



## **Theme for NORDYRK conference 2020 (June 10-12<sup>th</sup>):**

### **Transitions to, within, and from school and work life**

Vocational education and Training (VET) is focusing on a vocation. Therefore, it is crucial to create meaningful links between the learning taking place in the school part of the education, as well as in the work based learning taking place in the company. The interaction is the characteristics of the vocational education as well as its special strength. It is also the special challenge of VET to create meaningful links between the different learning contexts i.e. the company and the VET school and, increasingly, the virtual learning spaces as well. Of course, this is also about linking theoretical and practical knowledge and experience within the different learning contexts, rather than thinking 'theory' as belonging to the school, and 'practice' as belonging to the company.

The transition from elementary school to the vocational educations invokes special attention. How are the students met, acknowledged and included in the different VET schools? How are the students managing the transforming to the vocational education, where personal character formation and professional development are unfolding in a dynamic interaction?

The transition from VET school to the work life, it is not less important to scaffold for the students. Furthermore, especially in the school based educational programs it is also important to secure a smooth transition from vocational education to work life.

Depending on the different vocational education programs in the Nordic countries, there might also be different transitions between the modules of the program built *into* the vocational education. These transitions represent awareness-raising points for students as well as teachers during the education. It might be transitions between school and practice oriented modules and support to the learning processes taking place in the different connections. It might be the creation of connection between theoretical and practical oriented subjects; or it might be the connection created through physical or it-mediated meetings.

Digital media form a new learning space, which supports and challenges the transitions in the vocational educational programs. The digital media makes it possible to take an education and cooperate in connections that were earlier difficult because of a physical distance. Simulation and Virtual Reality og Augmented Reality can also be learning spaces where the students may explore areas that were not previously accessible or understandable.

Transitions between (to, within, and from) school and work life are thus key attentions points in relation to the vocational education programs. There are similarities and differences between the countries. It is essential for consideration of the professional content and educational pathways of education. It is also essential for the students' meeting with the vocational education, where their professional identity creation processes and vocational socialization are woven together into the students' perceptions of – and expectations to - working life. It is of central importance for the cooperation or exchange between schools (teachers) and companies (trainers). A special theme consists of gender. How are gender stereotyping conceptions about educational choices and future working life done?

The theme of transitions thus has a very central learning focus in vocational education, while opening up a wide range of professional and competence issues. The relationship between professional and generic competencies is particularly central in light of fast and accelerating changes in working life, and with the necessary focus on lifelong and life-wide learning.