

THE MURMUR

COPENHAGEN
EDITION

The waste
to energy
plant that
failed, ex-
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predicted

As winter
beckons,
can Chris-
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pushers?

Branko
Milanovic
on globali-
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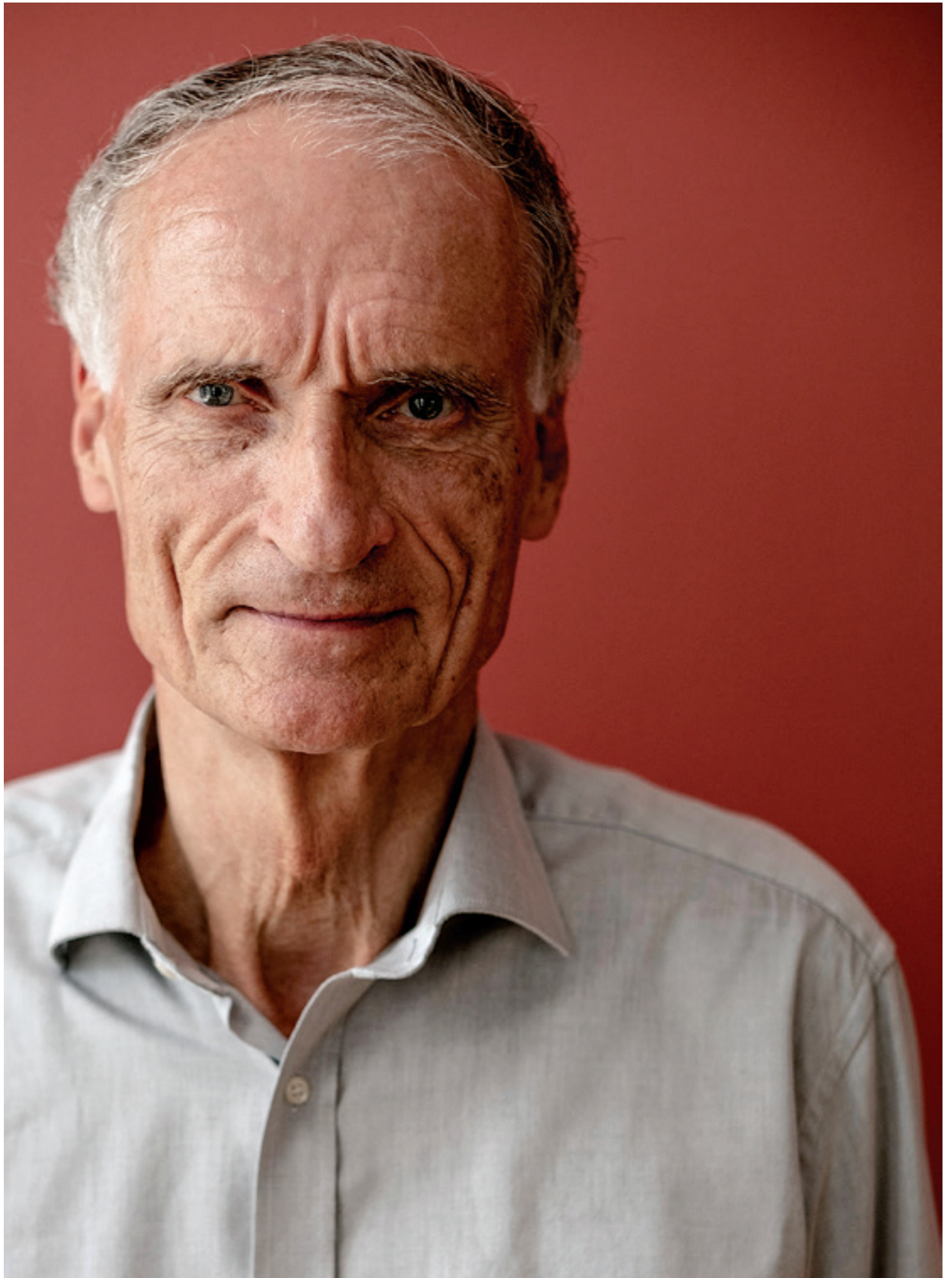
NEWS

CULTURE

POLITICS

COMMENTARY

NOVEMBER 2016 VOL. 3 ISSUE 10



Taking Denmark back to its roots

Culture Minister Bertel Haarder explains why Danes need to know what they stand for

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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OPENING BORDERS to trade and labour has brought billions of people out of poverty. But the spoils of globalisation are increasingly being reserved for the wealthy, says economist Branko Milanovic, who warns that Western democracies are being destabilised as people increasingly move toward dangerous forms of populism and nationalism.

This widening divide between the haves and have-nots is of course something to be worried about. But there is another schism I am worried about, which is opening between those who generally trust institutions and the media, and those who do not – a schism between two groups of people whose worldviews aren't separated by a difference in perspective or analysis, but by their facts.

Take voter fraud. Despite a total lack of evidence that it's a problem, it was a central talking point on the American right during the US election. It's a fear that has been repeated by both Donald Trump and Russian-backed English-language news sites, such as Sputnik, but which has been resoundingly debunked.

It's obvious why Trump and Putin would want to spread misinformation – their power and influence is increased by undermining the established political institutions. What I am more worried about why otherwise intelligent people are unable to tell the difference between fact and fiction. Or, worse, that people who know the difference, but choose to side with those spreading misinformation.

It's all about feelings, of course. The essential strategy of post-truth politics is to appeal directly to the hearts of voters, speaking to their biases, fears and ignorance. It's bloody terrifying, and it seems to be working. People are disregarding previously trusted institutions – such as the media and academia – and rallying behind the call that it's rigged against them. Many don't believe they can trust anyone associated with “the establishment”.

This brings us back to the growing inequality that globalisation – despite all its fantastic qualities – has perpetuated. People have witnessed this inequality di-

rectly, and watched jobs move and opportunities disappear. And we now watch in dismay as they fall into the laps of populists like Trump, who doesn't have the ideas, ability or temperament to actually improve people's standards of living.

Because making political change is hard. Really hard. It requires more than big ideas and vision. It requires forming alliances and seeking consensus, which in turn requires diplomacy and tact. This is the political reality, and as long as we live in complicated societies with unending combinations of competing interests, it's a reality that will continue.

But people are tiring of political secrecy. We see it in people's mistrust of Hillary Clinton, a politician of over 30 years who knows exactly how to navigate the corridors of power, and who has accomplished great deal for families and children in particular. We see it in the opposition to trade deals such as CETA and TTIP, which could bring enormous gains to our respective economies. But their secret negotiations with little public oversight has made people wary of whether they are little more than corporate Trojan Horses.

Winning back the trust of the public will require a new age of radical political transparency. For just as the problems of globalisation are affecting both American and Danish middle and working classes, the lack of trust in political institutions is not just an issue in the US. The Danish government, for a start, could roll back the ‘offentlighedsløven’ that restricted public insight into government decision-making.

Only by opening up political process to public oversight and influence can we build a political system that the public trusts and will invest in. Insodoing we shift the mistrust back onto the Putins and Trumps of this world, who both rely on secrecy to hide their own selfish interests.

We desperately need to improve the standards of living for those without the skills, knowledge or means to take full advantage of the possibilities globalisation offers. But, even more importantly, we need people to trust that the established institutions can provide this change. Because if people continue to feel unfairly treated by an opaque class of elite decision makers, it creates fertile ground for future demagogues to seize power and potentially unravel everything we've worked so hard to build. **M**

Some politicians don't want to support the Antidote program and I don't understand why. These are people just like you or me, just with an addiction, which they really can't help.

MARIANNE KROMANN, P31



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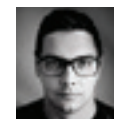
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James Clasper Food Editor. This month in his Get Stuck In column, James gives us the low down on the Italian restaurant trend, and sticks his nose in at Bror.
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Rasmus Degnbol Photo Editor and winner at this year's Danish Press Photo Awards. His major assignment this month was shooting the portraits of Culture Minister Bertel Haarder.
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Sophie Frahm Editorial intern. Sophie is completing her MA in English and European Studies at the University of Copenhagen. She took a look at the proposed changes to university management, as well as writing the Politics column and MIR.



Gabriele Dellisanti Editorial intern. Media and communications student at Lund University, Gabriele asked why it can be so hard to make friends with Danes.
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Hana Hasanbegovic Originally from the Balkans, Hana has a master's degree in English. This issue she wrote about Copenhagen's first Ethical Clothing Library.
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Jon David Finsen Born and raised in Copenhagen, Jon holds an M.A. in Journalism from Aarhus University. He reported from Christiania, covered the Amager Bakke debacle, and wrote this month's City column.



Adrian Mackinder A British writer, actor and comedian, Adrian has written for BBC, Channel 4, Comedy Central, Discovery and Disney. Now living in Copenhagen he tried out the city's first improv theatre.



Joshua Hollingdale (left) & Kristoffer Dahl Kvalvik (below) Both journalism students, Josh studies at the Danish School of Media and Journalism, and Kristoffer at the University of Southern Denmark. They teamed up this month for an article about Denmark's failure to live up to its obligations to protect at-risk women from female genital mutilation.



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MONTH IN REVIEW

Foreign crime rises

The number of foreign criminals charged with an offence has doubled since 2009, with 12,556 suspected foreign criminals charged in 2015. The suspected criminals are primarily from Romania, Lithuania and Poland.

Police amass a million hours of overtime

The police have been extraordinarily busy this year, and have amassed 1,030,415 hours of overtime. Additional assignments, such as monitoring the German border and surveillance assignments in Copenhagen are primarily to blame. According to DR, the officers don't want the overtime to be paid, but are instead asking for time off to rest and spend with their families. Police union chairman Claus Oxfeldt has urged police leadership to prioritise assignments.



GREEDY APPLE

Apple has countersued a Dane who won a case against them for wrongly replacing a defective iPhone with a refurbished, not new, model. Apple want him to pay the court costs.

WINE WEATHER

A warm September provided Danish winemakers with the best harvest ever, both in terms of quality and quantity. "I have never experienced such high sugar levels in the grapes in the 10 years I've grown wine," chairman of the Danish Vineyards Association, Knud Zangenberg, told Politiken.



Flickr / Daniel Jølvet

Jacob Jørgensen / Kongehuset



Queen: No natural law for becoming Danish

We have underestimated the challenge of integration says Queen Margrethe in her new book "The deepest roots – the Queen narrates about Denmark and Danes". She emphasises that Denmark must make demands of people who want to live here, and that Danes need to become better at explaining the values the country is built on. "There is no natural law that living in Denmark makes one Danish," she wrote, adding that integration is most effective through schooling.

Sophie Frahm

MAERSK BREAKS SHIPS ON BEACHES

Despite promoting its sustainable practices, shipping giant Maersk has been found to be disposing of its unwanted ships using irresponsible methods. The revelations were made through an investigation by Danwatch, Politiken and TV2, which proved that Maersk ships were being broken on open beaches in both India and Bangladesh. This method is environmentally irresponsible, with toxic waste leeching into the sand where it can remain for many years. Poor local workers endure harsh conditions and possible death.

Big data to improve traffic safety

Traffic researchers from Aalborg University want to use big data about people's traffic behaviour to prevent future accidents. Accident data used to be restricted to information gathered by the police and the Danish Road Directorate. But new sources of data can reveal driver behaviour, even when there isn't a reported collision – only a fraction of accidents and dangerous situations are registered by police. Fitting cars with GPS transmitters and accelerometers can reveal dangerous stretches of road, for example, by showing where and when drivers suddenly hit the brakes. By collecting and analysing this data, the researchers hope to improve traffic conditions and lower the risk of accidents.



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A smiling man with dark hair and a beard, wearing a white t-shirt, stands next to a woman with long brown hair, wearing a striped shirt and denim overalls. They are both looking towards the camera. The background is a plain grey.

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GET STUCK IN

Chris Tonnesen



Samuel Nutter and Victor Wågman worked together at Noma before opening Bror.

BROR

"The penis took around two years to put on the menu," says Samuel Nutter as he darts around the kitchen at BROR, a restaurant in Copenhagen's Latin Quarter. "We probably did a hundred things with it before we realised you could make it into a crisp."

Nutter, 30, is from the UK and launched BROR three years ago together with Victor

Wågman, 34, from Sweden. The duo previously worked at Noma and when they left, their former boss, René Redzepi, said the pair had: "no investors – just pure talent and huge balls."

He wasn't kidding. At BROR, Nutter and Wågman have won acclaim for using animal parts that most diners shun, such as skin, penis and testicles. (Since you're asking: BROR's bull's balls come coated in breadcrumbs and deep-fried, giving them the lip-smacking crunch of a chicken nugget.)



The glazed beef shank. Yum.

If that sounds a little daunting, consider trying the duo's cooking at one of their Winter Wednesdays – a weekly dinner where guests sit around a communal table and tuck into their "most pampered pieces of meat", along with side dishes and a drink. Week one saw diners enjoy glazed beef shank, buckwheat pancake, crème fraîche and pickled condiments.

Of course, if you ask nicely, you may even be able to try the 'crispy dick', which appears

on BROR's regular menu as a snack. To make it they boil a bull's penis for a long time, peel it, freeze it, slice it very thinly, dry it out and deep fry it. "With a bit of work and playfulness, you can achieve results that people actually consider delicious," says Wågman, smiling.

Bror
Sankt Peders Stræde 24A, KBH
restaurantbror.dk



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THE ITALIAN TAKEOVER

THE NEW NORDIC kitchen isn't dead yet, but it's certainly taking a beating. "Thanks to the countless wannabes who have foraged in Noma's wake, New Nordic has run its course as a global food movement," wrote Michael Booth (author of *The Almost Nearly Perfect People: The Myth of the Scandinavian Utopia*) in an article for *Vice* last winter. "Too often, when you dine with the leather-apron-and-beard brigade ... you feel short-changed by miserly portions, misused techniques and 'poverty' ingredients."

Meanwhile, in a recent review of Noma co-founder Claus Meyer's restaurant **Agern**, at New York's Grand Central Station, writer Adam Platt warned that: "although still influential, the great Scandi craze has begun its inevitable descent from the height of fashion into the realm of parody".

Culinary trends rise and fall like empires. A decade or so ago, much of the world was still in thrall to the molecular gastronomy movement, exemplified by restaurants such as **El Bulli** in Spain, whose proponents performed circus tricks and sought to make food look like its opposite ("It appears to be meat but it's actually fruit. It looks like fruit but it's made of meat").

Little wonder that the New Nordic movement – whose watchwords were local and seasonal – swept aside those culinary trapeze acts and ushered in a new era of dining, which once again made food look and taste as simple and as natural as possible.

Yet, like molecular gastronomy before it, there are signs that influence of the New Nordic kitchen may be waning. One anecdotal indication is the sense that some chefs are trying to shake off the label. A more interesting sign lies in the kind of restaurants recently opening in Copenhagen – especially in the mid-range. Italian food, in particular, appears to be in the ascendancy.

