

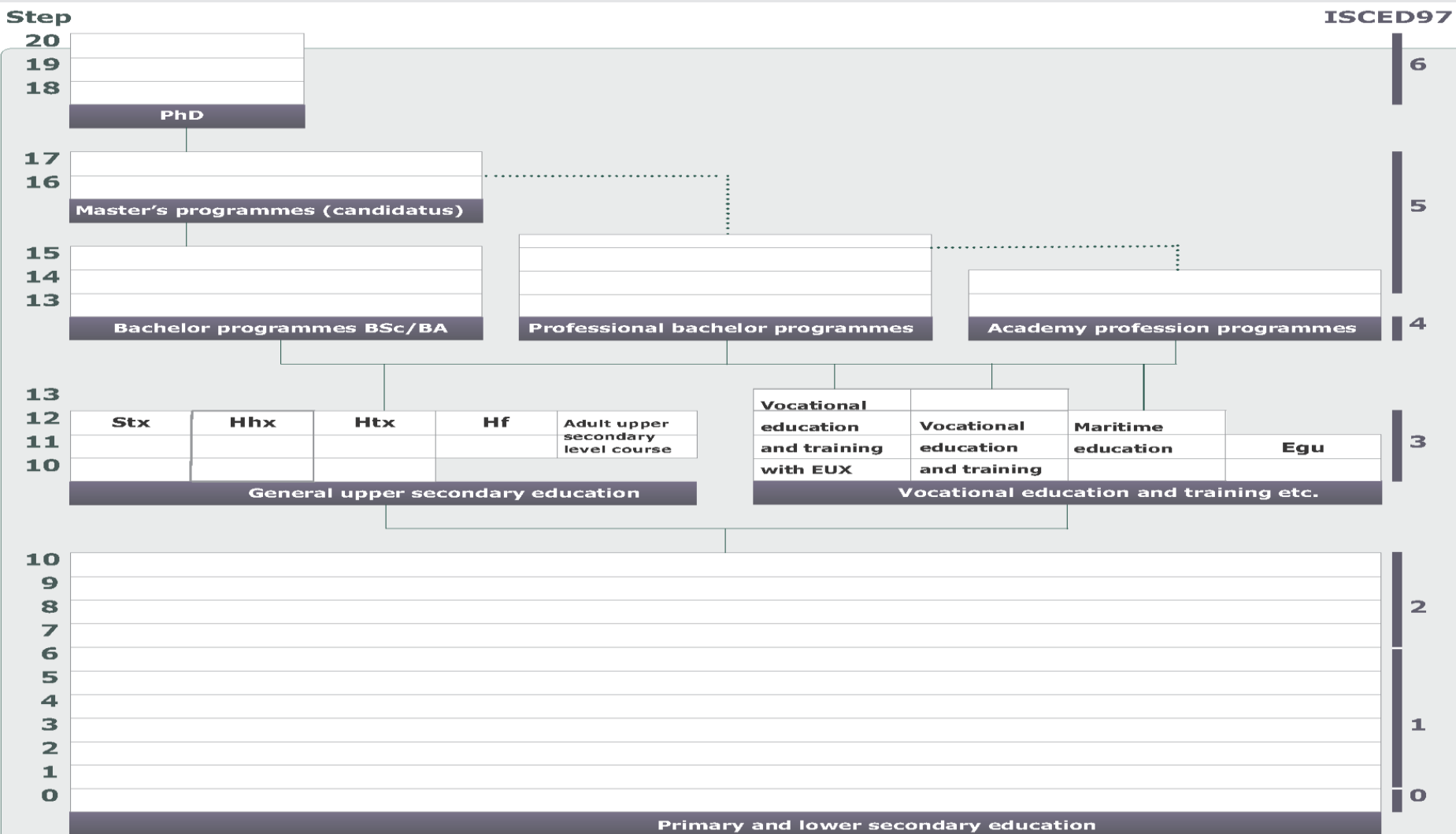


# Young people, motivation and school culture

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- A view from above: Educational challenges - Motivational crisis or change – 3 societal tendencies
- Our conceptualisation of motivation
- Motivational orientations in educational settings – possibilities and challenges
- A few after thoughts...

