



AALBORG UNIVERSITY
DENMARK

Aalborg Universitet

Danish Report: Work Stream 3: Fokus Group Interviews

Militants from the other Side: Anti-bodies to Hate-Speech in Denmark

Siim, Birte; Larsen, Jeppe Fuglsang; Meret, Susi

Publication date:
2014

Document Version
Early version, also known as pre-print

[Link to publication from Aalborg University](#)

Citation for published version (APA):
Siim, B., Larsen, J. F., & Meret, S., (2014). Danish Report: Work Stream 3: Fokus Group Interviews: Militants from the other Side: Anti-bodies to Hate-Speech in Denmark, No. 461002, 27 p., Dec 22, 2014.

General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- ? Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- ? You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- ? You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal ?

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us at vbn@aub.aau.dk providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.



With financial support from
the Fundamental Rights and
Citizenship Programme of the
European Union



AALBORG UNIVERSITY
DENMARK

Hate speech and populist othering In Europe: Through the race, age, gender looking glass

WORK STREAM 3

Militants from the Other Side:

Anti-bodies to hate-speech and behavior in Denmark

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS - ANALYSIS

Birte Siim: siim@cgs.aau.dk

Jeppe Fuglsang Larsen: Fuglsang@socsci.aau.dk

Susi Meret: meret@cgs.aau.dk

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PART I: THE DANISH POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

- Democracy, Citizenship and Social Movements
- EURO-skepticism and the Danish Opt-outs
- Victim Organizations and Antibodies

PART II: ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS

- Methods
- The first round of interviews: Sabaah, the Trampoline House and SOS against Racism
- The Second Round of Interviews: The Trampoline House and LGBT Asylum refugee

III: CONCLUSIONS, REFLECTIONS, DILEMMAS

PART I: The Danish Political Landscape¹

Executive Summary

The purpose of this national report is to analyze the role of social movements/organizations/initiatives in the struggle against racism, discrimination, hate speech and behavior from the Danish context. The first part briefly presents the Danish political landscape focusing on the participatory model of democracy, the shift towards a restrictive citizenship model in 2001 and the long tradition for social movements and voluntary associations. The political institutions and political culture form the context for the potentials and barriers for democratic antibodies and grass root initiatives to combat hate speech hate crimes. The mapping of voluntary movements/groups/organizations presents an overview of the diverse policies and strategies towards racism, discrimination and hates speech and hate behavior. It looks at the kind of activities, campaigns and demonstrations the organizations have been engaged in demonstrating the close collaborations and negotiations/networking between the democratic anti-bodies as well as the struggles between antibodies and groups practicing hate speech and hate behavior. This identified important gaps in our knowledge about what is going on – not only at the national level but especially beyond and below the nation state – at the transnational and local levels. It shows that some of the groups, for example Sabaah, offering counselling to homosexual youths with a Muslim background, work mainly on the local municipality level in Copenhagen. Other groups, such as SOS against Racism, are national organizations that are part of European wide or EU sponsored networks. The second and main part of the report provides an in depth analysis of selected organizations and groups engaged in the combat of racism, discrimination, hate speech and hate behaviour. The following five organizations were selected for in depth individual and focus group interviews: Sabaah, the Trampoline House, SOS against Racism, Refugees Welcome and LGBT Asylum. The main issues addressed were: Migration/refugees; Racism/discrimination; LGBT equality. The conclusion illustrate that in the Danish context collaboration between the multiple groups working on similar issues, such as LGBT organizations, anti-racist or advocates of refugee groups is the rule rather than the exception. The selected organizations do not understand themselves as democratic ‘anti-bodies’ who work against the system. They pursue a dual aim as ‘advocates for’ and ‘activists’ working with the target groups. The organizations experience political consensus around integration issues, such as LGBT, and conflicts around refugee and asylum

¹ Part 1 is a summary of the main points concerning the Danish historical and political context previously presented in the State of the Art WS3 Report: Siim, Birte, Jeppe Fuglsang Larsen and Susi Meret (2014): *State of the Art. Work Stream 3 – the Danish Report: Militants from the Other Side Anti-bodies to hate-speech and behavior in Denmark, Paper, National Report. May 2014.* For a more detailed analysis see also the WS1 Report: Siim, Birte; Jeppe Fuglsang Larsen & Susi Meret (2013): *Danish Populism: Hate Speech and populist othering. Work Stream 1 - Analysis of Interviews, National Report 2013.*

issues. This influences the political support they receive as well as their abilities to support specific target groups.

Democracy, Citizenship and Social Movements

Denmark has during the last 100 years developed a *participatory model of democracy* with a tradition for bottom-up initiatives of peasants, workers and women organized in the folk-high school movement, the social movements and trade unions. The first democratic constitution dates back to 1849 that granted the vote to men above the age of 30 having their own household². “Women, poor people, criminals and fools” did not gain the right to vote till 1915. Since 1920, the country has had a parliamentary democracy and the present Constitution dates back to 1953. Denmark has only one chamber [Folketinget], with 179 seats – two seats are reserved for members from Greenland and two for members from the Faroe Islands. Formally, the main power is in Parliament and the Government must step down if it does not have the support of the majority. Danish democracy is *majoritarian* in the sense that Parliament is the most important institution compared to the judiciary and executive powers.

A large part of the population is organized in *voluntary organizations*, SMOs and NGOs and the country has a tradition for a strong *local democracy* based upon decentralization of power to elected municipalities and till 2007 also to regional counties. Till January 1, 2007 there were 270 municipalities and 14 regional counties. A structural reform in 1997 reduced the number of municipalities from 270 to 98 and created 5 regional councils; the latter is without the power to tax.

The country has during the last 150 years been relatively homogeneous in relation to religion, language and ethnicity, and the political culture is characterized by a cultural monism. Denmark has a union with Greenland and the Faroe Islands. Immigrants have the right to vote in local elections after 3 years of residency (since 1981) and are generally better represented at the local than at the national level, and some municipalities have set up Integration Councils as consultative for integration issues, for example Copenhagen and Aarhus.

The Danish citizenship model is described as mix of a civic-assimilationist and an ethno-cultural citizenship model. Denmark has been a small nation state, since the loss of Norway in 1814 and Slesvig-Holstein in 1864 with a population 5.634.437 million people. In 2012 about 89, 6 percent of the population were of ethnic Danish origin, defined as having at least one percent born in

² In the first democratic constitution only a quarter of the men and only about 15 per cent of the people were enabled to vote (cf. Fiig & Christensen 2012; <http://kvinfo.dk/2015>).

Denmark or with Danish citizenship. Many of the remaining 10, 4 percent were immigrants and their descendants (142 000 second generation migrants born in Denmark).

The immigration issue played a crucial role in the election campaign in 2001 and already in May 2002 the new majority adopted a restrictive Alien Act. This law explicitly aimed to restrict the access to Denmark for immigrants while at the same time intensifying efforts to integrate migrants living legally in the country. Denmark adopted a stop for immigration in 1973, and since then immigrants could only gain legal access to the country as refugees or as part of family unification. Following the new integration policies adopted by the Centre-liberal government in 2002, immigrants must have lived legally in the country for nine years before they can apply for citizenship, and integration laws have gradually been tightened. One example is the adoption of citizenship tests examining immigrants' knowledge of Danish language and values.

Gender equality has during the last 30 years become a crucial part of the universal Danish welfare model. The country has since the 1970s adopted a dual-breadwinner model where both spouses are expected to be active on the labor market. In terms of politics the country was characterized by a strong bottom-up women's movement and women have gradually been included in the political parties without adopting quotas, and in the latest elections women have made up around 40 percent of the representatives in Parliament. As a result gender equality has become part of the Danish citizenship model, and the present government defines gender equality as a key aspect of Danish democracy and as a special 'Danish' value. Gender equality and women's rights have become politicized in the struggle for control over migration, and the discourse of gender equality has increasingly been used by the government and their support party as the means to legitimize discrimination and stigmatization of ethnic/racial and religious minorities, for example in relation to forced and arranged marriage, family unification and veiling.

EURO-skepticism and the Danish op-outs

The country has a reputation for EURO-skepticism and a tradition for using *popular referenda*, especially about the relation to the EU and the EU treaties. Denmark was the first Nordic country to join the European Union in 1972, at that time called the European Community [Det Europæiske Fællesskab EF]. The country voted about joining the EF in 1972. In the debate both the Right wing and Leftwing politicized concepts like 'the people', 'the nation' and 'democracy' in the arguments against joining the EF. In spite of this, a majority of Danes voted for membership of the EF. Following a binding referendum on 2 October 1972 Denmark acceded, as the first Nordic country, to the European Community (EC) on 1 January 1973. 63 per cent of the Danish population voted in

favor and 36,7 percent voted against membership of the EC. Greenland joined the EC together with Denmark, whereas the Faroe Islands decided to stay outside the Community. In 1982 Greenland decided to leave the EC. The country had already applied for membership in 1961 and 1967 together with Great Britain, Norway and Ireland, but the French president at the time, Charles de Gaulle, vetoed British membership, and Denmark did not wish to enter the EC without Great Britain. However, on 1 January 1973 Denmark, Ireland and Great Britain entered the EC.

