

**Anti-Immigration Parties in
Denmark and Norway:
The Progress Parties and
the Danish People's Party**
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1. Breakthroughs and Party Failures

The main anti-immigration parties in Scandinavia are the two Progress Parties in Norway and Denmark, and the Danish People's Party, formed in 1995 as a break from the Progress Party. Initially, immigration was not even on the parties' agenda. The Progress Parties were formed as anti-tax parties, reacting against the rapid expansion of the welfare state. The Norwegian party was inspired by the success of the Danish Party which had been launched in 1972 by tax lawyer Mogens Glistrup. Both parties had their electoral breakthrough in landslide elections in 1973 with 15.9 per cent and 5.0 per cent of the votes, respectively.¹

New tendencies surfaced in 1979 when Mogens Glistrup supported overtly racist persons and groups at the fringe of the Progress Party but this only created internal unrest and damaged the party electorally. When the number of asylum-seekers increased dramatically in the mid-1980s, on the other hand, the time was ripe; not least on Glistrup's initiative, it soon became a main issue of the Danish party. Glistrup's aggressive statements generated media attention, and the new party leader, **Pia Kjærsgaard** who had replaced Mogens Glistrup while he was imprisoned for tax fraud (1984-85), skillfully modified his statements to make them more socially acceptable.

As Glistrup was increasingly marginalized within the party, he launched a new and more radical party in 1990: The Party of Well-being. It never managed to run for elections, however, and Glistrup gradually lost public attention; when he was convicted for racist statements in 1998, it was hardly noticed by the media. In 1995, due to personal power struggles, Progress Party leader **Pia Kjærsgaard** formed a new party of her own, the Danish People's Party, which is more focused on the issue of immigration and on nationalistic appeals. In the 1998 election, the Danish People's Party obtained 7.4 per cent of the votes and emerged as the main successor of the Progress Party. The old party obtained 2.4 per cent and only survived because of the popularity of its leader, **Kirsten Jacobsen**.² By **specializing** in single issues such as abuse of power and other

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- 1) In Sweden which has the highest level of immigration among the Nordic countries, a sister party did not emerge until the late 1980s when "New Democracy" gained 6.7 per cent of the votes in the 1991 election. It did not survive the next election, however. Although the **Swedes** do seem a little more tolerant than the Norwegians and the **Danes** (Togeby 1997: 68-69), the difference is too small to account for the failure of the Swedish party. Extreme conflicts of leadership at a critical stage is a more likely explanation. In Finland, on the other hand, the absence of a sister party is probably explained by the fact that immigration has been negligible.
 - 2) In the rest of the country, the party lost about two thirds of its support from the 1994 election but in Kirsten Jacobsen's own county, the party increased its support and gained two of its four seats. Anything like this has not happened in Danish politics since before 1920.

scandals, she has become one of the most popular politicians in Denmark; although she criticized the Danish refugee policies fiercely in the 1998 election campaign, she has never been much interested in this issue, however.

Table I. Electoral support for the Progress Parties and the Danish People's Party, 1973-1998. Percentages.

Norway ¹⁾	73	75	77	79	81	83	85	87	89	91	93	95	97
	Pa	Lo	Pa	Lo	Pa	Lo	Pa	Lo	Pa	Lo	Pa	Lo	Pa
Progress Party	5.0	1.4	1.9	2.5	4.5	6.3	3.7	12.3	13.0	7.0	6.3	12.1	15.3
Denmark ¹⁾		73	75	77	79	81	84	87	88	90	94	98	
Danish People's Party													7.4
Progress Party		15.9	13.6	14.6	11.0	8.9	3.6	4.8	9.0	6.4	6.4	2.4	

1) Norway: Pa=Parliamentary election, Lo=Local elections;

Denmark: Parliamentary elections only.

Source: Statal Yearbooks

Also in Norway, the dramatic increase in asylum-seeking from the mid-1980s put immigration on the political agenda. In 1987, the Progress Party mobilized against liberal refugee policies and obtained its definite breakthrough with 12.3 per cent of the votes in the local elections. However, the Norwegian party has other rallying planks when necessary. In the 1997 Parliamentary election, the party had its best result ever with 15.3 per cent of the votes but the issue of immigration was not highlighted. Instead, the former anti-tax party's main demands were improved care and more generous support for the elderly and for the sick, under the slogan: 'Use the "oil-revenues" for the people's welfare'.

2. Immigration, Xenophobia and Racism in the Scandinavian countries

Except for the Sami People in the far north, the Scandinavian countries have been ethnically homogeneous societies without political or intellectual traditions of xenophobia or racism.³

3) In the 1930s, however, restrictions on immigration were sometimes defended by what would today be considered overtly racist arguments. For instance, it was argued that closed borders were necessary to preserve the Nordic race and to prevent Norway from becoming "one of Europe's garbage cans" (Rovde 1997).

Official ideology has been one of tolerance and humanism even though earlier waves of **small-scale** immigration has often generated some unrest among ordinary people (Sorensen 1988).

The emergence of “guest workers” from the late 1960s did not make immigration an issue. The reasons seem simple. The number was modest, it was in a period with nearly no unemployment, and the “guest workers” accepted the dirty jobs which the indigenous population left vacant. Nor did it become a political issue when decisions were made in the early 1970s to stop immigration of guest workers: Although the political left and the political right were concerned with different things (competition on the labour market and social expenditures, respectively), they drew the same conclusion from different arguments. It was not until the issue was rephrased in quite other terms when cheap immigrant labour was replaced by refugees from the mid-1980s that political polarization began to increase and political attention began to accumulate.

Dispersed empirical evidence from the 1970s indicates that intolerance and prejudices were quite widespread already by then. But it was not politically articulated (Gaasholt and Togeby 1995). What has changed since the 1970s is not the degree of hostility but rather the saliency of the issue, especially in Denmark. In the Norwegian and Danish election studies, immigration was not at all mentioned as an issue by the voters until the sudden shock of **asylum-seeking** refugees from the mid-1980s. In the beginning, the saliency of the issue was mainly a matter of short-term flashes (Tonsgaard 1989; Aardal and Valen 1995: 166-178; Togeby 1997:67) but from around 1990, the rapidly growing immigrant population and the increasing public attention to language problems, juvenile delinquency, unemployment, dependence on social security etc. put the issue permanently at the voters’ agenda. In Norway, the proportion of voters mentioning immigration as the most important issue for their party choice increased from 4 per cent in 1989 to 7 and 6 per cent in 1995 and 1997, **respectively**.⁴ In Denmark, the figures were on a comparable level up to 1998. Here, the question refers to the most important problems that politicians should take care of. The proportion of answers concerning immigration was 4 per cent in 1987, 8 per cent in 1994 and ends with an explosion to 14 per cent in the 1998 election survey when immigration was one of the most important single issues, mentioned by 35 per cent of the

4) The 1987 local elections was the first election where immigration appear as a **campaigning** issue in Norway. As no election survey was conducted, however, we **do** not know the saliency among voters. In 1989 and 1993 the question was posed if the respondent could “mention one or two issues which were especially important for their voting behaviour”. If we exclude those without any opinion the proportion who point at immigration as their first choice was 4% in 1989 and 2% in 1993. In 1995 and 1997 (MMI), respondents were asked about the most important **issue** for their party choice.

respondents as among the two or three most important issues.' Having an election with immigration as a main issue has usually been considered a nightmare; towards the end of this chapter, we shall assess some of the impacts.

