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MARCH 2017 VOL. 4 ISSUE 3



Winning back bodily rights

Emma Holten's activism fuelled a debate and provoked new laws to combat revenge porn

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

THE MURMUR



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My Facebook feed was drenched in outrage last month. The government had apparently decided that you can only be Danish if your parents are Danish too.

The news prompted a viral video in which young Danish children with foreign-born parents were filmed as someone told them they were not Danish. The video, which captures their shocked and tearful reactions, has been watched more than two million times.

But it seemed a bit far-fetched. It would mean, for instance, that MP Naser Khader from the Conservative People's Party – a member of the coalition government – would also have his Danishness revoked. Why would they do that?

It turned out that the government hadn't passed a law, only a so-called Forslag til vedtagelse, which is really not much more than a statement of intent.

"Parliament notes with concern that there are areas in Denmark where the proportion of immigrants and descendants with non-Western backgrounds is over 50 percent. It is Parliament's position that Danes should not be the minority in Danish housing projects," they stated, before committing to continue to tighten immigration.

There are 170,000 descendants of immigrants living in Denmark, and two-thirds hold Danish passports. Reading the Forslag til vedtagelse, it does suggest that the government doesn't see them as Danish.

The signals a government sends matter. And it is tragic that Danes with foreign-born parents should ever have their right to live in Denmark and participate as an equal in the society challenged. Sadly, it's commonplace, and minority Danes are still fighting to be acknowledged as equals. Last month, the organisation Ansvarlig Presse (Responsible Press) released a study that showed that minority Danes made up only four percent of news media sources, despite making up 12 percent of the population.

This problem must be addressed through reason, debate and persistence. And there's good reason to be optimis-

tic. Ten years of research by Christian Albrect Larsen from Aalborg University has found that Danes are becoming increasingly tolerant about who should be considered Danish. Religious practices and a person's heritage mean much less than they used to.

"Danes are slowly but surely becoming less nationally-conservative and increasingly republican," Larsen states on the university website. "The conception of an authentic Danish culture is becoming less and less important."

Have we arrived at this point because of viral videos with sad piano music and crying children? I would argue, no. These sorts of videos are even counter-productive for promoting inclusive multiculturalism.

Tugging at heartstrings is easy. But you can't judge a political message by the strength of emotions it elicits. To see the damage that emotional reasoning can cause, just look at the nativism and populism that has swept Europe. Far right leaders appeal to sentimental ideas about identity and the nation state in order to justify bigoted policies – feelings can make us do bad things too.

We can't tackle regressive populism by copying the strategy but changing the message – the strategy is part of the message. People are increasingly supporting a broader definition of Danishness because it makes sense – because it is reasonable that a country and its inhabitants change and that change doesn't have to be bad.

By making an argument for an inclusive society – rather than an emotional appeal – I also think we are better at shaping the society when conflicts do arise. And the government isn't wrong when they suggest that we risk social and economic marginalisation when housing developments have high densities of immigrants.

But instead of the government's response, to blame the mere fact that there is immigration, the alternative response is simple: investment in better education and programmes to ensure that regardless of where a child is born, they all have the same opportunities.

So let's stop sharing emotional propaganda. Through open and critical debate we can build bridges within and between communities to find consensus and shared interests, and ultimately become even more invested in each other's success. **M**

Every time they say to victims or young people, 'Don't take naked pictures', they are telling potential perpetrators that the person who takes the picture is at fault.

EMMA HOLTEN, P12



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MASTHEAD

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SPROG

MONTH IN REVIEW

Child sex abuser caught

A man in Brøndby is accused of ordering and live streaming child porn from the Philippines for over five years, resulting in the sexual abuse of 346 children. Prosecutor Helene Brædder says the case is extremely serious.

MRSA found in 88 percent of Danish pig farms

The number of pigs infected with MRSA has increased by 20 percent since 2014. The antibiotic resistant bacteria can be found in 88 percent of all pig farms, according to the Ministry of Food and Agriculture. Humans can potentially be infected through contact with pigs, or in rare cases, though eating infected meat. A project to find new methods of disinfection will soon be launched together with the Technical University of Denmark.



Liz West / flickr

Anti-Muslim vandalism

A total of eight graves were vandalised in the Muslim section of Copenhagen's Vestre Cemetery. Journalist Rushy Rashid Højbjerg noticed the incident while bringing flowers to her mother last month, according to DR.

BENEFIT FIGHTERS

According to tabloid Ekstra Bladet, 36 Danes have claimed unemployment benefits while fighting in Syria for the Islamic State. It's not the first time that Danish fighters have been shown to subsidise their excursion to the Syrian battlefield using taxpayer funds. In 2014, it was reported that over two dozen Danes were claiming money from the Danish state while in Syria. Around 135 Danes have so far left for Syria to join the jihadist group. Relative to the size of the population, Denmark is the second largest contributor of foreign fighters in the conflict.

Gabriele Dellisanti

Dishwasher among three new partners at Noma

Ali Sonko is possibly the world's most famous dishwasher. After 13 years of polishing dishes at Noma – which held two Michelin stars before it temporarily closed in February – he was officially made a partner by the head chef Rene Redzepi. Sonko (right), 61, is originally from Gambia and has been described by Redzepi as "the heart and soul of Noma". Restaurant manager James Spreadbury (left) and service director Lau Richter (middle) were also made partners.



Rene Redzepi / Instagram

NEW MICHELIN STARS

Five Danish restaurants received their first Michelin stars in February, including 108 in central Copenhagen.

Other restaurants to get their first star include KOKS on the Faroe Islands (the first ever for the islands), Restaurant Domestic in Aarhus, Ti Trin Ned in Fredericia and Slotskøkkenet in Hørve.

Henne Kirkeby Kro received their second star and is the first restaurant outside Copenhagen to achieve such a high ranking. Noma loses both of theirs due to their planned closure.

St. Patrick's

Parade

2017

"Everyone is Irish on St. Patrick's Day"

Rådhuspladsen 15.30

A buzz of traditional Irish music & dance
Free St. Patrick's Day face paint for children
Green hats & accessories, Irish coffee & Irish beer for sale

Parade 17.00

Gordon Pipes & Drums - Dark Green School of Irish Dancing
bodhráns - Irish wolf hounds and terriers
Start and finish at Rådhuspladsen (ca. 45 min.)
Requirement for participants: Wear something green!

/copenhagstpatricksdays

Support for legal weed

A survey by Analyse Danmark has shown that four out of five Danes supports the use of medicinal marijuana. Only five percent of the Danish population is strictly against it. A trial legalisation starts next year.



Aleksander Klug

Violent protest marks 10 year anniversary of Youth House demolition

The ten year anniversary of the eviction and demolition of the youth house Ungdomshuset in Nørrebro was marked with a demonstration that descended into violence. Around 1000 supporters of the left wing community gathered for the march that was planned from central Copenhagen to the new building on Dortheavej in Nord Vest.

Along the way, a few protesters attacked banks, threw fireworks at police and vandalised their vehicles. The march ended with a standoff at Dortheavej where police stormed the building. Nine people were arrested. The community regards the eviction and demolition of the property on Jagtvej 69 in March 2007 as unjust and unforgiveable.

Unethical exports

EU member states have permitted exports of cyber-surveillance technology at least 317 times during the past two year, according to Information newspaper. Almost 30 percent of the issued licenses were for exports to countries that are ranked as 'not free' by the think tank Freedom House.

The exports have taken place despite restrictions on the export of surveillance that were introduced by the EU in 2014. The new regulations were implemented after reports that European surveillance teams had helped Middle Eastern dictators locate and crack down protests during the Arab Spring. The UK approved 201 licenses and rejected seven, while Denmark approved 17 and rejected one.

MUSIC AND FOOD UNITE Haven festival, which will debut on Copenhagen's Refshaleøen in mid-August, has announced the full lineup. Alongside The National and Beach House, expect Iggy Pop, Feist, Band of Horses and Danish acts such as the rising Kwamie Liv and punk band Iceage. The festival is a collaboration between Aaron Dessner and Bryce Dessner from The National (middle), chef Claus Meyer (right) and Mikkel Borg Bjergsø (left), founder of the brewery Mikkeller. The organisers write that their ambition is "to get beer, food, art and music to meet as equals in a single festival experience".



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Europe steps up to support women's sexual health after Trump reinstates 'global gag rule'

With US foreign aid being pulled from NGOs that discuss abortion, Denmark and the Netherlands launch initiatives to raise the lost funding and support the sexual health of more than 200 million women worldwide

THE SEXUAL and reproductive health of women around the world was dealt a blow with Donald Trump's entrance into the White House. Among his flurry of executive actions was the reinstatement of a policy that blocks international NGOs that discuss abortion as a family-planning option from receiving US foreign aid.

Known as the "global gag rule", the withdrawal of US funds threatens to undermine efforts to promote women's rights and sexual health in developing countries around the world.

But a number of countries are stepping into the void, including Denmark, which has allocated 75 million kroner to support affected NGOs.

DENMARK COMMITS

Denmark also drafted a letter to the EU High Representative and the Commissioner for Development – co-signed by eight other EU countries – to encourage a debate about how to make up the funding shortfall left by the US, which some estimates put at six billion kroner per year.

"I am worried by the possible consequences that the reinstatement of the global gag rule can have for the world's poorest and most vulnerable women and girls," said Danish Minister for Development Cooperation Ulla Tørnæs.

"It is important that the organisations that work with family planning and sexual and reproductive rights are not forced to shut down their important work. Denmark cannot fill the gap alone. But Denmark will commit 75 million kroner, and I will – together with other like-minded European countries – with the letter encourage the EU Commission to increase their funding. In this way we can hopefully reduce

We cannot let women and girls down. They should have the right to decide if they want to have children, when they want to have children, and with whom they want to have children.

LILIANNE PLOUMEN, DEVELOPMENT MINISTER OF THE NETHERLANDS

Peter Stanners



A mother and daughter in the Masiphumelele township in Cape Town, South Africa.

the number of unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions and deaths linked to pregnancy and birth," Tørnæs said.

SUPPORT FOR SHE DECIDES

She adds that Denmark also supports the global fundraising initiative 'She Decides' that is being spearheaded by Dutch NGO Rutgers and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

It was launched after Dutch Development Minister Lilianne Ploumen made a public call for an international fund for safe abortion.

"We have to make up as much as possible for this financial blow, with a broad-based fund that governments, companies and civil society organisations can donate to so that women can continue to make their own decisions about their own bodies," Ploumen said.

"[The] huge funding gap ... can only be filled by a strong international response from governments, aid organisations, businesses and individuals. We cannot let women and girls down. They should have the right to decide if they want to have children, when they want to have children, and

with whom they want to have children."

LACK OF OPTIONS

According to the Danish foreign ministry, more than 800 women die from preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth every day.

There are also more than 225 million women who want to avoid pregnancy, but who are not using safe and effective family planning methods, for reasons ranging from lack of access to information or services to lack of support from their partners or communities. **M**



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CITY



Artist Poul Gernes gave Palads a colourful makeover in 1989.

The cinema standing in the way of progress

With its colourful façade, the cinema Palads has long been an architectural landmark. But it now risks demolition as plans are hatched for a massive urban redevelopment

"IT'S A SHAME, we don't want any more of these ugly high-rises," says Laura, 45, pointing at the nearby Radisson SAS hotel and the newly-constructed Axel Towers.

We are standing in front of Palads cinema near Vesterport station, which may face demolition if a proposed redevelopment is approved. Originally built in 1911, it was given a colourful makeover in 1989 by artist Poul Gernes, transforming it into one of the city's most iconic buildings.

I talk to Laura and her three friends about how the proposed redevelopment promises a new neighbourhood with fewer vehicles and more restaurants, shops, and businesses. Laura says the idea is appealing, but she doesn't see the need to demolish Palads.

A fifth friend shows up, and joins the conversation.

"Great! Get rid of it," he says of the demolition plans.

A BETTER USE OF SPACE

Palads certainly divides opinions – it's both an iconic eyesore

People care about the building and its place in the urban landscape.

GRETHE PONTOPPIDAN, ARCHITECT

Johanna Sveinsdottir

and a treasured landmark. It's not its aesthetic qualities that have brought its future into question, however, but its location alongside the recessed S-Train railway line – one of the few stretches through the city centre that remains exposed.

Covering the tracks has now been proposed by a consortium of developers who want to transform the area around Vesterport train station into a modern district with shopping, offices and housing. Their proposal was taken up by Copenhagen City Council's Technical and Environmental Committee in February, which decided that it would not prevent the landowners from demolishing Palads if a sufficiently attractive redevelopment plan came along.

"If we want to cover some of these holes in the city, we know we have to build with a high density," Morten Kabell, Mayor of Technical and Environmental Affairs, told Politiken newspaper.

"This is a realistic picture of how to cover the recessed railway. It will undoubtedly be expensive and diffi-

cult, but this is actually the best attempt I have seen so far."

Gertrud Jørgensen, professor of landscape architecture and city planning at the University of Copenhagen, also likes the proposed redevelopment.

"All things considered, it is a splendid idea to fill in the Vesterport railway cutting. It's a way to get some use out of an area that is at the moment a waste of great space," she said, adding that the consortium's decision not to include Palads in its proposed vision would appear to be a deliberate strategy.

"I imagine they're putting pressure on the administration: if we don't get Palads, we will scrap the project."

TOO TALL

According to the City Council, the proposed redevelopment was presented by a private developer, DSB Ejendomme (the property division of the state-owned rail operator), with the cooperation of Nordisk Film.

The ambitious vision consists of

80,000 square meters of new development distributed between three towers, which will be linked by a number of shorter buildings surrounding a central pedestrian district. A fourth, separate tower is planned on the northern end of the lot.

While Kabell welcomed the proposal, the meeting of the Technical and Environmental Committee on February 6 resulted in demands for substantial revisions. For a start, they accepted only the tower on the northern edge of the lot, while requiring the rest of the development to be kept below 30 metres. This is to preserve Copenhagen's characteristic profile, in which just a few tall buildings rise above the skyline.

The administration is also not convinced that Palads needs to be demolished in order to successfully redevelop the area. They pointed out that it is worthy of preservation, and should be kept as a listed building – at least until an appealing enough plan comes along.

Even if it is preserved, however, it is unlikely to remain a cine-

Climate leadership group opens office in Copenhagen

A coalition of 90 of the world's largest cities, the C40, have opened an office in Copenhagen to coordinate their fight to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and tackle climate change. Located in the new BLOXHUB district near Frederiksholms Canal, the office will run the network's global Business, Economy and Innovation programme, which will support "greater cooperation between C40 cities and the private sector [in order to] help to overcome one of the major barriers to mayors delivering on their ambitious climate change agendas."

Copenhagen is too small to qualify for formal membership – C40 cities must have at least three million residents – but it earned a spot in the club nevertheless due to its successes in developing green urban solutions.

"Mayors around the world look to Copenhagen's solutions for inspiration in developing their cities, and it will become a major showcase for green Danish businesses," said Copenhagen's mayor Frank Jensen. The Social Democrat is responsible for the city's ambitious climate plan, which expects to see the city become climate neutral by 2025.

Being a leader has its obligations, however. Speaking to Politiken, economist Philipp Rode is cautious. "The role of a pioneer and international leader is a big commitment. It becomes much harder to be evasive when the really tough decisions need to be made."