The Danish electoral system is representative, and the party system plays the key role in the political process, but no single party has been able to gain a majority in Parliament, and Denmark has had either minority or coalition governments. This is the basis for the *consensus model of governance* between the political parties, which often includes political compromises representing the majority of all parties. There are presently seven parties in Parliament. After the Second WW Danish governments have either Centre-Right coalitions led mainly by the Liberal Party or Centre-Left coalitions led by the Social Democratic party.

Denmark has a long democratic history of referenda about EU issues. The Danish population has been able to vote in six EU referenda since the first binding referendum in 1972: The most dramatic referendum was about Denmark's accession to The Maastricht Treaty in June 1992, which was a relatively close vote between 40, 5 % voting for accession to the Treaty and 41, 7 % voting against. As a result Denmark did not accede the Maastricht Treaty. A new referendum was, however, organized in 1993 where 48, 6 % voted in favour and 37 %, voted against accession to the Maastricht Treaty, supplemented by the Edinburg Agreement. The new referendum resulted in a 'national compromise' among the political parties about Denmark's position in the EU followed by a new Danish decision new decision to accede to the Treaty.

Denmark joined the Amsterdam Treaty in 1998 after a referendum where 41, 3 % voted in favor and 33, 6 % voted against the country's accession to the Amsterdam Treaty. In the last referendum about Denmark's accession to the single European currency September 2000 46, 8 % voted in favor and 53 % voted against. As a result Denmark is not part of the single European currency, the EURO.

In contrast to this the ratification of the Treaty of Lisbon was completed through the passing of a regular bill in the Danish Parliament, the Folketing, 24 April 2008, and the signing of the bill by the Danish Head of State Queen Margrethe II. Denmark ratified the Treaty of Lisbon in accordance with section 19 in the Danish Constitution (international agreements can only be entered into with

the consent of the Parliament). The ratification bill was passed 24 April 2008 by a majority of 90 votes for, 25 against and no abstentions.

This democratic tradition of referenda has not prevented a relatively strong Euro-skepticism in the Danish population, illustrated by the first no to the Maastricht Treaty, which was followed by the national compromise agreed by the major political parties in parliament, except the Danish Peoples' Party and the Red-Green Alliance. After the Danish no-vote in the Maastricht referendum, in October 1992 seven out of eight of parties of the Folketing agreed on the so-called "National Compromise". The agreement was the starting point of the Danish Government at the negotiations with the other EU-member states.

In response to the Danish no-vote in the Maastricht referendum in 1992, the country was granted four opt-outs from European co-operation. The opt-outs concern *defense policy, justice and home affairs, the euro* and *union citizenship* and paved the way for the Danish yes-vote in 1993. All four Danish opt-outs are part of the Edinburg Agreement and supplemented by a special Protocol attached to the Treaty of Amsterdam. Denmark's opt-outs cannot be changed without Danish consent and will be maintained for as long as Denmark wishes. In November 2007, the Danish Government announced its ambition to put the opt-outs to a referendum in the course of its present four year term. The ambition has been confirmed by the Danish Prime Minister on several occasions but a referendum date is yet to be announced. The opt-outs are maintained in the Treaty of Lisbon, ratified by Danish Parliament in April 2008. Yet the Treaty has opened the possibility that Denmark's opt-out regarding the cooperation on justice and home affairs in the EU can be changed, subject to approval by referendum. If approved, Denmark will be able to co-operate in justice and home affairs on a case-by-case basis.

The current government coalition (in power since 2011) is a Coalition Social Democratic Party and the Social Liberal Party [Det Radikale Venstre] led by the Social Democrat, Helle Thorning Smith. It is a minority government dependent on support from both The Socialist Folks Party [Socialistisk Folkeparti], which left the government in the spring of 2014, and the Red-Green Alliance [Enhedslisten]. The previous government (in power between 2001 and 2011) was a Centre-Right coalition government of the Liberal Party [Det Liberale Venstre] and the Conservative People's Party [Det Konservative Folkeparti] led first by the Liberal Prime Minister, Anders Fogh Rasmussen (now General Secretary of NATO), and from 2010 by Lars Løkke Rasmussen. This was a minority government supported by the anti-migration Danish People's Party [Dansk Folkeparti]. The Social Democratic Party has traditionally been the dominant party, but now competes with the Liberal

Party and the Danish Peoples' Party about being the largest party. The Liberal Party, The Conservative Party, The Danish Peoples' Party and the small Liberal Alliance presently form the opposition.

Victim-organizations and "Anti-bodies"

In the Danish case the previous State of the Art (cf. *The State of the Art WS 3*, May 2014) has identified a certain overlap between 'victim-organization' and 'anti-bodies' working on issues, such as combating discrimination of minorities, racism and hate-speech and gay rights and both types of organizations are usually dependent on public support. One independent Danish organization *Documentation and Counseling centre about Racism* [Dokumentations- og rådgivningscenteret om racediskrimination] (DRC) was interviewed about racism in WS1 as part of organizations supporting victims of discrimination (cf. *Danish Populism: Hate Speech and populist othering. Work Stream 1 - Analysis of Interviews*). Two transnational organizations are also involved in combating racism: ENAR- *the European Network against Racism* and SOS-against racism. ENAR was selected as one of the victim-organizations and interviewed in WS 1, whereas SOS-against racism was selected as one of the anti-body organizations and interviewed in WS 3.

For WS 1 the Danish team thus selected four 'victim'-organizations to be interviewed, all of which had in different ways been involved in public debates with the Danish Peoples' Party about racism and discrimination of ethnic minorities: *The European Network Against Racism* (ENAR); *The Documentation and Counseling Centre about Race Discrimination* [Dokumentations- og Rådgivningscenter for racediskrimination] (DRC); former members of the *Youth Organization for New Danes* [Nydansk Ungdomsråd] (NDU); and *Ethnic Minority Women's Council* [Etniske Minoritetskvinders Råd] (EMKR). One interview was done with an individual 'victim' active in the public debate about hate-speech. All interviews were telephone interviews conducted by research assistant Jeppe Fuglsang Larsen during August 2013.

The three selected anti-body organizations each addresses issue concerning refugees; racism and LGBT. The selected cases for WS3 thus aim to expand on key issues from the previous analysis of interviews with victim organizations in WS1. They can illustrate the strengths and weaknesses of the bottom-up Danish political culture and democratic traditions. The selected organizations were examined via individual interviews as well as through two focus group interviews (FI) with activists from the three organizations.

One group of issues was how the organizations defined themselves as activists or advocates, who the target groups were, what were the relations between activists/advocates and users and to what extent they were founded by or for the people using them, by public authorities, private funds or ethnic Danes? Another group of issues was to what extent and in what ways the various organizations negotiate, compete or collaborate with organizations with similar goals, such as racism (ENAR and SOS against Racism); LGBT (Sabaah, LGBT Denmark and LGBT Asylum), and refugees and asylum seekers (The Trampoline House and Refugees Welcome). Finally we examined what their strategies are towards state institutions and to what extent they use illegal methods and employ violence in the struggle against anti-democratic forces.

PART II: ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS

Methods

The Danish team has carried out two focus group interviews and two individual interviews, which all addressed the following issues: a) racism and discrimination; b) homosexuality and c) refugees/asylum. The interviews took place between May and October 2014. The first round of interviews was carried out in May 2014 and the second round in September 2014. The first focus group interview was carried out with members of *SOS against Racism* in May 2014; the second focus group interview with members from *The Trampoline House and LGBT Asylum* in September 2014.

This analysis is based on the individual interviews as well as the two focus groups interviews, all the selected groups and organizations are in different ways engaged in the democratic struggle against hate-speech, racism, discrimination and othering. The following 5 organizations were selected for this in depth analysis:

- *SOS against Racism*
- *Sabaah*
- *The Trampoline House*
- *LGBT Asylum and*
- *Refugees Welcome*

In the first round of interviews in May 2014, the three selected groups were: a) *SOS against Racism* that addresses issues concerning racism and discrimination in Denmark and Europe; b)

Sabaah that addresses issues concerning homosexuality of youths with Muslim background; and
c) *The Trampoline House* that addresses issues concerning refugees and asylum seekers.

All interviews were carried out by the research assistant, Jeppe Fuglsang Larsen (JFL): The first focus group interview (FG) was with SOS against Racism; the other two interviews turned out to be individual interviews with representatives from *Sabaah* and *The Trampoline House*. These groups also represent different types of organizations: *SOS against Racism* is a European wide organization founded in 1984 in France with branches in several European countries, including Denmark where they have around 200 paying members. *Sabaah* and *the Trampoline House* are newly founded organizations based in Copenhagen. *Sabaah* was founded in 2006, and *The Trampoline House* opened its doors in 2010.

The first focus group interview with *SOS against Racism* took place in the office in Copenhagen. JFL contacted the organization's chairwoman, Jette Møller, via email to set up the interview. She contacted other members of the organization and asked them to participate in the interview. The other three participants were Leif Christensen, member and accountant of the Copenhagen division of SOS Against Racism: Sten Eriksen, Chairman of the Copenhagen division of SOS against Racism, and Rawa Mukenen, member of SOS Against Racism. The interview lasted 1 hour and 30 minutes.

