

## Denmark and the European Union

Manners, Ian

*Published in:*  
EU som et politisk system - udviklinger og udfordringer

*Publication date:*  
2011

*Document Version*  
Early version, also known as pre-print

*Citation for published version (APA):*  
Manners, I. (2011). Denmark and the European Union. In D. S. Martinsen, & M. Wind (Eds.), *EU som et politisk system - udviklinger og udfordringer: et festskrift til Morten Kelstrup* (pp. 178-195). forlaget columbus.

### General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain.
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal.

### Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact [rucforsk@ruc.dk](mailto:rucforsk@ruc.dk) providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

# Denmark and the European Union

Ian Manners

## (1) Denmark and the EU as political system

Over the past two decades Morten Kelstrup's work has been at the centre of three important intellectual innovations in political science – the study of the EU as a regional political system; European security studies; and small states in European integration. Kelstrup's five best known books (Buzan, Kelstrup, Lemaitre, and Tromer 1990; Kelstrup 1992; Wæver, Buzan, Kelstrup, and Lemaitre 1993; Branner and Kelstrup 2000; Kelstrup and Williams 2000; Kelstrup, Martinsen, and Wind 2008) stand as part of the intellectual heritage of Danish contributions to the three previous debates. For the purposes of this book, two of Kelstrup's most important intellectual contributions come from his work on Denmark's relations with the European Union, and his use of systems theory to understand the EU.

As part of the recognition of Kelstrup's intellectual innovations and original contributions this chapter will consider five aspects of Denmark and the European Union, with reference to his work as appropriate. The rest of this section will consider the extent to which Morten Kelstrup's work coincides with an opportunity to reflect on five decades of European integration since the Treaty of Rome. The next section will focus more specifically on Denmark in Europe, with the third section asking whether the EU is becoming more Danish. The fourth section questions how Danish democracy and EU democracy interact with an emphasis on how Danish MEPs use the European Parliament. The final section concludes by asking to what extent Denmark is at the heart of Europe 35 years after joining the EU and reflects on the extent to which Kelstrup's central questions remain relevant to the study of Denmark and the European Union two decades after he started asking them.

In 2007 the EU celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Treaty of Rome establishing the European Economic Community. Fifty years after the signing ceremony on the 25<sup>th</sup> March 1957 at the Palazzo dei Conservatori on Capitoline Hill, Rome, to what extent is it possible to say anything new or certain about the EU? In many respects this was the question which drove Kelstrup, together with colleagues Marlene Wind and Dorte Martinsen to write their 2008 book on *Europa i Forandring* proving a foundation on the EU's political and legal system for students. From a wider perspective there are three 'big pictures' of the contemporary EU which can just be seen with sufficient critical distance if one takes a step backwards. These three pictures are only now coming into focus over half a century after the signing of the Treaty of Rome and represent images of the 'raison d'être', 'hybrid polity', and 'normative balance' of the EU.

The last fifty years have seen a gradual evolution of the *raison d'être* of the EU, very much reflecting the global context in which it sits. Taking a broad view, the *raison d'être* of the EU can be abstracted as the pursuit of peace, prosperity and progress. Hence the immediate post-war and cold war periods 1950 to 1969 tended to focus on peace building amongst former enemies. Following the western economic crises of the 1970s, the period 1984 to 1992 represented a change of direction with a focus on market building and returning relative prosperity to EU citizens. Finally, the post-cold war period has seen the EU increasingly concentrating on progressively responding to more global concerns such as economic and developmental crises; migration and human rights; the environment and energy issues; conflict and terrorism; and global institution building.

Since the Treaty of Rome the EU has slowly and hesitantly developed into a *hybrid polity* which is 'polycentric' (von Bogdandy 1993: 27-29; Wind 2003: 103-135). The EU is polycentric in nature because political power is shared by so many different political entities – hence the EU is regularly described in various contradictory ways such as 'intergovernmental', 'supranational', 'multileveled', or 'regional'. In this sense the EU may be characterised as a 'regional political system' (Kelstrup 1990) to the extent to which it is a regional system of member state political systems, all within a wider international system. The EU is primarily intergovernmental in the sense that it is the constitutive member states that confer competences on the EU, and it is the member states that maintain important roles for themselves through intergovernmental institutions such as the Council of Ministers and the European Council. But the EU is also supranational to the extent that its ordinary legislative procedure creates supranational law and that it has a number of supranational institutions within its hybrid polity. These supranational institutions include the European Commission, the Court of Justice, the Court of Auditors, and the European Central Bank. Finally, the EU is also transnational because the role and attention given to non-national and non-supranational institutions and actors within its hybrid polity. These transnational institutions include the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of the Regions, all of which represent local and transnational civil society, rather than the member states or the supranational EU. The transnational aspect of the EU is given further importance through the treaty-based references to the principles of the United Nations Charter, in particular through the EU's external actions.