Rode adds that one of the requirements for being a sustainable and environmental city is reducing car traffic, which is only possible if the city implements congestion pricing. Former Social Democrat PM Helle Thorning-Schmidt promised to introduce congestion fees after winning the 2011 election, only to be blocked in parliament.

10 years on from Ungdomshuset's demolition, activists oppose new development

"Nothing is forgotten – Nothing is forgiven". Members of the far-left community marched through Copenhagen on March 1 carrying a banner bearing the slogan to mark the ten-year anniversary of their eviction from their former youth house, Ungdomshuset, which was subsequently demolished.

The community had unsuccessfully attempted to purchase the building, which they had squatted since the 1980s. Public sympathy for the community at losing their home under unfair circumstances was diminished by the damage caused in the riots that broke out following the building's demolition.

Although the municipality provided them with a new site in the Nordvest district, they have forcefully opposed any new development on the plot of land at Jagtvej 69, where the original building stood. Their objection extends to the latest proposal by Vendepunktet to use the land for a container 'village' for the city's homeless. The eight container apartments can be shared by up to 16 people, and offer a common cooking area, health care and social activities.

Despite the project's potential for positive social impact, activists from the anarchist community oppose the temporary facilities.

"It stinks of being a project that uses the pretext of helping at-risk city youth as a handy precursor to commercial development at Jagtvej 69," they write in a press release.

They add that it is suspicious that the homeless housing project is scheduled to end just as the nearby Metro construction site at Nørrebro's Runddel is completed, which will make the land even more valuable. The protesters are adamant that the Jagtvej 69 property should be a free and open space for all.

A quarter of Copenhageners now immigrants or descendants of immigrants

The non-Danish population in Copenhagen continues to grow. According to the latest figures from Statistics Denmark, 24 percent of the city's residents are now either immigrants or descendants of immigrants. The national average is 13 percent. Around 33 percent of immigrants and their descendants in Copenhagen are of Western descent, while the remainder are of non-Western descent.

Let them have brooms

Cecilie Lonning-Skovgaard wants Copenhagen's unemployed to clean the streets. As the leading candidate for the Liberal Party (Venstre) in November's upcoming municipal elections, she argues that 500 of the city's welfare recipients could help tackle the city's trash problems.

"We have a resource of labour that we could use," she told Berlingske. "I believe it is a healthy principle that you have to contribute in order to receive the unemployment benefits our society provides, and therefore we think that in this way we can kill two birds with one stone. On the one hand, we will be able to see how willing to work those receiving benefits really are when we ask them to pitch in, and at the same time we will get help cleaning the city for everyone's enjoyment." **M**



WERK

A render of the proposed redevelopment in Vesterport that will see the demolition of Palads and the construction of four new towers.

ma. Its owner, Nordisk Film, has stated that it plans to move out of the building within the next ten years, as it is will no longer be suited to the requirements of a modern cinema.

"The cinema industry is developing faster than ever," says John Tønnes, general manager of Nordisk Film's cinemas. "Building standards are changing, which presents technological challenges. This is a huge effort especially for old cinemas, not to mention a 100 year old veteran like Palads."

Tønnes adds that it is difficult to imagine how Palads could be repurposed as a building, or who would be interested in undertaking the project.

But while Nordisk Film is not opposed to demolishing Palads after establishing a new cinema very close to the existing cinema, they have not yet given up on the iconic building and recently committed a significant financial investment in maintaining and upgrading the building.

"Palads is a very special structure that is not easy to reconstruct. It is old and has thick walls and fundamentals that lie on top of what is essentially a bog, here by the old city ramparts. Furthermore, the building itself is cut through small hallways, staircases, lines, pipes and ventilation systems so it is extremely difficult to renovate and make changes."

HISTORIC VALUE

Not everyone prizes redevelopment

ment over nostalgia and history, however. Architect and construction economist Grethe Pontoppidan, an expert on renovation and restoration projects, feels the administration is moving too quickly.

"They should do research on the urban environment and take into account cultural heritage before deciding on a project like this. At least look into other options first, hold a competition for the proposal, or call a public hearing," adding that Palads could still have a future.

"It has served different purposes in the past, and so it can always gain a new function in the future as long as you are open to the possibility and research the situation before deciding on the matter."

There is also popular support for preserving Palads, with around six thousand Facebook users stating their intention to attend protests against the redevelopment in March.

"It's fantastic to see this kind of support," says Pontoppidan. "It is clear that people care about the building and its place in the urban landscape."

Outside Palads, I get talking to Anders, who seems to agree.

"I can barely remember what it used to be like – it was white, I think," he says.

"I thought it was hideous at first, but it's grown on me, I guess. I couldn't imagine Copenhagen without it. I still think it's ugly, but it has become a landmark." **M**



Vendepunktet

The proposed container village for the city's homeless that would be placed on the empty lot where Ungdomshuset once stood.

POLITICS

Industrial workers negotiate new deal

Families, older workers and unskilled labourers are all set to a benefit from a new collective bargaining agreement that was struck between labour union CO-Industri and Danish employers' association DI.

The agreement covers around 230,000 people and includes an investment of 200 million kroner over two years to educate unskilled labourers. Older employees with less than five years to retirement can apply for an extra 32 days off each year, while parents will now be able to receive full salaries during parental leave.

"The technological development in industrial workplaces demands a significant improvement of skills," CO-Industri chairman Claus Jensen said. "This deal will create security for the future of our members' jobs."

DI's administrative director Karsten Dybvad echoed the sentiment.

"I am glad that the deal gives employees a better opportunity to lift themselves from unskilled to skilled workers in selected fields where there is a demand for labourers."

Thousands turned away at the border

The temporary border control with Germany has resulted in 2,901 people being denied entry since its establishment in January 2016.

According to the Ministry of Immigration, Integration and Housing, they were turned away for lacking residence permits or visas, or for carrying falsified papers.

"This demonstrates the importance of border control," Immigration Minister Inger Støjberg said. "We are stopping the right people, the ones without ID, and that tells me that we have much better control over who is coming into Denmark."

The majority of those turned away were from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Eritrea and Somalia. Fourteen Germans were also denied entry. **M**

AN OLD POLITICAL FEUD SOFTENS

The Social Democrats and the Danish People's Party belong to opposite political wings, but are increasingly finding common cause

CAN A LEFT-WING government have the support of an anti-immigration party? It's a question that was raised last month when the leaders of the Danish People's Party (DF) and Social Democrats (Socialdemokrater) participated in a joint interview conducted by the labour union 3F.

Between 2001 and 2011, and from 2015 to the present, DF has supported right-wing minority and coalition governments. But in the interview, DF leader Kristian Thulesen Dahl said that this wouldn't necessarily always be the case.

"I am incredibly happy that we have a dialogue that makes it possible for the Socialdemokrater and DF to cooperate on a completely different level than we are used to," Dahl said.

The two parties have a lot in common, at least on paper. They are both pro-welfare and oppose social dumping, raising the pension age, and cutting income taxes. While the right-wing parties welcome the taxi platform Uber, DF has followed the left wing's line that it represents unfair competition.

Instead of supporting the left-wing 'red bloc' parties, however, DF's hard line on immigration means they have always belonged to the right-wing 'blue bloc'.

Over the past two decades, however, the dividing line on immigration has crept further and further left. After losing power to a minority Liberal Party (Venstre) government in 2015, Socialdemokrater voted with the right-wing parties on a string of immigration and asylum restrictions.

According to Politiken newspaper's political editor Anders Bæksgaard, the cross-aisle alliance doesn't necessarily mean the two will try to form a government together at the next election. DF would have a hard time working with parties further to the left, such as the Red-Green Alliance, whose permissive immigration policies could not be more diametrically opposed to DF's closed border stance.

But DF and Socialdemokratiet still ben-

efit in the short term from their informal alliance, Bæksgaard argues.

"DF is given a better and freer negotiating position with Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen. And Mette Frederiksen (leader of Socialdemokratiet, ed.) can leverage the weak cohesion in the blue bloc to demonstrate that she, the leader of the opposition, can have a greater impact on Danish politics than the prime minister."

Others are less optimistic about the alliance. In a leader, Politiken Editor-in-Chief Christian Jensen writes that while it's true that DF has moved toward the left on economic policies, it's even more true that Socialdemokratiet has moved to the right on immigration.

"[But] it's difficult to see how a governing coalition could be realised without the Socialdemokrater further abandoning the party's fundamental ideas about internationalism and humanism," he writes.

Still, the two parties have come a long way since October 1999. During a debate in Parliament, then-Socialdemokrat PM Poul Nyrup Rasmussen condemned DF's anti-immigration stance and declared, "You will never be housebroken." ("*Stueren, det bliver I aldrig.*") **M**

THE YOUTH VOTES BLUE

Liberal and conservative parties more popular among youth than left wing and populists

THE DANISH PARLIAMENT parliament would be overwhelmingly right wing if it were up to 14 to 17-year-olds. In February, 670 schools and 63,000 students across the country participated in the second-ever school election, which resulted in an overwhelming majority for the right-wing 'blue bloc', which secured 55.2 percent of the vote.

The most popular party was the centre-right Liberal Party (Venstre) with 19.1 percent of the vote, which mirrors the 19.5 percent the party achieved in the 2015 general election.

But for a number of the other parties, the voting habits of young people diverged widely from the population at large. The opposition-leading Social Democrats (Socialdemokratiet) fell to second place in the school election with 15.5 percent percent,



Youth supporters of the Liberal Party (Venstre) celebrate their party's win at the school elections.

a dramatic change from their overwhelming win in the 2015 election with 26.3 percent of the vote.

And while the populist Danish People's Party won 21.1 percent of the vote in 2015, they could only muster 8.4 percent of the youth vote this time around. The Liberal Alliance and Conservative People's Party (Konservativer) are also much more popular among young people than adults. LA secured 13.5 percent of the vote in February compared to 7.5 percent in 2015, and

Konservativer 12.8 percent – almost triple their support in the 2015 general election.

Held for the first time in 2015, the school election was launched to improve political awareness and competencies among young people. University of Copenhagen research following the first school election found that students felt more able to understand and take part in political debates after participating in the programme, which involved school debates and discussions on political issues. **M**

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STUDIESKOLEN
NÅR SPROG FLYTTER GRÆNSER

Emma Holten argues revenge porn is a breakdown in social empathy, fuelled by individualism and made possible by a lawless online realm. While new laws will combat the phenomenon, the only solution is building a world where we can trust each other again – we just need to learn the power of consent

The woman who fought for our right to privacy and won

When hackers broke into Emma Holten's email account in 2011, they found nude photographs she had sent to a former boyfriend. They stole the photos, posted them with her personal information on a website, and encouraged visitors to harass her.

It didn't take Holten long to realise what had happened, and in a panic she called the police and directed them to the website. While they acknowledged it was criminal behaviour, they said it would be a waste of time to report it.

"That was extremely shocking," she says.

"Anyone who has experienced being violated by the justice system will recognise this feeling – that a system you thought would protect you is simply not functioning. It's a violent feeling, because you feel completely outside society, like your rights don't matter."

Almost six years on, Holten has become one of Denmark's most recognised advocates for victims of these sorts of violations, often called either 'revenge porn' or 'non-consensual pornography'. Her work is motivated by a lack of empathy for victims by police, the media and public figures, who often argue that the solution is simple: stop taking intimate photographs.

Attitudes have begun to change, however. Once seen as unfortunate but inevitable teenage behaviour, the non-consensual sharing of intimate photos is now increasingly regarded as criminal and antisocial behaviour.

This was formalised in February, when the government released a series of new measures designed to tackle digital sex crimes. They increased the penalty for sharing other people's private images and proposed a number of initiatives to better manage the intersection of youth sexuality and digital technology.

Revenge porn is a power grab, getting a kick out of having another person's life and identity in the palm of their hand and feeling invigorated by it.

Words and photos:
Peter Stanners

To Holten, the new measures are a major step forward.

"The conversation leading up to this was very much about how revenge porn victims felt bad about what happened because they were somehow ashamed of having taken the pictures. The way to stop the crime was to tell people: don't have a private life, and there won't be stuff you don't want to show people. That seemed misguided to me."

Holten argues that there is still work to be done, both in terms of securing justice for victims and changing social attitudes toward digital sex crimes.

But to understand where Holten thinks we need to go, we need to see where we have come from. We can start at the moment when Holten realised she was far from alone.

THE RIGHT TO HUMILIATE

There is a thriving online industry based on publishing intimate photographs without the consent of the subject. Sometimes they are stolen, but often they are provided by jilted lovers.

As she browsed the websites that hosted her images, Holten could see that she was not alone. Thousands of young people around the world had suffered the same fate, their intimate photos posted in folders along with personal details like their phone number, address and email addresses.

And it got her thinking: what motivated people to share others' intimate photos? The motive couldn't simply be financial – some websites offer to remove the photos for a fee, but far from all. And it couldn't simply be sexual, either, as there is plenty of free and consensual pornography on the internet.

She found a clue in the emails that had start-

ed to fill her inbox. "Do your parents know that you're a slut?" "Send me more nudes or I'll send the ones I have to your boss." "Did you get fired?"

"It became apparent to me that it's about having the right to humiliate someone," says Holten. "It's a power grab, getting a kick out of having another person's life and identity in the palm of their hand and feeling invigorated by it."

Sharing another person's private images is illegal in Denmark but, as Holten discovered, the police didn't have the resources to investigate.

Meanwhile, perpetrators were getting away with the crime because their actions were being tacitly accepted by society at large. It seemed that sharing someone's nude image was somehow no worse than agreeing to be photographed in the first place.

THE CONSENT PROJECT

Three years after her email account was hacked, new topless images of Holten were circulated online. Except this time, Holten herself was responsible.

She commissioned photographer Cecilie Bødker to take the new set of images, which they published in the feminist magazine *Friktion*. Entitled *Consent*, the goal was to demonstrate that the problem with revenge porn wasn't sex, nudity or shame – it was the violation of privacy.

The photo series was also published online, and soon attracted media interest from around the world. Holten was surprised, thinking the project would only appeal to a niche feminist audience. But she soon discovered she had touched a nerve.

"I was deluged by emails and messages from





people who had similar experiences – they had been filmed in changing rooms, or had their medical records hacked and leaked. All these crimes related to a violation of consent. The one unifying factor was that none of us received help or understanding from law enforcement or the wider culture."

NO SHAME IN BEING A VICTIM

The central problem is this: the victims pay a much heavier price than the perpetrators. This is certainly the case in schools, where Holten learned that students who shared photos suffered few or no repercussions, while the students depicted in the photos often had to change schools.

Not that it always helps. According to the government, a third of Danish municipalities are aware of folders containing the intimate photos of hundreds of young men and women. The folders are shared on Facebook groups, where requests are made for photos of specific individuals.

"What often happens is that the victim changes school, but the violator will stay and their social status doesn't change. That's not a problem that can be fixed by law. Why do we not find it reprehensible that people do these things? Why is it not a deal breaker?"

There has seemed to be little social stigma

Some people are victims in ways they don't deserve, and that sort of victimisation is political – so making it political is the best way to stop crying and get out there.

attached to sharing intimate photographs of other people without their consent. This was confirmed by a 2015 government survey, in which 22 percent of young people aged 15 to 30 responded they had no problem with sharing a nude photo of someone they didn't know. Ten percent of young men aged 15 to 25 responded that they had shared a sexual photo or video of someone else.

