

A European
film prize
is trying to
keep the
continent
together

DSB says
homeless
no longer
welcome
to sleep in
stations

They make
Denmark
money, but
EU migrants
still scape-
goated

JANUARY 2017 VOL. 4 ISSUE 1



A new type of cancer patient

Design students worked with hospitals to perfect an innovative home chemo system

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



Peter Stanners
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IF YOU couldn't find this issue on the streets, there's a good reason – we didn't print it. This month we did something a little different and only made a PDF. We needed a little holiday,

but still wanted to make a newspaper, so this was the compromise.

Fret not, The Murmur returns in February as normal, and will do so at least 11 times this year. This is thanks, in part, to the 109,000 kroner in support from the Danish Agency for Culture that we were granted for 2017.

We are overjoyed for the support that, together with own fundraising, will see us through another year of creating English-language news about Denmark.

But we have ambitions, and hope in the near future to share with you some of the ways that The Murmur hopes to grow over the coming years. We have to, as traditional business models for newspapers are crumbling in the digital age – printing a newspaper and selling adverts is

no longer enough. Through partnerships and a number of new services, I am confident we can grow The Murmur into a larger and more sustainable business, but whose core mission remains the production of high quality English-language news.

We will let you in on these ideas when they are ready, but until then there's plenty of reading for you to get stuck in to. For a start, our cover story about hemo chemotherapy gives a fascinating insight into the ways that designers and healthcare professionals work together to improve the quality of care for patients.

We also focus on the homeless in this issue, firstly on the decision by rail operator DSB to no longer tolerate homeless sleeping in train stations, and secondly on whether the deposit system 'pant' makes Denmark an attractive destination for Europe's homeless. Also don't forget to catch up on the big headlines from the past month, as well as the latest developments in Copenhagen – especially how one political party thinks the city can benefit from Brexit.

That's all I've got for this month. Thanks for being a reader and remember you are more than welcome to get in touch with your thoughts and ideas. Happy reading! **M**

It is not our responsibility to create a place for the homeless, we are a train service.

ASKE WIETH-KNUDSEN, HEAD OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AT DSB. P12

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MONTH IN REVIEW

Danes getting lazy

January might see a boom in gym attendance, but a survey by Gallup for Berlingske found that one in three Danes is exerciseing less than they did five years ago – one in five is more active than they were in 2011.

South Korean suspect arrested in Aalborg

A suspect in a political scandal, which has seen the impeachment of South Korean president Park Geun-Hye, was arrested in Aalborg in early January. Chung Yoo-ra, 20, is accused of using her mother's close relationship with the president for her own personal gain. Despite only attending 17 days of high school in her final year, she was still accepted to one of South Korea's best universities.



ZOOM ZOOM

Bikes may have outnumbered cars in Copenhagen for the first time in 2016, but private car sales across the country also surged a massive 7.3 percent.

FOREIGN FIGHTERS ON BENEFITS

Tabloid Ekstra Bladet revealed that dozens of Danes received welfare benefits while living in Syria and fighting for the so-called Islamic State. A total 36 were found to be claiming the unemployment benefits dagpenge and kontanghjælp. This is not the first time that Danes fighting for ISIS have been found to be relying on benefits. In 2014, it was reported that over two dozen Danes were claiming money from the Danish state. It is estimated that around 135 Danes have left for Syria to join the jihadist group.

Christoffer Rosenfeldt



Weekendavisen gets a new editor

Martin Krasnik, 45, became the new editor-in-chief of the weekly newspaper Weekendavisen. He took over from Anna Knudsen who held the position since 1998. She managed to defy circulation decline and increase the paper's readership in recent years. Krasnik joined Weekendavisen as an intern in 1995 and has worked as a foreign editor and correspondent in Jerusalem since. Before rejoining Weekendavisen last year, he hosted the nightly news programme Deadline on DR2.

Gabriele Dellisanti

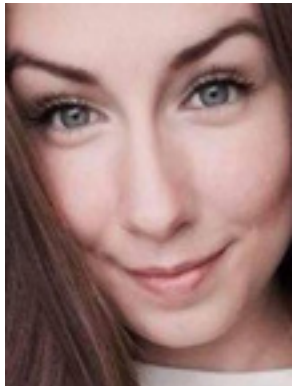


Immigration laws changed 68 times

Since 2002, immigration laws in Denmark have been changed 68 times, on average every three months. Legislation concerning family reunifications was changed 15 times in 15 years and rules concerning permanent residency are set to be changed for the tenth time. In 2002, migrants were required to live in Denmark for at least three years before having the right to obtain permanent residency. After several revisions it now stands at eight. "[The refugee crisis] made it necessary to introduce the most comprehensive restrictions ever, over just 18-months," Marcus Knuth, Venstre immigration spokesperson, told Information.

BODY OF MISSING EMILIE MENG FOUND

The body of Emilie Meng, who disappeared in July last year, was found over Christmas near a lake in Borup, Zealand. Meng was last seen in Slagelse on July 10 last year and disappeared on her way home that night. The police are treating the death as suspicious.



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Fireworks injuries

New Year’s Eve saw a high number of people hospitalised because of fireworks. 98 people were hospitalised with injuries compared to 75 last year. Four suffered permanent injuries to their eyes.

Danes show support for Aleppo

The siege of Aleppo in Syria by the forces of president Assad provoked international uproar. In December, thousands of Danes gathered across the country in solidarity with the victims. Torchlight processions were held in Copenhagen, Aarhus, Odense, Roskilde, Aalborg and Rønne. Despite the call for action, newly-ap-

pointed foreign minister Anders Samuel- sen (right) declared that Denmark and the West could do nothing to help alleviate the disaster in Syria, calling it an “unsolvable situation”. “Everyone agrees that it is terrible to see, but we need to admit that we are in a situation of powerlessness,” Samuelson told TV2.



Thomas Angermann



TRANSSEXUALISM NO LONGER A DISORDER
On January 1, Denmark became the first country in the world to remove transsexualism from the list of mental disorders. All parties backed the initiative that was propelled by a campaign spearheaded by trans activists and Amnesty International.

Nordisk Film



Danish Movie shortlisted for the Oscars

The Danish movie ‘Under Sandet’ is on the shortlist for Best Foreign Language Film at this year’s Academy Awards. The movie follows a group of German POWs who have to clear World War II mines from Danish beaches. Two other Scandinavian films ‘En Mann med Navn Ove’ from Sweden and ‘Kongens Nei’ from Norway are also competing for the title. So far, Denmark has won three Oscars in total.

FOREIGN NAME DISCRIMINATION

The Danish labour market has a meritocracy problem. To be considered for a job interview, a Dane with a Middle Eastern name has to send 52 percent more job applications than a peer with the same qualifications but a Danish name. So found two PhD students from the University of Copenhagen who submitted applications to employers that were identical, except for the name.

Maersk dismantles Tyra gas fields

Maersk Oil is set to start dismantling production from Tyra gas fields in the North Sea after it failed to agree a new deal with government on taxing the natural resource. Tyra accounts for 90 percent of Denmark’s production of natural gas and has been in operation since 1984. In recent years, however, Maersk Oil has faced setbacks drilling for the gas, which required further investments than initially planned. According to Politiken, Maersk Oil demanded more lenient taxation to make continued production more profitable. After a new deal could not be reached, the field will be closed by October 2018. There is money at stake for both Maersk and the Danish government, as North Sea gas generates millions of kroner in profit for Maersk and tax income for the government every year.



Maersk Oil

CITY

New districts find their funding

Standing on Istedgade and looking southwest, you can't avoid seeing Vesterbro's new landmark, Bohr's tower. The apartment complex is the standout feature of the new Carlsberg district that is being developed on the site of the brewer's former headquarters.

A new shopping plaza and train station have opened at the foot of the tower, which also houses University College Capital's Campus Carlsberg. But it's only the start of the redevelopment, and in early January pension fund PKA announced they were investing 4.2 billion kroner in the second phase.

The money will go toward four new residential towers, offices and businesses, as well as the restoration of historic buildings.

"The new deal with PKA finances Carlsberg Byen's largest phase of development and reflects the market's enormous interest in the district," Carlsberg Byen director Jens Nyhus said.

When it is fully developed in 2024, the district will cover over 600,000 M2 and include around 3,000 new homes.

In December, PKA also announced that it was investing 1.2 billion kroner in the Enghave Brygge development in nearby Sydhavn. The development consists of 11 artificial islands that connect Vesterbro to Copenhagen harbour.

PKA's investment will finance 40 houses and 430 new apartments across three of the islands.

"With the large number of new arrivals to Copenhagen, it is necessary to develop new districts and create recreational areas," said PKA's head of property, Nikolaj Stampe.

When Enghave Brygge is completed within the next 10 years, it will house 2,600 new homes and 1,600 jobs, in addition to a Metro station, shopping district and daycare institutions.

City bikes a hit

When Copenhagen's city bikes were launched in late 2014, they were en-



Bryggernes Plads will be the central square in the new Carlsberg Byen district of Copenhagen

visioned as a means to tie together Greater Copenhagen's transport infrastructure. Commuters could park their cars at train stations north of the city, and complete the last few kilometres by renting a bike from the train station when they arrived.

But few did, not least because the company that produced the bikes, GoBike, had gone bankrupt and was unable to deliver around 1,400 of the battery-assisted bicycles. By April 2015, the city's deputy mayor for technical and environmental affairs, Morten Kabell, admitted the 88 million kroner scheme was unlikely to succeed.

GoBike managed to raise new capital, however, and delivered the remaining bikes by the end of the year.

And since, the popularity of the bicycles has only risen. According to the latest figures, there were 933,642 trips taken on city bikes in 2016 compared to 169,834 the previous year. And while tourists and residents covered 840,690 kilometres using city

bikes in 2015, last year it was almost 3,700,000 kilometres.

Stealing the spoils of Brexit

Copenhagen is so left wing that every single mayor in recent history has been a Social Democrat. Unsurprisingly, right wing parties in the City Council are frustrated and blame left wing policies for making the city a poor place to do business in.

Of Denmark's 98 municipalities, business lobby group Dansk Byggeri ranked Copenhagen the 84th best for doing business in last year.

The Liberal Party (Venstre), the main right wing opposition party, has had enough. One sign is their decision to replace their leading candidate in the municipal elections later this year with a more pro-business candidate. Following a vote, Cecilia Lonning-Skovgaard, a senior director at Dong Energy, was chosen to take over from Pia Allerslev, who has represented the party in city hall since 2001, and is currently deputy mayor for children

and youth.

Lonning-Skovgaard is hoped to push a stronger liberal agenda in the City Council and in a recent column for financial daily Børsen argued that the municipality does too little to cater to the interests of the city's businesses.

While she acknowledges that the municipality makes great efforts to attract foreign businesses, Lonning-Skovgaard has eyed an especially promising opportunity – Brexit.

