

# The People's School as a repatriation politics institution

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Fafo seminar

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Nordic street-level integration work



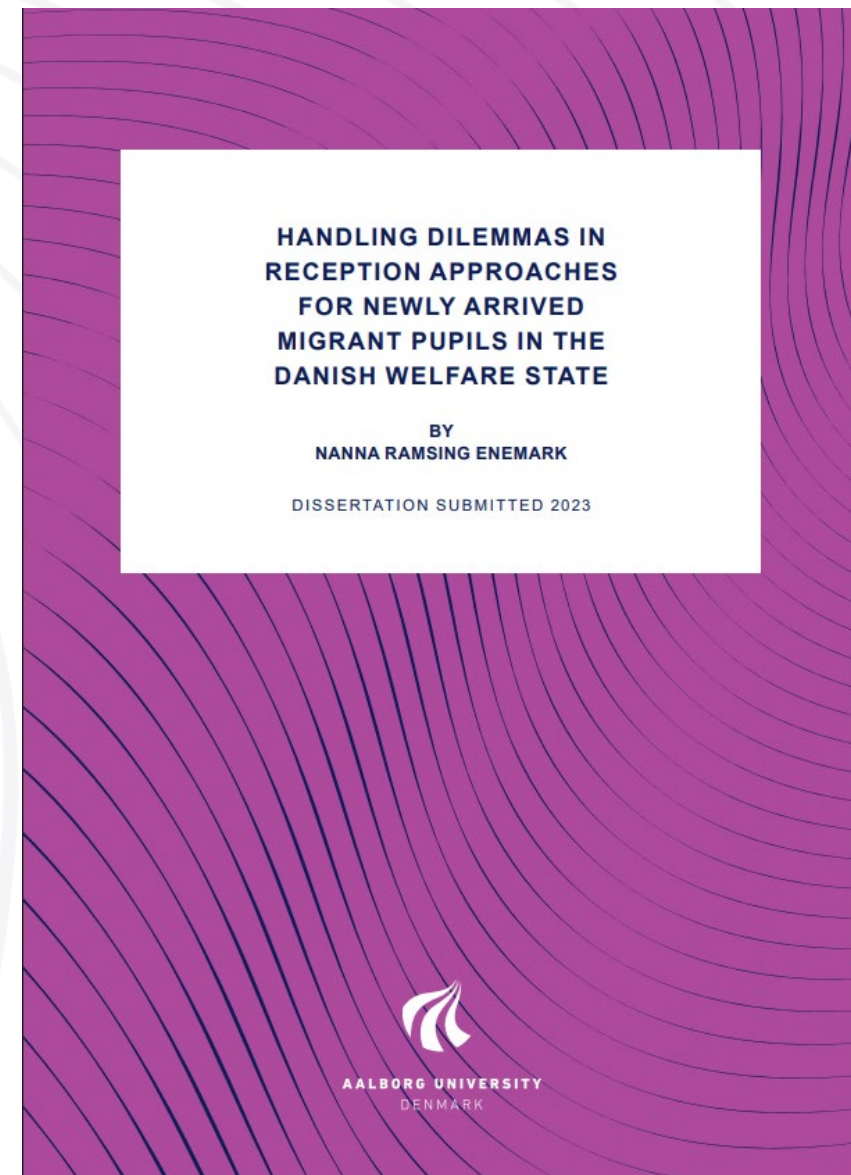
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# Structure

- 01 Repatriation politics – my Danish context
- 02 Findings of the article
- 03 Discussion points of the article
- 04 ... So what can we do?



“  
... So, do you want the Indonesian  
engineer-kids, the Polish farm kids, or  
the refugee kids?





# Repatriation politics



Sylvi Listhaug

February 22, 2019 ·

Heia Danmark! De har skjønt det med dette paradigmeskiftet i utlendingspolitikken. Når flyktninger ikke lenger trenger beskyttelse bør de reise hjem, for å gjenoppbygge landet sitt!

Älskade jävla danskar

## Nu vill regeringen ha danska straff för svenska brott

16 juli 2025 06:00

Politiikka

**Tanskalla on tiukka linja maahanmuuton suhteen: "Hyvinvointiyhteiskunta voi säilyä vain, jos rajoitamme maahanmuuttoa"**

Pohjoismaiden maahanmuutosta vastaavat päättäjät etsivät Helsingissä yhteistä linjaa. Tanska näyttää mallia.

Toneangivende partier i Norge, Finland og Sverige begynner at kopiere centrale elementer i dansk udlændingepolitik.