The organization *Sabaah* promised to send two representatives to the interview, but one participant had to cancel the interview. The interview was set up via email to different members of the organization. It was difficult to get participants to join the interview. The interview thus took place with only one participant from *Sabaah*. The interview took place in *Sabaah's* office in Copenhagen and it lasted around 1 hour. The interviewee has asked to be kept anonymous.

The interview with the organization *The Trampoline House* took place in their house in Copenhagen and was set up after a long email correspondence as the employees/coordinators of the house are very busy. The interview was with Tone Olaf Nielsen, who is Coordinator of the Program and the Volunteers and the *Trampoline House* and lasted around 45 minutes.

The second round of interviews took place in September 2014. It was decided to carry out a second focus group interview with three different groups that were all in different ways engaged in issues concerning refugees and asylum seekers: *The Trampoline House*, *LGBT Asylum* and *Refugees Welcome*.

The second focus group interview (FG) took place on the premises of The Trampoline House, which since the previous interview in May had moved into a large new building, which also houses *Refugees Welcome*. Refugees Welcome describes itself as ‘a small humanitarian organization, which offers free legal counseling and assistance to asylum seekers, tries to ensure the rights of refugees and inform the public of the conditions for refugees in Denmark’³. Unfortunately the member of this organization had to cancel the participation in the FI at the last minute due to illness.

LGBT Asylum is the youngest organization. It describes itself at the homepage as ‘group of LGBT people – asylum seekers, Danish citizens and persons residing in Denmark. LGBT Asylum works for the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons in the Danish asylum system and does support and counseling for LGBT asylum applicants’⁴.

Six people participated in the FG: The initiator and present leader of the Trampoline House (TH), Morten Goll, and three members of LGBT-Asylum; the initiator for LGBT Asylum (LA), Hanne, and two participants, LAD and LAN and two interviewers from the Danish team, Jeppe Fuglsang Larsen and Birte Siim. In the end the focus group interview only included two organizations, since the contact person from Refugees Welcome unfortunately had to cancel her participation and did not manage to find a substitute with short notice. The FG lasted about one hour and a half and was carried out partly in Danish and partly in English because two members of LGBT Asylum preferred English to Danish.

All the interviews were conducted using the common questionnaire guideline, which contained the following topics:

1. The goals, values and activities of the association/network/group
2. Demonstrations and campaigns
3. Collaboration with similar organizations
4. Political communication and members
5. The understanding of and strategies against racism

³ Michala Bendixen from Refugees Welcome received a newly founded Human Rights Price 2014 <http://refugeeswelcome.dk/>

⁴<http://www.lgbtasyllum.dk/>

One of the main objectives was to map out how the organizations/movements/groups understand themselves in relation to the questionnaire for example as democratic 'anti-bodies', counter forces, advocacy groups, social solidarity movements, self-empowerment groups etc. How do they describe themselves in relation to other democratic forces fighting hate-speech, behavior, racism and discrimination in the Danish society as well as to the mainstream political culture, institutions and Rightwing political force in Denmark and across Europe?

The Danish team has not participated in any demonstrations or on-field work, with the exception of interviews conducted while participating in the Peoples' Meeting [Folkemødet] in June 2013, which was a form of participant observation (cf *Danish Populism: Hate Speech and populist othering. Work Stream 1 - Analysis of Interviews*, National Report 2013). The main reason is that three of the interviewed organizations (The Trampoline House, Sabaah and LGBT Asylum) did not see demonstrations as their primary goal. The other reason is practical, since the possible activities, demonstrations and manifestations of the organizations were all based in Copenhagen, while the Danish team is based in Aalborg. The center for the struggles against hate-speech, discrimination and racism is still in Copenhagen, and especially activists struggling for gay and Lesbian rights flee to Copenhagen. The capital is also the center for struggles to change the situation of refugees and the asylum system, since the state institution situated in Copenhagen has the responsibility for the asylum system.

INTERVIEWS: Sabaah, the Trampoline House; SOS against Racism

The following analysis is based on the first round of interviews conducted by Jeppe Fuglsang Larsen in May 2014; one focus group interview with members of the organization SOS against Racism and two individual interviews with representatives from the organizations Sabaah and The Trampoline House.

The main goals of the organizations

The three organizations target different groups in their work. *Sabaah* is an organization that offers counselling to homosexual youths with a Muslim background. This is done both by counsellors from the board of Sabaah and by the experience sharing of other users of the organization. *SOS against Racism* is an organization mostly involved in educating the Danish people about racism and the different forms racism can take. This is for example done with education material supplied to high schools. *The Trampoline House* is focused on helping asylum seekers in the Danish asylum camps. They offer both legal counselling and a house which hosts a number of activities with the purpose of giving the asylum seekers a break from the everyday life in the camps.

Sabaah explains their main goals as *“helping individuals from the immigration-community. Those who come from an Islamic background have challenges when it comes to being gay or lesbian. We try to help them and make their everyday easier.”* Sabaah have different ways of helping gays and lesbians with a Muslim background. One of the key functions of Sabaah is to be a forum where a network of people with similar issues can talk and exchange experiences. *“We try to create a network for them and get them to meet people older than themselves who can guide them. It is a forum where you can be yourself and talk to others who are in the same situation. We have a café each Thursday, we drink coffee, tea and beer, for those who want to, and smoke a water pipe. There is 10-15 participants each time, they talk and start to form a network. They talk about coming out to one’s parents.”* In this way the goal of Sabaah is to make young people with an Islamic background more comfortable with who they are, and to give them people to talk to about the problems they may encounter regarding their family and friends. They do this by creating a forum or network, but they have also employed a counsellor to answer the phone and give counselling or set up a meeting in private. This counselling is anonymous.

The main goal of *SOS against Racism* is different from Sabaah’s. *SOS Against Racism* has education about racism as their main purpose. *“The purpose is to fight racism through education and other non-violent means. It is to strengthen the dialogue in the society [...] We believe that education is the most important thing to fight racism. We cannot reach those who are on the far right wing, but you might have a chance to make those who are in the middle see things differently, and see that not all immigrants are criminal.”* To educate the Danish public, *SOS against Racism* has taken different steps. One of the main educational steps is the publication of the organization’s magazine that comes out two times a year which each time has a different topic regarding racism and antiracism. Other than that they have made antiracist films, they have education material for high schools, and they arrange debates and conferences where they invite different speakers to talk about issues such as hate speech and the racism paragraph.

The Trampoline House shares *SOS Against Racism*’s view that education of the public is essential. *The Trampoline House* has three main goals. One of them is to inform the Danish public about the condition and everyday life in the Danish asylum camps and to try to mobilize the public to close the camps and work towards creating an alternative asylum and integration system. The other two goals are: *“To break the isolation of the people in the camps and give them some tools to navigate and understand the asylum system they have become a part of, and to help people who have received asylum in their very demanding three year integration process.”* *The Trampoline House* is

in this way more activist than the other two groups as they have as a clear goal to change the asylum system. They do this by being an exemplar to follow and they hope that politicians and the public will realize that the way the Danish system is treating asylum seekers is “racist”

Demonstrations and campaigns

None of the three organizations see the act of demonstrating as the most important way of fighting for their main goals. They do, however, take part in different demonstrations as a way to make their views heard and as a way to raise awareness of their cause and organizations.

Sabaah is mainly involved in the annual Copenhagen Pride Festival. *Sabaah* explains their involvement in the LGBT-festival as follows: “*In the public in general the Pride Festival is seen as something very Danish, there are not many immigrants. But when we participate with our float with Arabic music and dark boys, it is something different. Then you think, oh yes, there are also immigrants that are homosexuals. We want to make ourselves visible as a group, also to the ethnic Danes.*” The Pride Festival is not a “normal” demonstration, it is maybe more of a statement, and this is how *Sabaah* use the festival as a way to show their face and to be seen. This is, however, not without potential problems. During the Pride Festival they must always have the police close by, even though they have not experienced any threats. “*We have an exit route if anything was to happen. Nothing has happened yet, but the threat is there. We have this arrangement with the police at big public demonstrations.*” The threats *Sabaah* feel are from other ethnic minority persons with Muslim backgrounds who they fear will assault them because of their sexual orientation. *Sabaah* explains that if some guys were to violently attack them that they will act in self-defence. Other than that they are against violence. “*We would rather take a political discussion with them and try to sort it out. You do not get far by hitting each other.*”

SOS against Racism is more active when it comes to demonstrations than *Sabaah*. They explain that they do not arrange many demonstrations themselves, but they participate in other anti-racist demonstrations in Denmark. They do this together with other organizations in Denmark that has some of the same goals and values as *SOS against Racism*, such as the organization *Racism Free City* (*Racismefri By*). Sometimes these demonstrations get out of hand to an extent that the members of *SOS Against Racism* leave the demonstration, as a member explains here: “*I recently was at a demonstration arranged by Racism Free City and some of the youths in black clothes freaked out, because apparently there lived a racist in one of the buildings we passed. They started running towards the building. We simply can't be held responsible for that.*” *SOS*

against Racism does, however, argue that they believe that people can separate some uncontrollable youths from what their organization stands for.