Holten has spent the last three years since the Consent project trying to challenge these attitudes, writing columns and speaking regularly in high schools and debate programmes.

February marked a major milestone in her activism, when the government released a document entitled "Enhanced measures against digital sex crimes" outlining the measures it would take to tackle revenge porn. The government hopes that preventative strategies, increased support for victims, and stricter sentencing will bring an end to a culture that affords social status to those who share intimate images.

"It is not shameful to be the victim of a digital sex crime. It is not wrong to send an intimate photo of oneself to a partner," the government writes. "But it is both wrong and disgraceful to send or share nude or intimate photos of others against their will."

When Holten read this, she felt vindicated.

"This was the most important signal – that we were right and everyone telling us that we

deserved this or put ourselves in this situation were most definitely wrong. That has been one of the central tenets of the work I have been doing over the past two and a half years: to say privacy is a right, and having your privacy violated is a serious crime. The government has now written a ten-page document saying this. They could just have written, 'Emma Holten is right and you should just shut up!'"

IT'S OK TO TRUST

To Holten, it's simple: violating someone else's privacy should have far greater consequences than having your own privacy violated. While the government now agrees, there is still broad resistance to the idea that people who take intimate photos are not even partially responsible when those photos are non-consensually shared.

One argument she commonly faces, for example, is that while violating someone's privacy is wrong, you ought to at least minimise your own risks. You wouldn't leave a laptop unattended in public and not expect it to get stolen, so why would you not expect someone to share your nude photos?

But this argument has a number of problems, argues Holten. Firstly, people and property are fundamentally different. It's obvious that stealing someone's unattended property should be considered a far lesser crime than

violating someone's personhood. As a society, we accept that people should be held liable for guarding their possessions, but people should never be held liable for being subjected to violence.

Holten warns that the logical extension of the "you were asking for it" argument is that people become liable for all violence committed against them.

"I kind of fear that we are retreating into a society where people who are trusting are considered naïve, and I think that's incredibly sad," says Holten.

The second problem with victim blaming, argues Holten, is that it absolves the perpetrator of responsibility. With revenge porn, this is most often young men.

"What they are saying to young women is they are idiots for trusting young men. People don't even hide it – it's one of the first things people said to me," Holten laments.

"This makes young men think that they are not expected to behave differently, that we can't expect boys to respect basic human rights. Every time they say to victims or young people, 'Don't take naked pictures', they are telling potential perpetrators that the person who takes the picture is at fault. Imagine if we told storeowners that they can't have apples lying around because people will take them. I wouldn't feel so bad about stealing an apple, because at least the storeowner was warned!"

CONSENT AS A UNIVERSAL RIGHT

Holten wants society to have more compassion for people who suffer crimes against their privacy. But one difficulty with this is that we don't all agree about what should be kept private.

"Having your privacy violated is very abstract. If people have a right to privacy and it's being upheld, they don't care, but as soon as they lose their privacy it becomes very concrete. I think a lot of people have this sense that they could never be a victim like I was, because it's not a problem that's relevant to them," says Holten.

"But we all have things we try to keep private. I don't know what it is for you, but there must be something. This is about protecting exactly that. It's difficult because apart from the word 'consent', there really is no rallying cry for this."

The point is that it's not about what should be kept private, but that we all have the right to privacy. For if we accept that other people's privacy can be violated – because they took nude photographs of themselves, for example – we risk undermining the fundamental nature of privacy.

As a philosophy for protecting individual rights, it's compelling, because it can be ap-

A concept like consent over your body is quite complex. Many adults don't really master it fully, but it's a concept that we must now reasonably expect a 12-year-old to understand.

plied regardless of the cultural context or norms – it's universal.

"Two central principles hold: we all have the right of consent over what happens with our bodies, and we don't have the right to regulate other people's bodies. Those two things are almost the same. The issue in some conservative countries – and also in Denmark – is that a lot of people apply their own bodily cultural norms to others. They say, 'seeing as I would normally not take a naked picture, you shouldn't either'."

THE INTERNET

You can't discuss revenge porn without discussing the platform that made it possible – the internet. It has transformed society by radically enabling the sharing of information. But its potential for abuse has gone unchecked for so long, argues Holten, that it has become a parallel world in which normal ethical rules have been discarded.

"It's almost as if, ten years ago, after the creation of the internet, people sat down and were like, 'Ok, we have a completely new public space where strangers can contact each other, and at the same time we are putting everyone's private information in this space, and we are going to pretend this is not ever going to be an issue'. It was naïve."

The internet is placing particular demands on parenting. The average Danish child first watches pornography at around age 11, according to the Danish Family Planning Association, meaning that parents have to talk to their children about sex, consent and exploitation when they are preteens.

"A concept like consent over your body is quite complex. Many adults don't really master it fully, but it's a concept that we must now reasonably expect a 12-year-old to understand," says Holten.

POLICING

The police face their own set of challenges in enforcing laws that protect victims of revenge porn, though Holten acknowledges that the government's new measures are a step in the right direction.

The national police, Rigspolitiet, will now work together with the state's attorney, Rig-sadvokat, to draw up new guidelines for securing digital evidence. Information campaigns will communicate the severity of digital sex crimes. Sex crimes will be easier to report, and police will be given better training in how to respond to allegations and speak to possible victims.

Those found guilty of sharing another person's private images may be given a jail sentence of up to two years – a significant increase over the current six-month maximum sentence.

But without increasing the police's resources to tackle internet crime, the initiatives won't

have much effect, argues Holten, who accuses the government of not truly acknowledging the scope of internet crime.

"Police funding has been severely cut over the past 15 years because there's been less violence. But a lot of the crime has moved to the internet, and it takes different types of resources and skills to solve internet crime. It can't be done by the same people who solve other crimes, and it can't be solved with the same means," she argues.

"Currently, if you get a rape or death threat online no one is going to care – the police will ignore you, even though rape and death threats are illegal in Denmark. That is not being upheld right now because we have seen a proliferation of threats, and I think that in that sense revenge porn is symptomatic of problems that exist all over the internet. A lot of things are happening in the legal system, and police are simply not able to keep up."

MAKE IT POLITICAL

Like many notable activists, Holten was thrust into her role by circumstance. Despite this and her young age, she's helped shape an agenda aimed not only at implementing better protections for victims of digital sex crimes, but also at increasing empathy in society toward these victims.

The first step was to make her struggle political, not personal.

"As soon as you reduce your struggle to what happens to you as a specific person, you end up blaming yourself, and that goes for racism, consent violations – for everything. The most liberating thing is to educate yourself on the violence you have been subjected to and ask: why are you ashamed that it happened? Why does this happen? Has this happened to others? What do you have in common with them? How is this related to money, class or technology? Once you look at your victimisation from a broader perspective, you are going to be in a better, more empowered position."

She blames individualism for making people less resilient and less able to tackle struggles like the one she has dealt with.

"Every time young people face some sort of hurdle, they blame themselves – that they should be strong enough to fight against it. And I'm afraid that sometimes I get used as a poster child for that response, that 'don't make yourself a victim' response. But I am a victim, and what happened to me definitely shouldn't have happened. It made my life a lot more difficult than I deserve, and it shouldn't have happened. But it doesn't mean that I shouldn't be empowered and have agency within my victimisation. Some people are victims in ways they don't deserve, and that sort of victimisation is political – so making it political is the best way to stop crying and get out there." **M**



A highly trained and specially-equipped quick response unit from the Estonian army from the 1st Scouts Battalion secures a road in rural Estonia during Exercise SILL/Steadfast Javelin, in May 2015. A year later, Denmark sent 200 troops to Estonia to support their forces and deter a Russian invasion.

RUSSIA: expanding superpower or victim in retreat?

While the EU tries to debunk Russian disinformation and Denmark sends troops to support NATO campaigns near the Russian border, MP Marie Krarup and journalist Iben Thranholm argue that the current approach to Russia is just making things worse

THERE'S GOOD REASON to be wary of Russia. Its annexation of Crimea and the war in Eastern Ukraine have former Soviet states in the Baltic concerned that they may be next. And after its alleged intervention in the US election on behalf of Donald Trump, there are fears Russia might try to weaken the EU by throwing its support behind populist and anti-EU candidates in the upcoming elections in France and Germany.

These are some of the reasons why Russia poses one of the most serious military and political threats to the West, according to a 2016 risk assessment from the Danish military intelligence agency, FE.

But Marie Krarup, defence spokesperson for the Danish People's Party (DF), argues that it's not Russia we should be most afraid of, but Islamic terrorism. In fact, she maintains, the EU's sanctions on Russia and support of Ukraine are jeopardising the West's ability to cooperate with Russia to address the threat these terrorists pose.

"NATO and the EU are leading a confrontational policy on Russia, which I think is wrong," says Krarup, adding that the EU must either stop supporting Ukraine, or impose sanctions on both sides until the conflict is resolved peacefully.

"The West needs to put pres-

sure on Ukraine as well, so the two countries can end the conflict. At the moment we are helping incite civil war in Eastern Ukraine. Instead, we should be putting pressure on both parties to end the conflict through peaceful negotiations, and when the conflict is over, we should seek to cooperate with Russia to help fight the shared threat posed by Islamic terrorism."

THE RUSSIAN BEAR

Krarup's calls for reconciliation with Russia make her an isolated voice in the Danish Parliament – both the opposition and government do not agree. In an op-ed for Berlingske in February, Defence

Minister Claus Hjort Frederiksen argued that additional funding was needed to curb the military and political advances of Putin's Russia, in particular the threats posed by Russia's "rogue" tactics of hacking and disinformation.

Last July, the government committed to sending 200 troops as part of a 1000-troop NATO battalion in Estonia. These troops, along with another 2000 NATO troops stationed in neighbouring Baltic countries and Poland, have been deployed to deter Russian aggression, according to military analyst Jens Ringsmose from the Institute of Military Operations at the Royal Danish Defence College.

"They are there to demonstrate

Joshua Hollingdale

that if Russia against all odds should violate the sovereignty of a NATO country, they will take part in the defence of said NATO country. And that means American, British, German and Danish flags on the caskets," he says.

"It is a tactic that I believe will work well because the Russians know that if they do invade – which would be very stupid – they are not just fighting one country, they would be fighting the whole alliance," he says.

While Ringsmose believes in maintaining sanctions against Russia, he believes the West needs to reinstate a "Cold War formula" when dealing with Russia. The formula consists of two elements: deterrence and dialogue. The two elements pull in opposite directions, which makes the formula tricky to implement, he explains.

"Basically, we need to keep the sanctions and our show of strength in Eastern Europe while also telling Russia that if they pull out of Eastern Ukraine and stop attempting to expand, then the West is ready to talk about improving the relationship," says Ringsmose.

A SYSTEMIC SOLUTION

While the odds of a military conflict between Europe and Russia are low, Russia's disinformation campaigns present a more immediate threat. The Russian government sponsors two English-language news channels, RT and Sputnik, which attempt to undermine and downplay negative stories about Russia. For example, despite the overwhelming evidence that Russian rebels in Eastern Ukraine were responsible for downing Malaysian airliner MH17 over Ukraine in 2014, these news channels instead report that the findings were fabricated, biased and deliberately misleading.

In March 2015, the EU established the East StratCom Task Force to monitor and debunk not only false claims on these channels, but also false stories in Western media that are seeded by Russian disinformation.

It's a step in the right direction, argues Flemming Splidsboel Hansen from the Danish Institute of International Studies, an expert on Russian media and the communication strategies of the Putin administration. He isn't worried about a conventional war breaking out between the West and Russia, but does believe that more needs to be done to combat the disinformation campaigns and hacking attacks conducted by Russia.

"East StratCom is doing very well with limited resources. However, I have two objections to the work done by the task force: one,

EU and NATO are in fact power-hungry institutions seeking to expand their spheres of influence, and they cannot understand that Russia has a different viewpoint.

**MARIE KRARUP,
MP FOR THE
DANISH PEOPLE'S
PARTY**

that I simply don't think it is anywhere near enough, and two, that at times they can get too caught up in their own mission by occasionally branding things disinformation, which are in fact just the product of a misinformed author," he says.

Ultimately, Europeans shouldn't have to rely on organisations such as East StratCom to help them tell fact from fiction – we should be better at figuring it ourselves. 'Fake news' is a product of an outdated media world in which the public could place more trust in what they were being told. Splidsboel argues that this is no longer the case, and that we all need to develop a higher level of media literacy in the new digital era.

"Our understanding of the media is stuck in the pre-digital world, and it feels to me like we still have not realised the extent of the anarchy we are facing. We have seen a paradigm shift where now everyone can publish content all of the time," he says.

"We almost need a new subject in school to educate our citizens on today's media chaos – it is that serious. One option is to invest heavily in new media outlets that broadcast in Russian, Urdu or English. Another option, and this is much more controversial, is to do things like bankroll productions of films or TV series, which help show voters in countries that do not have the same free ideals as the West, that the world is not such a dangerous place," he says, while emphasising that he is merely presenting options, not recommending a specific course.

PERSECUTED FOR CHRISTIAN VIEWS

While Splidsboel sees East StratCom's mission to separate fact from fiction as noble, Krarup is less sure. She is worried that the task force may even be violating journalists' freedom of expression as enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights when it identifies specific articles as disinformation.

In a parliamentary debate in January, she asked Foreign Minister Anders Samuelsen whether he thought it reasonable that "a known Danish critic of Islam had been placed on East StratCom's list of disinformation."

"There is no list of individuals," Samuelsen replied. "I note that [Krarup] does not mention which well-known critic of Islam she is referring to. If it is the case of a debate article by Iben Thranholm that was published in The Russian Insider in October 2015, I agree with the task force's assessment that it represents a typ-

ical example of the Kremlin's narrative about the moral collapse of the West."

Thranholm is a conservative journalist and theologian, and a regular contributor to Russian media. Thranholm is critical of Islam and of immigration from Muslim countries, and views Russia as a potential Christian superpower and moral alternative to a secular Europe that she believes is pushing Christians out.

Krarup argues that even if East StratCom does not keep a list of authors that pen anti-Western disinformation, singling out Thranholm's article still violates her rights.

"The people whose work ends up on that list are finished – they can never get a job again. That is simply autocratic. It is a government agency intervening in the public debate, and that should not happen in a democracy," Krarup says.

Thranholm agrees, and argues that she is being punished for being a conservative Christian whose views are more warmly received in Russian media than in the West. She adds that East StratCom demonstrates that the European political establishment is so afraid of losing power that it needs to "strictly control the narrative."

"This is a way of manipulating the public to help create a situation where only one world view is acceptable in the West – and that has nothing to do with democracy," she says.

"Who should decide what is suitable for the public debate? I am expressing genuine Christian criticism that belongs in our culture and I am classified as someone who is spreading lies. If a governmental organ is put in place to decide what the 'truth' is, then we really do have a totalitarian system."

DIFFERENT TYPES OF THREAT

Krarup and Thranholm share the view that the mainstream media and political establishment are unfair in their treatment of Russia.

"The problem is that people understand this conflict in ideologically different ways," says Krarup. "The EU, NATO, the US and people like Splidsboel Hansen view the West as this moral saviour spreading the objective truth in the world. They don't see that the EU and NATO are in fact power-hungry institutions seeking to expand their spheres of influence, and they cannot understand that Russia has a different viewpoint."

