

**COPENHAGEN
EDITION**

**The COP21
deal was
full of good
intentions
but was it
enough?**

**The West is
suffering a
narcissism
epidemic
says Sørine
Gottfredsen**

**Despite
state help,
refugees
are still
struggling
to find work**



ISSN 2246-6150

Roland Møller finds his calling

With his first lead role, the self-taught actor proves he's more than a hard man

THE MURMUR

JANUARY is a rubbish month to start a New Year with. It's dark, cold and boring. There's little to celebrate except the odd glimpse of blue sky and sun. It's not made an easier when you remember that summer sometimes only lasts three weeks. Sure, there are cheap flights to Thailand, but COP21 made us feel guilty about our carbon emissions and we already feel bad enough still eating red meat. Bah humbug.

And, really, is there much to look forward to? The conflicts in Syria and Ukraine show no signs of abating. Despite a new climate accord, it was the warmest year on record, ending with winter weather anomalies from record flooding in the UK, tornado outbreaks in the US, to freakishly high temperatures in the Arctic.

Well, the world's not all bad. Global health expert Hans Rosling went viral this year by showing how we radically underestimate the health and education levels of people around the world. He blames our ignorance on biased and generalised experiences from the media, which overlooks slow and steady changes. Shocking and newsworthy events exaggerate the unusual and put the focus on swift changes, argues his organisation Gapminder.

For example, last year we reported on the "refugee crisis". But for whom was it really a crisis? Despite the one million new arrivals, life proceeded unaffected for most Europeans. The real crisis was taking place in Syria, where a lack of aid meant refugee agencies could not support the millions of displaced people. So they left the carnage for Europe, risking their lives in flimsy boats, only to arrive and be told their presence is tearing apart the European project.

The only crisis Europe is experiencing, however, is a disappointing crisis of faith in the project. We have the wealth, institutions and knowledge to address and change whatever aspects of the co-operation we disagree with. After the Lisbon Treaty, the EU has never been more democratic. But instead of harnessing this democratic power to create a joint refugee programme, European states decided to deal with the issue individually. Now Sweden has introduced border controls with Denmark, and Denmark is considering border controls with Germany. If this continues, we may lose the free mobility which has brought Europe its enviable wealth and stability.

Whatever your stance on how open our borders should be, we should still be doing far more to limit the number of people forced to flee conflict, persecution or economic insecurity. The 4.8 billion kroner cut to Danish foreign aid sadly demonstrates that the government does not understand this simple principle.

2015's crises were largely symptoms of our inability to cooperate and find common ground, from the conflicts in the Ukraine and Syria, to the dramatic rise in numbers of arriving refugees. These disruptions seriously threaten global peace and stability, but we need to do more than address the symptoms if we want to continue the positive developments outlined by Rosling.

So, in 2016, we'd do far better if we remembered that the world is slowly getting better, but that if we want to prevent it sliding backward, the answers are almost always to be found through greater cooperation.

The Murmur

When we
are constantly just
dealing
with ourselves and
our needs,
our whole life becomes too
focused on
the self and
that makes
us less
available
and present
for others.

SØRINE GOTTFREDSEN

PAGE 32

CONTRIBUTORS



Elias Thorsson Assistant editor. He is pursuing his master's degree at the University of Copenhagen, studying American politics. In this issue he interviewed priest and Christian philosopher Sørine Gotfredsen.



Joshua Hollingdale Editorial intern. Joshua is as passionate about critical journalism as he is about his favourite football club, Arsenal. He takes a look at the impact of the government's new agriculture package.



Lena Rutkowski Editorial intern. An Australian law graduate, Lena asks whether the COP21 climate conference will actually stop the planet from warming more than the critical two degrees Celsius.



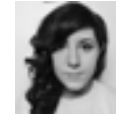
Rasmus Degnbol Photo editor. Rasmus is an award winning documentary photographer and filmmaker.



Kenneth Nguyen A freelance photographer, Kenneth's fashion, landscape and lifestyle work has developed a strong following. He photographed actor Roland Møller.



Hana Hasanbegovic Originally from the Balkans, Hana has a Master's degree in English, with a focus on literature and linguistics. In this issue she wrote about the difficulties refugees face when trying to find work in Denmark.



Daniela De Lorenzo A 2014 journalism graduate, Daniela now works at VICE Denmark. She took the photos that accompanied her article on student housing, which she co-wrote with Peter Stanners.



Holger K Nielsen MP for the Socialist People's Party and foreign minister between 2013 and 2014, Nielsen writes an op-ed that argues the far left wing ought to be more pro-European.

JOIN US

Editorial intern - part time

We are looking for an aspiring journalist with a passion for reporting and feature writing to join us for a six-month internship starting in February, 2016. You need to be curious and self-motivated. You will be writing in English but we hope you can also read and speak Danish. Email a CV, cover letter and examples of your work to Editor-in-Chief Peter Stanners — peter@murmur.dk

MASTHEAD

Peter Stanners Editor-In-Chief

peter@murmur.dk

Mark Millen Director, Sales and Marketing,

mark@murmur.dk

Mette Salomonsen Art Director, salomet.dk

SALES For advertising sales, please contact: advertising@murmur.dk

CONTACT THE MURMUR, Hedebygade 14, st.tv., 1754 Copenhagen V. info@murmur.dk

PRINT Trykkeriet Nordvestsjælland, tnvs.dk

DISTRIBUTION THE MURMUR is available at a range of businesses, institutions, cafés and public libraries across Denmark. THE MURMUR is also available as a free digital download. Visit murmur.dk

SUBSCRIPTIONS For home or corporate delivery of the printed edition please contact: subs@murmur.dk

THE MURMUR is published 12 times a year.

This issue was published on January 3, 2016

Cover photo: Kenneth Nguyen

Circulation: 12,200

CVR: 36198966



MURMUR.DK



@MURMURDK



FACEBOOK.COM/
MURMURDK



MURMUR.DK

LEARN DANISH THE RIGHT WAY, LEARN IT THE IA WAY!

The logo for IA Sprog, featuring the letters "ia" in a large, black, stylized font with red accents on the dots of the "i" and the "a". Below "ia", the word "SPROG" is written in a smaller, black, sans-serif font.

ia
SPROG

IA SPROG Vibevej 9-11 • 2400 Copenhagen NV •
+ 45 3888 3233 • info@iasprog.dk • www.iasprog.dk

MONTH IN REVIEW

Dead guard honoured

Dan Uzan, the 37-year-old volunteer guard was gunned down outside Copenhagen synagogue in February, was named 'Dane of the Year' by Berlingske newspaper.

Prime minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen praised the decision to award the annual prize to Uzan, whom he dubbed an inspiration. "Dan was a real Danish every-day hero. He stood at the front, even when it posed a risk to him," said the PM to Berlingske.

ID CONTROLS THREATEN ORESUND

The economy of the Øresund region is at risk because of the new ID controls on commuters warns Greater Copenhagen, a regional lobby group comprised of political leaders from both sides the strait. Almost 100,000 commuters cross the Øresund bridge connecting Copenhagen and Malmö every day. But in the New Year travel time to Sweden will be greatly increased once it introduces new ID controls to better register the flow of refugees across the border. "The ID control will affect thousands of daily commuters as well as Greater Copenhagen's abilities to continue creating growth and jobs," Copenhagen's mayor Frank Jensen told Politiken newspaper.



News Oresund

DENMARK 4TH BEST
The UN Development Programme's Human Development Report 2015 ranked Denmark behind Australia and Switzerland as the world's fourth-best country to live in, in terms of providing for citizens. Neighbouring Norway ranked number one for the twelfth year in a row, while Sweden had to enjoy 14th place.



Peter Stanners

Lena Rutkowski

Lower crime means fewer ghettos

The number of 'ghettoes' in Denmark has dropped from 31 to 25 this year, the lowest number since the list was first compiled by the Immigration, Integration and Housing Ministry in 2010. The list defines ghettoes as residential areas with a high proportion of residents with specific social and integration challenges. Factors such as unemployment and the ethnic makeup of residents are included.

The country's 25 ghettoes are found in 15 councils and are generally concentrated in and around big cities. Copenhagen housing associations in Lundtoftegade (left), Bispeparken and Sjælør Boulevard have upgraded from their ghetto status. According to the ministry, the number of ghettoes is decreasing as fewer public housing residents are convicted of crime. However three new areas were also added to the list, two of them because of a rise in criminal convictions among residents

In a press release, immigration minister Inger Støjberg said that the government is working on a new plan to tackle the challenges faced by ghettoes.

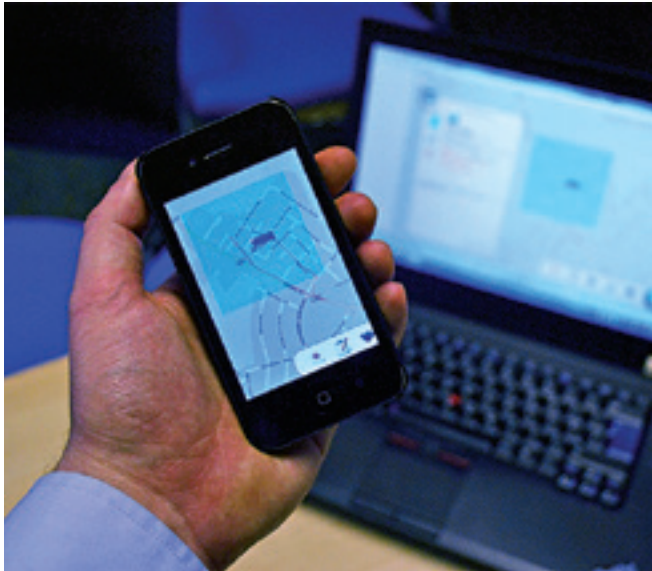
- Classical, Jazz & Pop Piano
- Music theory & rhythm
- Courses for absolute beginners
- Courses for children & adults

www.jhmms.org
about@jhmms.org

Harman Music Methods®



DEMENTIA PATIENTS TRACKED
Many nursing homes attach GPS and alarm systems to dementia patients to ensure they don't wander away and gets lost, sometimes without the patient's knowledge, reports DR. In The practice is used in at least 86 of Denmark's 98 councils since it was legalised five years ago. While it may sound Orwellian, Margrethe Kähler from senior citizen's association Ældresagen says it's a necessary protective measure. "This is not Big Brother. This is Big Mother, because it protects their well being. We don't monitor them continuously, but only if they haven't come home."



Star student faces deportation
A high-achieving Cameroonian student had his residence permit revoked by the immigration authorities for working too many hours at his part-time cleaning job. Marius Youbi has ten months left of his engineering degree at Aarhus University, which costs him 46,000 kroner per semester. But by working an additional 90 minutes per week more than his visa allows, he's been ordered to leave Denmark by January 8. The university responded by allowing Youbi to sit his exams ahead of time, where he scored top marks despite sitting three in one day. "I hope the authorities will take this on board and let me finish my studies," he told DR.



Peter Stammers

Danes most pro-refugee
While the Danish government has been accused of turning its back on a global crisis by tightening asylum seeker regulations, an opinion poll of 14 European nations revealed that Danish attitudes to refugees are friendlier than their EU counterparts.
The poll, by ORB International, found that 76 percent of Danes think the EU should do more for refugees, and 46 percent of Danes said their government should also be doing more – among the highest of the countries polled. On the other hand, 65 percent of Danes believe so-called economic migrants are a burden on society.

COPS CENSOR NUDE PHOTOS
Danes are said to be nonchalant about nudity, but last month police shut down an outdoor photography exhibition in Copenhagen dedicated to the female body. Photographer Mathilde Grafström selected nude subjects who don't have a typical 'model look' for her exhibition 'Female Beauty', which was intended to counter negative body images. Police denied Grafström permission to display her work in a public exhibition on Nytorv in central Copenhagen, however.



RYGAARDS SCHOOL
INTERNATIONAL AND
DANISH DEPARTMENTS

- High Academic Standards
- Christian Ethos
- Conveniently located in Hellerup

GET STUCK IN

Danish on a Sunday



THERE'S MORE to Danish cinema than Lars Von Trier and Dogme, but scratching at the surface of the local film industry can be tough for an English-speaker. But fret not! Cinemateket screens a classic or hit film from Denmark with English subtitles twice a month,

through its 'Danish on a Sunday' programme. The idea is to introduce non-Danish speaking audiences to films they might not have heard of.

Kicking off on January 10, the year's first screening is *Vampyr*, a 1932 vampire film from world-renowned director Carl Th. Dreyer (left). Erotically charged and hypnotic, the story follows a mysterious series of killings in an eerie manor where a young man is confronted with the possibility of a supernatural murderer. With its non-professional cast and disorienting visual effects, international critics still hailing it as one of history's greatest horror films.

But it's not all black and white movies. Psychedelic colours will pop on the screen when Cinemateket screens the 2014 hit "It-si Bitsi" on January 24. The film

transports viewers to the 1960s as a young man transforms himself from poet, to writer, junkie, nomad and eventually the lead singer of hit Danish band Steppeulvene, all for the love of a woman.

And if you were hoping that 'Danish on a Sunday' was an event dedicated to delicious flaky pastry, take heart – before the screening, there's a special cake and coffee offer in next door's Restaurant Sult downstairs.

Danish on a Sunday

Cinemateket
Gothersgade 55
1123 København K
bit.ly/danishsunday

Analogue versus Digital

A FREE concert in a cool setting is hard to beat, so check the calendar for January 9. That's when Dome of Visions – a transparent greenhouse-style structure on Copenhagen's harbour which faintly resembles Disneyland's Epcot center – will host an experimental music event called "Bits and Pieces" (Stumper & Stykker).

As a venue, Dome of Visions explores binaries – inside and outside, urban and organic. Stumper & Stykker is a night similarly dedicated to the duality of sound – between analogue and digital.

It's a concert in three parts, with artist Jesper Sørensen taking to the stage first and performing an analogue, bass-based set. Then underground producer Morten Wagner, better known as Popgoblin, will bring out laptops and synths for a digital music performance. Finally, the two will combine powers, fusing Sørensen's bass with different technology to deliver a set called "six signals".

The event also promises digital visuals and an analogue bar. Warm clothes are advised to cope with the January chill.