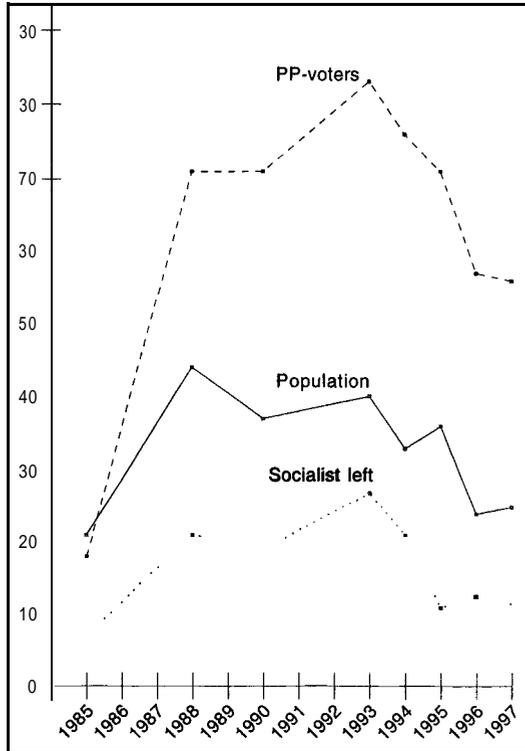
Indeed, there has been a rapid change in immigration since the mid-1980s. In Norway, the number of asylum-seekers increased from 200 in 1983 and 300 in 1984 to 8.613 in 1987. In Denmark, the corresponding figures were 800 in 1983 and 9.300 in 1986. The civil war in ex-Yugoslavia generated a peak of nearly 14.000 in Denmark in 1992 and nearly 13.000 in Norway one year later (in Sweden, however, the figure was 84.000 in 1992). Since then, the figures have been lower but because of family reunions etc., the immigrant population has continued to increase. By 1997/1998, the proportion of first- or second-generation immigrants was 5.3 per cent in Norway and 6.6 per cent in Denmark.⁶ The proportion of immigrants from "non-western" countries (i.e., Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Turkey and ex-Yugoslavia)⁷ is 3.2 per cent in Norway and about 3 per cent in Denmark. In both countries, these figures doubled from 1987 to 1997.

This forms the background of political mobilization of demands for restrictions. In both countries, attitudes have fluctuated in response to changes in the number of asylum-seekers and the adoption of new restrictions. It is also possible to reveal how the issue has come to divide the political parties. Norwegian data are particularly illuminating. As late as in 1985, attitudes among Norwegians did not vary much according to party preference, and Progress Party-voters did not deviate from the population at large. But since 1988, all surveys have located Progress Party-voters on the one pole and the Socialist-Left voters on the other (see figure 1). In Denmark, the issue was not even included in the election surveys of 1981 and 1984; but probably a question from the 1979 election survey can serve as an equivalent measure. This question, concerning the conditions of "guest workers" revealed no difference at all between the Progress Party voters and the adherents of other parties, except left socialist voters, indicating that the situation was very much the same as in Norway.

5) Up to four answers were accepted but rarely given.

6) First-generation immigrants are born outside Norway/Denmark by parents who also are foreigners. Second-generation immigrants are those who are born in Norway/Denmark with a father and mother born in a foreign country. Both in Denmark and Norway, about 80 per cent of all who are classified as "immigrants" are first-generation immigrants.

7) The description of Yugoslavia and Turkey as "non-western" countries is of course questionable.



*Figure 2. Proportion who want stronger restrictions on the entrance of refugees and asylumseekers in Norway, 1985-1997. * Per cent.*

* Percent who had the opinion that Norway ought to be more restrictive against entrance of political refugees.

1988-1990: Percent who disagree with this statement: "It is a national task to give entrance to refugees and asylumseekers in at least the same extent as during the last years."

1993-1997: Percent who disagree with this statement: "Norway ought to give entrance to refugees and asylumseekers in at least the same extent as today."

Sources: 1985, Norwegian Gallup Institute. 1988-1997, Statistics Norway

Although there is a popular demand for restrictions, the attitudes towards immigrants nevertheless remain ambivalent: Many Danes and Norwegians are worried about the consequences of immigration but at the same time tend to maintain humanist and relatively tolerant ideals (Gaasholt and Togeby 1995).

To conclude, even though negative attitudes to foreigners have become more visible, it is doubtful whether intolerance has increased. But especially in Denmark, there is a marked long-term increase in the saliency of the issue, and in both countries, immigration policy has become an issue that generates strong political divisions, especially between the Progress Parties/Danish People's Party and the other parties.

3. Delicate balances: The ideology of the Progress Parties and the Danish People's Party

It is against this background that the ideology of the Progress Parties/Danish People's Party should be read. There are strong constraints against the formulation of overtly racist attitudes. The statements of the parties must remain within socially acceptable limits; Mogens Glistrup went too far, and both **Hagen** (Norway) and Kjaersgaard (Denmark) have been keen to underline that their criticism is directed against policies, not against individual refugees. Strictly speaking, the parties cannot be accused of racism, perhaps not even of xenophobia. They also dissociate themselves from other **xenophobic** parties in Western Europe. Thus, when in the 1997 election campaign the Norwegian Progress Party was accused of racism, and Carl I. **Hagen** was compared with Jean-Marie Le Pen, **Hagen** became fiercely angry and declared: "Le Pen is a disgusting and real racist of whom I really disapprove. His ideological attitudes are far, far from what the Progress Party is an exponent for."

On the other hand, the parties' negative attitudes to foreigners serve as a generator of ever new arguments against immigration policies, and some of these are quite extreme. It is interesting to note how this has developed in the party manifestos. The first manifestos did not even mention immigration, and in the second manifesto of the Norwegian party (1977-1981), it was mentioned only in connection with unemployment: To secure employment, restrictions on immigration should be strictly enforced. In 1985, an argument appeared which was to be developed in the years to come: The party argued against subsidised housing, support for training in mother language, and various other 'affirmative actions' which were seen as favouring

8) Aftenposten 15. September 1997. Somewhat less convincingly and without referring to racism, Pia Kjaersgaard has also refused any allegations of political kinship with Le Pen, stating that she only knew of Le Pen from the newspapers, and what she knew of, she disliked (Morgenavisen **Jyllands-Posten** oct.27, 1997)

immigrants and discriminating against Norwegians. The Progress Party presented itself as the only party that did not discriminate according to ethnicity, religion and culture. This theme is also echoed in the manifestos of the two Danish parties.

The Norwegian 1985 manifesto also reveals a strong neo-liberal influence: In *principle*, the party would favour free immigration provided that immigrants could manage without public support. But as Norwegian laws give equal social rights to immigrants, this policy cannot not be realized. The principle of free immigration is also mentioned in the manifesto of the Danish Progress Party which states that foreigners are welcome if they do not impose extra social expenditures or risk of increasing crime on the Danes. Any such notions are conspicuously absent from the manifesto of the Danish people's Party.

At the same time, however, the Norwegian 1985 and 1989 manifestos underlined that only Norwegian citizens had the *right* to stay in Norway. Instead, the party advocated short-term work permits, taking Switzerland's handling of "guest workers" as an ideal. This is, of course, very radical and contradictory to existing laws, according to which everybody with a permanent residence permission is granted the right to stay in the country. However, this part of the manifesto was later dropped.

The Norwegian manifestos of the 1990s put stronger emphasis on cultural aspects of immigration. In particular, the 1993 manifesto introduced the new argument that a society without ethnic minorities was an ideal: Conflicts too easily arise in multicultural societies. Divisions according to ethnicity, religion and culture contain potentials for a non-harmonious society. From this view followed a recommendation for the integration of immigrants in combination with a very restrictive policy towards new immigration, allowing only a quota of 1000 "non-western" immigrants per year. Surprisingly, the 1993 manifesto also explicitly stated that one had to fight against any form of discrimination and racism. This statement was dropped in 1997, however.