The Trampoline House is not actively demonstrating at the moment. When the house was started, and there were not that many users, the coordinators had more time to arrange demonstrations and campaigns against the Danish asylum system. Right now they are too busy to partake in demonstrations themselves, but they do collaborate with other organizations that do not have a physical platform. Another reason for not demonstrating at the moment is pragmatic. A board member explains: *“The reason that we are not participating in demonstrations at the moment is also that the government’s new law on asylum was enacted in 2013, so it is impossible to get your voice heard regarding asylum. We are therefore working on a campaign for next year, where we will demand the camps closed.”*

Apart from different forms of demonstrations, the three organizations have also all been involved in Folkemødet (The People’s Meeting), which is a festival, or a gathering, of different organizations and political parties. This is a meeting place for politicians and civil society organizations; a chance for the public to engage in discussions with politicians and civil society organizations, and for organizations to raise awareness for the issues they see as important. When JFL visited the People’s Meeting in 2013 the Trampoline House had a stall where they arranged dates about immigration and asylum issues in Denmark. SOS against Racism was also present at the People’s Meeting that year. Sabaah has also used the People’s Meeting to arrange debates on LGBT-issues. Their presence at the People’s Meeting functions as both a way to inform the public about the causes of the organizations and to have debates on important topics with the public and political actors.

Collaboration with similar organizations and other actors

As shown above, the three organizations collaborate with other organizations when it comes to demonstrations. They do, however, also collaborate with actors and organizations in other regards as the next section will show.

SOS *against Racism* also highlighted during the interview that Copenhagen Police is the local collaboration partner. SOS Against Racism meets with representatives from the police together with the Documentation and Counselling Center on Racial Discrimination (DRC) and the Institute of Human Rights (IMR). The police department tells their story of how they see the condition of ethnic minorities in Copenhagen. *“The idea has been to create a better relationship between the police*

and ethnic minorities, a relationship that has been very strained in the area.” In addition to the local and national collaborations, SOS Against Racism also has transnational collaborations with similar organizations such as European Network Against Racism (ENAR) and European Grassroot Antiracist Movement (EGAM).

The Trampoline House also has several national organizations that they collaborate with and mentions ‘No Borders’, ‘Stop the Deportations’ [Stop Deporteringerne], ‘Here is Space’ [Her er plads] and ‘Church Asylum’ [Kirkeasyl]. *“It is typically projects that work together trying to stop deportation of people back to countries that are not declared safe yet. Denmark deports people to countries that [are not safe] which goes directly against the UN.”* The Trampoline House has also established a formal collaboration with the organization Refugees Welcome who offers counselling to refugees and has moved the organization in to the Trampoline House.

Sabaah also has collaborations with national and international organizations. On a national level they mainly work with other LGBT-organizations in demonstrations and festivals such as Pride. Another collaboration partner nationally is different politicians. Other organizations, such as SOS Against Racism and the Trampoline House, doing antiracist work and work connected to issues of discrimination and integration, have been targeted financially and criticized by political parties, especially the Danish People’s Party. *Sabaah* has on the other hand not had any problems collaborating with political parties in Copenhagen. *“It is because we do not work with immigration or immigrants. We work with sexuality and problems related to that, and that is something else than skin colour. You can throw it all in one box, but this is an issue were people can see that there are challenges that needs to be solved. But if we need political help, it is not the DPP we ask. We could do that, because I do not think they would be angry with us. But we collaborate with all parties. We will not exclude anyone, not even if the DPP would come to us with open arms.”* In this way *Sabaah* is different from the other two organizations as *Sabaah*’s cause is widely accepted and acknowledge among the ethnic Danish public and the Danish political parties. Internationally *Sabaah* talk with similar organisations in the Middle East about being homosexual with a Muslim background. They exchange experiences and visit each other.

Political communication and members

This section will focus on the three organizations’ political communication, how they try to reach new members and what characteristics their members have.

The Trampoline House and Sabaah can both be described as user driven. They are constituted by their members' use of their organizations and their facilities. The Trampoline House can, however, be said to have a more hierarchical structure than Sabaah. The Trampoline House has experienced that in order to be able to run the house and secure a certain direction in the development of the house, they have to have a small group that makes the decisions. This has been a consequence of the growth of the house and the number of users. Both Sabaah and the Trampoline House describe their users as very varied when it comes to political orientation, class and ethnicity. The point for both organizations is that these issues are not important to the organizations. They try to make a space where everybody is welcome.

SOS Against Racism requires a paid membership. Like the other two organizations, they do not require a special political standpoint for their members. The informants explain that none of their members are further to the right than the Social Liberal Party, and that most of the members are left-wing. In addition most of the members are ethnic Danes. According to *SOS Against Racism* this might be because those who experience racism struggle enough in the everyday life, and that ethnic Danes might feel bad about how ethnic minorities are treated and therefore become members. *SOS against Racism* has, however, experienced a decrease in membership and they are especially trying to get young people involved and become members. *"We have discussed what we can do to get more young people involved. We have just had an essay competition on all high schools. The students could either make a poem or an essay on how racism can be fought in Denmark. More than 200 entered the competition. That is a way we can get them to think about it. We have to do more like that."*

All organizations describe the internet as a main way of doing political communication and reaching out to their members and users. *SOS against Racism* has a Facebook page where they both announce events and start debates on topics in the news related to racism and discrimination. Sabaah describes their use of the internet as very active: *"We are the places where the young people are. When we have an event, then we will do PR-campaigns on the websites we know our potential users are. And we spread the news in the relevant communities. But it is also very much from mouth to mouth. The word spreads fast."* Sabaah does not have an ambition to be widely known. They only need to be known by the people that they are relevant for, which are homosexual youths with Muslim backgrounds. The users often want certain discretion when dealing with Sabaah. While it is relatively easy for Sabaah to get hold of and inform their users of coming events, the Trampoline House has other obstacles in their communication. Their users are living within the asylum camps often placed in remote areas and forests, and thus SMS text

messages are the most important communication means. They send out the weekly programme via SMS. Almost all the people in the camps have smartphones, which also makes Facebook a very important communication tool.

The political communication is also about how to get funding for the organizations' activities. As described above, Sabaah is widely acknowledged as an organization that serves a good cause. They do not experience the same difficulties getting funding for their activities, as the two other organizations. Sabaah that is financed by the Copenhagen municipality explains: *"We are a financially funded and supported by Copenhagen Municipality. We receive money for helping the young from 18 years to 30, who are insecure about their sexuality"*. The two other organizations find that they have a harder time finding funding for their projects and running their organizations. The Trampoline House explains that each time they receive money from either the state or from private donors and funds, the money comes with demands for which activities they want to support and the quality of them: *It does not matter where the money comes from. It is not that they interfere in the way the house is run and structured, but there are demands according to which activities they want to support and the quality of the activities. The state demands that the activities are evaluated and that a rapport is delivered back to the state. That can be a hassle, but there is not a big difference between state and private funding. They all demand evaluation. There can be big differences of how you define quality. We define it in our way."* SOS Against Racism receives money from their members, but it only has about 200 paying members. The organization tries to apply for different funds for money, but they have found it increasingly difficult since 2001 when the Liberal government took over with the DPP as their supporting party.

How to deal with the term "racism"

The following section focuses on the three organizations' understanding of the term "racism", which is contested and has many meanings. The emphasis is on what they understand as racism in a Danish context.

Sabaah has a focus on issues regarding sexual orientation and the difficulties associated with being a sexual minority within the Muslim minority. It was made clear in the interview that *Sabaah* does not want to talk about racism as they see their issues as unrelated to their main topic. Therefore the following will only focus on SOS against Racism and the Trampoline House.

In the interview *with SOS against Racism* the focus was mainly on the shift from racism grounded in skin colour to a racism that is grounded in culture and religion. *"Earlier it was discrimination*

because of race. That was during World War 2, but after that it has become cultural racism. It is a belief in one's own kind, like when Pia K says 'there is one civilization, and that is the Western civilization'. That is a form of modern racism. That the Christian culture is superior." SOS against Racism argues that Muslims have become the target of the cultural racism and that their culture is seen as subordinate in Denmark. Even though they see the cultural racism as something other than a racism focussed on skin colour, they also believe that the two forms of racism in reality is much the same and that the skin colour racism is also present in Denmark today: *"A lot of it is also about skin colour and that some people can't stand to look at people who look different from themselves. But you never say that it is because someone looks different and has a different skin colour. Denmark was one of the first countries to have a racism paragraph. Skin colour is not acceptable to have anything against. But in reality it is happening..."* SOS against Racism still believes that skin colour racism is relevant to talk about in Denmark today, but no one does it, because it is seen as unacceptable. Instead the debate is often about the 'freedom of speech', which SOS against Racism thinks has been misused to legitimize hate speech towards ethnic minorities: *"Freedom of speech has become the freedom of being able and allowed to verbally abuse ethnic minorities. That was never the meaning of freedom of speech. It was the minorities right to speak their opinion of the state power. But there has been a huge change in Denmark. It started in 1997 when the DPP and Ekstra Bladet ran a campaign against those who came to our society. Now everything is about culture and Islam, which is dangerous. Racism has taken other forms, but in reality it is the same."* This is the organization's overall view on how racism has changed but still remains a threat to ethnic minorities in Denmark. SOS Against Racism also wants to raise awareness towards, and fight, the structural racism that ethnic minorities, according to them, face when applying for housing and in searching for jobs.