Take the past 12 months alone. Last November saw a casual trat-



Osteria Rufino is among the best of the restaurants riding the Italian trend.

James Clasper

toria called **Italo Disco** open on Oehlenschlägersgade. **Osteria 16** then expanded their local empire, launching **Spaghetteria** on an unfashionable strip near Vesterport. **Bevi Bevi** – the Oehlenschlägersgade bar loved for its Aperol spritzes and sharing plates – opened a sister restaurant up the road. At the start of the summer, **Il Buco** launched **La Banchina**, a waterside restaurant in Refshaleøen. And this autumn saw two Italian restaurants open – **No. 31**, on Frederiksborggade, and **Forketta**, which moved from Torvehallerne to new digs on Ryesgade.

Then there's **Rufino Osteria**, which may be the best of the bunch. Launched on April Fool's Day by three Italians – Alberto Sala, who's from Piedmont, and chefs Alessandro Ciofani and Paolo Bonelli, who are Roman – it occupies an unassuming spot on the corner of Strandgade and Torvegade, in Christian-

shavn. Despite – or perhaps because of – its somewhat subterranean setting, Rufino is a convivial place, with a large communal table, plus cosier tables for couples (you may even find yourself wondering if there's an Italian word for hygge). "We had in mind a social place more than just a restaurant," Sala says.

Rufino has a short menu, which changes often, and an interesting mix of Italian wines. The authentic cooking is inspired by the chefs' Roman heritage. Sala says they try to use as many local products as possible and to be sustainable. The emphasis should be on "the taste of the ingredients by their combination in the plate, without too many sauces, foams or airs," Sala says.

"As many Nordic restaurants have proved, often simple tastes are more effective and the modern tendency is to recover an aspect of cooking that was lost a little."

In a nod, perhaps, to the culinary ties connecting their heritage with that of their adopted city, Rufino recently launched "Don't Tell Our Grammas!" – a Sunday lunch which sees a non-Italian chef invited to give diners their own interpretation of Italian cuisine. A recent Sunday in late October saw Relæ's Australian sous-chef Scott Chancellor take on the challenge.

As Sala puts it, the traditional Sunday lunch in Italy is "something serious, but we would like to mess with it a bit". The influence of the new Nordic kitchen may be in decline, then, but its legacy lives on in surprising ways – including at Italian restaurants on the very street where Noma long ago made its name. **M**

Osteria Rufino
Strandgade 14, KBH
rufino-osteria.com



POLITICS

ANTI-EU CHAMPIONS CAUGHT MISSPENDING EU FUNDS

Denmark's most anti-EU party has wrongly used EU funds to finance a number of party activities. Now the subject of a fraud investigation, the scandal has toppled one of its most high profile members, and resulted in voters turning their back on the party

THE DANISH PEOPLES PARTY (DF) is a proud and vocal advocate for transparency, and has long lobbied against EU overspending and waste.

But the tables have turned, and in October the EU's anti fraud unit, OLAF, launched an investigation into DF's use of EU funds.

Heads have already started to roll. MEP Morten Messerschmidt – who was elected with a massive 465,758 votes in the 2014 European Parliament (EP) election – has been removed from DF's leadership for his role.

Central to the scandal are EU funds given to DF through MELD, its old political group in the EP, and FELD, its affiliated foundation. The funds can only be used to finance activities relating to the EU, but recent revelations indicate that DF has been using the money on domestic political campaigning, which is not permitted.

Despite disagreeing with the accusations, DF announced in October that they would pay back 955,210 kroner to the EU – all funds received from the MELD and FELD, from 2012 to 2015. But the EP has refused to accept any money until OLAF's investigation is complete.

"We suspect serious fraud due to conflicting statements by the party," said EP spokesperson Marjory van den Broeke told Berlingske. "DF wanted to repay the money, but that isn't something that one just does. It's necessary to conduct a proper investigation first. Then, if things aren't as they should be sanctions are an option."

POLITICAL SAGA

It all started back in October 2015, when MEP Rikke Karlsson from DF left the party when she was refused permission to examine the finances. She was suspicious of fraudulent activity, after being made to sign documents that stated she had participated in MELD and FELD meetings, which



"More Denmark. Less EU." An campaign poster for MEP Morten Messerschmidt during the European Parliament elections. No one thought he meant it so literally.

she had not. Parties are reimbursed when MEPs attend certain events, and Karlsson thought it was unethical.

In May, the EU asked DF to repay three million kroner, which they argue had been wrongly spent on DF domestic political campaigns, a golden handshake to an employee in MELD and FELD, and a DF boat trip in 2013 ahead of the municipality elections.

Party leader Kristian Thulesen Dahl announced that DF would repay 1.6 million kroner, even though the party disagreed with the parliament's decision. He refused, however, to repay the remaining 1.3 million kroner as they were administered by MELD and FELD, not DF.

More damaging cases turned up over the summer, however. In August, Ekstra Bladet published documents, attained from French authorities, revealing that both Rikke Karlsson and DF MEP Jørn Dohrmann were elected into MELD's management in 2014.

The problem was, however, that neither of them were present at the assembly, or knew anything about it. As if that wasn't enough, the documents also showed that Karlsson was registered as being Lithuanian. The documents were signed and submitted by Messerschmidt. Karlsson proceeded to report Messerschmidt to the police for identity theft.

EU INVESTIGATION

In early October, several new revelations were made, including that MELD had spent EP money on media training, and on the party's summer meetings – neither of which had any relationship to their activities.

By the end of October, DF leader Dahl decided that the party would repay an additional million kroner of EU funding it had spent on a variety of activities, including dinners with journalists, newspaper subscriptions, Christmas cards from Messerschmidt, as well as the media training and summer meetings.

"There's been a messy, careless and lenient administration, which has proven to be a general problem in my view," explained MEP Anders Vistisen, leader of DF's group in the EP, in a press release after DF finished its internal investigation.

The EU refused to accept the 955,210 kroner, however, so DF has deposited the sum in a bank account until OLAF has completed its investigation.

DF FOUNDER ENTERS DEBATE

Former DF leader Pia Kjærsgaard accepted that the party management holds full responsibility for the situation.

"I must also say, that Morten Messerschmidt is a creative soul, but as is often

the case, he doesn't have a firm grip on finances. The two things often go together," she told Politiken newspaper.

"I don't believe that Morten Messerschmidt or anyone else has done this consciously and that there is evidence for fraud. I think months have gone by where things haven't been sorted out and that's how it became a bad habit. And such habits are unbecoming," Kjærsgaard said.

BLEEDING VOTERS

DF's misuse of EU funds is all the more curious due to the party's focus on the EU's own misspending. Messerschmidt even published a book in 2013 titled, *Diary from EU: How the EU wastes your money*. The book was also financed using EU funds – funds which DF is now trying return.

The scandal has been compounded by the party's refusal to release its finances, despite being quick to demand other parties to the same under similar circumstances. A poll carried out by Berlingske in late October found that support for DF had dropped from 20.2 percent to 17.9 percent, over the course of a month. **M**

Sophie Frahm

ANTI-EXTREMISM POLICIES CRITICISED

The Liberal Party (Venstre) government has proposed 22 initiatives to fight radicalisation. A majority in parliament supports the proposals, but experts are less enthusiastic.

The initiative includes establishing a new unit under PET, the police intelligence service, to identify and remove extremist propaganda online. The government also wants to establish an online filter that blocks terror propaganda as well as give Danish internet service providers the ability to eliminate access to foreign websites that spread extremist and violent propaganda.

The aim is to make it more difficult for militant terror organisations, such as ISIS, to spread their propaganda. While a majority in parliament support the proposals, Jacob Mchangama, director of think tank Justitia, worries that limiting freedom of speech and other fundamental liberties is the wrong strategy.

He compares the initiative to methods often used in Turkey and Russia and calls it "a paradigm shift" in the government's position on freedom of speech.

"I don't know if PET says that it's necessary, or if the proposals are rather because of a need for political action. Because there aren't many signs that criminalisation and prohibition is especially effective. It isn't a weapon liberal democracies ought to employ in the first instance," Mchangama told Berlingske.

Maja Greenwood, a PhD student working for Danish Institute for International Studies, argues that the plan is not precise enough.

"The group of people that the government is trying to reach is badly defined, which will lead to suspicion of a much larger group that will create parallel societies, rather than solve the issue," Greenwood told Politiken.

Justice minister Søren Pind admits that they don't know for sure whether the policies will work or not, but what he fears most is if they don't act on the threat at all.

"I think we need to try some things here, even though we don't know for sure what the outcome will be," Pind told Politiken.

OPPOSITION SURGES IN THE POLLS

If a general election were held tomorrow, Venstre PM Lars Løkke Rasmussen would most likely have to step down and hand over power to his political opponent Mette Frederiksen, leader of the Social Democrats (Socialdemokrater).

According to a poll by Norstat for Altinget, the opposition left wing 'red bloc' would win 50.5 percent of the vote, compared to 47.9 percent for the ruling right wing 'blue bloc'. All blue parties, except the Conservative People's Party (Konservative), suffer losses compared to the September poll.

Political commentator for Altinget, Erik Holstein, said DF are the main losers thanks to both insecurity in the party and emerging competition from the New Conservatives (Nye Borgerlige). Venstre are also suffering due to widespread criticism of its proposed 2025 economic plan.

"There is a large majority against lowering student grants and increasing the pension age to fund tax relief for high earners. Such policies are only popular during times of crisis," Holstein explained.

Nye Borgerlige were included in the poll for the first time, and are estimated to take 2.1 percent of the vote. Holstein says it is significant that they are polling above the two percent threshold for entry to parliament given their lack of policies and inclusion of some radical party members.

METTE FREDERIKSEN: MEN WHO BUY SEX ARE BAD

"If a man buys sex from a woman, he isn't capable of maintaining a job as a teacher, policeman, judge or politician."

So says Mette Frederiksen, leader of the opposition Social Democrats (Social Demokrater) in a new biography by Berlingske journalists Bent Winther and Peter Burhøi.

Her views sparked a political debate about sex work, with many agreeing with her view that men who buy sex are violating the principle of equality and respect between sexes.

But there was no unanimity, and chairman of the Danish Union of Teachers chairman, Anders Bondo Christensen, told Jyllands Posten that he's against disqualifying teachers that have bought sex.

Pia Kjærsgaard, speaker of the parliament and an MP for the Danish People's Party, also criticised Frederiksen.

"I think politicians from Christiansborg need to be careful when defining the moral standing of others. That's for voters to decide," Kjærsgaard told Berlingske.

Around one in six Danish men, aged between 18 and 65, have bought sex according to a 2013 study by Rambøll.

It is legal to buy and sell sex in Denmark, but while sex workers have to pay tax on their earnings, they are not protected by ordinary labour laws.

CHILDREN TO BE OFFERED A LAWYER WHEN PARENTS SPLIT

When parents divorce they often employ lawyers to best argue their cases. But in the future, children will too be able to receive legal counsel.

The system has been tested for almost two years through a cooperation between the charity Børns Vilkår and the foundation Egmont Fonden, in an effort to strengthen children's voices when parents divorce.

The pilot scheme included more than 200 cases, and has resulted in a new permanent system that is supported by a majority in parliament.

MP Laura Lindahl, social affairs spokesperson for Liberal Alliance, brought the proposal to the negotiation table.

"I want to ensure that children, caught in the middle of a conflict heavy divorce, have a permanent lawyer before, during, and after the public administration makes the casework," she told Berlingske.

The program is expected to cost between 1.2 and 1.5 million kroner a year. **M**

Sophie Frahm

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CITY

Controversial development in Amager Fælled approved

Copenhagen is set to lose a large chunk of one its largest remaining unspoiled areas thanks to a planned redevelopment between Bella Center and Sundby Metro Station.

The land has been earmarked for redevelopment for over 20 years, but only recently has a concrete proposal has been put forth – a new sustainable residential community built on a wild area that has been largely untouched in 5000 years. Around eight percent of Amager Fælled will make way for the new development.

Around 30,000 people have signed a petition to preserve the area, and a protest was held in late October.

"The long history of the area means that the plants, insects, birds and fungi in the area make up a unique ecosystem, which can't be found anywhere else," the Danish Society for Nature Conservation wrote in a press release.

It won't be the first encroachment into Amager Fælled. A golf course and Danhostel both opened in 2006, while a brand new camping site is already planned in the south.

Despite being rich in flora and fauna, Amager Fælled is not a protected nature reserve, unlike Kalvebod Fælled to the south. The area was exempted from this status when plans for the development of Ørestad were written into law in 1992, which explicitly stated that the area can be developed without regard to the wild and unique nature.

Proponents of the construction argue that it is necessary to develop the area, because Copenhagen is growing by 11,000 residents a year. They also emphasise that the new development will be built with respect for the historic nature in mind.

The landowner, CPH City and Port Development– a publicly owned development company tasked with developing Ørestad – is 16 billion kroner in debt. Selling the properties in Amager Fælled is expected to raise 1.5 billion kroner.



Amager Fælled, seen looking north toward the city centre. The area set aside for redevelopment is outlined in white.

By & Havn

Insects, birds and fungi in the area make up a unique ecosystem, which can't be found anywhere else.

DANISH SOCIETY FOR NATURE CONSERVATION

Jon David Finsen

PokéStops in Royal Library Garden spark controversy

The Library Garden next to the Royal Library in Copenhagen has turned from a peaceful oasis of contemplation into a chaotic meeting place for Pokémon hunters. The garden, which is located on Slotsholmen between the Royal Library and Parliament, is home to no less than six PokéStops, which has drawn an unprecedented number of visitors since the release of the mobile app Pokémon Go in July.

Some people feel that the new visitors are ruining the garden and have called for a limit to the hunters. One of them is Birgitte Possing, who is a researcher at the National Archives in the Royal Library.

"I was once pushed as I tried to walk through the garden, when 50 youngsters come running around the corner," she told Ritzau.

PokéStops are often placed at cultural or historically significant places, but in places like the Holocaust Memorial in Berlin authorities have asked the company responsible for Pokémon Go, Niantic, to remove them.

The Agency for Culture and Palaces has refused to intervene and ask for the removal of the PokéStops,

however. On the contrary, the agency has set up a portable toilet, a number of extra garbage cans and hired an extra guard to handle the many new visitors.

Saxogade to become social, non-profit shopping centre

Vesterbro's Saxogade will become a hub of social shops and workshops, thanks to a 5.4 million kroner grant from the Turbog Foundation.

By the end of the year, three new shops and workshops will pop up at the end of Saxogade on Litauens Plads. The three shops include De Grønne Fingre – a market garden with focus on balcony gardening; Fredes Woodshop – a furniture maker and printing house; as well as Normas Corner – a showroom for gardening and furniture.

