

THE MURMUR

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EDITION

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make hiring
immigrants
even harder

Tackling
poverty
with better
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JUNE 2016 VOL. 3 ISSUE 6



A new life built on a lucky break

Once a refugee, now a novelist – Alen Mešković can't leave the horror of war behind

THE MURMUR is a Danish newspaper, which just happens to use the English language. Through original reporting and photography, we tell stories about what it's like to live in Denmark.

THE MURMUR



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The twin phenomena of Donald Trump's status as the presumptive Republican nominee for president and the UK's referendum on EU membership have deeply troubled me.

And I know I am not alone – they are signals that the spirit of cooperation in the Anglo-Saxon world is faltering.

Both cases have been brought on by people who argue that open borders have done us more harm than good. They want to renegotiate the terms of collaboration. Trump wants his wall on the Mexican border. Boris Johnson (former mayor of London and de facto leader of the 'Leave EU' campaign) wants to make the UK great again by, er, making it harder to work with Europe? Dunno, really.

But you can't blame people for listening. Despite rapid growth in the British and American economies over the past few decades, the middle and working classes have experienced wage stagnation. The two nations are getting richer, but lots of people haven't benefited.

International trade and cooperation is often the scapegoat. Right-wing politicians argue that globalisation compromises sovereignty and results in immigration that disrupts social cohesion and contributes to social ills. The left, on the other hand, argues that globalisation only benefits a wealthy corporate class who import cheap foreign labour – or just move jobs abroad – both of which suppress wages.

These arguments each have a grain of truth in them. The free movement of labour does suppress wages for low-income workers, and international trade requires that we set international standards through consensus and compromise, resulting in a loss of sovereignty.

But low wages can be addressed by national parliaments, while the opportunities created by the EU's free movement of trade and people mean that Europe is a far wealthier and stable continent than if we had not joined forces.

This wealth comes at a cost, and that

cost is sovereignty. Whether it's trade, the environment or policing, we are far more effective when we aligning our policies. Europol is an incredible force for tackling cross-border crime; EU environment legislation has given us clean air and water; and trading standards speak for themselves. To accomplish things like these, you need political cooperation, in this case, the EU.

I am worried by Trump's anti-internationalist tone, and British politicians who want to withdraw from EU cooperation. They may not realise that they set a tone felt by the entire world. Danish PM Lars Løkke Rasmussen has already come out on the British government's Eurosceptic line, while Trump's nationalist message will undoubtedly be seized on by right wing and nativist forces in the EU.

Like Trump and Johnson, those who seize on a nationalist message might argue that withdrawing from international cooperation might the world more peaceful, happy, just or wealthy. But I don't believe it for a second, and I can't believe they do either. Instead, they are using the argument as an opportunity to push their own narrow interests, unconcerned about the massive fallout. If the UK leaves the EU Boris Johnson will likely become the new leader of the Conservative Party, while Donald Trump will be in a position to further his interests as 'President'.

We are undoubtedly better off because of the cooperation and integration since the end of WWII. But to preserve the peace and wealth we have worked so hard to achieve, we need to ensure our wealth lifts far more people than is currently the case. Only then will we be more resilient to concerns about the effects of immigration and open borders on jobs, housing and social cohesion – only then do we really stand a chance of challenging those who flirt dangerously with parochialism and nativism.

Moving on – this issue marks the two-year anniversary of The Murmur. I just want to thank all our readers and contributors. It's an honour and privilege to create a product that has been so well received, and to work with so many incredibly wonderful and talented people. We're taking a holiday in June, but we will be back in August. We hope you have a great summer! **M**

"When we're talking about abortion stigma, we're really talking about misogyny. It's about the fact that we don't want women to control their own bodies."

PREETHI SUNDARAM,
P24



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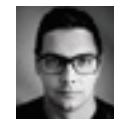
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James Clasper Food Editor. This month in his Get Stuck In column, James focusses on the sunshine island – Bornholm.
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Rasmus Degnbol Photo Editor and winner at this year's Danish Press Photo Awards. Rasmus provided almost all of the imagery in this month's issue.
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Natasha Jessen-Petersen Editorial intern. This issue she interviewed Torben Hansen from the Association for New Danes, and wrote the Month in Review and #Trending columns.
@natashakawabata



Stubbe Wissing Editorial intern. A journalism MA graduate from the University of Cardiff, Stubbe took a look at the concept of a 'basic income', visited Herlev Bryghus and wrote the City column.
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Aleksander Klug A freelance visual journalist and political correspondent. Aleksander reports on social justice issues and European politics. In this issue he visited the illegal migration camps outside Copenhagen.
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Corrections

We have two corrections to make from the May 2016 issue (Vol. 3 Issue 5). In the cover article 'Sleepwalking into the future'. We mistakenly wrote that Angela Oguntala is working as head of the Innovation Lab at Eskild Dahl. She no longer works there.

In 'The spin on sex work', we printed several quotes attributed to Maja Løvbjerg Hansen that had not been through the editing process. The corrected article is available online: murmur.dk/the-spin-on-sex-work



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MONTH IN REVIEW

Refugees not working
Refugees brought to Denmark through family reunification continue to struggle in the Danish labour market. According to Rockwool Fonden, only one in five is in work after five years.

RUSSIAN THREAT
Denmark is sending 150 soldiers to Estonia as part of a 6,000 strong NATO force to stave off the threat of a Russian invasion of the Baltic state.

PESTICIDE RISK
A new study revealed an alarmingly high level of pesticide residue in the urine of Danish children and their mothers. Of those tested, 90% had traces of pesticide in their urine.

Most of the detected pesticides are illegal in Denmark, leading the researchers from the University of Southern Denmark to conclude that the source of the pesticides is imported fruit and vegetables.



gancycles8 / flickr

Poor ol' Grey seals
Fishermen on Bornholm will soon be allowed to kill gray seals, an otherwise protected species. The provision from the Ministry of Environment and Food will allow fishermen to shoot up to 40 seals a year or those within 500 meters of the fishing gear. Fishermen lobbied for the rules, arguing it would help protect their livelihoods.



Mikel Santamaria

Natasha Jessen-Petersen



Jens Hasse/Chilli foto

IC4 TRAINS TO BE PHASED OUT
After years of scandals, the IC4 trains have been sent into retirement. From doors that do not close to faulty braking systems, the IC4 trains experienced an endless list of problems. DSB bought 83 trains from Italian manufacturer AnsaldoBreda in 2000 for five billion kroner. The trains were supposed to be delivered by 2006 but the first ones didn't run until 2008. Currently only 30 are in operation and DSB now no longer believes the target of 77 by 2019 is realistic. The trains will now be phased out.

Military under fire over prison abuse claims
Despite receiving at least 13 reports of abuse, the Danish military continued to hand over prisoners to Iraqi police. Military leadership received constant complaints from soldiers regarding the beatings, threats, terror, and torture occurring within Iraqi prisons.
The revelations were made by Information newspaper after receiving documents obtained through a Freedom of Information Request.
"The many cases demonstrates that Denmark was aware of the risk of abuse and torture," Ela Søndergaard from anti-torture organisation Dignity, told Information.
"There is a clear pattern and Denmark should of course have reacted to it."

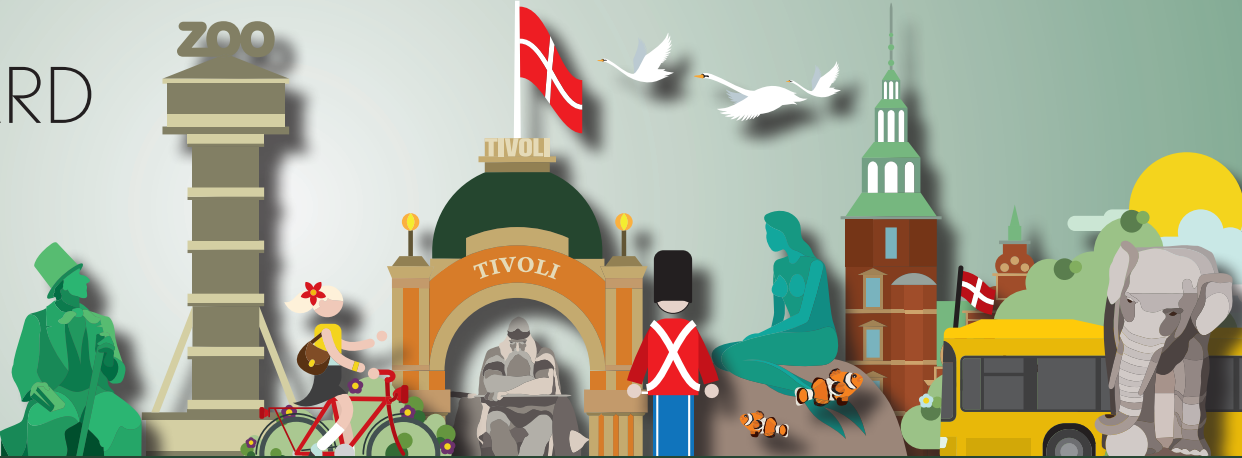
HPV VACCINATION RATE PLUMMETS
An increasing number of girls are opting out of receiving the HPV vaccine. New figures from Statens Serum Institut show that only 27% of 12-year-olds chose to be vaccinated in 2015 and early 2016. This is a significant drop from the 90% of females who received the vaccine just three years prior.
If vaccinated before to becoming sexually active, the HPV vaccine can protect recipients from a variety of viruses. One virus can cause cervical cancer, which kills around 100 Danish women every year
Source: Altinget

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#TRENDING

THE POLITICS OF SKIN

The Danish People's Party got plenty of free publicity thanks to a poster campaign depicting white people – and a photo-shopped dog

SØREN ESPERSEN, foreign affairs spokesperson for the Danish People's Party (DF) found himself in deep, and arguably quite dirty, water last month when he was accused of calling US President Obama a 'n*****'.

It all started when DF launched its new poster campaign, portraying a supposedly typical Danish family along with the caption, "Our Denmark - there is so much that we need to protect".

Aside from the mirth resulting from the inclusion of a sloppily-photoshopped retriever, the backlash to the poster was immediate. Many people interpreted the posters as an insinuation that white Danes need to be protected from the terrible, scary-coloured 'Other'. Competing posters were made in

response, one of which featured Danes who were diverse not only ethnically, but also in their sexual orientation, hairstyle and religion.

In an attempt to defend the advertisement and his party's campaign, Espersen told TV2 News, "I myself am colour-blind, I do not see skin colour....[but] we could easily have put a negro in".

It was a poor choice of words, and he was subsequently called on to apologise.

"Why should I apologise? And to whom should I apologise? Barack Obama?"

The day after his statement, he tweeted an apology, explaining that it was not his intention to offend anyone with his use of the word negro. He deflected further criticism, describing people's obsession with Obama's race as "sick".

But this was far from the end of the story. MP Jeppe Kofod from the Social Democrats took to Twitter, outraged.

"DF Chair of Danish Parliament Foreign Policy Committee calls @BarackObama first n***** President. Scandal!"

Espersen indeed heads the parliamentary committee that oversees foreign pol-

icy, so it would be ill-advised for him to call Obama the n-word. So grave was the allegation that Espersen decided to cancel his trip to the United States this autumn because of his comment and Jeppe Kofod's widely-shared subsequent translation.

But many were quick to point out the difference between the two words. While acknowledging the discrepancy in meaning, Kofod defended his translation, stating that while 'negro' is also a degrading and racist expression, n***** was a proper reflection of Espersen's intent with his words.

He later apologised and issued a correction. "Chair call @BarackObama "negro" NOT other N-word. Still hurtful," he wrote on Twitter.

The incident was soon forgotten when public attention was diverted to the publication of a book about the taboo of menstruation, which started a lively discussion about whether we need to talk more openly about our bodily functions.

Danish public debate is indeed alive and well. **M**

Note: We follow US convention in censoring the N-word.



It all started with the above advertising campaign. It inspired Jacob Crawford to reply with his more multicultural take on Denmark. And below is the offending tweet that saw Søren Espersen cancel his trip to the US.



Jacob Crawford



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GET STUCK IN – BORNHOLM

IF YOU'RE HEADING to Bornholm this summer, forget your bucket and spade – these days you're better off packing a knife and fork. The Baltic island now boasts an enviable food scene that's drawing a younger, trendier crowd, and helping to eclipse its reputation as an old-fashioned holiday destination.

The tide began to turn in 2007, when Kadeau opened on Bornholm's southern shore. A frontrunner in the New Nordic movement, the restaurant specialises in elegant dishes made with seasonal, foraged ingredients. It won a Michelin star this year.