The Trampoline House (TH) also perceives racism as something that might have changed and is no longer founded primarily on skin colour. "People raise the question whether you can say that Denmark is a racist place. They talk about a form of colour blindness. The way we talk about racism in The Trampoline House is that there is a direct internment of people who are unwanted in the Danish society. In Canada, when you seek asylum, you get to decide where you want to live and you get to work from day one. We intern people until it is decided whether we want them or not. Those people are seen as unwanted and we treat them as unwanted, the state does. There is discrimination, a racist treatment." The Trampoline House considers the way that the Danish state treats asylum seekers to be racist. They see it as if the state treats these people as unwanted people in Denmark. TH tries to create a safe space where there is room for everyone and in this way they try to create a place where the asylum seekers can be treated as normal and not as

unwelcome or unwanted. The Trampoline House calls this vision 'everyday-activism': *"This house is everyday-activism. it is about there being room for everybody in this house whether you are straight, queer, black or white. It is about letting people in the house know that this is not a house that has the dominant Danish view on migration. It is the migrants in this house that are the experts. They are the ones that can criticize the system. We do not speak on behalf of the people in the house, they speak for themselves. We just try to transport their voices to for example the Red Cross that administrates over half of the camps."* In this way the Trampoline House helps the migrants, but it is the migrants themselves that do the criticising.

All in all SOS against Racism talks about racism and defines it in a broader structural and cultural sense than the Trampoline house, which defines racism mainly in institutional terms of the way the Danish state treats asylum seekers.

Both of the organizations think that Denmark first of all needs to follow international laws. SOS against Racism emphasises that the first thing that needs to be done is for the Danish state to follow the human rights conventions. *"There are examples of that not happening. It is obvious when it comes to children's rights that we do not follow the human rights."* The Trampoline House first of all wants the Danish state to close all asylum camps and follow the Dublin Convention: *"But on a Danish level it is first of all about closing the camp in order to make sure that people are able to live in smaller housing communities."* The Trampoline House finds that this is the solution the state could and should chose as an alternative to having the camps. It is called "the community-garden idea" (kolonihavetanken), a certain (Social Democratic) version of community and belonging, which includes growing your own vegetables, which goes back to the 1930ies but is still alive across Denmark. *"The community-garden idea is fantastic. People can live in the community-gardens, the whole community should not be housed by asylum seekers, but they could be offered a small house among a lot of different people, where they have a small garden and they would be allowed to continue their educations and work from day one."* This is the ideal for the Trampoline House. The coordinators see it as a way for the Danish state to treat the asylum seekers in a non-racist way.

Morten believes that the amount of success they have had, is a way of demonstrating that it would be possible to change the asylum system and close the camps and let people live closer to where the Danes people live and thus create more common meeting places, like the Trampoline House, all over the country. This would contribute to create more happy, able and competent asylum

seekers who would then already be integrated when they get asylum, because they know a lot of and about the Danes. The philosophy of the house is that integration to start at day one.

INTERVIEWS: The Trampoline House and LGBT Asylum refugee

The following analysis is based upon the second focus group interview (FG) carried out in September with members of the two organizations, The Trampoline House and LGB Asylum, both organizations that are in different ways concerned about the situation of refugees and asylum seekers in Denmark. Birte Siim and Jeppe Fuglsang Larsen conducted the interview with BS as the monitor. The Danish team has visited the premises of the Trampoline House twice. The organization acquired a new building in the August 2014 with government support and the FG was held in their new building, which was still under construction. Here Morten Goll, an artist, co-founder of the TH and its daily leader, welcomed us by giving a guided tour on the new premises of the house, which included a brief overview of the ideas behind establishing a 'house' for refugees as an alternative to the refugee camps. It is an impressive place, which has previously served as an old factory, able to house a large communal kitchen, a large communal dining place, large office spaces, a coming gallery room and meeting facilities for several groups. The Trampoline House presents itself as an original and innovative social and to some extent also a democratic experiment. We experienced an active and warm atmosphere with many users and a number of diverse activities going on, which we would have liked to document visually. It was an inspiration to visit the house and it deserves a further in depth case-study analysis. It was not possible for us to take photos of the diverse activities going on in the place since the many users preferred to remain anonymous.

The Danish state is responsible for asylum and refugees and therefore the municipalities only get involved after people have gained the right to asylum in Denmark. The Trampoline House and LGBT Asylum thus do not receive funding from municipality but have cooperated mainly with Copenhagen municipality about festivals, for example the Pride festival and Diversity Festivals, and other activities. The two groups have different histories, aims and organizational structures. The Trampoline House is a well-established and publicly funded organization, which owns a large building, including large meeting rooms and office spaces, and has lately set up a more professional board. In contrast LGBT-Asylum is a newly founded informal organization of between 25-50 persons, white Danes and LGBT activists of whom the majority has already acquired asylum. The group does not have a permanent meeting place but meets in cafes and in private homes.

The goals and strategies of the organizations

The initiators of the two organizations, Morten and Hanne, were both present at the FG and understand themselves as (white) organizers and advocates for refugee and asylum seekers and they also to some extent see themselves as activists. The leader of LGBT Asylum (LA) refers to the about 25 volunteers and about 25 members as 'activists', since they all struggle for a common goal: LGBT rights. The coordinators of The Trampoline House (TH) also act both as 'everyday' activists and advocates. Here there is, however, a larger gap between the white Danish coordinators, the volunteers and the users of the house, who are mostly refugees and asylum seekers and third country nationals from countries outside the EU.

The organizations have therefore adopted two different democratic strategies: The strategy that The Trampoline House (TH) has chosen is at the moment mainly concerned about improving the daily life of refugees and asylum seekers by providing a place and for them outside the camps where they can feel safe and feel 'at home'. The strategy that LGBT Asylum has chosen is concerned about legal and procedural changes of the immigration system in favour of the target group, LGBT people. The two strategies raise questions about the potentials and limits of the democratic strategies and what you can do as advocates and activists to struggle against hate-speech, racism and discrimination for different target groups in changing political contexts.

Morten explains that *The Trampoline House* originally wanted 'to change the whole immigration system', but what would take a lot of effort and what would be the best way to change it? The problem is how to tell the politicians that they are wrong and that the system has to change? Morten is an artist and finds that it is important to show them something which works, that it is not enough to say that we as artists or activists and we think this is wrong, because they do not care about artists and activists or any civilian.

TH today understands The Trampoline House as a 'showcase', because it is important to relieve the stress in the camps here and now, but also to teach the Danes that there is a different way that is possible. The objective is 'to tell a beautiful story about integration', what you can achieve if you turn things on its head and work together. The objective is thus to teach Danes that another and smarter way is possible. And he hopes that this idea will spread slowly and more and more people would realize: "Wow why did we not think about this before".

The strategy of The Trampoline House is to create an ideal space for refugees and asylum seekers which feels 'like home'. Morten adds that in the beginning they wanted to stay under the radar because of the former Liberal-Conservative Government (in power from 2001-2011), and they feared that if they knew about them, the government's support party, The Danish Peoples' Party, would insist on a law against the Trampoline House. With the new government in power since December 2011 they started to become more outgoing because they knew there were politicians that they could actually talk to. And therefore they got the idea of letting the state paying for the house, and this has been the case since January 2014. It was a big achievement that the state has given them 2 years of experimentation period 2014-2016. After that it will be evaluated. Morten believes that they have really good results and finds that presently they have a strong support in parliament who is eager to evaluate the experiment is and are positive towards it. They would like a positive evaluation which could contribute to a change treat of the asylum system and treat asylum seekers in a smarter way so they don't become clients of the welfare system. That is the main argument.

LGBT Asylum's strategy aims to change the asylum system from the perspective of human rights. Hanne from *LGBT Asylum (LA)* explains that their perspective is different. LA's objective is much more specific, it is not only about asylum. They have a different approach, since they work directly on changing the immigration system. 'The fruits we are picking are much more low hanging than the ones the Trampoline House are working with'. Hanne agrees with TH's perspective and the way it acts, but she argues that LGBT and asylum system needs to be changed because it belongs to a sinking boat and water is pouring in. There are strong arguments for changing the system, because it is part of a human rights issue defended by the EU court and UN and human rights. Therefore LA is not patching that up or covering it up but is working to change the immigration systems perspective, on accommodation, case handling, and social issues, for example having someone to talk to and not be alone an isolated. On accommodation, LA has done that, a check mark. The system does not want bad stories any more, like about a guy being chased away from Aunstrup refugee camp. And now LA moves to case handling, which will be more difficult. LA's strategy is based on the belief that the system wants to cooperate with them

LGBT Asylum is a young organization and the group normally meets at a café called Muhabet. In the daytime it is a place for vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers but they lent it to us in the weekends. Hanne explains that they are vulnerable but in a different way and strong in another way. Every month the whole group meets and tries to meet up at private houses. They eat together

and have a meeting. An important thing is that they have two different tracks, which she finds is ethically problematic. One track is the individual cases and contact persons and the other is the social part and what they do together, for example doing a demonstration, going to the pride parade together. They eat together the last Saturday of the month. They have a common space, but it is peoples' own choice what they want to share in the group.

