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BY- OG REGIONFORSKNINGSINSTITUTTET
NIBR

Scandinavia's segregated cities

Policies, strategies and ideals

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The three Scandinavian states presented new strategies to counter segregation in 2018



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We have conducted a comparative analysis of these strategies

- Financed by the Nordic Council of Ministers, carried out by Anne Balke Staver, Susanne Søholt (both NIBR) and Jan-Paul Brekke (ISF)
- Comparative analysis:
 - Descriptions of the problem of segregation
 - Presentation of the causes of segregation
 - Proposed political initiatives to resolve or mitigate it



What kinds of segregation are they concerned about?

Denmark

- **Ethnic residential segregation**
- 29 designated “ghettos” (per 2018), defined on an annual list
- Criteria which have been adjusted over time

Sweden

- **Socio-economic segregation**
- Overall policy, not directed at a specific list of areas but cities as a whole

Norway

- Mainly socio-economic segregation /living condition challenges
- Neighborhoods targeted by area based policies

How do they explain that segregation has arisen?

- ` Danish focus on **immigration** and a **lack of requirements** and incentives
- No references to research to support the causal story

- Swedish focus on **growing socio-economic inequality over time** with consequences for housing, education, employment, participation and crime.
- High reliance on research.

- Norwegian focus on mechanisms in the **housing market** in a context of urban growth and inequality
- New expert commission will examine causes of segregation.

Policy areas



Denmark

- **Physical change and demolition**
- Directed settlement in designated areas
- Increased policing and punishment (**skærpet strafzone**)
- Early efforts for children and youth - kindergarten, language testing etc



Sverige

- **Housing:** mixed residences and help onto the housing market (plus reform EBO)
- Reduce connection between background and **school** results
- Increase **employment** (youth, women, newcomers, long-term unemployed)
- Increase democratic **participation**
- Increase safety and reduce **crime** (prevention, focus on organized crime)



Norway

- **Housing:** assistance onto the housing market, refugee settlement away from vulnerable areas
- Increase **employment** through qualifications
- Increased **policing** and prevention
- Activities for youth; free **kindergarten**
- Sense of local **belonging**


Comparison 1: housing

- The Danish strategy is more oriented toward **physical infrastructure**, including demolition
 - Denmark has a higher share of social housing, whereas in Norway the vulnerable areas are dominated by owned properties
- Danish emphasis on **directing settlement** away from vulnerable areas through incentives (reduced benefits) and rules for municipalities assigning social housing
 - Norway and Sweden are also adjusting their refugee settlement policy away from vulnerable areas