# Overview of the Danish Educational System

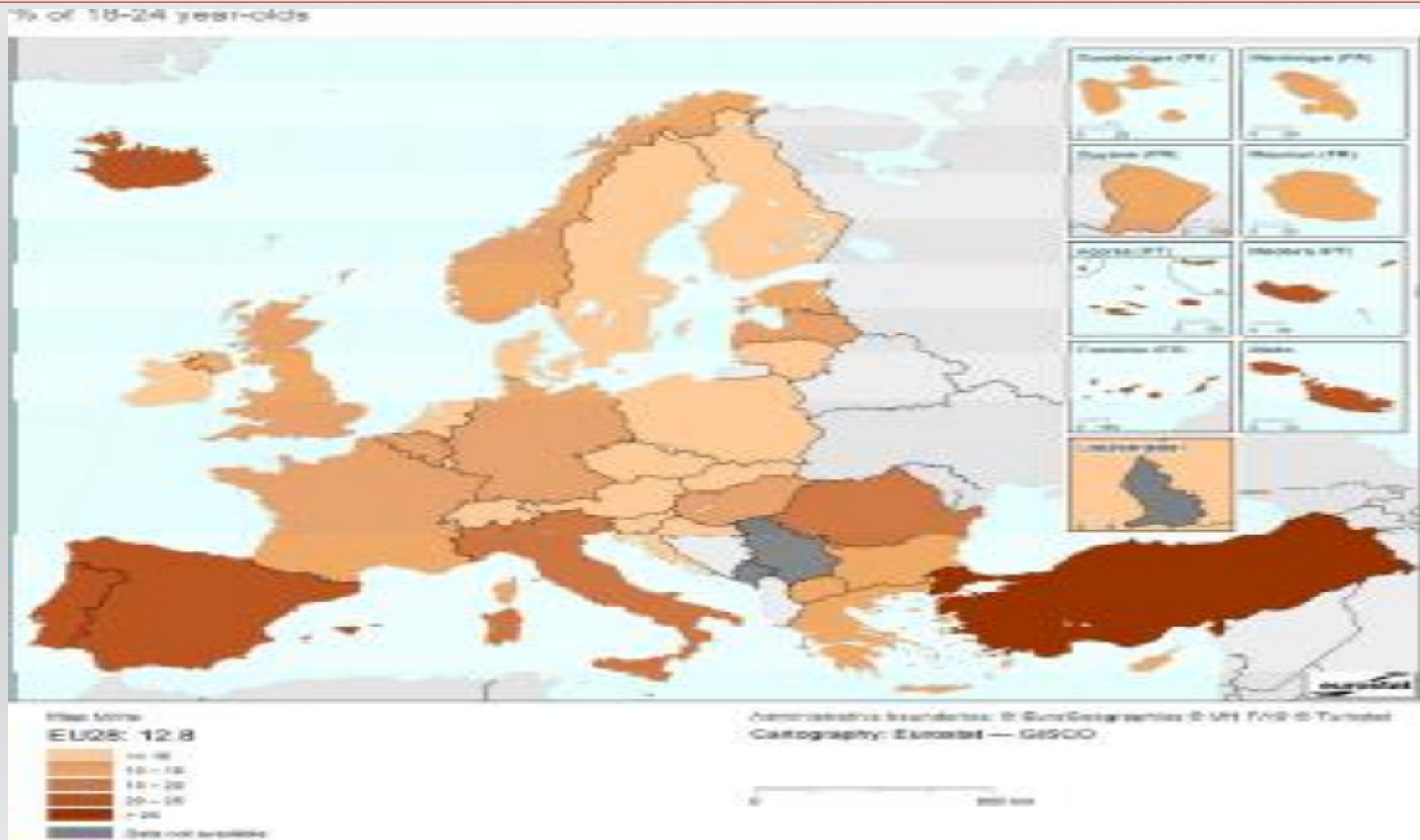


## Motivational crisis – or change?

- In 2012 about one fifth of 15 year olds showed insufficient abilities in reading, maths and science across the EU
- In 2012, 12.7% of all 18 to 24 years olds with EU had not completed upper secondary education and were no longer in education and training (= 5,5 mio young people).
- In 2015, 58.2 % of 18 to 24 year old early leavers from education and training were either unemployed or inactive (Eurostat and European Commission)

**Our focus => motivational changes**

# ESL rates in european countries



Footnote:

