This is a timely book on the clash between the Nordic welfare practice and the neo-liberal state experiment changing nations from welfare states to competitive states and their individuals from citizens to being part of a workforce, as Rasmussen and Moors put it. The book is an important contribution to the discussions of the changes being implemented in the countries which aimed at realising the ideals of democracy, social justice and prosperity by equality in education.

The book regards 'The Nordic Education Model' as a common historical heritage. A political project spearheaded by Social Democrats in country-specific alliances with liberal and agrarian parties. A tradition exists long way back for comparative writing from the Nordic perspective; all the way back to Snorri Sturluson's historical writings in the high-Middle ages, in a sense. This book traces the common roots back to the Nordic political union in the late Middle ages and by that comes under the hat of comparative- and case-oriented methodology aiming at "maintaining historical context whilst explaining variance of a given outcome by proposing causal relationships" (Volkmar and Wiborg, 119). The causes and consequences are all in the modern times and, from the point or view of this reviewer, the underlying question is if the Nordic welfare state 'School for All' will survive the Right-wing turn. This scholarship is in itself a reciprocal learning process, where scholars reinforce the Nordic whole by consolidating their effort to analyse the social forces shaping their common future. Accordingly, this book is a part of the Nordic project, and comes out as a defender of it.

This is the number one book in a series by Springer titled 'Policy Implications of Research in Education' presenting the ambitious aim of narrowing the gap between the research knowledge bearers and practitioners as well as policy makers. Reading the book enhances the understanding of how the neo-liberal state experiment has already influenced and changed the Nordic Model in Education by the adaptations to perceived threats to nations being left behind in the globalised marketplace. It must be welcomed by researchers looking for overviews, but it remains to show if it gets to the policy-makers.

´The Nordic Education Model' comprises two parts. The first is a state-specific part and the second a theme-specific part. In the former the five Nordic countries are described as cases and analysed. All the authors write on the historical genesis of the ´School for All´ as a part

of the Social Democratic state-building, where all of its citizens were entitled to full rights and participation in society. The encounter with neo-liberal policy is dealt with and the main verdict is that in all countries the changes have occurred and changes have been made in the direction of market-oriented school systems. Parental school choice, voucher systems, privately run schools, private profit from owning and running schools etc. The changes are already there. The countries move along different lines, though. The chapter on Sweden gives an integral picture of decisive changes from the Nordic Model to neo-liberal policy resulting in "control regime overshadowing the learning, equity and democracy agenda that are still in the curriculum" (Blossing and Söderström, 32). The Norwegian case describes the ongoing importance of known indicators for difference in educational attainment such as social status, gender and immigrant status. The analysis of ´School for All´ routes the reader into considerations of the work conditions of school teachers wasting time on paperwork. The Danish case invites us to reflect upon the possible segregating effects of talent-orientation of the school system. The Finnish portrayal describes a prolonged process of finding consensus on comprehensive school system for students of diverse origin. And concludes that both structural changes of more free school choice and decentralisation of steering to be the outcome. The Icelandic case focuses on inclusive education. In this concert the reviewer notes that the authors of the Icelandic chapter do miss the link between the first legislation on obligation to teach children to read and the analogous arrangements by the very same regime in the Danish-Norwegian kingdom in the 18th century. Knowing the Icelandic case in most details, it comes into mind that an author deals with the art of presenting a case as a special one but as well as a part of a whole pertaining to general rules. I believe education in Iceland is more a general and more a Nordic case than a special one, as I find stated in the description. Iceland learned from the Nordic countries how to operate a modern school system, just as the Nordic countries learned from learned from each other. This book capitalises on these channels of joint learning process to oppose extraneous forces.

In the thematic part Volkmar and Wiborg ask: "Why have Socioal Democrats in Scandinavia endorsed and even initiated market-led reforms on education?" The answer reconciles to the research they raise their reasoning on: it is a concession made in light of "the increasing power of the Right". A more direct discussion of the economic thinking and acting would have been welcomed in this part of the book. How realistic are the assumptions about the nature of human agents in this economic theory that the authors do criticise? At the same

time the authors get tough on arrangements set up for helping the least advantaged students. The irregular programs in Scandinavia are said to be “of little or no value” (206). According to table 11.1, these programs seem to pave a way for the majority into further education or employment. They must be of value to these students and families. Sometimes you have to allow yourself to celebrate a victory. I wonder if the progressive scholars should take that into consideration. Is the theory of Bourdieu and Passeron any proof of the failure of the Nordic Education Model? It is refreshing to see a critical stance towards this question. We read of counteractive critic of School for All in Norway and sociologists directly undermining the legitimacy of the idea in Finland. School for all is a more revolutionary idea than overthrowing democracy as the parties insisting being radical have periodically invited to.

The book is of interest for researchers and for those who strive to get an understanding of the changes being made to the Nordic Education Model, being students or policymakers. Perhaps the telescope of educational researchers should be directed to the right. How far is the political Right-wing ready to go to demolish the welfare system?