**Danmark bliver nævnt syv gange i valgoplæg: Nordiske partier vil kopiere dansk asylpolitik**

POLITIK 13. mar. 2019 kl. 2.43

## Nordiske lande vil kopiere dansk asylpolitik

Toneangivende partier i Norge, Finland og Sverige begynner at kopiere centrale dele i dansk udlændingepolitik.





# The People's School – for all?

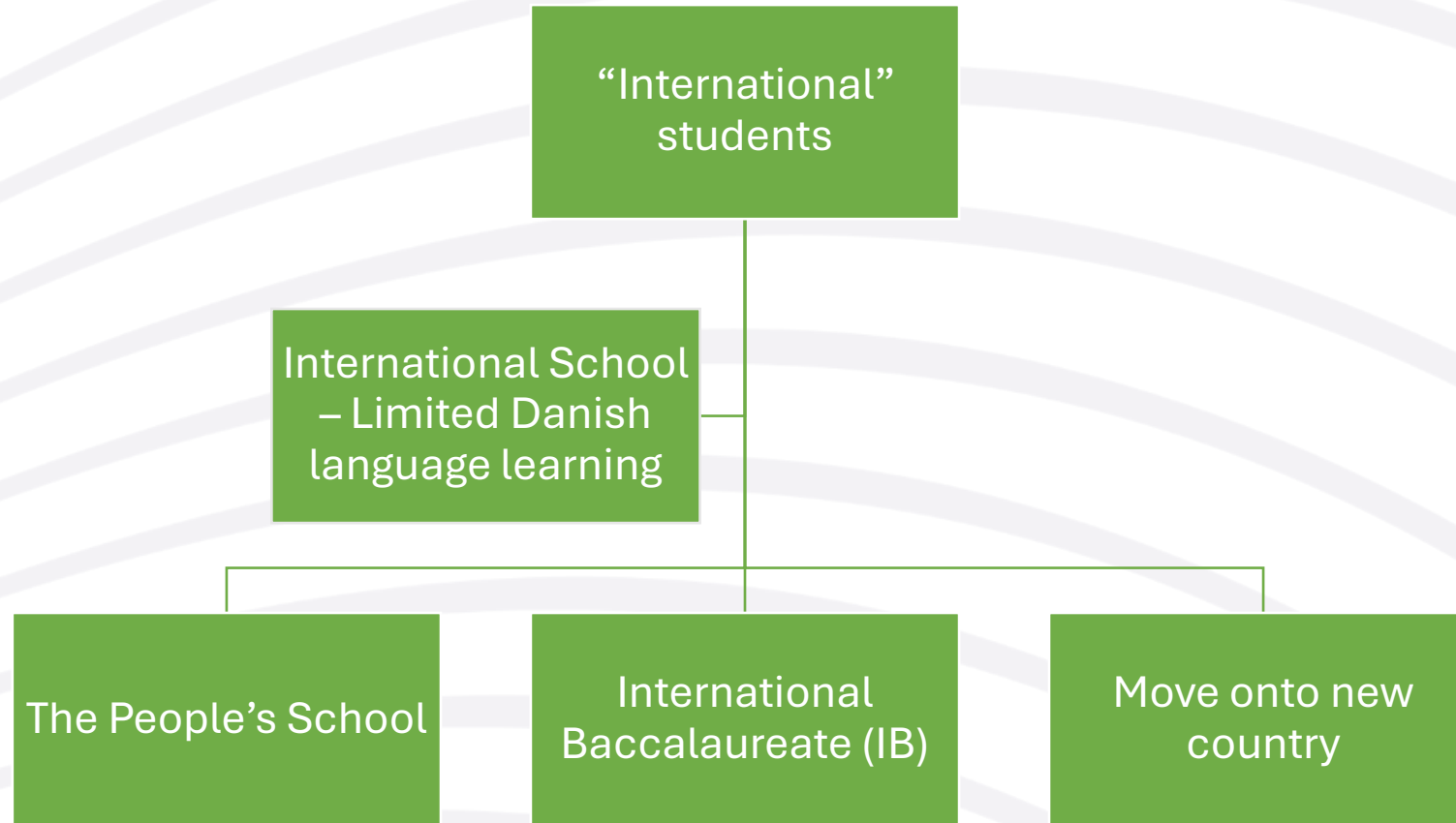
- Danish language learning and culture (Jacobsen, 2012; Buchardt, 2012; Enemark & Buchardt, 2023), while simultaneously:
  - Legislation allowing referrals outside the school
  - Separate schools
- Sharp 9<sup>th</sup> grade deadline for tracking to upper secondary education
- Upper secondary education: International Baccalaureate (IB) or in Danish only (Gymnasiums, VET)