Stumper og Stykker

Dome of Visions
Søren Kierkegaards Plads, Copenhagen

January 9
Doors open at 20:00, show starts at 21:00
domeofvisions.dk



News Oresund

Turning Japanese



Rasmus Malmstrom

A HOT BROTH is the best antidote to a cold climate. But despite its long winters, Copenhagen has been slow to embrace the global thirst for ra-

men, a Japanese noodle soup made from hearty stock with endless topping possibilities. Fortunately, craft-beer juggernaut

Mikkeller has teamed up with local Japanese restaurateur Daisuke Uki to open Ramen to Birru in Nørrebro.

Mikkel Borg Bjergsø, one-half of the team behind Mikkeller micro-brewery, says the new restaurant pays homage to the unique culture of ramen dining in Japan. "Ramen bars are unpretentious and efficient, but they serve damn good food," he said to AOK. "I also like that you can enjoy ramen alone on the way home after a long day at work, or slurp it standing up with your friends, ten minutes before the film starts."

But he maintains that the beer is more than a mere sidekick to accompany the dish.

"All Ramen bars in Japan serve beer. We will serve ice-cold beers full of character and body, which are specially created for Ramen to

Birru, and which will contrast with the warm noodles."

This dedication to recreating an authentic Japanese experience even saw the restaurant fly chef Takuro Otani from Sapporo to Denmark, where he spent several months refining the soups.

Other nods to the soup's birthplace include an order machine installed at the entrance, which takes ramen requests and spits out meal tickets. "Basically, we have made a soup that tastes good enough that people will buy it," said Otani to. "All the extra things are just a bonus."

Ramen to Biiru

Griffenfeldsgade 28
Nørrebro, Copenhagen

bit.ly/ramencph

Sydhavn's secrets

ONCE THE lowly dockyard suburb to the south of Vesterbro, neighbouring Sydhavn is now capturing the spillover of cool café and bar culture. The latest offering is Rallys, a laidback and cosy joint that serves up coffee and toast by day and beers by night. With just one month tucked under its belt, an official opening party is slated for January 30.

It's the namesake of owner Daniel Rally Danielsen, a photographer who learned the industry ropes as a former bartender at Vesterbro institution McKluud, a smoky bodega with cowboy overtones. It's always been his dream to open his own place with a more relaxed atmosphere, and Danielsen sensed that there was big potential in the area's unpretentious, rough-around-the-edges charm. "Sydhavn is awesome," he quips.

Danielsen put a lot of love into the café-bar and built it up himself, a laborious project that took the better part of 2015 and lends the place its homely vibe.

Rallys

Mozartsvej 9
Sydhavn, Copenhagen

bit.ly/rallyscph



POLITICS ROUNDUP

Travel chaos to Sweden

After 160,000 refugees arrived in Sweden this year, the government introduced stricter refugee regulations as well as border controls with Denmark to stem the flow. Since November, Swedish police have been checking IDs of rail, car, ferry and bus passengers who had arrived in Sweden.

But from January 4, rail passengers using the Oresund connection will have to exit at Copenhagen Airport and have their IDs checked before being allowed to travel onwards to Sweden. The new control is expected to increase journey times by up to 30 minutes.

DSB has introduced a number of measures to ensure that all passengers have their IDs checked before boarding the train to Sweden. A fence has been erected between the two platforms to ensure that passengers don't walk across the tracks, while security staff will be posted at 34 different locations around the station.

DSB say the new ID controls will cost 30 million kroner in the first month, with Swedish rail operator Skånetrafiken sharing some of the cost. After this month, they have not ruled out introducing an additional fee on travellers to Sweden to recoup the losses, though the Liberal Party (Venstre) government has ruled out the proposal.

"Sadly, the state can't intervene to cover the losses," transport minister Hans Christian Schmidt said, adding that DSB has the necessary resources given the 500 million kro-

It is not reasonable that tax payers in Denmark should pay for asylum seekers who bring large fortunes with them.

NASER KHADER, KONSERVATIVE INTEGRATION SPOKESPERSON

Peter Stanners

ner before tax profits the rail operator earned this year.

Refuge don't come free

The Swedish border controls are the latest development in the ongoing Scandinavian struggle to limit the flow of refugees, primarily from the conflict in Syria. While Sweden introduced temporary residence permits for refugees in November, after previously guaranteeing permanent residency, the Danish government has gone much further. In September they announced 34 new and more restrictive regulations for refugees and asylum seekers, of which 13 were passed in November.

The next set of regulations are set for debate in January, and include the controversial proposal to allow police to search refugees for valuables that can be used to cover the costs of their stay. The policy resulted in international condemnation after reports in publications from Time to the Guardian.

According to the proposed law, cash and valuables that are necessary for a basic standard of living, up to around 3000 kroner, are exempted. Valuables, which have special sentimental value for the asylum seeker, such as watches and engagement rings, are also exempted, unless they have an unreasonably high value.

Supporting the new policies are government allies The Conservative People's Party (Konservative), Liberal Alliance (LA), Danish People's Party (DF), as well as the Social Democrats (Socialdemokraterne) across the aisle.

"It is not reasonable that tax payers in Denmark should pay for asylum seekers who bring large fortunes with them," Naser Khader, Conservative integration spokesperson, told Politiken.

It will be up to police to search refugees and confiscate the valuable items. However, chair of the police union Claus Oxfeld says the police are unlikely to confiscate valuables.

"I could not possibly imagine that we will have to," Oxfeld told Politiken, adding: "We are not employed

as appraisers. I cannot tell the difference between a ring that costs 1000 kroner or 5000 kroner."

Other policies included in the January law package include further delays to family reunion for refugees with temporary protection, stricter rules for permanent residency, higher fees for certain applications and complaints, reduced cash allowances and restricted rights to live and work outside refugee centres.

Michala Bendixen, chairman of Refugees Welcome, says the low – or even non-existent – allowances means asylum seekers are prevented from leaving the camps, which are mostly situated far from urban hubs.

"No money is provided for transport. There is also no way to cover the costs of phone cards, hairdresser, cigarettes, makeup or other small items," she says.

"The remote location, the close interaction with many other cultures, the large amount of people with trauma in combination with the passive, powerless waiting position without meaningful daily activities are inevitably leading to mental sickness, conflicts and lack of integration."

She adds that the new three-year wait for family reunification will mean that refugees may end up separated from their families for up to five years, when the processing time for the applications are also included.

Government MEP quits

European parliament member (MEP) Jens Rohde quit governing party Venstre over its refugee policies and EU scepticism. Rohde, a member of Venstre since 1985, was political spokesperson when the party assumed power in 2001 and was elected twice as an MEP for Venstre, the first time in 2009. He has now joined the Social Liberal Party (Radikale), which belongs to the same liberal group ALDE in the European Parliament.

In an op-ed for Politiken, Rohde says he no longer believes his party will return to its pro-European and liberal roots.



ALDE Communication

"It has now become acceptable to separate people into groups and stereotypes, ignore the ombudsman, and demand that the police arbitrarily relieve people of their last valuables and dignity," he wrote, adding that his party is doing too little to counter the growing Euroscepticism in the Danish population.

"How are we supposed to convince people that the EU is good for a small country like ours when we are constantly talking about the things we don't want to participate in? How are we supposed to convince Danes of the EU's capacity to solve cross-border problems when we politically refuse to take collective responsibility for solving the most pressing issues facing society?"

Rohde's departure is the second for Venstre in a month after one of its parliamentary candidates for Copenhagen, Kåre Traberg Smidt, left for The Alternative (Alternativet). Smidt was a member of the party since he was a teenager but said he had to leave because he no longer recognised his values in the party.

"Almost every week I've read new proposals that I think are unacceptable. We should not be treating each other in this way, especially not the most vulnerable in society. I simply believe we can do much better," he wrote in an op-ed for Politiken.

Danes vote NO

A referendum to end the opt-out of EU cooperation in justice and home



affairs was voted down in December, with 47 percent in favour and 53 percent opposed. The referendum means that Denmark will have to withdraw from the EU policing agency Europol in mid-2017 when it becomes a full EU agency.

A 'yes' vote would have replaced the opt-out with a case-by-case opt-in measure, and included on the ballot were 22 different areas of co-operation with the EU which Denmark would immediately sign up. In the future, however, parliament would be able to sign up to more areas of EU cooperation – and sign away sovereignty – without a referendum.

Liberal Party (Venstre) prime minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen campaigned for a 'yes' and, in a Facebook post, acknowledged his party's defeat. He argued that the result demonstrated a crisis of trust between large parts of the Danish population, and the political class.

"Promises have not been kept, complicated problems have been simplified, political substance has been replaced by spin and process, and personal scandals have stolen attention," Rasmussen wrote.

He promised to visit EU leaders in Brussels to investigate the possibility of remaining within Europol through a so-called parallel agreement. Rasmussen was told at the meeting in early December that, without the opt-in, Denmark could not become a full Europol member.

Six of parliament's nine parties urged Danes to vote 'yes', including the opposition Social Democrats (Socialdemokraterne). On the night of the result, leader Mette Frederiksen said Denmark needs Europe,

especially when fighting terror and crime.

"It is an essential mission to find more common ground between politicians and our population," she said. "I still believe in the European dream. I still believe that we are stronger when we stand together than apart. Not least when it comes to crime."

A more thorough analysis of the result can be found on page 14.

Government defies parliamentary majority

The foreign aid budget will still be slashed by an additional 1.8 billion kroner next year, despite a majority in parliament voting to maintain current levels of spending. The government has been widely criticised for wanting to reduce foreign aid from 0.8% to 0.71% of GDP.

Opposition Socialist People's Party (SF) presented the law that would force the government to drop the cuts, bringing the government into a minority. The law passed after government allies De Konservative allies abstained.

But foreign minister Kristian Jensen said the cuts would still have to go ahead to keep down the deficit. The government can remain in power, despite ignoring a majority in parliament, because their allies did not demand a vote of no confidence.

"I am sure that the Konservative won't demand a vote of no confidence," Jensen told Politiko.

This summer the government announced 2.9 billion kroner of cuts to the foreign aid budget, which was later increased to 4.7 billion kroner to cover increased costs of housing refugees in Denmark and contributions to EU refugee programmes.

The cuts will affect the work of Kvinno and ActionAid Denmark, which are losing 30 percent of their 200 million kroner budget for their work in the Middle East and Arab countries.

"These cuts will impact ten years of work strengthening women's rights in a region where rights are under constant pressure," said spokesperson Suzanne Moll.

"It lacks vision. I don't think any-

one doubts that we are in a new situation in Europe with arriving refugees. But because it is a new situation, we need to find new money to manage it."

The government is using its slimmed-down foreign aid budget to pay for housing refugees in Denmark. This decision has been criticised both because the government promised to invest more in solving conflicts closer sources of conflicts, but also because a lack of foreign aid has been identified as a main driver behind the refugee crisis.

"It was the straw that broke the camel's back," says Rasmus Egendal who was the vice-coordinator at the UN World Food Programme work in Syria until September 2015.

"We were forced to halve food rations for the most vulnerable and completely stop rations for those who were less in need. People could not understand how they were supposed to cope," he told Information newspaper.

On December 30, the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) reported that it only has around 58% of the funds it needs for addressing the Syrian crisis, representing a \$1.8 billion funding gap from international donors.

Bjarne Corydon

Should there be restrictions on who politicians can work for after they leave parliament? It was a question raised after the former finance minister Bjarne Corydon announced he was starting as global director for The McKinsey Center for Government.

Corydon has been a member of Socialdemokraterne since 1992, and served as finance minister under the Helle Thorning-Schmidt government between 2011 and 2015, where he developed a close relationship with the global investment and consulting industry. His decision in 2013 to sell 19% of national energy firm Dong to Goldman Sachs provoked the Socialist People's Party (SF) into withdrawing from the coalition left-wing government.

According to finans.dk and Politiken, between 2009 and 2014 the Finance Ministry paid McKinsey

I still believe in the European dream. I still believe that we are stronger when we stand together than apart. Not least when it comes to crime.

METTE FREDERIKSEN, SOCIALDEMOKRATERNE LEADER



89 million kroner for analyses that helped find savings in the police, Tax Ministry, Defence Ministry and asylum sector.

Far-left party Red-Green Alliance (Enhedslisten), which was also disappointed about the Dong sale, has now demanded that politicians face quarantines before they become lobbyists. They point to countries such as the UK where government ministers must wait two years before finding work in businesses that directly lobby governments.

"It is simply another example of a powerful elite that moves unhindered from positions in the political world to private financial interests, and back again," wrote Enhedslisten MP Pelle Dragsted on Facebook, pointing out that former Socialdemokraterne food minister Karen Hækkerup now leads agricultural lobby group Landbrug og Fødevarer.

"As a former minister you have lots of insider knowledge, a large network and privileged access to former colleagues. Of course lobby groups and private interests want to access these."

On his own Facebook page, Bjarne Corydon writes that his new job will help strengthen the public sectors of countries around the world.

"It is a position with enormous opportunities to use the things I learned in politics and a positive difference in an area I burn for," he wrote, adding that the move would be the end of his political career. **M**



CITY

New student skyscraper by Nørrebro station

Students will have an easier time finding housing in the not-too-distant-future after the city approved the construction of a new student housing project, Uptwon Nørrebro. Consisting of five six-story blocks and a 96-metre-tall skyscraper, the buildings will provide 510 apartments and house roughly 700 students and researchers.

Danica Pension are funding the project, and have left the architectural responsibilities to Arkitema Architects, who are known for designing the round residential towers on Havneviggen on Islands Brygge and the skyscrapers next to Amager Strandpark.

The project went ahead despite significant protests from the local committee in Copenhagen's Nørrebro district.

"The idea of building that high up in that particular area is ridiculous," wrote committee chairman Mogens Petersen in an open letter to Copenhagen City Council. But the scale of the construction is not his main point of criticism, however.

"Some members of the committee are appalled at the idea of a skyscraper in the area, but the main concern is that we will have 500 student flats within 500 square metres. We are well on the way to having a very skewed age distribution in Nørrebro – to the point where it is basically a neighbourhood for young people. We simply do not possess the necessary facilities to accommodate so many young people in our part of the city. We have enough trouble finding room for our own children – we are very much lagging behind in the sports and leisure area in Nørrebro," the chairman concludes.

Despite the committee's best efforts, which included a petition and Facebook page against the project, the city decided to move ahead. Danica Pension and Arkitema Architects hope to break ground in 2016 and complete construction as early as 2017.



The skyscraper flanked by two of the smaller buildings in the Uptown Project.

Future still uncertain for Prags Boulevard 43

Plans to build a large-scale storage facility on a piece of land that used to house a creative community have been blocked by Copenhagen City Council, reports local publication Amag'røsten.