It is within the political context of its *raison d'être* and hybrid polity that a *normative balance* is beginning to emerge within the EU. What the complexities of global interdependence over the past fifty years since the Treaty of Rome demonstrate is that the distinctions between EU internal policies and EU external actions are more permeated than they have ever been. In this world a European balance must be struck between the extremes of communist collectivisation and capitalist individualisation; between the brutalities of nationalism and the problems of globalism. The EU's normative balance reflects these shared experiences and collective memories of the last half-century, however diffuse. Hence while some member states share collective memories of the catastrophic effects of the second world war and ensuing cold war, others have experiences of brutal authoritarian rule, whilst others still have only recently emerged as modern economies. However thin these collective experiences, they contribute to the emphasis placed on striking a balance between liberalism and socialism as dominant ideologies in post-cold war Europe. Within the EU, the emphasis placed on the liberal normative principles of freedom, democracy, rule of law, and good governance reflect the post-war experiences of creating free democracies and market economies. At the same time, the emphasis placed on social normative principles of human rights, equality, solidarity, and sustainable development reflect the post-war experiences of creating welfare states and mixed economies. Taken together, this normative balance reflects emerging EU politics in a 21<sup>st</sup> century more safely lived without an uncritical belief in any one ideology.

In this first section it has been argued that three big pictures are beginning to emerge of the European Union and the Treaty of Rome after 50 years. These are complex and contradictory pictures with little clarity and are clearly nowhere near being finished – indeed they never will be. Like most compound polities, the EU defies simplification and generalisation but that does not mean we cannot see some emerging clarity after fifty years. However it is equally important that there is engagement between those who either dismiss its importance, or overemphasise its monolithic appearance. Looking at the EU fifty years after the Treaty of Rome with a series of three big pictures helps to bring some colour and light to

the impressionistic work of simple dichotomies that so often dominate the discussion of the EU. In many respects these images were first brought to light by Kelstrup's observations, 20 years ago, that the EU constitutes a regional international society, as a hybrid political system in between normative arguments regarding the structure of the international system (Kelstrup 1990).

## **(2) Reflection on Danish contributions to EU studies**

Within this understanding of the EU as a 'regional political system', it is also worth reflecting on Danish contributions to European union. Over the past two decades the disproportionate influence Danish membership and Danish scholarship in the EU has been striking. But these are very hard to recognise from within Denmark, so it is worth illustrating with a few examples. In the area of small state adaptation Denmark was one of the first self-confessed small state to join (with Ireland) the EC in 1973 and has stood as a reminder of the importance of member state equality in the EU. Interestingly, because Denmark is neither seen as independent of the EU (as the UK saw itself) or dependent on the EU (as Ireland saw itself), its membership and scholarship has set the standard for adaptation to the EU. In this respect, one of the earliest and most important articles pieces on adaptation was Nikolaj Peterson's 1998 article national adaptation strategies. On questions of democracy and referenda the practices of Danish democracy, including minority governments, use of referenda, and relative strength of the European Committee in Folketinget, have placed the EU firmly in the public sphere in a way seen in few other member states during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Danish scholarship, for example Kelstrup's work on democracy in the EU, reflect this contribution to the EU (Kelstrup 1992, 1993a).

The historical experience of Danish relations with the EC/EU has provided the foundation for an area of theoretical strength in Danish studies of anti-Europeanism, euroscepticism and non-participation of member states. While the 1992 Danish referendum on the Maastricht Treaty provides the starting point for this theoretical strength, the much longer history of Danish suspicion and reservation towards the rest of Europe is important. The very open public debates in Denmark about the kind of EU Danes want say something very interesting about the varied nature of anti-Europeanism, euroscepticism and political contestation in both member states and the EU (Kelstrup 1993b). Catharina Sørensen's work on varieties of euroscepticism demonstrates the extent to which Danish public opinion on the EU has varied over the past 35 years (Sørensen 2007). This particular nature of the Danish-EU relationship can also be found in the work of Danish-based scholars working on EMU (Marcussen 2000) and the Danish 'opt-outs' (Adler-Nissen 2009; DIIS 2008). Beyond the study of democracy, anti-Europeanism, euroscepticism and the Danish opt-outs, there are several policy fields where the Danish contribution to these fields and policy debates is noticeable. Obvious examples would include agricultural, welfare, gender, judicial, and foreign policy (for examples, see Roederer-Rynning 2002, 2003; Knudsen 2009; Martinsen 2005, 2007; Martinsen and Vrangbæk 2008; Wind 2009, 2010; Jørgensen 1997a, 2008).

