

Summary

The basis for studying part-time/holiday jobs in the Nordic countries

LG Insight has conducted a study on the use of part-time/holiday jobs for young people with ethnic minority backgrounds aged 13-18 in Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland. The study is based on a large and systematic literature review, interviews with key stakeholders within employment/integration, culture and leisure, and a questionnaire survey covering all four countries.

The study is based on a large amount of data, but is not intended to be comprehensive. The sole purpose has been to identify traditions and good examples of integration-effective part-time/holiday jobs for young people.

Work for young people under 18 years of age as part of the labour force

In all four Nordic countries, there are examples of young people under the age of 18 working in combination with school and other spare-time activities. The primary purpose of a part-time job is for the companies to solve some production tasks, while the pay is the primary motivation for the young people.

However, part-time jobs are significantly more prevalent in Denmark, where approximately 34% of young people under the age of 18 are employed and therefore part of the regular labour force in the labour market. It is estimated to be significantly lower in the other three Nordic countries¹ and typically in parent/family businesses or similar, or in larger companies that also employ young people for social reasons.

Holiday and part-time jobs for vulnerable groups of young people

LG Insight's study shows that all four Nordic countries have a wide range of initiatives that target young people who need support and counselling to get a part-time/holiday job. In Sweden, municipalities are launching a very large number of summer jobs in municipal welfare jobs (nursing homes, daycare centres, etc.), while Norwegian municipalities offer summer jobs in both private and public companies. In Finland, municipalities also have summer job programmes, which include a voucher scheme where municipalities offer different target groups of young people a pay subsidy for a private summer job that the young people find themselves.

¹Source: Based on interviews with stakeholders in Norway, Sweden and Finland

The role of municipalities

Summer jobs in Sweden, Norway and Finland are primarily funded by municipalities. In Norway alone, NOK 620 million (2022) is spent annually to pay young people in summer jobs².

In both Norway and Sweden, extra summer jobs are often offered in disadvantaged neighbourhoods where a large proportion of the residents have an ethnic minority background, with funding from social services, district councils, foundations, etc.

In Denmark, a few – primarily the larger municipalities – help young people get a part-time job, but municipalities in Denmark play a smaller role than in Sweden, Norway and Finland in terms of employing young people in jobs. In Denmark, municipalities are more likely to be partners in social housing initiatives (e.g. local schools, street-based workers, etc.), and in Denmark, it is mainly private companies that employ young people.

Programmes for young people with ethnic minority backgrounds

In Denmark, it is more common to target special part-time job programmes to young people with non-Western backgrounds. Thus, in recent years, a number of municipalities have set up special initiatives under the auspices of municipal job centres to inform, motivate and help children/young people of refugee parents to get a part-time job.

In Norway, Sweden and Finland, holiday job offers are largely a general offer to all young people, for example, all young people in the 9th grade in Helsinki Municipality. However, there is also prioritisation of particularly vulnerable groups, but only rarely specifically young people with minority backgrounds.

Benefits of part-time jobs for young people with ethnic minority backgrounds

The study points to the following benefits of the initiatives:

- Many young people from ethnic minority backgrounds live in low-income families. The part-time job gives young people a financial benefit that can enable them to participate in society and youth life on an equal footing with other young people.
- Young people gain greater language skills because they are exposed to a community where they use language actively when speaking with other colleagues, managers and customers/partners.
- Young people are more likely to complete school and be employed by the age of 25.

²Source: "Flere unge hadde sommerjobb i fjor" (ssb.no) <https://www.ssb.no/arbeid-og-lonn/sysselsetting/statistikk/antall-arbeidsforhold-og-lonn/artikler/flere-unge-hadde-sommerjobb-i-fjor>

- The young people gain a greater knowledge of the culture of the country in question, including normative requirements such as attendance stability, discipline, collaboration skills, etc., that they can use in their school life.
- Young people gain an insight into job types and specialised fields, which strengthens their later prerequisites for educational choices.
- Young people from ethnic minority backgrounds gain work experience, which is crucial for their chances of getting another job later on.
- The young people build a network that can help them move on to another part-time job.³

Learning points from the project

- Professional stakeholders in Sweden, Norway and Finland want more knowledge about the Danish effects of part-time jobs, as well as knowledge about whether other types of community activities for young people under the age of 18, such as mother tongue lessons, homework help at school, association activities, etc., have equivalent or better value for young people than part-time work.
- Professional stakeholders in Sweden have been curious about how organisations in Denmark and Norway have succeeded in engaging private companies to provide holiday jobs for young people with minority backgrounds. Norway and Finland are also interested in learning more about how to engage private companies to pay young people's wages themselves.
- Danish stakeholders have been interested in knowing more about summer jobs in welfare jobs, such as in Sweden, and what impact this has on young people's later choice of education and work in the welfare sector. Danish stakeholders also find it interesting that Sweden uses summer jobs as a form of introduction to civil and welfare society for young people – including as a way of helping them with sports association activities.
- Professional stakeholders across the countries have been interested in discussing how jobs in private companies can accommodate young people with poor Nordic language skills. And how part-time jobs can provide tasks that help develop young people's language skills. The cross-border community meetings have generated contacts across the Nordic countries to exchange experiences in this area.
- Across countries, stakeholders would like to be inspired by courses and support for young entrepreneurs (entrepreneurship), which are offered in Finland as part of summer jobs, for example, under the auspices of 4H.

³ For sources, please refer to the source list in the appendix, and the sources cited later in the report when impact figures are presented.