Introduction

The political context in Denmark is characterized by a tension between national and local political level. As the Danish state structure is highly decentralized, it became necessary to analyze reform activities in central and local government. In addition, it was necessary to take other changes into account – primarily what is labeled the transition from a welfare state to a competitive state. This transition emphasizes a change in policies related to the selected area of investigation (Svendborg Municipality and a social housing area which former was on the so called “Ghetto-list” – due to rates of unemployment, ethnic minorities and criminality) implying that policies and interventions are multidimensional, ranging education, training, employment, day care institutions and lived experiences.

In order to identify relevant policies the approach used was two-dimensional – top-down and button-up approach – a logic that highly influenced the methodological design.

Methods

The methods applied in the case are interrelated in a research design where both a qualitative content analysis (QCA) on a purposive sample of policy documents where conducted. This was done upon a inductive sampled corpus of policies. This induction was done as a result of semi-structured life-world interviews with experts of the field. 11 interviews were conducted. Two of these were group interviews. The interviews followed an interview guide prepared in advance.

Policy making and implementation

The analysis states that interventions from the state as well as interventions thought as marked-directed have not solved the problems of the particularly disadvantaged social housing estate. Voluntary work has been helpful to a certain extent, but civil society is overburdened with social tasks which used to be part of the state or municipality policy.

Social innovation and the role of social innovation in the delivery and development of existing and new youth policy

Therefore, social innovation has been seen as a proper remedy. The report states that social innovation is a contested terrain, and at this early stage of analysis local dimensions of social innovation still have to be evidenced. Obviously, different forms of social innovation are established at a local level, because local institutions have to execute national and local policy with constrained resources. However, examples of social innovation have been identified – e.g. local day care institutions have to develop solutions of heavy social problems by using innovative ideas in the cooperation between professionals (teachers, social pedagogues, family therapists, etc.) and between professionals and parents/children.
Discussion and conclusions

The most important conclusion seen from a comparative perspective is that no exclusive youth policy is defined. Youth policy in Denmark is a mixtum compositum of various policy fields (education, preventive work (e.g. against criminality), empowerment, and developing local employment in the municipality of Svendborg. Further, the informational basis for judgment of justice (IBJJ) is to some extent construed, and forms of social innovation are identified. A belief system that is predominant produced within discourse both form and is formed by the existing social practices, and that produces and reproduces social structures. The discourse that produces and reproduces this heuristic model is furthermore strengthened by a mutual interdependency between the construction of the belief in this relationship in discourse and the actual national statistics.