

## CONFERENCE

# EDUCATION AS THE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE OF NATIONS

Friday, May 13, 12:30-16:30

Organized by Center for Knowledge Theory and Policy together with Center for Research in Compulsory Schooling, DPU, Aarhus University

Festsalen, Campus Emdrup, Aarhus University, Denmark

### CONTENT

Education has become a fundamental competitive advantage of nations with mobilization of knowledge and education as a basic competitive tool. How does this affect the Danish educational system and institutions? What can be learned from the successful Singapore model? Will a future competitive strategy be “mobication”, combining flexibility and Lifelong Learning?

At the conference one of the founding fathers of the Singapore model, Prof. S. Gopinathan, National Institute of Education, NTU, Singapore will summarize the Singapore model. In addition, in their presentations, Prof. Ove Kaj Pedersen and principal Dorthe Enger, Niels Steensens Gymnasium, will suggest how to act within a Danish perspective. Ove Kaj Pedersen is known as the author of the book “The Competitive State”, while Dorthe Enger is among the Danish school leaders who have reflected on the impact on Danish education and youth culture.

### PROGRAMME

- 12:30-13:00 Lars Qvortrup: Introduction: Presentation of Center for Knowledge Theory and Policy and today's programme
- 13:00-13:30 Dorthe Enger, principal, Niels Steensens Gymnasium: East west and what serves us best – reflections on the globally challenged Danish education and youth culture
- 13:30-13:45 Questions/answers
- 13:45-14:30 S. Gopinathan, professor, National Institute of Education, Singapore: State, Economy and Education: the Singapore Story
- 14:30-14:45 Questions/answers
- 14:45-15:15 Coffee break (tea, coffee and cakes are served)
- 15:15-16:00 Ove Kaj Pedersen, professor, CBS: State, Economy and Education: Mobication as a Strategy in the Age of Globalization
- 16:00-16:30 Questions/answers and general, concluding discussion

The conference is free of charge but you need to [register here](#). Please register before Wednesday May 11.

## SUMMARIES

Dorthe Enger, principal, Niels Steensens Gymnasium: *East west and what serves us best – reflections on the globally challenged Danish education and youth culture*

The arrogant notion that the West carries and will always carry the mantle of world managerial leadership with China as the obliging factory is now yielding to the realization that countries like China, India and South Korea are taking giant steps in the field of education – displaying the creativity and innovation to which the West claims ownership. Not “made in China,” but “created in China” these days!

Will the roles be reversed? What will Denmark’s future be, given the current educational standard and the culturally accepted hedonistic youth culture?

What can be done to help Danish students improve academically and find a better balance between enjoyment and achievement in order to help them make the transition to a globalized world with new and demanding challenges?

S. Gopinathan, professor, National Institute of Education, Singapore: *State, Economy and Education: the Singapore Story*

The Singapore developmental state rose to prominence in both economic and educational terms in the mid-eighties, a bare two decades after independence in 1965. The circumstances of its birth, severe social and economic challenges make the transformation all the more remarkable. It chose export led industrialization led by multinationals, co-opted labour, centralized political power, and built from scratch socio political institutions like the Economic Development Board and the Development Bank of Singapore to aid socio- economic development.

Economic growth as a means of empowering the state and society and building a world class state was the prime mover, and multiculturalism, meritocracy and incorruptibility are key values. A quest for educational excellence has parallels in other spheres of Singapore society. Society is managed on the basis of effort, excellence and prudence, not wealth transfers.

Education and training has been central to this transformation and today, as Singapore once again reinvents itself, education reform is a key driver. Given present economic and geo-political circumstances the state is once again challenged to revisit key assumptions and strategies.

Ove Kaj Pedersen, professor, CBS: *State, Economy and Education: Mobication as a Strategy in the Age of Globalization*

Globalization as well as Europeanization has opened up for education and training to become the most important of all welfare policies. When previously labor market policies and income policies were tools for national governments in enhancing the international competitiveness of their national economies today education and training is at the core of creating comparative advantages for industries and companies. How to facilitate the mobility of the labor forces and to establish conditions for lifelong learning is part of how national governments are trying to establish comparative advantages for their companies. What are the consequences on national systems of education when they become a remedy for creating national comparative advantages?