In the Ukraine, for example, Krarup sees Russian hostility as an understandable defensive strategy given the EU's support of pro-European political movements that

could weaken Russia. She argues that instead of imposing sanctions, the EU should reconcile with Russia in order to focus on their shared primary security risk, Islamic terrorism.

Mette Skak, an associate professor at the Department of Political Science at the University of Aarhus, disagrees.

"What is strange about Krarup's argument is that it seems like she cannot comprehend that there are different types of threats to Western society. No one is denying the threat of Islamic terrorism, but while that threat is palpable and serious, there is no doubt that it is also appropriate to call Russia's illiberal agenda and constant attempts to destabilise Western countries a threat," she says.

Krarup's response is that while Russia is an illiberal democracy, that doesn't make it a threat.

"Their system is not exportable. It is the Russian system and it is staying inside Russia," she says, adding that the West needs to look inward instead of demonising Russia.

"The story of the objective goodness of the West needs to end. We need to start thinking in much more old school terms geopolitically and start viewing countries as sovereign states in which we do not interfere. The political systems of other countries, as unpleasant as they might be, are no business of ours," she says.

GOVERNMENT: RUSSIA A RISK

Krarup and Thranholm are in the minority when it comes to opinions about Russia, however. A broad majority in parliament supports NATO operations in the Baltics and Eastern Europe, sanctions against Russia, and anti-disinformation campaigns.

Defence Minister Claus Hjort Frederiksen also believes the threat from Russia is very real.

"We are facing a number of security and political challenges – from conventional warfare with powder and bullets to threats in cyberspace," Frederiksen wrote in an email.

"When it comes to the latter, one of the battlegrounds is the media, and here Russia is a state that deliberately and systematically spreads disinformation and propaganda. It is a threat we must pay very close attention to, and we must have a system in place to counter fake stories, as these can have a meaningful influence in undermining the values of our society. Therefore it is important that we take this element into account when dealing with the threats against our society in the year 2017." **M**

"We can win this battle against populism. But it won't be easy"

Foreign minister Anders Samuelsen argues that while globalisation and the EU are under threat and need to be protected, overlooking their flaws will only strengthen populism

WHEN LIBERAL ALLIANCE was first elected to Parliament in 2011, the party openly admitted that it had no foreign policy platform. So it came as a surprise to many when its leader, Anders Samuelsen, was appointed foreign minister in December.

Speaking at a press briefing on Friday, Samuelsen said he felt compelled to accept the role in order to address the major and pressing challenges posed by populism.

"We are facing a fight between populist [answers], and more difficult answers to difficult questions. I think that if we are not able to resolve this situation and provide the right answers to these questions, then we will face major troubles over the next three to five years. That goes for the European community, for NATO, and for transatlantic cooperation."

Answering these questions means challenging the status quo, he added, in both the conduct of politics and international cooperation.

"Then we will hopefully be able to convince the broad majority of the population that free trade is good; that globalisation is good; that working together is better than only working bilaterally; that it's good to work in multilateral discussions; and that it's good to have an international rule of law."

SELLING THE ALTERNATIVE

Samuelsen argues that one way to sell globalisation to a disenchanted population is to help the older generations understand the opportunities that globalisation has given the younger generation – opportunities that we risk losing if populism succeeds in rolling back globalisation.

"If we are able to have a broad and respectful debate [between the generations], I think we can win this battle against populism. But it's not going to be easy – it's going to be very difficult and require that we don't respond to populism with arrogance. It's important that we understand that populism is the first answer to real problems."

Samuelsen spent the first decade of his political career in the Danish and European Parliaments representing the Social Liberal Par-

We believe in the core values of the European community, but think it's important to criticise it when necessary, because if we don't, it opens up the path to populism.

Peter Stanners



Foreign minister Anders Samuelsen, speaking at the International Press Centre.

ty, which he left in 2007 to form the New Alliance party. He became its leader when the party renamed itself the Liberal Alliance in 2009, and guided it to win five percent of the vote in the 2011 election. Four years later, the party increased its share of the vote to 7.5 percent when the right-wing 'blue' bloc regained control of Parliament.

Samuelsen wants to be seen as a competent and ambitious foreign minister, but his scepticism towards the EU makes him somewhat unconventional given the strong cross-party pro-EU tradition in the Danish Foreign Ministry.

PRO-EU, PRO-NATION STATE

While his party certainly believes in the benefits of globalisation and free trade, it is also wary of losing sovereignty in the process. This is why the Liberal Alliance urged a 'no' vote in the 2015 referendum on replacing Denmark's opt-out of EU justice and policing cooperation with an opt-in protocol. The party argued that the opt-in procedure was risky because it would allow Parliament to join more areas of EU cooperation that surrender

Danish sovereignty, and it would no longer be obliged to hold a referendum to do so.

Samuelsen explained that he is a firm believer in the core values of the European community – free trade, freedom and the peace project – but he wants the EU to remain a cooperation of nation states. So when he sees efforts to transform the EU into a federalist union at the expense of member states, he feels he must speak up.

"I think it's important that we don't put ourselves in a situation where we are afraid of debating [the EU because we worry people will think] we are against it," Samuelsen said.

"The LA stance toward the EU is that we believe in the core values of the European community, but think it's important to criticise it when necessary, because if we don't, it opens up the path to populism."

He's referring to the sort of anti-EU populism that arguably propelled the British decision to leave the EU last year. Negotiations for a post-EU settlement between the EU and the UK are expected to get underway in March and may well

be messy. The UK wants both trade with the EU and complete control over its borders, but being a full member of the Single Market requires allowing free movement.

"I have to work in the interest of Danes and Danish companies, [so] it's not a good idea to have a situation where the Brits are allowed full access to the free market, but where we meet trade barriers. So we need a balanced deal, and I think that's possible," Samuelsen said.

As a small, open economy, Denmark is especially reliant on EU membership to meet its trade, labour and security needs. With Russian antagonism to the East, and a US administration that regards the EU as a trade competitor rather than a partner, I asked whether Samuelsen thought more should be done to promote the benefits of EU membership to the Danish public.

"I still hope I am able to tell especially the younger generation about what is good and bad in the EU and convince them to support it. What we've seen after Brexit is an increase in support for the EU, and that's good." **M**

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WHILE MANY PEOPLE move to Denmark for work or to seek refuge, expats often say they relocated to Denmark because of the high quality of life that the country has to offer. Several surveys rank Denmark as one of the happiest places to live in the world, and reference the fact that it is a safe country because of the trust Danes place in their fellow citizens. Corruption is rare, and rates of violence and crime are notably low.

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A PLACE TO CALL HOME

Denmark has a rich history of immigration. Currently, around 485,000 foreign nationals live in Denmark, alongside 5.2 million Danish passport holders. In the capital, Copenhagen, one in four residents are either immigrants or the descendants of immigrants.

An inclusive country that promotes a strong culture of egalitarian living, Denmark's stable political system,

thriving civil society, and open economy all help make it an attractive country in which to live. From employees of international companies who take advantage of Denmark's world-class production and service industries, to refugees who benefit from the opportunity to start a new life, get an education and retrain, there are many reasons to move to Denmark, and many more reasons to stay.

EASE OF ACCESS

Moving to another country can often be a bureaucratic nightmare – who wants to show up in a new country and immediately break the law? But this is less of a challenge in Denmark, where there is relatively little red tape to overcome before getting settled in. Once you're registered with the system, almost all your contact with the municipality and tax authorities can be done online from the comfort of your home. If you do experience any trouble, most municipalities offer specialised English-language services to help you find your way, such as the International House Copenhagen.

Making a life for yourself and your family in Denmark does not have to be difficult. But don't just take our word for it – discover more about what a move to Denmark could have in store from the real-life stories and expert accounts later in the supplement. **M**

DID YOU KNOW...?

50 percent of all immigrants and descendants in Denmark originate from just 12 countries. – Danish Ministry of Immigration and Integration Affairs.

Copenhagen Media Center - Thomas Høyrup Christensen



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[I gang igen]

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ia
SPROG



Melanie Haynes.

ROADMAP DENMARK:

STORIES OF ADAPTATION & INTEGRATION

We catch up with three expats who now call Denmark home. They share their personal stories of cultural adjustment, social integration and working to create a better life in a foreign country

MELANIE HAYNES – THE 'HYGGE' WAY OF LIFE

Back in 2008, Melanie Haynes' husband, who worked for Nokia in the UK, was offered a position in Denmark. They decided to take on a new adventure and make the move and, after three months they were smitten – a year later their son was born. She spoke to The Murmur about adjusting to life and raising a family in Denmark.

There are a lot of similarities between Denmark and the UK, as both are European countries, but I see Denmark as a more relaxed place. There is also less competition about what you own and what you earn here, not necessarily in all circles, but those I move in. There is more thought about the community, both at a micro and macro level – for example, the high taxes that benefit everyone. I also like the way trust is such an important element to life here, and that is very refreshing.

Initially, to better integrate, I started learning Dan-

ish. This really helped me adjust to life in Denmark. It is very isolating not being able to read things around you or to be able to respond to a question from a stranger. Otherwise, I slotted into life here very easily, as it reflected the kind of life I wanted to have in the UK – a slower pace, less reliance on a car, a greener, more environmentally-aware society, and also living close to the sea, which I love.

I am quite a private person, so the private nature of Danes wasn't difficult for me, even though I understand it is for others. I think expats need to realise that Danes are private people who already have close-knit circles of family and friends, and they may not be dying to be your mate. It takes time and you need to show you are worth being friends with.

I love that all celebrations come with either a special cake, meal or beer – or all of them! Holidays are holidays here, with shops closing and people spending time with those close to them. Families are very important here, and the support fathers are given to be involved with their families is a big thing that makes it such a family-friendly place. There is a real separation between work and home, and the balance is excellent. Although it has been commercialised by the media outside Denmark, I truly love hygge and all it entails, especially over the dark winter months.

I suppose the biggest cultural adjustment has been the laissez-faire attitude Danes have about potentially dangerous activities or situations, such as open playgrounds in some schools. I also find that there is often little understanding of cultural differences.

Fitting in culturally takes time wherever you go, but

understanding the rules – written and unwritten – and accepting them, even if they don't exist in your home country, will help you fit in anywhere. At the same time, it is important to keep your own traditions and try and share them with new Danish friends without dismissing their traditions. I guess the way I settled in was to be curious, willing to try things and to be as friendly as I could be without being scary.

Follow Melanie's story online: dejligedays.com

SAGE AUTUMN ON FITTING IN AT THE WORKPLACE

Sage Autumn was working for LEGO as a Senior Website Producer in their US office when she was offered the opportunity to transfer to the corporate headquarters in Billund, Denmark. She found that her travel back and forth between the US and Denmark at least once a month was disrupting her life, so she decided to make the move a permanent one. After a period as Senior Managing Editor for LEGO.com, she resigned to strike out on her own as a freelance copywriter and editor.

I think the Danish labour market is pragmatic enough to understand that it needs foreigners. My entire business is based on my ability to write perfect English, which is something Danish companies need if they're going to expand outside of Denmark. It was extremely easy to start up my company in Denmark and the Aarhus municipality in particular has a lot of programmes to help start-ups.

In terms of adjusting to the work culture in Denmark, one thing that was very different was the amount

of time off. For example, I was used to working a half day on Christmas Eve and being back to work on the 26th, but in Denmark, the company actually shut down between Christmas and the New Year, which was wonderful. I also wasn't used to leaving work at 16:00, or earlier on Fridays. In my first days here, I'd leave work and feel like I still had the whole day ahead of me!

One of the biggest challenges I encountered, which I feel most expats in Denmark do, is how the government treats highly-qualified and highly-paid foreigners who are here temporarily and who pay high levels of tax. Now that I have permanent residency and plan to stay in Denmark, I don't mind paying into the system. However, when I was here on a three-year work permit that was tied to my job, and paying high levels of tax, but with the prospect of being deported within three months if I lost my job, I didn't feel particularly welcome.

In the end, I made my peace with that – the Danish and US systems are just very different – but I do think Denmark could be more accommodating to foreign workers who don't plan to take a university education here, who can't collect unemployment benefits, and who will not retire here.

That said, Denmark is a very supportive environment with a different set of values than I was used to. The focus here is very much on having a good work/life balance and a happy life. People don't mind paying a little bit more so that everyone can have healthcare and a good standard of living and I think that makes for a happier and safer society. If you look at what's happening in the States at the moment, Denmark is pretty much the complete opposite!

Visit Sage's blog: www.sageandsimple.com



Sage Autumn.

It was extremely easy to start up my company in Denmark.

SAGE AUTUMN



GET A WORLDLY EDUCATION AT COPENHAGEN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Our new Nordhavn Campus offers state-of-the-art facilities, talented teachers, and the opportunity to get an education in the heart of a thriving international community

AT COPENHAGEN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, students don't just learn about the world, they learn with and from the world as it is represented in the classroom and in the school community. We teach our students intercultural understanding and awareness, and we provide a stable and caring environment for students and their families. Many of these families are often on the move around the world, so we strive to offer a home away from home.

AN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

As an inclusive school, we appeal to a wide range of students. While we have students from more than 80 countries around the world, we are also suitable for Danish students looking for a truly international learning environment that will prepare them for the demands of the 21st century.

Copenhagen International School is Denmark's largest and most experienced international school. We have an excellent track record in academics, in our comprehensive extracurricular programmes, and in our community building. If this isn't reason enough to enrol your child, consider this:

- We are an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School, offering a student-centered, inclusive, and inquiry-based approach to learning for students aged 3 to 19.
- Our classrooms are diverse, with more than 900 students and 180 staff representing 82 different nationalities.
- The learning environment is warm and welcoming. Our vibrant international communi-

ty ensures a smooth transition and instant network for the whole family.

- We offer a comprehensive Co-Curricular Programme, including arts and crafts, design, dance, music and sport.

NEW CAMPUS IN NORDHAVN

In January, we proudly opened our brand new campus right on the water's edge in Nordhavn, fulfilling our dual aims of increasing our capacity and reuniting the school following the 2011 split into the Hellerup and Østerbro campuses. Copenhagen International School has never been in a better position to satisfy the twin pillars of its vision: learning and community.

First and foremost, the new campus will be a centre for learning for our students, staff and families. But it will also be a hub of activity, and will eventually be in use from morning to night by both the school and the wider community.

Most importantly, the new campus will provide state-of-the-art teaching and learning facilities that meet the needs of our diverse student population and our three IB Programmes, which include a strong emphasis on the arts and sport. **M**



For more detailed information about the new campus, please visit our website, CIS.DK or give us a call on: +45 39 46 33 00.

After the first couple of messages, I thought it was a success. By the next morning, however, I had literally hundreds of people messaging me.

EMILY BOLTON



EMILY BOLTON: MAKING FRIENDS ONLINE AND MEETING THEM OFFLINE

Emily Bolton moved to Copenhagen from Nottingham, England, in early December 2016 to escape post-Brexit Britain and transform her lifestyle. Feeling socially isolated, she impulsively posted on the 'Expats in Copenhagen' Facebook group, asking if anyone else was in a similar position and fancied a cup of coffee. The response was overwhelming, and dozens of other immigrants and expats replied. She is now responsible for a series of social gatherings to help expats and immigrants overcome loneliness – but without social media she doesn't think it would have been possible.

