

# Abstracts

Den nye magtudredning

## Denmark: A small country with large companies

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Congruently with the process of economic globalization after 1990, a small group of very large companies has become increasingly important in the Danish business structure. This development stands in stark contrast to the traditional perception of Denmark as a country characterized by small and medium-sized companies contrary to the neighbouring countries of Sweden and Germany. Focusing on Novo Nordisk, it is concluded that even individual companies have critical importance for the country's economy, among other things in relation to tax payment, return on assets and derived employment. Whereas previous investigations of power have focused on the more structural conditions, the concentration trends in Danish business life should lead to a supplementary focus on the importance of the individual large corporations and the following position of power in Danish society. It is worth noting that the largest Danish companies represent several different sectors within manufacturing, logistics, services and the pharmaceutical and food industries.

## Ownership and Power in Danish Business

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The article concludes that it is important to understand the ownership of Danish business in order to understand the importance of business to the distribution of power in society. So far, the study of "Power and democracy in Denmark" (Danish: Magtudredningen) has only dealt with the direct influence of business on the political level. A new inquiry into power and democracy should deal with what ownership looks like and what it means, and can advantageously examine this at levels other than the political. Private companies possess many resources and have relationships with many people. Within the framework of the law, it is the ownership that ultimately decides for what purposes and under what conditions all these resources and people are put to use.

## Power and the Danish labour market model

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The labour market is a key arena for power and the exercise of power, where workers and companies fight for the value that is created. In Denmark, however, there are a number of agreements, norms and institutions – popularly referred to as 'The Danish Model' – that set a decisive frame-

work for the use of force in the labour market. In this paper we focus on how power is used and exercised in the Danish labor market with a focus on differences between the public and private sectors. The motivation for this comparison stems from the development in the level of conflict (measured in lost working days), where the public sector accounts for the majority of conflicts in the last two decades. The public sector is particularly interesting from a power perspective, as the sector is politically controlled, in contrast to the private sector dictated mainly by market forces.

### Expensive Counsel: Advisory Power and Taxation in Denmark

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Research on power dynamics in Denmark ought to focus on an important group of experts who advise both states, companies and private individuals on tax matters. As advisers, these experts have acquired a subtle kind of power: their work is crucial to both the design and implementation of our tax systems, but it remains understudied. The power of these advisers is particularly relevant in light of their contribution to tax avoidance and rising inequality. In this article, we provide an overview of existing research on these experts and describe their work in Denmark, and explain how tax experts exercise both instrumental, structural and infrastructural power. We propose a number of research questions, which focus broadly on the influence of advisers on democracy.

### Interest representation: From close relationships to professional connections?

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In 2003, when the Danish Democracy and Power Study published its conclusions, the most central aspect of interest representation in Danish politics was the interaction between classic interest groups and the authorities. Over the last 20 years, a much wider range of actors has become engaged in lobbyism, and public-affairs agencies have gained a more prominent role. At the same time, the range of relevant political arenas has grown: the news media have assumed a more central role, and social media have emerged as a new means of communication. Finally, interest representation is much more professionalized today. This article discusses these developments and points to some of the issues that should be central for a new study of power in Denmark. Among them are the consequences for the balance between different societal interests and for the ability of interest groups to channel citizens' concerns into the political system.

### Power studies and news media

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A new study of media and power relations in Denmark should include social media as well as including the traditional news media, which still play the most important role in agenda setting. This article offers a resume of, mostly, Danish research into the question of news media and power from the last power study in 2003 and until today. The purpose of the article is thus to point to the existing state of knowledge, while also pointing in directions of study that could be taken in a new

power study. The article uses a previous division of the question of power and the media, and thus looks at this question along three dimensions: The power behind the media, the power in and surrounding the media and the power from the media.

### **Equality and Diversity: Continued Discrimination in and Challenges for Danish Business Community**

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The previous Danish democracy and power study demonstrated that while gendered power relations are undergoing sociocultural transformation, political and economic power remains skewed in the favor of men. In the 20 years that have passed, this situation has not improved. To the contrary, Denmark has fallen behind in international rankings of gender equality, particularly in terms of economic power. In this article, we first present the newest data in the field, then argue that we should expand the agenda from gender equality to diversity. There is a particular need for research that identifies and details dynamic intersectionalities between different identity dimensions – and explores the ways in which these condition individuals' and groups' ability to gain and exercise power. We zoom in on the continued biases in and challenges for Danish business but indicate the broader implications of these as seen from the perspective of power.

### **The signification of cultural forms of domination for power in Danish society**

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In the previous investigation of power in Denmark, the studies of power and exercise of power were mainly conducted within a tradition from political science, with emphasis on political and economical power. It is, however, widely recognized that also cultural nexuses of meanings and significations matter, as for instance language, religion, education and lifestyles. This pertains within the domain of sociology, and in the more recent sociology Pierre Bourdieu's analysis of how cultural capital works together with or in opposition to economic capital has a paramount position. In this article, we will argue for the significance of culture in the study of power through an examination of a series of domains, primarily within a Danish context. We will draw on examples from recent research that can show the significance of cultural capital as a source of power in Danish society, and thereby draw attention to important questions to examine for the forthcoming investigation of power in Denmark. We will highlight different aspects of cultural capital, namely educational capital, classic education, value orientations and informational capital.

### **Displacements in legal fields towards privatisation of law? Input to a new Danish research project on democracy and power**

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Through three cases, this article focuses on the parts of the legal fields which rarely are examined when legal elites are in focus. Firstly, the article discusses how large law firms have displaced legal hierarchies and through their counseling of companies and large organizations have got a new important role for the development of law. Secondly, the article considers how law is made by market actors, including law firms, outside nation states, but with an impact on the nation states. Thirdly, the article discusses how state and EU law makers' room for maneuvering to a large degree is affected by professional lobby organi-

sations (and lawyers) representing market actors. All three cases points to the fact that legal fields are displaced towards the economy and law is partly privatised. Thus, the article focuses on

other actors and processes than the Danish research project on Democracy and Power from the beginning of 2000 did.