The community, PB43, occupied the land on Prags Boulevard on Amager until February this year when the owners, Dutch firm Akzo Nobel, sold the land to Pelican Storage. PB43 was a haven for artists, craftsmen and residents of the area alike, hosting workshops, art-

Joshua Hollingdale

hesion" with the neighbourhood in which it is built.

The Council has sanctioned a so-called §14-prohibition to block the construction of the storage facility, and have demanded a new plan for the land. The landowner may challenge the prohibition by bringing the case before the Natural and Environmental Complaints Office (Natur- og Miljøklagenævnet).

The local committee of Eastern Amager has taken up the case and appealed to Morten Kabell, Copenhagen City Council's deputy mayor of Technical and Environmental Affairs, in the hope that the council will be able to help reserve the land for small, non-polluting businesses and creative entrepreneurialism.

Amarøsten reports that Kabell shares the local committee's vision and has stated that he desires a sustainable development in the area, though he admits that the future of the land is unclear. He adds that the landowner is ultimately responsible for the land and they can choose to develop the area in accordance with the council's new local plan or sell it on to a new owner.

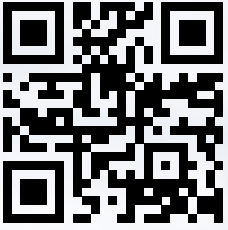
Steen Andersen, a former project manager at PB43, believes the sale of the land to Pelican Storage, and the ensuing confusion surrounding the property, represents an unfortunate trend in urban areas.

"I feel that the whole development shows how Copenhagen and other big cities have become deadlocked between different systems and ideologies in such a way that the inhabitants of the city as well as the council have very limited options in terms of influencing the decision making process when it comes to deciding on the way we want to use our cities," he says, adding that the council has acted too little and too late.

"PB43 has now moved to our new location in Nordhavn where we have slowly but surely started creating projects around the city again." M

studios and even late-night parties at the weekends. The collective moved to a new location on Skudehavnsvej in the harbour-area of Nordhavn in eastern Copenhagen after their lease was terminated ahead of the planned sale, which has now been blocked by Copenhagen City Council.

They consider the building of the storage facility 'undesirable' at the location, despite it abiding by the city's urban development plan for the area. The council argues the facility is too closed in, and would prefer a building which opened its perimeter towards the residential area, in order to be more "in co-



Sign up
for free
DANISH courses

Digital material - Fast progression
Correct pronunciation - Crash courses

DANISH is hard - we make it **EASY**

www.CLAVIS.org

CLAVIS
SPROG & KOMPETENCE

Q&A

Marlene Wind

DIRECTOR OF THE CENTRE FOR EUROPEAN POLITICS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF COPENHAGEN

Since her days at the European University in Florence, Professor Marlene Wind has been obsessed with the EU and the unique international cooperation it represents. Over the years, she has become Denmark's most cited EU expert and is currently the Director of the Centre for European Politics at the University of Copenhagen. Her views are not always welcome, however, and she often finds herself on the receiving end of harsh criticism for her pro-European position.

Last December, Danes voted 'no' on increased European integration in a referendum. But Wind explains that Denmark needs the EU more now than ever before.

How did your interest in the EU begin?

It was a deep fascination of a union or community that in many ways exists against the odds. When states normally work together, they only give up sovereignty when it is in their own interest – suddenly a European phenomenon came about that was so different that no written theory could even attempt to describe it. I found that deeply fascinating and wanted to find out more.

Why is the EU so important?

It really should be quite obvious that Europe as a civilisation will disappear without the EU – it is simply not possible for Europe to solve the challenges of a globalised world if the countries comprising the EU do not stand together in a powerful union. If one looks objectively at the type of global giants that the EU is up against, it is really quite obvious that we need this type of union between European countries.



I often wonder why the popularity of the union is not much higher, as the only way for the, especially smaller, countries of the EU to match the US, the new BRIC-countries and China internationally is if the European countries stand united. The project should really be self evident.

Why is it necessary for Denmark to be a member of the EU?

If we look at it pragmatically, Denmark is basically just a small, open economy completely dependent on being able to sell its goods on the European market. More than two thirds of all Danish exports go to European countries which means we are fundamentally dependent on European markets in order to pre-

serve our prosperity. Not only that, the trade needs to be free and not hindered by embargos and complicated rules. This is what the EU provides through binding rules sanctioned by a strong court. The benefits this presents for a small country like ours is that in Europe everyone is equal before the law. Whether we are dealing with a small or large country or a company, the rules are the same. This would never have been the case if the EU had been based on ordinary international law.

Denmark therefore benefits enormously from the union not only due to the free trade between its members, but also because of the joint set of rules and its independent court that makes sure everyone plays by the rules

at all times. The Danish economy is simply existentially dependent on the binding rules of the European market.

This has never been properly communicated to the Danish people by its lawmakers – it seems as though politicians have never quite grasped how dependent Denmark is on the special character of the EU-market and of being part of that international community. This is, however, dangerous to say out loud in Denmark. If you do, you immediately get accused of being elitist and out of touch with the feelings and sentiments of ordinary folks.

Why are Danes so sceptical when it comes to the EU?

I really do not understand why

Joshua Hollingdale

Danes are so sceptical. I just don't get it. If you ask historians they will say that it all goes back to 1864 when we lost a large chunk of Denmark to the Germans. The area had people from another culture, so when we gave it up we stopped being multicultural.

The loss also had an enormous impact on Denmark's sense of nationalism, which I often think feels very fundamentalistic. It's as though Danes think they can't be both European and Danish. The worship of national identity has run amok. It ruins our ability to operate in a globalised world, as it makes people regard international co-operation as running contrary to our country and opposed to what it means to be Danish I was on the receiving end of a 'shitstorm' because I made some relatively innocent comments that were critical of Denmark ahead of the December referendum. Danes with what I perceive as a very provincial attitude towards the EU, literally threatened to kill me, though that wasn't the first time – You are simply not allowed to criticize these things in our country.

You have called Danes 'small minded and cheap' in their attitude towards the EU – what do you mean by that?

This is exactly one of the things people reacted to. I was called a traitor, received death threats and told to leave the country. All I was trying to say was that if you want to take part in international cooperation it is not possible just to receive the benefits and not be a part of solving the challenges facing the union. It goes both ways and there will always be pros and cons – there will always be advantages and challenges, and it is simply not an option to only get the advantages.

I think Danes have a strange and unrealistic attitude towards the EU – we are constantly thinking about ourselves. And this rhetoric of looking at what we can

Danes think they can't be both European and Danish. The worship of national identity has run amok. It ruins our ability to operate in a globalised world.

get out of the EU while escaping any disadvantages runs through the whole system. That was the rhetoric I was attacking. I was trying to add an extra perspective to the EU debate.

Are our politicians to blame for the poor understanding Danes have of the EU?

I am very wary of blaming people. What is obvious, however, is that politicians often deny the reality of Denmark's European commitments. They talk endlessly about the internal market but hardly anyone seems to talk about the EU as a community in which countries cooperate on many different matters, sometimes even on issues that do not directly benefit them.

This rhetoric has characterised all referendums concerning the EU and has polarised the debate. One side says "don't worry, there is nothing binding in this referendum!" while the other says "you're lying! We can never get out if we vote ourselves in!" This has created a defensive pro-EU position rather than a visionary one that says "yes we want to take part in this, even though it's not perfect, because we believe in the European project and in being a part of something greater. Why? – Because only by working together can we meet the challenges we face in a globalized world".

That debate is almost non-existent in Denmark whereas its part of the ordinary political debate in Germany and France. Currently, the debate is constantly focused on how 'safe' it is to vote for the Union, rather than against it. And I completely understand people who are confused and feel like the politicians are leaving out key information.

What hardly anyone seems to grasp is that the European project is incredibly ambitious and much more binding than normal international trade unions. Within the EU you can't just pick and choose what laws you want to apply. I am not quite sure whether our politicians really understand

this – what I do know, however, is that they have never communicate that to the people.

Why do so many people have an emotional, rather than logical, approach to the EU?

I really do not understand it because the EU in reality is something that we should look at pragmatically, logically. Denmark is a small, vulnerable economy in a globalised world. It is essential that Denmark has a positive attitude towards joint, binding trade laws. To me, that simple argument should be enough, but for so many people it is not, and they get emotionally caught up to a degree that I simply cannot understand.

Maybe the reason is that there really is nothing else to be passionate about in this world that people decide to be overly passionate about national identities, focussing obsessively on their flag and their own little sovereign state which de facto isn't sovereign at all. Sovereignty is a myth and has been for quite a while. What is important today is not to be theoretically sovereign, but to have influence. And you only get influence through binding co-operation.

How can we make the EU more relevant in the eyes of Danes?

That is very hard. I think we need to make it a bigger part of everyday politics and not just something we talk about once every five years when there is an EU election or a referendum. The problem is that the EU presents a huge obstacle for politicians in terms of getting elected. The way for national politicians to be elected or re-elected is to present this image of being very powerful and having tremendous influence.

But we all know that in a globalised world, politicians only have power if they cooperate with other states. Despite this, politicians keep presenting this false image of power and influence for the simple reason that more peo-

ple will vote for them. So politicians have no real incentive to talk about the EU up to national elections, as they would indirectly admit that they do not have very much power and that they are dependant on cooperation with other countries. That is an unpopular message that doesn't get you many votes.

Another possibility is raising awareness through education. Why don't we teach our children about the EU when we teach them about Danish society? Even when they have reached high school kids hardly realise there is something called the European Union. I find that ridiculous, and what is even more amazing is that I receive around 30 emails a week from students who want answers to the most ridiculous questions about the EU. One student even wanted my expert opinion on why Syria did not just join the EU as that would surely make solving the crisis in the Middle East so much easier.

How do you see the EU evolving over the next 10 years?

I was quoted as saying that the EU would 'break down' over the next 10 years. What I meant was that the union as we know it might break down, in a way that we will end up having a small core-group of EU-positive nations deciding everything for countries like Denmark, without even asking us our opinion. That would be a direct consequence of the attitude of countries like ours who only want the advantages that the EU provides, but refuse to take part in solving any of the challenges facing the Union.

If this attitude continues, I believe Denmark will end up in a position of non-influence, forcing us to just copy the inner-market's laws passed by the core group without us having any say in shaping those laws. We will effectively become like Norway, which just copy and pastes all inner-market rules, but have no influence on the European project at all. **M**

Police dealt a blow with 'no' vote

Danes rejected increased EU cooperation on crime and justice in last month's referendum. Now, policing cross-border crime is at stake. Has euroscepticism triumphed in Denmark?

THE BENEFITS of increased EU integration weren't worth the cost to national sovereignty. This was the symbolic message sent by the outcome of December's referendum, in which 53% of Danes voted 'No' to ending Denmark's opt-out of justice and policing cooperation.

Until now, the opt-out has had little impact on Denmark. But in mid-2017, when Europol transitions from a supranational organisation to a full EU agency, the opt-out will prevent Denmark from remaining a member. This is a major blow to its ability to tackle cross-border crime. Last year, Danish police searched Europol's EIS database 71,000 times, looking for evidence and suspects across European borders.

December's referendum asked Danes whether they wanted to replace the opt-out with an 'opt-in' measure. This would allow the Danish parliament, Folketing, to join different areas of cooperation within policing and justice on a case-by-case basis. Voting 'Yes' also included 22 areas of cooperation, from remaining in Europol, to joining EU cybercrime regulations.

While the opt-in enjoys wide support in parliament, it had to be sent to a referendum. This is because Folketinget requires a super majority when deciding legislation that gives away sovereignty, which an opt-in measure does. The 5/6 super majority was prevented because of opposition from the populist Danish People's Party (DF) and far-left Red-Green Alliance (Enhedslisten).

EUROSCEPTIC DENMARK

While these parties celebrated the 'no' result, Denmark's policing abilities will be significantly weakened when it is forced to withdraw from Europol. For while DF and Enhedslisten argue that Denmark can remain a member through a so-called parallel agreement with the EU, the highly technical procedure has no guarantee of being approved by the European Commission.

Sound complicated? Many vot-

Many people conflated the 'No' result with Danes wanting less EU. What actually happened is that the people who wanted greater EU cooperation stayed home.

DEREK BEACH,
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR FROM
THE UNIVERSITY
OF AARHUS

Peter Stanners



Customs authorities in Italy seize illegal ivory in the Europol operation COBRA III, which targeted the illegal trade in endangered species. Denmark now stands to leave Europol after Danes voted not to increase EU cooperation in justice affairs.

Europol

ers thought so, with one telling the BBC the referendum was "the most baffling in the history of the EU". In the lead-up to the referendum, a third of voters said they were undecided.

Some commentators interpreted the result as a sign of growing Danish insecurity about giving up power to the EU. Certainly, a 'yes' outcome represented the possibility of even greater integration with the EU down the road. An 'opt-in' arrangement meant a simple majority in Folketinget would be able to sign on to more areas of EU cooperation in the future, such as an EU asylum programme, without first putting it to referendum.

Derek Beach, Associate Professor from the University of Aarhus, doesn't agree. He argues that the result was skewed because more

EU-sceptic voters were drawn to the polling booths.

"Many people conflated the 'No' result with Danes wanting less EU. What actually happened is that the people who wanted greater EU cooperation stayed home, while the EU sceptics went out and voted. It's the status quo bias – it's easier to get people to vote in favour of the status quo than vote for a major change."

He says that overall national attitudes could look very different:

"Voter turnout in centre-left pro-EU districts was lower than in other areas. When only 72 per cent vote, it really matters who does turn out. If turnout was 85 per cent, we would have seen a 'yes' vote," he explains.

PARLIAMENT VS THE PEOPLE

For DF, the result points to grow-

ing Euroscepticism in Denmark.

"The result can only be interpreted as an unwillingness to hand over yet more sovereignty to the EU," wrote DF MP Peter Skaarup in an op-ed for Politikken. "The EU is a bureaucratic construction comprised of a political elite who are pushing politics that are not always in line with the interests and values of the European people."

Currently, a cross-aisle majority of five pro-EU parties set Denmark's EU political agenda. DF leader Kristian Thulesen Dahl argued that the referendum result demonstrates that the time has come for Eurosceptic parties, like his own, to be included.

"We would like to see an EU politics that is based on support from a far wider set of Danes," Dahl told Politiko. "The 'Yes' side needs to

listen to the 'No' side. We also need to ensure that [PM Lars Løkke Rasmussen] secures broader support for Denmark's approach to the EU before increasing European cooperation."