The theme of multiethnicity is absent from the manifesto of the Danish Progress Party which is otherwise quite similar to the Norwegian one. The party demands "tightening" of access criteria, and of family reunion. However, the Danish party is more extreme by explicitly stating that refugees should not be integrated and only in exceptional cases be granted permanent residence. Access to Danish citizenship should be limited by a quota arrangement, and be given only to people with the ability to care for themselves and with sufficient knowledge of Danish language and Danish culture, if necessary examined by an oral and written test. This should be seen in light of the fact that the Danish and Norwegian rules for citizenship are liberal: Seven years of legal residence more or less automatically qualify for citizenship. The support for this

practice is widespread, and a newly launched proposal from the Norwegian Party for some sort of test of language and knowledge as a precondition for citizenship was heavily attacked and regarded as extreme.

Still, immigration policy occupy only one page towards the end of the Danish Progress Party's manifesto, which takes its point of departure in the classical themes of the Party since 1973: Abolition of income taxes; simplification of the "law jungle"; reduction of red tape; and individual freedom. The Danish People's Party is somewhat more extreme. Rather than individual freedom, its core idea is nationalism, i.e. preservation of national feelings and the national community. This involves a social obligation to take care of the weak, and the party dissociates itself from former neoliberalism in favour of a more positive attitude to welfare but for Danes only. The party argues strongly against multiethnicity as a threat to the national culture.

When the Danish Progress Party lost **Pia Kjærsgaard**, it lost some of its profile on immigration as the remaining representatives of the party were not really much interested in the issue. In an attempt to regain a profile, a MP of the Progress Party declared that **Somalian** refugees should be repatriated one way or another, if necessary by sending them back on an aeroplane with parachutes on. This sort of humour was considered far outside the range of acceptability by most Danes, and it may have left the impression that the Danish people's Party was the more moderate party, which is certainly not the case.

The general trend in the manifestos is the same in both countries, however: Increasing emphasis on immigration, and with regard to Denmark, increasing extremism. Even though government practices have also become much more restrictive, very significant differences remain between mainstream and the extreme right. All three parties demand that only a small quota should be granted permanent residence. All three parties want to abolish the right of foreign citizens with three years of legal residence to vote in local elections. All three parties demand that immigrants who are sentenced to prison should be expelled from the country. And the Danish People's Party argues against any kind of integration of refugees, as it wants to repatriate them as soon as possible (this would seem to imply that refugees should typically be confined in refugee camps).

To be sure, most voters do not read party manifestos. They only catch the signal that the parties want restrictions. However, party manifestos are interesting as they reflect the discussion among the most active party members. And it is evident that the three parties not only demand restrictions but that they are basically opposed to any sort of immigration at all. In the beginning, the arguments were mainly economic but increasingly, the cultural argument against multiethnicity is put forward.

4. Ecological analyses: Proportion of immigrants and support for the Progress Parties

Both in Norway and Denmark, immigrants are unevenly distributed across regions. Concentration is highest in the cities. In Norway, the proportion of “non-western” immigrants reaches a peak value of 12 per cent (1997) in Oslo and as much as 42 percent of these immigrants live in Oslo. In some parts of Oslo, immigrants constitute about one third of the **inhabitants**.⁹ In more than 70 per cent of Norway’s 435 municipalities, on the other hand, the proportion is below one per cent. In Denmark, we find a similar but more weak pattern, and in both countries, it is reinforced by the regional migrations of immigrants.

Thus some communities have become multi-ethnic but contacts with the indigenous population remain limited. Only three per cent of the Norwegians indicate that they have daily contact with immigrants. In Denmark, 14 per cent have weekly contacts at work, seven per cent in their neighbourhood, and only five per cent had private contacts with immigrants. The proportions are of course higher if the question is whether people have immigrants in their neighbourhood, on the working place or in the same school/university.”

The interesting question is whether xenophobic attitudes and support for xenophobic parties are associated with the proportion of immigrants in the community. A negative association could indicate that contacts reduce prejudice, a positive one could indicate a feeling of threat among the indigenous population, especially among the more marginalized segments.

In Norway, xenophobic attitudes seem to be fairly evenly distributed across the country. Some studies point at no difference at all between rural and urban areas (Bjørklund 1999); others indicate that in rural municipalities with few foreigners, attitudes are slightly less liberal (Hellevik 1996). But the common denominator is that ethnic prejudice is not positively related to the proportion of immigrants. However, support for the Progress Party has always been highest in urban areas. And there does seem to be a strong statistical relation between the proportion of immigrants and the saliency of immigration as a political issue. This was especially clear in the 1995 local elections: In municipalities with more than 60.000 inhabitants, 10 per cent mentioned immigration as the most important issue, as compared to only one percent in municipalities with less than 2.500 inhabitants. The corresponding figures in the 1997 parliamentary election were

9) “Old Oslo” - an old working-class area, see **Vassenden** (1997: 88).

10) See Kalgraff **Skjåk** og **Bøyum** (1994) and Togeby (1997:108). Concerning immigrants in the neighbourhood the number was 31 per cent in 1988 and 44 per cent in 1993, on the working place the corresponding figures were 24 percent and **26 per cent**, finally in the school/university the highest figures were observed: 76 per cent in 1989 and **85** per cent in 1993. The corresponding Danish figures were a bit lower (Togeby 1997: 101-02).

5 and 2 percent, respectively. The proportion of immigrants in the two categories of municipalities was 6.4 and 0.9 per cent, respectively (Bjørklund 1999). In short, ethnic prejudice is not related to the proportion of immigrants but saliency is, and this seems to be the causal link to party choice.

The Danish history is somewhat different. As in Norway, it is well-documented that xenophobia is not causally related to the proportion of immigrants, or to the existence of an asylum centre in the municipality. If anything, attitudes are a little more tolerant where concentration of immigrants is highest. (Togeby 1997: 123- 129). Besides, intolerance seems most sensitive to media attention on immigration in the areas where the proportion of immigrants is low (Togeby 1997: 112). Unlike in Norway, however, the Danish Progress Party used to have its stronghold in rural areas, being unable to penetrate the greater Copenhagen area. This means that there used to be a weak negative association between proportion of immigrants and support for the Progress Party. This changed in the 1997 local elections where a positive association was found between the proportion of immigrants and the strength of the Danish People's Party. When we distinguish between the Copenhagen region and large cities on the one hand and other municipalities on the other, it turns out that the correlation within the lastmentioned group is small." It should be added that the local elections of 1997 took place in a context where media attention on immigration was at its zenith, not least because of a dramatic increase in support for the Danish People's Party in the polls.

To sum up, xenophobia is not related to the proportion of immigrants in either of the countries, rather the opposite. This indicates that the attitudes and behaviour of most people is less influenced by *personal* experience with immigrants and immigration and much more influenced by the general *political debates* about immigration. However, at least in Norway it is documented a connection between the proportion of immigrants and the propensity to point at immigration as the decisive issue for party vote, and a weak association may be emerging in Denmark, too.