The project is spearheaded by Settlementet, a commercial foundation in Vesterbro, that works to improve the rights and standards of living of the socially marginalised. The new shops will merge social responsibility with commercial sensibility, by contributing all proceeds to creating jobs for vulnerable Copenhageners, such as the homeless and people with drug problems.

"Customers will not come because of their bleeding hearts. They will come because they'll get good quality, lovely design and a good bargain. It's commercialism on equal terms," says head of the project, Magrethe Wivel.

Harbour Circle completed

The 13-kilometer bicycle and pedestrian route, Harbour Circle, which runs around Copenhagen Harbour, has been completed with a new bridge in Sydhavnen.

The route stretches along both sides of the harbour, from Nyhavn in the north to Sluseløbet in the south, and is connected by five cyclist and pedestrian bridges – most notably Linderhavnsbroen at Nyhavn.

The Harbour Circle functions both as a commuter artery for cyclists as well as a recreational and sightseeing path for tourists, passing through 12 distinct areas – from historic Nyhavn, past rickety houseboats in Sydhavn, and alongside Amager Fælleds wild nature.

The new bridge is, however, only a temporary measure. If everything goes according to plan, the new Belvederebroen will be replaced by another bridge at Frederiksholmsløbet in 2018. **M**

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West of Valby: The forgotten Denmark

For the educated urban elite, the benefits of globalisation are obvious – easy travel, better job opportunities, and more ways to spend their money. But the benefits of globalisation have not been felt evenly across the country, and there is a growing sense that two nations live in Denmark, whose experiences do not align



South Funen used to have lots of industry, but most have closed and moved production to cheaper countries. These are the now-closed premises of Faber Gardiner, that produced blinds.

SOUTH FUNEN is a scenic, pastoral part of Denmark. Idyllic villages pop up between the fields and forests, with small houses hugging the roadside. Peaceful as they may be, it is impossible to miss the 'For Sale' signs that are constantly on display.

The island is one of the areas hardest hit by the negative consequences of globalisation, and has the lowest number of 26 to 64 year olds in employment, according to a 2014 report by Region Syddanmark. In the 1980s it was part of Denmark's old industrial heartland, but many of the large industrial employers in the region have since moved their operations to countries with cheaper labour, leaving behind un-

employment, increased competition for jobs, and a downward pressure on wages.

A GLOBAL ISSUE

On the whole, globalisation has benefitted the world's economies. Raising incomes in Eastern Europe, China and India, have opened up new markets to products, while also making it possible for the West to attract qualified employees from across the world.

But the rapid deindustrialisation and outsourcing of jobs from the West to the East has also tilled fertile ground for the anti-globalisation fervour that is currently sweeping the West. Earlier this year, the UK shocked the world by

voting to leave the EU, while in the US Donald Trump ran a campaign based on building walls – both literal and figurative ones.

Danes are still generally positive about globalisation, however. According to a 2014 report by the non-profit research organisation Bertelsmann Foundation, Denmark ranked as the second biggest beneficiary of globalisation in the world, measured by per-capita GDP growth since 1988. Despite that, not all have shared in the benefits, and the rural areas of Denmark have been those most hurt.

THE LOSERS

Danish industry was originally located around the large urban ar-

reas, but as concerns over pollution and population density grew it was increasingly moved to the countryside. Rural areas, such as South Funen, were therefore especially hurt when the outsourcing of industry to low wage countries began.

"We haven't gotten over it yet," explains Tonni Hansen, chairman for local chapter of the industrial trade union 3F. "I know of many people who have lost their jobs due to outsourcing – many people who are older than 55 and who all their lives had good, low-skilled industrial jobs, and been valuable employees. There is so much competition for the remaining jobs, so if you can't just get up and move, you

Words:
Elias Thorsson

Photos:
Rasmus Degnbol

are in trouble."

According to Hansen, some were lucky enough to find new jobs in the area. But others – especially those without any form of proper education – were left stuck in unemployment before losing their right to unemployment benefits, and ultimately becoming dependant on relatives and loved ones. But the situation remains most acute with future generations, who are at risk of growing up without jobs or prospects.

"We now have young people who have never gotten started. Who have never had a job. Already there is emerging a generation that won't know what it means to work," he says. "I can see the increasing social problems in the area where I live, and where a so-called 'under-class' is growing."

A HOUSE DIVIDED

What Hansen experiences is a growing divide between the countryside and urban areas. This divide was made especially apparent during the last elections. Parliament's newest party The Alternative – pro-entrepreneurial and green – flew into parliament by appealing to the creative classes in the cities, while the populist Danish People's Party (DF) swept the less densely populated areas of the country, ultimately becoming the second biggest in the country.

Underlining this development, former DF leader Pia Kjaersgaard told Berlingske earlier this year that Denmark was at a breaking point and that there existed a "dominating, self-righteous and ignorant" elite that didn't experience the problems felt by ordinary Danes.

"It's funny, not long ago Copenhagen was dirt poor and people lived in apartments without access to toilets, so the rest of the country had to support them financially," Hansen says. "But now the situation has turned on its head. Now the economy has changed to something else that benefits Copenhagen. So quite possibly we are missing a form of solidarity between the two. There are absolutely people in Copenhagen who feel that we need to stick together, but there are also others who belong to a cultural elite who think Copenhagen is the centre of the universe and don't give a damn about the rest of the country. I can easily get annoyed by it."

PARTING IDEOLOGIES

What Brexit proved to the world is

We now have young people who have never gotten started. Who have never had a job. Already there is emerging a generation that won't know what it means to work.

TONNI HANSEN, 3F



Dagny Felslund-Jensen worked for 20 years making blinds, drapes and awnings for Faber. She thinks she was lucky to find another job in her field when the company moved its production to Poland.

that increasingly the West is split into two separate groups whose views and experiences of globalisation are markedly different. Frustration with diminishing incomes and anger towards the political establishment has driven people away from mainstream politics and towards populism. According to Hansen, this is no different in Denmark.

"You just have to look at how people vote. DF has been growing because they represent something that is anti-establishment," he says. "DF has taken advantage of the situation and they have found a scapegoat for all the problems we are experiencing. They tell people they lost their job because of the Pole who came here and took it from them, or that the EU is at fault."

And it is a strategy that has worked. During the last election, DF received 23 percent of the vote

in South Funen, an increase of over 10 percent. Hansen is worried about the development of populism and what happens when you have a large group of people who feel forgotten and overlooked.

"You just need to see what happened to Italy and Germany in the thirties."

The blame lies with the politicians and how the EU was structured, he says. The focus on liberalising capital and keeping inflation down, diverted focus from strengthening the social safety net.

"Had that been done, I think we'd be in a very different position. But then again damn it, people vote for what they want. But we could've made another Europe built around solidarity."

STOPPING THE ROT

Hansen argues that more public investment is needed in order to boost non-urban areas. He praises

the current government for their decision to move several thousand public jobs away from the cities, but he argues that more innovative solutions are needed to help the region. Some examples are producing green energy from agricultural waste (biogas), or producing organic food specifically for the export market.

The problem is that developing these new industries requires funding that is not easily available. Hansen says a possible solution could be creating a state bank that focusses its investments in areas private banks overlook.

"I don't think it would take a lot to get the area going. You just need to show people that things are happening here and that there is investment. Then the wheel will start turning on its own. We need to remember that there is plenty of potential. We have a strong tour-

Continues on page 35



Anti-EU supporters campaigning during this year's referendum

Garry Knight / flickr

The losers of globalisation

Brexit, Trump and opposition to trade deals such as CETA and TTIP, demonstrate a growing unease with globalisation. Despite the increase in wealth and standards of living it has brought, economist Branko Milanovic has revealed that globalisation and inequality remain intrinsically linked

'HURRAH FOR GLOBALISATION'.

Danish foreign minister Kristian Jensen released a book with this title in 2003, when he was a 32-year-old MP for the ruling Liberal Party (Venstre). It didn't break ground, either in sentiment or argument, but aptly expressed a worldview that has dominated global affairs since the end of the Cold War: an open world with a free flow of capital and goods increases wealth and makes our lives better.

A Gallup poll conducted the following year showed that of all the Western nations, Danes had the most positive view on globalisation. But that is changing, as Denmark and the West is swept by anti-globalisation sentiment.

In Europe it was best exemplified by the shocking referendum this summer in which a majority of Brits voted to leave the EU. Many analysts agree that the vote to leave, which shocked the financial and political establishment, was largely driven by anti-immigration and globalisation sentiments.

The referendum brought to light a growing divide between social classes. Generally speaking, wealthy and highly educated voters voted to remain, while the working class wanted to leave.

Branko Milanovic, a Professor of Economics at the Stone Center on Socio-Economic Inequality at University of New York, claims this divide should come as no surprise. He argues that we are witnessing an ideological schism between the highly educated cosmopolitan citizens, who have benefitted from

globalisation, and the lower middle and working classes, who have lost out.

"There is a schism and it stems from some groups having had a very good period over the last 25 years. These groups are in general highly educated, mobile and can take advantage of changes in technology and globalisation," he says. "The other groups are those that have had to bear the brunt of globalisation."

THE ELEPHANT GRAPH

Last summer, Milanovic released the book *Global Inequality: A New Approach for the Age of Globalization*. By combining historical accounts and data, Milanovic compared inequality across the globe and found that while global income inequality is falling, increasing inequality in the West poses a serious problem.

In 2012, while acting as head researcher of the World Bank, Milanovic produced a graph that, due to its shape, has popularly become known as 'the elephant graph'. It depicts changes to real income globally from 1988 to 2008 and shows that while most of the world's population had achieved sizeable gains, especially in emerging markets like China, the income of working and middle classes in the West had actually decreased. At the same time, the richest one percent had experienced a considerable increase in their share of wealth. In other words, the spoils of globalisation were being unequally distributed.

I do not believe it makes political sense to tell the lower middle class in rich countries to be happy about emerging incomes in China and India.

Elias Thorsson

Following Brexit, as analysts and politicians around the world tried to grapple with rising populism and anti-globalisation, the graph came to prominence, with Bloomberg calling it "the graph of the decade". Decades of globalisation may have benefitted the world as a whole, but that provides scant comfort for its losers.

"I do not believe it makes political sense to tell the lower middle class in rich countries to be happy about emerging incomes in China and India. People everywhere primarily look at themselves and their families," says Milanovic.

THE 2008 FALLOUT

Since the Great Recession in 2008, countries across Western Europe have been slashing welfare in an attempt to balance budgets and stimulate growth. But as Milanovic explains, austerity measures have a multiplying effect on anti-globalisation sentiments and populism.

"I think it exacerbates the problem in the long run. Especially when we are dealing with policies around crucial public goods such as education, health or infrastructure. It will make it more difficult for the children of those that have lost or fallen behind. It is hard to get people who are middle aged and older to adjust to a changing world, so we should be thinking about their children, as we need to make sure they don't get left behind."

Inequality is not just an economic issue, but a political and

societal one as well, he argues, adding that there are three main reasons for why we need to be concerned about inequality.

Firstly, there is empirical evidence that inequality impedes growth as a result of hindering people from achieving their highest potential due to lack of affordable education, and through the rich being unwilling to finance infrastructure such as public education and transport.

Secondly, it harms social mobility and creates an inequality of opportunity, as current levels of income or wealth inequality negatively impact future generations.

Thirdly, inequality leads to plutocracy, where an increasingly small number of people end up in a position to manipulate the electoral process and taxes to their benefit.

"We can address inequality by, for instance, helping children get educated, or through direct transfers of wealth. But if we don't deal with it, then that can lead to less than desirable outcomes."

Frustrations with globalisation can also lead to bad policy, as exemplified by Donald Trump's proposal for a wall on the Mexican border.

"Brexit is also a very clear example of a sort of rejection of globalisation. It was based on huge concerns about mobility of labour. Places like London and the south, potentially the whole of England, have benefitted from the free movement of capital, but I don't think you can have that without the free movement of labour. Po-



Branko Milanovic. Illustration by Peter Berke.

litically, the debate about inequality and globalisation can easily turn towards keeping out migrant workers."

WORST CASE SCENARIO

In his book, Milanovic sets out an argument for how inequality may have played an important role in creating the environment that sparked World War I. Resentment was high and nationalistic populism soared. And just like then, modern populism could just as easily lead to war.

"I am somewhat pessimistic about the future. The kind of populism and nationalism we are witnessing is very dangerous. The soil can be ripe for conflict when you consider the possibilities," he says. "We have to fear similar kinds of populism today. When we talk about populism, we are mostly talking about Western Europe and the US, but I don't think the situation in Russia and China is significantly different."

SOLUTIONS

The end of World War II marked the beginning of a period that Milanovic refers to in his book as the 'Great Levelling'. Inequality in the West decreased significantly and remained low up until the 1980s. The emergence of strong trade unions and large investment in mass public education played a significant role in the levelling of income. However, in a globalised world, Milanovic argues, we need more innovative solutions. Trade unions are on the wane, and he thinks it is doubtful they will strengthen, while the free movement of capital has made higher taxes less feasible.

"The ways to tackle inequality today will not be the same as back then, the economy has changed. Instead we should think about giving strong incentives to the middle class to get access to as-

sets they currently don't have. For instance, we have had a lot of incentives for the rich to decrease their taxes, but there hasn't really been any help for the middle class to become shareholders, or owners of stocks in the companies they work for."

Milanovic argues that one way to tackle the issue is by people becoming what Margret Thatcher called 'people's capitalists'. This would make working people less dependent on income from wages, and more on investment returns.

"Theoretically each of us has two endowments. Firstly, there's labour endowments, which are influenced by education, skills and so forth. And secondly, there are capital endowments, which are all kinds of property that give returns. The problem is that a lot of people have zero returns because they own little or no property. Other ways would be to implement a citizens' grant or wage, increasing the inheritance tax, and placing a tax on wealth."

Milanovic believes that there are tools available to prevent the nightmare scenario of another global conflict. And he claims that the re-emergence of the debate about inequality shows that there is a possibility of countering the situation.

"Reversing this situation will require a very long political process. We need two things: dissolution of the status quo, and ideas about what to do. And as we see now, the greater interest in recent years has brought forth many ideas. The taxation of wealth might seem utopian now, but if in the future we could implement a global registry of wealth that allows us to know how much each individual owns, then we could do it. And, actually, the Nordic countries are good example of such a possibility, as the data available there is extremely good." **M**

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PUSHER STREET:

Christiania's problem child

Following a shooting in late August, Christiania residents tore down the booths in Pusher Street and vowed to ban the open sale of cannabis. Two months later, some Christiania residents say that Pusher Street is under control, while the police see little to no change

CHRISTIANIA'S PUSHER STREET

has been through a rough summer. During June and July police carried out a series of raids, removing booths and arresting a number of suspected drug dealers.

While the criminal drug-dealing networks tried to rebuild their business in August, the self-proclaimed 'Freetown' was once again plunged into chaos when a man with ties to Pusher Street shot two police officers and a civilian outside Christiania.