"On the strategic front we need to target businesses whose headquarters are currently in London and who we think will leave London when they finally disconnect from the EU," she writes.

"We should make a bid to attract businesses in the clusters we are good at; Medico, Fin-tec and fashion to name three."

She adds that Copenhagen should also bid to be the new home of the European Medicines Agency, which is currently headquartered in London. **M**

Peter Stanners

Institut Sankt Joseph is seeking a Primary Mathematics, Science for our International Bilingual Program

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- participation in school committees that promote our formational/educational mission and team building

MORE ABOUT YOUR PLACE OF WORK:

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POLITICS

Uber finds a friend in new coalition government

“Taking an Uber” has become almost synonymous with grabbing a taxi in many cities around the world. But while Uber drivers also cruise Copenhagen’s streets, the Eastern High Court ruled in November that they were doing so illegally by not following taxi regulations.

The ruling upheld the conviction of six Uber drivers in the summer, who were each fined 6000 kroner. In early January, the police presented charges against another 44 drivers.

Unions and the taxi industry oppose Uber, arguing the firm undermines collective bargaining agreements and operates at an unfair advantage. Taxis, for example, are not allowed to turn away customers, while Uber drivers can pick and choose their clients based on their individual rating.

The coalition right-wing government is a believer in the service, however. In their platform they published in November, they promised to deregulate the taxi industry to promote innovation, spur competition and bring down prices.

In December they presented their reform, which removes the cap on taxi licences, allows taxis to operate across municipal lines, deregulates pricing restrictions, and places greater demands on services such as Uber to share information with the tax authorities.

Many elements were met with criticism such as the proposal to remove the requirements for taxis to have video surveillance and seat sensors. The latter ensure that taxi drivers don’t bypass the mandated minimum prices set by the government.

But transport minister Ole Birk Olesen from Liberal Alliance argues the new regulations make it much harder to cheat the tax authorities.

“Uber must provide documentation that every single vehicle lives up to the regulations and that the taxes have been paid. If they don’t want to satisfy these regulations, they will be closed,” Olesen told Politiken. **M**

US BASE STIRS TENSION WITH GREENLAND

Greenland’s foreign minister Vittus Qujaukitsoq thinks the Danish government is interfering too much with issues that directly affect Greenlanders

Discontent is brewing in Greenland over its relationship with the Kingdom of Denmark. Over the past 60 years the former colony has transitioned to a self-governing territory, but its parliament still doesn’t have full control over its affairs, such as defence. In December, Greenland’s foreign minister Vittus Qujaukitsoq accused Denmark of “arrogance” for blocking Greenland from having influence on issues important to the Greenlandic people.

He takes aim at the deal that allows the US to have a military base near Thule in north Greenland. Denmark retains control of Greenland’s defence, so the Greenlandic parliament has no influence over the terms of the deal and what benefits it must provide Greenland.

“For 75 years we have provided facilities



The Thule Air Base in the distance.

for the USA, but the results of the US presence has been nothing but trouble, nothing but environmental pollution,” he told Politiken newspaper.

In other areas such as fishing policy, finding a compromise can be difficult because Denmark and Greenland’s interests can be divergent.

“We have come to a point where Greenland no longer thinks the situation is acceptable,” Qujaukitsoq said. “The arro-

gance is destroying our relationship in the Kingdom of Denmark.”

In an email to Politiken, foreign minister Anders Samuelsen said he didn’t find the criticism reasonable or constructive.

“I do not recognise the arrogant approach that Vittus Qujaukitsoq expresses. We have clearly said in the government platform that it is a central responsibility to the government to manage important cases such as the Thule Base.” **M**

REFUGEE NUMBERS FALL

While the number of asylum seekers dropped by almost two thirds between 2016 and 2017, more than 1600 rejected asylum seekers have gone missing

Only 55 migrants sought asylum in Denmark in the last week of 2016, ending a relatively quiet year for the asylum system. According to the police, 6072 people applied for asylum in 2016, compared to around 21,000 in 2015.

Danish authorities had otherwise expected a busy year, with as many as 25,000 arrivals according to Berlingske. In preparation, they established a number of temporary tent facilities across the country to house the new arrivals.

With immigration minister Inger Støjberg admitting that the camps were designed to make Denmark a less attractive country for asylum seekers, it may be that she succeeded. The closure of the Balkan route for migrants travelling from the

Middle East may also have brought down numbers. So too could the temporary border controls the government introduced in early 2015.

But while the government has lived up to their promise to control the flow of migrants, they don’t have as much control over the fate of failed asylum seekers. Police have lost contact with 1600 failed asylum seekers over the past 18 months according to a freedom of information request submitted by Politiken newspaper.

The national police, Rigspolitiet, argue that the majority have moved on from Denmark, but according to the Rockwool Fondens Forskningsenhed, around 10,000 failed asylum seekers are living in Denmark without the necessary documentation.

Citing the risk of terror, the Social Democrats (Socialdemokrater) and Danish People’s Party (DF) have both urged the government to step up their efforts to find and deport failed asylum seekers.

“It’s reasonable to believe that that some of those who are living underground are subsisting from crime, as they cannot have a legal income,” Socialdemokrater

immigration spokesperson Dan Jørgensen told Politiken.

DF’s immigration spokesperson Martin Henriksen pointed out that the recent terror attack in Berlin was carried out by a failed asylum seeker.

“It would be great if they just moved on to another country. But we don’t know that, and seen through DF’s eyes it is a security risk for the Danish society,” he said, adding that failed asylum seekers should be automatically held in detention.

Jørgensen does not agree, arguing it violates international conventions and “common decency”.

“But that doesn’t mean that nothing can be done,” he said.

Michala Bendixen, chairman of Refugees Welcome, argues that rejected asylum seekers should be given another legal opportunity to remain in the country.

“They could, for example, apply for work permits, family reunification or study visas,” she told Politiken. “We are talking about refugees here, who for many different reasons don’t want to leave. Politicians have to recognise their situation.” **M**

Weak Europol deal looks likely

The police were dealt a major blow last year following a referendum that meant Denmark had to pull out of the EU policing agency Europol. After months of negotiations, however, Denmark has struck a deal with the European Commission that means Danish police might be able to continue to use Europol's resources.

The referendum was over whether to replace Denmark's opt-out from EU justice and policing cooperation with a case-by-case opt-in. In May, when Europol transitions from a supranational organisation to a full EU agency in May, the opt-out will prevent Denmark from remaining a member.

Danes were encouraged to vote 'no' by parties who assured them it would be possible for Denmark to secure a so-called parallel agreement with the EU to retain its membership. But these assurances were dealt a major blow when EU officials all but ruled out a deal.

In December, however, the European Commission offered Denmark partial access to Europol, that would give Danish police indirect access to Europol's information system.

"It's not as good as if we were a full member, but it's an agreement that could work," Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen told reporters after his talks with EU leaders, but added there was a risk that the deal would not be accepted by the European Parliament.

"It's a complicated process and many decisions need to be made along the way. The EU Parliament needs to debate it twice – you can't pass the football to yourself all the time, so you need others to pass it to you to be sure that you score."

While the deal means that, on an operative level, police have essentially the same tools at their disposal, Denmark has no influence or control over the development of Europol cooperation.

Still, the deal is better than Norway's and will not be made available to the UK when they leave the UK. It is contingent, however, on Denmark remaining a member of the EU and the passport free zone, Schengen.

Immigrant repatriation centre condemned

"The deportation centre Kærshovedgård by Ikast is the closest Denmark has to a concentration camp without being one."

So wrote Stig Grenov, leader of the Christian Democrats (KD) in an op-ed for Politiken newspaper. The centre, which houses reject-

ed asylum seekers and criminals sentenced to deportation, has few amenities and is designed to be as uncomfortable as possible.

According to Grenov, the 80 inhabitants are served measly portions of food, provided inadequate medical care, and are needlessly bullied by the staff.

"All people should be treated properly. If you make their existence intolerable – as the [immigration] minister has done, then Denmark is no longer a Christian country," Grenov writes.

"Before the Second World War, Denmark expelled Jews to Nazi Germany. We are about to write another dark chapter in our history."

Immigration minister Inger Støjberg responded on Facebook, calling his comparison to Nazi Germany "disrespectful to the more than six million Jews who lost their lives in concentration camps".

She argues that the immigrants in Kærshovedgård are unwanted, and that their conditions are fitting.

"I don't want to use a lot of tax payer funds on immigrants who are required to leave Denmark after, in many cases, committing severe crimes."

PM defends cuts in NYE speech

While many look back on 2016 as a year to forget, prime minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen is looking forward to the future with optimism.

"We are richer. Live longer. Have more freedom to do what we want. The present is better than the past. And the future will be even better," Rasmussen said in his live New Year address

He also presented arguments for some of the government's more controversial reforms of the past year.

With the economic crisis over, he argued that there was a need to better reward Danes who choose to work rather than receive unemployment benefits.

And by spending less on asylum centres and student grants, it frees money for investment in infrastructure, tax cuts, foreign aid and education.

He also urged Danes to see the opportunities that international trade and technology present society.

"We cannot keep jobs in Denmark by stopping to trade with abroad. And we cannot magic away the refugee crisis or threat from terrorism by pulling out of international cooperation that is designed to solve the problems. We cannot build walls to the world, for we end up locking ourselves in." **M**

IN BRIEF

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EDITORIAL INTERN - PART TIME

