994).
 Läroplan för det obligatoriska skolväsendet, förskoleklassen och fritidshemmet – Lpo 94 [National Curriculum for the compulsory school] (2006).
 Läroplan för de frivilliga skolformerna – Lpf 94 [Curriculum for the non-compulsory school system] (2006).
 Förordning om kommunal vuxenutbildning [Regulation on public adult education], 2002:1012 C.F.R. (2002).