The shooting shocked many, including Christiania residents and the police. Acknowledging that Pusher Street had become a hub for hardened criminals in recent years, Christiania residents tore down the remaining booths in Pusher Street and vowed to clear the street of organized crime.

Two months on, and the official line from Christiania is that the illegal market is under control. But walking down Pusher Street, it's clear that the cannabis trade is still flourishing, with pushers selling their merchandise openly to passer-bys.

CHRISTIANIA: PUSHER STREET IS UNDER CONTROL

When The Murmur visited Christiania in early September, there was a sense of optimism. Many Christiania residents had taken time off work to clear the booths from Pusher Street, while others occupied central squares to prevent the return of the criminal gangs.

In a press release, Christiania pleaded for help from both politicians and cannabis users.

"Christiania cannot take responsibility for housing all of

Denmark's hash trade," they wrote. "We can remove them, but we cannot be sure that they won't return. We need all of Denmark's help to do so. If you want to support Christiania, don't buy your hash there."

The message has since changed. Instead of banishing the trade altogether, the ambition is now to limit it and to return to the days where the trade was restricted to locals selling small amounts.

Kirsten Larsen, who works for Christiania's press group, is content with the current situation in Pusher Street two months after the shooting.

"I believe it's working well. We've managed to get rid of the booths and everyone in Christiania and Pusher Street agree that they're not going up again anytime soon. But we're never going to get completely rid of the cannabis market," she says.

"The open hash market is now under control. When you walk down Pusher Street today, it is obvious that the market has been limited. At the same time, we've gotten rid of the pushers who come from outside of Christiania."

POLICE: NOT MUCH HAS CHANGED

Non-resident dealers have long been an issue in Christiania, with many residents holding them responsible for the gradual brutalization of the community around Pusher Street in recent years. The suspected gunman in the August shooting was not a Christiania resident.

But Dannie Rise, head of Task Force Pusher Street – the special police unit tasked with handling

As we approach the cold season, the pushers will want shelter. It may start as a parasol, but then they'll want a heater, and a chair, and before you know it, we'll be back to square one.

**DANNIE RISE,
HEAD OF TASK
FORCE PUSHER
STREET**

Jon David Finsen

Pusher Street – says the removal of the booths has not altered the make-up of the dealers operating on Pusher Street.

"As far as we can tell, it is the exact same people who are dealing cannabis in Christiania today as it was three months ago. And they are standing in the exact same places as they did before. The main difference is that they are sitting on benches rather than behind booths and military netting," he says.

Rise fears that the current low-key market is a temporary situation.

"We've seen this before. As we approach the cold season, the pushers will want shelter. It may start as a parasol, but then they'll want a heater, and a chair, and before you know it, we'll be back to square one," he says.

SELF-DISCIPLINE AND DIALOGUE

Larsen is more optimistic, however, and argues that Christiania residents are now in a better situation to keep Pusher Street under control through dialogue and self-discipline.

"It's the way we've done it for years. We have a continuous dialogue with Pusher Street, and we expect it to work that way in the future," she says.

She explains that Pusher Street has had a number of rules in place for years, such as a code of conduct that prohibits any use or sale of hard drugs.

Another important rule prohibits non-residents from selling cannabis in Pusher Street, though it is a rule that continues to be flouted. Larsen acknowledges that Christiania has contributed to the problem.

"We must admit that the rules for Pusher Street have been relaxed over the years. For years, the rules required that you had to have been a resident in Christiania for three

years, before you could start selling. That bar was gradually lowered as more people disappeared from the street and into prison. At the same time, we allowed the dealers to start wearing masks. All that made it harder to maintain the self-discipline in Pusher Street," she explains.

POLICE TO BLAME

Nonetheless, Larsen believes the police's pressure on the pushers has been the driving force in hardening the community around Pusher Street.

"The pressure on the pushers and the imprisonment of many of the old guard created room for a new group of hardboiled people, who have carved out a place for themselves. That's the reason we have seen the pushers become more brutal in recent years," she says.

Larsen refers to many raids against the dealers in Pusher Street in the last decade. In 2004, hundreds of police officers moved into Christiania, accompanied by bulldozers, to clear Pusher Street of the cannabis trade. They tore down the booths and arrested hundreds of people with ties to the cannabis trade – many of them Christiania residents.

Despite regular police raids between 2004 to 2009 the market remained.

According to Larsen, the many arrests and the regular raids on Pusher Street ended up fragmenting the cannabis market in Copenhagen, which until then had largely been confined to Christiania. New criminal enterprises took advantage of the volatility to enter the market, both in Pusher Street and across Copenhagen.

From 2008, rivalries between different crime factions over control of the cannabis market escalated and resulted in shootings in both Chris-



Peter Stanners

A photo from the day residents tore down the booths on Pusher Street in early September. As the cold months approach, however, the police are concerned the criminal dealers will return.

tiania and the rest of Copenhagen until 2012.

IMPOSSIBLE TO REIN PUSHERS IN Nonetheless, Rise doesn't believe that Christiania will ever be able to control the cannabis market.

"They cannot control the organised crime that inevitably follows the cannabis market and they cannot control the people who are only there to make money," he says.

Rise points to the fact that the cannabis market in Pusher Street has a turnover of more than one billion kroner a year.

"There have been many attempts to romanticize the cannabis trade. But it is not just a couple of guys with a lump of hash in their pockets. Those days are long gone. When you have something as lucrative as the cannabis market, it is naïve to believe that it can ever just be a couple

of locals who sell out of their pockets to earn a decent living and support Christiania," he says.

Several Christiania residents The Murmur spoke to share Rise's opinion.

"The self-discipline in Pusher Street has failed. When I walk down Pusher Street I still see a few familiar faces – but more and more of the dealers are obviously not residents," says a long time Christiania resident, who prefers to stay anonymous.

Another resident, who also speaks under the condition of anonymity, says it more polemically:

"We have tried to keep it under some kind of control for years, but Pusher Street has slowly slipped completely of our hands. We cannot control it. It's a lost cause," he says and concludes:

"It is like a tumour on Christiania. A tumour that must be removed." **M**

We're never going to get completely rid of the cannabis market.

KIRSTEN LARSEN

- Christiania is a former military area, which was squatted by hippies in 1971.
- In 1989, Christiania was declared a "social experiment" by the then Danish government, who allowed the autonomous community to continue and gave the residents of Christiania the legal right to use and develop the area for an unspecified amount of time.
- The authorities largely tolerated the open cannabis trade, which has been a staple of Christiania since the beginning, until 2004 when the police moved into Pusher Street in one of the largest police operations in Danish history.
- At the same time, the then centre-right government declared the social experiment a

"failure" and enacted a number of laws, which were to "normalise" Christiania. These included plans to revoke the right to use the area and replace it with an offer to the Christiania residents to buy the land.

- In 2012, Christiania obtained legal status and ownership over the area, when the non-profit 'Christiania Fund' bought the entire property from the state.
- Christiania is home to just under 1,000 residents. To this day, Christiania is run entirely on consensus decision-making. The highest authority in Christiania is the monthly "Fællesmøde", which all residents can attend.



Wear & share

Now you don't have to buy your own clothes – at Cleo De Laet's Ethical Fashion Library you can just borrow some and return them when you're done

BLÅGAARDSGADE, in the heart of Nørrebro, is known for its mix of greengrocers, hipster cafés and the occasional gang-related transactions. As of last month, it can add another business to its resumé: the Ethical Clothing Library.

The concept of the store is fairly straightforward – like any other library it's all about lending. Only instead of books, you can borrow clothes. Ethical ones at that.

"Everything started really spontaneously," says Belgian founder Cleo De Laet, who explains the idea arose during an internship with renowned Danish designer Henrik Vibskov.

"I was doing research on sustainable fashion and I was shocked to find out how things are produced. I learned that it's actually really hard to find clothes that are sustainable through all the steps in the chain of production," she explains.

The deeper she researched corporate social responsibility (CSR) policies and environmentally friendly production, the more she discovered just how unethical and murky the waters of the fashion industry were.

After a trip to her native Bel-

It's very important for me to make sure that the designers pay their workers fairly, treat them with respect and don't mass produce and leave a big environmental mess.

Hana Hasanbegovic

gium, she got inspired to give the ethical library a go.

"My goal is to keep it simple," she says. "You basically pay a specific amount, depending on how long you borrow the clothes for, and how much of the collection you want to choose from."

ALTERNATIVE TO FAST FASHION

The library is stocked with a number of different designers that, despite being fairly obscure names in the fashion industry, all share their commitment to be ethical and environmentally conscious – requirements that the designers must be able to document.

"It's very important for me to make sure that the designers pay their workers fairly, treat them with respect and don't mass produce and leave a big environmental mess. This is also why the collections in the Library are all unique and limited," she explains.

Since launching, she's been surprised by which people have chosen to use the Ethical Clothing Library.

"I thought it would be students, who were just making ends meet and couldn't afford to spend that much money on new clothes. But I was surprised to see that instead

it is women in their 30s with kids, who are mostly drawn to the concept," she says.

De Laet reckons that the lack of a younger target group is due to the impact of fast fashion. Young consumers have become accustomed to spending nearly nothing on high street clothing, which has distorted their perception of the relationship between quality and price.

"I understand that the initial thought is 'why should I borrow something when I can just buy it?' Customers have also told me that it's very intimidating to wear 'someone else's clothes', but I don't know what the big deal is – once the clothes are washed they are as good as new," she says.

FAR FROM BORING

As far as the future goes, De Laet has an ambition to expand her collection of brands, while lowering the prices as more people start using the library.

"At the moment everything that is being lent out is brand new, but the prices will obviously be lower once the clothes have been worn more. And hopefully that can attract a younger segment of borrowers."

For Cleo De Laet, the message of her fashion project is threefold. For starters, she wants to show a more diverse image of sustainable fashion.

"People usually think that sustainable fashion is a boring organic cotton t-shirt. But there is no limit to the design or the material. I want to show exactly that with the designers I work with."

There is also a social aspect to the Library, in which the transparency of fashion production in general is made accessible and uncomplicated.

"It's a way for people to exercise their right to know where their clothes comes from," she explains.

Lastly, there is the sociopolitical idea of a borrowing system, which makes people think about how they consume.

"We see this sharing-economy becoming more and more visible in everyday life. Just in Copenhagen we are used to GoMore and Airbnb. Why not try this with our clothes as well? People are always afraid of what is new, but after some time it becomes socially acceptable and you realise that you can have a different approach to spending," she says optimistically. **M**



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CAPTURED

Peter Stanners

THE WESTERN HALF OF AMAGER is home to one of the city’s last remaining unspoilt areas, Amager Fælled (Amager Common), which covers just over two square kilometres. Apples, sea buckthorn, blackberry, elderberry, blackthorn, cherry plums and wild herbs, such as goutweed and horse-radish, grow naturally. It is also home to endangered bird spe-

cies such as the bittern and the marsh harrier that nest in the marshy terrain.

It’s a popular recreational area for Copenhageners, who walk, run and cycle through Amager Fælled all year round. But there may be a little less to enjoy in the future, as a large section in the southeastern corner (around eight percent of

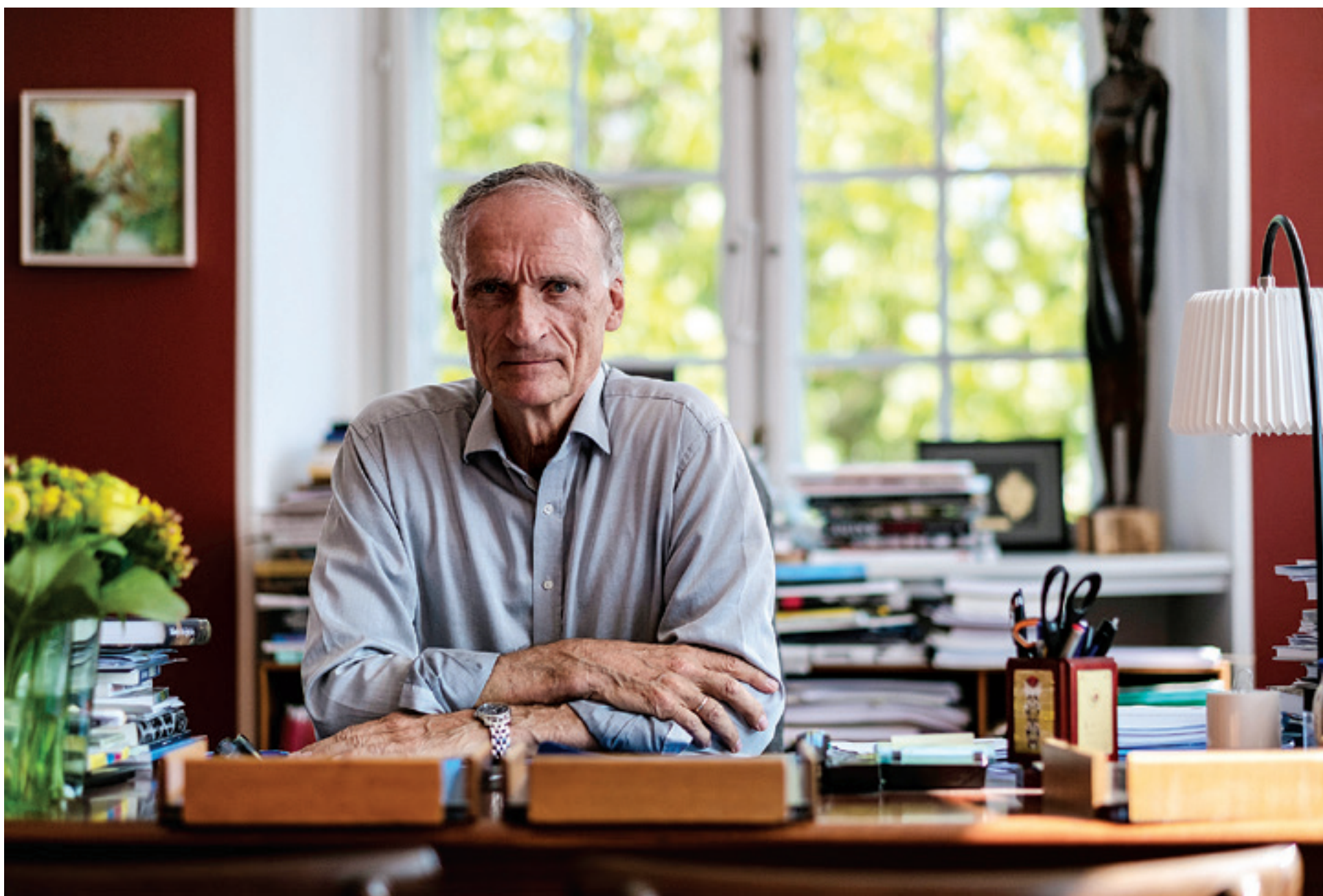


the total area) has been set aside for redevelopment. Protests and petitions have been launched to preserve the area.