It is also worth remembering that it is all too easy for non-Danish scholars to get Denmark and the EU wrong. An academic piece written by a leading US scholar, Andrew Moravcsik, in 1999 illustrates two interesting aspects of misunderstanding Denmark and the EU. In arguing that there was 'something rotten in the state of Denmark', Moravcsik claimed that the "Copenhagen School" of continental constructivist theories radiate outwards from the Danish capital, where it is the hegemonic discourse'. Clearly, writing a history of European integration based on 'soft sources and weak evidence' that dismissed the role of Denmark and eight other member states contributed to Moravcsik's rotten reading (Lieshout, Segers, and Vleuten 2004). To an outsider, vigorous and rigorous theoretical pluralism are often seen to define the

Danish scholarly debates on the EU, apparently mirroring the pluralism present in political debates. Of course, the question arises of whether such apparent pluralism translates into more informed debates and better policies, as discussed in the concluding section 5 below.

The final reflection on Danish-EU studies come from the intellectual impact of two theoretical approaches in which Denmark can rightly claim to have led the scholarly world. Firstly, the Copenhagen 'securitisation school' has encouraged post-structural insights into the EU in a way found nowhere else in the EU. Examples would include the work of Ole Wæver, Thomas Diez, Pertti Joeniemmi, Lene Hansen, and many others (see origins in Buzan, Kelstrup, Lemaitre, and Tromer 1990; Weaver, Buzan, Kelstrup, and Lemaitre 1993; Kelstrup and Williams 2000). Secondly, social constructivism plays an important and innovative role in the Danish understanding of the EU. Examples would include the contributions by Knud Erik Jørgensen, Marlene Wind, Martin Marcussen, and many others (see origins in Jørgensen 1997b; Christiansen, Jørgensen and Wiener 1999). In general, it is possible to see the contribution of Denmark and Danish scholarship to the European Union. I would identify domestic political contestation and significant academic pluralism as being key features of this contribution. On reflection, the extent to which Morten Kelstrup's work has played a role in so many, if not all, of these contributions is noteworthy.

### **(3) The 'Danish-isation' of the European Union?**

After reflecting on Danish contributions to the EU, a question arises over the extent to which there has been a 'Danish-isation' of the EU? Over the past decade, in amongst all the doom and gloom of the EU's constitutional crisis and enlargement fatigue a remarkable change may have gone largely unnoticed – Denmark appears to have come to Europe. Alongside the Irish, Danish respondents to Eurobarometer polls have been breaking all national records when questioned about the benefits of EU membership. The last Danish government was upbeat about the EU, as seen in its support for both the Constitution for Europe and the Treaty of Lisbon. The five main parties in the Danish parliament have called for a debate on the merits of opting back into the country's three opt-outs from the 1992 Treaty on European Union. Some critics still continue to argue, that not much has changed in the state of Denmark, and that for all the party political enthusiasm, the real test will be in any future referenda.

The shifting tides of Denmark's relations with the rest of Europe may be found in several examples of Danish-isation. These include the increasing attention given to the successful and sustainable Nordic models of economic growth combined with supportive welfare and high levels of education. The Danish model of "flexicurity", reconciling flexibility for enterprise with high standards of social security for employees, is one such example. Similarly, the lead taken by the Danish in energy and environmental policy has been complemented, by imitations of Denmark's variable taxes on different packaging materials and its systematic reduction of pesticide use over the past 20 years. The December 2009 attempts by the Danish government to take a European lead over the COP15 negotiations may have been stonewalled by US and Chinese intransigence, but the 'small' Danish EU presidency of 2012 may offer an opportunity to make amends. More controversially, the 'Danish-isation' of Europe has a more contentious side to it. France and the Netherlands could be said to have followed the Danish example of 1992 on the Maastricht Treaty when they voted against the constitution. And the eurosceptic positions of the Polish and Czech governments also seem to echo Danish "awkwardness" during the 1990s.