FIGHTING FOR EUROPOL

Immediately following the referendum, the PM travelled to Brussels to meet Commission chairman Jean-Claude Juncker and European Council President Donald Tusk where he learned that without the opt-in, Denmark could not become a full Europol member.

"The message was that it is going to be very, very difficult," said Rasmussen on his return. The sentiment was echoed by Juncker's spokesperson, Margaritis Schinas.

"There was agreement that experts would need to sit down and look at the possibilities for a limited legal and political cooperation. Everyone has accepted that it will be a long and difficult process," he told Politiko.

To remain in Europol, Denmark must begin the complex, bureaucratic path to a parallel agreement. It must first apply to the European Commission, then secure the approval of all EU States to begin negotiations, before the EU Parliament approves the agreement.

DF and Enhedslisten have argued that securing a parallel agreement will be easy, because the EU has an interest in keeping Denmark involved. But there are plenty of reasons to be wary. Firstly, the EU has rejected two out of Denmark's four previous attempts to secure parallel agreements.

Second, some parallel agreements can take up to five years to negotiate, meaning Denmark will be forced to drop out regardless, even if only for a few years. This seems likely given that Denmark can't even begin negotiating the parallel agreement until the European Parliament for-

mally agrees the Europol reform in April 2016.

According to Bjarke Møller, director of thinktank Think Europa, there are many other factors that make it unlikely for Denmark to secure a parallel agreement by mid-2017. The UK renegotiation of membership, as well as reform of Schengen and the Dublin rules will feature much higher on the EU's list of priorities. Even then, Denmark will be worse off than today.

"It is not likely that Denmark can secure a parallel agreement for Europol that gives Danish police the same conditions as the current police cooperation," says Møller, arguing that the government should hold another referendum before the end of 2016, though this time for a limited opt-in model.

EUROPE NEEDS DENMARK

It's a bad time to be leaving Europol, especially for a member of the open border agreement Schengen – the recent Paris attacks and ongoing refugee crisis show that borders cannot contain crime, terrorism or refugees. EU counter-terrorism coordinator Gilles De Kerchove has said that by leaving Europol, Denmark will miss out on new anti-terrorism powers such as increased data sharing with EU border agency Frontex.

"When you see the added value of the (security) tools we are developing ... you need to be on board," De Kerchove told Reuters.

Despite the negative outlook, Beach still believes that Denmark stands a good chance of negotiating a parallel agreement.

"There's a lot of evidence to suggest that Denmark and Sweden have done very well in EU negotiations because their opt-outs make them even better more prepared and internationally diplomatically aggressive. It's one area where they punch above their weight." **M**

Taster Day, January 22nd

www.cis.dk



Our High School students go to Harvard, Cambridge and Outer Space

Are you looking for a High School that opens the doors to some of the world's best universities and most interesting opportunities? We are one of the original IB schools and our graduates have been accepted at Harvard, Cambridge, Princeton, MIT and the International Space Station.

To experience and learn more about our High School program we invite you to a Taster Day on January 22, 2016. To sign up please visit www.cis.dk or call +45 3946 3315

Copenhagen
International
School





UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon (fourth from left) and French President François Hollande (third from right) celebrate the signing of the COP21 agreement.

When the dust settles in Paris

COP21 produced a historic deal to tackle climate change, but not before Denmark's green reputation wavered on the world stage. On the home front, the battle against global warming has only just begun

LAST MONTH'S COP21 climate conference in Paris marked a now-or-never point for climate diplomacy. Ahead of the talks, the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) projected catastrophic consequences should the conference fail to reach a working agreement that would stop global temperatures from exceeding two degrees Celsius.

Since the first COP conference in 1995, countries have failed to introduce meaningful restrictions on carbon emissions, prioritising the financial benefits of fossil fuel-driven economies above climate concerns. It was

Lena Rutkowski

with an eye on this political reality that Liberal Party (Venstre) prime minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen toned down expectations for the UN conference, predicting that a "useable", but ultimately "insufficient" agreement would emerge.

However, Paris delivered the world's most significant climate deal yet, with 196 nations pledging to cut carbon emissions and agreeing to a third-party review every five years.

"This is the biggest event of my time as minister. I don't recall anything like this in my time in politics," climate minister Lars Christian Lilleholt who represented

Denmark at the climate talks, told Ritzau.

But without binding emission targets, the success of the Paris agreement hinges on the willingness and ambition of each of the signature countries.

KEY MEASURES

"A major leap for mankind" was how French President François Hollande described the agreement after the deal was adopted on December 12.

An ambitious upper limit on temperature increases certainly outstripped expectations. The deal calls on countries to keep global temperature increases

"well below" two degrees, striving for 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial levels.

Achieving the ambitious target, however, will require countries to reach peak greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible – with larger timeframes for developing countries – and introduce rapid reductions thereafter.

However, without the binding reductions targets supported by the EU, the deal risks becoming more symbolic than a definitive end to the fossil-fuel era. It will therefore rely heavily on international pressure to maintain momentum in tackling climate change.

Critics in Denmark see this as an incomplete roadmap for pollution reduction. While pleased, Liberal Alliance's (LA) leader Anders Samuelsen took to Twitter to add realism to the post-accord euphoria:

"Is it binding? No. Is there financing? No. Are these mere declarations of intent? Yes."

On the other hand, Katherine Richardson, climate professor at the University of Copenhagen, welcomed the agreement as a fundamental building block for the global climate effort.

"To achieve clean air, our neighbours also have to act. This agreement lays the foundation we can build up from," Richardson told Politiken newspaper.

Former EU climate minister Connie Hedegaard agreed that the agreement was a "huge step", but added that there were still many things to resolve.

FLEXIBILITY

What helped secure the agreement global support was the flexibility it afforded signatory nations. Reviews every five years will revisit and re-evaluate national efforts at curbing emissions, an approach that takes into account both the unique situation of every nation and potential changes in predictions.

The climate adaptation funding promised to the developing world remains vague, however. The preamble, which is not legally binding, promises 100 billion dollars per year in climate finance for developing nations by 2020. The amount has been criticised as insufficient, particularly because the developing world hasn't enjoyed the same economic benefits from fossil fuel production, but will still face enormous costs as they decrease consumption and extraction.

"There is little in this agreement to give the poorest communities around the world comfort that they will see an increase in funds to cope with climate change

in the years ahead," Tim Gore, Oxfam's head of climate policy told Bloomberg.

DENMARK LOSING THE LEAD

During COP21, Denmark's climate minister Lilleholt complained that the agreement lacked bite, despite the fact that his own Venstre-led government backtracked on former climate goals after ascending to power last year. Pleading fiscal grounds and the extra burdens on business, the government reduced its carbon reduction target from 40 percent to 37 percent by 2020. Denmark's specific climate funding pool was also scrapped in favour of administration under foreign aid, which is being cut by 4.8 billion kroner.

Jens Mattias Clausen, a climate politics advisor from Greenpeace Denmark, accused the Danish government of double standards.

"The Prime Minister and Climate Minister drastically cut climate initiatives and then come to Paris boasting about being global leaders," Clausen told Ritzau.

The government's diminishing climate ambitions didn't escape international notice. The country was awarded "Fossil of the Day" during the conference, a mock award given oxut by activist organisation Climate Action Network (CAN), designed to name-and-shame countries performing badly on climate issues.

"The new, minority, Liberal government of Denmark got into power in July and clearly thought there was too much climate leadership going on. So they decided to dial it down, right down," said CAN.

The policy changes have affect Denmark's status as a green leader and, in the latest World Energy Council (WEC) ranking of sustainable countries, Denmark fell from fifth to sixth place. President of WEC Denmark Hans Hvidtfeldt Larsen was quick to point out that the figures are rel-

Is it binding? No. Is there financing? No. Are these mere declarations of intent? Yes.

ANDERS SAMUELSEN, LEADER OF LIBERAL ALLIANCE

ative and could reflect advances made by other countries rather than setbacks at home.

Despite the cuts to foreign aid, the Prime Minister has pledged 580 million kroner for Mission Innovation, a new investment program where parties pledge to double their clean technology commitments by 2020. Lilleholt also argues that Denmark remains a green pioneer, pointing to The Climate Change Performance Index, which rates Denmark as the world's most climate-friendly country.

"Back in 2012 we took on a climate policy, which indicates - with the figures we know today - that we will reduce carbon dioxide emissions in 2020 by 37 percent. That places Denmark among the countries in the world which reduce the most emissions," he told Ritzau.

CLEAN ENERGY BOOST

The Confederation of Danish Industry (Dansk Industri) also maintains that Denmark is still a clean energy pioneer despite the target reductions. Director Tine Roed is optimistic the deal will prove enormously financially beneficial to Denmark, provided its industry can rise to the challenge.

"Denmark is currently the market leader in Europe. But if we are to hold the position, we must constantly develop new technologies and build on what we have. But we have a fantastic departure point," she said to Ritzau.

Assuming the US, China, EU and Mexico follow up on their pledges, Dansk Industri estimates that Denmark can double its clean energy exports to around 125 billion kroner by 2030.

Lars Aagard, CEO of the Danish Energy Association (Dansk Energi), agrees that the deal could be a huge boon for the renewable energy market, where Denmark holds a strong position. But adds that those opportunities won't materialise for Denmark unless politicians reframe the nation-

al climate agenda and make the transition to cleaner energy more attractive.

"We can't carry on with a tax policy, where taxes on green power are far, far higher than taxes on oil. It makes no sense," says Aagard.

DOMESTIC POLICIES CATCH UP

In a post-accord editorial, Michael Liebrich, Chairman of the Advisory Board for Bloomberg New Energy Finance, wrote that the legacy of Paris now hinges on how domestic politics play out in the near future.

"The real acid test will be whether, over the next 10 years, countries are prepared to make significant additional commitments, in particular in the areas of decarbonising transportation and improving energy efficiency."

And it is in this context that Denmark's faltering climate ambitions are a concern. John Nordbo, head of climate at WWF Denmark, claims the landmark 1.5-degree target demands an immediate revision of Danish climate goals.

"To give the Paris agreement the best possible start, the Danish government must eliminate any doubt about Danish climate targets. It makes no sense that Denmark is one of the few countries in the world to weaken its climate ambitions, when the rest of the world is doing the opposite," says Nordbo.

The fear remains that Denmark's weakening initiative could spread to other countries at future negotiations, setting a poor example to countries with a weaker financial foothold to help ease them off fossil fuels.

"Now it's critical for all countries to deliver, Denmark as well," former climate minister Martin Lidegaard (Radikale) wrote on Facebook.

"It is up to us to make the difference. We need more than the government's green mediocrity. The battle has only just begun." M

Sacrificing the environment for profit

The government's new agriculture package promises farmers greater yields and profits, but some worry about the impact of increased use of fertiliser and more lenient pollution regulations

FARMERS can look forward to a more profitable 2016, after the government passed 30 new agricultural regulations to renew growth in the sector.

But while food and environment minister Eva Kjer Hansen says the new regulations represent a "green boost to the environment", others argue the opposite is true and that Danish agriculture needs new and better ideas to survive in the global market.

"My hope is that farmers and banks now can start investing in the future with a good conscience," Hansen stated in a press release.

BOOSTING YIELDS

Danish agriculture is under strain due, in large part, to its collective 360 billion kroner of debt, which is roughly half of the yearly state budget of Denmark. According to Landbrug og Fødevarer, 10 to 15 percent of all farms are in danger of going bankrupt.

Martin Merrild, chairman of Landbrug og Fødevarer, supports the government's new regulations which, he argues, will be a boost to the sector's competitive ability.

"The biggest change is an increase in the production and quality of Danish crops. That means more profit to farmers and more value added to the whole production, which in turn means more jobs, more export of agricultural products and fewer imports of other products such as protein enhancers from South America," says Merrild.

He acknowledges the potential environmental impact of the new regulations, such as increased nitrogen and phosphorus runoff into waterways, but argues that the issues can be overcome.

"The Minister has even suggested a number of possible solutions such as placing rocks that were once fished out of the lakes back into the water to remove some of the extra nitrogen," he says.

"I think it is important to understand that the Danish agricultural sector will still be very



A farmer ploughs a field in Skåne, Sweden.

The government's strategy can be compared to pissing in your pants to stay warm.

PER KØLSTER,
CHAIRMAN OF
THE NATIONAL
ORGANIC SOCIETY

Joshua Hollingdale

strongly regulated in terms of the use of nitrates – we will still have what I believe are the strictest regulations in the EU on the use of nitrates."

LACK OF VISION

The National Organic Society (Økologisk Landsforening) doesn't share Merrild's enthusiasm for the new regulations, however, and their singular focus on increasing production.

"The problem is that we actually should be developing new products that match the modern, international market," Chairman Per Køster says. "Danish agriculture should be much more interested in how to create new value in goods, rather than increasing the amount of goods produced."

Køster adds that the strategy is pointless and only presents a short-term solution.

"To be quite frank, the government's strategy can be compared to pissing in your pants to stay warm. If you just produce more goods, then prices will start dropping and then farmers will just start going bankrupt."

Food and agriculture expert and journalist Kjeld Hansen argues the last thing the Danish ag-

riculture sector should be given is a mandate to use more fertiliser for the sake of increasing yields.

"Danish agriculture has been roaring forward for many, many years. We are the country in the EU with the largest percentage of land being farmed, around 60 percent. So the fact that we have the strictest rules on nitrate-emission into nature is not a point of pride – it is just necessary because we work our land so hard," Hansen explains.

Nitrogen and phosphorus fertilisers are added to crops to help their growth. But if too much is applied it risks being washed out into rivers and onwards to the sea and lakes where they promote the growth of algae. These algal blooms can consume vast amounts of oxygen, rendering waterways unable to support animal life.

Denmark has yet to live up to the environmental standards for its rivers, lakes and fjords that are outlined in the EU water framework directive from 2000. A main issue is agricultural runoff into rivers, which the former centre-left government attempted to combat by introducing 10-metre no-spray zones from water-

ways. This restriction has now been lifted.