Despite the public pressure, there are strong economic incentives to push forward with the proposed sustainable housing development. The landowner, CPH City and Port Development, is 16 billion kroner in debt. Selling the properties in

Amager Fælled is expected to raise 1.5 billion kroner.

With so few open green areas in Copenhagen, it would be a loss to the city and its residents to lose even a small corner of this green oasis – a precious area blossoming on land that once served as the city's open sewer, and later as an artillery training ground. **M**



Bertel Haarder's project to preserve Denmark's S P I R I T

First elected to parliament 41 years ago, Culture Minister Bertel Haarder is an iconic figure in Danish politics. He fears that immigration has the potential to tear the European project apart, but it could have been avoided if we had been more clear about which values immigrants must accept. But which values can we not compromise on? This is the goal of his current project, the Denmark Canon, which he hopes will bring immigrants and Danes together around a shared set of values and principles.

Words:
Peter Stanners

Photos:
Rasmus Degnbol

Bertel Haarder peels an apple with a pocketknife. He cuts out the core, separates the flesh into eight pieces and savours each bite while taking short pauses between questions.

"Being a politician requires making initiatives that some people are against. Adolf Hitler would still have governed Germany if Winston Churchill had followed public opinion – just to give a dramatic example. I remember a lot of interviews where I had to waste my time explaining and explaining and explaining because I want to be an open person," Haarder says in his office in the Culture Ministry across the canal from Parliament in central Copenhagen.

It's a quote that says a lot about Haarder, Denmark's 71-year-old Minister for Culture and Church. On the one hand, he's an accessible member of government who spends a lot of time engaging with the media and participating in public events. On the other, it hints at his reputation for being impatient with journalists who stray from the agreed line of questioning.

But, more fundamentally, it demonstrates that he is prepared to make unpopular decisions that he believes are right for Denmark. And few politicians have had the impact on Danish society that Haarder has.

In October he became Denmark's longest serving minister since 1902, with over 7,800 days served as a minister. As Education Minister in the 1980s, he ushered in reforms to upper secondary education and spending cuts that unleashed massive protests. After seven years as an MEP in the European Parliament in the 1990s, he returned to Denmark in 2001 to serve as Minister for Refugees, Immigrants and Integration in a coalition government with the Conservative People's Party. His reforms both made it far more difficult to immigrate to Denmark, while also limiting welfare for immigrants – reforms that were massively unpopular among many in the left wing.

As Haarder later explains, his reforms were less designed to punish immigrants than prevent new arrivals from languishing on welfare. But the meeting of cultures is not unproblematic, he argues, especially if the host culture is uncertain about what its central values and principles are.

DEFINING DANISH SOCIETY

Months after assuming his role as Culture Minister last year, he presented a project to address this issue: the Denmark Canon (Danmarkskanon). Through a website, the public was invited to submit ideas for which social values, traditions or movements have shaped

You cannot have open social systems for anybody coming from all over the world, receiving social benefits at a level that is much higher than if they had qualified work in their home country. You cannot have that and have open borders too.

Denmark, and which they want to carry through to Danish society in the future.

The entries had to satisfy three conditions: they must relate to Danish history, have present and future relevance to Denmark, and can be considered immaterial in nature, for example historical events, traditions, movements or values.

This summer, Haarder presented the five Danish values and traditions that he feels are most central to Danish society: gender equality, free speech, the folk high school culture, working, and cycling.

"When I am asked what I first of all would like in the canon, I always think of the confidence that Danes have in each other. They even have confidence in public authorities. They even have confidence in politicians. We are the least corrupt country in the world. I think it will be very high on the list to keep it that way. Therefore we should not tolerate parallel societies following their own rules," he says adding that the welfare state has so far proved a popular submission.

"It very well may end up top of the list because we want to keep it. That's the reason why we cannot have open borders. You cannot have open social systems for anybody coming from all over the world, receiving social benefits at a level that is much higher than if they had qualified work in their home country. You cannot have that and have open borders too. That's impossible."

OPEN DOORS AND WINDOWS

Haarder often frames the Denmark Canon in terms of addressing the challenges presented by globalisation and immigration. And there are two sides to this. First, to properly engage with the rest of the world, Danes must first understand who they are as a society.

"I believe that people are most open towards people coming from outside, and influences from outside, if they have solid roots in their own culture. My Denmark Canon project is not in any way inward looking, it's not something that should separate us from other cultures or peoples," he says.

Second, is that for immigrants to thrive in Denmark, they must also understand the culture they are living in.

"We need to be more clear about what are the basic values of this country. Where can we be flexible? For example headscarves, and what we eat, and so on. But there are some basic values where there cannot be any compromise and I think it can be very useful to ask Danes what these are so we can be more clear."

OUTSIDE INFLUENCE

Haarder says he was careful to ensure that the project was not isolated from Danes with immigrant backgrounds, and invited in a num-

ber of them to contribute their thoughts during the planning stages. One of them is Abdel Aziz Mahmoud, a journalist at DR who is also outspoken in the political debate about integration.

In an interview in Berlingske, Aziz spoke out about his concerns that the Denmark's Canon could become a project to exclude, rather than include.

"If the concept of liberalism is included, the danger could be that people would be labelled unDanish if they were not liberal. I fear the canon could be used as a check list for what it means to be Danish," he said, adding that he still supported the project.

Radio host Rushy Rashid, another one of Haarder's consultants, expressed more enthusiasm for the Denmark Canon when Berlingske interviewed her.

"I grew up with parents that have strong values that easily overshadowed Danish values. So my experience is that we in Denmark need to be better at promoting the positive values."

Bjarke Møller, director of think tank Think Europe, pointed out that Danish culture was so embedded in European history that it makes little sense to speak of Danish traditions, cultures and values without also discussing Denmark's place in Europe.

"If the Denmark Canon is to really make sense, it needs to be seen as part of a larger European cultural canon, only translated into Danish," Møller wrote in an op-ed for Politiken newspaper.

But Haarder doesn't see these critiques as undermining the project. He points out that modern Danish culture was particularly shaped by Denmark's Golden Age in the first half of the 19th century, which saw a blossoming of Danish culture, particularly in arts and literature.

"It took place in a country where 40 percent of the citizens were Germans, because Denmark went all the way to Hamburg. Still, that was a Danish Golden Age. Why? Because of all the German influence, coming from Berlin, from Holstein, was met with a cultural conscience, with an ambition of taking the foreign influence and turning it into something generally Danish. That is what created a Golden Age. Not isolation, not closed windows and doors."

ETHNIC ISOLATION AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION

Haarder's objective with the Denmark Canon is not simply to identify uniquely Danish values and traditions in order to lay claim to them. Rather, it's an attempt to challenge cultural relativism, which he believes has had a damaging effect in the meeting of immigrants and the Danish welfare state. Unable to enter the labour market, and with easily available unemployment benefits, immigrants languished separate from the mainstream Danish society, and with little incentive to join it. ►

"I reiterated over and over again that it wasn't immigrants who were to blame. I kept repeating that they arrive in Denmark with a wish to work and with an ambition to take care of their families. But the first thing they get to know is how they don't need to work. And even though they are from the countryside, virtually all of them are put in apartment buildings and turned into wage earners with no chance of earning a wage because they have no qualifications. The Danish labour market is like a ladder where the lower steps are missing, so it's very difficult for those with no qualifications – who don't even speak the language – for them to find a low-paid job to begin with. That's what they can find in Southern European countries and the US and Canada, but not in the Scandinavian countries. We are run by unions that have made sure that you cannot work without having some of the highest wages in the world. And that's fine for the Danes. But for newcomers that leads to a very poisonous combination of ethnic isolation and social exclusion."

Haarder points to the failure of the Danish welfare state to get more immigrant women into work and traces it to a lack of assertiveness by Danes about the importance of gender equality – one of his picks for the Denmark Canon – and the expectation that both men and women should work in Denmark.

"Gender equality is the big problem in some of the immigrant communities. Because we have not been clear about this. They should have been told clearly that they have come to a country where gender equality cannot be compromised. That is true for their wives – who are supposed to be in the labour market and learn Danish otherwise they get no social benefits – and their daughters who are supposed to participate in the afternoon in after school activities. We have not been clear about this."

A MINISTER FOR IMMIGRANTS

Haarder laid out his critique of the welfare state in his 1997 book *Soft Cynicism*, which was released during his time as an MEP in the European Parliament.

"The point of my book is that soft values lead to cynicism," he told Information newspaper the same year. "We want to be so kind to children who can't read, that we end up letting them down so they become the worst at reading in Europe. We want to be so kind to young immigrants, but we end up ruining their chances of succeeding in the Danish society."

His views made him an ideal candidate for implementing tougher immigration laws when Venstre regained power in 2001. So effective were the policies he implemented, that family reunification dropped 68 percent, and asylum 81 percent between 2001 and 2005.

I was not at all unpopular among immigrants. Not at all. And now still I have very good friends among some very outspoken immigrants.

The laws were roundly condemned on the left wing, in part due to their collateral damage. The foreign partners of many Danes were prevented from moving to Denmark, leading them to start new lives across the Øresund in Sweden, where they could settle due to more relaxed immigration laws and their EU citizenship.

These so-called "love refugees" provoked the same outraged headlines in international media as the "jewellery law", which was introduced earlier this year and allows police to confiscate valuables from refugees. But despite the negative international attention these laws garnered, Haarder points out that they have ultimately served as inspiration for countries across Europe. They also didn't make him unpopular among immigrants, he says.

"I always attended the Eid festivities, Pakistan national day, I met a lot with the Turkish community. Immigrants felt in many ways that I was their minister. When I was walking around people often wanted to get their photograph taken with me. I was not at all unpopular among immigrants. Not at all. And now, still I have very good friends among some very outspoken immigrants."

The uproar over the jewellery law was particularly disproportionate, he argues, given that it has only been used once by police. Five Iranians were stopped in Copenhagen Airport in June travelling under fake documents, leading police to confiscate cash worth around 80,000 kroner.

"The jewellery law had absolutely no effect. It did harm our image abroad, and since it had no effect then many of us would probably have wanted the wording to be different. Because what it was about, was that if you want social benefits in Denmark, then you need to declare your incomes and assets and that's all there was to it."

EUROPEAN BREAKDOWN

According to a 2004 book by journalists Andreas Karker and Mikael Børsting from the tabloid B.T., Haarder's track record as immigration minister could be why he wasn't selected as Denmark's EU commissioner in 2004 – PM Anders Fogh Rasmussen didn't want to let him go.

After three years reforming Danish immigration law, Haarder felt his job was done, and he asked Rasmussen to consider him for the post. He was keen to return to Brussels and try his hand in the European Commission, after his seven years in the European Parliament between 1994 and 2001.

Rasmussen overlooked Haarder in favour of agriculture minister Mariann Fischer Boel, and he also missed out on the post in 2009 when Connie Hedegaard, the climate and energy minister from the Conservative People's Party, was sent to Brussels to spearhead its climate efforts.

Haarder is worried about the future of Europe, and blames the challenges presented by immigration for Brexit and the rise of populist sentiment across Europe, which could result in far right and anti-EU leaders, such as Marine Le Pen, from taking charge.

"They may cause the breakdown of the most remarkable peace project in world history, the European Union. It is so dramatic. People think the union has failed. People think their leaders have closed their eyes to the integration problems. They feel that the leaders live in special areas and that all the problems are then carried by the working and poorest people who compete with immigrants and refugees," he says.

"The best thing that happened to Europe was the fall of the Berlin Wall. The worst is Brexit, because it could be the end of a remarkable period and it was all caused by immigration. That was the reason. Shouldn't we take problems of immigration seriously? And while my country has done something that might have been unnecessary, the fact that we are doing something has my full support." **M**

BERTEL HAARDER

Born on September 7, 1944 in Rønshoved south Jutland, he has four children with his wife Birgitte Haarder.

Graduated from Aarhus University in 1970 with a degree in political science, and worked as a teacher and lecturer between 1968 and 1975.

A lifelong member of the Liberal Party (Venstre), he has represented the party as an MP between 1975 and 1999, and again from 2005 to the present day.

Between 1994 and 2001 he served as an MEP for Venstre in the European Parliament. Between 1997 and 1999 he served as Vice-chairman, and from 1999 to 2001 as Vice-president and foreign affairs spokesman of the European Parliament's Liberal Group, ELDR 1999-2001.

He became the longest serving Danish minister since 1902 when he completed days 7,853 as a sitting minister on October 8.

In his time as government, he has been minister with a wide range of portfolios: Education, Research, Development, Ecclesiastical Affairs, European Affairs, Culture, Nordic Cooperation, and Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs.

He also sat in Folketinget's Presidium between 2011 and 2015, the committee that directs parliamentary negotiations.



TRIVIA

A talented songwriter and lyricist, he is known for penning songs for public occasions.

In 2005 he won Who Wants To Be A Millionaire and gave the prize money to the Marjatta Fælleskabet, which helps developmentally-challenged children.

In February 2010, the snow was so deep that he decided it would be fastest to ski from his home in Østerbro to Parliament to participate in a ceremony for the Germany author Hans Magnus Enzensberger, who had been awarded Sonningprisen. Beneath his winter coat, he was wearing a tuxedo.

Shortly before Christmas in 2010, Haarder had a notorious outburst at a journalist in the DR headquarters. Haarder thought the journalist had prepared him poorly for the interview, after asking questions that Haarder was not prepared to answer. He later apologised, and explained he had an emerging migraine, and was disappointed that he made the trip to DR to do the interview that meant he missed out on eating his favourite dish, rice pudding, which his wife had prepared before they attended a concert later in the evening.



Commemoration in the Ceremonial Hall in the Main Building of the University of Copenhagen.

University independence at risk

Self-owned and managed, universities have long made their own decisions on how best to conduct research and educate Denmark's brightest minds. But if the government follows the recommendations of a new report, they may soon have far greater control over university management. At risk is the international reputation of Danish research and education

UNIVERSITIES are among the most important institutions in a democratic state. They reflect on the challenges societies face and develop solutions and knowledge that keep us informed and educated. And, by supplying industry with graduates and expertise, they support the economy and create jobs and welfare.

But Danish universities now stand on the cusp of reforms that threaten their independence. The university sector warns that if the government follows recommendations to dominate university boards with politically appointed members, their research could be

seen as lacking objectivity, which would damage their credibility.

Proponents of the reforms argue that they will better ensure that universities satisfy their obligations to greater society. But there is little evidence to suggest, however, that universities are failing to do so, meaning the reforms present real risks, with few benefits.

MORE GOVERNMENT INFLUENCE

In April, the government launched a review of university management, to ensure that universities continue to produce high quality education that is relevant for society.

Sophie Frahm

"Over a third of students, in a number of fields, remain unemployed two years after graduation," education minister Ulla Tørnæs stated in a press release in April.

"This benefits neither the individual nor society. Further education institutions have gone through a significant development over the past 10 to 15 years, both in terms of organisation, size and management. So we want to see whether the framework for their management supports high quality education for work."