But what can explain the apparently more positive change in Danish attitudes to Europe during the mid-2000s? First, there is the suggestion that the support the Danish government received from some other EU member states, parts of the Commission and some of the European media during the 2005-6 “cartoon crisis” suggests some benefits of membership. However any such support from other EU members seems to have been tempered by perceptions of Danish unwillingness to participate in collective monetary, refugee and peacekeeping policies. It is equally clear that many EU member states did not share the Danish government position on freedom of speech vs. religious provocation, particularly given the participation of the far-right Danish Peoples’ Party. Second, the warming of the Danish Socialist People’s Party to the EU, particularly since 2003-4, appears to reflect both EU actions on green issues and the general opposition across Europe to the invasion of Iraq. Third, healthy economic growth and historically low unemployment in Denmark from 2003-2009, spurred in part by closer relations across the Øresund bridge with southern Sweden (with tens of thousands of Danish and Swedish commuters crossing the Øresund every day), was undoubtedly an earlier factor. While the Danish economy may have been more exposed to banking and financial risk by its non-participation in EMU, the 2009-2010 economic crisis has been less damaging to Denmark than other exposed economies such as Iceland and the Baltic states. Since the summer of 2010, the slowly reviving eurozone economy and the return of building projects in and around Copenhagen, reflect the possibility of improved economic fortunes. Fourth, the extent to which Danish ideas on energy and the environment now seem to be mirrored in Brussels appears to have resonated with many Danes, as has the EU’s attempts to promote and achieve the non-binding commitment of the 2009 Copenhagen Accord.

One more reason for changing attitudes may have been the role of Danes with a relatively high-profile in Denmark working with or in Brussels. During the 2000s this included Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen (now Secretary General of NATO); EU Commissioners Mariann Fischer Boel (Agriculture) and Connie Hedegaard (Climate Action); MEP and former-Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen (president of the Party of European Socialists), and MEP Jens-Peter Bonde (chair of the right-wing Independence/ Democracy group in the European Parliament). The presence of such ‘Euro-Danes’ in Danish media seems to have contributed to a greater sense of EU participation, although this appears not to have translated into greater support for core policies in economic, justice and security areas

Care needs to be taken in understanding the changes in Denmark, as it may hold lessons for the rest of Europe. The idea that anti-Europeanism and euroscepticism result from a lack of referendum-related information about the EU appears at first hand no explanation in the Danish case. Denmark’s four decade-long engagement with Europe has long been marked by extensive referendum-related debate on the merits of European integration. However, as discussed in section 5, such public and democratic debates increasingly suffer from a disconnect between political anti-Europeanism / euroscepticism and an empirical basis for knowledge. Another explanation of apparently changing Danish attitudes might be the desire simply to get on with a “Europe of results” rather than continuing divisive debates about membership. It may not be so much that Danes have become more pro-European, or that other member states have become more questioning, but that in an enlarged EU Denmark has become less important. Denmark may not have come to Europe, Europe may even be coming to Denmark, but is Denmark at the heart of Europe? This will be explored later.

## **(5) Danish MEPs: A channel for Danish values?**

If democracy is important to Denmark's relationship with the EU, and there has been a 'Danish-isation' of the EU, then what role do Danish democratic representatives play in the EU? The year 2008 was the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first sitting of the European Parliamentary Assembly.<sup>1</sup> As a result of changes to the EU treaties, the European Parliament (EP) has gained significant power since its establishment. Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) can now enact legislation on a wide range of policy areas on an equal footing with the EU Council of Ministers, amend most lines in the EU budget, censure the Commission and veto the nomination of the Commission President. The EP is no longer what many people in the past characterised as a 'Mickey Mouse Parliament', but rather a parliament playing a crucial role in taking decisions as well as promoting new EU legislation. Thus, Danish national politics are increasingly affected by the decisions taken in the EP. It is no exaggeration to say, then, that understanding the EP and MEPs voting behaviour has never been more important. However, we know very little about what determines how Danish MEPs vote. Do they vote in accordance with their national party? Or, are the MEPs beholden to their European Party Groups (EPGs) who control their influence in the EP? Based on interviews with Danish MEPs it is worth discussing how far national party policy positions, the EPGs, and national affiliation explain the Danish MEPs voting behaviour in order to better understand Denmark and the European Union.

The legislative behaviour of the EP is, potentially, more complex than that of national legislatures for several reasons. Firstly, it is a supranational parliament elected primarily on the basis of national manifestos. All members of the European Parliament are members of national parties and of European party groups, which raises the question of how to vote if a conflict between the two occurs. Secondly, because national electorates elect MEPs, they are also representatives of their country. Finally, embedded in the separation of powers system and with no real government to hold accountable, the main function of the EP is to maximise its influence vis-à-vis the Council of Ministers, representing the governments of the EU's member states, and the European Commission, the EU's administrative-executive arm. Therefore, the MEPs also represent the Parliament as an institution.