11) In 1993, the **unstandardized** regression coefficient for the Progress Party was **B= -.17** ; in 1997, the figure for the Danish People's Party (which submitted candidates in 140 municipalities) was **B= +.39** for the whole country. For the larger Copenhagen area and the other three biggest cities the figure was **B= +.31** , for the remaining municipalities it was **B = +.13**)

5. Unemployment and support for the Progress Parties

Unemployment has also frequently been linked to hostility against immigrants. Immigrants have served as scapegoats for a number of evils, among which unemployment is the most common. Also at the individual level, it has been suggested that marginalized groups, not least the unemployed, are particularly inclined to blame immigrants themselves for their problems (Betz 1994). Thus one could expect that unemployment, both at the individual and at the aggregate level, was associated with support for the Progress Parties. A similar expectation may be derived also from a discontent thesis (the Progress Parties attract all sorts of discontent) as well as from the fact that the unemployment rate among immigrants tends to become extremely high in recession periods. These expectations, however, do not receive much empirical support.

In the first place, time series data reveal no association between the unemployment rate and support for the Progress Parties. In Norway, unemployment reached a peak of six per cent in 1993 whereas in the 1997 election campaign, the focus was more on the shortage of labour power. But from 1993 to 1997, the Progress Party more than doubled its electoral strength. Correspondingly, the “second breakthrough” of the party in 1987 was not associated with any increase in unemployment. In Denmark, support for the Progress Party declined in nearly all elections from 1973 to 1984, in spite of an almost constant rise in unemployment. And from 1994 to 1998, combined support for the Progress Party and the Danish People’s party increased from 6.4 per cent to 9.8 per cent, even though unemployment declined by more than 40 per cent.

Next, we do not find any association between unemployment and support for **xenophobic** parties either at the individual level or at the ecological level. In Norway, an ecological correlation reveals a small negative association between unemployment and support for the Progress Party in 1987 and a zero association in 1995.¹² At the ecological level, no data are at present available in Denmark but here, individual level data indicate no association between unemployment and support for the Progress Parties. The results are presented in table 2. In Denmark, we have included both people who are unemployed and people aged less than 60 years who have retired from the labour market.

12) Despite the fact that the aggregate result for the Progress Party in the local elections in 1995 was nearly the same as in the 1987 local elections, the correlation between per cent of jobless and support for the Progress Party changed. In 1987, it was negative ($r=-.29$), whereas it was approximately zero ($r=-.07$) in 1995. One explanation is that the regional distribution of joblessness changed.

Table 2. Support for the Progress Party/Danish Peoples's Party (combined support), and support for the Norwegian Progress Party, by labour market status, 1987-1998. Percentages.

Denmark

	1987	1990	1994	1998
Employed	5	7	6	10
Unemployed	7	6	6	6
Disablement pensioners and others (18-59 years)	2	7	6	11
(N)	1905	1508	1885	1058
	156	183	229	19

Norway

	1989	1993	1995	1997
Employed	11	5	11	15
Unemployed	*	13	23	5
Experience with unemployment or unemployment in household	16	6	*	*
(N)	1284	1215	1330	3088
	*	46	87	62
	315	388	*	*

Source: Denmark: Danish Election Studies.

Norway: Norwegian Election Programme 1985, 1989, 1993; Local Election Study 1995, MMI Panel Study 1997

* no question

As unemployment is very low in Norway, the samples of unemployed are small but they do not indicate any significant association either: Unemployed or people with unemployment experience in the family appeared to be slightly over-represented among the supporters of the Progress Party in the elections from 1989 to 1995 but in 1997, no such association was found. Besides, in the tables above, we have not controlled for education which is an important determinant of both unemployment and support for xenophobic parties. Thus there is nothing to indicate that support for xenophobic parties has any relationship to unemployment: Neither time series nor ecological and individual correlations reveal any such pattern.

6. Social Profile of the Progress Parties and the Danish People's Party

Like radical right wing parties elsewhere, the Progress Parties have recruited their supporters disproportionately among men. In Denmark, the proportion of men among the voters has varied between 55 and 67 per cent in the elections from 1973-1994 (combined figure in 1998 is 59 per cent), and in Norway, the figures are 63 and 67 per cent, respectively, according to the election surveys. As women have been voting a little more to the left since the 1970s, men are typically a bit over-represented among the adherents of Conservative and Liberal parties but no other Scandinavian parties have such a strong male dominance. Whereas this is a very similar and stable pattern, the age composition has been more varying. In the 1990s, the age distribution of the two Danish parties has been slightly skewed towards the older voters. The Norwegian Party, on the other hand, used to have a stronghold among the young, but as from 1995, the age composition of the Norwegian party comes closer to that of the entire population (Goul Andersen & Bjørklund 1998).

The most unusual aspect of the social profile, however, is the class profile of the two parties (see table 3). From the beginning, the Danish party attracted attention because of its support among self-employed (which was often explained in terms of theories of populism, see e.g. Fryklund & Peterson 1981). However, in Norway, this was less obvious, and in both countries, the strong support among manual workers gradually became far the most remarkable aspect. Thus, the Progress Parties have contributed to the breaking up of class voting which used to be very strong until the early 1970s. In Denmark, the proportion of workers among Progress Party supporters has increased in nearly every election since 1973, and in Norway the renaissance of the Progress Party was also accompanied by a significant increase in the support among workers (see Table 3). In the 1990s, the two Progress Parties have even obtained a higher proportion of workers among their electorate than any other party, including the Social Democrats.

Table 3. The proportion of workers among the supporters of various party groups. Deviations from sample means. Percentage points.

A. Denmark	1966	1973	1977	1979	1981	1984	1987	1988	1990	1994	1998
Progress Party		-4	-1	+2	+6	+9	+4	+14	+15	+16	+13*
Other bourg. part.	-26	-15	-20	-17	-15	-12	-12	-15	-16	-11	-10
Social demcr. part.	+27	+26	+20	+15	+18	+20	+19	+16	+16	+13	+10
Left Wing	+26	+17	+6	+3	+4	0	+2	+4	+1	-3	-4
Normal	40	37	35	36	36	32	32	36	31	34	38

Source: Election surveys, Danish Election Programme.

B. Norway	1965	1973	1977	1981	1985	1989	1993*	1995*
Progress Party	-	-14	+12	+15	+5	+8	+5	+8
Conservatives	-29	-29	-27	-21	-15	-16	-15	-10
Centrist Parties	-17	-13	-10	-8	-13	-9	+2	+1
Social Demcr. party	+21	+19	+19	+19	+18	+12	+6	+6
Left Wing	+21	+20	+3	-2	-4	-3	-10	-9
Normal	43	45	44	39	38	36	21	19

Source: 1965 - 1993 Election surveys, Norwegian Electoral Programme, 1995 Local Election survey.

Note. Entries are deviations between the proportion of manual workers among the supporters of various party groups and in the entire sample ("normal"). Only voters belonging to the labour force are included (Denmark 1966-88 including housewives classified according to husband's position but this does not affect the figures significantly).

+ 1998 include Danish People's Party.

* Based on a more narrow classification of workers by Statistics Norway.

At the same time, we observe exactly the opposite pattern among the left wing parties where manual workers used to strongly over-represented in the 1960s but now constitute a slightly smaller proportion than in the population at large. This is perhaps the strongest indicator of basic changes in party systems where voters divide along new ideological cleavages. As pointed out by Kitschelt (1995), the class profile of the Scandinavian Progress Parties is quite similar to other right-radical parties. According to Kitschelt, the working-class support for a neo-liberal anti-state and pro-market policy could be explained by the globalization of the economy which makes governments' intervention in the market in order to level out social differences - in short, traditional working class policy -increasingly difficult. In a global economy, high taxes may even be a threat to employment.