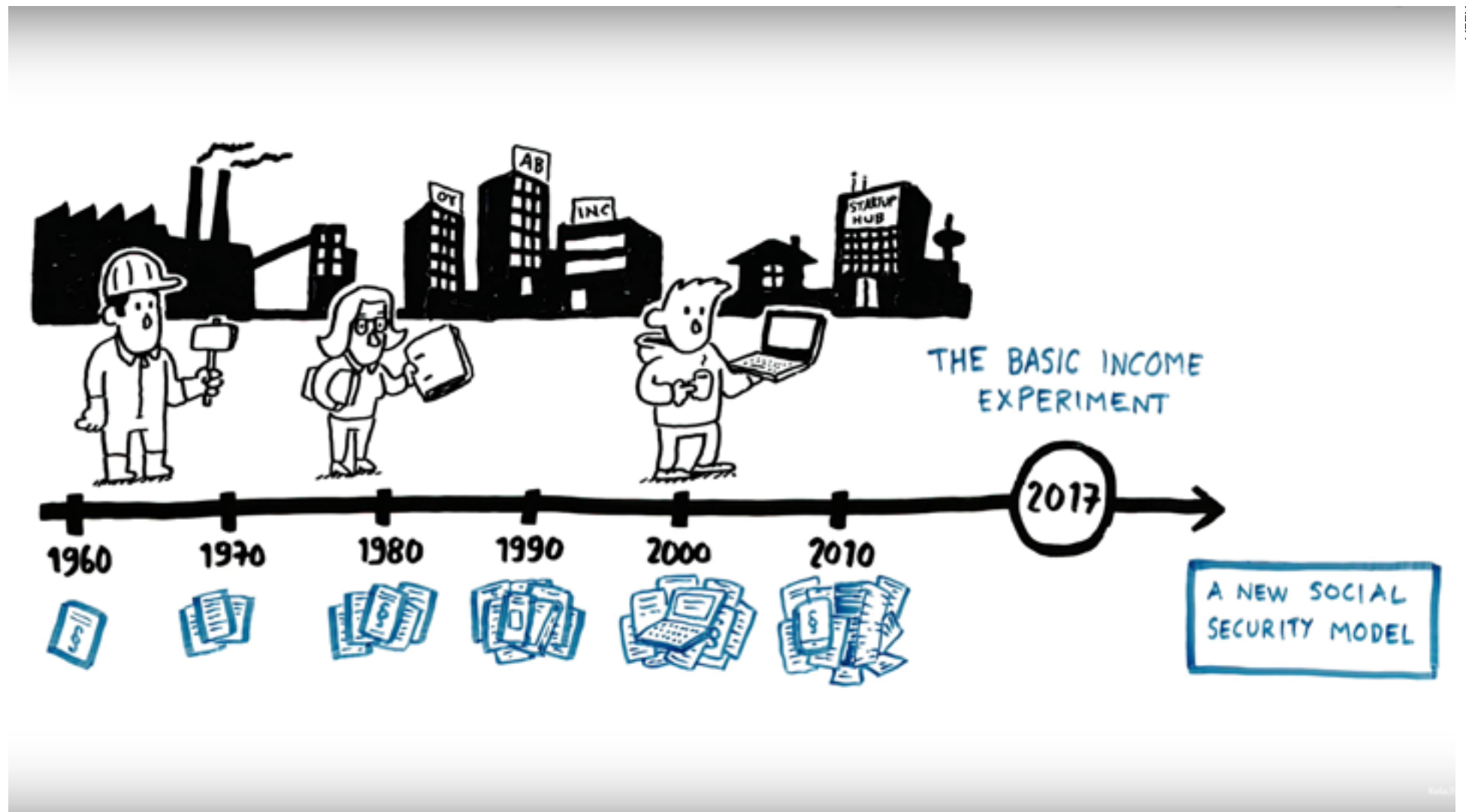
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Finland's Social Insurance Institution, KELA, explains in a video on its website that the current social security model was developed to suit the needs of a different era.

Is a guaranteed income the answer to an uncertain future?

Finland wants to see if giving free money to unemployed citizens will better incentivise their transition to the labour market. But while the idea has promise to address a future with fewer jobs, the idea has few proponents in Denmark

NO JOB, NO PROBLEM – at least, not if you're one of 2,000 randomly-picked unemployed Finns. Over the next two years, the Finnish government will hand them the equivalent of 4,000 kroner per month with no strings attached. If they find a job, the money is still theirs.

The project is managed by Kela, Finland's Social Insurance Institution, in order to discover whether a basic wage motivates people on unemployment benefits to take the risk to find a low paying job instead.

"In the current system, with many strictly income-tested benefits, people may end up in situations where work does not pay

enough, making them reluctant to get back to the job market with short-term or low-income jobs," Professor Olli Kangas, head of Kela's research department, told Al Jazeera.

The concept of a guaranteed state-financed income is actually not so modern. In the seventh century the Muslim caliph and father-in-law to the prophet Muhammad's, Abu Bakr, introduced a minimum income; Napoleon Bonaparte claimed that every man was entitled to a "share of the Earth's produce"; libertarian economist Milton Friedman advocated for a version of it, and Martin Luther King claimed it was the "most effective" way to

fight poverty.

Each gave a different reason for offering a basic income, from producing a more effective state to creating a fairer society. Modern economists and thinkers from across the political spectrum have also identified benefits with a basic income. Last October, Branko Milanovic, a Professor of Economics at the Stone Center on Socio-Economic Inequality at University of New York, argued that a basic income could be one of the ways to combat the worrying trend of rising inequality.

NOT IN DENMARK

But while Finland starts its trial, the idea has yet to garner

much support in Denmark. Torsten Schack Pedersen, employment spokesperson for the government coalition partner Liberal Party (Venstre) says the very notion violates fundamental Danish principles.

"We believe that those that can work should work. Our constitution maintains this point and I don't believe that the state should occupy that role," he says, adding that a better strategy for getting people into work is to increase the financial incentive.

"As far as I know, we still offer higher unemployment benefits than our neighbouring countries, including Finland. We believe that people have a personal re-

Elias Thorsson

sponsibility to get bread on the table, and if they are unable to do so than we as a society have safety net in place to help those people,” Pedersen said.

“It's a matter of principle and if we go this way, then we are forcing a major change to our values.”

Kasper Fogh, policy director at the left-leaning think tank Cevea, shares the criticism and argues the idea is utopian and absurd.

“I understand that the discussion is taking place, but I can't really see the argument for it,” he said, adding that it would be preferable to invest in strengthening the traditional welfare system, and increase investment in education.

TECHNO-SOURCING

One argument in support of a basic income is that it would provide an income to those whose jobs are expected to be replaced by machines and computers in the near future.

A 2013 study from Oxford University estimated that 47 percent of jobs in the US will be lost to technological innovation in the next 10 to 20 years. In the less developed world this risk is even higher, with the World Bank predicting that over 60 percent of jobs will disappear from these countries.

In response to these predictions, futurist and Tesla founder Elon Musk proposed implementing a guaranteed basic income for every man, woman and child on the planet.

“People will have time to do other things, more complex things, more interesting things. Certainly more leisure time,” he told CNBC last November.

But Fogh and Pedersen remain united in criticism on this argument too.

“This is the same discussion we had following the invention of the steam engine,” says Pedersen.

“People were worried as traditional jobs were lost, but in the end it turned out that the new technology actually created more jobs, and I can't see it being any different this time around.”

Fogh adds that a better way to respond to the loss of jobs to technology is to invest in an educational system that can retrain and educate the workforce.

“To start with, the industrial revolution created inequality and a poor standard of living, but that ended up being solved,” he says.

“A lot of jobs are now being cre-

ated in the service industry. And just a few years ago nobody was interested in organic produce, but now that is a large, growing market.”

He points out that unemployment in Denmark is at its lowest in over a decade, so the challenge is rather to ensure that new jobs are properly paid and that the rich pay their fair share.

“I believe ideas, such as the basic income, are propagated by economists who have a very poor understanding of people. They see people as producers, but I think that true joy is having a good job – I don't believe in doing nothing,” he said.

“To me this is a societal structure that sounds romantic in a very naive way and I don't think there is much support for it in Denmark.”

THE ONLY CHAMPION

The one Danish party that is interested in trialing a basic income is the Alternative (Alternativet), which sees the need to try new solutions to old problems, such as unemployment.

“We don't claim that it is necessarily the way to go, but we need to be open to new ideas,” says economy and employment spokesperson Josephine Fock, adding that she is following the different basic income trials around the world, including in Finland.

Fock argues that the current benefits system can be harmful, as it can dehumanise recipients and keep them dependent on government assistance. Monitoring recipients of unemployment benefits also requires an enormous amount of resources, while also demotivating the person under surveillance.

“The current system forces you to live up to a multitude of requirements. If people are allowed to prioritise in the way they please, they will be better prepared to take care of themselves and find employment.”

Fock also argues that a more active approach is needed to tackle the 800,000 jobs that are expected to be lost in Denmark to technology.

“We stand on the precipice of a revolution of technology and artificial intelligence, which provides us with amazing opportunities – if we structure our society in a way that can take advantage of it.” **M**

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Homeless evicted from train stations

Copenhagen's homeless population is being moved on from train stations out of concern for passenger safety. But experts argue the policy simply makes life more difficult for one of society's most vulnerable groups



A private security service has been employed to stop homeless from settling in train stations.

FOR A COUNTRY admired globally for its generous welfare state, Denmark's homelessness problem is a stain on this reputation. In 2015 there were 6,138 homeless according to The Danish National Centre for Social Research (SFI), a 23 percent increase compared to 2009.

It's especially young people who are at risk of falling into homelessness. In 2015 there were 1,971 homeless aged 18 to 29 – a 76 percent increase in six years.

But while the Denmark's homeless population grows, the number of shelters hasn't kept pace. In 2013 there were only 2,180 places available – enough

for just over 35 percent.

With nowhere else to go, many homeless choose to pass the night in Copenhagen's train stations. But this is no longer an option after state-owned rail service DSB hired a private security company to keep the homeless out.

"We have been getting calls from people who feel unsafe at our train stations, and who don't feel they can allow their children to travel alone," says DSB's Head of Business Development Aske Wieth-Knudsen.

She adds that while they have rarely had to involve the police in conflicts between the homeless and rail passengers, she argues

that it is not in DSB's mandate to take care of Denmark's homeless.

"It is not our responsibility to create a place for the homeless, we are a train service. People should not sleep in the stations, that is not what they are there for and it creates an unsafe environment for our customers."

A HUB FOR HOMELESS

The move has proven problematic for social services in Copenhagen, however, as train stations function as a gathering place for the homeless.

Peter Ellermann, head of the municipality's homeless contact project (støttekontaktpersonor-

ning for hjemløse) says moving the homeless on from stations will therefore make it harder for social services to make contact with them.

"It has had an impact on our work, definitely. The train stations attract the mentally-ill and homeless, so we have been able to keep tabs on them there. This move has made it more difficult for us to find them," says Ellermann, adding that DSB's guards have been instructed to contact his offices should they encounter a vulnerable or homeless individual.

"They didn't used to do that, so this is an improvement. Their

Words:
Elias Thorsson

Photos:
Aleksander Klug





employees didn't know how to deal with the people they encountered, but now they direct the social work part to us," he said.

OUT OF SIGHT

DSB's move demonstrates that they fail to understand the plight of the homeless, argues the Danish National Organisation for Homeless People, SAND.

"We think this move is really terrible," says spokesperson Sofie Bay-Petersen.

"It is well known that the most vulnerable homeless, such as the mentally ill, seek out train stations. Nobody chooses to stay there for fun – it is not fun to be

homeless – and the fact that they have decided to do this in the middle of winter just makes the situation even worse."

She adds that DSB, being a state owned company, ought to take responsibility and try and find a more accommodating solution.

"The state owned train services in Norway have tackled the issue by creating heated rooms where the homeless can stay. Their employees can thereby direct the homeless to a place where they can stay. DSB, which is also owned by the state has, however, not taken any responsibility."

Bay-Petersen points out that DSB did implement a strategy a few years ago, before quickly backtracking. She now calls for the train provider to resume its dialog with homeless advocates

"We can all agree that people shouldn't live in train stations, but what DSB is doing is just moving the problem somewhere else. It is highly unreasonable that DSB is throwing people into the street."