Most of Danish MEPs participate in votes where their national party and their EPG wanted different outcomes. Conflicts between MEPs' national parties and EPGs happen on a wide range of issues, especially on issues concerning the environment, agriculture and EU integration. Some MEPs find themselves more in favour of 'tighter' EU cooperation than their national party as they feel that they are able to judge things differently than the national party and, perhaps, see things from a broader European perspective. The MEPs do not necessarily vote with their national party when a policy conflict emerges between the national party and the EPG, not least because national parties are often seen as ill informed and/or slow on the uptake. The MEPs usually make themselves aware of the position taken by the national party, but they do not feel that they are obliged to take up the same position. However there are certain issues where the Danish MEPs tend to vote more with the national party rather than the EPG. These issues are often coloured by Danish interests reflecting widely-held Danish popular beliefs/values that shape voting behaviour. National affiliations do significantly influence the voting behaviour in the EP when voting on issues regarding the environment, employment and social affairs, animal rights, food safety and agriculture. On these issues, the Danish MEPs are more likely to vote with each other rather than follow the line of their EPGs. The Danish MEPs are in support of higher and stricter environmental EU standards than most of their fellow MEPs. When it comes to the Common Agriculture Policy, the Danish MEPs are strongly in favour of introducing more free market measures by reducing EU farm subsidies. In contrast, many of the French and Portuguese MEPs, for example, could never dream of changing the current

structure of the farm subsidies. When these issues appear on the agenda, it is often the case that Denmark, Sweden, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom vote in one way and the southern European states vote in another way. The new member states have not yet found a solid policy stand and, as a consequence, the European Parliament is often characterised by national divisions between 'south' and 'north'. One might wonder why votes on agricultural as well as employment and social issues are coloured more by national divisions than by EPG affiliation. The answer is to be found in the different historical and cultural origins of national parties. Whereas, for example, the left-wing parties in Portugal traditionally have been strongly affiliated with the farm workers and the fishing industry, the left-wing parties in Denmark grew out of worker's movements.

The importance of national affiliation on agriculture, environment, as well as social and employment issues is confirmed when talking to Danish MEPs about their contact with the Danish government. When asked whether or not they have been contacted by any of the Danish ministers, most MEPs mention that they are in frequent contact with the Minister for the Environment and the Minister for Food, Agriculture and Fisheries. Although, frequent contact does not guarantee identical views, it does show that these areas are of special importance for Denmark. The focus of the Danish parties on environmental issues and global warming in the 2007 election campaign confirms this view. Furthermore, it is probably not a coincidence that the last two Danish Commissioners has been in charge of agricultural affairs (Mariann Fischer Boel) and climate action (Connie Hedegaard).

From this, can we conclude that legislative behaviour in the EP is structured more by national affiliation than EPG affiliation? The answer is mixed as it depends greatly on the policy issue in question. When employment, environment, food safety, animal rights and agricultural issues are on the agenda, Danish MEPs are more inclined to vote in accordance with national affiliation rather than with their EPG. However, the desire of the EP to present a united front, so as to carry weight in negotiations with the EU Council and Commission, and thus to influence legislation also serves as a strong incentive for the MEPs to adhere to the EPG position. But when voting on these five issues, national affiliation and/or the position of the national party are usually the most powerful forces behind the Danish MEPs voting behaviour.

How well have the Danish MEPs succeeded in addressing and promoting these issues in the EU? The answer is not simple as it is difficult to separate the effects of the Danish MEPs work in the EP in influencing the EU's agenda and the role played by Danish lobbying groups and the Danish government. Many of Danish MEPs have held influential positions in the EP either as group coordinators/whips, committee rapporteurs or group leaders. For example in the 2004-2009 European Parliament, former Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen was president of the Party of European Socialists, and Jens-Peter Bonde chaired the right-wing Independence/Democracy group. In the 2009-2014 Parliament, seven Danish MEPs were vice-chairs of EP Committees or Delegations. Some of the Danish MEPs are known on the domestic political scene with a past in either *Folketinget* and in government, or at the local and regional level. Most well remembered are Mogens Camre, Margrete Auken, Gitte Seeberg, Anders Samuelsen, Ole Christensen and Bendt Bendtsen from national politics. Furthermore, Danish MEPs also use their EP experience as part of runs in the national elections. The Danish MEPs posts in the EP provide one of the few ways for influencing EU legislation in a Danish way. The EU's attention to the relatively successful and sustainable Nordic models of economic growth combined with supportive welfare and high levels of education indicates that Denmark has played a role in influencing the EU-agenda, outside of core economic, judicial and security areas. The Danish model of "flexicurity", reconciling flexibility for enterprise with high standards of social security for employees, stands as the example of how Denmark could play a role in the EU. For example, Ole Christensen has focused his parliamentary work on introducing Danish



labour market ideas into the EP, seeking to influence the EU's focus on flexicurity in shaping new European labour market reforms. While Emilie Turunen has brought the Danish green political perspective to her work on the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection.

