

# Why Anti-Refugee Policies in Denmark?

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## But why?

One can point to many reasons for such a tragic development in an otherwise decent, wealthy and hitherto well-respected country.

- It's become too easy to go to war. The generation of politicians who might have a sense of war are long gone. If you take property owned by people who have fled thousands of kilometres because their life opportunities have been smashed and who carry just what they could grab in a hurry and carry - you simply have no idea of what life is like in a war zone. Neither do you see any need for advisers.
- Only a small percentage of Danish politicians have any international experience, no special competence, in international affairs - in sharp contrast to the 1970s-80s.
- Knowledge, broad civic education and cultured manners have been replaced by marketing consultants, styling experts, and fast politics salesmanship.
- Politics nowadays attract a different kind of people than before. They fight more for their power positions than for an ideology, values, norms or a vision of a better world - all of which is totally outdated in today's politics.
- Politics is a job or profession, not a calling based on deepy held individual values and visions about a better society for all.
- Anyone mentioning ethics or existential responsibilities would be ridiculed. And neither do media people raise such dimensions. An expert in ethics is hardly ever invited to the TV debates.
- Since the end of the Cold War, there has been no international balancing factor to take into account - the US/NATO and EU could do virtually what they pleased, riskfree violations of all good norms and international law - and implicit if not intended humiliation of Russia.
- The social democratic party developed from a working class solidarity movement to a middle class power elite losing on the way all ideals, ideology and solidarity with disadvantaged domestically and internationally. It lost its narrative and party identity as a social transformation agent for the better sometime in the 1980s.
- Earlier politicians relied to some extent on knowledge and expert analyses on subject matters. Today the budget for these kinds of things are spent on 'styling', public relation, ads and video promotions as well as marketing companies who sell politics as if it was fashion clothes.
- Today's European leaders are not even pale copies of former leaders like

Adenauer, de Gaulle, Brandt, Finnbogadottir, Kreisky, Kekkonen, etc. They are not copies of anyone, no comparison possible. To future historians Angela Merkel may be the only great European leader – but she is being squeezed constantly by lesser minds from all sides, her crime being that she is decent, uncorrupted, principled and compassionate and knows, indeed embodies, history.

- The Danes have lived a very good material life, expecting it to become more and more luxurious by the year – totally unaware there in their idyllic parish pump what life is like where their F16s bomb. Today many seem unable to distinguish between happiness-seekers and asylum-seekers. And the more you own, the more you have to feel threatened that somebody will one day come and steal it. Thus the propensity to turn off people at the borders.
- Turning their backs to the world out there and having a nice cosy time with themselves – to “hygge sig” – is a well-known characteristics of what some stupid ranking index has called the world’s happiest people. Other people’s unhappiness doesn’t throw a shadow over the Danes’ happiness.
- In today’s Denmark, you get neither the political nor the media ear if you tell the truth – namely that behind every refugee stands an arms trader and war-making government. Connecting the dots in general and between warfare and refugees is a taboo. Complex issues cannot be explained in soundbites of 30 secs.
- The Danes see themselves as innocent victims and shy away from recognising that, like other NATO/EU countries, Denmark with its war participation is a *refugee-creating* country. It refuses to carry its burden of the consequences. “We stretched out our hand but...”
- The Nordic countries in general have thrown the welfare state and solidarity thinking over board; neo-liberal, profit-making economy, not a mixed economy or new economies, are in vogue. Paradoxically, the more globalised the world gets, the more growing segments of the people have turned inward.
- So too the news media. Compared with, say, 20 years ago, there is simply much less global stuff in the news relative to domestic issues – also in the public service media. The Danish Broadcasting Corporation relies on much fewer permanent correspondents stationed over long time in one place than earlier – the rest is stringers and cutting Western news bureau telegrams, re-editing them here and there – little research, if any.

### **The myth that justifies: Denmark and Europe as generous**

Enigmatically Denmark still sees itself as a generous country and people. And, yes, it has received comparatively many refugees per capita. That ought to be a proud measuring rod for the future too, not a reason to egoistically pass the buck to neighbouring countries who will be forced to do the same and thus eventually harming millions of people in existential need.

Here a few facts from UNHCR, IOM and others reliable sources:

- Russia is the European country that has received most asylum applications. Secondly, it is the developing countries that host more than 86% of the world’s refugees compared to 70% ten years ago – and often internally displaced persons too.
- Turkey, Pakistan and Lebanon host 30% of the world’s 15 million refugees.
- The EU is 503 million people and the richest region on earth. It can’t do better

when 1,2 million people – 0,2% – knock on their doors? If there is a will – and some leadership – there is a way. Not directly comparable of course, Europe could handle 582 million tourists in 2014.

- In addition, due to demographic trends all the European countries need – or will need – to import labour of various kinds to not sink hopelessly back in the future world economy. Here a lot of qualified people turn up at our shores (albeit for the wrong reasons) and Europe turns them off. How short-sighted!

[The fourth and last article](#) in this series begins with a few observations about Sweden – and ends with why one *must* still see hope.

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