The homeless situation has changed radically in recent years. While homelessness rises in Denmark, it has also become an increasingly popular destination for foreign homeless. They are

even more vulnerable, however, as they are unable to make use of publicly-funded shelters.

Most worryingly for Bay-Petersen, however, is the symbolic value of DSB's move.

"We have seen a general trend in society, in which we try to push the homeless problem out of sight and out of mind. The number of homeless has exploded in recent years and I can understand that we get worried because we don't want these problems to exist. We as a society are becoming increasingly asocial and that is very worrying, to say the least." **M**

Do bottle deposits draw Europe's homeless to Denmark?



A typical 'pant' machine, where bottles can be returned in exchange for cash.

BOTTLES AND CANS rarely end up in Danish landfills, thanks in large part to the pant deposit system. At between one and two kroner per container, it's enough of an incentive that Danes turn in just over a billion recyclable and single-use glass and plastic bottles and aluminium cans every year.

In the summer, you're likely to see bottles and cans abandoned in parks and beside bins on city streets. But it's not simply because Danes are too lazy to turn them in – it's because they know that someone will be around to pick them up.

Often, Danish homeless perform this service to earn a meagre living. But in recent years, they have been joined by foreign homeless, who subsist almost entirely on the redemption of pant deposits.

Copenhagen's Lord Mayor, Frank Jensen, thinks the situation is unsustainable, and has called for a reform of the pant system to make

Denmark a less attractive destination for Europe's homeless.

"They camp out in the city's streets and parks, where they live miserable lives and create insecurity. Collecting pant is a business for many of them," Jensen, a member of the Social Democratic party (Socialdemokraterne), told Jyllands-Posten newspaper.

"The pant system is a brilliantly-conceived way to support recycling and reduce pollution. But it was never meant to be a way of supporting Europe's poor migrants and the miserable street life they live."

NEW PANT SYSTEM

First introduced in 1947 to encourage recycling, the pant system has been a great success and has won international praise. Now managed by the non-profit company Dansk Retursystemet, around 90 percent of all pant-labelled cans and bottles are turned in each year, amounting to around

450,000 tons of glass, plastic and aluminium.

Besides encouraging Danish consumers to recycle, the pant system has also become a means of subsistence for the homeless.

The solution, says Jensen, is to make the system cashless. Currently, discarded cans and bottles can be delivered to automatic pant machines in supermarkets that print out a receipt that can be exchanged for cash in the shop.

Instead, Jensen argues, the receipts should count only as store credit. If the sum spent in the store is less than the amount of the receipt, the remaining sum would be lost. Changing the system requires an act of parliament, so Jensen has asked the government to look into his proposal.

Copenhagen deputy mayor for health and care, Ninna Thomsen of the Socialist People's Party (SF), agrees that the city needs to address its growing population of for-

eign homeless. But in a post on Facebook, Thomsen writes that she isn't sure that reforming the pant system is the solution.

"The foreigners who end up becoming homeless in our city have come here for various reasons and they stay in the city for various reasons. No doubt about it. It's a human tragedy and an expression of Europe's poverty problem. That's why we need common EU solutions," she wrote.

"Frank Jensen's proposal is an attempt to find a solution, and I approve of that. I approve of it because I can see that the problem is getting out of hand."

SCAPEGOATING PANT

According to the homeless organisation Projekt Udenfor, the free movement of labour within the EU, its expansion in 2004 and 2007, and the ensuing economic recession all contributed to the increase in the number of homeless migrants in

Words:
Sophie Frahm

Photos:
Aleksander Klug





Copenhagen.

The employees of Projekt Udenfor support the city’s homeless by making contact with them on the street and offering relevant services to address their psychological or addiction issues.

Bo Heide-Jochimsen, one of Projekt Udenfor’s outreach workers, doesn’t think Jensen’s proposal will do much to reduce the number of homeless foreign migrants in Denmark.

“Pant is being scapegoated. The truth is that these people will come here either way, and pant has nothing to do with it. It’s a social problem, one which no reform or proposed law offers a real solution to,” says Heide-Jochimsen, adding that increased anti-homeless legislation introduced over the past six years has done nothing to bring down numbers.

“More people have actually come. Worsening their quality of life has no effect.”

LACK OF WORK

DanChurchSocial (Kirkens Korshær) provides an information service, Kompasset, for undocumented migrants in Denmark. Nikolaj Thorborg, a staff member, argues that Jensen’s proposal relies on a misunderstanding of who the foreign homeless are and why they are in the country.

“The assumption that they come here simply to collect pant bottles and cans is wrong,” he says.

“They come because they don’t have a job, and they hope to find one here. When they don’t, they have to live on the street. But they come with the simple goal of becoming self-supporting,” he said, adding that they will continue to come as long as the EU has free movement of people.

“Reforming the pant system won’t solve the issue of poverty in Europe. Instead, it will make these people more desperate. Taking pant from them only denies them

yet another opportunity when they have so few.”

He explains that one of the central problems of homeless people is that they don’t have any rights until they get a job and start to pay taxes. While they look for work, they can find it hard to find a place to live, which makes them even more vulnerable.

“They don’t have a right to a roof over their head, no health insurance and no meals. They need help, especially in the form of access to information – information about the job market, their rights and their opportunities, help to become a stable citizen, or help to go somewhere else.”

After working closely with migrants, Thorborg argues that what is most acutely needed is a basic service where migrants can seek advice about finding work.

“A lot of information is only available in Danish, which makes their situation even worse. Help is

vital so they can avoid ending up on Danish streets.”

Heide-Jochimsen agrees. “These people who are so poor that they will cross borders to live on the street – they will keep doing so even when there is no pant system to give them money. It’s an expression of poverty and desperation, not organised criminals exploiting a system,” he says, calling for investment in institutions that can help the homeless get off the street.

Ultimately, tackling the problem of foreign homeless in Denmark will require cooperation between EU states in order to prevent migrants being shuffled from country to country – and in that, Denmark should take the lead.

“We actually have solutions here in Denmark. We know from years of experience how to help homeless people get off the streets. So why not use that knowledge to make life better for more people?” **M**



Migrant workers fill labour shortages across the EU, but are also a political hot potato.

Saving Danish welfare from the phantom EU menace

EU workers provide a healthy surplus to the Danish economy, but the government still wants to limit how much welfare it pays them

THE RIGHT TO FREE MOVEMENT is the glue that holds the EU together. Without it, there could be no single market with open trade across the 28 member states. The economic growth that resulted from the single market has increased standards of living across the continent, particularly in Eastern Europe and the Baltic region.

But the right to live, work, study and do business anywhere in the EU could also prove to be its undoing. Concerns that EU migrants suppress wages contributed to anti-EU sentiment in the UK and ultimately resulted in that country's referendum decision to leave the union last June.

The idea that foreign EU nation-

als put pressure on the UK's public services also concerned British voters. EU nationals are entitled to the public services available in the country in which they work and reside. This has led to fears of "welfare tourism", the idea that some EU citizens move to other EU countries simply to access more generous welfare.

Several EU states, including Denmark, have lobbied the European Commission for new regulations to help protect their welfare systems from abuse. In December, Marianne Thyssen, the employment and mobility commissioner, answered these concerns with several new rules.

"[The] free movement of people

would not be possible without EU rules on coordination of social security. These rules guarantee that you and I don't lose our health insurance coverage when traveling as a tourist or our pension and unemployment coverage when working in another Member State," Thyssen said.

"So why did we come forward with this update? To sum it up in one word: it is about fairness. It will ensure that EU rules are fair, simpler to apply and easier to enforce."

Ahead of her announcement, Danish employment minister Troels Lund Poulsen said there was an urgent need for reform.

"We are in a state of emergency," Poulsen told Berlingske. "The

question of how these regulations will be adjusted will have a fundamental impact on Denmark and our welfare state."

HARDER TO GET UNEMPLOYMENT

There are two central areas in which the Danish government wanted reform. The first is to stop EU citizens from claiming Danish unemployment benefits (dagpenge) from the moment they arrive in Denmark.

To qualify for dagpenge in Denmark, you must be employed and pay into an unemployment insurance fund (A-Kasse) for one year. Under current EU rules, however, you can transfer your qualifying hours and payments from one

Peter Stanners

EU country to another. This means that you could technically move to Denmark and immediately claim dagpenge.

This would be the case, that is, if Denmark hadn't already introduced a rule that requires new A-Kasse members to work 296 hours in a 12 week-period before they can transfer their qualifying hours and payments to Denmark. This rule was controversial, and there was speculation that it would be challenged in the European courts.

The three-month quarantine is among Thyssen's proposals, however, vindicating the government's existing regulation. Without it, many more EU nationals living in Denmark would qualify for dagpenge. Of the 18 billion kroner spent on dagpenge in 2015, around 1.2 billion – or 6.7% percent – was spent on EU nationals.

Child benefits are the second issue that the government hopes to address, and it was here that Poulsen was most disappointed. His Liberal Party (Venstre) has long objected to EU workers in Denmark claiming child benefits when their children live in another country with a lower cost of living.

Instead, the government wants to see child benefits indexed according to the child's country of residence – the cheaper the country, the lower the sum.

Thyssen rejected this proposal, writing that while she understood it was a sensitive issue for many countries, there were more compelling arguments against indexation. For a start, only one percent of child benefits in the EU are sent abroad, while setting up an indexation system would be enormously bureaucratic and prohibitively expensive.

"It is also difficult to argue why someone who is paying full contributions as a tax payer should

not receive the same treatment in terms of benefits. Therefore the country where you pay your contributions will remain responsible for paying your child benefits, independently of where the child lives. If we want equal pay for equal work, then it is only consistent that you get equal benefits for equal contributions," Thyssen said.

A MATTER OF PRINCIPLE

There is good evidence to support her position. Firstly, EU workers in Denmark generated an average surplus of 21,205 kroner for the Danish state in 2015, according to a recent study by the Danish National Centre for Social Research (SFI).

Secondly, benefit payments for children living abroad are vanishingly small. According to the Ministry of Taxation, around 687,000 people received child benefits in 2013, amounting to 14.5 billion kroner. Of this amount, only 90 million kroner went to European citizens who work in Denmark but whose children live abroad – about 0.6 percent of the total.

But to Poulsen, it's not the size of the payments that matters, but the principle.

"It's about what's right and fair. It doesn't make sense to wait to address it until it becomes a major economic problem. This is a major political problem. It wipes out support for the political project if you introduce models that undermine the ability of nation states to pursue their own policies," he told Berlingske.

BENEFITS CAUSE WAGE DUMPING

Poulsen also criticised Thyssen's proposal to extend from three months to six the length of time an EU national can take their unemployment benefits abroad while looking for work.

While Thyssen argued that

It is difficult to argue why someone who is paying full contributions as a tax payer should not receive the same treatment in terms of benefits.