Similarly, the lead taken by the Danish in energy and environmental policy prior to 2010 has been complemented by imitations of Denmark's variable taxes on different packaging materials and its systematic reduction of pesticide use over the past 20 years. EU attempts to forge an international post-Kyoto agreement in the aftermath of the UN climate summit in Copenhagen in December 2009 suggests ways in which high Danish environment standards serve as a model example for the EU. Increasing the EU's environmental standards and fighting climate change are especially high on Margrete Auken and Dan Jørgensen's (both members or substitutes of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety since 2004) agenda in the EP. Dan Jørgensen's 2006 book 'Grøn Globalisering – miljøpolitik i forandring' suggests ways in which the EU citizens and politicians can reduce their CO<sub>2</sub> footprint. All these factors point to that the Danish MEPs serve as a channel for Danish values, especially in their efforts in putting issues regarding the environment, agriculture, as well as labour market reforms on the EU agenda by increasing the awareness of these issues in their daily work in the EP. On these issues, the Danish MEPs tend to vote in a Danish way rather than in a European way, highly influenced by their national parties and widely-held popular views and values in Denmark. However, of considerable concern is the fact that none of the Danish MEPs sit on the major Economic and Monetary Affairs, Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, or Foreign Affairs committees in the 2009-2014 Parliament.

## **(5) Conclusion: Denmark at the Heart of Europe?**

Morten Kelstrup's work on Denmark and the European Union has raised many of the central questions regarding the EU as a political system, the question of democracy, and the specifics of the overall relationship. When the EC enlarged in 1973 to become a regional political system with nine member states Denmark moved closer to the centre of this system. To conclude it must be asked to what extent Denmark is still at the heart of Europe 35 years after joining the EU? In many respects Denmark is somewhere near the heart of Europe, but as the 2008 Danish Opt-Out Investigation found, this position is increasingly questioned (DIIS 2008).

While Copenhagen may be 5 degrees north and 3 degrees east of Gelnhausen-Meerholz (Germany), the geographical centre of Europe, in many respects Denmark is at the heart of Europe. Temporally, Denmark is neither a 'founding' member state, nor a 'new' member state; it is somewhere in the middle in European integration history. Demographically, a population of 5.4 million means that Denmark is neither a 'larger' member state, nor a 'micro' member state. Socially, Denmark is somewhere between Nordic austerity and an easy-going Mediterranean type of lifestyle. Politically, Denmark's Cold War experiences are shared with 'old' Western Europe, while its post-Cold War aspirations are shared with 'new' eastern Europe. Thus temporally, demographically, socially and politically, Denmark is somewhere in the middle of the European Union (EU), that is, somewhere near the heart of Europe.

As a small, open country somewhere near the heart of Europe, Denmark is deeply implicated in the processes of globalization which so define our era. The Danish economy has been transformed by globalization over the past two decades. Trade in goods and services is now over 80% of gross domestic product, with approximately 44% of trade being with the Eurozone (and 27% of trade with the rest of the

EU). Globalization involves a transformation in the size, ease and technologies of human interconnectivity. In this respect, global container shipping firms such as Mærsk, lowcost airlines such as Cimber Sterling and internet telephony providers such as Skype all reflect how Denmark contributes to such global interconnectivity. At the same time, globalization also has its dark sides, for example, facilitating predatory capitalism, international criminality and human trafficking, and contributing to global warming. It is in this context of globalization and EU membership that Denmark's relations with the rest of the world must be understood. When tackling global problems, it is the EU to which its members turn for the collective capacity to respond to these challenges.

Whilst globalization has been accelerating, the position of Denmark somewhere near the heart of the Europe has been increasingly called into question by the growth of the Danish opt-outs from the Treaty on European Union. In the autumn of 2007, the European Committee of the Danish Parliament commissioned an investigation in the developments and consequences of the Danish opt-outs from the 3<sup>rd</sup> stage of Economic and Monetary Union (EMU); Security and Defence Policy (SDP); Justice and Home Affairs (JHA); and the declaration on union citizenship. The Danish Opt Out Investigation (DOOI) used a multimethod approach based on analysing four sources of evidence (secondary literature, public legal documents, 'on record' written/oral evidence, and 'off-the-record' evidence), as well as engaging in comparative analysis with other member states (especially Sweden, Finland, Ireland, and the UK).

