

Preliminary experience with VPL in vocational education for adults in Denmark

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EVA in brief

The Danish Evaluation Institute (EVA) is an independent governmental organisation.

The purpose of EVA is to explore and develop the quality of daycare centres, schools and educational programmes through **evaluations, analyses and instruments.**

Vocational Education for Adults

A new Act on the Vocational Education in Denmark in August 2015

- New Vocational Education for Adults
- VPL as mandatory part of Vocational Education for Adults age 25 and up
- Reform goal is a shorter way for adults to become skilled workers

EVA is evaluating the new Vocational Education for Adults through the first two years

Vocational Education for Adults

VPL has become an important part of adults way to become skilled workers

VPL is divided into two parts:

1. A mandatory VPL of former education and relevant work experience within the chosen field
 - Primarily through documentation and diplomas
2. Discretionary recognition of prior learning
 - Primarily through conversations of prior learning, few other tools, as tests and practical tasks

Vocational Education for Adults

Adults are divided into three groups through VPL:

- EUV1 – for adults with at least two years of relevant work experience
- EUV2 – for adults with less than two years relevant work experience or an other education
- EUV3 – for adults without an other education or working experience

Different rules for the three groups.

Schools must give adults an individual educational plan.

A decrease in the activity for adults joining vocational education

- There has been a decrease of 20% in the activity of the EUV in the first year (2015/2016) compared to previous years (2010-2014).
 - This development does not correspond to the political intention that EUV would make it more attractive to acquire vocational training.

Companies knowledge about Vocational Education for Adults (EUV) is very limited.

- 19% of companies that employ skilled and unskilled workers, knows Vocational Education for Adults (EUV) – the rest do not.
 - The knowledge is highest in large companies with 100 or more employees (35%) and lowest in small companies with less than 20 employees (12-16%)
- Why?
 - Is it because of too many changes of regulations?
 - Or too complicated Acts/rules?
 - Or lack of interest in education?

Companies assessment on Vocational Education for Adults (EUV).

- 52% of the companies that know EUV find that it to a lesser degree or not at all has become more attractive for the companies to participate in the vocational education for adults.
- Why? There can be many reasons:
 - Logistic problems with individual time tables when their apprentices are in school
 - Shorter time for education is not always to the benefit of the companies (Lesser working time)
 - Shorter time for education can be hard for adults with poor basic skills

Time spent on prior learning assessment at vocational schools

- 7 out of 10 prior learning assessments are carried out during a maximum of one day.
- Why only one day?
 - Is it motivated by the task or by the economical incitements?
- What can you do within such a timetable?
 - An interview? A test? A practical task?
 - Is this sufficient for sound and valid assessments?

Inspiring examples of VPL practice in Vocational Education for Adults

- All schools have not yet found a good way to handle this new task
- The vocational schools handle this new task in different ways
- Through observations we have encountered several inspiring examples of how to assess prior learning in vocational educations

Written assignments and tests to illustrate prior learning

During our study we have encountered different forms of inspiring use of tests and assignments to help assess prior learning:

- Tests are often followed up with discussions in groups or with the assessor about the answers
- Tests are designed to help the adults to show their knowledge and the limits of their knowledge
- Planning a menu for a restaurant or how to wash a patient in bed can be examples of assignments or tests close to their practical experience

Conversations about prior learning and working experience

Through our study we have seen, different takes on conversation as a part of an assesment of prior learning.

In the conversations the assessors focus on:

- Getting descriptions of the adults work experience
- Asking them to provide details of tasks they have performed
- Include knowledge from practical tasks, assignments etc.

Acting to illustrate prior learning

In our study we have encountered an example of acting being used as an opportunity for the adults to show, what they have learned in prior work.