"My husband and I had decided to leave the UK for numerous reasons, a decision that was further cemented by Brexit. We were saving to move to Australia – being born there, I have a passport – so it seemed like the obvious choice. But then my husband found a hairdressing job advertised here and he applied without telling me, and got it! Once I got over my initial tantrum, I realised he was right, there's a lot going for Denmark in terms of quality of life, and we'd be foolish to turn down the opportunity. So, Denmark it was, and we moved here at the beginning of December.

My Mum came to visit over New Year's, and we loved sharing how happy this place makes us. However, having her here made me realise that I couldn't just wait for the next set of visitors: to build a life here, I needed friends here. So it was the night she left when, after a glass of wine, I thought, what's the worst that can happen? I'll post and no one responds. So I just did. I posted at around 10PM, and after the first couple of messages, I thought it was a success. By the next morning, however, I had literally hundreds of people messaging me.

Initially, I planned to meet up with four or five people individually for coffee. Then when someone said to invite more people, I decided to make a Facebook event. The first event was a walk followed by coffee, and there were six of us in total – no two from the same country. We took a selfie that I posted onto the expats group and, again, it got an enormous response. Since then we've had a coffee meet up in Hellerup, and went to a Pie and Pint night at which we ran the bar out of clean glasses. The biggest event we've had so far was at the Barbershop near Nyhavn, where, with fifty people, we literally filled the bar.

Social media is a funny thing. While it was originally invented to bring people together, over the years it's actually started to limit our capacity to interact with people one-on-one. I'm guilty of it, I'll sit with my phone in my hand and not engage. In response to this, I, along with Stu and Chad, who I met through the group, have a project in the pipeline that uses social media as it was originally intended: to enable real friendships between expats – and Danes too! There are a lot of people I've spoken to, both expats and Danes, who would like to meet new people, but the two worlds don't really collide at any point. In our project, we plan to use Twitter to bring people together, but then encourage them to make their friendship offline.

But for now, there are a whole lot of people that I've yet to meet, a whole lot of friends that I've yet to make, and a whole lot of drunken nights out and horrible hangovers yet to have. It's all part of throwing yourself into a place. **M**

facebook.com/groups/expatsincopenhagen/

GTS Nordic – helping you do better business in Denmark

Since 1999, GTS Nordic has helped international clients from all over the world do business in Denmark, Norway and Sweden. We are the "a one-stop shop" for employment solutions, payroll administration and personal relocation within Scandinavia

WITH A SPECIFIC FOCUS on business compliance for companies and their employees looking to make the move to Denmark, our relocation services are tailor-made for both your personal and business requirements. Whether its work and family residence permits, searching for accommodation, finding appropriate schooling for children, or practical information about life in Denmark, or gal is to help you settle down successfully.

ALL YOUR BUSINESS RELOCATION NEEDS

Setting up an office in a new country can be a daunting prospect, especially when it comes to compliance. But at GTS Nordic we take the stress out of business relocation by offering relevant compliance services based on the very best domestic and international knowledge and expertise, as well as our long-term relations with leading international law and accounting firms and banks.

Our team of dedicated international experts make sure that the necessary paperwork is in accordance with the local legislation, and that our contractors can focus on what they are best at – their core business. We also make sure that any practical questions are answered promptly and professionally, and provide further guidance if needed.

With us, you only have to concen-

trate on what you do best: your line of business. But don't take our word for it, our many satisfied customs will attest to our service excellence.

One such customer is Temenos Denmark, a software product house that delivers core applications to the banking sector. In 2015 Temenos decided to establish a Nordic subsidiary of the group, headquartered in Copenhagen but had little understanding of the Danish business legislation, and few leads of how to connect with reliable partners.

To address these challenges, they decided to enlist the help of the professionals – GTS Nordic.

"During our initial meetings and calls, GTS Nordic showed great dedication and understanding of our needs. The entire GTS staff took the collaboration seriously and handled all our queries with extreme professionalism. Their flexibility and client-tailored approach gave us the reassurance that we should start working together," explained Silvia Pavlovic, HR Advisor at Temenos, of their decision to outsource their compliance work to GTS Nordic. **M**

If you or your company needs a foreign specialist in business and personal relocation, please visit our website, GTSNORDIC.COM or contact us on +45 7024 8080, and we will gladly assist.



The importance of learning Danish: find friends, get work, and settle in

If you want to make the most of your time in Denmark, it's important to learn Danish – even if you plan on working in an English-language environment. This was the experience of Liga Karklina, from Latvia, who found that being able to communicate her thoughts, opinions and creative ideas in the native tongue was a vital part of getting properly settled in Denmark

BEFORE RELOCATING TO DENMARK, Liga Karklina studied English Philology and Danish at the University of Latvia. In her third year, as part of the course's practical requirements, Liga enrolled at a Danish *højskole* (folk-high school) in order to immerse herself in the language and learn more about Danish culture.

It was not long before she caught the Danish bug.

"I decided to quit university and stay for another semester of *højskole*, take a few more courses and try to figure out what I would study and where. This decision was made easy by the fact that *højskole* was free of charge for new EU citizens – I only had to cover the cost of materials, which was very affordable," she explains.

There are plenty of high-quality language schools in Denmark to choose from, and in your first three years in Denmark they are free and subsidised by your municipality. The official Danish language education is divided into six modules, and completing module five (the Danish 3 Examination) is often a prerequisite for applying for jobs that require spoken and written Danish.

Liga enrolled instead in the FVU (Preparatory Adult Education) programme at IA Sprog, a course aimed specifically at foreigners living in Denmark who are no longer eligible to receive free Danish education. The course teaches Danish that is useful in the labour market, whether for vocational training or for acceptance into educational programmes leading to professional work as, for example, a social and health services worker, kindergarten assistant or chef.

"The chances of me finding a position that I'd like were very small without Danish language skills. I wanted to understand Danes better when they conversed in groups or teams – something required in the work environment, as well as in general social situations," says Liga.

CULTURE SHOCK

Learning Danish wasn't only important to finding work, though. She found it difficult to make friends when she first arrived in Denmark, and blames her inability to speak the language.

"Even though I had the basics covered, it was not enough to communicate freely at a conversational level in order to make friends," she explains.

"I don't know if it is because I am different, and Danish people are a bit afraid of something different – but I don't want to

I cried
after my
first les-
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I thought
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sounding!



Kristian Dyekjær Hansen

feed that stereotype, because I have met people who are very curious and open to getting to know my cultural differences," she says, noting the many cultural differences between her home country and Denmark.

Initially, Liga says that she did not like the Danish language much.

"I cried after my first lesson at the university. I thought I would never be able to understand or speak something so strange-sounding!" she says, adding that learning Danish alone at home was difficult.

Thankfully, she found enormous support at FVU at IA Sprog where the interaction with other students helped her learn without feeling judged.

"It's like a safe place to practice and not be afraid to fail."

Learning the language and speaking it are

two different things, however – Liga says that pronunciation and understanding spoken Danish are especially difficult.

"I can't pronounce some sounds, and understanding is often hard because many people speak so fast! But I am happy that I am able to identify dialects already – it is amazing how different the language sounds to me now that I hear it," she enthuses.

While her main goal in Denmark is to find a job at an international company where English is the primary language, she knows that Danish will still be vital for keeping up with news, hanging out with colleagues, and singing along at parties.

"This cultural association is a good enough reason to learn the language even if it's hard. In the end it will be worth it, and you'll be rewarded for your hard work." **M**

THE DANISH LABOUR MARKET NEEDS YOU!

The Danish labour market is facing a shortage of qualified workers in a number of key industries, including engineering, IT and networking, education and medicine. Many of the top international employers in Denmark often find themselves dipping into the foreign talent pool for suitable candidates to help bolster their business.

And it's not a bad place to find work. The Danish labour market is characterised by flexible and secure working conditions, as well as fair working hours that permit an ideal work-life balance. According to the Danish Ministry of Employment, the Danish labour market also offers some of the most competitive salaries on the continent. For these reasons, the Danish workforce is also among the most productive in Europe.

But as a newly-employed foreigner in Denmark, negotiating the labour market might feel somewhat daunting. Thankfully, there are organisations such as Workplace Denmark that are committed to communicating the rights and duties of foreign employees and employers, and that make the process of labour integration that much simpler.

The organisation says that foreign nationals should be aware of three central elements of the Danish labour market: collective agreements, cooperation and organisation.

THE 'FLEXICURITY' YOU NEED

Denmark is internationally recognised for its 'flexicurity' labour model. A portmanteau of 'flexibility' and 'security', this concept refers to a welfare state model that combines flexible working hours and conditions with social security protections such as state health and social benefits, job and income security, as well as freedom for organised labour and business associations. Most labour market issues are settled by employers and employees in consultation with associations and unions, rather than by the courts.

With this combination of flexibility and social security, both employees and workers become more willing to take a risk on the labour market. And by increasing security in connection with a job change, for instance, workers are encouraged to become more mobile in the labour market. Likewise, flexibility with regards to hiring and firing means that employers can afford to take more risks, for instance, by hiring employees who are alienated from the labour market.

EMPLOYMENT INTEGRATION

In 2015, ten percent of the Danish workforce was made up of foreign nationals and descendants, according to the Danish Agency for Labour Market and Recruitment, with an equal split between non-western and western immigrants and their descendants. This number is expected to increase in the future.

While there is demand for workers with certain skills, many have difficulty entering the Danish labour market. The government has programmes like specialised training and education in place to help integrate foreign nationals into the labour market, especially those without formal qualifications.

These initiatives are supported by the confederation of trade unions, LO, which believes that, "a socially more inclusive labour market means holding on to the people who risk being excluded".



Copenhagen Media Center - Tula Hjørne

BUSINESS ETIQUETTE IN DENMARK

On the whole, Danish workplaces offer very good working conditions, modern facilities and high-quality technical equipment. Competence development is given high priority, and most workplaces regularly offer continuing education to their employees.

But regardless of the efforts made by government and civil society to ensure a more inclusive and flexible labour market, it is up to you to fit in with the Danish business culture.

Here are a few qualities and protocols foreign employees need to be aware of:

- ▶ Teamwork and co-operation are valued in all sorts of businesses. Danish businesses are often less hierarchical and more casual than many international workers will be used to.
- ▶ Employees are expected to be motivated and committed to doing their best.
- ▶ While not unheard of, relationships at work do not usually carry over into private life – there tends to be a clear distinction between work and home.
- ▶ There is a tradition, however, of work-based social events, such as Christmas and summer parties.
- ▶ While the usual working week is 37 hours, from 8AM to 4PM, many work places adopt a flexible working policy.

- ▶ The minimum holiday entitlement is five weeks per year for a full-time employee. This is earned at 2.08 days per month and the calculation usually starts on 1 January. **M**

DENMARK'S TOP EMPLOYERS

According to The Statistics Portal, the 10 biggest companies in Denmark as of June 2016, by number of employees are:

1. Integrated Service Solutions (ISS)
2. Møller-Maersk
3. Carlsberg Group
4. Novo Nordisk
5. DSV
6. Falck Holdings
7. Vestas Wind Systems
8. Coop Denmark
9. Dansk Supermarked
10. Bestseller United

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LETSGO CARSHARING A CAR WHENEVER YOU NEED IT!

LetsGo is a carsharing service that offers expats and businesses easy access to a car as often as they need it, without having to own one

DENMARK IS RECOGNISED around the world for its quality public transport and bicycle infrastructure. So when expats land in Denmark, many are prepared to jump right in and embrace the freedoms that bicycles, trains and busses offer – and that make cars seem more of a burden than a necessity.

Sometimes, however, expats can't escape the need for a car, whether it be for business travel or exploring Denmark. But having a car on standby for these moments can be an expensive luxury, considering the maintenance and costs involved in owning and servicing a vehicle.

This is where LetsGo comes in. All you do is sign up to get easy access to one of LetsGo's 185 cars across Copenhagen, Aarhus, Odense and eight other Danish cities whenever you need it.

The carsharing scheme, which has existed for 10 years (the last four years under the name LetsGo), is owned by a foundation whose ambition is to reduce the number of cars in cities. Since LetsGo is non-profit, its profits are continually re-invested in the company, which means that its fleet is steadily growing.

BECOME A MEMBER TODAY

LetsGo has two membership types: with and without a subscription fee. Both types require a mandatory insurance fee of 50 kroner per month.

No subscription: You pay no monthly subscription fee, and pay instead for each hour you use the car, as well as a reservation fee of 20 kroner. This type of membership is ideal for individuals who require a car less frequently.

Membership subscription: For a 220 kroner monthly fee, members benefit from a cheaper hourly rate and free use of cars between 20:00 and 06:00. They also enjoy a lower reservation fee of 10 kroner. This option is better suited to people who require a car on a more regular basis.

A SATISFIED CUSTOMER

"We opted for membership with LetsGo rather than buying a car, because buying and maintaining a car is an expensive and time-consuming proposition," says Francis Brooker, an expat living and working in Denmark with his partner Julia Behr.

They say their experience has been a positive one, and that they were mainly attracted to LetsGo because of the easy access to cars and the customer-focused service offered by the non-profit organisation.

"Julia and I live just 50 meters from a LetsGo car-pod, so it's convenient, and there is nearly always a car available to us when we need one. This coupled with the professional, courteous and timely manner in which the staff deal with our enquiries makes LetsGo a winning team." **M**

For more information contact LetsGo at +45 35 35 14 11, via email at letsgo@letsgo.dk, or visit the website letsgo.dk



www.cis.dk



Re-United Nations

Our two campuses have re-united and we have opened the doors to our brand new school in Nordhavn. The new campus is now home to our 1,100 students and teachers from more than 80 different nations.

We are very proud of the fact that our new school is one of the world's most modern teaching facilities. Among the school's many features you'll find state-of-the-art classrooms, a restaurant, a fitness center and a dance studio, three gyms, three music rooms, seven science rooms and a 350 seat theater - all powered by 12,000 solar panels.

It's no wonder that our new campus has been listed as one of the five most innovative and sustainable new buildings, together with Apple's new Headquarters in California and Tesla's new Gigafactory in Nevada.

For more information or to arrange a visit, please contact us at cis.dk

Copenhagen
International
School



OVERCOMING THE BUREAUCRATIC ANXIETY

Starting a new life in a foreign country can feel like an adventure. But if there's one thing that can spoil the experience, it's not understanding how the bureaucracy works. Here's our guide to the essential bureaucratic hurdles you need to cross to start a life in Denmark



Copenhagen Media Center / Kasper Thy

There isn't a country in the world that doesn't have bureaucracy – it's a fact of life. Thankfully, Denmark is a highly digitised country, and most communication with the municipality, tax authorities and banks can be managed online from the comfort of your home.

But there are still some important steps to follow to make sure that you are properly registered with the relevant authorities. We break them down for you here:

GET A CPR NUMBER

All legal residents in Denmark must have a CPR number. It's virtually impossible to get by without one, and you need one to go to the doctor, open a bank account, get a phone number, pay taxes and receive a salary.

To register for a CPR number, you must:

- ▶ Plan to live in Denmark for more than three months and have found a place to live.
- ▶ EU citizens also need a registration certificate, which you are entitled to if you are in work, self-employed,

studying, self-sufficient, or have a family member who qualifies to support you. This can be obtained by registering at the nearest office of the State Administration (*Statsforvaltning*) or at a citizen's service center (*Borgerservice*). Bring a completed OD11 form (available online), your passport, and a passport photo. You also need to bring your employment contract, or, if you are self-employed, a budget that has been approved by a registered accountant. Students must bring their acceptance letter from an approved educational institution.