# Main points of the article

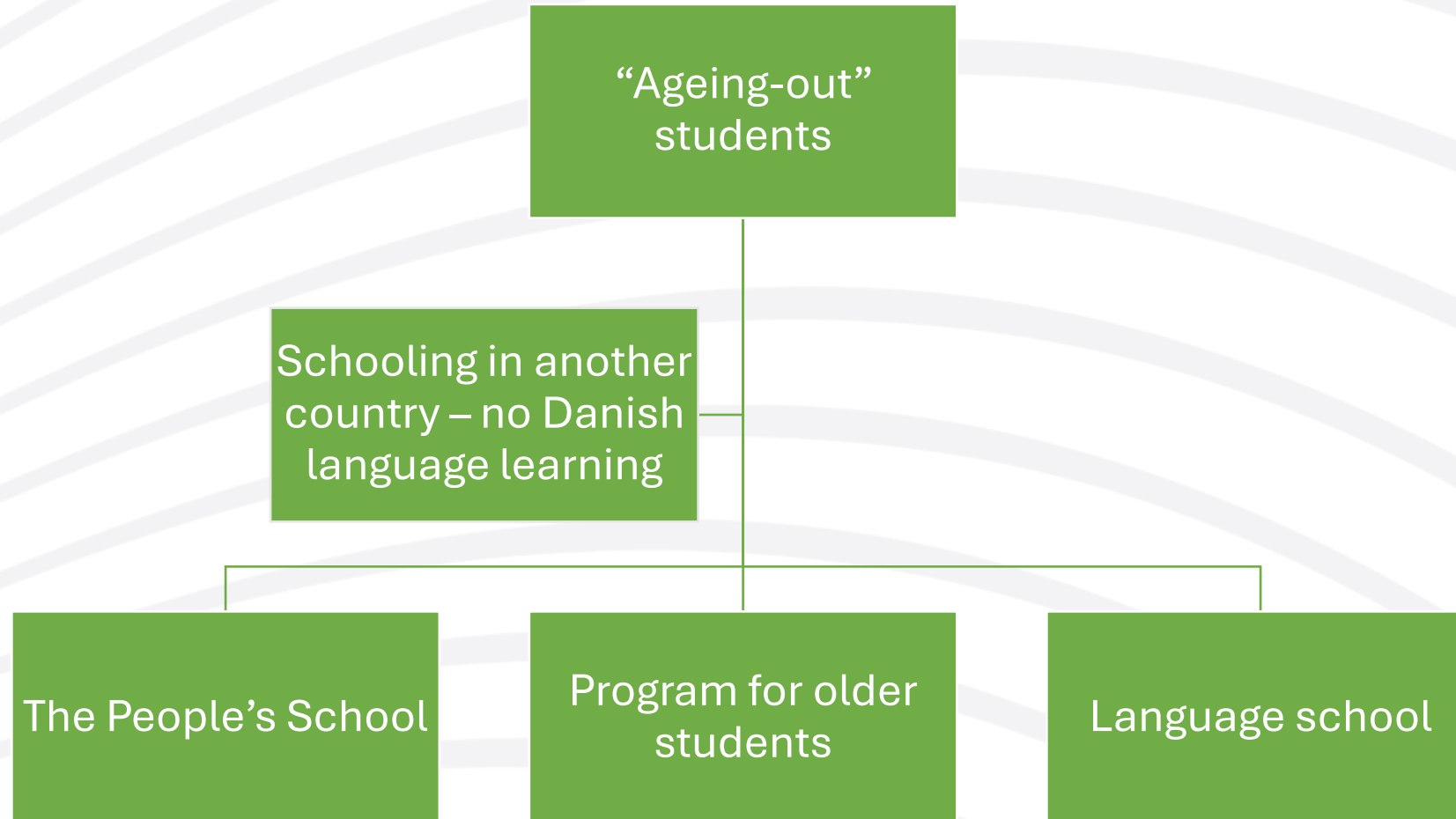


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## Overarching point: 3 types of temporary students