Provisional data for DE, LU, NL, PL and EU26. Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (online data code: edat\_lfsa\_15)

1. Fast tracking, tests og performance focus in the educational systems
  - **Performance culture instead of learning culture?**
2. Rapid societal and labour market changes, changing communication – and knowledge forms
  - **Hard to predict which competences are needed in the future – diffuse future horizons**
  - **The school system no longer has the monopoly of knowledge**
3. Changes in the ‘relational grammar’ between grown ups and children
  - **New demands to the role of teachers - a daily truggle to ‘win’ the relation and the attention for the subject matter of the students**

**85 % of pupils in 8th -9th grad finds education very important**

**1,5 % finds education is 'not important at all' (CEFU, 2015)**

- An education is very important to me, as it is my education, I have to live of for the rest of my life. It's my education, that will ensure me a good life. (girl, 9th grade, Pless & Katznelson 2005)
- Well, it's hard, and you really don't feel like it. But it has to be done, you know. One has to have an education. Even if you don't want to. For a secure future. (young man without further education, involved in 'bridging'-project)

**'All' young people are motivated for education  
BUT not all are motivated for school**

# Increasing polarisation amongst young people

## The 'overperforming'

Doing well in the educational system, but have high expectations to own performance. Some are experiencing severe stress etc.

## The 'disconnected'

All-emcompassing school fatigue. Some have given up on education all together and find it hard to see a viable pathway forward



# Briefly about the research project in focus

## Research questions

- How can we understand, what produces motivation for learning in the final years of compulsory education?
- How can we support young people's motivation for learning and further education in final years of compulsory education?

## Research design:

- Survey among young people in 7th-9th grade at 21 schools from across the country (1050 respondents)
- Casestudies at 6 schools (involving classroom observations, individual and focus-group interviews with young people and teachers)