Empirical evidence from Scandinavia concerning social equality strongly question the premises of this theory. For instance, in Denmark and Finland, the income distribution has become even more equal in the 1980s and early 1990s (Goul Andersen 1997; Danish Ministry of Finance 1997,1998), and there is little empirical evidence to suggest that equality is an obstacle to economic development. But Kitschelt's argument may nevertheless catch part of the

explanation. As pointed out by **Lipset** (1960) long ago, manual workers have traditionally been at odds with democratic socialist parties on a dimension of authoritarianism, but this had little practical impact as workers typically voted for these parties in spite of their humanitarian and liberal ideals, because of strong identification with socialist parties as the protagonists of working class interests.

This identification may be declining for several reasons. In the first place, it may decline if the ties between individual workers and the working-class organizations are generally loosened as is clearly the case even in Scandinavia. Next, in the absence of such ties, spontaneous forms of (dichotomous) working class consciousness conducive to populist appeals may easily be strengthened. Finally, turning to the policy-type of explanations suggested by Kitschelt, we may add that not only policy limitations imposed by globalization but also the basic acceptance of the welfare state among non-socialist parties may weaken the image of socialist parties as sole protagonists of workers' interests. Characteristically, increasing economic equality in Denmark was obtained during a decade of bourgeois governments (1982-1993). If Socialist parties are not seen as the obvious advocates of their economic interests, workers may come to focus more on the issues that dissociate them from the socialist parties. Among these issues we find immigration and other values that might once have been described as "authoritarian". However, authoritarianism is too narrow a concept to describe the new ideological cleavage today.

7. Xenophobia and "New Politics" Cleavages

There is no doubt that from 1987 to 1997, critical (not to say hostile) attitudes towards immigrants and towards refugee policies, have been an important determinant of voting for the Progress Parties and the Danish People's Party. This is particularly well-documented in the Norwegian case: In the 1995 local elections, almost one out of two Progress Party voters mentioned immigration as an important issue for their party vote, and those who mentioned immigration as the most important issue voted almost unanimously (93 per cent) for the Progress Party. Thus the Progress Party seems to have channelled all protest against immigration policies in that election. In 1997, welfare issues were more important even among Progress Party supporters but still, one out of five Progress Party voters mentioned immigration as the most important issue for their vote. Among the other parties, the proportion was just about zero.

Although immigration is the decisive issue, however, it is integrated with other issues which, taken together, seem to constitute a new fundamental cleavage in many European party systems (Inglehart and Rabier 1986; Goul Andersen and **Bjørklund** 1990; Borre and Goul Andersen 1997). Whereas the concepts of "postmaterialism" and "new politics" were originally developed to account for the "New Left", they have become increasingly important for explaining

and identifying support for the “New Right” although the underlying explanations in terms of social change must be modified as it is not only a matter of “materialism” or a matter of reaction against postmaterialism.

In an American context, a “New Right” dimension would include moral reactions against the “permissive society” and to some extent women’s liberation. In Scandinavia (as in most of Europe), these aspects are not relevant. Whatever remains of moral reactions against the “permissive society” in Norway is captured by the centrist “Christian People’s Party” and in the even more permissive Danish society, such moral reactions of a reactionary kind are hardly identifiable. The Progress Parties, as well as the Danish People’s Party, are clearly “modern” at this cultural dimension. They are not against “permissiveness”, and they do not defend traditional gender roles, or the traditional family structure.

In Denmark and Norway, the “New Politics” dimension is constituted, first and foremost, by negative attitudes to immigrants and to refugee policies, by authoritarian attitudes to “law and order” with emphasis on stronger punishment, by negative attitudes to foreign aid and, to a lesser degree, by critical attitudes to environmental **regulations**.¹³ On the base of the election studies of the 1990s we have investigated how anti-immigration attitudes at the mass level are linked to other new politics-issues. More specifically, we have examined law and **order-attitudes**¹⁴, **anti-environmentalism**¹⁵, **anti-feminism**¹⁶, and attitudes to foreign aid to developmental countries.”

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- 13) The environmental question is often regarded the most typical New Politics issue. It is, however, not easy to identify any opposition against environmentalism. Rather, some parties put more emphasis on environmental concerns than others. A content analysis of party **manifestos** reveal that the Norwegian Progress Party exhibited the lowest devotion to environmental protection (**Strøm and Lejpart 1989**). In Denmark, concern for the environment falls somewhere between “old” and “new” politics (**Borre and Goul Andersen 1997**) as the “old left” parties were able to establish, to some extent, an “issue ownership” already in the 1970s (**Goul Andersen 1990**).
- 14) In the Norwegian 1993 election survey the statement sounds: “**There** is far too little respect for law and order in this country”. Those who answer “quite agree” are assigned the value “1” (new right), all others are assigned the value 0 (zero). In 1989 the question was: “Do you have the opinion that crime of violence should be punished much more severely than today, or do you have the opposite stance that punishment is too soft. Indicate your position on a scale from **1** (more severe punishment) to **10** (too soft punishment).” The value 1 is considered (“new right”), all other answers are recoded to 0 (zero). In Denmark 1994, the statement was: “Criminals of violence should be, punished much more severely than today”. “Quite agree” is assigned the value 1 (new right), all other answers are recoded to 0 (zero).
- 15) **Environmentalism** is based on this statement: “Economic growth should be ensured by means of industrial build-up, even though this may be in conflict with environmental interests”. Those who agree (quite or partly) are assigned the value **1** (new right), all others are assigned the value 0 (zero).
- 16) In Norway, this issue is based on this question: “During the last years one has stressed gender equality. According to your view should the political work with gender equality go on, or has it reached a satisfactory level or gone too far, or do you not have an opinion on this issue”. “Reached a satisfactory level” or “gone too far” is assigned the value **1** (new right), all other answers are assigned the value 0 (continued...)

Anti-immigration attitudes are measured by the indicator “Immigration constitutes a (serious) threat to our national culture”. For simplification and index construction, all variables have been dichotomized.¹⁸

Firstly, we examine the association between the question on immigration and the four other “new politics” issues suggested. Next, we examine the association with party choice. In this connection we have also constructed an additive index based on the five dummy variables (Denmark 1998: four variables). All correlations run in the expected direction (see Table 4). However, the correlations between immigration, environmentalism and feminism are rather weak; in Denmark, the correlation between immigration and feminism is close to zero (this may in part derive from the fact that we have used another indicator than in Norway).

Table 4. The correlation between anti-immigration and four New Politics issues.

		Anti development aid	Law and order	Anti environmentalism	Anti feminism
Norway	1989	.33	.24	.14	.19
	1993	.33	.30	.19	.15
Denmark	1994	.38	.27	.20	.04
	1998	.44	.33	.25	

Source: Norwegian Election Programme 1989.1993. Danish election Programme 1994, 1998.
Items are dichotomized.

Below, we have used an additive index based on all five items; as will be seen, this is a “conservative” choice as compared to the alternative of using only the three items on immigration, aid to developing countries; and law and order. That is, the particular “new politics” pattern is most outspoken on these three items, and the results are slightly blurred by including also the two remaining items. As emerges from table 5, Progress Party voters are clearly distinctive on these issues. Beginning with the composite index, three party groups may be

16)(...continued)

(zero). In Denmark, the question was “Women should constitute one-half of the members of the Parliament”. Disagree (“quite” or “partly”) are assigned the value 1 (new right), all other answers are assigned the value 0 (zero). No equivalent question was available in 1998.