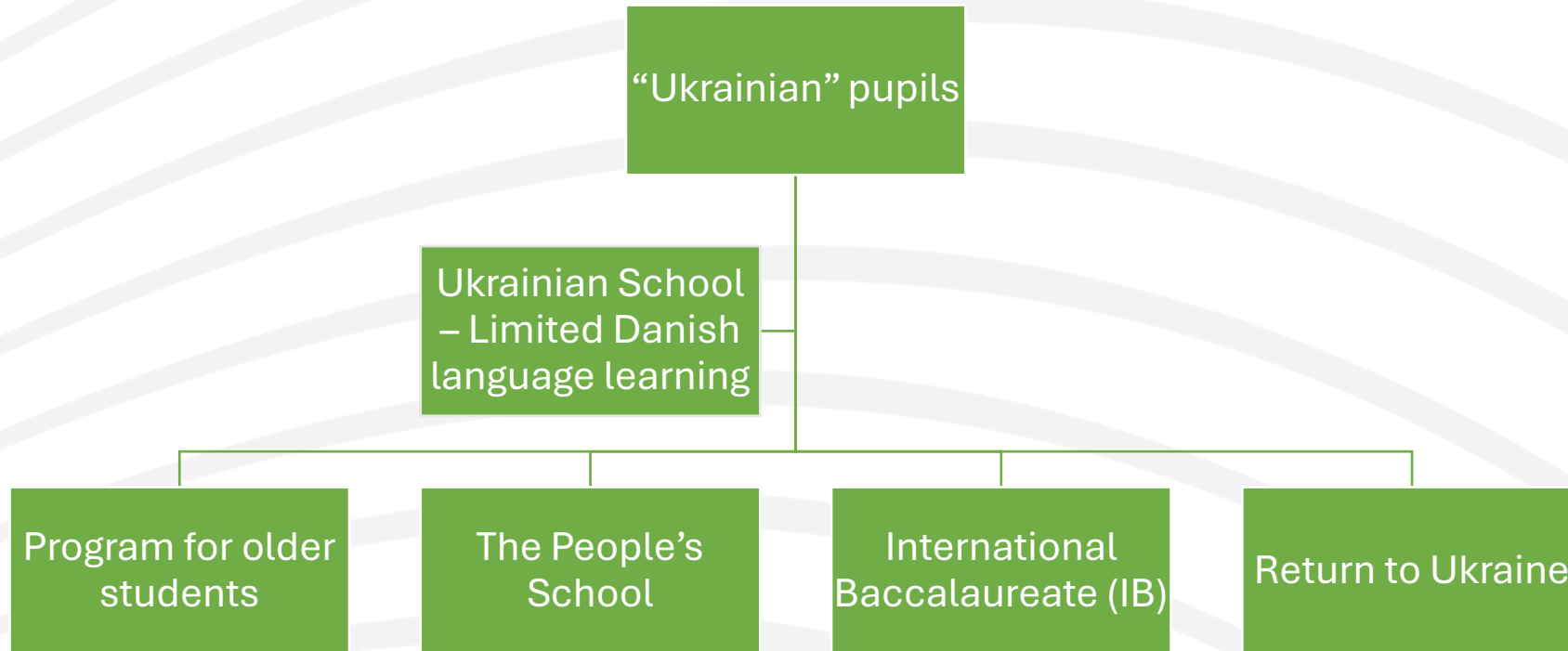


## Overarching point: 3 types of temporary students





## Overarching point: 3 types of temporary students





# Varying characteristics of the individual newly arrived migrant student provides different opportunities

“*We have really been tested on the whole reception situation concerning the Ukrainians, where we have experienced that a large group of them, despite being in a program for six months, uh, actually are still categorized as newly arrived and not actively using the [Danish] language. And there can be a lot of reasons for that.*”



# Temporariness challenges integration efforts, left at the discretion of street-level bureaucrats

“*A couple of years ago, we actually had one who started, uh, a Dutch [student], who began in 8th grade. That is quite late and normally we would send them to [the program for older students]. But because there was a family connection to the school, and they lived in the district, we gave it a shot ... That is how it will always be. We want to give it a shot if we believe it deserves it.*”



## Main point of the article

*The People's School is a prerequisite for further integration (education) and street-level bureaucrats are tasked with being gatekeepers of this access*



# Discussion points



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## Discussion points of the article

- 1) Are the characteristics “fair”? How to ensure students’ rights are being honored? Who deserves ‘a shot’ in the People’s school?
- 2) 9<sup>th</sup> grade examination barrier – are there appropriate programs in place?

# Implications



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# Implications for policy

- Temporariness *cannot* be controlled





# Implications for practice

- Temporariness *cannot* be assumed



# Implications for research

- The premise and promise of education institutions

*§ 2. Kommunalbestyrelsen har ansvaret for, at alle børn i kommunen sikres ret til vederlagsfri undervisning i folkeskolen.*

*[§ 2. The Municipality is responsible for, that all children in the municipality, is ensured the right to free schooling in the People's School.]*

**The School Act (2025)**

# References

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Jacobsen, G. H. (2012). *Lighed gennem særbehandling? Heldagsskoler og spredning som ekspliciteret særbehandling af etniske minoritetsbørn og udtryk for aktuelle tendenser [Equality through special treatment? Full day schools and dispersion as explicit special treatment of ethnic minority children and as an expression of contemporary tendencies]*. Copenhagen University.



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