Very early on in the DOOI's research, it became clear that there was little secondary literature on the Danish opt-outs, and few scholars researching the topic. As the research progressed, it also became clear that there is not much documented evidence regarding the opt-outs, although this is not surprising, given that the DOOI was looking for evidence regarding Denmark's absence from policy and politics. Ultimately, the DOOI found itself at the 'cutting edge' of investigative research, working with a mixture of empirical material, including standard social-science techniques of interview triangulation and verification interviews. To ensure the quality of the analysis, the DOOI incorporated two rounds of peer review using scholars and experts in the policy fields. By the end of the investigation in 2008 a number of worrying developments over the past sixteen years appeared to be hollowing out the claim of Denmark being at the heart of Europe.

While the world and the EU has changed dramatically over the past sixteen years, with wars in Yugoslavia, global terrorist attacks, changing patterns of migration and demography, global financial problems, and a more than doubling of the number of member states, the opt-outs have remained in place. In this period, EU member states have attempted to respond to European and global challenges by strengthening security and defence policy, expanding judicial cooperation and increasing the coordination of economic and financial policy. By 2008 Denmark had largely excluded itself from active influence and full participation in three of the EU's four main objectives. Equally worrying was the impact the opt-outs were having on Denmark's position in the EU, with evidence suggesting that issues such as treaty negotiations, chairing the EU presidency, achieving administrative positions and overall perceptions were all negatively affected by the opt-outs. The DOOI and report leads to the conclusion that although Denmark maybe somewhere near the heart of Europe, it appears to have become a hollow heart.

The hollowing out of the Danish-EU relationship is not only due to the opt-outs, but also to the relative lack of research capacity on EU issues, which leaves public and democratic debates relatively under-informed. Despite the scholarship of Kelstrup and the Danish colleagues discussed in section 2 (above), the DOOI

illustrated the extent to which there is a relative lack of scholarship in the three crucial policy areas of EMU, SDP and JHA, as well as Denmark's overall relationship with the EU (see Branner and Kelstrup 2000 for an exception). Similarly, there is relatively little Danish research on the EU's external relations, in particular enlargement policy, multilateral diplomacy, and Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). More problematic for Danish democracy is the relative lack of expertise and scholarship on the European Parliament and questions of improving democratic accountability in EU legislative processes. Again, this could be seen during the DOOI, where there was very little scholarship on the way in which the promotion of intergovernmentalism in the EU has contributed to a lack of democratic accountability in areas such as CFSP/SDP, as well as police and judicial cooperation. This relative lack of research capacity runs the risk of leaving public and democratic debates devoid of informed content, something that Morten Kelstrup has played a significant role in addressing over the past 20 years.

## **bibliography**

- Branner, Hans and Morten Kelstrup (eds.) (2000) *Denmark's Policy Towards Europe after 1945: History, Theory and Options* (Odense: Odense University Press).
- Bogdandy, Armin von (1993) 'The contours of integrated Europe: The origin, status and prospects of European integration', *Futures*, Vol. 25, No. 1, pp. 22-31.
- Buzan, Barry, Morten Kelstrup, Pierre Lemaitre, and Elzbieta Tromer (1990) *The European Security Order Recast: Scenarios for the Post-Cold War Era*.
- Christiansen, Thomas, Knud Erik Jørgensen, and Antje Wiener (eds.) Special Issue on 'The Social Construction of Europe', *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 6, No. 4.
- Danish Institute for International Studies (2008) *De danske forbehold over for den Europæiske Union: Udviklingen siden 2000* (Copenhagen: Danish Institute for International Studies).
- Jørgensen, Knud Erik (ed.) (1997a) *European Approaches to Crisis Management* (Brill).
- Jørgensen, Knud Erik (ed.) (1997b) *Reflective Approaches to European Governance* (Basingstoke: Macmillan).
- Jørgensen, Knud Erik (ed.) (2008) *The European Union and International Organizations* (Routledge).
- Kelstrup, Morten (1990) 'The Process of Europeanization. On the Theoretical Interpretation of Present Changes in the European Regional Political System', *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 25, No. 1, pp. 21-40.
- Kelstrup, Morten (1992) *European Integration and Denmark's Participation* (Copenhagen: Political Studies).
- Kelstrup, Morten (1993) *Small States and European Political Integration*.
- Kelstrup, Morten (1993) 'EF's politiske system', *Politica*, No. 3, pp. 253-268.
- Kelstrup, Morten (2003) 'Le Danemark et l'Union européenne: entre scepticisme et participation active.' *Nordiques* 2003, no. 2, s. 9-32. 2003.
- Kelstrup, Morten (2004a) "Forfatningstraktaten, Konventet og EU's demokratisering", *Økonomi og Politik*, nr. 1, 77. årgang, 2004, s. 2-13.
- Kelstrup, Morten (2004b) "EU-konventets forfatningsudkast: et fundament for det fremtidige EU eller et monument over spildte kræfter?" I *Politik*, årgang 7, nr. 1, marts 2004, (sænummer: "På vej mod en europæisk forfatning?"), s. 16-24.
- Kelstrup, Morten (2006) 'Denmark in the process of European integration : dilemmas, problems, and perspectives.' i: John Campbell & John A. Hall & Ove K. Pedersen (eds.): *National Identity and the Varieties of Capitalism* (Montreal: McGill University Press).
- Kelstrup, Morten (2007) 'EU's historiske success og aktuelle problemer – og lid tom forsømmelser i den danske EU-debat', in Catharina Sørensen (ed.) *Danske Perspektiver på 50 år med den Europæiske Union* (Copenhagen: DIIS), pp. 60-65.
- Kelstrup, Morten and Michael C. Williams (eds.) (2000) *International Relations Theory and The Politics of European Integration: Power, Security and Community* (London: Routledge).
- Kelstrup, Morten, Marlene Wind, and Dorte Sindbjerg Martinsen (2008) *Europa i Forandring : En Grundbog om EU's Politiske og Retlige System* (Copenhagen: Hans Reitzels Forlag).