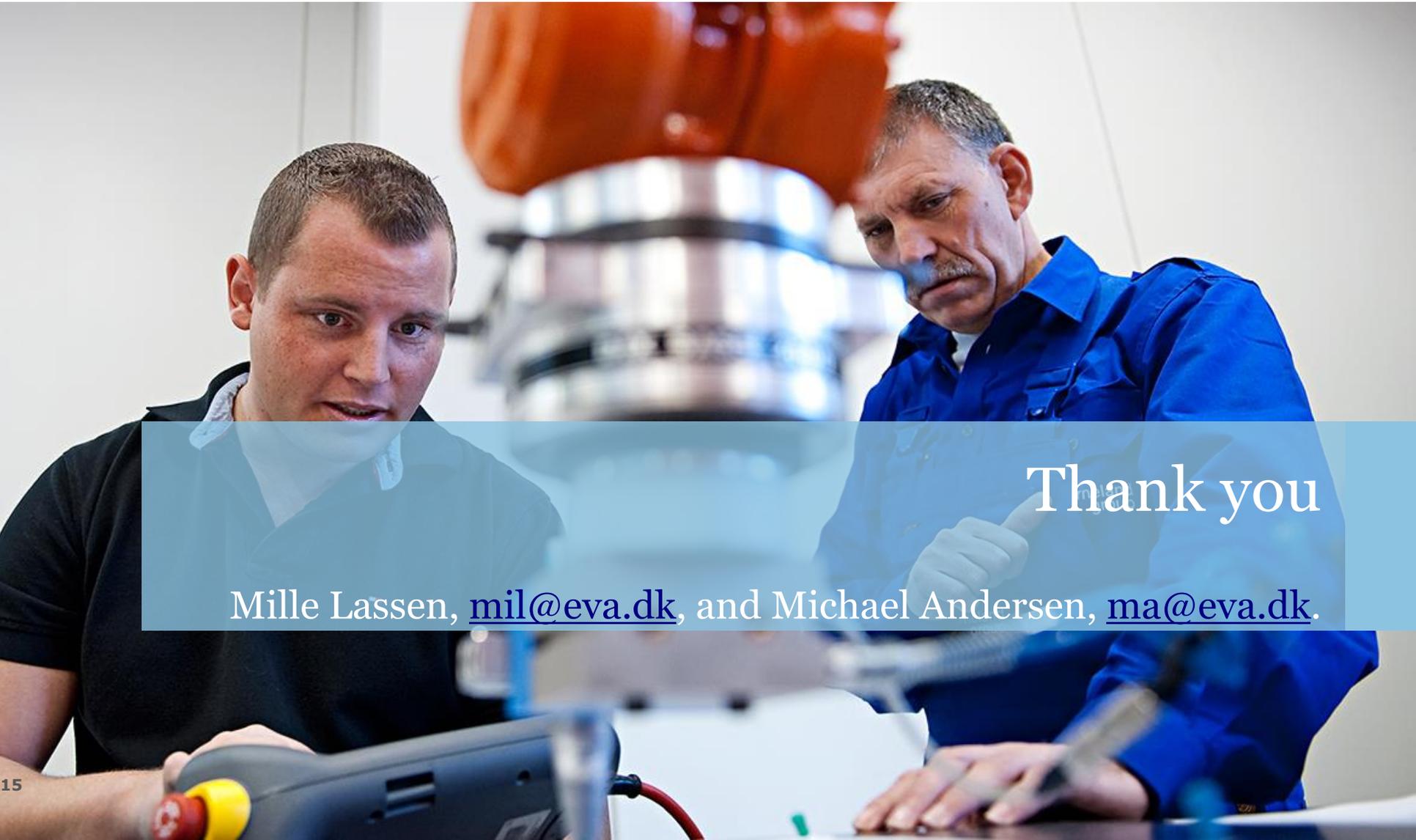
An example from the nursing assistant education:

The adults are put in situations where they are expected to react in relation to a patient

After the role play the situation is discussed and the adults get a chance to reflect on their behavior in the play

Closing remarks

- New attention to Recognition of prior learning at the vocational educations
- Recognition of prior learning is now a part of the daily practice at the vocational schools in Denmark
- Recognition of prior learning is not yet common at other levels of education.



Thank you

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