17) In Norway, this question was: “Someone say that we ought to **cut** the Norwegian aid to foreign countries, what we call the developmental countries, others have the opinion that the aid should be maintained or eventually increased. What is your opinion, should the aid be **cut**, maintained or increased?” “Cut” is assigned the value 1 (new right), other categories are recoded as 0 (zero). In Denmark, approximately the same response categories were applied in a battery concerning public expenditures where we used the item “aid to developing countries”.

18) The Danish 1994 question omitted the word “serious”. The question has been dichotomized as follows: “agree” and “partly **agreere**” are assigned the value 1 (new right), all others are assigned the value 0 (zero).

identified in both countries: In Norway, we have the Progress Party at the one extreme and the Left Wing at the other, with the remaining parties in-between. In Denmark, the break with the conventional left-right pattern is even more. outspoken as the centre parties are located at the same position as the Left Wing; otherwise, the pattern is the same as in Norway. The Progress Party voters clearly constitute the far right, and the difference between the Social Democrats and the major non-socialist (conservative/liberal) parties - usually called "old left" and "old right" parties - is negligible.

Table 5. Deviation from mean on five New Politics issues -and score on New Politics index -by party choice. Norway 1989 and 1993, Denmark 1994 and 1998. Percentage difference.

NORWAY	Anti immigration		Anti develop- ment aid		Law and order		Anti environ- mentalism		Anti feminism New Politics index				N	
	1989	1993	1989	1993	1989	1993	1989	1993	1989	1993	1989	1993	1989	1993
Progress Party	+29	+28	+34	+42	+23	+17	+4	+4	+14	+12	3.02	3.32	143	78
Conservatives	-1	-1	-3	+4	+3	+5	+7	+7	+1	-4	2.07	2.40	378	267
Centrist Parties	-6	+4	-11	-5	-7	+4	-5	-5	+12	+6	1.80	2.30	309	460
Social Dem.	+3	-1	+2	0	+1	-2	+3	+3	-4	0	2.07	2.33	568	636
Left Wing	-21	-23	-12	-16	-18	-27	-15	-15	-20	-24	1.16	1.09	226	141
	38	46	23	27	55	52	42	42	44	46	200	2.28	1692	1616
DENMARK														
	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998
Progress Party	+43	+42	+37	+31	+20	+18	+14	+13	+4		3.28	2.74	93	162
Conservatives/ Liberals	+6	+7	+6	+12	+5	+9	+9	+11	+10		2.36	2.10	696	658
Centrist Parties	-20	-20	-21	-17	-16	-10	-10	-2	+7		1.44	1.22	160	208
Social Dem.	+1	-1	-1	-5	+2	-1	-4	-9	-9		2.26	1.55	601	572
Left Wing	-24	-28	-21	-29	-22	-25	-19	-18	-14		1.48	0.72	208	225
	44	40	42	46	74	62	23	23	36		2.19	1.71	1758	1830

Source: Norwegian Election Programme 1989,1993; Danish election Programme 1994,1998.

As mentioned, this pattern is particularly clear on the issues of immigration, aid to developing countries, and law and order whereas the Progress Party does not distinguish significantly from Conservatives/Liberals **on** the two other dimensions. Some other studies have given the Progress Party voters a more clear anti-environmental profile (Aardal and Valen 1995, Knutsen 1997), perhaps because of more refined measure instruments.

Thus it makes sense to see the Progress Party support as a **reaction** against changes or reforms which some people think have gone too far: (Policies on) immigration, law and order, and the “lavish” use of money in developing countries (where Denmark and Norway are among the countries that contribute mostly). As far as the high-profiled “new politics” issues of environmentalism and gender equality is concerned, party policy may also **fit** the picture of a “silent counter-revolution” (Ignazi 1992) even though the voters do not distinguish significantly. Thus, the Norwegian Progress Party has opposed all efforts to increase the representation of women by rules about gender quota, and the party also want to cancel the gender equality act and the administration, headed by the gender equality ombud, with the task to enforce the **act**. Clearly, they do not oppose gender equality but the means - all sorts of affirmative action - applied to obtain this goal. In Denmark, gender equality is a less contested issue, simply because fewer actions have been taken.

It is characteristic, also, that **political trust** tend to follow a bell-shaped curve, that is, political trust is highest in the centre and declines as one moves far to the right or far to the left on the traditional left-right dimension. On the “new politics”-dimension, however, things are different: **Here** we find a monotonous increase in political trust as we move from the “new right” to the “new left” (Borre and Goul Andersen 1997:316).

Furthermore, it was also observed in the Danish 1994 election survey, as well as in a survey from 1997, that the propensity to switch from the Social Democrats to the Progress Party/Danish People’s Party was unrelated to position on the “old” left-right dimension but strongly related to position on the “new politics” dimension (Borre and Goul Andersen 1997: 152-58; Ugebrevet Mandag Morgen 1997:34, oct.6).

It is well-established that in spite of the declared neoliberalism of the Progress Parties (which only plays a minor role for the Danish People’s Party), the supporters have never been far to the right on the “old” left-right dimension. Most studies show a quite large variation of attitudes on this dimension among Progress Party voters but usually with a mean somewhere between the “old right” parties and the centre parties (Goul Andersen & Bjørklund 1989, 1998); in the 1970s, however, attitudes to the welfare state, public expenditure and taxes clearly distinguished Progress Party voters from “old right” voters (Glans 1986); in the 1990s, this is no longer the case.

Thus there are strong arguments that support for the Progress Parties/Danish People's Party is anchored in a new structural cleavage in the Scandinavian countries; a cleavage that is not entirely independent of economic interests but must mainly be seen as a cultural cleavage line (unlike the cleavages of industrial society but with some resemblance to the pre-industrial cleavage lines; see **Lipset & Rokkan 1967**).¹⁹ This cleavage line was implied already by the discussion about **materialism/postmaterialism** (Inglehart 1990) but it is, **first** and foremost, the mobilization of the New Right that has made this new cleavage visible in Denmark and Norway. And even though the issue of immigration is only a part of that dimension, it is undoubtedly the most salient part of it in the 1990s.

Finally, the social anchoring of the New Politics dimension also gives the clue to understanding the social profile of the electoral support for the Progress Parties. Nothing indicates that this should be explained as a reaction from any genuinely marginalized segments of the population; rather, the Progress Party represents sentiments that are widespread in rather broad segments of the population, especially among ordinary workers. This also gives the clue to understanding the dilemmas of traditional working-class parties (see below).

Unlike the old left-right dimension which was "gender neutral" the new left-right dimension tends to polarize men and women as male dominance is a characteristic of the new right whereas women constitute the majority among left wing voters and, more generally but less markedly, among those who hold new left attitudes. Unlike the old left-right dimension which located workers to the left and nonmanuals to the right, the new left-right dimension tends to produce the opposite polarity. And, perhaps most significantly, unlike the old left-right dimension which located the better-educated to the right because of their superior market position, the new left-right dimension locates the lower-educated to the right and the better-educated to the left. This is particularly outspoken on the issue of immigration.

There is a difference, however, between the impact of education on the old and the new politics dimension. On the old politics dimension, it is vocational training rather than basic school education that determine an individual's labour market position and, consequently, economic interests. On the new politics dimension, one should expect that it is values learned through education, rather than qualifications learned through education that counts. Consequently, it is basic education rather than vocational training that counts at the new politics dimension.

19) Recent Danish data from 1997 indicates that attitudes towards **European Integration** may form yet another dimension independent of both the old and new left-right dimensions but also affecting the propensity to vote for the Progress Party and the Danish People's Party which are both opposed to European integration but support only the economic cooperation in the Common Market (Ugebladet Mandag Morgen **1997:34, oct.6**). In Norway, however, the Progress Party has until now supported European Integration (Norway is not a member of the European Union).