Consultancy Nextpuzzle was commissioned to carry out the re-

search, and in September presented its recommendations. It found that members of university boards often felt decoupled from the daily management of universities. This limited their ability to make decisions that helped universities satisfy their obligations.

The boards of Denmark's eight universities are responsible for managing resources and hiring its leadership. They consist of 11 members: two board members represent the academic staff, one board member represents the support staff, while two board members represent the students. The remaining six are drawn from

outside the university, and are selected by the five board members that are employed at the university.

Nextpuzzle found that while this model was working, it still faced a number of challenges in ensuring that the courses offered by universities were high quality and relevant. And while Nextpuzzle found that boards are adequately equipped to enact the political goals of the Education Ministry, it could be improved through closer cooperation between the ministry and board. They call for the ministry to be involved in selecting university boards through a selection committee, or for the minster to approve proposed candidates.

According to Weekendavisen, the Permanent Secretary of the Education Ministry, Agnete Gersing, set out their proposed changes in a closed meeting with university leadership in October. They proposed establishing a permanent selection board that would choose candidates to serve as university board chairman. The chairman would then select candidates for the six external board members, which would then have to be approved by the education minister.

LESS INDEPENDENCE

Until now, university-appointed board members were in the majority. But under the proposed model the government will have control over appointing a majority of board members.

It is a move that has been strongly criticised by the education sector. Anders Bjarklev, Vice chancellor of DTU and chairman of Universities Denmark argues that the education ministry already enjoys high levels of control over higher education – everything from salaries to the size of courses. The minister can even fire an entire university board if they are not doing their job properly.

"If we get management boards that are handpicked by the minister, it's possible that a professor here and there would self-censure to avoid trouble," Bjarklev told Weekendavisen, adding that the

current model is advantageous because researchers cannot fear reprisal from the government due to their research.

"The universities we cooperate with in Europe and globally, all have as a standard premise that they are politically independent. Otherwise you're not allowed to partake. It's a problem if it becomes questionable whether the knowledge is based on science or on the opinion of the current minister."

AN OVERSIMPLIFIED REPORT

Jonas Krog Lind, a PhD student at the University of Copenhagen with a specialisation in university governance, argues that it's too early to tell what the effect of the proposed changes will be.

"The final result will depend on the criteria the selection boards are given. But we don't currently know what the final practice will be. It may not necessarily lead to greater political influence, we can only speculate at this time," he said.

The effect will depend on whether the new boards will see their role as representing the interests of society or the university, he adds. The current law emphasises that university boards should serve the interest of universities and not the preferences of the government or even society at large.

He points out that while some research shows that universities perform better when they are given greater autonomy, the experience in Switzerland – where the state has a lot of control over universities that perform very well – is the opposite. This indicates that there are no single model for great performance.

However, he believes the Nextpuzzle report bases its conclusions on thin evidence, and without taking into consideration a wide range of factors that affect the ability for universities to satisfy their societal responsibilities.

"The ministry should consider a more holistic approach to the governance of universities. For instance, could the same goals – of improving quality of education and employability of candidates – be

Over a third of students, in a number of fields, remain unemployed two years after graduation. This benefits neither the individual or society.

ULLA TØRNÆS, EDUCATION MINISTER



reached by the taximeter reform, which the ministry is working on separately at the same time? Treating funding of education and the steering model for the universities as separate issues is probably not a good strategy."

A LONG TIME COMING

According to Lind, Danish universities have traditionally sought to follow the Humboldt university model, which values freedom of research and collegial governance of the university. Prussian philosopher and scientist Alexander von Humboldt thought it was important for universities to remain completely independent from the state, whose job he saw as guaranteeing an open framework for research and education.

In recent years, however, universities have come to be viewed as a state instrument. Rather than as independent institutions that exist simply to produce new knowledge, Lind says universities now function as tools to achieve a number of goals, including creating jobs and economic growth.

"Many of the reforms we've seen in recent years have been about moving to a market-focused model, which is built on a desire to create and enhance competition."

But while universities have lobbied against reforms that threaten their independence, they have slowly succumbed to political pressure to ensure that public investments are maximised.

Chair of the University of Copenhagen management board, Nils Strandberg Pedersen, is worried that if politicians start appointing members it will send the wrong signal foreign universities.

"It creates a hint of political interference, which will create a similar political control as we know from Turkey and old Eastern Europe," Pedersen told Berlingske.

Aarhus University rector, Brian Bech Nielsen, is also critical of the proposal.

"Politicians ought to control the framework while giving university leaders the necessary freedom to lead universities within the given framework. The problem is not solved through politically appoint-

ed board members," he told Berlingske.

MORE, NOT LESS, FREEDOM

Despite meetings with university management, MP and education spokesman from the governing Liberal Party, Jakob Engel-Schmidt, said that the government has yet to make a final decision on how to proceed with enacting the recommendations from Nextpuzzle.

Nonetheless, the Social Liberal Party (Radikale) has attacked the government's tentative suggestions. MP Sofie Carsten Nielsen – who was education minister under the former Social Democrat government – argues that following Nextpuzzle's recommendations would result in needless government authority over universities.

"What problem is being solved when the minister selects board members? Does she imagine that universities will change course in tact with the political policies being addressed in Parliament, and that it should be possible for politicians to use universities to promote their own agendas? Perhaps not directly, but the opportunity will now be there. It is the board that hires the Rector, and the Rector of course has a huge influence on the university's priorities and daily management," Nielsen wrote in an op-ed for Weekendavisen, adding that she is concerned that the reforms will open a direct line of communication between the Ministry and researchers, which threatens the independence of researchers who might feel at risk of reprisal.

Nielsen concedes that university managements face challenges in ensuring that universities live up to their responsibilities. She outlines challenges in selecting the most competent board, producing the best Master's graduates when the pressure on universities is the quantity not quality of graduates, and ensuring research funding is most effectively spent.

She believes, however, that giving them more room for manoeuvre, not limiting their autonomy, is more likely to improve their performance. **M**

Women in Denmark remain at risk of FGM

In 2011 the Danish government signed a European Council convention that committed them to investigate the extent of female genital mutilation (FGM) in Denmark. But with no action over the past five years, Denmark is being accused of violating the convention and putting vulnerable women at continued risk



UK Department for International Development

A CULTURAL PRACTICE without a medical basis, which leaves women with long-term health risks, female genital mutilation (FGM) has affected at least 200 million women around the world. But while it is most prevalent in Africa, Asia and the Middle East, women in Denmark are also at risk.

Sadly, there is no statistical evidence to clarify exactly how large an issue FGM is in Denmark, which limits the ability of parliament, health professionals

Kristoffer Dahl
Kvalvik &
Joshua Ursin
Hollingdale

and civil society to take action. This lack of information was supposed to be addressed after Denmark signed the European Council's Istanbul Convention in 2011.

The convention commits signatories to protect women against any act of violence and take the necessary legislative steps to prevent, investigate and punish the offenders.

Five years on and still no statistical studies have been made to survey how many women in Denmark have undergone – or are at risk of

undergoing – FGM. The government's action plan for combating FGM, has also not been updated since 2010.

By failing to live up to its obligations, Denmark is therefore violating the convention, explains Christopher Badse, director of the monitoring department at The Danish Institute for Human Rights.

"As there is no data available, our opinion is that Denmark does not have the required overview and is thereby failing one

of its areas of responsibilities," says Badse, adding that if FGM is to be properly combated in Denmark, it is essential to have data to work from.

"We believe that it is necessary to have the right basis of evidence in order to be able to come up with the correct initiatives to combat FGM."

20,000 AT RISK

Despite a lack of official statistics, it is possible to estimate the extent of the problem in

FGM FACTS

FGM or Female Genital Mutilation is a practice where a girl or woman's genitalia is changed or damaged with no medical purpose.

There is no medical advantage connected to FGM.

FGM is extremely painful and can lead to serious bleeding and a vast range of long-term issues with sex, urination and can result in cysts, infection and also makes it more likely that the woman will die during childbirth

More than 200 million women and girls have been subjected to FGM worldwide.

The practice is most prevalent in African countries, The Middle East and parts of Asia, but is not a religious practice.

Circumcision is often done when a girl is between the ages of 0 and 15.

FGM is a violation of human rights.

Left: A UK aid supported UNICEF-UNFPA Joint Programme conducted focus groups with community representatives in Burkina Faso on the practice of Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting. They asked the programme to include teaching about FGM/C in pre-schools.

In some communities in Burkina Faso, FGM/C is carried out when during a child's primary school years. If children are aware that it is harmful they can report cases and seek help to prevent the practice.

Denmark. According to Danmarks Statistik, in 2014 there were 17,500 women resident in Denmark who originate from the 28 African countries in which there is a strong tradition for FGM. Within that group were 8,500 women from Somalia where 98 percent of the female population has undergone FGM, according to UNICEF.

Lena Nyhus, head of the anti-FGM organisation Intact Denmark, says as many as 20,000 women in Denmark have either undergone FGM or are at risk of it. The number

I think the best thing to do is to check people who arrive in European Council member countries from countries with a tradition of FGM traditions.

NATALIE KONTOLIS,
END FGM EUROPEAN NETWORK

could be significantly higher if female immigrants and descendants from non-African countries, where FGM is known to take place, are also included.

"The UN is neither interested in the well-hidden FGM culture in Pakistan, nor the very visible one in Indonesia, which makes it impossible to get access to any data from that area in a country like Denmark," she says, adding that the problem is likely growing in Denmark.

"We know from countries like Sweden, Norway and the UK – where the interest in the area has been a lot bigger – that FGM is a growing issue. The reason for the growth is that implementation of legislation has been either weak or, in countries like Denmark, non-existent," she explains.

While Nyhus calls for more statistical research in the area, she also calls for a larger focus on children's rights in general, as she considers this the best tool to defeat FGM.

"Of course we need to have data and it is utterly bizarre that we are not living up to the convention we have signed. However, I just want to stress that the data cannot stand on its own. A broader effort is required," she says.

DIFFICULT TO ESTIMATE

Els Leye is an assistant professor at The University of Ghent where she is a coordinator for the Focal Programme on Harmful Cultural Practices at the International Centre for Reproductive Health. She has studied FGM since 2008 and is one of the leading European experts in the field.

She has developed a model that provides a very rough estimate of the number of women residing in Denmark that have suffered FGM. However, the model does not take into account the women and girls who are at risk.

"Estimating the number of women with FGM is always difficult because of the fact that it

is a very personal and controversial subject. The number I have come to is roughly 8,000. These are the ones with FGM, not the ones at risk," says Leye.

NO EUROPEAN OVERVIEW

End FGM European Network is a European umbrella organisation consisting of 15 different anti-FGM NGOs whose goal is to draw attention to the issue on the European level. Spokesperson Natalie Kontoulis agrees with Nyhus' estimate of the extent of the issue in Denmark, based on the number of immigrants and descendants from countries with a long-running tradition of FGM.

She argues that current initiatives in Europe are insufficient to tackle the scale of the problem.

"It is incredibly hard to find any data on the area – not just in Denmark but in many European countries. This is due to the fact that many EU-governments simply do not accumulate data from the affected groups," she says.

The European Parliament estimates that the number of women that have undergone FGM, which are living in the EU, could be as high as 500,000. The parliament also estimates that a further 180,000 women and girls are at risk of undergoing FGM every year.

"We consider those numbers to be grossly underestimated. The actual amount is much, much higher," says Kontoulis, adding that while a number of initiatives are in place in EU-countries, many have not been implemented.

"The EU and the European Council have initiatives in place to combat FGM, but because of the financial crisis and the refugee crisis, they have never been properly put into place by the member states. Teachers, nurses, lawyers and employees in asylum centres need to be properly trained to talk to affected persons and, of course, in treating them. This is not currently happening."

Kontoulis argues that for

FGM to be adequately combated, better legislation and greater awareness is needed. But this is only possible following a thorough overview of the current situation.

"I think the best thing to do is to check people who arrive in European Council member countries, from countries with a tradition of FGM traditions. We need to make sure that gynaecologists, nurses and doctors are trained in registering and treating women who either have been or are at risk of being subjected to FGM."

She also calls for better transnational cooperation in the area.

"In order to really combat the issue it is necessary for all signatories to agree on a single way of implementing the convention. It is possible that the EU can help with finding the best way of implementing the convention, but in the end it is up to the individual states and as of now it is simply not a high-priority issue."

SIX CHARGED IN DENMARK

Ulla Sandbæk, MP for Alternativet, says she is disappointed by Denmark's inaction.

"The Alternative is of course highly critical of the fact that Denmark is not living up to its obligations. We will consult the relevant minister on the matter, and continue to work toward ensuring that the Convention on the Rights of a Child, which bans FGM, is implemented in Danish law."

Sandbæk pressed Justice Minister Søren Pind on the issue in a parliamentary question. He answered that Denmark ratified the Istanbul Convention in 2014. He added that it is illegal under Danish law to perform FGM, which carries a six year sentence, and that between 2012 and 2015 the National Police charged five individuals with the offence.

"The Justice Ministry does not have any information about how many people are at risk of FGM in Denmark or in their parent's homeland," Pind wrote. ■



Amager Bakke photographed this summer, while under construction.

Copenhagen's dirty, white elephant

It was supposed to be a landmark that combined modern architecture, recreational facilities and sensible Danish waste management. But the multi-billion kroner waste-to-energy plant Amager Bakke will likely be a burden to taxpayers and might slow down other environmental waste strategies

WHILE SOME CITIES build skyscrapers or opera houses, Copenhagen is building a very different landmark of its own. Standing 85 meters tall, the Amager Bakke waste-to-energy power plant is set to be the second largest building in Copenhagen when it is finished in 2017.

Amager Bakke is a four-billion-kroner prestige project. Not only will its two enormous incineration ovens turn waste into energy for Copenhageners, it will also be a recreational centre just three kilometres from the City Hall Square, with three artificial ski slopes, a climbing wall and a café.

When the City Council approved the plans for the new incineration plant late 2012, Copenhagen mayor Frank Jensen, was ecstatic.

"The plant will be one of the world's most environmentally-friendly incineration plants and will provide a showcase for Danish green technology. It will contribute to export and green, sustainable growth," he declared in press release.

But less than a year before the

We now have a facility that does not have enough trash and therefore has a massive deficit which Copenhagen taxpayers have to pay.

MP IDA AUKEN

Jon David Finsen

plant is set to turn on its ovens, it is facing massive difficulties.

ECONOMICALLY UNSUSTAINABLE
The plant's biggest problem is that there's simply not enough trash to burn. The plant has a capacity of about 500,000 tons of trash a year, but the five municipalities that own it, do not produce enough waste to fill the ovens.

Running the plant at a lower capacity will generate less revenue, which could potentially accumulate an operational deficit of 1.9 billion kroner by 2020 – a deficit that tax payers will have to foot.