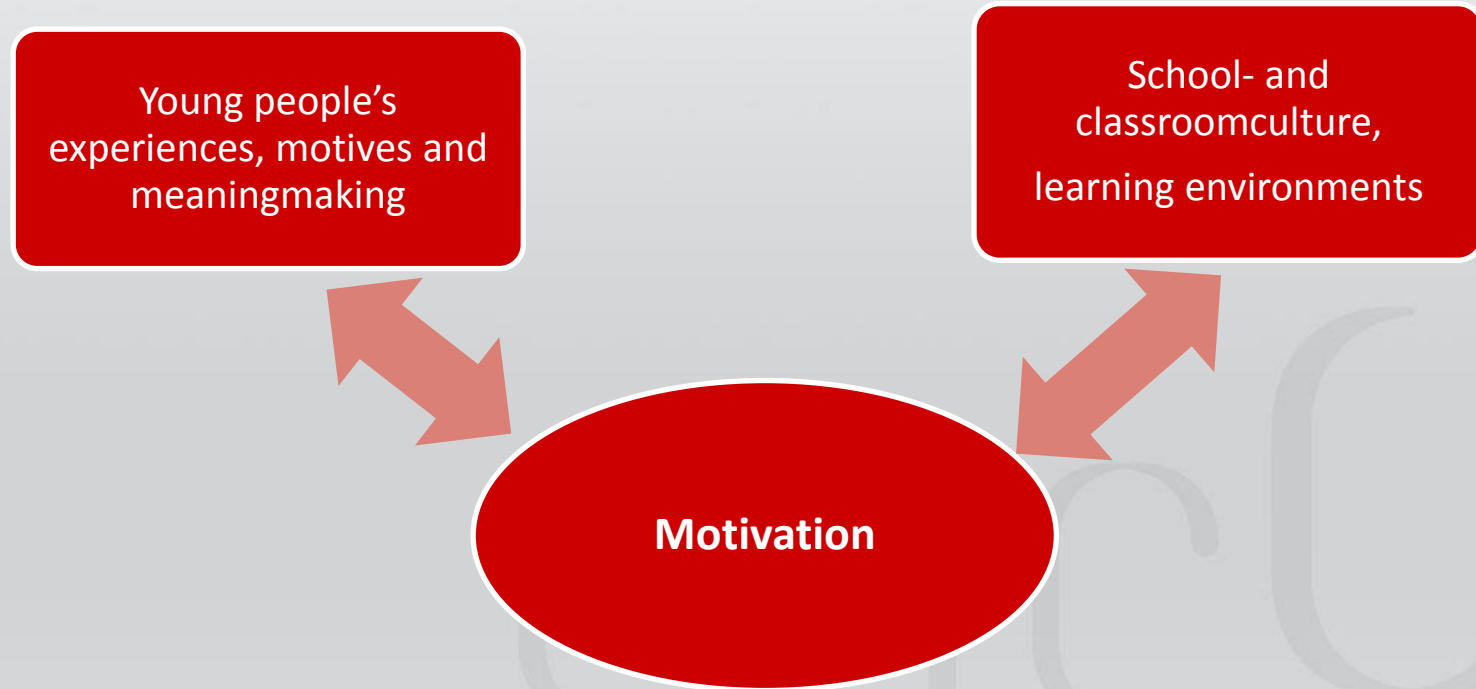


# How can we understand and conceptualise motivation?

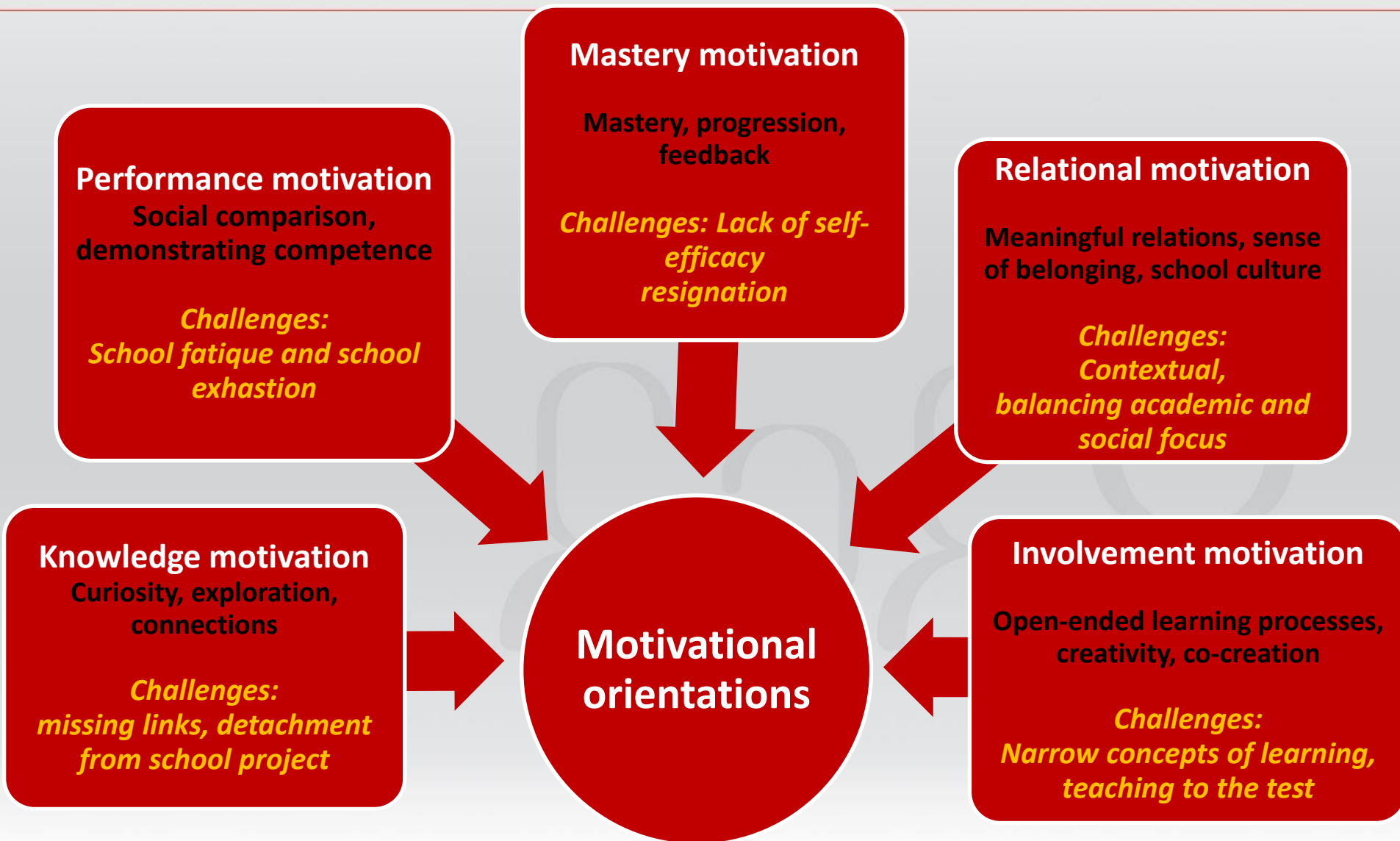


## From a predominant psychological - and individual - view on motivation

- Motivation as something within the individual, a personal trait or characteristic
- A quantitative measurement
- Educational challenges linked to young people's disengagement and lack of motivation (EU)



- ⇒ Motivation is not a *prior condition* for learning. Rather it should be viewed as the *result* of school activities.
- ⇒ Focus on young people's orientations and motives for (dis)engagement in learning activities
- ⇒ What motivational orientations dominate in the learning context, where the young people participate?
- ⇒ Which motives and practices are supported in educational contexts and which are 'deemed' out?



## Involves

- Curiosity, exploration
  - Preoccupation with the outside world – and not least ‘me’ as part of the world
  - Connections to everyday practical use
- I like physics and chemistry and stuff about voltage and electricity and such. It’s just the way, the world is built. Then I find it interesting to learn (male pupil, 8<sup>th</sup> grade)
  - I know one thing, that in the old days, black people were not liked. I think you can learn to see what it was like in the old days. I like things better now. (student - male, at special education, 8th grade)

## Challenges

- Missing links
- Interest as ‘demand’

## Involves

- Social comparison and competition
- Preoccupation with performing well (best)
- Focus on demonstrating competence
- I like being known as the smart one – a competition-person. Some of us, have gotten this image, that we're smart. And then people come and asks us to help them, sometimes. (Male pupil, 8<sup>th</sup> grade)

## Challenges

- *School-exhaustion* (academically strong students who push themselves) and *de-motivation* (students, who struggle to live up to demands and expectations in school)
- I also think, in class, when you're asked a question, then you can be affraid of giving a wrong answer. But here (at a grade free school), there are no right or wrong answers, there are only different right answers – so its much easier (female pupil, 8th grade.)