First-rate restaurants are now abound across Bornholm, from Christianshøjkrøen, in the island's forested heartland, to Molen in the eastern town of Nexø. And, for three months this summer, the north-western village of Ållinge will host Kadeau's baby brother Sommer Pony – a casual and cut-price option.

But it's not all fine dining on Bornholm. Indeed, no holiday is complete without a visit to one of the island's famous smokehouses or ice-cream parlours – nor, these days, to its increasing number of biodynamic wine bars and breweries.

Helping to give visitors a leg up on all things gastronomic is Gaarden, a social enterprise founded last year to promote Bornholm's *madkultur*, or food culture. Based outside Gudhjem, the island's prettiest village, Gaarden was launched



Gaarden

after a food-related event at the Melstedgård living museum proved especially popular, bucking the trend of declining visitor numbers.

With local government support, a new building was constructed alongside Melstedgård's nineteenth-century farmhouse. It operates as a cultural centre and culinary school, offering a range of courses from bread baking to fermentation. Although the school is open only on the weekends in low season, it'll be in full swing during the summer and autumn, when some 600,000 visitors flock to Bornholm.

According to Thomas Guldbæk of Bornholm Museum, which co-founded Gaarden, the goal is to get back to the island's roots – in some cases, literally. "What worked best last year

was the foraging course," he says. That course saw participants head into a nearby forest to look for edible plants and herbs, returning with their bounty to the school's Masterchef-style kitchen.

Another class teaches participants to make ice cream using ingredients picked from the garden or foraged from further afield. Christian Skovdal Andersen opened the Penylan brewery in Tejn last year, and he'll return in the autumn to run his popular beer-brewing course.

"We're very inspired by River Cottage," Guldbæk says, referring to the residential culinary school set up by British chef Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall. Along with plenty of courses and activities for families, Gaarden will al-

so cater to groups seeking a different kind of team-building experience.

Arguably, though, Gaarden's most significant role is as an ambassador for the island's growing number of food producers. Some are native Bornholmers who, inspired by the burgeoning scene, set up shop on their own. Others moved to the island, like Mads and Camilla Meisner who left Copenhagen in 2009 to launch Denmark's only sea-buckthorn plantation.

Guldbæk says Gaarden aims to be a one-stop shop and support group for this new crop of food producers. Instead of knocking on numerous doors to figure out regulatory issues or to find answers to marketing or branding questions, they now have a single point of entry. The group already has 60 members, including chef Rie Uldahl, who won the official Danish snaps-making championship last month and hopes to take her product to market.

Above all, however, Gaarden hopes to celebrate the island's gastronomy. "We're a nerdy group trying to showcase the taste of Bornholm," says Guldbæk. "We have different traditions, different food, more extreme flavours. Eighty percent of Danish herbs grow near the coastline – but the water around Bornholm isn't as salty as elsewhere in Denmark, so our herbs taste different. Our terroir is definitely different." **M**

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Kenneth Nguyen



A happy pig is a tasty pig.

AMAZING PIG-OUT

AMONG THE HIGHLIGHTS of writer Michael Pollan's recent Netflix series *Cooked* was his foray into the world of whole-hog barbecue. Watching legendary pit master Ed Mitchell use techniques passed down from his great-grandfather induced hunger pangs and no doubt inspired a few viewers, including Pollan himself, to give it a go too.

To see what all the fuss is about, you usually need to head to American states such as Kansas, Tennessee and Texas. But this month Copenhagen sees the return of its own celebration of whole-hog barbecue – the Amazing Pig-Out.

Strong winds threatened to spoil last year's event, held in the gardens of Amass, the much-admired restaurant in gusty Refshaleøen. The organisers of the city's porkiest picnic must hope the gods will be appeased by this most sacramental of meals when it returns to the same location on June 19.

They include Amass and ODC Mad – an online butcher specialising in organic meat produced from animals raised to the highest welfare standards. Its co-founder, Joachim Friis,

says they want to show that "happy pigs make happy people" – and taste better, too.

To make their case, they've scaled up the event. Six pigs from Knuthenlund Farms – one of Denmark's largest organic estates – will feed 500 people. Local butcher Spis Min Gris will roast a whole hog, while five top chefs – including Christian Puglisi of Michelin-starred Relæ and Doug McMaster of the UK's zero-waste restaurant Silo – will prepare different parts of the pigs.

Still, having fun is the aim of the Amazing Pig-Out – not being preachy. "We're very Switzerland about things," explains ODC co-founder Jonathan Soriano. "It's cool if you want to eat conventional meat. I'm not going to judge you. But we reserve the right to preach happiness on this account." **M**

The Garden of Amass
Refshalevej 153, KBH
Billette.dk/tapo-2016

PENYLLAN

ON A RECENT SUNDAY EVENING, two saddle-sore cyclists stopped at the Nordlandet Hotel in Ållinge, a village on the northwest coast of Bornholm. Their destination? The hyggelig bar run by Christian Skovdal Andersen and Jessica Jenkins, co-founders of Penyllan Brewery – Denmark's only brewery specialising in wild fermentation and wood ageing.

With Abbey Road on the stereo, Andersen – resplendent in a leather apron – held court behind the bar. One of the cyclists savoured the view of the Baltic Sea, crystalline beneath a blush pink sky, while the other sought out samples of beer on tap. A glass of Hopfix – a first-rate IPA – proved suitably thirst-quenching.

Equally satisfying was Violet, an organic ale aged in a champagne barrel and made using 27 kilos of wild plums ("foraged" from other people's gardens, winked Jenkins). Soft but sour, it paired perfectly with the two dishes shuffled in from the kitchen that evening by Jen-



kin's sister – spicy meatballs with barley, carrots, and crème fraîche; and risotto with asparagus, ramps, and pork belly.

As the Beatles bled into the Strokes, and the owner of the local ice cream parlour popped in for a pint, talk turned to the following day's ride along the coastline. Sensing anxiety, Jenkins recommended the house cocktails, pre-mixed and dispensed from barrels above the bar. An Old Fashioned duly appeared alongside a Negroni – as ruby-red as the sunset over Gudhjem – and the two weary cyclists raised a toast to their hosts' impending nuptials. **M**

Penyllan brewery
Havnevej 8D, Tejn
penyllan.com

CITY



A cross section of the new 'super' Museum of Natural History.

those taking part in its activities.

"We could see that there is an alternative cultural environment out here that attracts lots of young people, and we think it would be a shame to close it," Jensen wrote in an email to Politiken.

Under the new terms, the projects will be guaranteed permission to operate for at least four years.

Previously, the venues were not guaranteed contracts beyond two years, Maria Bertel, co-founder of Mayhem, told Politiken. She said the new terms would be a great improvement and allow for better long-term management of the venues.

Museum spaces to expand underground

Two ambitious museum projects approved by Copenhagen's city council will have prominent underground exhibition spaces, reports Magasinet KBH.

The smaller of the projects is a new museum about the Danish resistance movement during World War II, to replace the original museum that burned down three years ago. It will be located in Churchill Park near Kastellet, and is scheduled to open in 2018.

The second project is the new Museum of Natural History, which will become a so-called super museum, and is set to open in 2020. The new facilities will incorporate the present Botanical Gardens, the Zoological Museum and the Geological Museum. The items in the combined collections will make the new natural history museum among the world's best.

The cost of the new super museum is projected to be nearly one billion kroner, while the Resistance museum will cost about one-tenth of that.

The architectural firm for both projects is Lundgaard & Tranberg, the company that designed the Tietgenkollegiet dormitory and the Royal Danish Playhouse. In the case of the natural history museum, the new designs are a development of plans originally presented by architect Claus Pryds. **M**

City collides with police over traffic proposals

The police should stick to policing rather than spend their energy killing traffic proposals, says Copenhagen's deputy mayor for technical and environmental affairs, Morten Kabell.

Police evaluate all of the city council's traffic proposals to ensure they are safe to implement, and have turned down a number of proposals that could improve conditions for bikers and pedestrians in several parts of the capital.

"Time and time again, the police step into the political domain with their veto against our projects," Kabell told Berlingske. He wants the police to better document their reasons for turning down projects with claims of traffic or safety concerns, and is scheduled to meet with Copenhagen's chief of police before the holidays to discuss the issue.

"If the police want to run traffic policy, I suggest they stand for council elections."

One of the contentious and recurrent issues revolves around

the number of parking spaces in the city. Police turned down a recent traffic proposal to discontinue 80 parking spaces in the Frederiksholm Canal area, arguing that it would cause an unacceptable surge of traffic in adjacent streets.

The need to improve conditions for cyclists is supported by the city council's 2016 cycling report that was released in May.

It found that parking spaces for cars in the city occupy twice as much space as the total bicycling infrastructure, while on the busy Knippelsbro bridge, cyclists make up 55 percent of the traffic but are only given 33 percent of the space.

The report outlines 24 projects costing 260 million kroner to improve cycling infrastructure for Copenhagen's increasing population – by 2025, cycling traffic is expected to increase by 27 percent.

One proposal would allow cyclists to cycle in both directions on 10 to 15 one-way streets in the city centre. This is the kind of plan the police have historically vetoed – so fingers crossed that the meeting between Kabell and the police chief goes well.

DIY music venues to be saved from eviction

A number of alternative concert venues and other social initiatives on public property in outer Nørrebro appear to have been saved from eviction.

According to Politiken, mayor Frank Jensen has put forward a proposal to allow venues on Ragnhildgade to remain open, albeit in a more formalised way. The land was originally earmarked for redevelopment, but now only a section of the land will be used to erect social housing.

The new proposal requires that the concert venues, institutions and social initiatives concentrated at number 1 Ragnhildgade will be administered under the umbrella of Ragnhildgade-fonden, an initiative backed by prominent lawyer Knud Foldschack, who has previously defended Christiania and the punk youth house Ungdomshuset.

Jensen said he recognized that the area, which is home to concert venues Bolsjefabrikken and Mayhem, is a popular attraction that has a positive social effect on

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Free money, forever

More and more countries are experimenting with basic income – a monthly salary from the government with no questions asked. But does it destroy the financial incentive needed to get people off the sofa and into a job?

YOU USED TO be able to trust left-wing parties to defend welfare and right-wing parties to attack it. But in Denmark, governments on both sides of the aisle have taken to reforming welfare and benefits as a matter of course. The focus has been on reducing unemployment and reining in government spending. In the process, the unemployed have gotten less and less.

But is the current system the best way to deal with unemployment? Is it possible to have a safety net that isn't constantly threatened with cuts – one that is both generous and empowering?

One popular proposal is basic income, in which all citizens receive a no-strings-attached sum of money each month, regardless of income and employment status.

The idea is gaining traction across Europe, and Finland looks set to give all citizens €800 (5950 kroner) per month next year. A pilot programme has been introduced in Utrecht, the Netherlands, while Switzerland will vote to introduce a basic income programme in June.

UNEMPLOYMENT MYTHS

In Denmark, the idea is championed by political party The Alternative (Alternativet), which sees it is a viable alternative to the least generous unemployment benefit, *kontanthjælp*. *Kontanthjælp* recipients must be available to the labour market at all times, have personal assets worth no more than 10,000 kroner, and may not earn any other income. But the Alternative would rather give them the money without conditions.

"There exists this myth in Denmark at the moment that holds that unemployed people are unemployed simply because they don't want to work," says Alternativet MP Torsten Gejl, who argues that people receiving unemployment benefits ought to spend their time developing their skills and taking care of their needs, rather than chasing non-existent jobs.

"Nothing bad will happen if we stop forcing people to find work



Utrecht in the Netherlands is among the cities and countries that have decided to experiment with a basic income.

Julio Gref / flickr

that isn't there. I think that once we can demonstrate that this system actually encourages people to become more qualified and closer to the workforce, the barriers to introducing a basic income will be removed. This would be a much better system than thinking we will achieve full employment tomorrow. Full employment is a situation that occurs every 50 years. And at the moment, there is far more unemployment than there are jobs available."

In recent years, the government has reduced the value of *kontanthjælp* in order to increase the incentive to find work. Other bureaucratic demands are designed to make being a recipient of unemployment benefits as burdensome as possible. So without these incentives, would people still try

and find work, especially those without language skills or qualifications recognised by the labour market, such as refugees?

According to Gejl, Alternativet wants to try basic income for *kontanthjælp* recipients first, before rolling it out to the rest of society.

"We haven't discussed in detail if this policy would be the best way to meet immigrants who have fled another country. I think we must be very active to make sure that immigrants become a part of the workforce," says Gejl, adding that he hopes the proposal will be implemented as quickly as possible.