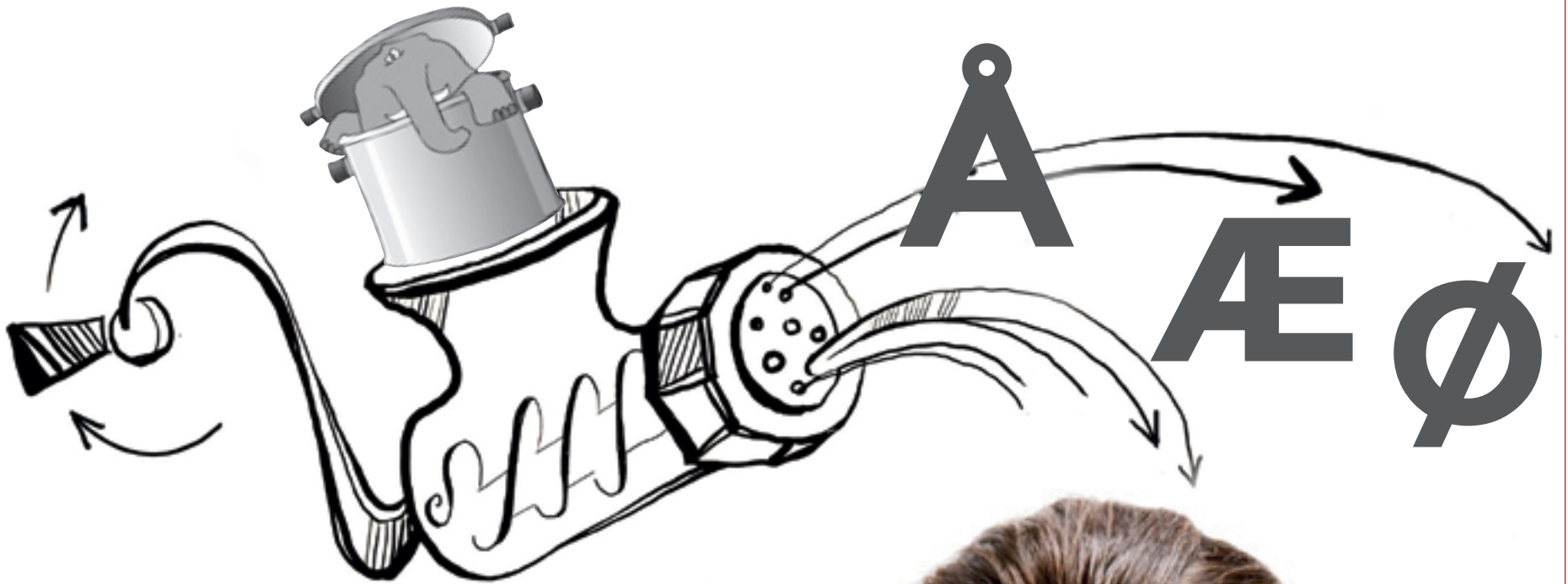
"This government has the cruel intention of not fulfilling the EU directive – they obviously believe the directive goes too far," says Hansen.

"The greatest crime is that we, the Danish tax payers, have been paying billions of kroner for a better water environment for the past 30 years. My research shows water quality has improved, so it's mad that this government, without hiding it, has decided to backtrack on that positive development."

Hansen also argues the new regulations will fulfil few of the promised benefits – for example increasing GDP by one billion kroner – while simultaneously creating problems for the future.

"For the farmers, it will not be the aid package it is made out to be. The farmers who are already rich will become richer, which is not at all the point," says Kjeld Hansen.

"Environmentally, the government is cheating the rest of us because we're going to pay for the help given to these farmers, while we are also the ones who will pay to clean environment when it becomes more polluted. The government is mocking us twice." **M**



HOW DO YOU EAT AN ELEPHANT?

IT'S LIKE
LEARNING
DANISH AT IA
BIT BY BIT!

ia
SPROG

IA SPROG Vibevej 9-11 • 2400 Copenhagen NV •
+ 45 3888 3233 • info@iasprog.dk • www.iasprog.dk



CAPTURED

Rasmus Degnbol

A Syrian boy drinks tea while waiting in a line at the border between Macedonia and Greece. The photo was taken on December 5, and belongs to photographer Rasmus Degnbol's ongoing series about the migration crisis in Europe. He says this scene repeated itself across Southern Europe as states competed to keep out the new arrivals and direct them away toward their neighbours. "In late December, the Danish Government proudly showcased dropping numbers of asylum seekers and claimed it was the result of cut backs and restrictions on refugees and asylum seekers," says Degnbol. "But these restrictions are not responsible, rather it is because of the restricted movement of refugees through Europe."





Roland Møller, photographed in Grundtvig's Church in Copenhagen.

An actor with a dark and troubled past, Roland Møller's first leading part in the WWII drama 'Land of Mine' demonstrates that he is capable of roles that don't just reprise his violent and criminal history

The rehabilitation of ROLAND MØLLER

Roland Møller arrives on time, but visibly hungover – the night before he was out late at a strip club with Lene from the pop group Aqua. Aged 42, Møller recently played his first lead role as sergeant Carl Rasmussen in *Land of Mine* (*Under Sandet*). Set on the west coast of Denmark in the immediate aftermath of WWII, his character is tasked with overseeing the demining of a Danish beach by young German POWs. Rasmussen's hate of his former German occupiers slowly gives way to empathy for this team of adolescent Germans who are mistreated and starved as they risk their lives clearing the beach of mines.

"When I read the script, I immediately felt it was my story – a guy walking around in the darkness. He's taking care of these boys, who we didn't feed and then died or lost their limbs. Can you just imagine that? These boys were barely born when Hitler came to z; they never had the chance to be kids. My character hates them, these German monsters. Nietzsche said, 'he who fights with monsters should look to it that he himself does not become a monster ... when you gaze long into the abyss the abyss also gazes into you.' He's fighting monsters, but can he avoid becoming one too?"

BACKSTORY

Møller doesn't really want to talk about his time spent in the darkness. It's a story he's told dozens of times before, and he worries that he lacks the enthusiasm to do it justice. But after washing down headache pills with a strong coffee, he shares the story of how he turned around a life of crime in Odense, to become one of Denmark's most fêted actors.

The short story is that of a young man sucked into the criminal underworld in Odense. He was an enforcer and in the process racked up ten convictions for violent behaviour, for which he served around four and a half years in prison. He is eager to stress that he never hurt anyone outside the criminal community.

After his tenth conviction, aged 30, he decided it was time to start anew. He was offered parole on the condition he leave Odense and got a job, which he found working with his friend the Danish rapper Jesper Dahl,

I listen to my stomach, I use my brain, and I follow my heart – in that order. If these three things line up, then I'm good to go.

Words: Peter Stanners

Photos: Kenneth Nguyen



In 'Land of Mine' Roland Møller plays Sergeant Carl Rasmussen who commands a group of young POWs who are called in to remove mines from Danish beaches.

Nordisk Film

aka Jokeren, as a songwriter on his new record label in Copenhagen.

Møller's first break in cinema was as a screenplay consultant for the 2012 prison drama *R*, which was set in the recently decommissioned Horsens prison where Møller had served time. He was brought in to teach the actors the right words and body language. But after seeing Møller on-set directors Tobias Lindholm and Michael Noer saw in him potential for more. His role as Mureren (the builder), a gang leader who manipulates and humiliates younger inmates, earned him his first nomination as supporting actor at the Bodil Awards, the Danish Film Critics Association Awards.

"Looking back at my criminal past, I realise that the reason I am such a good actor is that I've always been acting," he says, adjusting his baseball cap and leaning back into his chair. "I've never really been an asshole, I just acted like an asshole. I've always had a good heart."

Møller was also nominated for his role as the machine engineer in Lindholm's pirate drama *A Hijacking* (*Kapringen*), before winning the award as a gang leader in Noer's gangster film *Nortwest* (*Nordvest*). He is unnervingly convincing in tough roles, his hardened features and gravelly voice seem bereft of empathy. But his roles in *A Hijacking* and *Land of Mine* show that he can do more than channel his criminal past. His latest character is an angry man, but the film's most moving scenes are when he lets his guard down and begrudgingly bonds with the young men.

But while critics have appreciated his performances, his col- ►



You can't always do the right thing in war. You do what you do to survive. I know this because I've been in gang wars and it brings out the worst in people. Power attracts the worst and corrupts the best.



leagues in the Danish Film Academy seem less convinced, and have yet to nominate him for a Robert award.

"I don't blame them, I mean who the fuck am I? They went to school together after all," he says.

Møller is certainly an outsider in an insular and protective industry. Most major Danish actors, producers and directors attended one of Denmark's exclusive acting or film schools. While his peers were in school, Møller was living as a violent enforcer with a lavish lifestyle – they were scraping by on student grants, while he had a nice house, jewellery, cars and motorbikes.

Back then, he could not have imagined he would become a critically-acclaimed actor, without a car and a home.

"Right now I'm homeless. I put everything in storage and instead I'm couchsurfing. I have the key to three different apartments. I think it's healthy to try because I discover a lot of things about myself. When I had a lot of flashy possessions they formed my identity and when I was sent to prison I lost them all and had to earn them all back again. I felt stressed out and felt like I couldn't breathe. But the day before I moved to Copenhagen and gave them away, I suddenly felt free. I started realising I was a sensitive guy, that I had a lot of energy. Until then I had been playing a role."

PAYING IT FORWARD

Møller got into his first fight because of his love of Hip Hop. In the 1980s, rap crews, break dancers and graffiti artists started popping up across the country. He still wears his clothes baggy and has a baseball cap cocked to the side. Some older boys in his neighbourhood weren't fans, however, and they bullied him for listening to "black music".

"One day I had enough and I just knocked one of the older guys out. It's when I realised that everyone wants respect. But there's two types of respect: what you earn and what you take. And I took respect. When I got passionate about something I would raise my voice, stand up and wrinkle my nose and suddenly everyone would agree with me. I thought I was smart, but they were actually just afraid I was going to knock them out. That took me along time to realise."

While Møller says his family has always been there for him, he can thank his rehabilitation in part to a judge who only granted him bail on the condition that he left Odense and found a job. But before he moved to Copenhagen he spent some time at Den Rytmske Højskole,

a musical school typically for students between high school and university. And it was here that he started to leave behind his existence in a parallel society, following a moment of compassion.

"It was a new start for me, nobody knew me over there. I scared them by being older and having tattoos, but no one except the principal knew about my history. My street reputation didn't count for anything there. One night we had a party and I got really drunk. We lived in small houses with eight people and when I got home I started breaking stuff. I broke down the door, smashed the beds, took down the blackboards, woke up the guys and forced them to break plates on our heads. When I woke up the next morning with a headache, I couldn't remember anything from the night before. But the other guys were just looking at me like 'what the hell is wrong with you?' I said sorry and told them my story and said maybe it was because of some inner frustration. I prepared myself to get kicked out of school, but these kids forgave me and we cleaned everything up and bought new plates and agreed to keep it quiet. It really did something to me. It was so humbling," he says, before pausing and finishing his second coffee.

"I always say you're not put in prison, you're taken out of society. It's the fight to get back into society that's the hard part, getting over that feeling that society doesn't want to accept you. Those kids were the turning point for me."

Møller acknowledges that his rehabilitation rests upon the investment of people around him – from the judge and his fellow højskole students, to the rapper Jokeren and directors Lindholm, Noer and Zandvig. He now uses his position to influence the political debate and change lives. He appears weekly on the Radio24Syv radio show *Politiradio (Police Radio)*, where he talks about crime and punishment, and mentors young people who are at risk of being sucked into criminal communities.

"It takes a whole village to raise a kid. It's not just the government's job, we all need to go out and give people a chance. I wouldn't be here if no one did that for me. I definitely feel the need to help these guys. Instead of pointing our fingers at single parents who can't control their kids, we should knock on their door and offer to take the kids to play football, go to a museum, read a book. There are a lot of doors out there, but these kids need to learn that they have to walk through these doors on their own. We have to show we want them, otherwise they'll just end up in a parallel society."



Nordisk Film

Roland Møller's break through part was in prison drama 'R' where he played the brutal convict Mureren.

It takes a whole village to raise a kid. It's not just the government's job, we all need to go out and give people a chance. I wouldn't be here if no one did that for me.

FACING FACTS

Land of Mine sparked a debate over its historical accuracy. Some argued that the boys weren't as young as those shown in the film, as young as 15. But Møller says graves in Western Denmark confirm the film's portrayal. Some historians argue Denmark committed a war crime by using the young men.

"Our history is wrong – we see ourselves as the good Samaritans when we are just as fucked up as everyone else, we just don't talk about it. And because it's not in the history books, so we build an identity on false grounds. I was taught we were always the good guys in WWII, helping the Jews cross to Sweden. Sure many Danes did, but the resistance fighters were also brutal, but we don't really talk about this bad story. The resistance fighters sometimes remind me of the bikers in modern Denmark. They were mobsters and opportunists. But can you blame them?"

Either way, Møller argues we have an interest in questioning whether Danish soldiers oversaw the brutal treatment of young Germans – it would weaken the war's good versus evil narrative. But of course Danes were also guilty of committing atrocities during the war, says Roland. During his research for the role he drew from the experiences of a Danish officer who oversaw demining activity, who confirmed that they mistreated the boys.

"He didn't want to tell me and he skipped over it at first. But I understand why, you can't always do the right thing in war. You do what you do to survive. I know this because I've been in gang wars and it brings out the worst in people. Power attracts the worst and corrupts the best. You can't blame freedom fighters who became mobsters after the war, or soldiers who starved boys on the beach. But we can blame historians for not telling the true story."

Møller is clearly a born performer. Even after appearing annoyed that yet another interviewer wanted to delve into his past, he recounted his story with gusto and enthusiasm. He's reflective and smart, condensing his experiences into lessons, quick to give others credit, and always returning to the big picture. He wants a better Denmark, but argues a lack of honesty and fear of hypocrisy is holding us back.

Before he gets up to do another interview, he shares one final lesson he uses to keep on walking in the light.

"I listen to my stomach, I use my brain, and I follow my heart – in that order. If these three things line up, then I'm good to go." **M**





Peter Stanners

Despite being qualified and resourceful, Julien Kalimira Mzee Murhula has found it very difficult to find work since fleeing to Denmark from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

"There are only jobs for Danes"

The government, civil society and the media are all working on programmes to better integrate refugees. But one refugee argues there are deeper prejudices at play that are keeping resourceful refugees out of the labour market

WHEN Julien Kalimira Mzee Murhula lived in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) his family expected him to become a politician. But after receiving a bachelor's degree in development studies at the Institut Supérieur de Développement Rural in Bukavu city in the late 1990s, he was forced to flee the civil war that broke out in 1996. In 2003 he was resettled in Denmark by the UN refugee agency, UNHCR, but had to put his career ambitions on hold when he discovered that his degree wasn't recognised by the Danish labour market.