Hanne from LA explains that the most important thing for LGBT Asylum is to create 'safe spaces'. "The group needs to be safe. Everybody knows that you have a contact person..." One important part of their work is by distributing their flyers to refugees who are part of the receiving team in the Refugee Camps, for example Sandholmlejre/camps, but since people are only there 8 hours now, they have to find a better way of distributing the flyers. LA can send the flyers to the refugee centers but their work is all based on networks and on 'mouth to mouth' methods. Refugees from one place, for example Uganda, all know each other. Hanne finds that there are things that she does not understand 'as a white activist' and must accept, for example that people go to church on Saturday and come to LGBS meetings on Sundays. They gradually manage to get agents in the camps where there are some employees who cooperate better than others with them. It is important to reach nurses and therapists, and many employees in the immigration board (udlændingestyrelsen) are also kind, but they have decided not to mix with them.

Hanne understands LA as a group of activists that aims to give attention to critical points but not to offer solutions, because the solution is the responsibility of Danish authority. Proper case handling is their responsibility. If I offered the solutions, immigrations would say: "but we did all you said we had to do..." It is not working. LA is also a kind of advocacy group who listens to and give council to the LGBT asylum seekers. She finds that it is also what makes sense for the specific groups, what makes sense to other groups might not make sense for us. The asylum landscape in Denmark is made of big NGOs like Red Cross and Danish Refugees Organization [Dansk Flygtningehjælp] and then TH is also much larger with more resources than LA.

In the dialogue that follows TH responds: "*Not in comparison to those organizations. They have budgets like 50 million and we have 2 million, but we are big enough so they notice us, but they also notice you. You don't need 2 million to be noticed in this field, you have to be smart*".

LA maintains: "*We have no money, we only have money for train tickets and meetings and stuff. There are many small organizations, like Refugees Welcome and other groups, who give us money, and private donors and support parties. We are managing, but for us it is like do it yourself*

activism. We do what is possible. We are young. It does not matter if we have no money. If we have no money in the beginning, then people could come if they have a train ticket, they could maybe get from somebody, but you can do it for no money and a lot of money. It would be nice to have all the money in the world, but we have enough to go on.

The coordinators of the two organizations thus agree that both strategies are important to change the regulations of the asylum system and offer alternative solutions to the asylum camps in the Danish context. TH says: 'I think also that this is like... Your organization is very important because you can focus on one single group. It has been on our house meetings, for instance that the afghans want to have a demonstration, because so many were sent back home. And the house meeting decided that we can't support just the one group, because what about the other group? We need proper case handling for everybody, not just for the Afghans or Iranians because everybody has problems. The strength of your organization is that you can focus on just one group'.

TH adds that he finds the LA's approach very important, since they are working on both tracks, but their strategy is different. TH finds it important to create the change in refugees' situation within their own house by everyday activism document this positive story to the world. So instead of telling people that they are so bad, TH represents a model which can demonstrate that "this is so great, we have a positive story from Denmark". One reason for this change of strategy is that Morten has experienced that the many Danes are tired of is being told 'that they are not okay; that Denmark is not really a democracy, which it is not for a lot of people, but the politicians are so tired of hearing it, and they have decided they do not need to listen, because they have the majority behind them'. This is the reason why TH now represents 'the positive story'. The objective is not to say that the present asylum system is great but to tell people that there is an alternative to the system, which is working well right under their noses, if they just take a look at it. TH thus represents an alternative strategy which aims at changing the system in a positive way by changing the daily lives of the refugees. This is a form for paradox therapy. Since the politicians are used to being scapegoats and TH gives them the opportunity to change this by pointing towards another solution. At the same time Morten emphasizes that it is important to have organizations which are criticizing the asylum system, because it is like stick and carrot.

LA is a young organization and Hanne explains how it started almost by coincidence: *"I kind of hate to say that this group was kind of a coincidence, but the coincidence happened because there is a huge amount of refugees coming from around the world because of LGBT and discrimination*

against these persons. LGBT rights are globally under huge pressure both in Asia, China, Russia and Africa especially In Afghanistan, South America. The refugee groups we see in Denmark are from Sub Sahara, like Uganda 80 % and actually interesting, also compared to the groups you see at the Trampoline House, there are a lot of women. We are 50 and 11 are actually women. But of course the coincidence happened, and I met a woman and took turn together with her through the asylum system. And then as she got asylum more people came around, and I was like I can't cope with this alone, so me and a guy sat down and made a group. The group started very slowly and in the beginning we were very network based, but things gained speed and more people came in. The numbers are very high, the dark numbers are huge. Registration is not done for LGBT cases, and we would like and advocate the cases to be registered. Like Morten said you meet a lot of people who has another asylum case, but really they are LGBT which is a stronger case".

The Trampoline House presents itself as 'user-driven' and one question is what this means in practice. In the debate TH explains that this so-called 'flat non-hierarchical structure' has been criticized as [rundkredspædagogik] based on group work and grass root democracy, which has been a principle in Danish primary schools. ... He finds that this 'the Danish model of democracy' with a 'flat structure' does not always work in the context of TH with 40 different cultural backgrounds, diverse religions and sexual orientations. Here it is the 'white Danes' which know this method and other cultures may be blind to it, so it is not necessarily the most democratic way to organize. He explains that TH aims to create a culture, where most people are able to get a voice, and therefore they are constantly working on changing the structure in order to include the groups which do not participate actively in the house meetings.

The two organizations also have different strategies towards demonstration and campaigns. The Trampoline House which represents more than 40 different cultures, diverse religions and sexualities, cannot engage in demonstrations to support one single group. In contrast to this, LGBT-Asylum define themselves as 'activists' for their target group but they are at the same time concerned with counselling and support for one particular group. They participate actively in demonstrations and initiate campaigns, which address this specific group, for example Copenhagen GAY PRIDE. LAN, a member of LA from Uganda, explains that LA collaborates with every organization in Denmark on different levels. If they have demonstration, it is LGBT Asylum demonstration, but all organizations show up. There is, however, no doubt that Copenhagen is still the center for all LGBT activities, demonstrations and campaigns.

Collaboration with similar organizations and other social actors

The two organizations have many things in common and The Trampoline House would like to have a closer cooperation with LGBT-Asylum and has offered them an office in their building (which they have later accepted). LA wants to cooperate, but it does not want to have an office there. LA activists prefer to remain anonymous. They collaborate and respect each other, although they have different strategies towards the immigration system. They want to discuss what would be the best way for a closer cooperation between the two organizations.

Asked specifically whether they cooperate with Sabaah, LA answers *With Sabaah it would make sense, and we talk to this guy who is in Sabaah. But I think, you know, on paper it would be relevant for people for people that they get asylum and to go there but they are a group that grew out of people who are born and raised in Denmark. Our experience is that there is a gap and that we are here and they are there and there are very much a youth organization. When you talk LAN about what you need. You don't need to sit together with people and talk about how bad it is to run away from mom and dad, you need to talk to someone who... You live alone, have no network and need to find an apartment. If you are born and raised in Afghanistan, Pakistan or Uganda, then you have different issues than you do if you have... The issue is not that Sabaah is not relevant, they are just different. In that respect in practice people who do have permit do stay in Denmark, but are not born in Denmark feel more attached to LGBT Asylum than to Sabaah, because Sabaah is very much, it was much more parties, although they stopped that part. The focus of this group is asylum and problems in the system and we have to focus on that*.

LAN finds that it is important not just to focus on the government and suggests that organizations such as LGBT Asylum and Trampoline House should organize workshops, which brings together immigration officials meeting asylum seekers from different countries to sit on a panel on the same level and document it with international television. The idea would be to sit on the same panel and exchange ideas and life experiences within the system and thus create a level where different people would be able to meet with politicians and decision makers and have a discussion with no insults and pick some interests from activists and Danish people who are willing to support. He hopes that even Danish people could be integrated.

Political communication and members

Morten explains that *The Trampoline House* accepts everybody. You can get a job here if you accept us, we accept you, without any conditions". Both converted Christians from Iran and gay people from Uganda can be in trouble in the camps. People here have had their throat split because they were Christian in the camps. There is no one that openly discusses their cases with

other people in the camps. Because there may be people from both sides of the conflict from Syria and you do not want any trouble and the same goes for Afghanistan. Morten gives one example from the Trampoline House of a guy from the Taliban. He was one of these people who are on the wrong side of history and is now in what they call 'tolerated stay' and he is never going to get out of that because they cannot send him back and they do not want him here because he is a war criminal. But the reason why he escaped from Afghanistan was that he was tired of having to deal with Taliban, which he had supported because he came from the region where Taliban was in power, so he was forced to do it. Morten says that there is no way he could ever be accepted, because when he arrived there the first time he looked like a Taliban, long beard... and when he got into the office Morten was really scared.