Comparison 2: Labor market participation

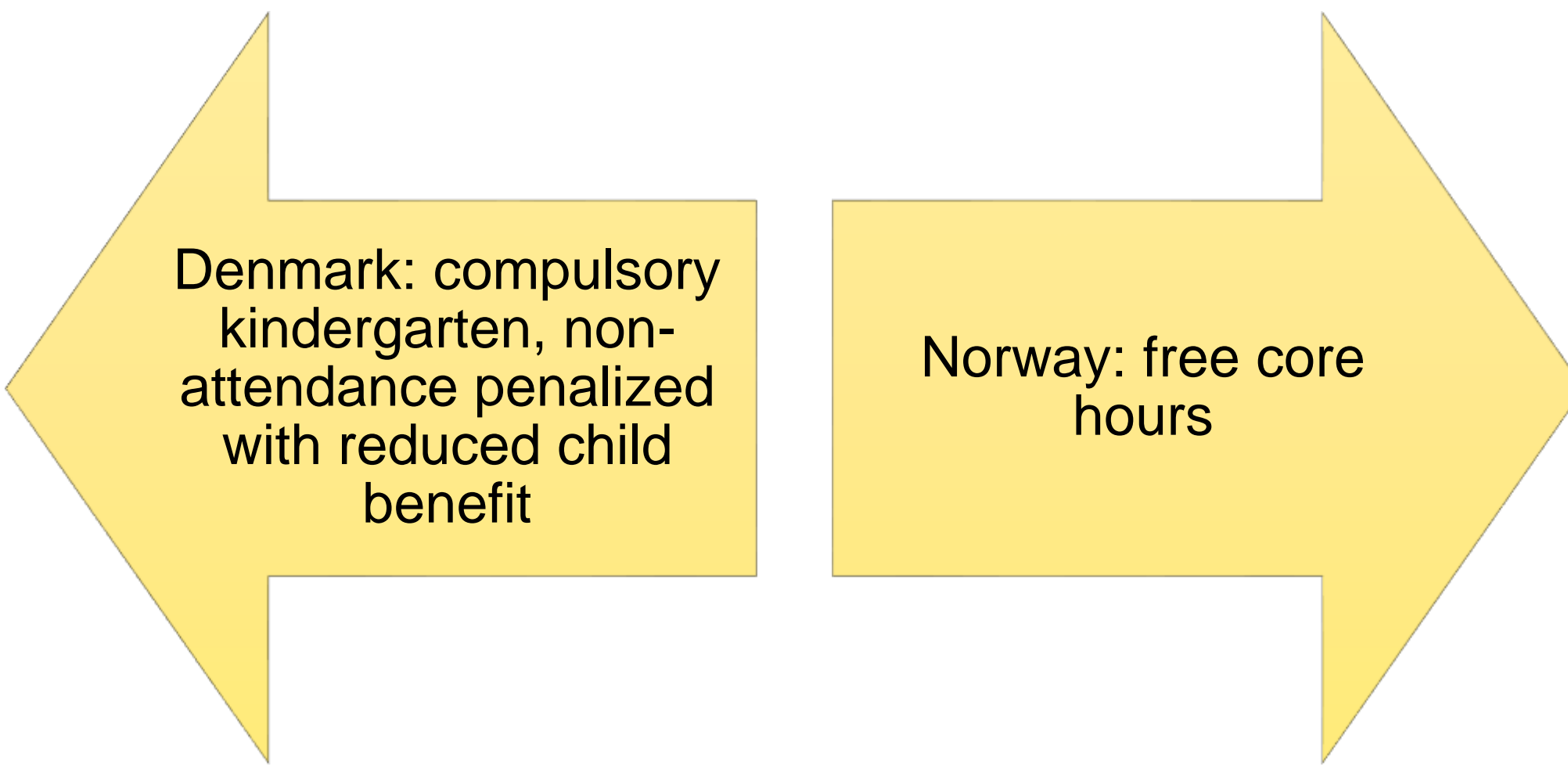
- This is emphasized in Norway and Sweden as a **means to reducing inequality and mitigating challenges arising from segregation**
 - Different policy measures aimed at this objective such as training, subsidized employment etc
- In Denmark this is **not a policy area emphasized in the strategy**
 - Only focus on **incentives** through reduced benefits (the so-called integration benefit is being further reduced and renamed **self-reliance and repatriation benefit**, to make it more attractive to work