"Let us first demonstrate that replacing benefits such as *kontanthjælp* with basic income works. Then we can get together again and talk about basic income for everyone."

NOT SO REVOLUTIONARY

In Denmark, the idea of a basic wage was first introduced in the 1978 book *Oprør fra midten* (Revolt from the middle), which argued for a more equitable society, though researcher Anita Ulrich points out that the Alternative's proposal is a far cry from its original incarnation.

"While a citizen's wage in *Oprør fra midten* is part of a vision for a future society defined by solidarity and social justice, the basic wage presented by Alternativet has been reduced to a fine-tuning of a system we already know and where society, after it has been introduced, retains its inherent social injustices," writes Ulrich in *Information* newspaper.

Revolutionary or not, basic income is gaining traction in modern

Stubbe Wissing

societies, where robots and outsourcing are signs of the slow death of unskilled labour, and where neo-liberal and austerity politics have become the status quo.

The primary benefit of the basic income is that, unlike unemployment benefits, it doesn't stop recipients from working, argues Otto Brøns-Petersen, head of analysis at liberal think tank Cepos. For those in work, the incentive is reversed, however, as they can lower their working hours and earn the same as they did before the introduction of the basic income.

"If we introduced a basic income today, some people who aren't working today would start working, while some people who are working would work less," Brøns-Petersen wrote on free market blog Punditokraterne. "The effect isn't clear."

A MORAL ISSUE

Understanding the impact of introducing a basic income is complicated, and requires integrating both the immediate financial cost of the programme with the change in behaviour it would cause. If its implementation raises taxes on those in work, for example, it could decrease productivity and reduce tax receipts further.

On the other hand, a basic income could increase the number in work and paying taxes. And some studies have shown that a basic income does not demotivate people. Instead, it frees them from worrying about fundamental insecurities such as paying for their basic needs.

Associate professor Jørn Loftager, from the department of political science at Aarhus University, doesn't rule out the possibility of a basic wage in Denmark. The vast majority of Danes are employed, so there are few who would join the scheme without any previous income whatsoever. In that sense, introducing basic income in Denmark would be comparatively easier than in other countries, notably those where women make up a much smaller percentage of the total workforce.

Loftager outlines two different models. One is to guarantee everyone a certain amount of income and pay each citizen that amount. The other is to integrate a basic income into the tax system through a negative income tax. Someone with no income would be owed the negative sum by the state, while those in work would begin to pay taxes when the income tax he or she should be paying is greater than the negative income tax.

What the two models have in common is that everyone is guaranteed an income, it's just the financing that differs. In the first, the challenge is how to recoup the enormous sums of money paid out to citizens. Will having a secure income increase productivity? We don't know.

Loftager argues that there is evidence that a basic income would not demotivate workers. He points to a study of a Belgian lottery in which winners are paid out in monthly instalments rather than a lump sum. The study indicated that people with a comfortable income are not inclined to stop working, even though they could. He also argues that research into people's motivation to work also suggests that there are many more factors at play than money, including a strengthened sense of personal identity and participating in social life with colleagues.

Still, money is generally held to be the primary motivator for work and most political parties argue that there should be a noticeable payoff for going to work rather than being on unemployment benefits. This is the central moral question in the debate – those who can work, should.

"People are against the idea that others should be allowed to enjoy something without effort," says Loftager. "It is like a categorical resistance that says: this is simply wrong, regardless what positive effects it could bring about."

Loftager points out that in the early 1990s, Denmark had a very generous unemployment benefits system with almost indefinite access and with the opportunity to take lengthy periods of paid leave. A lot has changed since, with massive cuts to both the value of unemployment benefits and the length of time they can be claimed.

It remains uncertain, however, whether these cuts have actually encouraged people to seek work rather than remain unemployed. With some groups remaining difficult to move into employment, perhaps a new approach is needed, argues Loftager.

"Basic income is not at all alien to the flexicurity provisions in Denmark that are in place to prevent people from going under in times of trouble and to keep them professionally qualified so that they can get back to work again," he says.

"Rather than keep delivering more of the same medicine, it would be interesting to experiment with something else." **M**

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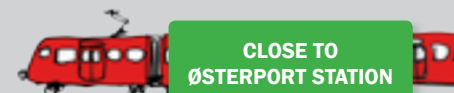
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POLITICS

Goldman Sachs big winner in Dong IPO

When the government sold a chunk of the state-owned energy firm Dong to investment bank Goldman Sachs in 2014, many called it a really bad deal for taxpayers. It was so controversial that the Socialist People's Party (SF) pulled out of the coalition government in protest.

These fears seem to have been prescient following Dong's announcement that they are floating the company on the Danish stock exchange. Existing shareholders are selling between 15 and 17% of the shares, reducing the government's stake from 58.8 to 50.1% and Goldman Sachs' from 17.9% to 13.4%.

When the bank bought its 8-billion-kroner stake just two years ago, Dong was valued at 45 billion kroner. The company is now worth between 84 and 107 billion kroner, meaning that Goldman Sachs will earn around five billion kroner – more than half their original investment – by selling only a quarter of their stake. Their remaining stake is worth at least 10 billion kroner.

Finance spokesperson for the far-left Red-Green Alliance (Enhedslisten), Pelle Dragsted, told Ritzau that the sale was a "scandal".

"We sold it far too cheaply," he said. "We received a large cash injection, but the profits we will receive over the next many years will have to be shared with foreign shareholders."

Dong CEO Henrik Poulsen argues, however, that without the cash injection from Goldman Sachs, the company would not have been able to grow and reach its current valuation.

"The capital that was added was absolutely vital for creating what we have today – one of the world's leading energy companies," Poulsen told Politiken.

Dong's focus on green energy has been central to its success. With 22 offshore wind farms around the world, Dong holds a market share of 26% of global wind capacity. Their ambition is to double that capacity by 2020. **M**

IN-DEPTH IRAQ COMMISSION REPLACED BY WEAKER INVESTIGATION

The government has agreed to allow a group of historians to assess why Denmark went to war in Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq

Over the past 15 years, the Danish military has repeatedly followed the US into foreign military interventions, most notably in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Danish involvement in the wars has been a subject of vigorous debate, particularly given the failure of either intervention to provide peace and security.

The former left-wing government established the Iraq Commission in July 2012 in order to investigate Denmark's role in the two wars. Among its central questions were the legal justifications used to join the wars, as well as the treatment of prisoners by Danish forces.

The commission was criticised by right-wing parties, particularly the Liberal Party (Venstre), which was in power at the time of both decisions. When they reclaimed pow-

er last June, Venstre closed the commission and promised to invest the funds in initiatives to help veterans instead.

"The government believes that the justification for the Danish participation in the Iraq war, as well as the conditions under which Danish soldiers detained people during Danish participation in war, have both been adequately covered," wrote the government in their post-election platform.

Not everyone agrees, however. Recent revelations have exposed previously secret deals between the Danish military and private military contractor Blackwater. It was also recently revealed that the military could not account for 360 of the 567 prisoners they took into custody over a period of four years. In 2012, former intelligence analyst Anders Kærgaard released a video showing an incident in which Iraqi police abused prisoners while Danish forces looked on.

Following the commission's closure, the Liberal Alliance presented a law in Parliament to compel the government to release all non-classified documents compiled by the commission. Despite a majority in favour of the proposal, Justice Minister Søren Pind refused to comply.

It was a brave move, given that the Liberal Alliance provides the government with

its parliamentary majority – failing to respect the wishes of a majority in Parliament can precipitate a vote of no confidence.

Instead, they worked to develop a compromise: three researchers will investigate the historic basis for Denmark's participation in the Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan wars. There is little doubt that this represents a watered-down version of the previous commission. They will investigate neither Denmark's treatment of prisoners of war nor the legal basis for going to war, and will not have the power to call witnesses. Those due to appear in front of the commission before it was disbanded included former PM Anders Fogh Rasmussen, who took Denmark to war in Iraq and Afghanistan, and subsequently became NATO's secretary general.

The government and right-wing parties support the new investigation, together with opposition party Alternativet (The Alternative).

"With the current government, it has not been possible [to reopen the commission], so we said yes because it's the first step on the road to a better understanding of what happened in the past," Alternativet's peace and defence spokesperson René Gade told Politiken. **M**

GREEN ENERGY INVESTMENTS UNDER THREAT

The government is replacing a green energy tariff with an increase in income tax

PM Lars Løkke Rasmussen returned from a meeting of Nordic leaders at the White House last month a happy man. Not only did US President Barack Obama find Rasmussen's speech so hilarious that he considered inviting him back to perform at the White House Correspondents' dinner, Rasmussen also returned home with a deal sealing closer cooperation in renewable energy between the two countries.

"The transition to a green economy is gaining momentum in the US right now," Rasmussen wrote in a comment to Information newspaper. "Denmark needs to exploit that. As a frontrunner in the field, we have a unique opportunity to significantly increase our green energy exports."

At home, however, Denmark's green energy future seemed threatened. A tariff



Offshore windmills in the Hons Rev 2 installation.

called a 'public service obligation' (PSO) that was added to energy bills to subsidise green energy producers is being scrapped after the European Commission found that it unfairly favoured Danish over foreign energy producers.

Lower-than-expected electricity prices also increased the cost of subsidies for green energy producers. Together with the loss of income from the PSO tariff, planned investments in renewables were suddenly under threat.

"We propose cancelling offshore windmills," Climate and Energy Minister Lars Christian Lilleholt told Politiken. "That will save us seven billion kroner."

To make up for the shortfall from the PSO tariff, the government announced a 0.31% increase in the income tax.

"Business will end up better off, while households will end up paying the bill," Otto Brøns-Petersen, head of analysis at liberal think tank CEPOS, told Information newspaper. **M**

IN BRIEF

Difficulty obtaining parallel agreements

In a referendum in December, Danes voted against ending an opt-out of EU cooperation in justice and home affairs. As a result, 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, but it would also have allowed Parliament to join more areas of EU cooperation – and sign away sovereignty – without a referendum.

Several parties feared the loss of sovereignty that could result from a yes vote, and urged voters to keep the current system. They argued that participation in Europol could be easily achieved through so-called 'parallel agreements' with the EU.

This ambition was dealt a blow after Donald Tusk, president of the European Council, said that it might be "impossible". Two other EU policing initiatives Denmark hopes to join through parallel agreements are judicial agency Eurojust and the PNR flight database – Denmark's participation in both now look uncertain.

Grants to EU students explode

Since 2013, EU students studying in Denmark have been allowed to receive the SU grant of around 5000 kroner per month provided that they are enrolled in a qualifying course and that they work ten hours per week.

Since the decision, the cost of EU students receiving the grant has rocketed from 19 to 321 million kroner per year.

"It is not, and never has been, the goal of the Danish educational system to use SU to educate citizens from other EU countries," education and research minister Ulla Tørnæs told Politiko.

The opposition Social Liberal Party (Radikale) is less concerned, pointing out that the total is less than the 390 million kroner specified in the law as the upper spending limit.

"We need to remember that foreign students contribute to Danish society in the long term," education spokesperson Ida Auken said. "It is not the case that they are sucking money out of the state."

The system is being abused by unscrupulous employers, however, who take advantage of the fact that EU students have

to work to receive SU. According to a TV2 investigation, employers underpay student employees and justify it by telling them that they are giving them access to SU.

Nature deal in place

The government faced a major setback early in the new year when it stood accused of fudging the numbers in its new agriculture package to make it look more environmentally friendly than it was.

Despite its assertions, Venstre couldn't back up claims that allowing farmers to increase fertiliser use would not damage the environment. The Conservative People's Party (De Konservative) was particularly frustrated, and refused to vote for the law unless it was granted environmentally-friendly concessions at a later point.

These concessions were outlined in last month's nature package, which will see 630 fewer tons of fertiliser deposited on Danish crops by 2018. The government is also choosing to continue a range of environmental initiatives introduced by the former government at a cost of 98 million kroner, including initiatives to protect vulnerable species and habitats.

While De Konservative were pleased with the result, professor Stiig Markager from the University of Aarhus argued in Berlingske that the drop in fertiliser use would have little impact. Denmark's annual use of 57,000 tons is still well above the 42,000-ton maximum specified by the EU water framework directive.

Refugees sue the state

Last year's massive refugee flows compelled the government to tighten restrictions on asylum seekers. Refugees who are not individually persecuted are now often granted only temporary protection, and must wait three years before they can apply for family reunification.

But Christian Dahlager, a lawyer representing five Syrians affected by the law, says the law obviously violates the right to a family life.

"We need to end this illegal law," he told Politiken newspaper. "It's not dignified and I believe we will win all the way to the Supreme Court."