"I was so frustrated. I had struggled for my education and

my parents sacrificed my siblings to educate me. But when I got here they said I am not educated."

Despite going on to earn a master's degree in public administration from Roskilde University in 2009, and learning Danish, he still felt locked out of the labour market. This year, aged 42 and now a Danish citizen, was the first time in 13 years that he held a job for six consecutive months, when he was employed as an integration consultant in Tårnby Council.

"The Danish labour market is very closed. There are only jobs for Danes. They would prefer to give a job to a stupid or under qualified Dane than a clever foreigner. Den-

mark is a strange society – they give you a free education, but then there are no jobs afterwards."

Murhula, a freelance translator who speaks six languages, has a long list of clients ranging from the Danish Refugee Board and the Danish Refugee Service to the International Criminal Court. Despite these positions, his resourcefulness and education, his inability to find long-term employment demonstrates a central issue in the integration debate. In 2013, only 47.7% of non-Western immigrants were employed, compared to 73.8 % of ethnic Danes.

With record numbers of refugees arriving this year, the ques-

tion is whether Denmark can avoid continuing to waste the potential of these new arrivals.

INTEGRATING TOGETHER

It's an issue PM Lars Løkke Rasmussen appears to be taking seriously. In late September he announced a new integration initiative to help refugees into employment or apprenticeships with Danish companies. The initiative, "Sammen om integration" (Integrating together) is a partnership between councils, job centres, public institutions and businesses, and provides recruitment, training, subsidised salaries, language courses and mentorships.

Hana Hasanbegovic

Additional reporting
by Peter Stanners

So far 30 different businesses have signed up, including facility management company ISS (Integrated Service Solutions). The company, which currently employs roughly 8,000 in Denmark alone, has agreed to take on at least 100 refugees. The jobs on offer are both skilled and unskilled, ranging from cleaning services, maintenance, catering, to security and office support.

Business Development Manager, Lotte Andersen, says ISS involvement in the scheme should not come as a surprise, as the company has a long tradition of facilitating inclusion of unemployed residents into the labour market. According to Andersen, ISS has already worked with 32 different councils and helped over 1,600 people find employment, and she says extending their scope to refugees makes both economic and social sense.

"There is nothing extraordinarily new about this procedure," she explains. "The only difference this time around, is the fact that we're offering these positions to refugees."

One of the councils working together with ISS is Brønderselv, where 75 refugees have been enrolled in apprenticeship programs with a view to get them into full time employment. The structure of the apprenticeships vary according to the needs and qualification of the refugee in question. Some work for three days and go to language school the rest of the week, others work during the day and attend classes at night for example. Including Danish language courses, provides a simultaneous development of both the refugees' language skills as well as their familiarisation with the Danish workplace.

When asked why ISS wants to take part in the integration effort and take responsibility, Group Chief Operating Officer, Martin Gaarn Thomsen explains the advantages it provides for the company.

"It increases diversity, improves efficiency in the company, and it should ultimately result in a bigger profit for the shareholders," he argues.

COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS

Despite these promising signs, there still remain challenges. The job programme is only available to those who have been granted refugee status. For those still in systematic limbo, with applications pending, volunteers and independent organisations try to fill the gap.

Deep in Copenhagen's Nordvest district, amongst halal butchers

and candy shops, is the Trampoline House, a community centre for refugees and asylum seekers. Managing director Morten Goll explains that the idea for the centre came after visiting asylum centres and speaking with residents about the problems they faced. He identified three main issues: poverty, isolation and the inability to take action.

This struck a chord with Morten Goll, an artist turned humanitarian entrepreneur, who wanted these asylum-seekers to have a physical space where they could feel useful and heard.

"My aspiration was never to rescue some 'poor' asylum-seekers," says Goll.

He decided that a community centre for asylum seekers would tackle both the sense of isolation and disempowerment. In 2009 he received three million kroner from the British OAK Foundation and opened the first Trampoline House in Copenhagen's Nørrebro district.

Goll argues that the central problems facing the integration of refugees lies both in the asylum centres where they live while their applications are being processed, as well as the compulsory three-year integration programmes, which distributes successful applicants across the country. While the former centre-left government allowed refugees to live and work outside centres six months after filing an application, the current Liberal Party (Venstre) government has rolled back these changes in an attempt to make Denmark a less attractive country to refugees.

As a result, asylum seekers are disconnected from mainstream society, says Goll. His ambition with The Trampoline House is to offer refugees a community and a sense of belonging in a democratic space. It also, at any one time, provides over 60 internships to asylum seekers while their applications are being processed. In order to provide successful applicants with a smoother transition into the labour market, he now wants to help facilitate better relationships with councils and big businesses so that Trampoline House users can start internships already while their applications are being processed.

"We spent six years building this psycho-social environment that is based on democracy. The current integration process fosters anger, frustration and alienation. People feel herded like cattle. We need to stop this and replace it



Trampoline House project manager Morten Goll speaking at a debate about the possibilities of finding work for refugees.

We wanted to show [refugees] that the reason they aren't being included in the debate, isn't because they are being ignored, but because journalists don't know they exist.

MAJA HECHMANN FIND, HEAD OF EVENTS AT INFORMATION NEWSPA-

with a space where people are accepted, and give them the sense they are needed as individuals. This creates a healing of the trauma they have experienced in war zones and asylum centres, where some people end up living for years."

MEDIA SCHOOL

The alienation from mainstream society many refugees experience means few are able to share their stories in the media. It's a situation that Information newspaper recognised, leading them to establish a media school for refugees in 2015, which refugees with the tools for participating in the media debate in a two-month programme. They learn how newsrooms work, what sorts of questions to expect when being interviewed, their rights for reviewing their quotes, and so on. The only condition being that they read and speak Danish.

"We wanted to show that the reason they aren't being included in the debate, isn't because they are being ignored, but because journalists don't know they exist," explains Information's head of events, Maja Hechmann Find. "Journalists are lazy, they'll just use the same sources over and over again."

Murhula attended the media school this year after noticing that voices like his were few and far between.

"When I came to Denmark I was frustrated because I realized that the Danish media is just for Danes. We pay taxes and media licenses that pay the salaries of journalists, but they don't come to us and listen to us and share our stories – they only want Danish stories. I don't think that's right," says Murhula.

"We want to show that we aren't here for welfare, we came here because our countries were on fire. We didn't move for fun. Politicians are ruining our image in the media. So when I discovered that Information was organizing the course I saw it as a good opportunity to participate and hope that I might get more access to the media to explain our situation."

GO TO SWEDEN

Despite the new initiatives, Murhula is not optimistic that new arrivals will have an easier time finding work than he did. Embedded within Danish society is an unwillingness to give a chance to people who don't belong to the majority culture, he argues, pointing to Sweden where the situation is very different. A friend of his, who moved there two years after Murhula arrived in Denmark, is now the director of a local council and has 40 employees. They had the same education and skills, so why did his friend succeed when he didn't? For a start, the Swedish labour market accepted his qualifications.

"Danish people are not ready to live with foreigners. Even when refugees receive residency they suffer. The reduction in welfare for refugees will make it more difficult to get by, and in the long term finding a job will be hard. There is no integration in Denmark," he says.

As chairman of the Congolese diaspora in Denmark, he has witnessed many of his countrymen receive residency before moving on to the US, UK or Canada where it is easier to integrate into the labour market.

"Syrians should go to Sweden. It's a paradise for foreigners. What are they going to do here?" **M**

How to spot a winner in politics

Proponents of political substance might well feel disappointed by the results of studies carried out by a team of professors from Aarhus University who have found that non-verbal cues could play a large role in determining who we decide is our preferred candidate

VOTERS MIGHT like to think they choose their favourite candidate based on merit. But according to recent research our voting habits aren't always that rational.

Take the campaign posters that are plastered across Denmark before every election. Often depicting just the candidate's face and their political party, you might wonder whether it's an effective marketing strategy. After all, can a person's face be enough to secure a vote?

Yes say two professors at Aarhus University – Lasse Laustsen and Michael Bang Petersen – who have found that being attractive can, under certain circumstances, be an advantage.

"Just from looking at a collection of anonymous candidate portraits, people can often choose the most successful candidate," explains Laustsen. "From past research and our own, we know there are two main factors that influence this. First is a candidate's overall attractiveness. The second is the appearance of competence, which is also associated with attractiveness, but also with facial maturity and masculinity."

LOOKING LIKE A WINNER

Their findings are based on a study in which they asked high school students to look at the photographs of 268 candidates running across three local elections in Denmark. The students had no prior knowledge of the candidates, and were shown candidates from different parts of the country than where they lived. Each subject was then asked to rate the candidate's attractiveness and appearance of competence.

"The results revealed that many of those with the highest scores were the winning candidates," says Laustsen, adding that the study could not determine whether it was the candidate's attractiveness or their appearance of competence that played a more significant role in their success.

Laustsen argues that the study raised questions about whether the appearance of masculinity or



During Danish elections, streets are plastered with campaign posters that focus highly on the candidates faces. It might be a winning strategy for some, but not others

dominance is always important to a candidate success. In a separate set of studies, they found that while you might assume that a dominant or powerful look would be an asset for most politicians, it doesn't always bring success.

One of the most notable experiments used altered portraits of parliament members Ole Hækkerup and Troels Ravn. The portraits were morphed to look more masculine and more feminine. The masculine faces were made to appear wider, with larger jaws, cheeks, and brow ridges. While the feminine faces were modified to become narrower, with softer facial features, and larger eyes.

"Subjects were shown one photo that was manipulated to look more or less dominant from the original, and were then asked to

state how much they agreed with a policy proposal from the politician they had just seen," explained Laustsen.

"The results revealed that conservative subjects were more persuaded to support the policy proposal when Ravn or Hækkerup looked more dominant, while liberal subjects were more persuaded to support the policy proposal when Ravn or Hækkerup appeared less dominant."

It's difficult to determine precisely why this link between facial preference and ideology occurs, says Laustsen. But the duo speculates that voters generally associate certain facial traits with certain ideological positions, which inherently influence their preferences.

"People have been shown to be

more persuaded by sources whose ideology matches their own presumably because they find such sources both more credible and easier to identify with," he explains. "A dominant or powerful look is associated with being conservative (and a Republican in the US), while a non-dominant look with being a liberal (and a Democrat in the US)."

CONFLICT VOTERS

While our political standpoint might influence which candidates we find appealing, there is something far deeper influencing which political wing we prefer. Laustsen points out that studies have found our perception of the degree of conflict in society often correlates with our political preferences – right wing voters gener-

ally view society as more conflict-ridden than left wing voters.

"We also know that some people are more inclined to think it is OK to dominate others," says Laustsen.

He and Petersen examined whether there was a link between this inclination to dominate, and voter preferences. To do so they used a Social Dominance Orientation measure that was designed to measure an individual's preference for hierarchy in social systems, and their stance in relation to dominance over lower-status groups.

"Again, right wing voters were

more oriented towards social dominance and this in turn seemed to be the driver of their stronger preferences for dominant candidate faces. Skin-conductance tests also show that right-wing individuals display stronger physiological responses when exposed to threat provoking stimuli such as a photo of a large spider or sudden loud noises. This again tells a story about deep-seated differences between liberals and conservatives, which potentially leads to different candidate preferences."

PREDICTIVE ABILITIES

According to Laustsen, in times of

social conflict such as war, right-wing parties will have an edge, as voters will generally lean towards a candidate who presents themselves as a protector with a more dominant appearance.

"In contrast, when facing peaceful conditions, subjects prefer leaders with less dominant and more feminine looks," the study reports.

However, even with all this knowledge, it's still not possible to predict the results of national elections, says Laustsen.

"The effects of physical appearances tend to dissipate the more recognisable a candidate is," he explains. "Once a politician is well-

known they won't be subject to the same kind of stereotyping."

But according to Laustsen, the research could prove useful for smaller elections.

"We have found a connection between facial dominance and electoral success of real world politicians and we have backed it up with a series of experimental studies," he explains.

"I don't think we can predict which party wins a specific election, but our results suggest that we might be able to predict which candidate within a given party stands a good chance of getting elected." **M**

International Bilingual Department



BLIV BILINGUAL!

Bilingual
STUDENTS LEARN
MORE; – FASTER

Discover the
world
every day!

An
Intercultural
learning
environment....

English and
Danish as
teaching
languages

FIRST CLASS
Cambridge
BILINGUAL
EDUCATION

A progressive
catholic school with
a *150 year tradition*
of humanistic
education

PRIVATE CATHOLIC SCHOOL – AGES 5-16



**Institut
Sankt Joseph**

Copenhagen | www.sanktjoseph.dk/en



**CLOSE TO
ØSTERPORT STATION**



Daniela De Lorenzo

Tim Warin, a British student attending the Copenhagen campus of Aalborg University, was forced to live on a boat when he couldn't find a home.

Boats, containers and AirBNB – students struggle to find a home

A lack of affordable housing makes students vulnerable to being ripped off by unscrupulous scammers. While Danes can draw on their networks, international students are particularly at risk. But while Copenhagen's mayor has 6,000 new affordable homes planned for the city, the government's plan to relax housing development laws could scupper his vision of a city where rich and poor live side-by-side

There was no mistaking that it was me in the profile photo of a Facebook account advertising a room for rent in Vanløse. Except the profile belonged to an Aminah P Shas. When I sent Shas a message demanding an explanation, I received a curt apology before Shas' profile photo changed to that of another girl holding a cat.

Shas was advertising a room in one of many Facebook groups used by students to find accommodation. But with low supply and high demand, the market is fertile ground for unscrupulous scammers who demand deposits up

front, before disappearing with the cash. Such is the magnitude of the problem that the University of Copenhagen (KU) has a page on its website called "Don't get scammed".

"I have never experienced anything like this," says Tim Warin, a British student attending the Copenhagen campus of Aalborg University, referring to the number of fake accommodation scams on Facebook. While apartment hunting, he had a Skype call with a woman who promised him a room. Except her story didn't seem to add up.

"I could see her face, but she was giving me the usual scammer excuses: she couldn't show me the room, she would have to leave the keys

with some friends, but I still had to pay in advance, which of course I would not do. It was unbelievable to see somebody lying so shamelessly. But what does she care, at some point somebody would have trusted her."

HOUSING PRESSURE

Between 2010 and 2014, Copenhagen's population grew by 9% to 739,000 residents. Among the new arrivals are a growing number of students at Copenhagen's four universities – KU, the IT University, the Copenhagen campus of Aalborg University, and Copenhagen Business School. In 2014 there were 63,000 students attending these universities, a sixteen percent increase since 2010.