 **Different views on structural obstacles in the labor market**



Comparison 3: Early childhood education

- Common objective
- Different instruments



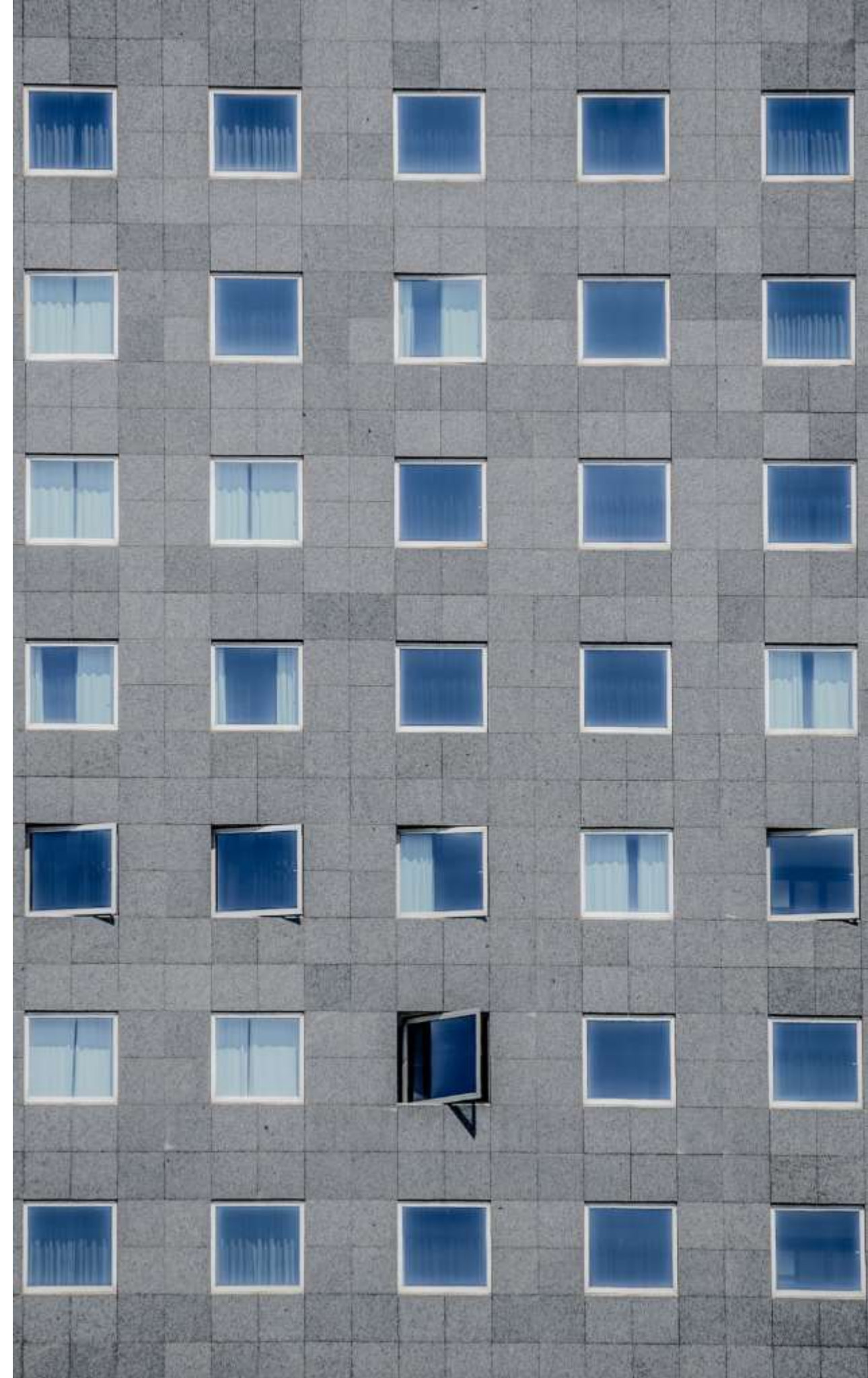
Denmark: compulsory kindergarten, non-attendance penalized with reduced child benefit

Norway: free core hours



Transnational learning?

- Scandinavian policymakers and politicians frequently learn from each other – or pick up ideas - in structured and unstructured ways
- Danish policy measures frequently appear in the Norwegian debate – what potential for implementation here?
 - Evidence based policymaking
 - Different housing regime



Summary

Common concerns over segregation in major cities

- focus on different dimensions of segregation
- Different causal understandings

Different mix of policy measures

- physical change in Denmark
- measures to improve living conditions in Sweden and Norway

Different types of policy instruments

- economic incentives in Denmark
- education and qualification in Norway and Sweden

We can connect the causal understandings to the proposed policy measures

THANK YOU

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