MARIANNE THYSSEN, EMPLOYMENT AND MOBILITY COMMISSIONER

Fact box – EU welfare reform

The EU has come under increasing pressure from member states to restrict welfare to EU migrants. In December, the European Commission proposed a number of concessions in response.

- 1) EU nationals will be allowed to take their unemployment benefits with them to another EU country for six months instead of the current three months.
- 2) EU nationals must work at least three months in a new member state before they can rely on their previous experience in other member states to access the unemployment benefits of the host country.
- 3) Unemployment benefits for frontier workers – who live in one EU country and work in another, returning home daily or weekly – must be paid by the member state in which they worked and paid social contributions, provided they worked there for at least one year.
- 4) Long-term care benefits are to be brought under the scope of social security rules, with more clarity over how long-term care benefits are treated in cross-border situations.
- 5) Economically inactive citizens – those who do not work and are not actively looking for a job – should not have free access to member states' social assistance systems.
- 6) Clearer procedures will be implemented so national authorities can verify the social security status of workers posted abroad and fight potential abuse.

the policy would help EU nationals look for work abroad, Poulsen thought it was a step in the wrong direction. The Confederation of Danish Employers (DA) agrees.

"If you can't find a job in another country after three months, then you simply haven't been searching broadly or intensively enough," wrote Christiane Mißbeck-Winberg, DA's Director of European and International Affairs.

The Danish Confederation of Trade Unions (LO) is also opposed to extending the period that workers can take their unemployment benefits abroad. LO chairman Lizette Risgaard argued that six months of Danish dagpenge is equivalent to an annual full-time salary in some European countries.

Just as LO, DA and the government all support the proposed three-month quarantine before being eligible for unemployment benefits, so too were they all dis-

appointed by the lack of a child benefits index.

But while DA and the government were more worried about Danish public opinion, LO is concerned that the benefits could be used to suppress Danish wages.

"High child benefits mean that foreign workers in Denmark 'can afford' to accept a lower salary in Denmark, as they are 'compensated' with very high child benefits," she wrote.

Still, the government has reason to be concerned about public opinion. Despite the surplus EU workers provide, and the small share of child benefits that are sent abroad, increasing numbers of Danes are opposed to giving migrant workers the same access to benefits.

A 2014 survey by Ugebrevet A4 found that 58 percent of Danes thought negatively about allowing EU workers to get Danish benefits – in 2009 it was 42 percent. **M**

Designing a better way to fight cancer

A new home chemotherapy device could improve the quality of life of cancer patients, and save hospitals money in the process

There is hardly a family in Denmark that hasn't been touched by cancer. One in three Danes will contract the disease, and around 250,000 are currently living with it.

Thankfully, a cancer diagnosis is no longer the death sentence it once was, as improved treatments are keeping sufferers alive much longer than only a decade or two ago.

Patients must still cope with the unpleasant side effects from these life saving treatments, however. Chemotherapy, for example, can result in hair loss, diminished appetite, nausea and – for patients who receive it intravenously – sometimes require long days spent at the hospital.

But chemotherapy patients in the future might have more time on their hands thanks to a home chemotherapy system that has been under development at the De-

partment of Haematology at Copenhagen's Rigshospitalet since 2014.

Consisting of a non-descript bag containing an IV bag of chemotherapy, a pump, and tubing that attaches to a patient's catheter – usually on the chest – the home chemotherapy device allows leukaemia patients to receive chemotherapy regardless of where they are, or the time of the day.

The latest prototype is called Chemo to go, Please!, and has been developed in collaboration with students from the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, School of Design (KADK).

Rie Maktabi, one of the designers, can attest to the ways that the home chemotherapy system has changed people's lives.

"The patients just bike home. We even met a patient who went to university with his pump. People are moving freely, and live normal lives. They also sleep better at night and eat more because they feel more comfortable at home. This is especially important because chemo can make it difficult to eat," Maktabi explains.

"It also strengthens them psychologically if they can spend more time with their family and children, instead of being in hospital. These different aspects come together and create a better experience for the patients."

Giving more responsibility to patients to manage their own treatment requires some bravery.

RIE MAKTABI

Peter Stanners

Home chemotherapy has upturned the traditional relationship between patients and healthcare providers. Not only could hospitals make enormous savings by freeing up beds and resources, there is also hope that patients will respond better to their treatment if they are more active and spend less time in hospital.

But while home chemotherapy has the potential to radically change what it means to be a cancer patient, doctors will first need to get used to letting go of control.

"Giving more responsibility to patients to manage their own treatment requires some bravery," says Maktabi. "Medical staff are used to being able to access patients whenever they like. But now they can give the patient chemo and just send them home."

LESS TIME IN HOSPITAL

The first Danish home chemotherapy prototype was developed by Katrine Seier Fridthjof, a project nurse in the Acute Leukaemia Department at Rigshospitalet. She had visited a hospital in London that used the pump and bag to deliver chemotherapy, and realised that Rigshospitalet's leukaemia patients could benefit from it too.

"Leukaemia patients need to be given the chemotherapy every 12 hours, so we have to give it to them early in the morning and in

the evening," Fridthjof explains.

"But because the ambulatory departments are closed at this time, we have to keep them in a ward for the ten days they get the chemotherapy for. That's why we thought the transportable pump would be a good idea, as the patients would only need to come in every third day for an hour or so to swap out the chemotherapy."

Fridthjof was granted six months to develop the system through Rigshospitalet's competition Idé-Riget, which allows staff to submit their ideas for improving patient care. After trialling the idea on 10 patients in 2014 she won the competition, and was given another year to continue work on it.

Her department rolled it out to another 300 patients in 2015 and quickly saw the improvement to their lives. But the patients also had some complaints, especially with the bag that came with the pump.

"One of the patients was on the bus and was worried that because it made a noise, and you could see cables coming out of it, that it would be confused for a bomb," says Fridthjof.

The bag was also unattractive, uncomfortable and couldn't be washed repeatedly, which meant that it could pick up pathogens that would pose a threat to their health, because chemotherapy sup-



Rie Maktabi with the Chemo to go, Please! bag that she codesigned together with three other students from the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, School of Design (KADK)

Right: The hospital staff that the student codesigners worked with in refining the home chemotherapy concept.

Below: Isabel Aagaard (left) and Rie Maktabi codesigned the Chemo to go, Please! bag together with fellow students Xénia Geller and Melanie Povlitzki. Aagaard and Maktabi are now codesigners at Nyt Hospital Nordsjælland, where they are designing its maternity unit.



presses the immune system.

COLLABORATIVE DESIGN

Fridthjof decided they needed some expert design help, and through a contact at Odense University Hospital she was put in touch with KADK, which passed on the assignment to the Master’s program in CoDesign.

Rather than focus on a particular type of end product, CoDesign students use a variety of tools and collaborative techniques to understand a particular problem and create a solution.

“I was more free to go into the field without knowing what exactly we would end up with – I loved the freedom,” says Maktabi.

For eight months, she and fellow student Isabel Aagaard were immersed in Rigshospitalet’s Department of Haematology where they followed staff and patients in order to find the best way to design a new bag for the chemotherapy and the pump.

“We wore medical clothes and ate lunch with the medical staff and had long conversations with patients. We wanted to know the good and bad sides. It’s been a really tough ride – it’s not just been fun. Some patients you get close to and spend a lot of time with and they tell their whole life story and then the next day they are

Being more active improves the treatment. They sleep better at home, their mood improves, they experience fewer side effects, and less medication to treat nausea.

KATRINE FRIDTHJOF

not there any more. That was really difficult.”

Through interviews, workshops, games, sketching and generative prototyping, they gathered insights that were needed to redesign of the chemo bag. The final prototype – that was designed together with students Xénia Geller and Melanie Povlitzki – is waterproof, washable and insulated, so the IV fluid neither gets too warm or too cold. It also looks a lot less like a medical device, with a functional appearance and space to store a wallet or mobile phone.

SERVICE DESIGN

In addition to redesigning the home chemo bag, Maktabi and Aagaard also designed some other services that could improve the delivery of the home chemo system. When they visited the homes of the patients, they thought it might be a good idea to create some material that is kept on the fridge to remind the patients to follow their treatment routines and to eat.

“But we found that they wanted to forget the hospital and did everything they could to hide that they were a patient. Patients with children were especially keen to hide anything that looked medical. They wanted their kid’s drawings on the fridge – not a reminder that they were ill,” says Maktabi.

With less access to medical staff, however, they still thought it was important to make sure that patients had all the information they needed while at home. So they designed a patient information website to replace paper documentation that was harder to keep track of, and which they found often had conflicting advice and information.

They also created an interior design guide, based on simple and easy-to-replicate principles, which hospitals can follow when creating their check-up facilities. The goal is to make sure the environment is relaxed, and the meeting between patients and health care professionals is as comfortable and efficient as possible.

While neither the website, nor the design guide, have yet to be implemented, Fridthjof says the experience of working with the designers exceeded her expectations.

“It was great and such a dynamic cooperation. The mix of medical staff, designers and patients worked really well together.”

BENEFITS OF BEING ACTIVE

Rolling out home chemo for cancer patients might seem a daunting undertaking for hospital administrators, fearful of losing control of the patients they are meant to care for. But Fridthjof explains that there are several of benefits to giving

patients more control over their treatment.

Firstly, because chemotherapy can suppresses the immune system, patients are susceptible to the dangerous pathogens that thrive in hospitals. This is also why patients who take their own blood samples through their chest catheter are less 50 percent less likely to suffer infection than if the blood sample were taken by medical staff – their body is already familiar with the bacteria on their own body and in their home, whereas they have much less protection from the less familiar pathogens that could be introduced by the medical staff or hospital.

Fridthjof also points out that patients recover more quickly when they are active. For the types of chemotherapy that have to be delivered intravenously, patients have to remain in hospital attached to a drip stand for up to hours at a time. With the pump, the chemotherapy can be delivered while they are on the move.

“I think being more active improves the treatment. They sleep better at home, their mood improves, they experience fewer side effects, and less medication to treat nausea that can drain their energy.”

Many of these benefits are also experienced by non-cancer patients who also use a portable

Design school focuses on sustainability

You'd be forgiven if you think it strange that students from Denmark's top design school have used their talents to design a medical device, rather than an elite building or piece of furniture.

But the school is undergoing a transformation, as it attempts to align its mission with the challenges currently facing the world. This was evident this summer when graduate students presented their projects, of which many were focussed on addressing social issues.

"Students have been changing their approach over the past four or five years, which was particularly noticeable this year," Peter Thule Kristensen, head of the KADK School of Architecture, told Berlingske newspaper.

"The era where architects wore black turtle neck jumpers, lived in ivory towers, and spoke pretentiously to each other, is over. We have a generation that thinks completely differently."