This is confirmed by Danish data on attitudes to immigrants and support for the Progress Party in 1994 (see table 6). Among those with basic school education (7-9 years) without exam, 60 per cent agree that "immigration constitutes a threat to our national culture". Among those with 10 years and an exam, the proportion is 43 per cent. And among those with a high school exam ("gymnasium") after 12-13 years, only 17 per cent think that immigration constitutes a threat. The equivalent figures for voter support for the Progress Party are 10, 4 and 2 per cent, respectively. Vocational training, on the other hand, has no measurable impact at all on voting for the Progress Party and only negligible effects on attitudes to immigration when school education is controlled for. That is, among those who have passed a high school exam, it - almost - does not matter what kind of training (if any) they enter afterwards, and among those without any exam, even a long vocational training (e.g. as an engineer) only modifies attitudes very little and does not affect party choice at all. In particular, we observe that having fulfilled an education as skilled worker or the like does not reduce hostility to immigration or propensity to vote for the Progress Party, as compared to the unskilled.

Table 6. Proportion agreeing that 'immigration constitutes a threat to our national culture', and voting for the Progress Party, by school education and vocational training, Denmark 1994. Percentages

A. Proportion considering Vocational training	School education			Total
	Basic, no exam (7-9 years)	Basic, exam (10 years)	High school ("gymnasium") (12-13 years)	
None	64	51	12	53
Basic year	54	48	(21)	48
Apprenticeship and the like	60	45	31	51
Further education, first level	(50)	30	26	32
Further education, second level	(32)	28	15	22
Further education, university level	-	-	6	8
TOTAL	60	43	17	44
B. Proportion voting for the Party				
None	11	6	2	8
Basic year	13	4	(0)	8
Apprenticeship and the like	10	4	2	6
Further education, first level	(5)	7	3	5
Further education, second level	(11)	2	0	2
Further education, university level			2	2
Total	10	4	2	6
C. (N)				
None	353	114	116	658
Basic year	73	79	19	181
Apprenticeship and the like	302	331	74	746
Further education, first level	23	17	46	147
Further education, second level	23	75	94	194
Further education, university level	1	3	80	84
Total	778	603	389	2021

This is, of course, an important observation; for it means, once again, that an interpretation of educational variation in terms of "marginalisation", "relative deprivation" or the like is not warranted. First and foremost, it appears to be humanistic values learned through education that count, not social position (nor "lack of a complex frame of reference", to use Lipset's (1960) euphemism for stupidity).

Finally, the particular location of the Progress Party in the political spectre also contributes to explain the exchanges of voters with other parties. Throughout its lifetime, the Danish Progress Party and the Danish People's Party have recruited a rather large part of their

new voters (typically between one-fourth or one-third) from the socialist parties (source: Danish election Programme, data not presented). One could have expected that this would change after the first election, or between the 1970s or 1990s as policies changed but somewhat surprisingly, this is not the case. Generally speaking, the Norwegian situation is the same as in Denmark; recruitment from the Socialist parties is clearly below that from the non-Socialist parties but clearly above that of other non-socialist parties.

8. Political impact and policy impact

In assessing the political influence of the Progress Parties and the Danish People's Party, it is necessary to distinguish between direct and indirect influence and, as far as the latter is concerned, to find a relevant counterfactual. As the established parties have typically sought to avoid direct cooperation with the Progress Parties, political influence of the parties has mainly been indirect. Especially in Norway, the established parties for a long time refrained from cooperating with the Progress Party in Parliament even though it is more moderate than its Danish counterpart. However, this has been reversed from 1997 as the Progress Party has supported the centrist government, a government with a weak and fragile parliamentary base which has been critically dependent on the Progress Party. As an example of direct influence can be mentioned a decision to raise cash payments to pensioners - a proposal originally launched by the Progress Party.

The **success** of the Norwegian party even as a coalition partner rather than merely as a protest party is strongly linked to the political skills of its chairman since 1978, Carl I. **Hagen**. When the founder of the Norwegian party, Anders Lange, died in 1974, he left a party in dissolution. However, **Hagen** managed to reestablish party discipline, and several attempts to challenge his leadership have been fought down very convincingly. **Hagen** is also a master in handling the media, and to have the media's critical questions appear as implicit attacks on behalf of the elite on ordinary people. And finally, **Hagen** is also very flexible in policy choice, including being able to cooperate with government as a "responsible" party leader when this is demanded by the situation.

In Denmark, it became a formula from the early 1980s that the votes of the Progress Party should count when forming a government. Thus, the party's support was indispensable for the formation of a non-socialist government in **1982/83** and again from 1987 to 1993 (from 1984 to 1987 a centre-right coalition had an absolute majority). In these periods, the Progress Party was also negotiation partner in a few "emergency situations" in 1982 and again in 1989 when it helped carry through the government's budget; the concessions given in these negotiations were rather small.

However, it has always been a **central** aim of **Pia Kjærsgaard** to make her two successive parties sufficiently “respectable” to become a permanent coalition partner for the Conservatives and the Liberals. Early in the 1994 election campaign, she succeeded in having these two big parties presenting themselves **with** the support of the Progress Party as a government alternative. Later on in the campaign the Conservatives and the Liberals dissociated themselves from this alliance, and in the 1998 campaign, the two established parties refused to have any contacts at all with the Progress Party or the Danish People’s Party: These parties could support the formation of a Conservative/Liberal government and nothing else; they were not in a position to make demands.

Thus the direct influence in Denmark is small. In both countries, however, the other parties’ strategy of isolation has competed with a strategy of containment where governments have tried to avoid increasing support for the Progress Parties by modifying their own policies. In measuring the extent of this indirect influence it is of course always difficult to identify a clear counterfactual, that is, to identify what the government or other parties would have done in the absence of the influence of the Progress Parties.

Until the **1990s**, the influence of the Danish party was mainly on taxation and welfare policies. In **1988/89**, the bourgeois government misinterpreted a sudden explosion of support for the Progress Party as a new tax rebellion and launched a “plan of the century” for profound changes in labour market and tax policies. This plan was also strongly influenced by other factors, including new economic philosophies; but the shock of the sudden increase in support for the Progress Party clearly changed the balance between moderate and more extremely neoliberal forces within the government.*

In the 1990s it became clear that immigration and law and order were among the main issues that nourished support for the Progress Parties, and, more generally, generated **working-class** defection from the Social Democratic party to the non-socialist parties. Again, the isolated influence of **the** Progress Party is difficult to assess, and it is also difficult to assess what would have happened in the absence of any opposition at all. The main reaction to the pressures, however, has not been an intensified defence for the government’s humanitarian ideas; on the contrary, both symbolic and real tightening of refugee and immigration policies has been the typical response in the 1990s.

20) Ironically, the new government formed after the May election in 1988 included the Radical Liberals as a coalition partner, signalling a centrist profile; but the policies of this government (**1988-1990**) became much more genuinely neoliberal than that of the previous bourgeois governments. Even more ironically, some of the ideas in the “plan of the century” which was eventually given up, were later **realized** in a modified version by the Social Democratic coalition government in **1993/95**.

Like in Norway where tightenings of refugee and immigration policies have also been considerable, it is difficult to judge how much of this change should be ascribed to the indirect influence of the Progress Parties and how much would have been carried through anyway. The pressure generated by waves of refugees has led to tightening in most European countries; again, it is difficult to find the relevant counterfactual.