Daniela De Lorenzo

Additional reporting
by Peter Stanners

The growing population is not being met with an equivalent increase in new affordable, housing, however. Across Denmark, the student population has grown by 13,000 since 2010, but according to figures from Statistics Denmark (Danmarks Statistik) only 1,052 student accommodations were built during the same period. But it's not just students who are having a hard time finding a home. According to construction lobby group Dansk Byggeri, the rising populations in Danish urban hubs will require the construction of 120,000 new homes before 2020.

While everyone needs a place to live, for the 4,000 international students currently enrolled at KU finding a home is especially important. It is hard to receive a civil registration (CPR) number without having an official address, and without a CPR number it becomes difficult to open a bank account and register with a doctor. The shortage of accommodations means that many students find themselves stuck in a limbo with neither a CPR number nor a home.

ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS

Many resort to extreme solutions. Before finding a home in October, a Danish classmate let Warin stay on a sailing boat in Nordhavn for free. It was a long bike ride to the Aalborg University campus in Sydhavn, especially when he had to make do without basic living facilities like a kitchen and a bathroom.

"It was quite hard, I had to adapt. I took a shower at the university before classes and spent most of my day there. Looking back, it is insane the amount of falafel I ate for dinner during the period."

Despite the long journey and cramped conditions, Tim was still lucky to find a cheap, temporary accommodation, even if it meant living on a boat. Others have resorted to Airbnb, where the average cost a night in Copenhagen runs around 500 kroner.

Giorgia Ussaggi, 22, moved from Italy to start a master's degree at CBS. Unable to find an apartment after arriving in the summer, she ended up spending 9000 kroner staying three weeks in an Airbnb apartment in Østerbro.

"This situation is absurd, but I had no other alternative. It is the price I have to pay, I do not want to think this is money down the drain."

At the end of September she moved again for two weeks to another room she found through Airbnb, and then again to another apartment for two months. In mid-December, she was again looking for a new place.

Denmark's second biggest city Aarhus also attracts a lot of international students who face the same housing shortage. To address the issue, the student union Studentarhus Aarhus

We are experiencing an increasing pressure on housing as the number of international students rise.

CHARLOTTE SIMONSEN, DIRECTOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF COPENHAGEN HOUSING FOUNDATION

launched Startup Housing with funding from the local council. The temporary homes, made out of containers, each house four students, which could be rented for 650 kroner a week, before the programme closed in October.

"The project started last year and we could accommodate 150 students," said Karl Nielsen, one of the project managers. "Seventy percent of the guests were international students. But we also had some people from elsewhere in Jutland, and even a couple from Copenhagen."

SOME IMPROVEMENTS

A 2011 joint-study by the Danish Agency for Universities and Internationalisation and the Danish Pupils and Students Dorm Council, found that 29 percent of full-degree foreign students only found accommodation after arriving in the city. Unlike exchange students, they are not guaranteed a place to stay before they arrive and are urged to look for housing through their network or on the open market.

They can also try their luck through the independent University of Copenhagen Housing Foundation (UCPH), which has 1380 leases available for international students and researchers.

"We are experiencing an increasing pressure on housing as the number of international students rise, which is why we are adding 300 more rooms in 2016 and 200 in 2017," said Director Charlotte Simonsen.

"The housing market in Copenhagen is very competitive, also for Danish students, which makes it even more important to be able to offer affordable accommodations for international students applying to UCPH. We at the housing foundation are working hard to address the housing issue and we are working

closely together with Copenhagen City Council. The problem we meet is that it is hard to find rooms at the right price."

Copenhagen mayor Frank Jensen has made it a priority to build more affordable housing in the city. Before 2025 he plans to finalise the construction of 6,000 new affordable student homes, which would cost just around 3,500 kroner a month, making them less than the 5,000 kroner student grant (SU). According to Copenhagen City Council, there are currently only 11,000 homes in the 2500 and 4000 kroner a month price range.

The ambitious new construction plan was made possible thanks to a law passed by the former centre-left government, which mandated that 25 percent of new housing projects be earmarked as affordable, up from 10 percent. The government furthermore allowed public housing associations to take 50-year interest free loans worth up to 500 million kroner in total to buy land in major cities.

Copenhagen may have to scrap its plan, however. The current Liberal Party (Venstre) government introduced a new Growth Plan that includes rolling back the 25 percent mandate, arguing that the higher mandate would prove to costly to private developers.

The mayor has openly condemned the decision, arguing there is a lot to lose by focussing so narrowly on economic growth.

"Growth has nothing to do with making sure that a city has affordable homes – the city is experiencing great growth. We just want to be able to secure, that around 25 percent of the new homes in the new living areas of Copenhagen are affordable to make sure we don't end up like London or Paris, so that rich and poor can continue live alongside each other," Jensen told The Murmur. **M**



Startup Housing is a temporary housing project in Aarhus that housed students in containers for 650 kroner a week.



The NARCISSISTIC Revolution

Building on two thousand years of Christian thinking and philosophy, conservative columnist and priest Sørine Gotfredsen has written a bestseller about how narcissism is tearing society apart. The answer, she says, is returning to God

So powerful was the ancient Greek myth of Narcissus that it's known around the world – the story of a beautiful young hunter who became so obsessively in love with his own reflection that he lost the will to live and ultimately starved to death.

It is a story that has resonated with people since it was first written down in 8 AD. Despite its old age, Sørine Gotfredsen believes its relevance to contemporary readers is more significant than ever before.

"I am convinced narcissism has gotten worse. We live in a world where it has become perfectly acceptable to just focus on the self and, like in fact I do, to live alone. We no longer feel it is necessary to start families, to have children. That it is acceptable to live a solo life."

In her new book *Løft blikket - nåde i narcissismens tid* (*Look Up - Grace in the age of narcissism*), Gotfredsen draws on great thinkers from Martin Luther to Søren Kierkegaard and Descartes to show the reader how questions about the self have been a fundamental part of our philosophical heritage. Luther focused on the personal relationship between the individual

and God, the French and American revolutions stressed the need for individual self-determination in politics, while human rights conventions outlined particular universal rights that all individuals should be entitled to.

"This individual age we live in has been coming for a long time. Some would say you can trace it all the way back to Augustine of Hippo, but I started by looking at Descartes, because his philosophy placed individual thinking at its centre and that we must measure and understand the world from that personal perspective."

Gotfredsen is not opposed to individual thinking, and argues that looking inward is still important. The problem arises when the constant focus on the self becomes a harmful obsession.

"When we are constantly just dealing with ourselves and our needs, our whole life becomes too focused on the self and that makes us less available and present for others. We end up constructing a box that separates us from others and from God. When we get stuck within ourselves we become lonely, unhappy and blind to the needs of others."

A PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEM

The book is written in the first person, with

I don't believe in people's ability to control themselves, I believe we are fundamentally sinful.

Gotfredsen referencing her own experiences. At first glance, this approach seems problematic in a book critical of narcissism. But she claims that was exactly the point.

"Writing about narcissism in that style risks being tragicomic, but I felt it was important for people to understand that I'm also impacted by the illness. We are stuck in this world, no matter how hard it can be. I'm no better than everyone else and I wanted to show that. From the response I've received from people that seems to have come across."

Despite its roots in Greek mythology, narcissism was first popularized as a psychological term through Sigmund Freud's 1914 essay *On Narcissism*. In 1968 the term narcissistic personality disorder, was classified as a mental illness by the American Psychiatric Association. The most widely used measure of narcissism, The Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI), was developed in 1979 by American psychologists, Robert N Raskin and Calvin S. Hall and has been used to test a random sample of US college students since the 1980s.

According to the 2009 book *The Narcissism Epidemic: Living in the Age of Entitlement* the results of these tests supports Gotfredsen's fears – 70 percent of students in college today score higher on narcissism and lower on empathy than their counterparts in the 1980s.

The book's author, Professor Jean Twenge, has said in interviews that the rise in narcissism is something we ought to be worried about, as people who score high in narcissism tend to have trouble in their relationships. Furthermore, focus has been shifting from the group to individual rewards, with Twenge claiming that young people today are far more likely to say being well off financially is an important life goal than they were thirty years ago.

GOD IS DEAD

But while Gottfredsen and the psychiatric establishment agree with the diagnosis of an increasingly narcissistic society and the problems it poses, she doesn't think the answer lies in psychotherapy. The modern person, she argues, spends too much time enjoying life and its pleasures. Therefore, the problem is not that people don't know how to live up to their potential and find happiness, but rather the modern person's inability and unwillingness to identify and take on their responsibilities and duties.

Her solution to tackling the problems faced by the "pleasure-seeking person", is by reasserting the position of the disciplinarian and authoritarian Christian God.

"We live in a world in which we have abolished God and this has made us lose our sense of duty, this is a lot of what my book is about. Most Danes will say that religion doesn't matter, but most Danes will also say that there might be a God somewhere, but it is a relationship without any meaning, because it demands nothing, it is just a nice thought."

She argues that this view of the "lax" God, actually lies in Christianity following the Reformation when the Church adopted a less stringent view on matters of faith, which absolved the individual from the demands that faith had previously placed on them.

"Christianity is not a religion of laws as such. There are no demands for praying a certain amount of times a day. There is only one law in Christianity and that is love thy neighbour."

Gottfredsen believes that the best way to combat and eliminate our narcissistic tendencies is by understanding our need for a relationship with the Christian God and the law Jesus placed upon us. She wants us to abandon the morality of "convenience", where decisions are made based on instant gratification, and replace it with a morality of principle, based on Jesus.

INHERENT EVIL

"I have a very black view of humanity. I don't believe in people's ability to control themselves, I believe we are fundamentally sinful, in that we

**To the atheist
I would ask,
do you think
it is realistic to drop
languages,
cultures, and
religions? Just
look around
the world and
tell me if you
think that
works.**

are too lead by our need for self preservation and in that lies our potential for evil. Therefore, if we don't have a universal and higher measurement of what is good, I fear we will move further and further towards selfishness. Then evil will take over."

Should Gottfredsen's assertion about the importance of religion to our morality be true, then Denmark is heading for trouble. A Gallup poll this year found that 52% of Danes say they are not religious. However, some evidence suggests that religious curiosity might not be so important. A study published this year in the scientific journal *Current Biology* showed that children raised in religious homes were less altruistic than children brought up in non-religious homes. Such findings might explain why atheist Scandinavia – 76% of Swedes identify as non-religious – consistently ranks so highly on the Global Peace Index.

Gottfredsen, however, dismisses the idea that morality can come entirely from within, rather than from a higher power – we do not know a world where Christianity and its morals have never existed, she argues.

"We will need God in the future. It is true that we live in a very peaceful part of the world where we have a high standard of living. A part of that is our tradition of criticising religion. Religion is one of the most dangerous things in the world, because it can keep people ignorant and lead to wars and bloodshed, but now that criticism has gone too far."

THE CLASH WITH ISLAM

Gottfredsen fears for the future of Danish society without religion to keep it grounded. We risk losing sight of true meaning in existence and, in the process, become vulnerable to outside influence. Islamic immigration, for example, could completely transform Europe unless Europeans reaffirm the basis of their Christian values, she argues.

It seems highly absurd to think that the Muslim population of Europe – which makes up just six percent of its total population – could ever take over the continent, but it's a future

some right-wing writers have come to believe is a real possibility. In the 2015 novel *Submission*, by French writer Michel Houellebecq, Islam has taken over French society in 2022, forcing women to wear veils, the Quran has become mandatory curriculum and polygamy has been legalised.

While the work was widely branded as Islamophobic, Gottfredsen says she fears the future he presents – a future where people in the West have become so obsessed with the pursuit of individual pleasures, that they are unable to resist the influence of a more spiritual people.

"In the book, people become so spiritually weak through their love of alcohol, good food and sex, that in the end the French convert to Islam to regain peace. It is like he writes at the end of the novel, it will always be spirituality and existential questions that humans fight over."

Unsurprisingly, Gottfredsen is highly critical of multiculturalism, arguing that we can't predict how immigration from non-Western countries will affect Denmark. That when cultures with radically different worldviews are forced to coexist, the result can only be conflict and violence. According to her worldview it is only naïveté that makes us believe that we can create a happy society based around moral and cultural relativism.

"We are different. We need our different roots and to feel that there is something worth fighting for. If I don't have that, I feel empty. So to the atheist I would ask, do you think it is realistic to drop languages, cultures, and religions? Just look around the world and tell me if you think that works. Our societies have become more vulnerable and our common beliefs are becoming smaller. We have forgotten what our values are."

Gottfredsen and her book provide important and critical input into a discussion we need to be having. But, ultimately, her position seems frustratingly based on personal bias and nostalgia for a world that was arguably far worse than what we have today. She might not provide us with the answers, but she has raised the questions. **M**

COPENHAGEN CARD

SEE MORE. PAY LESS.

COPENHAGEN CARD APP

The Copenhagen Card guide is also available as an app for iPhone or Android.



WWW.COPENHAGENCARD.COM

WONDERFUL
COPENHAGEN

Free admission to
74 museums and
attractions

Free transport by train,
bus and Metro in
the entire metropolitan
area

One adult can bring
along 2 children
under the age of
10 for free

FIND THE MURMUR AT A LIBRARY NEAR YOU

THE MURMUR

NEW!