- Knudsen, Ann-Christian (2009) *Farmers on Welfare: The Making of Europe's Common Agricultural Policy* (Cornell University Press).
- Lieshout, Robert, Mathieu Segers, Johanna van der Vleuten (2004) 'De Gaulle, Moravcsik, and The Choice for Europe : Soft Sources, Weak Evidence', *Journal of Cold War Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 4, pp. 89-139.
- Martinsen, Dorte S. (2005) 'The Europeanisation of Welfare – The Domestic Impact of Intra-European Social Security', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 43, No. 5, pp. 1003-30.
- Martinsen, Dorte Sindbjerg , 'The Europeanization of gender equality - who controls the scope of non-discrimination?', *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 14, No. 4, pp. 544-62.
- Martinsen, Dorte S. and Karsten Vrangbæk (2008) 'The Europeanization of Health Care Governance: Implementing the Market Imperatives of Europe', *Public Administration*, Vol. 86, No. 1, pp. 169–85.
- Moravcsik, Andrew (1999) 'Is something rotten in the state of Denmark? Constructivism and European integration', *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 6, No. 4.
- Rasmussen, Maja Kluger, and Ian Manners (2008) 'Danish MEPs: A channel for Danish values?', in Peter Nedergaard (ed.) *Fra fælles forsamling til folkestyre? festskrift i anledning af Europa-Parlamentets 50 års fødselsdag den 19. marts 2008* (Luxembourg: Office of Official Publications of the European Community). Kontoret for De Europæiske Fællesskabers Officielle Publikationer.
- Roederer-Rynning, Christilla (2002) 'Farm Conflict in France and the Europeanisation of Agricultural Policy', *West European Politics*, Vol. 25, No. 3 July 2002 , pp. 105-24.
- Roederer-Rynning, Christilla (2003) 'From 'Talking Shop' to 'Working Parliament'? The European Parliament and Agricultural Change', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 41, No. 1, pages 113-35.
- Weaver, Ole , Barry Buzan, Morten Kelstrup, and Pierre Lemaitre (1993) *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe* (New York: St Martin's).
- Wind, Marlene (2003) 'The European Union as a polycentric polity: returning to a neo-medieval Europe?', in Joseph Weiler and Marlene Wind (eds.) , *European Constitutionalism Beyond the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Wind, Marlene (2009) 'When Parliament Comes First – The Danish Concept of Democracy meets the European Union', *Nordic Journal of Human Rights*, Vol. 27, No. 2, pp. 272–89.
- Wind, Marlene (2010) 'The Nordics, the EU and the Reluctance towards Supranational Judicial Review', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 48, No. 4, pp. 1039-63.

---

<sup>1</sup> This section is based on Maja Kluger Rasmussen and Ian Manners, 'Danish MEPs: A channel for Danish values?', in Peter Nedergaard (ed.) *Fra fælles forsamling til folkestyre? festskrift i anledning af Europa-Parlamentets 50 års fødselsdag den 19. marts 2008* (Luxembourg : Kontoret for De Europæiske Fællesskabers Officielle Publikationer, 2008).