Responding to the shifting sands, KADK announced a major shift in strategy in November, when they teamed up with the think tank Sustainia. For the next three years the school would focus on developing sustainable design and architecture that addressed the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Chemo to go, Please! was singled out in the press release as an example of a design product that increases health and welfare. Two months earlier, Rigshospitalet's leukaemia department was recognised by the healthcare sector and awarded the 'Golden Scalpel' for developing the most innovative new product in the Danish healthcare sector.

pump to deliver other fluid medications such as antibiotics.

A MATTER OF PERSPECTIVE

Maktabi and Aagaard graduated from KADK in the summer and both found work as codesigners at Nyt Hospital Nordsjælland, a new 'super hospital' that is being constructed north of Copenhagen.

But while their day job is designing its maternity unit – the "delivery room of the future" – they have also started a company to manufacture and sell the CTGP bag. The current prototype is entering small-scale production and is being rolled out in Rigshospitalet and Odense University Hospital over the coming months.

Their role in developing service design requires examining problems from every perspective, rather than designing a solution that suits the need of only one stakeholder – the patient, the hospital, or the staff, for example.

Maktabi points to the blood tests the patients have to take as an example. When Maktabi's team saw the material nurses used to teach patients to take the blood samples, they noticed an obvious problem – all the photographs were taken from the point of view of the nurse.

"So what we did was document a patient taking blood from his own

The mix of medical staff, designers and patients worked really well together.

KATRINE FRIDTH-JOF

perspective, by putting a small video camera on his shoulder. It was these small discoveries that made a huge difference."

MONEY TALKS

Fridthjof says she would like to see the information website and the design guide implemented, but a lack of funding prevents it.

"The patients especially really want the website. But if we create the website, we will need to hire someone to manage it and we simply don't have the staff for it," she says.

With such pressure on their finances, hospitals are clearly interested in initiatives such as home chemotherapy. The trial at Rigshospitalet has so far used 350 mixed antibiotic and chemo patients and saved 800 hospital bed days, which cost around 6000 kroner per day.

Maktabi has seen first hand how the lack of resources in hospitals places enormous pressure on the staff, which then affects the treatment they give patients.

"If we are to have a welfare state that works in the future, then we need to reduce the pressure on medical staff. But we can't improve their working conditions by keeping patients pacified. They need to play a much more active role in their recovery. And that's why we need design." **M**



The Christian Democrats still have a little faith

They poll at under one percent and haven't been represented in parliament since 2005. But Christian Democrats leader Stig Grenov believes his party's vision, for a Denmark where family comes first, will return them to parliament sooner rather than later



Stig Grenov

SOME PARTIES perform well nationally and disappoint locally or vice versa. The Christian Democrats (Kristendemokraterne) struggle on both levels. They've been represented on and off in parliament since they were formed in 1970, but have failed to surpass the two percent election threshold since 2005 – with around 30,00 votes in the 2015 election they only secured around 0.8 percent of the vote.

While too small to enter parliament, it's a level of support that has remained consistent for the past decade, which suggests that there is a core subset of voters drawn to KD's message.

Since 2012 they have been led by Stig Grenov, a cheerful 56-year-old school teacher and KD member since 1990. He occasionally rais-

es his voice in the political debate, most recently in opposition to the detention centres for rejected asylum seekers in Denmark.

"The repatriation center Kærshovedgård near Ikast is the closest Denmark has to a concentration camp," he wrote, before outlining the poor living conditions in the center – living conditions that are designed to be so unbearable that the residents finally volunteer to leave Denmark.

I meet the party leader at his home in Hørsholm, north of Copenhagen, to find out whether the party still has a unique vision for Denmark. As the coffee brews we talk about the school reforms that were introduced by the former Social Democrat government in 2013, and which were strongly opposed by teaching unions.

It proves an entry point to understanding KD, for Grenov sides with neither socialists nor liberals on the issue.

"The school reform is a pet project of the socialists. It further strengthens the state's control over how our children are raised. The liberals accepted the project as they hope that parents will spend more time at work. We now have the highest proportion of children in kindergarten than any country in Europe. Families have gradually been deprived of their natural responsibilities. We are creating a rootless generation when we prioritise growth, jobs and material wellbeing at the expense of our own children. When I was in middle school we were told how it was dreadful that so many children in the USSR spent their entire child-

hood in institutions. Now both the left and right wing favour the same idea – just park the children in the institution and get to work!"

It sounds like you have some points of view in common with The Alternative (Alternativet), who argue that a good society cannot be strictly focused on growth and production.

"First of all I think Alternativet's economic policies are clearly untenable. And while they think we should work fewer hours, they don't appear to argue that families should enjoy that time off collectively. Society demands that we are flexible with our working hours – in retail for example – and that can actually be very damaging to families. We need to think about the wellbe-

Words: Jon Stubbe
Wissing

Photos:
Rasmus Degnbol

ing of employees in the smaller shops, they are the ones that drive the Danish economy."

Christian Democrat parties do much better in the rest of Europe, particularly in neighbouring countries. Why do you think this is the case?

"Fundamentally, I think the Christian worldview is deeply ingrained in many Danes. But yes, we have become almost a little protest-party – it's weird!"

What about issues that have historically been important for KD, such as the right to free abortion – the right all women in Denmark have to terminate a pregnancy within 12 weeks of conception. Is this still an important issue for the party?

"There is nothing free about free abortion. By which I mean I don't see it as freedom exactly, but rather as a choice of great uncertainty. No human is an island and I believe the state should be strong on this particular matter and ensure that people are encouraged to really consider whether getting an abortion is right for them.

We tend to get stuck with this image that we are against abortion, and who wants to be against the freedom to choose? But we would be happy if more women followed through with their pregnancies. Most abortions are carried out when women are in their mid-20s to 30s, supposedly the best time to have children. We would simply like to see policies like those in Germany regarding abortion, where a first trimester abortion is subject to mandatory counselling and a three-day waiting period."

Over the past two decades the political right wing has focussed on the growing population of Muslims in Denmark, and presented it as a threat to Denmark. Why has KD not participated more vocally in this debate?

"Traditional parties have opened to an "us and them" narrative that legitimizes some quite radical positions. We now have a party [Nye Borgerlige] that wants to abolish our commitment to The Human Rights Conven-

We would be happy if more women followed through with their pregnancies.

tion and other international commitments. I totally reject this. If we are to solve the current refugee crisis the European Union must work together. To the voter who is hesitant to accept newcomers I would say: We must become much better and faster at determining who qualifies for asylum and who does not. I also think it is important that asylum seekers settle locally in our villages and smaller towns once they are granted asylum. We know that when Muslims settle in cities they often get drawn into conservative Islamic environments. Municipalities should be rewarded for integrating people and helping them build their lives outside the major cities. There is a psychological limit to how many people Denmark can take, but I don't think we are there yet."

KD belongs to the right wing 'blue' bloc of parties. What do you have in common with these parties, and where do you differ?

"We have a lot of principles in common, particularly with the Conservative. But I'm disappointed that they have been more interested in bringing down property taxes than helping the Danes whose lives are affected by the new cap to social welfare. We think that being conservative means taking responsibly, not only for yourself but also for your fellow man. And in the blue bloc we don't see much responsibility – they say they want to strengthen the education system but cut student grants, and say they want to help refugees closer to areas of conflict rather than in Denmark, while cutting back foreign aid. It is very inconsistent."

What about one of the big challenges facing society, climate change. What's KD's position?

"The current policies are incredibly short-sighted. We should invest massively in public transportation and introduce car tariffs for entering the biggest cities. But the key is to introduce this over a long period of time and give people an



incentive to get an environmentally friendly car. Climate change is one of the biggest challenges of our time, no doubt about it. It is urgent that we help the developing countries combat it as well. The 7th commandment is "Thou must not steal" – that applies to the environment that we are passing on to our children."

Would you raise taxes to tackle a problem like climate change?

"We would aim to maintain the current tax levels. The state has become too large and it is overreaching. I am not an advocate of cutting back the state to its bare bones, but there are many areas where civil society that could

accomplish much more with the right support."

When you became party leader in 2012, you campaigned to return the party to parliament. What will it take?

"We will be pushing for an old-fashioned conservative decency. I hesitate to say this, as it implicitly makes everyone else seem indecent, but we have reached a point where we need that decency back in Danish politics. "

Do you believe in the project?

"Yes. If there is any justice in this world, we will return." **M**

Refugee children inspire a new Danish cookbook

Liv Ret collects the favourite dishes of 25 refugee children in Denmark and shows that regardless of our differences, food is the ultimate equaliser





Liv Ret is composed of three parts.

(Top left) Look! Contains colour drawings made for the book by the children and young people in the project. This is their very own, direct contribution to the book and the drawings include everything from a snowman or childhood home to a wolf on a hill. The photos in Look! show life and nature, where the young people are a part of the environment.

(Top right) Listen! Consists of interviews about what lies behind the choice of the children's favourite food. The young people describe how they see their lives in Denmark and their futures, what superpower they would wish they had, and what matters most in their lives.

(Bottom left) Taste! contains easy recipes of their favourite foods along with photos taken together with the children, young people and parents in their kitchens.

WHEN BROTHERS-IN-LAW Steven Achiam and Brendan Killeen enjoyed Christmas with their families last year, they were joined by a special guest – Ali, a child asylum seeker from Afghanistan.

Achiam, a photojournalist, had met Ali in Greece earlier in the year and they stayed in touch as he travelled up through Europe to Norway. Ali now spoke some Norwegian, but there were still some communication difficulties.

That is, until they got talking about food.

“Ali and my son figured out that their favourite dishes were both made with lamb,” Killeen recalls. “My son then asked if the sheep get to roam free on the mountains in Afghanistan like they did in Ireland, where I’m from, and Ali said yeah of course. He then wrote down the recipe for us.”

A few months later, Achiam and Killeen were talking about the encounter and came to the decision to make a cookbook using recipes provided by child refugees such as Ali.

Some of this stuff would grow in their garden, but you couldn’t find it here in a shop.

BRENDAN KILLEEN

Peter Stanners

“We started talking about what a good idea it would be to get out there and get recipes from kids inside asylum centres and just take a whole different angle on the asylum debate,” says Killeen, who is originally from Ireland and is a journalist by trade.

With the support of the Danish Red Cross Youth, Achiam and Killeen visited refugee centres across the country to meet child refugees and collect their stories and recipes for their favourite food for ‘Liv Ret’, Danish for their favourite food. It wasn’t an easy process, however.

“We needed translators and permission from their parents. Often the children would get moved between asylum centres, or even deported. Some would say yes initially then change their minds. At some point we wondered whether we would get 25 stable people for the book,” says Killeen.

They did succeed though, and in November released Liv Ret (Food for Thought), which is divided into three parts – a recipe

book (Taste!), an interview book (Listen!), and a book of portraits of the children together with their own illustrations (Look!).

“On the one hand it’s not a political book, but of course there’s a political angle because people think they are reading a cookbook when actually they are reading about these kids and their circumstances. We didn’t want to compromise the children or families. We took some of the sensitive stuff out of it, and focused on the food and their memories of home and left it at that,” says Killeen, adding that the Red Cross checked all the material thoroughly before it was published.