The government has already admitted that the law may violate the EU convention on human rights. **M**

Peter Stanners

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VISIT
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Interests or values: Denmark questions its international role

Internationally, Denmark should prioritise its own interests, argues Peter Taksøe-Jensen, Danish ambassador to India, in a report ordered by the government. The view has been criticised by development agencies, who say that Denmark should instead act as a force for good in the world



Danish coastguard in Greenland waters, 2008.

Trine Axelholm / Forsvaret

FOR A SMALL COUNTRY, it often feels like Denmark plays an out-sized role in the world – from participating in international wars to producing household names in the food and art worlds.

But the nation's ability to defend its sovereignty, further its interests and do good in underdeveloped areas and conflict zones is limited. Prioritising its resources is vital – but how?

Ahead of last year's election, PM Lars Løkke Rasmussen proposed appointing a tsar that would form a strategy to advance Denmark's interests abroad by coordinating its policies in defence,

Peter Stanners

foreign affairs, security, trade and development over the next 15 years.

Peter Taksøe-Jensen, Denmark's ambassador to India, was given the assignment in September and in May his findings were released in the report *Danish Diplomacy and Defence in Times of Change*.

While his proposals are unlikely to be adopted wholesale, the report's findings outline the difficulty of balancing Denmark's complex web of interests.

"The economic centre of gravity is shifting from west to east," writes Taksøe-Jensen in the report's introduction. "Demographic challenges and technologi-

cal developments are among the factors that will shape the global future. In Europe's backyard, continuous crises are producing instability and migration, both of which are putting the EU's coherence and ability to come up with common solutions to the test."

He also identifies issues created by the melting of Arctic ice caps, which is opening the region to increased economic activity, as well as Russian aggression in Ukraine and the Baltic region.

PRIVATE SECTOR

Taksøe-Jensen sees development funding as a strategic tool – rath-

er than simply a moral imperative – that can be aligned with Denmark's economic strengths. Climate change and resource scarcity increasingly cause countries to look for more sustainable ways to grow their economies, and they might as well look to Denmark.

"The green transition and sustainable urbanisation will become a [global] focus area for development policy as well as for private business sectors. For Denmark, this provides an opportunity to integrate development cooperation and economic diplomacy in completely new ways."

The idea is to better integrate

Danish business interests with development programmes by phasing out traditional 'country programmes' and replacing them with so-called 'flexible partnerships'.

"Development assistance [will serve as] a catalyst for other sources of funding and as support for Danish commercial interests."

HUMANITARIAN AID

Identifying countries that can benefit most from working with the Danish private sector is a win-win situation according to Taksøe-Jensen. And when it comes to humanitarian aid, Denmark should focus on countries it understands best – Afghanistan, Syria and Libya – where its military has previously operated.

The goal is to control the flow of migrants from these conflict zones by integrating foreign policy, humanitarian aid and long-term development goals in order to promote security, economic development and good governance.

It has long been the mantra of parliament's right-wing parties that Denmark should disburse its refugee aid in areas closer to the conflict areas rather than caring for refugees in Denmark. Last year's extraordinary migrant flows, however, forced a surge in spending on housing asylum seekers in Denmark.

Responding to this, the government chose to divert funds from its development budget, a move that was swiftly condemned by the OECD. Taksøe-Jensen stresses the need to spend Denmark's humanitarian aid budget in conflict areas, arguing that it is more cost-effective and can help reduce future migrant flows.

He also challenges the government's unwillingness to join the EU in finding common solutions to the refugee crisis. He points out that a lack of common policy has resulted in disjointed approaches, including border closures that potentially undermine the EU and the free movement of goods and labour.

"It is vital for the future of

He wants the military to do what they are doing, just more with more money. You can hear the echo of the Danish defence establishment between the lines.

KRISTIAN SØBY KRISTENSEN

Schengen and EU cohesion that common European solutions be found to reduce the number of refugees and migrants, as well as manage those that arrive, in Europe," he writes.

THE RUSSIAN BEAR

The report's recommendations for dealing with Russia seem somewhat inconsistent, however. Russian aggression in the Baltic has escalated in recent years and Taksøe-Jensen argues that it is important for Denmark to show military resolve by participating in NATO operations and training exercises in the region.

But when it comes to the Arctic, where Russia and Denmark have competing territorial claims, Taksøe-Jensen argues for a more conciliatory approach, suggesting that increased military friction in the Arctic should be addressed through better satellite surveillance and a "discussion forum on security policy".

Kristian Soby Kristensen, a senior researcher of NATO strategy and security policies at the University of Copenhagen's Department of Political Science, says that Taksøe-Jensen's advice in both cases echoes the line already taken by the Danish government and military.

In the Baltic, for example, there is growing concern that Russia might attempt to annex Estonia, which has a large Russian population. To deter an attack, NATO has announced it is sending 6000 troops to Estonia's Russian border – including 150 from Denmark.

His less aggressive approach in the Arctic also mirrors the orthodoxy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is wary of escalating conflict in the region.

"The Arctic is an important region for Danish foreign policy as it's one of the few regions where Denmark can say it is a power of significant status when regional decisions are made," says Kristensen. "The Kingdom of Denmark's voice in the Arctic is bigger than its voice in Brussels. But it's also an

area with potential future risks if confrontation between Russia and the West accelerates in the Arctic. Denmark really does not want a bilateral conflict with another state over territory."

INTERESTS OVER VALUES

Although Taksøe-Jensen's proposals tend to support prevailing trends at the Foreign Ministry, Kristensen says the report is a sharp and opinionated document that reflects a departure from the conventional approach to developing foreign policy.

"The normal procedure is to undertake an inquiry along with lots of different people and produce a long report that is a consensus product – everyone has to agree with the relatively bland wording. Taksøe, to his credit, has tried not to do that. He has tried to be provocative and to use wording not everyone will agree on."

The report is also noteworthy for its focus on Danish interests rather than Danish values. Kristensen says this shift will likely start a new debate about how to prioritise Danish resources in humanitarian and development aid, and where these investments should overlap with the interests of the Danish private sector.

Given that the report was meant to focus on prioritisation, however, Kristensen was less impressed with Taksøe-Jensen's position on defence spending.

"He wants the military to do what they are doing, just more with more money. You can hear the echo of the Danish defence establishment between the lines."

DEBATE

The report's release did succeed in sparking debate. Political party Alternativet launched a platform for discussing foreign policy on its website under the banner, 'The Best Denmark For the World'.

In a press release, Bishop Pete Fischer-Møller, chairman of Danmission, an international outreach arm of the Church of Denmark, wrote: "National interests and economic growth should not be the pri-

mary motivation for Danish development funding."

The Danish Shipowner's Association says it supports the report's interests-based approach and a number of its proposals, especially "the recommendations for increased focus on the Arctic as well as business interests in Asia and Africa," wrote chairperson Anne H. Steffensen. "All three regions will be increasingly important to Denmark in the coming years, and we should therefore increase our presence in the regions."

The Danish Refugee Council, meanwhile, approved of Taksøe-Jensen's insistence that humanitarian aid be spent abroad, and not on housing refugees in Denmark.

"Not knowing how much resources you have to spend is a handicap," General Secretary Andreas Kamm told DR. "Danish expenses for refugees are hard to predict because of the flow of refugees."

CHAMPIONS FOR COOPERATION

Laust Leth Gregersen, chairperson at Global Focus, an umbrella organisation for international development NGOs, is concerned that Taksøe-Jensen's 'interests over values' approach undermines the importance of international cooperation for its own sake.

"International institutions such as the EU and UN are important for more reasons than that they simply serve our own interests. They also help create a better world by expanding a common rule of law and creating a global community."

He agrees that Danish interests and values are interdependent. Investing in EU cooperation, for example, has helped lift the continent out of poverty and conflict while strengthening its economies, which is in Denmark's economic interest.

"Of course foreign policy is about self-interest, but we also have to believe that investing in global public goods of cooperation and civil society is really important for Denmark and the world as a whole. You need champions for that approach, and historically, that has been Denmark." **M**



BEFORE THE NEXT GRENADE FALLS

Alen Mešković would never have become a Danish author if it weren't for one chance encounter. The Bosnian refugee arrived in Denmark as a 17-year-old and has just released his second novel 'Enmandstelt' about life in a Danish refugee centre. He reflects on identity, war and learning to settle down after a life of permanent temporariness

n 1992, Serbian soldiers occupied Alen Mešković's town and gave his family twenty-four hours to pack and leave.

"They took the young men to the concentration camp. I was only fourteen, and my dad was too old, but they took my older brother. It was a very dark period – they were close to killing us a few times. It was an experience that does something to you. Maybe it's why I feel a sadness seeing people trapped in conflict."

He and his parents packed a few belongings and ended up in Croatia, where they found shelter in a refugee camp on the Adriatic coast. He used these experiences in his first novel, *Ukulele Jam*, a semi-autobiographical coming-of-age story featuring a young man, Miki, who finds escape from life as a refugee in girls and rock music.

In May, Mešković released a stand-alone sequel, *Enmandstelt*, in which Miki steals jewellery from his parents to pay for his illegal journey to Sweden to join his brother. On his way through Denmark, he is stopped and forced to lodge an asylum application. The novel captures the boredom, insecurity and loneliness of living in a foreign country that doesn't allow you to learn the language, pursue an education or work – just like when Mešković arrived in Denmark in 1994.

The refugee experience is full of disasters – grenades falling and people dying and disappearing. Things are constantly being taken from you and you think 'that's life'.

Words:
Peter Stanners

Photos:
Rasmus Degnbol

"If you're told by someone you trust, 'the next five years are going to suck, but stick it out because you will end up somewhere better', you can think, 'that's fine, I'll just read some books or walk around and pass the time'. But that's not how it is in a refugee centre – you don't know how long you will be there, or even if you're going to be sent back. The law kept us from learning Danish and I met Bosnians who had been in the country for years but couldn't speak any Danish. The Danes hadn't had much experience with refugees and were overwhelmed by 20,000 of us arriving in such a short period of time. They just gave us six-month residency permits that we had to keep reapplying for. I only had to wait in that limbo for a year, but it took others three years or more – the waiting destroyed some people. The educated ones applied for work visas in the US and Australia and left."

For Miki – and Mešković – the battle was to find a way into the Danish society without knowing any Danish, while carrying the emotional baggage of the conflict in Bosnia.

"It's a darker book than its prequel, in a way. It's about finding your own place in life, your new personal narrative, and your own people. He is asking, 'what fellowship do I belong to?' and trying to find a home with people based on shared experiences and relationships, rather than ethnicity."

A LUCKY START

Mešković pauses and pulls the dark curls away from his sunken eyes. I can see how tired he is – a week of interviews, book talks and childcare has taken its toll on the 38-year-old writer.

"It's going to be a time I look back on with happiness, but right now I'm physically destroyed. I'm wasting away," he says. I detect his deadpan humour only by the slight smile he pulls.

Despite being the worse for wear, Mešković speaks with intensity, often ignoring my attempts

to interject and guide the conversation. He has things to say and he will say them, only occasionally stopping to ask, "Wait, did that make sense?"

Wars and migration have been the focus of Mešković's writing since first being published in a poetry anthology in 2007. A book of poetry, *Første gang tilbage* (2009), was next, with *Ukulele Jam* following in 2011. The novel was a critical success – on sale in nine countries with an English-language translation out next spring – and secured him a three-year grant from the Danish Arts Foundation that resulted in *Enmandstelt*.

His career wouldn't have been possible, however, if it hadn't been for the help of one person. In August 1995 he was 17, living in an asylum centre, and bored, but he was too old for elementary school and didn't know enough Danish to go to high school. After speaking to some charities and local politicians, a meeting was arranged with the headmistress of a local school in Nyborg, Funen.

She offered him a place at a boarding school on the condition that he first learned enough Danish to follow lectures at the high school. The following December he received asylum, and the month after started at the boarding school. He would later go on to study comparative literature at university in Odense, and graduate with an MA in Modern Culture and Cultural Communication from the University of Copenhagen in 2006.

"I feel lucky that I walked into her office that day in 1995 and she saw something in me – a will not to drown, I guess. She gave me a chance. It's weird, I could have met someone who dismissed me and I would probably be doing something else today."

SYRIANS THE NEW BOSNIANS

In September, the refugee flow from the Middle East and North Africa finally reached Denmark in earnest. Thousands of new arrivals were forced off trains and made to walk along motorways

as they made their way north to their hoped-for final destination in Sweden.