However, there is little doubt that the indirect influence of the Progress Party has been considerable in both countries in the 1990s, not least as it became visible that the Social democrats and the Progress Parties often compete for the same voters. As mentioned, Norwegian refugee policies have become rather restrictive in the 1990s, partly as a consequence of the success of the Progress Party. And when in the Norwegian 1997 election campaign the incumbent Social Democrats said that refugee policies had become too restrictive, they abstained from making any concrete recommendations. Obviously, they did not want to discuss the issue during the campaign as they were afraid of accusations for being too soft on the issue. As the Social Democrats resigned after the election, one of the first signals from the new centre government was to adopt a somewhat more liberal practice, e.g. by increasing the quota of refugees accepted through the U.N. High Commissioner by 1,000 individuals per year to 1,500.

In Denmark, the indirect influence of the Danish People's Party on Danish politics became highly visible in the autumn of 1997. Following some violent episodes in the biggest cities, problems with repatriation of **Somalian** refugees, discussions about integration problems and a veritable campaign in the tabloid press, voter support for the extreme right grew steadily during the early autumn without being noticed much until support for the Danish People's Party suddenly exploded in **october** 1997 when the party's support increased from 5 to 14 per cent in the opinion polls within two weeks." This made Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen dismiss his Minister of the Interior who was responsible for refugee policies, in favour of a former mayor who had a reputation for being highly critical of the government's refugee policies. Voter reactions were immediate: The increase in support for the Danish People's Party came to a stop on the very same day as the Prime Minister announced his decision, and from that day until the election in March 1998, the Danish People's Party lost almost one-half of its newly won support, slowly but steadily.

Part of the success of the Danish People's Party in this case may perhaps be ascribed to the fact that the largest among the established parties, the Liberal party, had for quite some time exploited the opportunity to use the issue of immigration in its fight against the Social Democratic government. Undoubtedly, this had the side effect of increasing media attention and

21) **The** Danish Gallup Institute conducted a day-by-day measurement for the entire month, see Berlingske Tidende oct.26, 1997.

of lending legitimacy to the Danish People's Party. The Liberal party also explicitly refused having an agreement with the government not to include the issue of immigration in the 1998 election campaign. On the contrary, the party had big newspaper announcements on refugee policies which went unusually far for an established party; in fact, they were more resemblant to the claims of the Norwegian Progress Party. Also the Social Democrats, being in the defensive, made quite strong statements during the campaign. Clearly, the Liberals sought to exploit the opportunities to mobilize on the issue for tactical reasons but the behaviour of the two parties also expressed an indirect influence of the Danish people's Party.

Thus, what would previously have been unthinkable happened in the 1998 election campaign: It became a campaign with immigration as one of the main issues which was taken up not only by the radical right but also by the two largest Danish parties: The Social Democrats and the Liberals, with the last mentioned party in the offensive, demanding more restrictive policies. This provides an unusual opportunity to assess the consequences of discussing refugee policies in the media and in public: Did the debate mobilize hostility towards immigrants, or did it serve to neutralize the appeals of a more radical party?

9. "Catharsis" or "fuel to the flames"?

This is a classical theme when discussing right-wing extremism: Do containment strategies of the established parties work, i.e. does dissatisfaction decrease when the established parties modify their policies and give (symbolic or real) concessions to the right-wing extremists; or does it only lend legitimacy to these forces, helping them to mobilize even more effectually? And what happens when things go as far as in the Danish 1998 election campaign where even established parties put the issue on the agenda, **criticizing** the government for being too soft?

In one camp, the judgement is that this only adds "fuel to the flames": Unavoidably, this will give a hardening of hostile attitudes. At best, the established parties may maintain the support of dissatisfied voters in the short run, with the risk of losing them in the long run anyway; at worst, it may only **catalyze** the electoral appeals of the extremists.

In another camp, the claim is that the parties only bring into the open an already existing hostility towards immigrants. In the public debate, political leadership enters a dialogue with ordinary people, and in particular, the intolerant arguments may be confronted effectively. By modifying their policies, the establish parties may prevent voters from going to the extremists; at best, the public debate among ordinary people may even undermine the appeals of the extremists.

Table 7. Attitudes to Immigrants, Denmark 1994 and 1998. Percentages and Percentage difference Indexes.

		Fully agree	Partly agree	Neutral/ don't know	Partly disagree	Fully disagree	PDI: Tolerant minus intolerant ¹⁾
"Immigration constitutes a threat to our national culture"	1994	24	19	12	14	31	+ 2
	1998	17	13	8	18	44	+32
"Refugees and immigrants should have the same right to social assistance as Danish citizens, even if they do not have Danish citizenship"	1994	11	15	12	23	37	-36
	1998	29	20	7	16	28	+5

Source: Danish Election Survey 1994; Gallup/Berlingske Tidende march 3, 1998. The Danish Election Study 1998 omitted the last question and changed the wording of the first one ("serious threat"). But the Danish Gallup Institute repeated the questions.

It remains to be analysed in more detail what was the **consequences** of the highly unusual Danish election campaign in 1998. But it does emerge, according to opinion polls, that the announcement of a new policy by the government - a policy that means little more than symbolic adjustments on the access criteria for refugees, some economic tightenings, and a much stronger emphasis on integration - was sufficient to satisfy the demands of a majority of voters.²² Thus it seems that the feeling of responsiveness among politicians is important.

Even more importantly, whereas attitudes towards admitting access to refugees have hardened marginally (Goul Andersen 1999), there are quite strong indications that tolerance has increased. This is revealed clearly by two questions from the 1994 election survey that were repeated in an opinion poll during the **campaign**.²³ According to table 7, there has been a quite marked change towards increasing tolerance. In 1994, 43 per cent considered immigration as "a threat to our national culture"; in 1998, the figure had declined to 30 per cent. And in 1994, only 26 per cent supported the official policy of admitting foreigners the same right to social assistance

22) According to one opinion poll conducted in December 1997, 11 per cent believed that the proposal went **too far**, 29 per cent thought that it did not go far enough, and 36 per cent thought that it was appropriate, the remaining 24 per cent being in doubt (Ugebrevet Mandag **Morgen 1998:1**, Jan.5, 1998). According to another opinion poll conducted ultimo feb., 1998 38 per cent thought that it did not go far enough, 7 per cent thought that it went **too far**, and 36 per cent found it appropriate (Gallup/Berlingske Tidende, march 3, 1998). Most importantly, both surveys reveal that a small modification was sufficient to satisfy a majority of the voters.

23) This is confirmed also by Lise Togeby's time series on attitudes (Togeby, forthcoming).

as Danes even if they do not have Danish citizenship; in 1998, the figure had increased to 49 per cent. Such profound changes in the distribution of opinions are rare in Danish politics.

From the point of view of tolerance, these figures are encouraging. Even though they should not be interpreted too far, they do indicate that an open discussion of the problems of immigration does not necessarily mobilize intolerance; rather, open discussions may sometimes appear as the most efficient weapon against such intolerance. In this perspective, the Danish 1998 election campaign which was highly unusual both by national and international standards, should perhaps not be seen as a symptom of the illness of intolerance but maybe rather as a cure. However, even if the debate may have increased tolerance, it did not avoid the pitfall of being a discussion phrased in the terms: What do “we” do with “those people”? A debate in these terms may contribute to increased stigmatization, even if tolerance increases; it may contribute to an increased feeling of isolation among many immigrants; and it may make a minority of the indigenous population feel justified in discriminating or harassing immigrants. Still, despite such deficiencies, the data do lend considerable support to the “catharsis” argument.

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