The recipes are drawn from Ghana to Somalia, and Chechnya to Kuwait, but weren’t always easy to make sense of. So they brought in a chef to translate the recipes into easy to follow instructions. Still, some recipes were impossible to follow faithfully, simply because not all the ingredients are available in Denmark.

“It was funny to see the re-

actions of the children when we couldn’t get the ingredients that they took for granted. Some of this stuff would grow in their garden, but you couldn’t find it here in a shop. It is these perspectives which are different. Our target audience is middle-of-the-road Danes who don’t get to meet or think about refugees. So hopefully we can get them to drop their guard and think about asylum seekers a little differently through food.” **M**

Liv Ret costs 350 kroner. Profits go to the Danish Red Cross Youth.

Retailers:

Kost, Sønder Blvd. 52, 1720 Copenhagen V

Riccos Kaffebær, Hauserplads 30, 1127 Copenhagen K

Thiemers Magasin, Tullingsgade 24, 1618 København V

LIVRETBOK.DK

LUX: Film on the frontline, fighting for a unified Europe

The European Parliament's LUX Film Prize selected winners that explored the relationship between different generations – if the young and old can learn from each other, can't Europeans seek inspiration in each other too?

The film *Min Far Toni Erdmann* is a hilarious and delicate examination of the distance between a

headstrong young businesswoman and her father, a socially inept and clownish retiree. It's intelligent without being sterile, and heartwarming while avoiding sentimentality. Perhaps most surprising to some, it's also German.

When it screened in competition at Cannes, the filmmakers returned home empty-handed, despite earning rave reviews all over Europe. As if to confirm the folly of the Cannes jury, this November its female director, Maren Ade, was awarded the prestigious LUX Film Prize.

"I've been travelling through this great and diverse place called Europe with my film a lot recently, and one of the most common questions I'm asked is, 'how can it be, a German film has a such a sense of humour?'" she stated at her acceptance speech.

"And I came to find that most people think that their own country has, definitely, the best sense of humour. So even when many of us who believe that national borders should become a thing of the

past, our thinking becomes national again when it comes to the really important things – like humour and football."

I was among the journalists who were invited to cover the LUX Film Prize in Strasbourg, a two-day event in the European Parliament that some of us were previously aware of.

Herein lies the main problem facing LUX, an EU project dedicated to the promotion of European filmmaking with an annual budget of just €400,000. 70 European films are whittled down to 10 by a panel of industry professionals, filmmakers and critics. From those ten, three are finally selected to compete for the prize.

This year, alongside *Min Far Toni Erdmann*, was a Swiss/French animation for children, *Ma Vie de Courgette*, and the Tunisian/French drama *As I Open My Eyes*, which detailed the Tunisian revolution through the eyes of a teenage girl.

Now celebrating its 10-year anniversary, the LUX Film Prize is certainly gathering some momentum, while gaining a reputation for backing the right horse. Several winners have gone on to receive nominations at Cesar, BAFTA, and the Academy Awards – such as last year's excellent *Mustang*. However, for an initiative whose mission status is to further the reach of 'European films to Euro-

The most common questions I'm asked is, 'how can it be that a German film has a such a sense of humour?'

MAREN ADE

Mark Walker

pean audiences', it has some distance to go.

FRACTURED INDUSTRY

One issue is that, unlike the largely unified North American market, the film industry in Europe faces huge organisational and economic difficulties that are only worsened by its language barriers. American films account for nearly 70 percent of European box office takings, with European productions representing only 26 percent.

That's why the most valuable aspect of the LUX prize, for the three finalists, is having their films subtitled into the EU's 24 languages. Although, in some countries such as Hungary, Italy, Spain and Germany, dubbing is much more common than subtitling. But, speaking at a seminar on the role of cinema in European society, Doris Pack – a former German MEP and current President of the EPP Women (European People's Party) – argued subtitling was preferable.

"The smaller countries always did subtitling, but in Germany [our efforts] are berated, not least by those whose livelihoods depend on the dubbing culture. This is understandable. Audiences too complain about having to look at the pictures and words at the same time. They find it difficult. And yet, for the smaller countries I visit, I find people speaking German and

I ask, 'where did you learn this?' And many tell me that it is thanks to subtitling. How to address the problem? It is education. Arté are starting to do it now, and they want this. They are of course a large television network so perhaps the subtitles will come more and more. It is a matter of education. To educate people that to watch a film and hear it – in its original language, with subtitles – this is the best way to get to the soul of the culture, the soul of Europe."

THE ULTIMATE AMBASSADOR

The LUX Film Prize is one of several projects to try and draw the continent closer together. In 2009, for example, former Danish MEP Morten Løkkegaard launched the initiative A New Narrative for Europe, which called upon artists and intellectuals to help define a European story centred on Europe's culture. Similarly, the Lux Film Prize, hopes to start a pan-European discussion.

"The Parliament believes that cinema, a mass cultural medium, can be an ideal vehicle for debate and reflection on Europe and its future," the European Parliament states on its website.

It's certainly proven that film can bring together people from different countries and cultures. The UK, for example, has won hearts and minds with its world-class comedy, while Denmark has trad-



Tunisian/French drama *As I Open My Eyes*, which detailed the Tunisian revolution through the eyes of a teenage girl.

ed heavily on its cultural identity via a slew of Nordic noir films and TV series. Subsequently, barely a week passes in the UK without a newspaper espousing the virtues of woolly jumpers and ‘hygge’.

That’s not an entirely new phenomenon. Before the introduction of sound to cinema (and therefore language), Copenhagen-based studio Nordisk Film enjoyed a reach that extended throughout Europe and far beyond. The Danish silent film actor Valdemar Psilander was one of the most beloved faces in the world.

As for the mere ritual of cinema itself – of going into a screening theatre and sitting in the dark among a room full of strangers, all embarking on the same journey, the same adventure – it perfectly symbolises the notion of shared experience.

Pack says this unity is needed more than ever in the face of an increasing wave of isolationism sweeping global politics – with the likes of the ‘new nationalist’ populists such as Marie Le

Europeans are missing a sense of pride in their continental identity – it is a problem.

DORIS PACK

Pen in France, the Brexiteers in the UK and Poland’s President Andrzej Duda.

“Europeans are missing a sense of pride in their continental identity – it is a problem. It is not enough for governments to say ‘Look at me, I am big. I am independent. I will be fine’. No. We need each other, we need our neighbours. It is foolish to think that we can survive without one another.”

This is doubly true for cinema, as the vast majority of European films are co-productions between at least two countries. Thousands of films have also been funded by the European Commission’s MEDIA programme, which invests over €100 million in European cinema every year.

Helping, in part, to further foster these transcontinental collaborations is LUX again, with its 28 Times Cinema initiative, in which a young ‘LUX ambassador’ aged between 18 and 25 is appointed in each of the 28 member states. This collection of enthusiastic cinephiles start their journey at the

Venice Film Festival where they soak up the latest European cinema and meet with critics and filmmakers, before returning to their home country to spread the word, organise screenings and generally raise awareness of the LUX Prize while continuing to liaise with one another, sharing their progress.

Denmark’s 2016/17 ambassador for LUX is Maj Rafferty, a filmmaker herself, currently living and studying in Aarhus.

“Film has great possibilities in its capability for reaching out to people. The EU has been shaken to its core by recent events, particularly by Brexit. I lived in England for many years and currently find myself questioning things that I thought were beyond question. Also in America with the election of Trump. I feel a certain homelessness with regard to values, community and ideals. Because obviously something has gone wrong in our democracies. Ultimately I think there is a big problem of communication between the EU and their citizens.

If we can get EU citizens watching more of each other’s films, at least we would all have more shared points of reference to talk about. I think we need to be talking to each other more, that’s my point. We are living in a filtered reality these days, so maybe now, more than ever, shared experiences are important.”

THE LONG GAME

Swiss/French animation *Ma Vie de Courgette* (*My Life as a Courgette*) is the perfect embodiment of the values that LUX wants to promote. Adapted from an adult novel and tailored to a child audience, it concerns the lives of traumatised youngsters living together in a state funded orphanage. While the horrors they’ve endured (Courgette, the main character, inadvertently kills his abusive, alcoholic mother in the opening scene) are always just off-screen, nothing is explicit and director Claude Barras chooses to focus on the ways in which the children’s shared pain can unify them as a group and heal



Ma Vie de Courgette (My Life as a Courgette) is adapted from an adult novel and tailored to a child audience. It concerns the lives of traumatised youngsters living together in a state funded orphanage

them individually – often with touching and genuinely hilarious consequences.

“All these children started with something difficult in their lives that they have to cope with,” says Barras.

“What I want to tell children is that if they can stick together, they can fight the things that are coming at them. They can make a better future together and not become aggressive. It’s also happening to kids who have been through war situations, who have been traumatised and have to find a way to cope. I have worked in a shelter and, of course, some things are idealised but it’s my choice to look at the more positive aspects and work with them. Of course it makes sense to speak directly to children about these values, rather than institutions, because they are, after all, our future.”

Adrià Guxens, Spain’s young LUX representative, has spent much of his ambassadorship arguing for film to be included on school curriculums, reasoning

What I want to tell children is that if they can stick together, they can fight the things that are coming at them.

CLAUDE BARRAS

that access to European cinema is dictated by demand. How can one hope to reach suburban or rural teenagers – many of whom live miles from even a multiplex, let alone an arts cinema – and compete with more immediate forms of entertainment, such as social media or gaming, for their attentions?

LUX is exploring the possibility of launching a video on demand (VOD) service, but it is not a complete solution – not least because film is best experienced in a cinema. Also, VOD alone is unlikely to stimulate the wider demand required to justify such a service. Film studies in school then, could arguably create fertile ground for an appreciation of European cinema that would see the medium, the industry and the union prosper.

THE TROJAN HORSE

In the meantime, this act of building bridges when others are threatening to erect walls, has a renewed sense of urgency. And the success

of the three LUX Film Prize nominees offers some insight into how to progress on the battlefield. All share a common theme, in that they explore the dialogue between generations – the idea that while the old have something to teach the youth, our elders can learn something from the younger generation too.

This is most explicit in Leyla Bouzid’s *As I Open My Eyes*. The film presents us with the lead up to Tunisia’s 2011 revolution and the flight of dictator Ben Ali, but it does so by placing us in the shoes of a teenage girl who we meet in the throes of her first love, and while singing in a band. This provides a veneer of universal familiarity and acts as a vehicle for the cultural specifics, before the film reveals its more substantial and darker elements.

A similar device is employed in *Ma Vie de Courgette* that also lures viewers in with all the trappings of a children’s animation, before hitting us with the social agenda and emotional punch of a Ken Loach or

Dardenne brother’s film – and it’s all the better for it.