- ▶ Non-EU citizens require a residence permit, which can be secured in a variety of ways, but most often through work or study. For a full list of work and student resident permits, visit nyidanmark.dk.
- ▶ Take your registration certificate/residence permit, proof of address (copy of lease or property deed), and passport to your municipality's citizen service centre (*Borgerservice*). Several municipalities have dedicated international offices, such as the International House in Copenhagen.
- ▶ If you have children, take their passports or birth

certificates so they can be registered with you.

- ▶ For more information visit: international.kk.dk/artikel/how-do-i-get-cpr-number

Once you have a CPR number, you must also register with your municipality's civil registration office (*Folkeregisteret*). This can often be done at the same time as you register for your CPR number. If you move house after obtaining a CPR number, you can change your address online via the common public portal lifeindenmark.dk.

But to do that, you need a NemID...

GET A NEMID

Once you have a CPR number, you can apply for a NemID. This is the common login system used by public authorities and banks. You sign up by going to nemid.nu and creating a login. You will then receive a code card in the mail. When you log in using NemID, you first enter your user ID and password, and are then prompted to enter a key from the code card – it's simple.

OPEN A BANK ACCOUNT

Like most European countries, banking in Denmark is sophisticated and efficient, with mobile and online services as standard. The three major banks are Danske Bank, Nykredit, and Nordea, though there are a variety of smaller and more specialised banks, such as the co-op bank Merkur, that are worth looking at.

All you need to open a Danish bank account is a CPR number. You must then register the bank account as your NemKonto (Easy Account). Without this designation, you cannot receive a salary or any payments from Danish authorities (tax refunds, etc.). Your bank can register the account for you.

Denmark has a proprietary card payment system called Dankort, but you must have a Danish bank account to use this system. It is useful to have a Dankort because it is accepted across the country and many businesses do not accept international credit cards.

Cash is not essential in Denmark, since the vast majority of businesses will at least accept Dankort. Many are increasingly accepting mobile phone payments from apps like MobilePay. But if you're new in the country and rely on withdrawing cash, you can find ATMs at most banks and shopping centres.

CHECK YOUR TAX CARD

Paying taxes on your income in Denmark is relatively easy. After signing a contract with your employer, they must register and pay your income taxes directly to the tax authority, SKAT. You can easily amend your income details and deductions by visiting the tax authority's website, skat.dk, and logging in with your NemID.

Tax rates in Denmark start at 36 percent and can be as high as 51.5 percent, depending on your income. The tax year in Denmark is the same as the calendar year and tax returns must be filed before 1 May to avoid penalties – any tax due begins accruing interest on January 1, so it's a good idea to sort things out early!

GETTING AROUND

Public transport throughout Denmark, and especially in Copenhagen, is very good. The cheapest way to pay for transport is with a Rejsekort, which can be ordered online if you have a CPR number. Visit rejsekort.dk. If you don't yet have a CPR number, you can buy one at selected train stations.

Cycling is an extremely popular mode of transport among the Danish population. The country has a huge network of bicycle routes extending over 12,000 kilometres, which makes cycling an easy and safe way to get around Denmark.

Car ownership is less common than in most countries, in part because of the steep taxes on car purchases. If you do not really need a car on a daily basis, you are financially better off without one. If you will be in Denmark for a longer period of time and want a predictable car budget, leasing might be a good option. There are also a variety of affordable car sharing platforms.

If you have a non-EU driving licence it may be worthwhile to convert it to a Danish/EU one. From the date you receive your Danish CPR number, you may only drive a vehicle using a foreign driving licence for a 14 more days. If you exceed this deadline, you will be assessed a 5,000 kroner fine.

Applying for a drivers licence is a three-step process:

- ▶ Visit your doctor to receive a health certificate,
- ▶ Go to the municipality's citizen service centre and apply for a Danish EU Driving Licence
- ▶ Take a theory and driving test – and hopefully pass!

FIND A HOME

Finding a place to call home is, of course, a top priority. Depending on where you are looking it can be a struggle to find something within your price range. This is because many homes and apartments change hands without being listed on the open market.

Still, it is absolutely possible to find somewhere to live by checking listings in national newspapers, and online through estate agents and letting agencies. Be warned, however, that most rental contracts run for a maximum two years. This is because tenants earn the permanent right to reside if they live in a leased property for two years or more.

If you're planning on staying a while, then buying might be right for you. But unless foreigners are permanent residents in Denmark and have lived in the country for a period of at least five consecutive years, Danish law states that they must obtain permission from the Danish Ministry of Justice (Justitsministeriet) to buy property. Residents of European Union countries, or companies domiciled in a member state can, in some circumstances, buy property without first obtaining permission from the Ministry of Justice.

HEALTH

The Danish health services provides free care to all legal residents regardless of their economic situation and nationality. This means that seeing your doctor or getting hospital treatment is free, as is specialist medical services. However, to see a specialist you must be referred by your GP, who is assigned to you when you register for your CPR number. Dental care is only free up to age 19.

While basic healthcare in Denmark is free, additional insurance can be taken out to cover the cost of dental or eye treatment, for example. The most popular insurer is Sygeforsikringen Danmark, sygeforsikring.dk

If you have any more questions, we recommend visiting Copenhagen Municipality's international website: international.kk.dk/moving



Copenhagen media centre / Thomas Højrup Christensen

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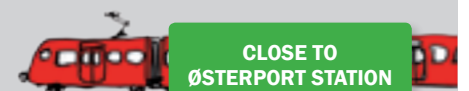
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WELCOME



The VELUX Group develops future leaders

The VELUX Group is introducing a new two-year talent programme for ambitious graduates with a passion for leadership. It offers candidates a variety of jobs with exceptional development opportunities across the board at the VELUX Group

IN 2017 THE VELUX GROUP opens its doors for talented graduates who want to take on new challenges in a leading international company. The new programme GROW with Us will make working at the VELUX Group an attractive opportunity for even more new and talented graduates, and ensure that the VELUX Group has enough of skilled employees for the future success of the company.

Participants will be employed in an actual position that they will help develop, while also receiving personal and professional development. In the GROW with Us programme, they will become a part of an international network together with other programme participants, and will engage in global projects of strategic importance for the whole VELUX Group.

"The enormous focus on the participants' professional and individual development will benefit both the company and the programme participants," says Connie C. Stanio, Senior Director of Global HR Development in the VELUX Group.

"We have decided to construct the programme around actual positions, since we know that the best and most effective experiences happen on the job. It is, in effect, not a traditional graduate programme with job rotations, but an individually-tailored process based on real positions. The programme also includes a mentor system so that we ensure the participants receive targeted coaching and professional development," she says.

The application deadline for the specific GROW with Us positions may vary, but recruitment is underway and will run until June 2017 in the form of a written application, tests and interviews.

The chosen GROW with Us participants will start in the summer/autumn 2017. **M**

For more information visit:

velux.com/article/2016/grow-with-us



"GROW with Us" will make working at the VELUX Group an attractive opportunity for even more new and talented graduates.

Grow With Us programme

In the VELUX Group, every employee is unique, and we strive to offer a world of opportunities for each employee to develop and grow.

We have therefore developed the two-year GROW with Us programme for talented and outstanding performers, which offers a number of extraordinary job opportunities across our organisation. These jobs are tailored to you – to help you grow and advance even faster in your career.

The programme is designed to maximise your personal and professional development, and to ensure success for you – and our business.

INTRODUCTION

During the first months of your programme, you will meet with the global GROW network to get to know other colleagues in the programme. Together, you will all be introduced to the VELUX strategy and products and meet with top management (VMG).

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

The GROW with Us programme has a high focus on your personal development. Therefore, you will make an

individual development plan with focus areas for you, to constantly develop and grow your personal competencies. You will be supported by a mentor and/or coach.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

You will be hired directly into a specific position and will get the necessary supervision to succeed with your tasks and achieve your goals. You will have regular follow-ups with your manager, where you will receive feedback and talk about the possibility to develop even further through eg. relevant courses.

GLOBAL PROJECT

During the programme, you will be part of a global project working across the VELUX Group. The project will be of strategic importance to VELUX and have the attention of top management.

GLOBAL NETWORK

The GROW with Us programme is a global initiative that will give you profound insight into the global VELUX organisation. You will meet with the GROW network 3-4 times a year to share experiences and learn more about our industry.

YOUR NEXT CAREER MOVE

We will continuously work on your career plan and at the end of the programme we will define your next career move together.

You're the right candidate if you can match our high expectations and your own, including:

- You have recently graduated with a Master's degree as one of the top performers of your class, or you have minimum three years of relevant work experience and a track record of being a high performer.
- You are mobile, fluent in English, and consider an international and multicultural work environment as a great advantage and something you value.
- Your colleagues and friends describe you as hardworking, resourceful and highly adaptable, and they admire your hands-on approach to business.
- A vibrant and dynamic work environment does not scare you – it makes you even more motivated.
- Dealing with complex assignments inspires you to walk that extra mile and pursue excellence.



CAPTURED

Rasmus Degnbol

Dubai, February 2017

“We need to do more for energy, more for gender equality, more for solid infrastructure.” Malta’s prime minister Joseph Muscat was speaking from the stage of the World Government Summit, a star-studded event with Elon Musk and Sir Richard Branson among the entrepreneurs, economists and humanitarians in attendance.

While his statement drew applause from the 4000 attendees, it rang a little hollow. The summit was being held in Dubai, UAE, which its ruler Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid al Maktoum likes to call: “the city of a thousand and one lights”. And it is hard not to get impressed as you walk around the city, your gaze constantly drawn upward, as your mind attempts to take in the sheer size of everything.

But it’s a city with two sides. While the Western workers walk



through glitzy malls, earn huge salaries and live in massive homes, the migrant labourers are being shuttled across the city in anonymous white busses. They have few rights and are paid very little, but have played a central role in enabling the city to literally rise from the sand over the past two decades.

Dubai holds an impressive number of records when it comes to consumption – it is one of the world's largest producers of energy, and one of the highest consumers of energy as well. In on-

ly six years its energy consumption rose 73.8 percent per capita, while CO2 emissions rose 49.4 percent between 2004 and 2010.

On the last day of the World Government Summit, Sheikh Mohammed launched his Dubai 10X plan. The goal is to get 10 years ahead of all other cities in the world. In his speech, he talked about disruption, the future of governance, and radical change. They are all trendy topics, but will the Dubai of the future also have poorly-paid migrant workers living long distances from the

buildings they help create? Can Dubai remain a tourist and business hub, lit by a thousand lights and one lights, and also address its wasteful energy use?

Pearls have been hunted for millennia, in the waters of the Persian Gulf off Dubai's coast. And, perhaps, a pearl is an apt metaphor for what Sheikh Mohammed wants Dubai to become – a rare treasure in an inhospitable wilderness. But is a pearl still a pearl, if it's covered in soot? **M**

STRESSED OUT STUDENTS LACK SUPPORT

Danish high school students experience some of the highest levels of stress in Denmark. Ambition, social competition and a lack of parental support are all to blame

I went to the doctor to understand what was going on, and she just told me, 'oh you're simply stressed, it's nothing' - I felt like she did not care at all."

Frederikke Lindhardt is 17 years old and currently enrolled in a two-year upper secondary (gymnasium) education, HF. It's her second attempt at gymnasium: she dropped out of a three-year STX programme after only six months.

"I got too stressed out, slept

too long, and often felt sick," she explains.

"I didn't like being in class because there were 28 girls who I felt did not like me because of how I dressed or what laptop I owned. Most of the girls ignored me because I did not have the same things as them," she said, adding that about ten other girls in her year also dropped out.

But while social pressure was the main cause of her stress, it was made worse due to a lack of

understanding and support from her teachers.

"People always think I am lazy simply because I am a teenager. They never see what is behind the stress."

AMONG THE MOST STRESSED

Linghart's experience of stress and social anxiety is hardly unique - on the contrary. But while we expect that teenagers will experience stress as they strive for the high grades they

need for university while also holding down social and extra-curricular activities, they might be suffering more than we have imagined.

University of Aarhus researchers have investigated the stress levels of students at two gymnasiums in Aalborg. They found that all the students in the second year of the three-year programme were experiencing higher-than-average levels of stress.

More than half of the students

Words:
Gabriele Dellisanti

Photos:
Rasmus Degnbol



Silas Frisenette, 17, dreams of studying psychology after he completes gymnasium. But it requires a high grade point average, meaning all his assignments have to be near perfect.



were experiencing the same level of stress as the most stressed-out 20 percent of Danes.

These findings confirm a 2014 government survey, Ungdomsprofilen, which found that 39 percent of gymnasium students reported feeling stressed at least once a week. 10 percent reported that they felt stressed every day.

"Students are under pressure, both academically and socially," says Anne Maj Nielsen, a co-author of the University of Aarhus report Stress i gymnasiet (Stress in high school).

"Those affected by stress want to perform as well as possible. They want to go on to further education and know that it requires high grades. But unlike many adults, students cannot choose to relax every once in a while. They have to hand in a number of written assignments at a time while also preparing for their other subjects. Students affected by stress can have difficulty prioritising."

PERFORMANCE PRESSURE

This is certainly the case for 17-year-old Silas Frisenette, who dreams of studying psychology after he completes gymnasium. To do so, he needs to maintain an average grade of 11.5 out of 12 – an incredibly difficult goal.

"The Danish system focuses a lot on exams and grades rather than on the learning process

Unlike many adults, students cannot choose to relax every once in a while. They have to hand in a number of written assignments at a time while also preparing for their other subjects.

ANNE MAJ NIELSEN, UNIVERSITY OF AARHUS

itself," he says. "You need good grades to get into university, and the competition is fierce."

But the pressure of academic accomplishment is just one of the forces at play.

"I know three people in my class who want to quit because of social anxiety. Stress is often not just about the schoolwork, but a combination of a number of different situations, including problems with classmates," Frisenette says.

Mads Panny has taught teenagers at a gymnasium in Viborg for the past ten years. He has witnessed a sharp uptick in the level of stress his students experience, and has tried to understand the cause. His theory is that after the 2008 financial crisis, students came under more pressure to live an outwardly perfect life.

"In the 1990s, there was a tendency to blame society rather than yourself for most problems. But since the financial crisis, there has been greater emphasis on being successful and on blaming oneself for not reaching certain goals," he said.

"So students today often feel like they are not doing enough. And because many not only like to keep up a vibrant social life on the side but also have to work to earn money, they have many arenas where they want to be successful, which makes school an increasingly stressful place to be."

Panny emphasised that the Dan-

ish upper secondary school system isn't in itself to blame, as it is no harder than other European systems.

"Obviously the grading system makes students stressed, but I honestly believe that the issue of being constantly online today represents one of the biggest causes of stress among students," he noted.

CONSTANTLY CONNECTED

Frisenette and Lindhardt confirm Panny's suspicion about the role of social media in fostering stress. Platforms such as Facebook and Instagram are distractions that keep them from their studies, while also encouraging social comparisons and jealousy.

"The problem with competition is substantial – being online and never being able to disconnect from the rest of the world," says Frisenette. "If I don't reply to someone's message they ask me what I am doing. You never get a total break. You can get emails on Fridays, which is stressful when all you want to do is relax."