## Involves

- Progression – that the individual experiences a development in learning
  - Self-efficacy
  - Access to feedback and support
- Grades mean a lot. Well, it's a nice feeling, when you move up. Then you become really happy – like: yeah, I've become better at this (pupil, girl, 9<sup>th</sup> grade)
  - *Int: what does it mean to be interested in a subject?*

## Challenges

- Resignation
  - Lack of self-efficacy
- It's fx when we have german and English, which I'm not so good at. It's harder for me, so I'm just not motivated for these subjects. I try as well as can, to tag along. Sometimes I feel it's fine. Other times, I just want to get away. (pupil, girl, 9th grade)



## Involves

- Sense of belonging
- Meaningful relations – academically and socially
- Classroom culture and the social 'climate' in the educational context

## Challenges

- Relational motivation cannot stand alone – important with links to vocational/academic subject matters
- Balancing a focus on the relational and academic content

- Liz (the teacher), she is also good. It's a bit more on the personal level, where you talk about personal stuff, things at home and such. We gain more respect for them. If they then become serious, then we want to listen, because if you have a good relation to them, then you don't want them to become upset about us not listening. (girl, 9th grade)

...

- I: How much do friends matter for school-life?  
Several: A lot

Boy: everything! (students, 7th grade)

## Involves

- Open ended learning processes
- Eksperimentation
- Creativity
- Co-creation

## Challenges

- Narrow concepts of learning
- Lack of 'language' to articulate 'alternative' learning processes
- Teacher focus - *teaching to the test*

- We were organised in groups, and (in the assignment) it said, that we were to figure it out ourselves. We were to make some tests with radioactive stuff. I thought it was fun, cause we had to do it ourselves and solve the problem and learn about it as a group (boy, 9<sup>th</sup> grade))
- We were making a short film, and commercials. Sort of alternative 'homework', kind of. Stuff you don't necessarily learn from, but which is a bit more creative and about cooperation.(boy, 8th grade)

# Focus on the learning environments