Maren Ade hesitates to label her LUX winner, *Min Far Toni Erdmann*, a comedy, preferring to call it “a mixture, really”. This is certainly true, since the category of ‘comedy’ fails to encapsulate the measure of realism and insight that characterises the film’s many beautifully observed moments. At the time of writing, the film has surpassed all expectations at the Danish box office.

If these LUX winners have anything to teach future European filmmakers, it’s that what is familiar and universal can still prove a potent vehicle for the personal and political, without compromising artistic integrity. By following the example of these films, filmmakers can potentially reach a wider audience and persuade them to put aside preconceptions long enough to discover something surprising about their neighbours – and perhaps even concede that Germans are, indeed, funny. **M**

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The religion of liberal drinking

Excessive drinking costs Danish society around 13 billion kroner a year, so why is there little political will to follow Sweden's example and make alcohol more expensive and harder to access? The answer, in part, a matter of faith



Cecilie and Emily doing what Danes do best – drink.

IN DECEMBER, a week before Christmas, Cecilie and Emily hosted a traditional Danish ‘julefrokost’ in their spacious apartment in Copenhagen’s Nordvest district. A Julefrokost – literally Christmas lunch – is an all-day festivity where Danes stuff themselves with roast pork and pickled herring, and wash it down with litres of alcohol.

“Me and my friends met up at around noon, cooked some vegan flæskesteg, frikadeller and risalamande. As soon as the food was ready we started drinking some beer and, first of all, schnaps – a really strong one,” says Cecilie.

“It’s a tradition at the beginning of every Julefrokost, that you take a shot and make a speech,” adds Emily.

BIGGEST DRINKERS IN SCANDINAVIA

Danes like to drink, even more than their Scandinavian neighbours. On average, each Dane consumes 10.4 litres of pure alcohol per year, the equivalent of 40 bottles of vodka. In comparison, Norwegians annually consume 6,7 litres of pure alcohol and the Swedes 7.2.

A 2013 study by the Danish health authority Sundhedsstyrelsen found that 8.5 percent of Danes aged 16 and over were high risk drinkers, while 20 percent exceeded the maximum recommended weekly consumption limits.

“In Denmark alcohol causes 10 percent of the total burden of diseases and approximately 3,000 Danes die as a consequence of their alcohol consumption each year,” says Anne Friis Krarup from the Danish Cancer Society (Kræftens Bekæmpelse). “The ‘overuse’ of alcohol in Denmark is estimated to cost society 13 billion kroner per year.”

Diet and smoking also contribute to Denmark having the lowest life expectancy in Western Europe. But despite frighteningly high rates of lifestyle illnesses, Denmark’s permissive approach to both tobacco and alcohol – both in terms of price and availability – shows no signs of change.

Krarup attributes Danish drinking habits primarily to culture, availability and strong influence from peers, and argues that the government has not done enough to prevent alcohol-related diseases and raise awareness of the risks of heavy drinking.

“Kræftens Bekæmpelse has recommend restricting the availability of alcohol – especially for children and adolescents under 18 years,” she says. “But, I think a ‘Swedish’ model will arouse uproar in the Danish population”

NANNY STATES

She might be right. Alcohol in Sweden is not on-

Alcohol causes 10 percent of the total burden of diseases and approximately 3,000 Danes die as a consequence of their alcohol consumption each year.

ANNE FRIIS KRARUP, THE DANISH CANCER SOCIETY

Gabriele Dellisanti



ly much more expensive in Denmark, beverages stronger than 3.5 percent can also only be bought for home consumption through the state-owned monopoly System Bolaget. Typically open during day time hours Monday to Saturday, and closed on Sunday, it’s a far cry from Denmark, where alcohol can be bought 24 hours a day, seven days a week – at least from a 7-11.

This approach has seen Sweden and Norway – which operates a similar alcohol policy – ranked as some of the world’s least free countries, in regards to alcohol, on the European Policy Information Centre’s “nanny state index”.

A “nanny state” is a disparaging term, which refers to a government that excessively interferes with its citizen’s personal choices, for example how much alcohol, tobacco, fat or soda they consume.

British author and journalist Chris Snowdon helped develop the Nanny State Index. He is a vocal opponent of this type of government intervention, and has published three books discussing the effectiveness of government interference on personal lifestyle choices.

“There are public order issues related to drunken behaviour and drink-driving which justify taxation at some level, licensing laws and policing. However, regulation should not be designed to reduce alcohol consumption per se. How much an adult chooses to drink is his or her own business,” he says, adding that Scandinavian alcohol monopolies provide a good range of choice, considering the lack of competition.

“But this is because the government needs to maintain support for the system. Their closing hours and prices, on the other hand, demonstrate a lack of respect for the population. They are relics of the post-prohibition era and should be abandoned.”

A CULTURAL FACTOR?

Regardless of whether alcohol regulations are moral or not, it’s been conclusively shown that higher prices significantly reduce alcohol consumption, especially among the young.

“To be honest, I would not the same amount if alcohol was more expensive,” Cecilie admits.

“The main reason why we drink so much at Julefrokosts is because alcohol is available everywhere for very little money. Plus, drinking makes up a big part of our Danishness.”

That is certainly beyond doubt – beer is to Denmark, what pizza is to Italy, or tea to the UK.

Sidsel Eriksen is an associate professor at the University of Copenhagen who specialises in alcohol studies and has looked into the differences between the apparently-similar Scandinavian countries.

She argues that developments in the early 1900s saw a shift from a spirits-based drinking culture to a beer-based one.

“In Denmark, drinking beer is mostly symbolic. Beer means relaxing with friends and family, and having a cozy time – most Danes do not necessarily drink to get drunk,” she stresses.

But how, and when, did Denmark’s liberal drinking style culture diverge from the rest of Scandinavia? In her essay ‘Drunken Danes and Sober Swedes’, Eriksen analysed drinking culture through temperance movements in Sweden and Denmark.

She underlines how the Anglo-American views of Christianity, which pressure the individual for constant self-improvement, had a very strong influence in Sweden, leading to a more controlled and restrictive society. Denmark, however, was far more influenced by a Lutheran tradition of rejecting restrictions on human actions.

“Social movements have been decisive for alcohol culture. Sweden was strongly influenced by Anglo-American views on Christianity, which stress the importance to prove that you’re a good and reliable person. Temperament has therefore been far more integrated in Swedish culture than in the Danish one. It has not been a Swedish state project to make people sober, but rather social movements, which played a substantial role in state construction through time,” Eriksen explains.

Denmark and Sweden’s divergent religious history means that while you’ll get fined for drinking a beer on the streets of Malmø, excessive drinking is almost glorified in Copenhagen. At least that’s how Cecilie sees it.

“I think it’s quite accepted to be drunk in Denmark, whereas one of my French friends told me in France it was uncool to be anything more than tipsy,” she says.

“But I’m quite certain if we’d discovered alcohol today, with current drug laws, the Danish government definitely wouldn’t legalise it.” **M**

WHAT'S ON • JANUARY



BARNETT NEWMAN
'Louisiana on Paper' is a series dedicated to drawings on paper and, this month, they are exhibiting the work of Barnett Newman.

Louisiana
Gl Strandvej 13, 3050
Louisiana.dk
Opens on the 6th

ALL MONTH

JAPANOMANIA
This exhibition promises to explore the way vivid natural scenes and asymmetric composition became prevalent in Nordic art.

Statens Museum for Kunst
Sølvgade 48-50, KBH
smk.dk
Opens on the 19th



EXTRACT VI YOUNG ART PRIZE
Extract presents the work of seven newly-graduated artists from art schools based in Beijing, London and Copenhagen.

Kunstforeningen GL STRAND
Gl. Strand 48, KBH
glstrand.dk
Opens on the 21st

7

WASTELAND
Opening late this month but continuing into April, this exhibition considers the way trash can become a resource.

Dansk Arkitektur Center
Strandgade 27B, KBH
dac.dk
Opens on the 26th

8

THE NEON DEMON
Twice a month Cinemateket showcases Danish films with English subtitles. This month they will show Nicholas Winding Refn's provocative modern fairy-tale.

Cinemateket
Gothersgade 55, KBH
dfi.dk/Filmhuset.aspx
14:15



STUDENTERHUSET FLEA MARKET
Studenterhuset will be hosting a flea market from 11:00-16:00 which offers a wide range of second hand goods, from vintage clothes to furniture.

Studenterhuset
Købmagergade 52, KBH
studenterhuset.com
January 8

11

ARTnSIPS
Combining painting and cocktails, at ARTnSIPS you can follow along to a painting instructor while enjoying drinks and varied company.

Restaurant SULT
Vognmagergade 8
facebook.com/artnsips/
19:00



BLACK BOX
To celebrate the 12th Anniversary of Culture Box, this night will be headlined by Levon Vincent, Northern Structures and more.

Culture Box
Kronprinsessegade 54, KBH
culture-box.com
January 14

EVENT OF THE MONTH

21

WOMEN'S MARCH
A solidarity march to promote equality and the protection of the rights of women, immigrants and marginalized groups. It will begin at the U.S. embassy at 14:00 and conclude at the Danish parliament.

U.S. Embassy
Dag Hammarskjølds Allé 24, KBH
bit.ly/2hWt5g5
January 21, 14:00



PANTOSTEIN
Amateur English theatre troupe, Copenhagen Theatre Circle, present an energetic family-friendly show promising all the tropes of a traditional pantomime with plenty of singing and dancing.

Krudttønden
Serridslevvej 2, KBH
ctcircle.dk
January 26 - February 4

Emily Tait

28

ROCKY HORROR
Husets Biograf regularly present interactive cinema experiences and this month they will show the cult rock musical Rocky Horror Picture Show.

Husets Biograf
Rådhusstræde 13, KBH
huset-kbh.dk
18:30

WHAT'S ON • FEBRUARY

2

LIGHT IN DARKNESS

In response to the darkening winter, Arken present a series of sculptures that play with the notions of light and dark: creating an exciting, sensory viewer experience.

Arken
Skovvej 100, 2635 Ishøj
arken.dk
Ends July 30



OLD NEWS

The Old News jazz troupe are joined by singer Randi Laubek and Eliith Nulle Nykjær on clarinet to create a festive winter-jazz evening at the Queen's Hall.

Black Diamond
Søren Kierkegaards Plads 1
kb.dk
February 4, 20:00

9

Sprout Meet #14

Regularly meeting to discuss sustainable development, Sprout Innovation Network connects innovative thinkers and curious students in discussion.

Dansk Arkitektur Center
Strandgade 27B, KBH
dac.dk



The XX

Originally from London, popular indie group The XX began 2017 previewing their new I See You single "Say Something Loving" via a Tokyo karaoke session.

Forum Copenhagen
Julius Thomsens Plads 1, FRB
forumcopenhagen.dk
February 10, 20:00

LETSGO

– CARSHARING IN COPENHAGEN

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

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