In an attempt to prevent the plant from becoming an economic burden on the city's tax payers, the plant has been given the green light to import trash from abroad in order to fill the ovens. In total, it is estimated that the plant will need to import between 90,000 and 115,000 tons of trash a year – more than one fifth of the entire capacity.

The plans to import waste breaks with the original political agreement for the plant from 2012, which prohibited import-

ing waste due to climate considerations. However, the new agreement justifies the import by arguing that burning trash is better than dumping it in landfills.

Associate professor Søren Løkke, from the Department of Development and Planning at Aalborg University, acknowledges that importing trash may make sense from a short term environmental and financial standpoint. But he also points out that importing trash is only a temporary measure, because flammable trash is a diminishing product – both in Denmark and around Europe.

"In the short term, you might say that trash is better spent in a Danish incineration oven than being deposited at landfills in the UK, for instance. But in the long run, the British will most likely develop their own incineration plants and increase recycling," he told Finans.

"In other words, we are basing the economic sustainability of our plant on the obsolete waste management policies of other countries."

Furthermore, Løkke points out, that the waste market is vol-

atile and fragile. With a forthcoming EU liberalisation of the waste market – combined with fierce competition from incineration plants in Sweden, the Netherlands and Germany – even the current back-up plan to sustain Amager Bakke with imported waste, might not be enough to save the plant from a massive deficit in the short term.

DIRTIER THAN PLANNED

Jens Peter Mortensen, an environmental expert at The Danish Society for Nature Conservation, fears that the import of trash will hurt the environment and increase Copenhagen's carbon footprint.

"Imported trash typically consist of paper, cardboard and plastic – typically between 15 to 40 percent plastic. In comparison, Danish waste contains an average of only 11 percent plastic," he tells the Danish newspaper, Ingeniøren.

Burning plastic releases high levels of greenhouse gasses, such as CO₂, meaning that the imported trash will result in increased

Continues on page 37

A simple antidote gives addicts hope

The opiate antidote naloxone can save the lives of heroin addicts and, if delivered early enough, can prevent organ damage too. Antidote Denmark recently received 1.6 million kroner to train addicts and health professionals how to use the drug, which could reduce overdose deaths that are more common than those resulting from traffic accidents

I TAKE THE GLASS VIAL and wrap the tip in my t-shirt and try to break it off without spilling the contents. I place it on the table and reach for the syringe and needle, gingerly removing the plastic cap. But when I pick up the vial again, and attempt to clumsily dip in the needle to draw up the liquid, Marianne Kromann intervenes.

"No, no, you will just end up poking yourself with the needle that way," the 32-year-old doctor says, taking the syringe from my hands.

She places the vial on the table again, before drawing up the contents, removing the needle and replacing it with a plastic device that creates a diffuse spray when the plunger is pressed.

"Here, now give it a go," she says handing it to me, before I spray the contents up the nose of a plastic dummy.

HARM REDUCTION

If it were a real person suffering a heroin overdose, it may well have saved their life. The vials contain naloxone, an opiate antidote, which swiftly binds to opiate receptor sites in the brain that prevents opiates from having an effect.

Around 250 people die every year from drug overdoses, of which heroin and other opiates are responsible for around 80 per cent. In comparison, around 170 people died in traffic accidents last year.

But naloxone can do more than just save lives, it can protect from organ and brain damage too. Opiates affect the central nervous system, which controls breathing, so when users overdose their breathing can become so shallow that they become starved of oxygen, which can kill them.

They can still come around if the overdose was mild, but their brain and other organs could have been starved of oxygen, resulting in permanent damage. According to the EU Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, there are around 20 to 25 non-fatal over-

I didn't meet one person who either had had an overdose, or knew someone who had died.

MARIANNE KROMANN

Peter Stanners



One of the kits that Antidote Denmark hands out to drug users, that includes two vials of naloxone.

doses for every death. So the sooner the antidote is administered the better.

OVERLOOKED GROUP

Which brings me to why I am delivering a life-saving drug to a dummy in the back house just off Værnedamsvej in Vesterbro. It's a class that teaches people how to use naloxone and in the room are around 15 other, mostly young people, who work with vulnerable drug users on a daily basis. The class is organised by Antidote, a charity founded by social entrepreneur Michael Lodberg Olsen, the pioneer behind Denmark's first safe injection facilities for drug users.

Antidote's mission is to ensure that naloxone is as widely available as possible. They hold courses both for health professionals and for drug users, and supply them with a free kit containing two vials of naloxone and a syringe.

Kromann is one of the volunteer doctors who helps teach the classes, which take place most Wednesdays. At the moment she works in an ears, nose and throat department, but says she has always felt a need to volunteer her time to help marginalised groups.

"Drug addicts are an overlooked group because they can't speak up for themselves," she explains. "Many don't have the time or energy to write letters and communicate the issues they face. They live day to day, and just get lost in the system. Very often we health professionals only meet them for the first time when things really start to go wrong."

She spent some time in a women's shelter in Roskilde, which house a number of addicts, and some of them used sex work to earn the money to pay for drugs. She says they tell her that those with a severe heroin addiction need to earn around 2000 kroner a day, which means they are more or less either working or taking drugs.

"What struck me is how much they have to work to finance their addiction – how tough it is and they don't enjoy it. They are also very scared of dying, and I didn't meet one person who either had had an overdose, or knew someone who had died. Many of them were interested in taking the course because they don't want to die and don't want their friends to die."

ADDICTS ARE NORMAL PEOPLE

Antidote's work has been recognised

by the government, which last month set aside 7.5 million kroner for teaching drug users how to use naloxone. Antidote received around 1.6 million of the total, while the remaining sum was divided between seven municipalities.

From a personal perspective, Kromann supports the program that supplies heroin addicts the drug through a prescription. This could lower the risk they would commit crime, or enter sex work, to pay for their addiction. And the time they would save in the process, not having to earn the money to pay for the drug, could be used on rehabilitation.

For now, though, Antidote is just another step in improving the quality of life of one of Denmark's most overlooked and marginalized groups.

"When they have friends or partners who have the antidote, it makes them feel much safer," she says.

"Some politicians don't want to support the Antidote program and I don't understand why. These are people just like you or me, just with an addiction, which they really can't help. I don't think we are going to help them by not giving them this opportunity." **M**



A refugee uses a mobile phone in the Idomeni refugee centre in Greece.

"Everyone has the right to information"

After discovering that refugees often lacked accurate information as they fled war and violence, three graduate students from Copenhagen Institute of Interaction Design established the social startup Refugee Text – a chatbot that helps refugees get the information they need, when they need it

IMAGINE YOU'RE ON THE RUN, alone in a strange country, with few possessions and little knowledge about what's coming next. War and violence have forced you to leave your home and old life behind. You're looking for food, shelter and help, but the information available is limited and helping hands are few and far between.

Since 2015, thousands of refugees from Afghanistan, the Middle East and Africa have journeyed to Europe to seek asylum in the hope of a better life. After risking their lives crossing the Mediterranean, they often land in overwhelmed reception sites and overflowing refugee camps where they struggle to get the answers they need to reach their final destination.

A new source of help is now at hand. Refugee Text, a new Copenhagen-based social startup, has developed a chatbot to help refugees access the information they need through SMS.

Kåre Solvåg and Caroline Arvidsson – two of the three graduate students from the Copenhagen

Institute of Interaction Design (CI-ID) that developed Refugee Text – explain that their goal is to inform as many people as possible, with as much information as possible.

"Through our research we've found that refugees have walked up and down streets in camps, unaware that there was an activity centre, a food hall or a help desk next

door," Arvidsson said.

They found that most information within refugee camps and communities is currently spread through word of mouth, flyers, mo-



The Refugee Text team, Caroline Arvidsson, Kåre Solvåg and Ciarán Duffy.

Sophie Frahm

bile services, factsheets, household visits, television broadcasts, random encounters or loudspeaker announcements.

"But our field research found that it simply wasn't effective enough," says Solvåg. "Information is essential because it allows refugees to fully know their rights, understand what services are available and how to access help".

INFORMATION VACUUM

Solvåg started working on Refugee Text in October 2015 in response to the refugee crisis that had escalated over the previous summer. He did six weeks of field research in a number of hotspots in different European countries, working with activist groups and asylum experts, and visiting community centres and border regions where he observed and interviewed volunteers and refugees.

"I soon realised that there was a huge problem – there was lack of information, wrong information, misleading rumours and situations where refugees were told one thing and volunteers another. I realised that something had to be done".

Together they developed a chatbot that is supplied by knowledge from aid organisations that is then passed on to refugees over SMS.

"Almost all asylum seekers have a mobile phone, which makes it the most obvious tool to use, because it's something everyone has," says Arvidsson, adding that a chatbot is the perfect tool to deliver information as quickly as possible – and to as many people as possible – in an emergency.

The system is quite simple. An organisation inputs information, which is then held in a customised database. Refugees who text the service are first asked to select their language, which they do by responding to the automated text message. Afterwards, they can navigate to the information relevant to them by continuously responding to simple text messages that provide them with increasingly precise answers about their specific situation.

Aid organisations can continually update the information, which ensures that users always receive the most up to date information. The UN refugee agency (UNHCR) even wants to upload the chatbot to their website, as an alternative to their own hotline.

"And we can distribute information as soon as a border opens or closes and as soon as the EU

There was a huge information problem – there was lack of information, wrong information, misleading rumours and situations where refugees were told one thing and volunteers another. I realised that something had to be done.

KÅRE SOLVÅG

makes a rule change," says Solvåg.

TRANSPARENCY

Arvidsson adds that in Greece, for example, they found that some aid organisations and volunteers withheld information from refugees, either because the information might complicate their journey, or because they thought it wasn't worth the bother because the rules were constantly changing. Refugee Text won't curate information in this way.

"We believe that everyone has a right to all information. Our voice, or the organisation's voice through

our tool, is meant to be like a very good friend on their journey," says Arvidsson.

A major advantage of the chatbot is the number of people it can reach. Not everyone has access to the internet, which limits the reach of an app or web-based service. It also alleviates the pressure of aid workers who are currently the primary source of information for refugees – and often spend a lot of time simply repeating the same information over and over again. By providing an alternative source of information, staff and aid workers are freed to work on other areas

related to the welfare of refugees.

The trio is currently Designing a chatbot specifically for the 60,000 refugees who are currently stuck in Greece because of the refugee deal the EU made with Turkey. They have found partners to supply the information, but currently lack funding. **M**

Refugee Text has launched a crowdfunding campaign. For more information, please visit: bit.ly/refugeetext



Most refugees have a telephone that they use during their journey.



Angel Garcia

Angel Garcia

Cracking the code to making Danish friends

Denmark might be one of the best countries in the world to live in, but many foreigners find it really hard to make friends. The key might be realising that Danes are more like coconuts, than peaches

Over a trendy pot of chia-porridge at Grød, the world's first porridge-only restaurant, Brock Willis shares his experience of relocating to Denmark.

"I was mostly interested in the culture and lifestyle," Willis explained. "Since I moved here I can see why it's ranked as such a happy place – everything is quite perfect and Copenhagen is a very easy city to live in."

Willis moved from Perth, Australia to Copenhagen seven months ago and chose the Danish capital because of all the positive stories he had read, and heard, over the years. And he's far from alone in making the move. According to Copenhagen City Council, 36,000 foreign nationals moved to Copenhagen in 2015, the majority from USA, Italy and Germany. Numbers from Danmarks Statistik show that the number of foreign residents in Denmark increased a massive 57 percent between 2008 and 2016, to 468,000 – around eight percent of the total population.

Their choice of destination is unsurprising given that Denmark regularly tops international rankings for happiest and most liveable countries. Its cultural practices are now on trend, with at least nine different books all being released in the past year on the concept of 'hygge'. Living standards are undoubtedly high, and Danish social welfare is among the world's most generous.

HAPPY FOR ALL?

But free student grants and cheap childcare is not enough to secure Denmark's position at the top of

Those who come from from warmer countries, with expectations from an outdoor culture all year round find it hard to integrate here.

HELEN RUSSELL

Gabriele Dellisanti



Laura Francioli moved from northern Italy to Denmark eight years ago for university, and never left.

every poll. In the most recent annual report from expat organisation InterNations, Denmark ranked among the worst countries when it came to settling in. Out of 67 countries surveyed, Denmark scored dead last when it came to the ease for internationals to make friends with locals.

Willis agrees that Danes can be hard to make friends with.

"I personally find it quite difficult to integrate. I feel like you have to try a lot and, from experience, Danes are quite hard to reach. You have to know someone that knows them before they let you in."

Expats living in Denmark found Danes were less friendly to foreigners than in most of the countries surveyed. On average, 65 percent of expats around the world said their host country was composed of friendly people; only 49 percent of expats in Denmark could say the same.

Participants were also encouraged to comment on both the benefits and downsides of living in their current country of residence. In Denmark's case, repeated statements from responders included: "everyone keeps to themselves", "the Danish do not mingle easily", "they tend to keep their circle of friends limited to family and childhood friends", and "people are too closed off".

InterNation's founder and co-CEO Malte Zeeck points out that the statements indicate that Danes are a tightly knit community, which makes it hard for foreigners to break in and find common ground.

"Beyond the fact that Denmark is a relatively small and homogeneous society, there could also be cultural differences making an impact. Scandinavians in general have a reputation of being very reserved and aloof."

INACCESSIBLE CULTURE CODES

British journalist and writer Michael Booth relocated to Denmark over a decade ago and his fascination with Nordic societies led him to write *The Almost Nearly Perfect People*, a book that takes a look at both the bright and dark sides of Scandinavian culture.

He argues that cultural and structural factors make Denmark seem like a closed society to foreigners who try to settle here. The educational system, for example, keeps children with the same peers for a number of years, which accustoms them to maintain tight knit groups.

"I've had Danish close friends for 15 years, but I still feel like I'm on a second level of friendship. Danes make friends at school and they stick to those friends for the rest of their life. And one part of this survey picked out that it is hard to get into the inner circle."

The InterNations report offers an insight on the life of expats living in 67 countries around the world. It helps giving an understanding on the differences between the lives of locals and internationals. Denmark ranked well when it came to work-life balance (2nd) and the best countries for working abroad (11th). However, it ranked very low in the feeling at home and finding friends subcategories. Out of 67 countries it ranked 65th for the ease of settling in, 60th for the perceived friendliness of locals, 64th for feeling welcomed by locals and fell to the last spot for the ease of finding friends.

Booth also points out that because Danes are so socially homogenous, there is less need for friendly reassurance to mask over social differences, which are more pronounced in many other Western countries than in Denmark.

WORKING YOUR WAY IN SOCIETY

Laura Francioli moved from northern Italy to Denmark eight years ago for university and never left. She grew up in the warmer and friendlier climes of southern Europe, which is a strong contrast to the reservedness of Danes and the cold climate they live in.