According to Nielsen, these social and academic burdens often intermingle. Her research found that students also feel pressure to ally themselves with other high achievers in the class in order to curry favour with teachers.

"It means that many young people are constantly under pressure to perform both academically and socially, and are anxious about be-

ing rejected by peers if they aren't seen as good enough."

NEED FOR PARENTAL SUPPORT

But perhaps most critical is the support that students receive from their parents and teachers. According to Nielsen, the lack of support many students describe can be explained by a generational change that has made it hard for parents to relate to their children's situation.

"One of the issues young people cite as being worst is when parents or teachers do not validate their feelings of stress. Many parents think their children's experience of school is similar to their own, when there were lower expectations for young people, and getting through upper secondary was easier," says Nielsen.

Both Lindhardt and Frisenette recognised this phenomenon.

"When I tell my parents I am stressed, they think it is just part of being in school," says Frisenette. "When I confront them, they just say, well, it's just natural and part of it. I really feel like this issue is not being taken seriously."

Panny agrees that parents and teachers need to be better at supporting students.

"One big problem is that parents today have an old-fashioned view of youth as being lazy and not doing the right thing. I often see that they have not yet adjusted to the fact that the lives of young people today are dramatically different than what they used to be." **M**



SOFT NETS, HARD LINES

Ole Nielsen says he's seen it all. He was born in the small town of Gilleleje on the north coast of Zealand 70 years ago and has lived there ever since, working in the family trade as a fisherman.

He stands in the cockpit of the Louise, a trim but powerful blue-hulled trawler, 15 meters from propeller to prow. The boat is his fourth and is named after his daughter. A flag snaps in the brisk breeze coming in off the Baltic Sea as he prepares the hull, which is filled with ice in preparation for tonight's catch. Nielsen likes to fish alone, with no deckhands, as he has always done.

"When I started out I was 14. Back then there were no problems, you could go out and catch whatever you wanted, eel, herring, cod, anything you can think of," he says. "Now

there's more and more rules. It's become a very big problem to be a fisherman today. Not just here in Gilleleje, but all over Denmark."

Nielsen is referring to the Common Fisheries Policy that sets quotas and regulations for catch, trawler sizes and working conditions for EU members. In December, Denmark's 2017 cod quota in the Baltic and Kattegat was reduced by 47 percent from the year before to 2768 tons. In 2012, Danish fishermen were allowed to catch 9380 tons.

Nielsen feels that the quotas place unnecessary strain on small-scale fishing operations like his own.

"How can they decide what I can and cannot fish if they don't know how my boat works, and how I fish, before they negotiate? All these marine biologists that politicians like to use

to support their arguments know that we are right. I've even taken a few of them out fishing myself. So why don't they listen to us?"

Small fishermen such as Nielsen are also under pressure from the rising cost of fishing licenses, which are increasingly being snapped up by multinational firms that operate large trawlers. As the number of active fishing vessels has dropped over the past decade, the number of fishermen in Denmark has also dropped, from around 3200 in 2005 to 1900 today, according to broadcaster DR.

The town Rødvig is among those to suffer from the downturn in the fishing industry, with boarded up shops lining the highstreet.

"But it's not just about us, you know," says fisherman Jan Hansen, pointing toward the shipyard on the other side of Rødvig harbour.

Words and Photos:

Aleksander Klug



left: Ole Nielsen preparing his nets.
Above: An anti-EU sticker adorns the side of Ole Nielsen's boat, 'Louise'.
Right: Jan Hansen watches trawlers return with their catch from a restaurant in Rødvig.
Below: Storage facilities on the Gilleleje harbourfront.



Fishermen in small Danish fishing communities are worried about the impact of cuts to the cod quotas in the Baltic Sea. While the quotas are designed to maintain healthy stocks, the fishermen warn of the threat to their livelihoods

"If the fishermen here lose their jobs, there won't be any boats left in the harbour. No boats means no jobs for the wharf staff, painters or maintenance crews. And if they lose their jobs, it will slowly start to affect the local economy, and everything will change. It already has."

Euroskepticism isn't uncommon in the fishing community, whose members argue that the quotas do not have to be this low in order to maintain healthy fish stocks.

"Just look at history," says Hansen. "There have been always been fish in the sea. Look at the amount of cod we have caught just today. Of course there have been times when stocks have been low, but it has always replenished itself. Politicians should just let nature behave like it always has, instead of causing trouble for people like us."



The cuts in Baltic cod quotas were condemned by lobby group Europeche, which argued that a higher quota would still allow the stock of cod in the Eastern Baltic to grow. Instead, the European Commission chose deeper cuts in a bid to grow the stock at a faster rate – at the expense of fishermen's livelihoods.

The Danish Fisheries Union was also disappointed by the steep quota cut.

"They have negotiated with no consideration for the economic realities of fishermen," vice president Kim Kær Hansen stated in a press release in October. "The cod stock is growing, but there won't be any local fishermen to catch them after 2017."

The union subsequently lobbied for economic compensation for affected fishermen. They were successful, and in December the govern-

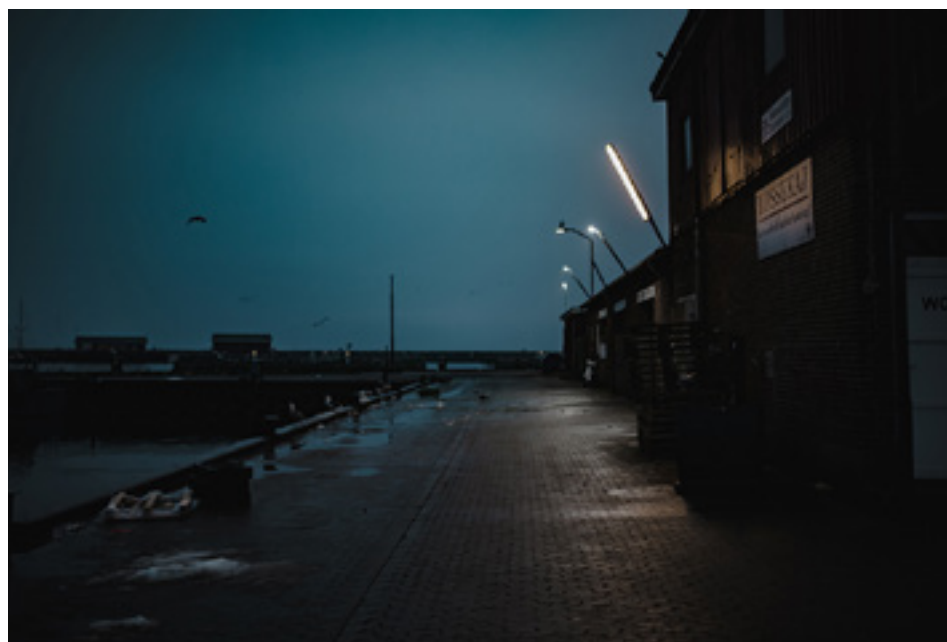
ment announced it would spend 24 million kroner on compensation for around 400 affected fishing vessels.

"It can be devastating to have your source of income so drastically reduced," environment and agriculture minister Esben Lunde Larsen stated. "It would be a shame if smaller vessels went bankrupt because of the tightened quotas. This economic bailout will hopefully keep them in business."

Back in Gilleleje, Nielsen has finished the preparations for tonight's trip.

"They throw around fancy words and lots of money, but they have no idea what it's like out here," he says, shaking his head as he casts off for another night on the ocean.

"Nobody is listening. Maybe if we leave the Union they will." **M**



THIS PAGE

Above: Jan Hansen stands in a storage bay in Rødvig harbour

Left: Ole Nielsen on his boat, 'Louise'.

Below left: Gilleleje harbour at 5:30AM on a February morning.

Below: Ole Nielsen often sells his catch to local residents straight from his boat. He says he makes more money this way than selling it to supermarkets.

OPPOSITE PAGE

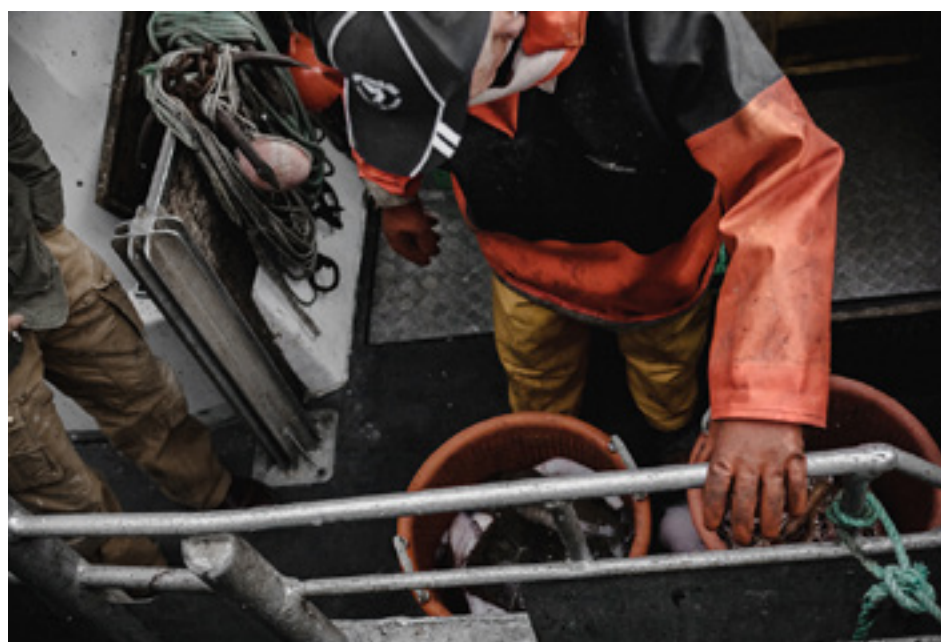
Top left: Egon is originally from Lübeck in Germany but moved to Denmark when he was young. He's been active in the Gilleleje harbour council for years and after retiring he's helped out with logistics and minor jobs.

Top right: A rundown fish restaurant on the outskirts of Gilleleje.

Middle left: Two vessels in dry dock in Rødvig harbour. As the quotas decrease, increasing numbers of fishermen choose to retire.

Middle right: Daily life in Rødvig harbour in the early hours of the morning.

Bottom: Pictures of a bygone time hang on a wall near Rødvig harbour.







"Occasionally I dream in Danish and wake up **exhausted** from the sheer effort"

Liz Jensen is a British writer who lives in Copenhagen with her husband, the Danish writer Carsten Jensen. She is the author of eight novels including the best-selling psychological thriller 'The Ninth Life of Louis Drax'. With the impending release of both a Danish translation, and the Hollywood adaptation on streaming platforms, James Clasper sat down with Jensen to discuss identity, the power of words, and how writers can respond to the rise of populism

Am I right in thinking you've got Danish heritage?

My father came from Aalborg. He spoke perfect English with a very thick Danish accent, which my friends claimed they couldn't understand. When I was very young I couldn't understand him either. When he talked about home he always said "back in Aalborg" rather than "back in Denmark", so my siblings and I used to think Aalborg was a country, like Austria or Albania. And a lot of people who know Aalborg would argue that it is a country, so perhaps we weren't wrong. We grew up in a very Danish home without really realising it at the time. When my parents got married, my mother must have asked my father what he liked to eat and he probably said, "I like fishcakes, I like pickled herring, I like boiled potatoes, I like anything involving whipped cream, and I like meatballs". So that's the kind of thing we ate: it was only much later, when I spent more time in Denmark, that I realized that what we took for our father's dietary eccentricity was just Danish home cooking.

So your heritage is primarily culinary?

Oh, it was much, much more than that. It was a mindset, a very Danish mindset. That's why I feel at home here, and around Danes – particularly funny Danes. I love Danish humour. There's an inbuilt sense of irony and a mistrust of pomposity, which is a big part of the British comic vision too, so there's a crucial overlap. There's also a very practical, down-to-earth way of living, which I feel in my blood. So, yes, I feel familiar with aspects of the Danish mentality. But having grown up closely acquainted with *Janteloven* [ed: tall poppy syndrome], I think I have a love-hate relationship with it too, just as I do with my own culture, or any culture in which I've lived, for that matter. I've come to see loving one's country as something potentially very scary, especially now. Patriotism can transform people in very ugly ways. But what is patriotism? What does it even mean when you say, "I love my country"? Which country are you talking about? My Britain might not be the same as your Britain. The Denmark I love might not be the Denmark you love. Love is a big word. Country is a big word. You can make of those words what you will.

Also, language is more powerful than we

Words are never "just words". They are vehicles for emotions, and emotions are powerful triggers. Words can, and do, kill.

James Clasper

give it credit for. Words are never "just words". They are vehicles for emotions, and emotions are powerful triggers. Words can, and do, kill. I'm not against free speech, and I don't know any writer who is, but weaponise it, and there's a problem. I think we're seeing it now.

As a writer, are you interested in exploring themes such as patriotism and identity?

Everything that's happening now is immensely exciting for writers. The challenge is deciding what to do with it. I've never known such a time of turmoil, of intensity – and of danger. It feels like there's momentum, like there's something game-changing on the horizon. And we can all only do what we're best at doing, which in my case is to write. But I don't necessarily think that we should all be writing about the present, because one of the things you can do with fiction is to set a story in another time, or place, or both, and let readers draw their own analogies. There has already been some wonderful writing – long-form journalism in particular – in this new era. I suspect that today's convulsions are giving rise to an intellectual blossoming which history will look back on.

Louis Drax is a story about family secrets, which starts with a boy falling off a cliff and his father going missing. Where did you get the idea?

I figured out where it came from only after I'd finished writing it. I should have seen it right away. There was a terrible tragedy in my family in the 1930s, which was never solved, and which cast a shadow over my mother's life forever. She never fully recovered. My grandmother either fell, jumped or was pushed off a cliff in Switzerland, four days after her eldest son disappeared. With fiction, you don't necessarily know what your theme is or why you're writing a book until after you've written the last page. The story of my missing uncle and dead grandmother was practically the first story I ever heard. No wonder I wrote about it. The only wonder is why I didn't write about it before. Though I didn't write about it directly – one never does. I wrote about a boy falling off a cliff and his father disappearing.

As a writer, how have you found living in Denmark?

Living in another country is always a kind of rocket fuel for my imagination, so it has been a joy. But it has been difficult, too, and I've had some setbacks, as all foreigners do here. Danish is the hardest language I've ever learnt – and I include Chinese. If my father were alive, I'd like to kill him for never having spoken Danish to us at home. Being bilingual – be it in Danish, Urdu, Swahili, French or anything else – confers a huge advantage and makes the brain more flexible. Occasionally I dream in Danish and wake up exhausted from the sheer effort. But I enjoy languages. I love working out how something changes when translated into another language. One of my favourite Danish expressions is Lars Tyndskids mark, which means the field of Lars' Diarrhoea. It describes the backend of beyond or the boondocks. I laugh every time I hear it. It's a wonderful, salty expression.

I like the literalism of Danish, too. The classic example of that is *brystvorte* or 'breast wart', meaning nipple. I have a growing list of untranslatable Danish words. They tell you so much about any culture. One of my favourites in Danish is *konflikt-sky*, meaning conflict-averse. It's not a word we use in English so much. Maybe because we don't need it, because we actually like conflict. The Danes have an interestingly intimate relationship with conflict aversion. It's an everyday word, and I'm struck by how often I hear it. To me, *konflikt-sky* is part of that set of words that's particular to a small country where people in glass houses can't afford to throw stones. *Hygge* is another one. It's deeply connected to social cohesion. *Menneskesyn* is another word we don't have, which means the way you see people. Not world-view, but people-view. That's telling too. Perhaps the untranslatable words should be the first ones people learn when they come here because they reveal what's unique to Danish society. **M**

The Danish edition of 'The Ninth Life of Louis Drax' will be published by Politiken this spring. The UK and US editions are published by Bloomsbury.