Morten adds that he gave 'his usual sermon' for this guy: *"This is a place where we accept everybody. You can get a job here if you accept us, we accept you, there is no conditions"*, and adds that he had never seen a bigger smile on a man's face. So after this incident the man became a big support of the house, cooking for the meetings and other work. The important thing is how the other Afghans deal with this guy, because most Afghans came from other side that worked for the Americans. So the issue is who is going to kill who and is it really necessary? It was really interesting that it was possible for this man to become friends with one of the interpreters and that they were able to resolve this conflict by means of negotiation.

We asked TH to explain the principles of 'conflict resolution' (mæglingssarbejde), which guides the work in the Trampoline House, further. He explains: *"An important part of this conflict resolution is about giving people hope. Because when you live in a camp you are left without hope and if you have 500 people without hope, they are going to become crazy and some will become violent and it does not matter who is in front of them, if it is a gay person or a Christian, they just need to let the steam off and that is dangerous. This is way we want this house to give people square meters where they have hope"*. In addition he emphasizes that they have a culture which is about acceptance of the other no matter what, but it is not an ideal society, so there are things they cannot deal with. One is coming out gay openly in the house, because of what can happen when you go back to the camp. In a way they have to deal with this problem, but they can't. They can talk about the acceptance of all, which means that you have to serve everybody. Within this premise it works, but they don't tell people and others that they know this man is from the Taliban and so on, that is considered to be private stuff".

Asked about the 'user-driven' structure in the TH and Morten emphasizes that the house meetings are important part of the daily life of the Trampoline House., but also the dinner which is at 6 o'clock. Morten explains that TH has created a tradition that they make the food themselves and all eat together 'like a family'. This may include any kind of religious or political prayer when the food is served, which is seen as a thanks for the food to the community. It can be seen as a tradition and a fabric, which keeps the community of users together. It is the rituals which make people recognize that they belong to a family. He believes that this is an important part of the glue that makes people give up wanting to fight. But also tells that there are also a lot of things they have to sweep over, because they want things to happen 'here and now'.

Morten also explains about the second part of TH's story called plan B, which is concerned with those who have to go back. This is tough, because a lot of the friends have to go back and even if they have lawyers there are a lot of people it is not possible for them to help, and finally they can only help them with plan B, how to get them to another country than their own and how to get home. It is better to go back to Congo without the police because they will hand you over to the Congo police and then you are in trouble. If you are going to Congo then it is better to go to Rawanda and sneak over the border. One example is a guy from Iran went to Afghanistan because then he was sure not to be caught by the Iranian police because then he could sneak over and come back.

How to deal with the term "racism"

The participants in this focus group interview targeting groups and issues related to refugees and asylum seekers did not talk explicitly about racism. In the previous interview Tone mentioned the racism within the Danish asylum system, which can be seen as a form of 'institutionalised' racism or discrimination on the level of the state directed towards those groups like refugees and asylum seekers who do not yet 'belong' in Denmark. This institutionalized discrimination contrasts to some extent by the political support and state funding groups, like Sabaah, experience targeting groups who already have residence or citizenship in Denmark. In the FI the coordinators and participants both refer to the discrimination and violence they see and experience on the level of their own communities, especially as sexual or religious minorities living within the camps. But they also refer to the often hidden discrimination they experience from the Danish 'asylum system' as well as sometimes also from ordinary Danes.

The examples that TH mentioned earlier from the refugee camps also refer to what you could call racism within their own community in the camps, for example refugees from Iran who are

converted Christian who could get in trouble and have their throat split in the camps among Muslim refugees. This is because there may be people from both sides of the conflict from Syria as well as from Afghanistan, for example the guy from the Taleban controlled area on tolerated stay as a war criminal having to learn to live with Afghani refugees who supported the American side.

LAD tells a similar story of discrimination he experienced living in the camps as homosexual: *“ I think. When you arrive at the center... When you just come into the system, you might not think about it, but from the centers... the integration has to begin right from the time people come to Denmark. The center is isolation of some sort. I am not a stranger to the system. I lived in the center for one year and nine months and lived far out, in the middle of nowhere. The only people we had contact with were people working there, social workers at the center. You are isolated to begin with. At that moment you do not think it is the most important thing, but as time goes by it does not make it easier. You kind of feel you do not belong. The biggest problem is when you are out of the system and are allowed to stay. This is where the integration starts, language and everything, but you go around the same circles, you go to the school. The teachers that teach language is just specifically for that, but this is when people have a lot of question.”*

He adds: *“The discrimination, I really feared that. I come in here as a gay immigrant and I find myself living in a center with all kinds of people that have different beliefs. The whole system itself is dangerous. You left on hot spot and got to another even hotter spot. You can't discuss anything with anyone or be who you are. You are afraid, you see it, and feel it, the homophobia. We come from different countries, different beliefs and traditions. In spite of that there lies this underlying difference that cannot be reconciled. It is so hard to live in the center, when you can't say who you really are even if that is the very reason you are there. You can't say that you are a gay immigrant from Uganda because of the very people you live with every day. Out of the centers, that is different. When you move out it is more private, when you get your own place, then you can get by. When I moved to the center I lived with 4 guys and the issue is hearing... you can hold an open discussion without saying your position. But you freak out when hearing peoples attitude to people with other sexualities”.*

Another member of LA from Uganda, LAN, tells about a similar experience with being a lesbian in the refugee camps: *“I am a lesbian woman and proud to be. I have never faced any kind of discrimination because I knew my rights. What we face is because the gay community is ignorant. They do not know their rights. They can't say what they want. But at the same time I am different. I was treated differently in the system, but there is a general discrimination where all LGBT people*

are put in the same place as straight people. When two people come from the same country, they are put in the same room because of the language. We keep to ourselves and are very private. It is easy for me to open up to Hanne, but not to my colleagues because I do not know their stance to LGBTs. It is easy to come here and hear that this man is gay, then I will open up to him. When you live in a room with a person from Uganda, then you end up in the same place. The difference is just location. I am proud to be a member of LGBT Asylum because we have changed a lot, we have done some campaigning. We have a special treatment were a person who enters the system gets in touch with LGBT Asylum. They help a lot and have a strong connection to the Red Cross. The LGBT people get a special treatment”.

LAN concludes: *Just, when you write your report, make sure to tell the Danish government that they should not use LGBT-people who are well known to make decisions and that asylum seekers are also gay people. In the reports they have they ask specific LGBT people because they are well known”.*

To sum up the FG interview: The members of the two organizations have much in common as activists and advocates for refugees and LGBT-asylum seekers, although they have chosen different strategies focusing both on changing the lives of asylum seekers and on securing the human rights of LBGT people: One strategy aims at demonstrating an ideal model by working as everyday activists and advocates to change the daily lives of asylum seekers making a home in The Trampoline House outside the camps. The other strategy aims at making legal and procedural changes in the asylum system working as advocates for as well as activists with LGBT-asylum seekers. The communication within the two groups is therefore also different: One group is bigger, older and supported by public and private funding has a professional board, while the other is a smaller, younger group relying on informal communication.

CONCLUSIONS AND REFLECTIONS - Danish Dilemmas

The analysis of the ‘antibodies’ addressed objectives, agendas, and strategies of selected democratic organizations against racism, and discrimination of asylum seekers, refugees, migrants and LGBT groups in Denmark. Most of these organizations are based in Copenhagen, which remains the main center of activities for anti-racists, LGBT and migrant rights’ movements and activists. Most of the interviews conducted were open-ended although the broad themes from the questionnaire formed the common basis of all the interviews. The themes addressed the central preoccupations such as: representation and aims; strategies and alliances; institutional

relationships. The two focus group interviews as well as the individual interviews were all conducted in the period May till October 2014. They thus intended to expand and deepen the conclusions from the previous analysis of victim organizations (see The National Report WS1, 2013) around issues related to racism, discrimination and hate speech and hate behavior.

As regards the issue of representation and aims, it was particularly interesting to observe that the groups interviewed expressed different formulations about the selected forms of collective action as well as about the goals and strategies of their activities. Some groups were primarily concerned with issues related to racism broadly perceived to permeate the Danish society and the public political culture: these groups were *The European Network against Racism* (ENAR); *The Documentation and Counseling Centre about Race Discrimination and SOS against Racism* (interviewed as part of WS 1). Other groups were mainly concerned with issues of discrimination against LGBT in relation to asylum seekers, refugees and migrants: it is the case of *Sabaah and LGBT Asylum*.

The first round of interviews with members of *SOS against Racism and the Trampoline House* addressed the problems related both to structural, cultural and 'institutionalized' racism (e.g. Miles and Brown 2003; Phillips 2011), while the interview with *Sabaah* mainly addressed problems of discrimination for sexual minorities within their own (mainly Muslim) communities.