Francioli now works as a psychologist in Copenhagen and says her experience of relocating to Denmark has been mostly positive. She stressed the importance of adapting to Danish society and playing by its rules – once you demonstrate a willingness to break the ice, nothing can go wrong.

"I believe the most important aspect of relocating here is adapting to Danish lifestyle rules, which you have to understand thoroughly," she explains. "Danes often come across as reserved because they tend to plan everything – even their social life."

The biggest culture shock southern Europeans experience, she argues, is the lack of spontaneity.

"Italians here complain that Danes are unable to plan a coffee or lunch break straight away. Southern Europeans are more flexible when it comes to this and Danes are not, but you have to respect."

Helen Russell, originally from London, recounts her life in Den-

mark since her relocation to Billund in her book *A year of living Danishly*. She agrees with Francioli's assessment.

"When I moved here, I just had to live Danishly because I knew that I was the one who had to make an effort. You just have to make your way into the inner circles," she explained.

"I have talked with people about living Danishly, and I've found that those who come from warmer countries with expectations from an outdoor culture all year round find it hard to integrate here."

BREAKING THE COCONUT

Kristian Næsby, a visiting Danish lecturer at the Department of Scandinavian studies at the University of Washington in Seattle, argues that you can't judge a Dane based on a first encounter – you first need to "crack the code". He recalls an analogy made by an American student he was teaching, who described Americans as peaches, accessible on the surface, but with a hard and unreachable core. Danes were coconuts, hard and almost impossible to crack, but once you are in, you get it all.

"Danes are not good at being first to extend a helping hand to strangers, but I do believe that Danes are really friendly when approached correctly," says Næsby.

The key to making friends in Denmark seems to be perseverance. Unpack those bags, dig deep, and persist. If you crack Danes correctly, you might just learn the elusive art of 'hygge'. Given how many books have been written about it, it must be worth the hype. Right? **M**



Dagny Felslund-Jensen lost her job when the factory she worked for moved to Poland. She says she's lucky to have found another job in her field.

West of Valby: The forgotten Denmark

Continued from page 13

ism industry and lots of creative people," he says. "But we are hurting from the loss of industry, and you can't just snap your fingers and turn industrial workers into creative innovators, that is not how it works."

ONE OF THE LUCKY ONES

Dagny Felslund-Jensen among those who have lost a job due to globalisation. For over twenty years she worked in a factory for the company Faber, making awnings, blinds and drapes. But, in 2008, production was moved to Poland.

"The expectation was always that you worked there until you retired. When they left there was an incredible sense of having been betrayed. We had been told that if we worked harder and had fewer hours the jobs would stay," she says.

"There were people who lost everything. Whole families worked there and were left without a single breadwinner. I know of people who even lost their houses."

Felslund-Jensen has a thick Funen accent and a large laugh. Without any formal education and having only worked one job in her life, she thought she might never work again when she lost her job, aged 51.

"It was the first time I wished I was older so I could just retire," she says.

"Me and schools have never been good friends. I finished a seven-year primary school education. I can read and write, sure, but I have always been someone who needs to work with their hands."

A NEGATIVE CHANGE

She was lucky, though, and managed to find a new job within her field, in a small company in the Faaborg-Mydftyn municipality – an area that has suffered one of the worst level of job losses in recent years.

She grew up not too far away, and says that she has seen what the negative effects globalisation and deindustrialisation can be.

"The development here has definitely been very negative," she says. "We used to have a lot of industry and jobs, but that is mostly gone. The mood here can feel a bit resigned. But then again we from Funen are very down to earth, so usually we think about our problems in the terms of 'everything will be alright'."

Despite that she fears that a generation of

young people might fall by the wayside.

"I have a grown up granddaughter and both she and her boyfriend have never made it into the workforce, and I do worry about her. I also know that if my other grandchildren want to make a life for themselves then they need to leave. They need to get educated and you can't do that here."

Region Syddanmark predicts that a further 10,000 positions for low skilled labourers will be lost by 2021, which only increases the pressure on residents to get educated, while increasing the competition for the remaining jobs.

"If my grandchildren are going to make a life for themselves they will not be able to stay here. They will need to get educated and for that they'll have to leave," says Felslund-Jensen, who argues that the responsibility for the current climate rests at the feet of the political class that often seems too far removed from the more remote parts of the country.

"I don't think they have so much forgotten about us, as much as they ignore our existence. There has been a definite arrogance towards people who are not highly educated. If you don't work in front of a computer, you are doing something wrong. It is not seen as fancy being a plumber or an elderly care worker. But you can't just run society on people who work behind a desk."

REUNITING THE PEOPLE

Felslund-Jensen fears Denmark splitting into two disparate countries, separated by class and geography.

"DF has used that split to their benefit. They claim to have a solution and they blame our situation on foreigners. It saddens me to say that I know of a lot of people who have started to support DF. Because there definitely exists what you could call 'arch-Copenhagengers' who have no idea how people west of Valby bakke live," she says, referring to the hill that marks the Copenhagen's western boundary.

She hopes that the split between the two groups and geographical areas can be overcome, and that the sense of community among people can be strengthened. But in order for that to happen, she believes the highly educated 'arch-Copenhagengers' need to understand a crucial fact of life.

"The truth is, some of us only have these ten fingers to work with." **M**



Copenhagen says 'yes' to improv comedy

A glorious celebration of self-expression, collaboration and imagination? Or a self-indulgent bid to boost fragile egos? Improvised theatre – improv – has its fans and detractors. With the opening in Copenhagen of Denmark's first and only professional theatre dedicated entirely to improv, we delve into this divisive art form

No culture has embraced and celebrated improv with such rapture as America. Over the past forty years, practically all comedy actors in Hollywood cut their teeth in this way. Original Ghostbusters Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd and Harold Ramis, and current line up Melissa McCarthy, Kristen Wiig, Kate McKinnon and Leslie Jones, all came from improv. Tina Fey and Amy Poehler also credit their success to the time spent on stage making stuff up for laughs.

And it is partly thanks to Poe-

hler's New York improv company, Upright Citizens' Brigade (UCB), that I found myself fumbling about on stage in the centre of Copenhagen.

Improv Comedy Copenhagen (ICC) is dedicated to American-style improvisational comedy and was founded by American performer Stephanie Grassley, together with Danes, Stefan Pagels and Kaspar Jacobsen.

Grassley was a member of UCB in New York and relocated to Copenhagen in 2014, when she met Pagels, who also spent several years in the US studying and performing with some of the best per-

formers on the celebrated Chicago improv scene. After running his own improv shows in Chicago and Copenhagen, Pagels joined forces with Grassley and, together with, Jacobsen set up the ICC.

Fast forward to 2016, and the ICC is now putting on professional shows every Monday, Friday and Saturday, entirely in English, performed by players from all over the world. Most have also trained at the ICC, taking one of the many courses and drop-in workshops on offer. With corporate training packages also available, it's clear the ICC has lofty ambitions. But do they know what they're doing,

or are they just making it up as they go along?

I stumbled into their wonderfully warped world of improv while searching online for English-speaking comedy in Denmark. Turns out, there's not much on offer, which I always found to be odd. Most people in the world don't speak Danish, but if you find yourself in Copenhagen, wherever you're from, chances are you'll be communicating in English. That means there are hundreds of thousands of students, tourists and expats in the capital who would love to see live comedy in a language they can more easily understand.

Adrian Mackinder

When I found the ICC website I was intrigued, and immediately signed up for a week-long intensive training programme. Back in the, UK I had been writing and performing comedy for over a decade, but up until now that had been scripted, either for TV or as stand up material. Will my experience transfer to live improv? How would I fare trying to be amusing on the fly?

The main principle that sets improv apart from other comedy styles is that it hinges on a single guiding rule: "say yes and..." Improv scenes develop from accepting what your performing partner says as truth, then building from there. In other forms of comedy, sitcoms or stand up for example, the comedy often stems from creating tension, conflict and revelling in frustration. But in improv, saying 'no' or introducing contradicting to cause tension, shuts down a scene, as I soon found out. I had to leave that at the door and embrace (often literally) this brave new world of positive affirmation.

That's not to say improv is all about hugging and learning. There's room to explore all emotions, scenes and characters. You are limited only by your imagination. There is something incredibly exciting about going on stage not knowing what's going to happen, while trusting your teammates

That's not to say improv is all about hugging and learning. There's room to explore all emotions, scenes and characters.

to support you as you take the audience on a ridiculous and surreal journey just about anywhere. It's a very inclusive form of entertainment and always starts with a single suggestion from the audience. But while they are in on the joke from the start, they have no idea where it's going to end up. That's the job of the improvisers and the ICC has some very talented, skilled and supportive performers. When they've got your back, you'll soar.

Improv Comedy Copenhagen has only just taken flight. It officially opened its doors on Frederiksholms Kanal on September 15 with special guest the US Ambassador Rufus Gifford, who even joined the performers on stage to serve up spontaneous monologues from which the team had to improvise sketches in front of a packed audience. Gifford endorses the ICC as not only a playground for his beloved American-style improv, but also as a place to develop valuable life skills such as collaboration, self confidence and communication. Having performed down there several times now, I concur. I realise my endorsement doesn't have quite the official weight of the American Embassy, so your best bet is just to go down there and see for yourself. Go on. Don't even think about it – just say yes. And... **M**



Rasmus Degnbøl

Copenhagen's dirty, white elephant

Continued from page 30

emissions, which could jeopardise Copenhagen's ambitious climate plans.

FALSE PROMISES AND LOBBYING

The entire situation could have been avoided, and the proposed plant was with met opposition from the start. Recycling is booming across Europe, while incineration is declining. Not least in Denmark, where 50 percent of all household waste is burned – the highest percentage in all of Europe. At the same time, Denmark has set a goal to recycle 50 percent of household waste by 2018.

The first warnings came in 2010, when the consultancy EA Energi-analyse produced a report for Copenhagen City Council on whether there was need for a new incineration plant. In the report, the consultancy warned against building a big, new and expensive plant. Instead, the report suggested that Copenhagen simply upgrade the existing plant in Amager.

At first, Copenhagen politicians heeded the advice. When the publicly-owned waste management company, ARC, asked the city council for a four billion kroner loan to establish a new plant in January 2012, the council refused, referring to the 2010 report.

According to Finans, ARC board member Peter Roulund sent a letter to the Ministry of Finance days before vote, seeking a public declaration that a new incineration plant would not compromise the government's coming resource strategy.

Then-finance minister Bjarne Corydon also received a letter from a company in his constituency in West Jutland, B&W Vølund, which happened to have won the contract to build Amager Bakke's incineration ovens.

According to several members of Copenhagen City Council, Corydon began to lay pressure on the municipality to agree to the four billion kroner loan. The pressure worked, and Copenhagen City Council approved the loan in September 2012.

Ida Auken was environment minister at the time, and has condemned ARC's political lobbying.

"The leadership has played politics instead of being civil servants, who serve the public interest and the decisions that are made in the City Hall and government," she told Finans.

"We now have a facility that – as expected – does not have enough trash and therefore has a massive deficit which Copenhagen taxpayers have to pay." **M**

WHAT'S ON • NOVEMBER



FREDAGSJAZZ, DEN GAMLE BY
Every Friday for the rest of the year, the historic Jazz Bar Bent J in Den Gamle By in Aarhus is open for beers and jazz.

Den Gamle By
Viborgvej 2, 8000 Aarhus C
Every Friday 14-17
All month

ALL MONTH

ICONIC PORTRAITS
A showcase some of the most iconic portraits taken by the famous Swiss-American portrait photographer Marco Grob – from Jude Law to Donald Trump.

Nationalhistorisk Museum
Frederiksborg Slot, 3400
Dnm.dk



HUBERTUSJAGT
For the 117th time, Dyrehaven will host the annual Hubertusjagt, where scores of riders will participate in the annual steeplechase

Dyrehaven, 2930
November 6

7

FLUME
After performing at this summer's Northside Festival in Aarhus, the popular Australian DJ is returning to Denmark for another upbeat party.

Falconér Salen
Falkoner Alle 7, Frederiksberg
billetflugen.dk

8

MICK JENKINS
One of the upcoming names from the reinvigorated Chicago rap scene, cath Mick Jenkins this Tuesday eveningfor his positive, jazz-inspired hiphop.

Pumpehuset
Studiestræde 52, KBH
Ticketmaster.dk



TOMAS FRANCK QUARTET
Swedish jazz veteran, Tomas Franck, celebrates the release of his new album with a rare concert in Jazzhus Montmartre.

Jazzhus Montmartre
Store Regnegade 19A, KBH
Jazhussmontmartre.dk
November 10-11

12

FLEA MARKET, BELLA CENTER
Copenhagen's biggest flea market takes place on this weekend. With hundreds of stands, visitors are sure to make a bargain.

Bella Center
Center Blvd. 5, KBH
LoppemarkediBella.dk
Ends November 13



PREOCCUPATIONS
Canadian post-punk quartet, Viet Cong, will visit Copenhagen again under their new name, Preoccupations, in order to promote their new, self-titled album.

Pumpehuset
Studiestræde 52, KBH
Billetlugen.dk

EVENT OF THE MONTH



16

SAMPHA
After collaborating with names like Drake and Little Dragen, English electronic singer-songwriter, Sampha, has launched his first solo-tour ahead of his upcoming album 'Process'.

Lille Vega
Enghavevej 40, KBH
Vega.dk



CHRISTMAS IN DEN GAMLE BY.
Experience the history of Christmas in Denmark in Aarhus' Old Town Museum, where you'll find everything from 17th century Danish Christmas food to period shops with gift ideas.

Den Gamle By
Viborgvej 2, 8000 Aarhus C
DenGamleBy.dk
November 19 - December 23

Jon David Finsen

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CHRISTMAS IN TIVOLI
Experience a magical light show, a real Santa Claus, lots of Christmas candy and a fairytale garden of the purest Christmas spirit in Tivoli Garden's traditional Christmas season.

Tivoli Gardens
Vesterbrogade 3, KBH
Tivoli.dk
Ends December 31

WHAT'S ON • DECEMBER

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CHRISTMAS MARKET

The majestic renaissance castle, Kronborg Castle opens its courtyard and beautiful ballrooms for the traditional Christmas market.

Kronborg Slot
Kronborg 2C, 3000 Helsingør
Ends December 11



TROTTERING LEAGUE FINALS

The Danish trotting league will finish up the season with an exciting final, where there will be plenty of opportunities to gamble and drink gløgg.

Charlottenlund Travbane
Travbanevej 10, 2920
Travbanen.dk
December 4

8

JOAN AS POLICEWOMAN

Together with collaborator Benjamin Lazar Davis, Joan as Policewoman released in August her sixth album, 'Let it be you'.

Pumpehuset
Studiestræde 52, KBH
Billetlugen.dk



THOMAS DYBDAHL

Norwegian folk crooner guests Vega following the release of his latest EP 'History'.

Vega
Enghavevej 40, KBH
vega.dk
December 15

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