Confront reality in a Copenhagen cinema

Starting on March 16, CPH:DOX offers an 11-day programme that addresses a diverse range of topics including the war in Syria, an exposé of the pharmaceutical industry, and the workings of an international fashion house



'The Last Men in Aleppo' is a portrait of three reluctant heroes and their work to save Aleppo's civilians.

CPH:DOX RETURNS THIS MARCH after an 18-month hiatus with a quality selection of provocative and insightful films. It's now the third-largest international documentary film festival in the world, having grown from 14,000 admissions in 2003 to over 90,000 in 2015.

While the documentaries will touch upon a range of hard-hitting subjects, the festival will not only challenge viewers in terms of content – CPH:DOX promises to play with the very notion of 'documentary' as a genre. The festival now includes debates, art installations, concerts, and even a sound show on March 22 entitled *Invisible City* that utilises the Dolby cinema surround sound system to represent the noises of Copenhagen in a multidimensional way.

One of the key themes of the festival is an exploration of the rise of populism in Europe, broaching the question of whether the liberal world order – and even democracy itself – is in crisis. Films grappling with this topic include *Miranda – the making of a politician*, the biographical account of a Swedish teenager who became part of an extreme right-wing party; *Boiling Point*, a study of the social tensions in Finland that have emerged as a result of the refugee crisis; and *Tutti a Casa – People and Power*, which delves into the formation of Italian rebel party M5S.

The festival will open with the European premiere of *Last Men in Aleppo*, which

Emily Tait

Left: A still from 'Cause of Death Unknown'. When director Anniken Hoel's older sister suddenly dies of cardiac arrest as a result of antipsychotic medication, she embarks on an investigative detective mission that takes her right into the dark heart of parts of the pharmaceutical industry.

CPH:DOX – March 16-26

With 200 films, including 75 world premieres, CPH:DOX focuses on the rise of populism, common reality, and truth. They write: "The liberal world order has been challenged by Brexit, Trump and the authoritarian and populist tendencies, which are rising in the Western world. The free press and artistic expression is under pressure, also in the Land of the Free where alternative facts have become the modus operandi in Trump's own reality TV show."

In addition to documentaries, CPH:DOX also includes a cultural summit, visual concerts, interactive exhibitions, a VR cinema and a designer sofa cinema, and a new children's programme. Also new this year is a science theme, and a festival centre at Kunsthall Charlottenborg.



'Miranda - The making of a politician' is a portrait of a young right-wing idealist and her short meteoric career in Sweden's populist party, the Sweden Democrats.

won the Grand Jury Prize in the international documentary category at the Sundance Film Festival. It delivers a sensitive portrait of the daily lives of members of the White Helmets rescue group and exposes the sacrifices made by those torn between protecting their own families and saving the lives of fellow citizens. It will be screened at DR Koncerthuset at 20:00 on March 15, a date that marks the six-year anniversary of the start of the Syrian revolution. The screening will be followed by a concert performed by an ensemble of Syrian musicians.

Other notable screenings include *Pornocracy* from France, and the world premiere of *Cause of Death: Unknown* from Norway, both of which will be shown multiple times throughout the festival. *Pornocracy* uncovers the dark underbelly of what the festival's website has controversially heralded "the world's most popular documentary genre," while *Cause of Death: Unknown* is an immersive journalistic exposé of the pharmaceutical industry, where money often outweighs the value of human life.

Also premiering at the festival is Reiner Holzemer's *Dries*, a year-long project documenting the professional and private life of renowned fashion designer Dries Van Noten. This film provides a rare glimpse into the creative

heart of the unconventional fashion house by following the development of four of its collections and the creative process that goes into its celebrated fashion shows.

There is a new addition to the festival programme this year, called CPH:CONFERENCE. This self-contained five-day conference comprised of keynote speeches, workshops and discussions will give attendees the chance to reflect on both the films they are seeing and the film medium itself. Each day is dedicated to a different theme broadly related to film and technology, from science and film to art as an instigator of social change. The third day of the conference, for example, is entitled *Serialized*, and will examine popular recent documentary series like *Making a Murderer* and *OJ: Made in America* (whose creator and director Ezra Edelman will be speaking). The conference will be held March 20-24 at the new Festival Centre Kunsthall Charlottenborg.

This is not a festival for escapists – CPH:DOX uses the medium to confront the reality of contemporary culture and politics. Hopefully, you'll walk away seeing the world in a slightly different light. **M**

For more information, visit:
cphdox.dk

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We are looking for an aspiring journalist with a passion for reporting and feature writing, to join us for a six-month internship starting in **JULY 2017**.

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While the role is open to potentially anyone, we are especially keen on Danish journalism students, or graduates, who are interested in a career in English-language journalism.

Payment is negotiated and depends on the candidate's qualifications and level of experience.

If you are interested, please get in touch by emailing a CV, short letter of intent, and some examples of your work, to our Editor-in-Chief, Peter Stanners – **PETER@MURMUR.DK**

OP-ED

When pro-Gay means anti-Muslim

The right-wing government claims that LGBTQ rights are fundamental. Simultaneously, it pledges to uphold border policing so as to prevent refugees from entering the country, while supporting policies that implicitly target ethnic-minority Danes. So is the government's claim to support LGBTQ rights merely a tool for masking human rights violations?

THE SEXUAL POLITICS of the new coalition government are, at first glance, nothing new to progressive Denmark. In their platform from November they acknowledge that sexual orientation, gender identity, and the right to choose one's partner are "fundamental" rights in Danish society. They add that the government is committed to promoting equality for all "regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity".

This pro-LGBTQ stance should not surprise most people familiar with Denmark's sexual-political history. One of Europe's first post-war organisations for homosexuals was founded in Denmark in 1947 and exists today as LGBT Danmark. In 1989, Denmark became the first in the world to formalise same-sex partnerships. It is the only country in the world not to classify transgender as a psychological disorder.

The new platform is still noteworthy, however, as it is the first time a right-wing coalition government has come out in such open support of the LGBTQ community. Previous governments led by the Liberal Party (Venstre) paid little attention to gay and lesbian rights, and no attention to transgender issues. Under the four coalition governments led by Venstre between 2001 and 2011, the platforms of the first three made no mention of sexual orientation or gender identity. The last briefly acknowledged discrimination against "the elderly, people with disabilities, and homosexuals" but had no other references to LGBTQ people.

In contrast, the left-wing Social Democrats (Socialdemokrater) made concrete promises for Denmark's LGBTQ community. When

One should be wary when political support for sexual diversity and transgender rights becomes entangled with anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim policies.

Andrew DJ
Shield



Dutch politician Geert Wilders (of the PVV: Party For Freedom) as Europe's most outspoken pro-gay, anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant politician.

they came to power in 2011, their platform included a section that addressed the need for sexual equality for LGBTQ Danes. Many would benefit from neutral marriage laws and parental rights for lesbian couples who used artificial insemination. Those who sought to legally change gender would no longer need to undergo surgery.

CYNICAL APPROPRIATION

Activists spent decades pushing for LGBTQ rights in Denmark, so isn't it good that the issue is no longer partisan? The answer is not so simple, as Denmark's gender and sexual politics are increasingly used to justify concerns about immigration.

Prior to 2000, there were few

European politicians that called for citizens to respect gay, lesbian, or transgender rights. In the Netherlands, however, a growing movement has linked tolerance for sexual diversity with good citizenship, with Dutch politician Geert Wilders (of the PVV: Party For Freedom) as Europe's most outspoken pro-gay, anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant politician.

Wilders is neither gay nor transgender, and has done little to advance new policies for Dutch LGBTQ's. But since 2006, he has found it strategic to defend Dutch women and gays from their supposed enemy: new immigrants, as well as Dutch citizens with backgrounds in Muslim-majority.

Wilders even tried to export

pro-gay, anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant politics to Denmark. In 2008 he spoke at the Danish Parliament, though only a few members of the populist Danish People's Party (DF) attended. Wilders alleged that Muslims in the Netherlands brought violence against Dutch women and homosexuals. But his speech proved unsuccessful at the time and DF continued to oppose LGBTQ rights, including same-sex parental adoption.

Even Donald Trump, during his presidential campaign, tested the waters with "Wildersian" politics. After the attack at a gay club in Orlando that left fifty people dead, Trump gave a speech where he stated that gay and les-

bian Americans needed to be protected from the violence of Muslim immigrants. This nod to gay and lesbian rights cannot be untied from Trump's campaign promises to establish a registry for Muslims living in the United States, to turn away Muslim tourists and immigrants – including especially Syrian asylum-seekers – and to build a wall with Mexico. But a month after the speech, Trump chose Indiana governor Mike Pence, who once said that gay couples signalled "societal collapse," as his running mate.

CONSERVATIVE SEXUAL POLITICS

Using LGBTQ rights to drive a wedge between "native" and "immigrant" populations has now come to Denmark. In the section of the government's platform that deals with young people, they pledge to "tackle social control" and initiate early intervention strategies for children and adolescents who are at risk of "honour-related conflicts" – implicitly targeting Denmark's Muslim community. They justify this need by stating that "personal freedom is a fundamental right in Denmark. This includes equality between the genders".

Immigrants and refugees are presented as a threat throughout the platform. In the chapter, "A Safe Legal Policy," the platform asserts that the government has decided to maintain temporary border control with Sweden and Germany to stop an "uncontrolled flow" of refugees and migrants. They also promise to introduce an "emergency brake" to prevent another "uncontrolled flow" of migrants, while cutting welfare for refugees and "setting higher demands on refugees and immi-

grants' ability and will to integrate into the Danish society."

The government's platform cannot be separated from other discussions outside of the government. In September 2016, for example, the neo-Nazi Danskernes Parti mimicked one of Wilders' publicity stunts by handing out "asylum spray" – faux pepper spray, actually breath freshener – to women in Haderslev, and announced that foreigners threatened Danish women with sexual violence. Sexual politics are not always radical – they can also foment racism and xenophobia.

Bipartisan support for LGBTQ rights is something of which Danes could be proud. But one must not blindly accept that Denmark is a bastion for its LGBTQ citizens and residents. Continued critique from especially trans and non-binary people demonstrates that there remain areas for further progress. We must also listen to the critiques from ethnically diverse contingents of the LGBTQ community in Denmark, who can attest to the discrimination they face on the grounds of xenophobia, racism, and Islamophobia.

One should be wary when political support for sexual diversity and transgender rights becomes entangled with anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim policies. One must not accept that immigrants are an inherent threat to LGBTQ rights in Denmark. Rhetorical support for LGBTQ rights must not blind us from other human rights violations. **M**

Andrew DJ Shield is a research fellow at Roskilde University, and author of 'Immigrants in the Sexual Revolution: Perceptions and Participation in Northwest Europe' (Palgrave Macmillan, forthcoming).

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WHAT'S ON • MARCH



THICK TIME
For the first time in Scandinavia, Louisiana is exhibiting the work South African artist William Kentridge who had his breakthrough in the 1990s with monochrome stopmotion films.
Louisiana
Gl Strandvej 13, 3050
Louisiana.dk
All month

ALL MONTH

UNFOLDS
The Danish Design Museum is displaying the work of some of Denmark's most skilled cabinetmakers. Both beautiful and practical, the 25 unique works all take the simple cube as a starting point.
Designmuseum Danmark
Bredgade 68, KBH
designmuseum.dk



MALENE LANDGREEN
Copenhagen-based artist Malene Landgreen uses this exhibition to challenge the way we experience a gallery space, with each room being given a unique shape and identity.
Kunstforeningen GL STRAND
Gl. Strand 48, KBH
glstrand.dk
All month

ALL MONTH

SARAH SZE
Sze's sprawling sculptural work will be on display in Copenhagen's new contemporary gallery, nearby Copenhagen street food.
Copenhagen Contemporary
Trangravsvej 10-12, KBH
cphco.org
Opens on the 10th

10

AMY MACDONALD
Scottish singer-songwriter Amy Macdonald is known for her pop-rock sound with a folk twang. She returns to Copenhagen with special guest Newton Faulkner.
Store Vega
Enghavevej 40, KBH
vega.dk



KOEN VAN WEEL

HARLEM GLOBETROTTERS
An exhibition basketball team combining athleticism, theatre, and comedy. They bring their wild show to Ballerup.
Ballerup Super Arena
Ballerup Idrætsby 4, 2750
ballerupsuperarena.dk
March 10

13

JÓN KALMAN STEFÁNSSON
Four-time nominee for the Nordic Council Literature Prize, the Icelandic author Jón Kalman Stefánsson comes to the Black Diamond to discuss his work.
Black Diamond
Søren Kierkegaards Plads 1
kb.dk



SCIENCE AND COCKTAILS
Combining science lectures with cocktails is a sure winner. The first of this season's sees Harvard scientist Donald Ingber delivers a lecture on Organs-on-Chips technology.
Byens Lys, KBH
scienceandcocktails.org
March 14



SAUNA PARTY
Get out of the cold and into the sauna. This two day festival at Refshaleøen combines public sauna and electronic music - open to all ages.
Halvandet
Refshalvej 325, KBH
saunaevent.dk
March 17-18

18

MINDFULNESS COURSE
This one-day intensive mindfulness course is designed to enable its participants to practice mindfulness independently by the end of the class.
Nørregade 41, KBH
levlykkeligt.dk
March 18



ST. JOAN
Gemma Arterton starts in Bernard Shaw's classic play depicting the powerful revolutionary, broadcast live from the National Theatre in London.
National Theatre Live
Cinamaxx
Kalvebod Brygge 57, KBH
Kino.dk
March 19

Emily Tait

31

HELLO VINTAGE KBH
A vintage kilo sale, in which you pay by weight rather than by item. The entry fee is only 40dkk and the two day event promises a huge variety of items worth taking an afternoon to sift through.
KPH Volume
Enghavevej 80, KBH
kph-projects.dk
Ends April 1

WHAT'S ON • APRIL



KØDBYENS MAD & MARKED

The first of April marks the re-opening of Kødbyen food market in the Meatpacking District. The weekend promises open stalls and plenty of beer until 10pm on Saturday night.

Kødbyens Mad & Marked
Flæsketorvet, KBH
koedbyensmadogmarked.dk
April 1

1

TEDX ODENSE

The first independent TEDx event to be held in Odense will feature exciting speakers on technology, education and design.

Odense Theatre
Jernbanegade 21, 5000
tedxodense.com



ZS + TVIVLER

The New-York based Zs return to Copenhagen with their experimental and often improvised music that pushes the boundaries of the harmonious. They are supported by Danish band Tvivler.

Copenhagen JazzHouse
Niels Hemmingsens Gade 10
Jazzhouse.dk
April 1

4

BLACK + NO TITLE

Over two evenings, performance artist Mette Edvardsen presents interpretative art exhibits entitled 'Black' and 'No Title'.

Dansehallerne
Bohrsgade 19, KBH
Dansehallerne.dk
Ends April 5

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