The focus group interview with *The Trampoline House and LGBT Asylum* also addressed problems with 'institutionalized' discrimination, in particular within the Danish asylum system. The two organizations, however, expressed quite diverse strategies for changing the system: One organization gave priority to 'everyday activism' as a means of improving the daily lives of refugees starting to change the daily lives of refugees from 'below' with practical activities, which are also aimed at the level of the individual. The other organization gave priority to forms of activism aimed primarily at reforms of the legal rules, procedures and approaches. The goal is to force the Danish system to live up to the international human rights conventions but their activities were also directed towards supporting individual cases.

It is worth noticing that most of the Danish groups are to some extent dependent on economic funding and support from government institutions, which probably influence the goals, strategies and activities of these groups. One example is the economic support that *The Trampoline House* has managed to get from the present government. This can be interpreted as both strength and

weakness for the work of this organization, especially in relation to its ability to work for transforming the immigration and asylum system with the aim of 'closing the camps'.

The different focus of the various groups can to some extent be explained by their different 'target groups'; the analysis revealed that the interviewed organizations did not in fact understand themselves mainly as democratic 'anti-bodies', but usually understood themselves – and the organizations- to pursue a dual aim as *activists and advocates* at the same time. *LGBT Asylum, Sabaah and SOS against Racism* all explained that they aim to combine the roles as activists and advocates, working explicitly both 'for and with' the vulnerable groups in need of support. The analysis indicates, however, that this strategy often leads to tensions within these organizations in their efforts to combine the dual role as activists and advocates.

The interviews thus raise a more general issue of the potential of stimulating immigrant activism; especially about how to avoid the danger of reproducing the gap between humanitarian ideas of 'passive' beings that need to be supported by local activists and support the agency of immigrants. One crucial question is to what extent the approach of the selected organizations contributes to empower the agency of immigrants and stimulate refugees own action-oriented capacity through self-empowerment? The Trampoline House in particular, appears to offer an innovative participatory model, which aims at encompassing all actors, or 'users' of the House. This is understood as a form of 'everyday activism' (on the micro-level) directed primarily towards the users of the Trampoline House related to the possibilities of self-empowerment of the 'users'. These issues of 'self-empowerment' need to be explored in greater detail through more in depth case studies; for example whether the 'users of the house' are able and willing to participate in the planning and decision making and to what extent they in practice contribute to the self-empowerment and agency.

The story of the Trampoline House also indicates that it can be useful to change strategy in order to influence the political opportunity structures: In this case the organizations' emphasis on 'changing the whole system' was to some extent replaced by a more pragmatic approach based on 'being everyday activism' aimed at improving the daily life of refugees 'here and now'. It is within this dual perspective of advocates for and activists rather than from the perspective of self-empowerment that the interviewed groups operate. Arguably the role as advocates 'for' vulnerable groups can at times contribute to create frameworks where self-empowering practices can emerge and further be consolidated, even though they are not primary goals in the agenda of the groups.

The selected organizations thus had different target groups, histories, agendas and strategies to combat racism, discrimination, hate speech and hate behavior. *The issues of racism, discrimination and hate speech were addressed at different levels as well as with different strategies.* Only SOS against Racism and The Trampoline House referred explicitly to *structural, cultural and institutional racism* within the Danish (asylum) system, whereas Sabaah and LGBT Asylum refer mainly to *discrimination within their own country of origin, community and families.* Finally the activists/informants also referred to the Danish public political culture, which they attempt to influence by means of information and education.

The questions about who are perceived as friends and enemies as well as how to perceive, negotiate with and possibly influence politicians, the police and 'the legal system' is clearly dependent on places and spaces. This raises issues about what strategies are possible and desirable as advocates or/and activists within specific political contexts, to what extent the organizations are able to combine diverse strategies, create alliances and collaborate with other groups and finally also change their strategies according to barriers and possibilities within the political opportunity structures. Copenhagen is the political center and the largest municipality of the country and it is therefore the center for the majority of activities for gay activists and to some extent also for activities to combat racism, discrimination and hate speech. It is worth noticing that in the Danish context, the multiple groups working on similar issues, such as LGBT organizations, anti-racist or advocates of refugee groups usually collaborate and support each other rather than fight each other, although they have adopted diverse strategies and may target different groups.

Finally it is worth noticing that a number of dilemmas exist in the Danish context: The informants experience a remarkable difference in the political and popular support the organizations receive depending on the issues: It makes a big difference whether the targeted groups are minorities who reside legally in the country, such as LGBT people organized in Sabaah, or asylum seekers and refugees from other EU countries, who have not achieved status as legal residents, as in LGBT Asylum and the Trampoline House. Organizations addressing issues concerning integration of people who reside legally in the country experience that they have a pretty good case for receiving popular support and public funding, while organizations addressing more controversial issues related to asylum seekers and forced migrants usually have a more difficult task when it comes to get recognition, funding and support. This illustrates that the status and future prospects of the different organizations are not only influenced by the political climate and the political parties in power but also dependent on their specific target groups. The analysis thus confirms a consensus

in the political culture about LGBT and integration issues whereas issues related to refugees and asylum seekers are much more controversial.

SELECTED LIST OF REFERENCES:

Denmark's Statistics (2014), *Indvandrere i Danmark, 2013* (Immigrants in Denmark). Available from <http://www.dst.dk/pukora/epub/upload/17961/indv2013.pdf> accessed December 22 2014.

Fiig, Christina & Birte Siim (2012). Democratization of Denmark. The Political Inclusion of Women. In: B. Rodriques Ruiz and R. Rubio Marin eds. *From Voters to European Citizens*, BRILL pub.

Flyger, Tabitta (2013). Volunteer Associations. A Symbol and a Political Instrument, *draft version of article for a PhD dissertation*.

Hadforbrydelser i Danmark – vejen til effektiv beskyttelse, Udredning Nr. 8, Institut for Menneskerettigheder 2011.

Hadforbrydelser. En håndbog til politiet [Hate Crimes a Handbook for the Police], 2011.

Korsgaard, Ove (2004). *Kampen om Folket. Et dannelseperspektiv på folkets historie i 500 år*, [The Struggle about the People], Gyldendal.

Korsgaard, Ove (2013). *Folk* [People], Århus Universitet.

Larsen, Jeppe Fuglsang (2012): *At stå mellem forskellige lejre - Et kvalitativt studie af unge etniske minoriteters identitetsdannelse* (Between different Camps – a qualitative study of the identity formation of ethnic minorities), Master Thesis in Sociology, Aalborg University, Denmark, 2012.

Meret Susi (2010) *The Danish People's Party, the Italian Northern League and the Austrian Freedom Party in a Comparative Perspective: Party Ideology and Electoral Support*, SPIRIT Ph.D series, Aalborg: Aalborg University.

Meret, Susi & Liingaard, Albjerg T. (2013). The Danish People's Party: Organisation, Leadership, Representatives at territorial level (national, regional, local), *Report Paper*, September 2013.

Meret, Susi & Birte Siim (2013c). *RAGE - Denmark Literature Review/Context/Background Paper*, May 2013.

Meret, Susi & Birte Siim (2013a). "Gender, Populism and Politics of Belonging: Discourses of Rightwing Populist Parties in Denmark, Norway and Austria" in Siim & Mokre Eds, *Negotiating Gender and Diversity in an Emerging European Public Sphere*, Basingstoke: Palgrave/Macmillan.

Meret Susi & Birte Siim (2013b). "Multiculturalism, Right Wing Populism and the Crisis of Social Democracy" in 'the 'Crisis of European Social Democracy' Michael Keating and David McCrone (eds.), Edinburgh University Press.

Miles, R. and Brown, M. (2003). *Racism*, Second Edition, London: Routledge.

Lentin, A. (2004). *Racism and Anti-Racism in Europe*, Pluto Press.

Phillips, Coretta (2011). 'Institutional racism and ethnic inequalities: an expanded multilevel framework' in: *Journal of social policy*, 40 (01), pp. 173-192.

Siim, Birte, Jeppe Fuglsang Larsen and Susi Meret (2014): *State of the Art. Work Stream 3 – the Danish Report: Militants from the Other Side Anti-bodies to hate-speech and behavior in Denmark, Paper, National Report. May 2014.*

Siim, Birte; Jeppe Fuglsang Larsen & Susi Meret (2013): *Danish Populism: Hate Speech and populist othering. Work Stream 1 - Analysis of Interviews*, National Report 2013.

Siim, Birte & Monika Mokre Eds. (2013), *Negotiating Gender and Diversity in an Emerging European Public Sphere*, Basingstoke: Palgrave/Macmillan 2013.

Siim, Birte & Pauline Stoltz (2013). *Nationalism, Gender and Welfare – the Politics of gender equality in Scandinavia*, Aalborg, Department of Culture and Global Studies, *FREIAs working paper*, No. 84.

Siim, Birte & Pauline Stoltz (2015). "Particularities of the Nordic. Challenges to Equality Politics in a Globalized World", in Helene Pristed Nielsen and Stine Thideman Faber. *Remapping Gender*,

Place and Mobility: Global Confluences and Local Particularities in Nordic Peripheries, Ashgate (forthc.).