Hovedbiblioteket i Aarhus
Møllegade 1
8000 Aarhus C

Frederiksberg Bibliotek
Falkoner Plads 3
2000 Frederiksberg

Lyngby Bibliotek
Lyngby Hovedgade 28
2800 Kgs. Lyngby

Hovedbiblioteket
Krystalgade 15
1172 København K

BIBLIOTEKET Rentemestervej
Rentemestervej 76
2400 København NV

Bibliotekshuset
Rodosvej 4
2300 København S

Blågårdens Bibliotek
Blågårds Plads 5
2200 København N

Brønshøj Bibliotek
Frederikssundsvej 175
2700 Brønshøj

Christianshavns Bibliotek
Dronningensgade 53
1420 København K

Husum Bibliotek
Frederikssundsvej 290
2700 Brønshøj

Islands Brygge Bibliotek
Njalsgade 15
2300 København S

Kulturanstalten Vesterbro Bibliotek
Lyrskovsgade 4
1758 København V

Kulturstationen Vanløse
Jernbane Allé 38
2720 Vanløse

Nørrebro Bibliotek
Bragesgade 8b
2200 København N

Patientbiblioteket Rigshospitalet
Blegdamsvej 9, Afsnit 4102
2100 København Ø

Rådhusbiblioteket
Rådhuset
1599 København V

Jægersborg Bibliotek
Smakkegårdsvej 112
2820 Gentofte

Vangede Bibliotek
Vangede Bygade 45
2820 Gentofte

Solvang Bibliotek
Remisevej 14
2300 København S

Sundby Bibliotek
Jemtelandsgade 3
2300 København S

Sydhavnens Bibliotek
Wagnersvej 19
2450 København SV

Tingbjerg Bibliotek
Ruten 14
2700 Brønshøj

Valby Bibliotek
Annexstræde 2
2500 Valby

Vigerslev Bibliotek
Kirsebærhaven 23
2500 Valby

Øbro Jagtvej Bibliotek
Jagtvej 227
2100 København Ø

Ørestad Bibliotek
Arne Jacobsens Allé 19
2300 København S

Biblioteksfaglig Afdeling Hovedbiblioteket
Krystalgade 15
1172 København K

Gentofte Hovedbibliotek
Ahlmanns Allé 6
2900 Hellerup

Østerbro Bibliotek
Dag Hammarskjölds Allé 19
2100 København Ø

Biblioteksfaglig Afdeling Hans Nansens Gård
Nyropsgade 1, stuen
1602 København V

Ordrup Bibliotek
Ejgårdsgade 11
2920 Charlottenlund

Dyssegård Bibliotek
Dyssegårdsvej 24
2900 Hellerup

Gentoftegade Bibliotek
Gentoftegade 45
2820 Gentofte

COLUMN

Modern society should be ISIS

Is the failure of liberal democracies and capitalism to provide deeper meaning and vision pushing us towards fascism and extremism?

"**WE HAVE NOTHING** to fight for," Sørine Gotfredsen told me during my interview with her (page 32). And, in the most basic sense, the priest and Christian philosopher is right. Those of us living in the West live relatively pampered lives. Our values are boring and therefore our politics and politicians are boring. This boredom is driving us towards proto-fascists like Donald Trump and Marine Le Pen, as well as radical leftists like Bernie Sanders and Jeremy Corbyn.

In March 1940, right before Germany invaded Denmark, George Orwell wrote what might be the most important book review in history on *Mein Kampf*, by Adolf Hitler. Orwell had spent years fighting against fascism in the Spanish Civil War and had acquired a deep understanding of not just the dangers of fascism, but more importantly it's appeal.

He understood that what it offers is the same that Gotfredsen offers us with her Christianity driven idea of purpose – something more than the here and now, more than the ego. That the sacrificing of individual pleasure is just as much ingrained in us as a species, as striving for pleasure.

"Hitler, because in his own joyless mind he feels it with exceptional strength, knows that human beings don't only want comfort, safety, short working-hours, hygiene, birth-control and, in general, common sense; they also, at least intermittently, want struggle and self-sacrifice, not to mention drums, flags and loyalty-parades."

In some ways I can feel a form of envy for the young men and women who go off to join ISIS. They have found some truth – as deplorable as it might – that they are willing to die for. All my beliefs are so vague they are barely worth fighting for. This is why I couldn't help but



An execution from ISIS that allegedly shows the execution of four Shia Iraqi men. ISIS manages to recruit young Western men and women to joining their ranks, despite this barbarism.

Boredom is driving us towards proto-fascists like Donald Trump and Marine Le Pen.

Elias Thorsson

agree with so much of what Gotfredsen said during our conversation about the dangers of modern narcissism.

I believe in democracy, personal freedom and trying my hardest. I have no existential truths, no knowledge that other people don't possess, no cause I know is right, and most certainly none I'm willing to die for.

But when I read about the young men who willingly sacrifice themselves for their beliefs, or see a conspiracy nut banging on with conviction about the fake moon landing, 9/11 or chemtrails, I can feel a bit jealous. They know something – something true. I have nothing but doubts and discomforts.

"Fascism and Nazism are psychologically far sounder than any hedonistic conception of life,"

wrote Orwell, but what did he mean by that? That it was better for the psyche to dominate minorities and kill those who are weaker? Doubtful, Orwell knew that violence and blood are bad for the human soul, but he equally knew that humans crave answers to the difficult and struggles for the existential.

"Whereas socialism, and even capitalism in a more grudging way, have said to people 'I offer you a good time,' Hitler has said to them 'I offer you struggle, danger and death,' and as a result a whole nation flings itself at his feet."

There it is. ISIS promises to young people across the world the "struggle, danger and death", that commodity-driven liberal capitalism can never deliver. It can only deliver goods and comforts and therefore, when it stops being able

to provide even that, our yearning for struggle is awoken.

Oscar Wilde once wrote, "a map of the world that does not include Utopia is not worth even glancing at, for it leaves out the one country at which Humanity is always landing. And when Humanity lands there, it looks out, and, seeing a better country, sets sail."

Maybe the answer to our problems with ISIS, right wing fascism, Donald Trump and our mistrust of politics does not lie in fighting to maintain our current world, but in providing a struggle. Maybe we need to search out the hard truths, because all the soft ones have left us feeling empty and alone. Perhaps we need a struggle worth fighting for, a struggle that might yield something good and wonderful for this world. A struggle that is real. **M**

OP-ED

"The battle between right and left can't be contained within nation states"

Does the EU function well enough? No, but we damn well need binding European collaboration. It is not good enough that the far-left screams with terror every time there is a hint of sovereignty loss

DURING THE RECENT referendum it was difficult to see the difference between the far-left Red-Green Alliance (Enhedslisten) and the People's Movement Against the EU or, for that matter, the Danish People's Party (DF). The 'no' campaign was based upon the defence of the Danish state and a dedicated opposition against any surrender of sovereignty. The arguments focussed on the corruption of judges in south European countries and conservative family policies outside Denmark. The necessity to act against the rising number of cross-border problems in a binding international collaboration were barely mentioned, even though this should be a core concern for left wing politicians.

Against this background it is understandable that Enhedslisten thought it necessary to justify their position, as their MPs Pernille Skipper and Søren Søndergaard tried in Information newspaper on December 29. Sadly, they did not create much clarity.

Enhedslisten claims to be opposed to the EU, and may even believe that Denmark should leave the EU. But the party understands the necessity of European cooperation – only that it should not come at the cost of giving up sovereignty. The party has asserted that the European Council is a better model for European cooperation. But with all respect for the European Council it is not a serious position to take when considering the cross border challenges we face, for example environment, criminal activity tax evasion and refugees et cetera.

Opposition to the EU is driven by the European right wing. Parties such as UKIP in the UK, the National Front in France, Freedom Party in Holland and DF in Denmark. These are all parties riding a new nationalist wave. They argue that national entities should close

We lack a common European refugee policy and this scan only be achieved by EU-wide regulation and some surrender of sovereignty.

Holger K. Nielsen

in on themselves at the cost of the European community. This is not Enhedslisten's policy, but they are contributing to the trend, and this is a serious concern. The left wing in South Europe is not anti-EU. They are simply opposed to austerity politics, which is somewhat different to being opposed to the entire EU project.

NO WAY AROUND THE PROBLEM

Pernille Skipper and Søren Søndergaard claimed in their article that Enhedslisten has laid out a refugee policy that isn't a reaction to national fear. Denmark should signal to the other countries that we will take our share of the many asylum seekers. That is great, it just doesn't address the problem; that we lack a common European refugee policy and this scan only be achieved by EU-wide regulation and some surrender of sovereignty.

This is why there is a political struggle in the EU at the moment. But shouldn't the left wing be involved in this struggle? Not according to Enhedslisten, who would rather bury their head in the sand than face up to reality. They scream with terror as soon as there is a hint of sovereignty loss. EU countries have tried the Enhedslisten model with voluntary agreements on refugees. But the individual countries hide and procrastinate about whose responsibility the crisis is.

Cross border problems can't be solved within the confines of nation states. There is a need for a binding agreement on international collaboration. If such cooperation is to be binding, there is an obvious need for EU regulatory bodies, and that each country surrenders a part of sovereignty to the European community. There needs to be a regulatory body that can force countries who try to avoid their obligatory duties and this means giving up sovereignty.



Enhedslisten MPs Pernille Skipper and Søren Søndergaard

Yes, Denmark will lose sovereignty, but the other EU countries will too. Because the surrender of some sovereignty is the only way to solve problems that are common to us all.

CRITICISM WITHOUT PERSPECTIVE

Søren Søndergaard and Pernille Skipper criticise the lack of democracy in the EU and its right wing policies. But honestly, can't the same criticisms be made of Danish society? I share the criticism on right wing politics and lack of democracy. Both Denmark and the EU are not static. The EU is a framework or, stated differently, a battleground for the political forces that exist in Europe.

The battle between right and left can't be contained within nation states, the EU simply creates a European perspective on this conflict. The EU as such is not something that is a given for all. It is a dynamic project that develops in accordance with developments within member states. In my opinion it is obvious that the left must participate in this debate in exactly the same way as we do in Danish politics.

It is pointless to blame the EU for problems that really are the re-

sult of poor judgement in individual member states. And it is completely hopeless to draw the conclusion that we should leave the EU, as Enhedslisten desire. Because however we try to twist the argument, the EU is the only opportunity to create binding European solutions for problems that need to be solved by cross border cooperation.

Does the EU work well enough? No but we damn well binding European cooperation with institutions and sanctions if rules are not abided by.

There is no way around the need to take up the struggle in the EU – just as we take up the struggle in Danish society. Clearly there is a need for greater democracy and there will always be a discussion regarding which decisions should be taken at national state level, and which should be taken in common at EU level. But the discussions are far too important to leave them to the right-wing of European politics. **M**

Holger K. Nielsen is an MP for the Socialist People's Party. This op-ed was originally published in Information newspaper.

WHAT'S ON • JANUARY



TRANSIT
A thriller about fear, surveillance and the human condition. In Danish.

Teatret Svalegangen
Rosenkrantzgade 21, Aarhus
svalegangen.dk
All month

ALL
MONTH

MCCURRY EXHIBIT
This month holds the last chance to see Steve McCurry's images from his travels around the world, which capture the essence of the human condition.

Frederiksborg Castle
dnm.dk
Ends January 17



CERAMICS MASTER
Check out at comprehensive exhibition ever of Bjørn Wiinblad, a unique figure in Danish art, design and craftsmanship.

ARKEN
Skovej 100, Ishøj
arken.dk
Ends January 17

ALL
MONTH

SELFIE FRIENDLY ART
A comprehensive retrospective exhibition of Japanese artist Yayoy Kusama. Bright, bold, and perfectly designed for capturing with your smartphone.

Louisiana
Gl. Strandvej 13, Humlebæk
louisiana.dk
Ends January 24

6

SPRINGSTEEN TALK
Music journalist Espen Strunk will act as a guide through the history, music, anecdotes and highlights from Springsteen's amazing career.

Aarhus Central Library
Hack Kampmanns Pl. 2, 8000
aakb.dk



INDOOR FLEA MARKET
If the weather fails, the flea market in Remisen is a good indoor alternative for clothes, shoes, toys, retro stuff, books and more.

Remisen
Blegdamsvej 132, KBH
remisen.kk.dk
January 9-10

12

CENTRAL AMERICAN TALES
Journalists Steffen Stubager and Asger Mow tell stories and show beautiful and cruel images from their time across the Atlantic.

Cafe Liva
Nyhavn 26, KBH
cafeliva.dk



David Singleton

MUMBAI AT DAC
Take part in an exotic, architectural event when Indian Architects Studio Mumbai open their exhibit at the Danish Architecture Centre.

Danish Architecture Centre
Strandgade 27B, KBH
dac.dk
January 13



KLAUS BOSS ANNIVERSARY
A true underground celebration of a true underground legend. Electronic DJ Klaus Boss has been at work for 25 years this January, come celebrate with some fine tunes.

Mayhem
Ragnhildgade 1, KBH
bit.ly/Klausboss
January 16

17

DAN UZAN MEMORIAL
A concert will staged in remembrance of the young security guard whose life was taken outside the Synagogue on Krystalgade a year earlier.

Tivoli Concert Hall
Vesterbrogade 3, KBH
tivoli.dk



MATOMA AT VEGA
Despite being only 24 years old, Norwegian DJ and producer Matoma is fast becoming a household name on the international stage.

Vega
Enghavevej 40, KBH
vega.dk
January 21

26

HAMLET AT THE DIAMOND
A series of talks about the classic play Hamlet will be held at the Black Diamond library to mark the 400-year anniversary of Shakespeare's death.

The Royal Library
Copenhagen
kb.dk

Joshua Hollingdale

WHAT'S ON • JANUARY

27

STAR NIGHT

The Planetarium will explain the characteristics of this month's night sky, which planets and star signs are visible and how best to observe them at home.

Tycho Brahe Planetarium
Gl. Kongevej 10, KBH
planetariumet.dk



MUSIC FEST FOR A NEW YEAR

Kickstart the new year with Northern Winter Beat music festival in Aalborg, featuring artists such as The Tallest Man on Earth and Palace Winter (above).

Skraaen, Aalborg
Kjellerups Torv 5, Aalborg
skraaen.dk
January 28-30

28

WINTER SWIMMING

The Skagen Winter Swimming Festival welcomes all true Vikings and guarantees ice cold sea dips, hot drinks, a close encounter with Skagen's unique nature.

Sønderstrand, Skagen
Vestre Strandvej 10, Skagen
visitdenmark.com
Ends January 31



DGI GYMSHOW

Impressive jumps, admirable tricks and breath taking choreographies are on the program at the DGI International GymShow.

Gigantium, Aalborg
Willy Brandtsvej 31, Aalborg
gigantium.dk
January 29

COPENHAGEN CARD

SEE MORE. PAY LESS.



WWW.COPENHAGENCARD.COM

COPENHAGEN CARD APP

The Copenhagen Card guide is also available as an app for iPhone or Android.



Free admission to
74 museums and
attractions

Free transport by train,
bus and Metro in
the entire metropolitan
area

One adult can bring
along 2 children
under the age of
10 for free

WONDERFUL
COPENHAGEN



A woman with dark hair in a ponytail, wearing a pink and white plaid shirt, is looking towards a whiteboard. The whiteboard has the Danish words 'Stumt d' and 'Hund' written on it. The background is a soft-focus classroom setting.

DANISH. CONCENTRATED.

INTENSIVE DANISH COURSES
IN HELLERUP AND LYNGBY



SPROGCENTER
HELLERUP

sprogcenterhellerup.dk