Many were stopped and made to register in Denmark, like Mešković more than 20 years earlier. But many other refugees were helped on their way by Danes who illegally drove them onward to Sweden.

"I saw the events in Rødby as a good sign. But I also saw how divided Danes are on this issue. There was also the guy who was photographed spitting on the refugees, and right-wing politicians who kept saying that terrorists might be among them. The thing is, politicians may have the power to set agendas in the public debate and speak from positions of power, but in real life, eyeball-to-eyeball, when Danes invite Syrians into their cars, in that sphere a politician doesn't have power. It comes down to us, the citizens, deciding what the right way to treat each other is. That's important to emphasise."

In Danish politics and media, ethnicity and culture are often subjects of debate. Many, particularly on the right wing, are afraid of immigration and fear that conflict will inevitably arise when different cultures live side by side. In an interview on the DR2 programme *Debatten* in May, immigration spokesperson for the Danish People's Party, Martin Henriksen, declared that there were "too many Muslims in Denmark" and that Islam presented one of the greatest threats to Danish society.

Ordinary Danes, too, question the viability of multiculturalism. Mešković says he sometimes meets Danes who wonder how he can still be friends with Serbians after the way the Serbian soldiers treated him and his family.

"I shake my head and say, 'listen, war is business'. Where there is war, there is someone earning a lot of money, and that also goes for Syria now. War is about the interests of the political, military or religious elites, not the civilians, the ordinary people. We lived for hundreds of years completely

mixed together in Bosnia and then suddenly neighbours started shooting each other – why?" he asks, throwing his hands in the air.

"The war in Bosnia was never actually about an 'us and them' between civilians. The fear and the ethnic hatred were gradually fabricated by the political and religious elite and their media in order to create new borders and earn a lot of money. Which they did. If we look at radical groups around the world, where do they get their money and infrastructure? And what about those huge corporations and their interests around the world? It's all about money. I guarantee that behind every single conflict in the world today is someone who benefits. Otherwise, the conflicts would be stopped very quickly."

SOLIDARITY AND INEQUALITY

In Mešković's experience, community and fellowship are more closely linked to class than ethnicity – the man spitting off the bridge is as Danish as the Dane who ferried refugees to Sweden. He argues for more solidarity among ordinary working and middle class people, who are manipulated by the political and religious elites that pit people against each other to shore up support for their own agendas. The Syrian civilians fleeing from the grenades of war, and European civilians under terrorist attacks, are victims of the same madness. Both are losers in the global conflict today and they shouldn't fear each other.

"I am Bosnian, but I don't feel fellowship with the owner of a huge media house in Bosnia who has been aligned with the nationalistic party since the beginning of the conflict, who is a criminal that exploited people during the war when people lost houses, friends and family, everything. How can I say 'We Bosnians'? I don't feel any connection there or any common interest."

Mešković also worries about rising inequality and our fading memories of the reality of war. He describes himself as a left-wing internationalist, though he doesn't really seem settled on the best term. At any rate, he sees the increasing concentration of capital and the break-

down of international solidarity as the main threats to global peace.

"From 1945 until the 1990s, we lived in a time of economic growth and integration. There was a will in Europe to say no more conflicts, war and genocide. We saw the rise of human rights, the end of war, and the protection of borders and states through rule of law and the UN. But with the invasion of Kosovo, the UN's power was first questioned in earnest. And since the invasion of Iraq, the big powers just ignore the UN. This means we are moving away from the age of human rights, integration and security. The EU countries are looking after their own interests again, which is also why we don't have a common refugee policy in the EU. And then the Syrians caught us last year in that moment of not knowing what to do. It's really sad that we have these huge powers fighting over resources and geopolitical domination in the area, and there's nothing the UN, the international society, can do."

Added to this are the fading voices of the survivors of the Second World War. Those making decisions about refugees and warfare have no experience of its horrors.

"The right wing claim that Syrian civilians were coming to Denmark for the welfare. It's a crazy idea! But some voters believe it because they have no empirical experience of war, it exists as an image on a screen to them," he says, adding later that he has no love for political games.

"When I hear politicians try and humiliate each other, I just think, life's too short. As Woody Allen said, most of life is bullshit, full of pain anyway, and it's all over far too quickly. By the time you settle down and figure out what you want, you're almost forty. Why waste time listening to these debates – soldiers in political parties, the small fish in the hierarchy, put on a TV programme to say something they don't even believe? They just stick to the party's programme."

DEATH, LOSS AND LOVE

I suspect Mešković's dry humour and self-deprecation are hallmarks of his Bosnian heritage – they are certainly not



It's a dark book in a way. It's about finding your own place in life, your own reality, and your own people. He is asking, 'what fellowship do I belong to?'



I'm against this idea of a melting pot, the cliché of being a world citizen



very Danish. He has now lived longer in Denmark than in Bosnia, but he has not left the Balkans behind. His two small children will visit their Bosnian family this summer. They have a Danish mother, but speak enough Bosnian to watch cartoons in their father's native tongue.

Knowing your history is important, says Mešković, who argues that you can't meet the world without knowing who you are first. Although he's an internationalist, he thinks multiculturalism can often be misguided.

"I'm against this idea of a melting pot, the cliché of being a world citizen and the exoticism that goes with it. People need to know what their narrative is. I haven't participated in a Bosnian context for many years, but I really like to learn about Bosnian culture and know what my grandparents were a part of. When you know that, you can meet other cultures, learn from them and question your own. I know how the Bosnian mentality sucks in some ways, but I also know the good things about it compared to other cultures."

Our identities are also formed by the reality of the lives we live. For Mešković, this meant a sense of constantly being on the move. When he finally decided to settle down in his 30s, he realised that he had adopted an identity of eternal transition. Giving it up was harder than he expected.

"I always lived with someone, sharing flats, that's part of my identity as a refugee. I love hotels – having my own room, but sharing facilities with other people. I adapted to functioning in a state of permanent immediacy. The refugee experience is full of disasters – grenades falling and people dying and disappearing. Things are constantly being taken from you and you think 'that's life', especially when you're young. So you try and make the most out of life before the next grenade falls. I have lost so many friends and girlfriends. But that's life – you have to enjoy and love and appreciate it and each other while you have it." **M**



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THE NORTHERN JUNGLE

Aleksander Klug

Tippen feels like the edge of the Earth. To the west, black smoke rises above the factories in the central harbour and to the south – stretching as far as the eye can see, like a dirty yellow blanket. Cold wind blows in from the sea and the smell of fish and burned rubber is overwhelming.

The small peninsula on the southern part of Copenhagen's harbour has a long history of lawlessness. Once it was used as a burial ground for plague victims and later as a dumping ground for industrial waste.

For a long time, migrants from the former Soviet bloc have set up camps in the barren no man's land, but in recent years the area has increasingly housed a growing number of Syrian and Iraqi refugees.

One of those is Masoud (22) from Idlib in Syria. He was refused asylum in Denmark and with no money left to return, he eventually found himself sleeping rough with a group of other illegal migrants in an area they call 'The Northern Jungle'. The name is a play on the refugee camp in Calais, where many of them stayed before arriving in Denmark. Here



they live in makeshift camps built with driftwood and scrap metal, earning money by scavenging copper and other metals, or as day labourers in the harbour.

For decades, the prospect of a safe and secure life within the Danish welfare state has made the country a desired destination for refugees. However, the reality that greets them stands often in stark contrast to the northern utopia they had hoped for.

Since the beginning of the worst migrant crisis since WWII, the Dan-

ish government has become increasingly hostile towards refugees and migrants. In early 2016, parliament passed a bill, which allows Danish authorities to seize valuables that are worth more than 10,000 kroner from asylum-seekers in order to help pay for the migrants' subsistence, a bill the UN has called "an affront to their dignity and an arbitrary interference with their right to privacy."

Since going to print, Masoud has left the country to apply for asylum in Sweden. **M**

Masoud (22) from the Syrian town of Idlib, sits on top of the day's load of scrap metal, in this case rusty suspension springs ready to be driven off to a metal processing plant on the other side of the harbour basin.

CONTINUED ►



The camp where Masoud found himself sleeping when he first came to Denmark. Camps like these can easily be found around the harbour district, although they are regularly raided by the immigration police.



Items left behind by migrants in an abandoned camp. According to the International Organization of Migration, there are over 200 million migrants worldwide and Europe is home to the highest number.



The Bashur family's dog "Aalam," the arabic name for 'world,' here seen with her favourite toy.



Alaya Rengin, the state flag of Iraqi Kurdistan, hangs in the window of Mr Bashur's office. Mr. Bashur, himself an Iraqi refugee who came to Denmark in the late 1990s, has taken in illegal refugees and migrants, letting them work in his shop until they have enough money to continue their journey or travel back home.

SEXUAL RIGHTS can change the world

Women will remain in poverty unless their sexual and reproductive rights are secured, says Preethi Sundaram of the International Planned Parenthood Federation

In Denmark, a universal health care system and emphasis on reproductive rights mean that Danish women generally enjoy the freedom to choose if, and when, to become mothers. But for the 225 million women around the globe who don't have access to contraception, the lack of choice influences every aspect of their lives and prevents many of them from breaking out of poverty, a condition that disproportionately affects women worldwide.

"It keeps women in conditions where they can't work and are confined to the home, which affects how women are valued in society, and further feeds into the idea that they don't have bodily autonomy," says Preethi Sundaram, a Danish researcher working for the International Planned Parenthood Foundation (IPPF) in the UK.

The now-Londoner is back in

her hometown of Copenhagen for the 2016 Women Deliver Conference, which assembled leading advocates for women's rights over three days to discuss strategies for women's empowerment worldwide. Sundaram presented a recently-released IPPF report that stressed the links between poverty and the sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) of women.

According to the researcher, SRHR has long been an issue on the fringes of development discourse, not least because it deals with highly stigmatised topics such as sex and abortion.

But Sundaram argues that if we are to empower the world's most vulnerable women and ensure their economic independence, it's critical that we channel aid resources toward fighting for the full realisation of their sexual and reproductive rights.

A POVERTY ISSUE

"For us at IPPF, sexual and reproductive health and rights are a poverty issue and a human rights issue," says Sundaram.

The researcher points out that for every year a girl remains in school, her future earnings increase by ten percent. Early marriage, on the other hand, not only means girls are pulled out of schooling prematurely, it also jeopardises their health, affecting the rest of their lives.

These links also mean that women with poorly-realised

When we're talking about abortion stigma, we're really talking about misogyny. It's about the fact that we don't want women to control their own bodies.

Lena Rutkowski

SRHR are prevented from contributing to a country's GDP and economic growth. Sundaram is critical of what she calls "instrumentalist" development rhetoric, however, which whittles female empowerment down to workforce participation or pure economic output.

"The focus of development discourse is often on women's contributions to economic growth, but we need to look closer at women's working conditions. Women are often subjected to violence and sexual harassment in low-paid work. We try to think more about how SRHR really affects women's empowerment, both in terms of whether they can access work and also the conditions of that work, and the onward ripple effects on their families."

HIGHLY POLITICISED

Despite their importance, SRHR are among the most highly-politicised issues, even at the highest levels of political negotiation, which makes it challenging to include them in mainstream debates and to translate discussion into effective strategies.

"When you get to the UN level, issues like abortion, LGBTIQ rights and rights for sex workers are the fundamentally divisive issues. There's also a massive disjuncture between the talk of human rights and the fact that SRHR often aren't valued enough in the human rights discourse."

There are also cultural barriers. Sundaram believes that one of the most effective tools for securing stronger SRHR protections is providing comprehensive sexual education to young people worldwide, particularly between the ages of 10 to 14. The organisation considers this a critical age to teach young people about sexual rights and health, including issues such as consent. This kind of outreach can be highly contentious in communities with strong taboos around sex, however, particularly with respect to girls and adolescents.

"It can be difficult to talk about these issues because they're so intimate and private, but we also need to see information as a right that can't be taken away from us, and we need to demand it."

IPPF's recommendation, she says, is for governments to implement strong CSE programmes and to support and resource educators, in rolling out sexual education to young people, both inside and outside of school.

"Norm changing must happen in tandem with education."

STIGMA AND MISOGYNY

Even in high-income countries that offer sexual education in schools, women's sexual and reproductive rights can be threatened. Sundaram points to the politicisation of women's reproductive rights in the United States, where the legality of abortion remains a deeply contested issue, and one currently un-



der consideration by the US Supreme Court.

"It always amazes me how the US political battlefield always comes down to women's reproductive rights. One in three women have abortions, and yet it's such a stigmatised issue," says the researcher, who says part of the problem is a patriarchal system that fails to acknowledge women's bodily autonomy.

"When we're talking about abortion stigma, we're really talking about misogyny. It's about the fact that we don't want women to control their own bodies."

REFOCUSING AID

Meanwhile, Sundaram says Scandinavian countries and the Netherlands are pioneers in providing comprehensive sexual education, pointing to their highly engaged programmes in their own countries.

"Denmark is a champion of sexual rights – high quality services and education are provided, and there is outreach to marginalised groups. It's critical for these countries to be champions of SRHR issues worldwide."

The conference in its capital city was also an opportunity for

Denmark to pledge further support for global SRHR initiatives. At the event, Foreign Minister Kristian Jensen announced that he would direct 65 million kroner to AmplifyChange, a foundation advocating for SRHR with a special focus on fighting female circumcision, child marriage and abortion stigma.

While Denmark has traditionally been generous in its support for developing countries, last year it made significant cuts to foreign aid in response to the refugee crisis, slashing funding by 4.4 billion kroner. Neighbour-

ing Finland, Norway and Sweden have also made reductions to their foreign aid budgets.

For Sundaram, the cuts to Nordic development budgets are cause for real concern.

"In the context of the refugee crisis, you see money shifted from different pots which will impact development aid. We ultimately want 'southern' countries to fund their own comprehensive sexual education, but in the meantime, we must keep investing in these programmes in the Global South until that becomes a reality." **M**

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Peter Stanners

"We want Denmark". Amsarul Haque (right) came to Denmark on a green card from Bangladesh. He has had difficulty finding work in his field and currently works in a kitchen.

Freezing out foreign workers

Visa programme reforms will make it harder for non-EU workers to join the Danish labour market in the future. Supporters of the reforms say that the goal is to attract only skilled workers, while industry lobby groups worry that Danish businesses will miss out on brain power as unemployment continues to drop

"**WE HAVE GIVEN** three years of our lives to Denmark, and I want to get something out of it. I am not here for fun but to boost my career."

Amsarul Haque from Bangladesh is among the 500 people who came to Rådhuspladsen in central Copenhagen to protest the termination of the green card programme. It's a warm day in late May and families stand huddled in small groups as children hand out cardboard green cards to be held aloft beside banners stating: "Denmark, Keep your promise!"

Words and photos:

Peter Stanners

"I gave up my job in Dhaka and moved my wife to Denmark," says 31-year-old Haque. "My family has expectations."

The green card programme was introduced in 2007 to attract talented labour from outside the EU, but a majority in Parliament now want to scrap the programme. The law is still being formed, but as it stands on this May afternoon, current green card holders will not be able to extend their stay beyond 2018 – hence the broken promise.

"People have children who now

speak perfect Danish," says Solman Javid Khalili, a green card holder originally from Iran who now works at pharmaceutical giant Novo Nordisk. "We are not happy that the rules are constantly changing. People want to plan their lives."

NOT A SUCCESS

The green card scheme was introduced to allow foreigners with particular qualifications, language skills and experience the opportunity to find work in Denmark. It's been amended a few times,

but as it currently stands, successful applicants are given two years to find a job with an average salary of 315,000 kroner a year. Thereafter, they can apply for three-year extensions.

It hasn't been an overwhelming success. A 2010 report from Rambøll found that only 22 percent of green card holders were working in a field related to their education and work experience, and 43 percent were working in hospitality. Haque is among them – he works in the kitchen of a Claus Meyer restaurant.

The Danish People's Party (DF) has proposed scrapping the law, arguing that they had only supported the programme in the first place because they thought it would attract the labour that industry was demanding.

"The businesses that said they lacked sufficient labour have simply not taken advantage of the programme," integration spokesperson Martin Henriksen told Berlingske.

"All it does is increase the labour force through immigration. That makes sense from a narrow business perspective, but it leads to wage dumping."

Left-wing parties agree, and together with Socialdemokraterne, Socialistisk Folkeparti and Enhedslisten, DF has secured a majority to end the programme. The unions HK and LO also support closing the programme. During the public hearing on the law, they wrote to Parliament to say that the programme undermined the Danish labour market.

REFORMS

As DF's proposed reform now stands, no new green card applications will be accepted after June 10, but a late amendment might allow current green card holders to continue extending their visas using the scheme, as long as they satisfy the minimum pay requirement.

After June 10, the best option for economic migrants is the Pay Limit Scheme, which allows non-EU workers access to the Danish labour market as long as they secure a job paying at least 375,000 kroner a year.

This programme is also likely to be reformed, however, as the Social Democrats (Socialdemokrater) have secured a majority in Parliament to increase the minimum salary to 400,000 kroner per year.

"If businesses lack employees worth less than 400,000 kroner per year, they can employ people in Denmark," Socialdemokrater MP Mattias Tesfaye wrote on Facebook. If they can't find qualified labour, then they need to educate unemployed Danes. We cannot open our labour market to the entire world."

HARD TO LEGISLATE

This is the central conflict the government faces, argues Assistant Professor Nana Wesley Hansen of the Employment Relations Re-

If businesses lack employees worth less than 400,000 kroner per year, they can employ people in Denmark.

MATTIAS TESFAYE

search Centre (FAOS) at the University of Copenhagen – how to maintain strict immigration laws that do not deprive the labour market of the talent it needs.

"It's a very difficult area to legislate, and the result has been a set of very selective policies," she says.

Hansen argues that there are industries in Denmark in need of foreign labour, from computer game programmers to heavy industry workers. If they can't find the right talent, some jobs may leave the country, while a lack of labour may produce bottlenecks preventing investment and growth.

But even though the work programmes are designed to keep jobs in Denmark, some unions have argued that they may actually be putting Danes out of work or pressure wages.

"In some industries that already outsource their work, such as the IT industry, global labour is much cheaper than in Denmark. So companies can use the pay limit scheme to offer jobs to foreigners at salaries that are very low in the Danish context, but high compared to where the worker comes from," according to Hansen.

Increasing the pay limit to 400,000 kroner could have an impact on some industries that are in need of foreign labour but don't offer very high wages, such as the metalworking industry. With unemployment continuing to drop, there simply isn't the time to train Danish workers to fill the demand.

TOUGH FIRST STEPS

The green card programme is the

only visa scheme not to require immigrants to have a job before they arrive in Denmark. Without a local network or language, and with no access to state support, including from job centres, it can be hard to get your foot in the door.

"I know that green card holders started getting many more job offers after they got their first professional job in Denmark," says Hesam Hashemi, who arrived in Denmark in 2014 with a Masters Degree in Material Science, but who has yet to secure his first professional job.

"We didn't study here, and apparently that's important. In some interviews, they said directly that if I had studied at the Technical University of Denmark they would have hired me. In Scandinavian culture, it's important to have that trust, I have found."

Hansen acknowledges this issue, but doesn't necessarily see it as a problem that so many green card holders found unskilled jobs in Denmark first.

"There's nothing wrong with working in a hotel while they learn the language, but I understand the concern, since there is much less social mobility among immigrants. The Rambøll report showed, however, that green card holders are much better at developing Danish networks, so they are much less isolated. And it's the isolation that is normally the problem. So I don't look at them so bleakly."

LONG-TERM IMPACT

After introducing a minimum pay in 2014, green card applications dropped from 1,241 to 863. Lobby group the Confederation of Danish

Industry (DI) argues that the drop demonstrates the reform is working, so there is no need to scrap the programme.

"The problem with the green card was the number of people in low-paying jobs, but that has been addressed by introducing the minimum pay," says DI's deputy director Steen Nielsen, who also argues that the government should lower the minimum salary required by the Pay Limit Scheme.

"Many companies are having trouble finding qualified people right now. Unemployment is around 4.2 percent, and is even lower in some industries, which makes it difficult to find labour. I think we need to do what we can to open up the labour market to foreigners. They are a benefit to Danish society and businesses."

Hashemi thinks the current situation could have been avoided if green card holders were given more support in entering the labour market in the first place, rather than being left to their own devices. For some, the time on their CV outside of their field could end up having a negative impact on their career.

"Some professionals will feel like they have failed if they have to go home. The time they spent outside the labour market can make it difficult to get back in."

He doesn't think he'll be sticking around in Denmark if the reform passes, but he's not worried.

"I'm positive about the time I spent here. I didn't come looking for a specific job, and I gained lots of experience and made some money. For me, it was just three years being abroad." **M**



Javid Khalili is a green card holder originally from Iran who now works at pharmaceutical giant Novo Nordisk. She came to the demonstration to support her fellow green card holders and their desire to stay in Denmark where their families had started to settle.



Hesam Hashemi arrived in Denmark in 2014 with a Masters Degree in Material Science, but has yet to secure his first professional job. He isn't disappointed with his decision to come to Denmark, however.



MALE RAPPERS REALLY DON'T LIKE US

A 15-strong, all-women rap group has burst forth from Iceland's male-dominated music scene and put Icelandic rap on the world map. This month, Reykjavíkurdætur kick off their debut international tour at Roskilde Festival

Lena Rutkowski

Thanks to world-famous acts like Björk and Sigur Rós, most listeners expect Icelandic music to be as lush and ephemeral as the Nordic country's volcan-dotted landscape.

Now, a 15-woman rap collective is breaking this mould and onto the international festival circuit with raps ranging from feminist anthems and condemnations of rape culture to tongue-in-cheek rhymes about anal sex and body hair.

Reykjavíkurdætur (Daughters of Reykjavík) have already lined up a summer European tour before they've even released a debut album. But while the group's success in a male-dominated genre has garnered international kudos, they're sometimes dismissed as uncool back home in Iceland, especially by male rappers and male rap fans.

"Lots of male rappers don't really like us. Some male artists say, 'I can make a beat for you guys, but I don't want my name on it,'" says Bergþóra Einarisdóttir, one of the 15 members of Reykjavíkurdætur, who goes by the stage name MC Bein.

"Or, guys show up to our concerts and say, 'I think you guys are really cool, but I can't tell my friends that I listen to you!'"

I'm speaking with Einarisdóttir over a pixelated video call. She's sandwiched between the group's manager Alda Karen Hjaltalín and fellow rapper Anna Tara Andréðóttir, who nods fervently in agreement.

"The rap world is probably more sexist than other genres," adds Andréðóttir. "I didn't know what I was getting myself into."

FROM THREE TO FIFTEEN

Andréðóttir, who is one of Reykjavíkurdætur's founding members, couldn't have imagined how big the group would get – both in size and profile. Two and a half years ago, she was part of a rap trio and organising women's rap nights. Before long, more women were stepping up to the stage, and the collective was born – some had never rapped before.

Andréðóttir says the creative process is fluid. Sometimes songs are written as a whole group, with each member allocated a verse, while the lyrics of other songs are created by just two or three members.

"It was never planned. That's why it's so magical. It feels like fourth-wave feminism," says the self-described "rappette".

"The crowds were obviously hungry for women rapping."

Although rap has been thriving in Iceland since the 1990s, the two performers say women rappers have traditionally been sidelined to the fringes of the genre, struggling for the attention granted to their male counterparts.

As the first all-female rap collective, Andréðóttir says the group has renegotiated the genre's boundaries, creating more space for both women rappers and rap fans. In the group's early days, fans would flock to rap events to see Reykjavíkurdætur perform, de-

We're a small country and so few people in the world speak the language – there's so much culture and beauty embedded in Icelandic. It's great that rap has generated more interest in it.

spite other audience members who scoffed at them.

"It was a big deal for these fans to get up front and show they were excited about us, despite the fact that the tough-guy crowd were calling us out for not being hardcore enough, or accusing us of attention-seeking."

SEXISM ON SHOW

As women performers, both Einarisdóttir and Andréðóttir report being offered less money than their male peers for performances, despite being among the country's most internationally-renowned rap outfits. The sexism has also been outwardly hostile – on one occasion, male rappers booed the group. Another time, a male MC tweeted that Reykjavíkurdætur were a mere fad, only popular because of their all-girl gimmick. One year later, he took it back.

Reykjavíkurdætur's international success has also forced other critics to backtrack. In June, the group will perform at Denmark's Roskilde Festival, the largest music festival in Northern Europe. At Spanish festival FIB, they will perform on the same stage as big-name acts like Muse and Massive Attack.

"Now these same male rappers are turning around and saying 'okay, maybe they're talented,'" says Hjaltalín.

RHYMING IN ICELANDIC

Although Reykjavíkurdætur primarily perform in Icelandic, both rappettes agree that the language barrier hasn't stopped international fans from connecting with their music and message.

"We have been told that even when people can't understand the Icelandic, the meaning still comes across. There's something special about girl power," says Einarisdóttir.

In response to fan requests for an English-language track, the group recorded a song in English for their upcoming album and will consider recording more if their international appeal grows.

"We're more practiced at Icelandic, but Eng-

lish can be easier for rap because it has more words to choose from, and smaller words," says Andréðóttir.

In Icelandic, noun endings change depending on grammatical context, making it more difficult to form rhymes and put them to a beat. However, Einarisdóttir says she wants to continue creating songs in her native tongue.

"It's important to preserve the Icelandic language. We're a small country and so few people in the world speak the language – there's so much culture and beauty embedded in Icelandic. It's great that rap has generated more interest in it."

MORE THAN ROLE MODELS

Many of Reykjavíkurdætur's songs touch on feminist themes, but the two performers are quick to say that they don't restrict themselves to rapping about one issue. They point to a recent track in which they take an unconventional approach to rapping about Icelandic politics.

"It's about looking at the politicians with compassion, instead of hate – and asking what is wrong with them, and whether they need help," says Einarisdóttir.

As women performers, however, both rappettes assert that they're often expected to act as a mouthpiece for women's issues.

"Here in Iceland, one male rapper actually made a song called 'I am not a role model'. I think all acts face that pressure to an extent, but we have more pressure on us to be role models, because we are women," says Einarisdóttir.

"But our songs don't always need to have explicitly feminist or political messages."

Andréðóttir agrees. "That's why we also try to release songs which have no meaning and are open to interpretation. People are always asking us what the songs mean. I'm sure guy rappers don't get asked that."

Irrespective of what they rap about, Hjaltalín says that the collective is committed to raising the profile of women in rap.

"We're the first all-women rap group in Iceland, and every day we are proving ourselves." **M**





Clockwise from above. Tore Jørgensen. Bottles showing the Herslev Bryghus logo. Beers are poured at the tenth anniversary celebration. The brewery uses many local ingredients, such as hay and even seaweed. The warehouse – Jørgensen says sometimes they can't keep up with demand.

Tore Jørgensen started a brewery in a backwater town with nothing going for it and created one of Denmark's most exciting microbreweries in the process

Beer & Beowulf

When I was a paperboy in the 1990s, my rounds used to take me to Herlev. I lived in nearby Kattinge and Herslev felt like our down-and-out-sibling. While our village pond was clean and thriving, theirs was smelly and overgrown with algae in the summer. Herslev actually felt more like an intersection than a village – just a few streets, neglected homes and the sound of mopeds competing with the church bells on Sunday morn-

Stubbe
Wissing

ings. Most of the time we felt superior – at least when Herslev didn't beat us in the annual village games. Herslev is in the national park Skjoldungernes Land, named after Denmark's first royal dynasty. According to legend, the king's men were big drinkers and their loud antics in the longhouses disturbed the marsh-dwelling creature Grendel, who snuck in and killed the men once they had passed out drunk. The hero Beowulf tracked down and killed Grendel and its mother, which made it safe for the king's men to drink again. So perhaps it's fitting that one of Denmark's most exciting breweries has found a home in the town. Herslev Bryghus, established in 2004, has been a raging hit and its beer is now sold in the supermarket chain Irma, as well as in trendy

watering holes in Copenhagen and beyond. Its founder Tore Jørgensen moved to the village in 1998 – around the time I was doing my paper rounds. He can't help but take a stab: "You don't even have a church in Kattinge do you?" It stings. **ORGANIC FOCUS** The courtyard of Herslev Bryghus is located on a farm, by a car repair shop at the edge of town. Trucks arrive, carrying fresh supplies of processed malt, grown on the surrounding fields. Before starting the brewery, Jørgensen was a farmer, but he changed trades after arriving in Herslev. He immediately went all in, hiring staff on his second day on the job.

"There was no advertising to begin with, we tried to tone it down because we wanted to make sure we had made a quality beer. So we would sell the beer from the old stables and people started to pick it up as fast as we put it up for sale." Popularity quickly increased and after starting out with a modest 400 litres per week they now produce 20,000 litres. Jørgensen says he is humbled by the success, but the main focus is on maintaining their high quality. "At first it was just about making beer that tasted acceptable. Then we made it taste good and then once we had the basics in place it was natural to start using organic produce to get the best quality ingredients. Now we bring in the farming aspect more broad-



ly, using all kinds of produce from our own fields. It has been a long process and I want us to continue to grow organically, building on what we have. The fundamental part is that we brew beer that we like ourselves."

COMMUNITY

Jørgensen's focus on locally-sourced ingredients led him to experiment with brewing with hay, which brought him into conflict with the Danish Food Regulation agency (Fødevarestyrelsen). Regulations did not deem hay safe for consumption, but following a short investigation it was signed off and now the beer has become a popular member of the more acidic brews featured in their series MARK (Field).

"I think our philosophy of or-

ganic and sustainable farming practises appeals to people. For instance, for a beer company we have a relatively high proportion of female customers and our beer attracts academics and workmen alike. The unifying factor probably is that our customers all take a big interest in what they eat and drink."

Jørgensen sees Herslev Bryghus as an integral part of Herslev and once a month people from the local community come to the brewery to eat together. The philosophy of social integration extends to his work with the farm Østagergaard, which doubles as a social institution for marginalised people. There the residents of the farm care for the cows that graze Jørgensen's fields.

For now it seems that Herslev

Bryghus' biggest enemy is summer thirst.

"Last year, we almost couldn't keep up with demand when temperatures shot up. This year I hope we are ready!"

NO LONGER A BACKWATER

Herslev was once another forgettable town with a past but no future. But now the town's population is slowly growing (up from 207 in 2010 to 222 in 2016), perhaps thanks to the social cohesion fostered by the brewery. The rivalry with Kattinge is fading too and we even drank Herslev beer at our annual village party. I guess that is the biggest compliment that Kattinge could really ever pay to Herslev.

Behind the brewery, Jørgensen has prepared the land for a new

HERSLEV BRYGHUS

- M** Established in 2004 and now has eight staff.
- M** Produces organic beer, brændevin, beer vinegar and beer bolsjer – all using produce from their own farms.
- M** 250,000 liters of beer per year.
- M** They regularly produce seven different beers – Økologisk Pale Ale, Pilsner, Økologisk Landøl, Økologisk Hvedeøl, Økologisk IPA, Økologisk Porter og Økologisk India Dark Ale.
- M** In addition are ten seasonal brews – Forårsbryg, Økologisk Paaskebryg, Aspargesøl, Maj Bock, Gorms Bryg, Midsommerbryg, Høstbryg Hyben, Oktober Bock, Økologisk Juleøl og Stjernebryg.

barn. Tove Larsen makes her way across the dusty courtyard, six beers in hand. The sun is out and it feels like the first days of summer – perfect for a cold beer. Larsen is from a neighbouring town, the closest in the immediate vicinity with a grocery store.

"I was looking for a present for a man who likes beer and I came here," she said, quietly admitting she would be able to make do with a six-pack of Tuborg.

As she leaves the Angus cows from Østagergaard gaze at us. Despite the growth of the town and brewery, the village is still quiet.

Lets hope they keep it that way – it's in nobody's interest that they provoke the ire of Grendel's spawn. **M**

ROSKILDE V. FLOW

Knee-deep in mud and music

Slip on an armband and bite into an exorbitantly-priced hotdog. The days are growing long, which means music festival season is nigh. LENA RUTKOWSKI lends her seasoned expertise and narrows it down to two choices

ROSKILDE FESTIVAL // June 25 - July 2

Roskilde Festival occupies a special place in the collective Danish consciousness. It's less music festival and more like heaving hedonistic mass of bodies, dancing feverishly for eight days straight.

As Northern Europe's largest music festival, and pulling a crowd of over 100,000, the festival site is surrounded by a sprawling tent metropolis. The campsites host parties that rival the concerts, and some get incredibly creative – with makeshift bars, libraries or a recreated Game of Thrones set.

Urine is the quintessential smell of Roskilde. Punters drink to excess and sprinkle the...well, 'excess' indiscriminately across the festival site. Somebody will probably pee on your tent. You may as well accept that now.

And regardless of the weather, you'll come home plagued by illness. If it rains, you'll return home damp and crippled with a cold. If it's sunny and warm, that's even worse – the urine-soaked ground dries up in the heat and turns to dust, which is then swept up by the wind and inhaled by unsuspecting festival-goers. The notorious "urine dust cough" can follow you around for the remainder of July.

So why endure it? A veritable smorgasbord of music is one reason. The festival cherry picks up-and-coming Scandinavian artists and bills them alongside major inter-

People in the Nordics are a famously cold, insular and rule-abiding lot. But once a year, they abandon all pretence of civilisation and actually make eye contact with strangers from beneath the crest of a floral headband or a beer-guzzler helmet.

That time is music festival season. Set against the backdrop of sunny summer nights, the Nordic region offers everything from massive rock festivals to small electronica affairs. But ticket prices are hefty

and you can't attend them all (let's not pretend your body could take it.)

To make the choice easy, I've narrowed it down to two extremes and pit them against each other. On one side is the raging, rock'n'roll piss-up that is Denmark's iconic Roskilde Festival. Up the Baltic is Finland's Flow Festival, a stylish lifestyle event slowly gaining international traction on the festival circuit.



Despite the mud, rain and sleepless nights, people keep coming back to Roskilde.



At Roskilde, people shed their inhibitions and their clothing.

national acts. The 2016 line-up will see everything from a 15-strong, all-girl Icelandic rap group on one of the smaller stages, to rock legends New Order, PJ Harvey and Iggy Pop performing under the festival's iconic Orange tent. Blur's Damon Albarn will also reappear with the Syrian National Orchestra, to follow up last year's multi-musician African jam, which saw the Britpop legend carried off stage by a security guard at the crack of dawn after trying for one encore too many.

But the best thing about Roskilde is the sense of community and freedom in the air. People let go, anything goes and literally everyone is going. I've never been able to turn a corner at Roskilde without running into friends (excellent) or exes (not so much). And there's always the opportunity to meet someone new – heck, half the couples I know in Denmark met at Roskilde and consummated their relationship in a tent of questionable structural integrity.

There's also a beautiful sense of history to the whole thing – the festival has been going since its debut as a two-day rock event in 1971, and it's not unusual to meet Danes at their fifteenth festival in a row.

So that's Roskilde in a nutshell. Filthy, smelly, sticky, and unbelievably magical.

HEADLINERS: LCD Soundsystem, Mø, Neil Young, New Order, PJ Harvey, RHCP, Tame Impala, Tenacious D, Wiz Khalifa

TICKETS: Full – DKK 1995, Day – DKK 995

(Tip: The festival may sell out in June, but it's normally not too hard to find a volunteer arm band. Go here: roskilde-festival.dk/more/volunteer)

MORE INFORMATION: roskilde-festival.dk

FLOW FESTIVAL // August 12 – 14

For those who prefer to dance to Iggy Pop's 'Passenger' in a more dignified environment, he'll also be performing at the ultra-stylish Flow Festival in Helsinki. The line-up may share some of the same acts as Roskilde but, fortunately, the ubiquitous festival onesie is nowhere to be seen at Flow.

Set in a disused power plant in downtown Helsinki, Flow feels more like an urban playground than a muddy outdoors romp. The old, industrial structures are strung with fairy lights, while strobes casts coloured patterns on the concrete, lending a surreal and beautiful feel to the place.

Attendees' fashion is experimental, but never obnoxious. Native American headdress is noticeably absent. Everyone looks good. You look good. In fact, as a non-camping festival, you have (presumably) woken up in a bed and actually look like you've had a proper night's sleep, meaning your festival instagrams might actually see the light of day. But there's also pressure to put your best fashion forward which sort of hinders the fun – it's hard to get lost in the music as you inch away from the guy with the overflowing beer cup hovering precariously close to your favourite top.

Musically, the festival takes great pains to showcase the local Finnish music scene alongside bigger bands. Watching these acts perform for local crowds lends a fun, intimate energy to performances, and sometimes prompts spontaneous cross-band jams. There's also the novelty of a 360 degree stage where the musicians play



The stunning, post-industrial landscape gives Flow Festival a special vibe.

Lena Rutkowski



Forever Parot playing last year.

Lena Rutkowski

inwardly, facing each other, allowing the audience to catch the gig at any angle.

Forget the usual festival fare of soggy french fries – Flow is a carefully-curated gastronomical affair. Leading Helsinki restaurateurs are invited to set up food trucks, plying fair-trade coffees, vegan ice creams and Asian-fusion dishes. Last year, there was lobster. Your constitution will thank you, but the hefty gourmet prices mean that your wallet probably will not.

While Roskilde is an intoxicating blur, Flow is the kind of festival you'll remember – probably because nobody really seems out to get drunk. It feels more like a sunny afternoon picnic with friends, which is the perfect way to recover from last month's urine-dust cough.

HEADLINE ACTS: Jaakko Eino Kalevi, Sia, Iggy Pop, Four Tet, Stormzy, Massive Attack, M83, Floating Points

TICKETS: 3 Days – DKK 2050; 3 Days – DKK 1060; 1 Day – DKK 690

MORE INFORMATION: flowfestival.com

HEARTLAND FESTIVAL

Set by Egeskov Castle and the surrounding gardens, Heartland offers a line up of acclaimed musicians, artist, chefs and speakers from around the world – from Martina Abramovic to Tobias Lindholm, and Mark Ronson to the Flaming Lips. It's all rather sophisticated, but that doesn't mean there won't be magic too.

June 10 – 11
Heartlandfestival.dk

COPENHAGEN JAZZ FESTIVAL

If you'd rather not swelter in a tent while your neighbour plays Taylor Swift on repeat, perhaps try a festival where you can sleep at home. Copenhagen Jazz Festival is wildly popular, bringing some of the world's best in the genre. Ten days of concerts across the city – super chilled, super grown up, super easy.

July 1 – 10
jazz.dk

INTO THE VALLEY

Looking for something slightly more off the map? Try Into the Valley, a three-day music festival in a stunning quarry in Dalhalla Rättvik, Sweden. Rather than the usual pop darlings, Into the Valley presents an array of electronic musicians, many of whom are surfacing from the underground scene for the very first time.

July 28 – 30
intothevalley.se

ØYA FESTIVAL

As one of Norway's biggest music festivals, Øya Festival promises a range of artists, from big names like Daughter and Jamie XX to exciting up-and-coming acts. With a focus on organic food and sustainability, it's a big festival with an environmental conscience – at least your hangover will be guilt-free.

August 9 – 13
oyafestivalen.com

Natasha Jessen-Petersen

Q&A

"Unemployed immigrants challenge Danish tolerance"

Torben Hansen, director of the Association for New Danes, wants more businesses to take a chance on immigrants and ethnic minorities – and he's got the data to back up why it's a good idea

FINDING A JOB in Denmark can be difficult if you don't possess the language skills or diplomas from a Danish education centre. It can be especially frustrating when, as an immigrant, you know you have plenty to offer – you just need a chance to prove yourself.

This is the challenge Torben Møller Hansen is dedicated to addressing as director of the organisation Foreningen Nydanske (The Association for New Danes).

The organisation works with over 100 companies to help ethnic minorities and immigrants into work, while also encouraging the labour market to appreciate the value of a diverse labour force.

What is your background, and how did you get into this line of work?

As a kid, I attended a Catholic school even though my parents were not particularly religious. The principal really emphasised the idea that all religions should be treated equally and that everybody had to respect each other. So in a way I was raised with diversity even before I knew what diversity was.

When I finished my Master's degree at Copenhagen Business School, I realised that diversity was a big challenge for Danish society, but there were few strategies to address the issue. I was offered the CEO position with Foreningen Nydanske a couple of years later and realised very quickly that this was the place that I was looking for. I am really lucky to have the job I have – working to promote our belief that businesses are stronger and more powerful if we properly manage diversity.

How is diversity in the workplace viewed in Denmark?

Since 1995, politicians in Denmark have regarded diversity and differ-



Rasmus Degnbøl

ent religions as value-related problems. Newspapers often carry stories about head scarves, prayer during work and issues concerning food that are framed as challenges that are very difficult to overcome.

What's interesting is that while politicians are eager to talk about a conflict between work and private life, companies often don't see the conflict – they just want the best brains, regardless of race or gender. They don't see it as a problem to have rooms where people can pray, since the rooms can be used for all sorts of other purposes too. When it comes to food, people who are training for a marathon have to change their diet in the weeks before a race. And afterward they might walk a little strangely for a week. But the business doesn't care, that's just part of running a marathon.

If you're fasting because of your religion, however, then we suddenly look at it like some sort of challenge or problem. But there are small and very elegant solutions to these supposed problems, and for the past sixteen years, we have seen businesses resolve them without issue.

How do you communicate diversity to these companies? What do you hope to achieve by working together?

Our prime minister has already asked us as a country to become better at managing diversity. This is especially important now as we try to integrate the large number of refugees that have arrived here. It is critical that we get them into the labour market as soon as possible.

But it's not straightforward. Novo Nordisk recently called us and said, "we don't really know how to be a part of this. We have some ideas and we would like to be challenged on how we could be even better". So we came in and set up a whole new way of working with the immigrants in that organisation.

Foreningen Nydanske's primary strategy is to distribute solutions that companies have already invented through their experiences of managing diversity. We rarely invent anything new, though we have started a number of mentorship programmes, including one specifically designed to reduce youth unemployment.

We found that many young people are skilled, they just lack a network and inside knowledge from the business world. After four

Natasha Jessen-Petersen


months in a mentor programme, around 70 percent are either in work, education or apprenticeships. Because of our success, we have grown from working with three municipalities to twenty-three, and we currently have around 1,260 business-people working for us as volunteers.

How do businesses benefit from having a diverse labour force?

There is a huge benefit. I have just published a report together with the facility services business ISS that concluded that Danish companies with diversity in their senior management are 10 percent more successful than companies without. In another report, we managed to show that diverse teams were 4.1 percent more successful than Danish-only teams in companies.

The point is that if you have only engineers writing an engineering textbook, then probably only professional engineers will understand the material. If diversity is present in management, products, development programs and services, then you are better able to meet the needs of diverse customers. This is why I believe that it is crucial for the success of businesses to have women in management. It's important to include all of the best brains from all over the world.

Ultimately, understanding, implementing and working with diversity in everyday life is a crucial part of business. Diversity is a tool, not a goal. For a lot of these organisations, diversity training is a very good idea. For example, the Nordic countries are very focused on getting women into top management. But if you look at Danish companies, around 95 percent do not have a budget to promote diversity. You have to motivate the companies, give them feedback, and show how they can achieve great success with just a little effort.

Why is it so important to get immigrants and refugees into work quickly?

There's no reason for immigrants not to be in work. When you take a walk across the city, you can see that a lot of work is not being done. A lot of lawns are not being mowed, a lot of walls are not being painted. And yet, there are a lot of immigrants who are unemployed. Something is malfunctioning.

Like most Nordic countries, we have a welfare system in Denmark, and if you

don't work, you are still paid quite well. But if we have a lot of people coming to our countries who do not work and receive benefits, the people of the Nordic countries are going to say, "no more". The low employment rate of immigrants only strengthens the anti-immigration sentiment in Denmark. But I think that if immigrants started working within months of arriving, then Danes would totally accept immigration.

The thing is that Danes are actually very tolerant – you just have to obey the law, vote when there are elections and earn your own money. So it's a shame that Danish tolerance is challenged by unemployed immigrants. A lot of Danes are pretty frustrated that they have to pay for people who don't work. For me that is challenge number one.

What could job centres do differently to meet the needs of migrants?

Job centres need to better understand the needs of private businesses. When job centres know they have to integrate 50 migrants into the labour market over the coming year, they need to communicate with businesses so they can outline the skills the migrants will need to learn in order to work there.

They also need to find out what sort of work is relevant to the different migrants when they arrive in Denmark, and which businesses need people with their skills. When we do that, we often find ten to fifteen different companies that are listing positions and into which 85 percent of the people will get hired.

That means we also need to tell immigrants entering Denmark that it is more important to develop relevant skills for the Danish labour market, and once they are employed, they can pursue their own interests.

What about immigrants, what can they do to improve their chances of finding work?

Capitalise on your difference. Look at your background in regards to language, culture, or whatever is relevant to you and make that an advantage. Help us, the Danes, to discover that your diversity is good for business. I think that we are at a tipping point at which Danish managers are starting to recognize the benefits. ■

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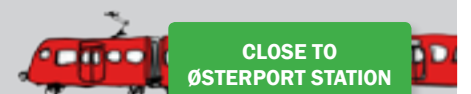
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WHAT'S ON • JUNE



Simon Capersen

HAMLET LIVE
To mark the 400th anniversary of William Shakespeare's death, Kronborg Castle is hosting an extravagant production of Hamelt.

Kronborg Slot
Kronborg 2C, 3000 Helsingør
kongeligeslotte.dk
All Month

1

DISTORTION
Party in the streets of Copenhagen in this five-day celebration of club culture – but there's also something for the grownups too.

Venues across Copenhagen
cphdistortion.dk
Ends June 5



Tonje Bøe Birkeland

CPH PHOTO FESTIVAL
With contemporary photography from across the country, Copenhagen Photo Festival is a platform for the best photographers of the moment.

Venues across Copenhagen
copenhagenphotofestival.com
June 2-12

4

AARHUS PRIDE
From large companies to smaller families, everyone is invited to participate and join in on the rainbow fun.

Officerspladsen v/ Ridehuset
Vester allé 1, 8000 Aarhus
Aarhuspride.dk

5

CPH FESTIVAL ENSEMBLE
The Copenhagen Festival Ensemble is dedicated to the highest performance quality of classical music from the Baroque to today's music.

Odd Fellow Palæet
Bredgade 28, KBH
bit.ly/cphFensemble



Melinda Oswaldel

MUSE
The legendary British rock act is coming to Copenhagen for their The Drones World Tour. Muse will perform for this first time in the middle of the arena, providing fans with a 360-degree experience.

Forum
Julius Thomsens Plads 1, KBH
forumcopenhagen.dk
June 8

10

HEARTLAND FESTIVAL
The festival combines live conversations and contemporary art to showcase the best from Denmark's music and food scene, and is set in the gardens surrounding Egeskov Castle.

Egeskov Castle
Egeskov Gade 18, 5772
heartlandfestival.dk
Ends June 11



KULTUR FESTIVAL
The Association for a Multicultural Forum was created to bridge the diverse culture and religions and hosts the Culture Festival, which offers diversity, music, food, and performances.

Von Scholtens Ravelin,
Helsingør 3000
kulturfestivalen.dk
June 11

EVENT OF THE MONTH



19

SØNDAGSVENNER
Søndagsvenner, a non-profit organisation, arranges open-air events throughout the summer. With the aim to transform unused urban spaces into social experiences, Søndagsvenner is a full artistic endeavour with great food, drinks, and music.

Refshalevej 189, KBH
bit.ly/sondagsvennerJune



Esben Zeltner Olsen

RED BULL CLIFF DIVING
The Copenhagen Opera House is transformed into the centre of the sporting event, a giant diving board extending from its roof. 28 metres high, Red Bull Cliff Diving guarantees an action-packed experience

Copenhagen Opera House
Ekipagemestervej 10, KBH
redbullcliffdiving.com
June 18

22

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
One of the most popular rock singers and songwriters alive, Bruce Springsteen has won 20 Grammys, 2 Golden Globes and is an inductee of both the Rock & Roll and Songwriters Hall of Fame.

Telia Parken
Per Henrik Lings Allé 2, KBH
teliaparken.dk

Natasha Jessen-Petersen

WHAT'S ON • JULY

1

CPH JAZZ FESTIVAL

With hundreds of concerts across the city, the jazz festival puts the city in a great mood as the summer starts to peak.

Venues across CPH

jazz.dk

Ends July 10



DJ SHADOW

His 1996 masterpiece 'Endtroducing' is a legendary work that inspired a generation of beat-makers, samplers and instrumentalists. A real legend.

Vega

Enghavevej 40, KBH

vega.dk

July 6

16

WUTHERING HEIGHTS

Kate Bush fans, her ye! "Out on a wildy windy meadow in Refshaleøen, we will dance out our hot, greedy tempers and chase away our bad dreams."

The meadow

Refshalevej 167c, KBH

bit.ly/wutheringCPH



Mikkel Kaldal

TRAILEPARK FESTIVAL

A cosy festival set in the Copenhagen Skatepark, expect the usual curated art and music. But also check out I/O, their design and technology day, on the Friday.

Copenhagen Skatepark

Enghavevej 80, KBH

trailerparkfestival.com

July 28-30

LETSGO

– CARSHARING IN COPENHAGEN

LetsGo is a flexible and easy way to have access to a car when you live in the city, and much cheaper than having your own car in Denmark.

- LetsGo have 180 new cars in Copenhagen, Odense and Aarhus.
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- The cars are parked at signed parking spaces all around the city.
- We have five different types of cars to meet your demand, from micro to sedans, vans and EVs.
- The cars can be reserved in advance or at the last minute for you private or business use.



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