

## DENMARK: THE 1964 FOLKETING ELECTION

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The distribution of votes among the parties in the three most recent elections in Denmark, excluding Greenland and the Faroe Islands, has been as follows:

Party	Number of votes			Percentage of valid votes		
	1957	1960	1964	1957	1960	1964
Socialdemokratiet	910,170	1,023,794	1,103,667	39.4	42.1	41.9
Venstre	578,932	512,041	547,770	25.1	21.1	20.8
Konservative folkeparti	383,843	435,764	527,798	16.6	17.9	20.1
Socialistisk folkeparti	.	149,440	151,697	.	6.1	5.8
Radikale Venstre	179,822	140,979	139,702	7.8	5.8	5.3
De uafhaengige	53,061	81,134	65,756	2.3	3.3	2.5
Retsforbundet	122,759	52,330	34,258	5.3	2.2	1.3
Kommunistiske parti	72,315	27,298	32,390	3.1	1.1	1.2
Slesvigsk parti	9,202	9,058	9,274	0.4	0.4	0.4
Dansk samling	.	.	9,747	.	.	0.4
Fredspolitisk folkeparti	.	.	9,070	.	.	0.3
Candidates without party affiliation	71	109	255	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	2,310,175	2,431,947	2,631,384	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of eligible voters	2,772,159	2,842,336	3,088,269			
Voting turnout (%)	83.7	85.8	85.5			

Denmark is divided into 23 electoral districts, constituting three regions — the Capital, the Islands and the Jutland regions. The seats are proportionally divided among the parties in each district by the evened odd numbers method. In addition to the 135 regional seats there are 40 additional seats used to achieve proportional representation of the parties nationally.

In the 1964 election the primary condition for obtaining an additional seat was that the given party must have won at least one district seat or gained enough votes to correspond to at least to two per cent of the total number of valid votes cast in the entire country.

In 1960 the latter requirement was replaced by the condition that a party had to receive a minimum of 60000 votes. The two per cent rule in 1964 corresponded to somewhat over 52000 votes.

Parties which have not won a district seat but have obtained a certain minimum of support in two of the three major regions are also entitled to participate in the distribution of the additional seats.

With one exception, all the parties which won additional seats in 1964 gained them by having won district seats. It was De uafhaengige, as in 1960, who won their representation at the Folketing by having fulfilled the requirements for a certain, either regional or national, minimum vote. In the 1964 election, however, they managed this with only a very narrow margin.

The distribution of seats in the three most recent Folketing elections has been as follows:

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## Recent Political Developments

Party	Number of district seats			Number of additional seats			Total number of seats		
	1957	1960	1964	1957	1960	1964	1957	1960	1964
Socialdemokratiet	63	65	66	7	11	10	70	76	76
Venstre	45	37	35	—	1	3	45	38	38
Konservative folkeparti	19	25	29	11	7	7	30	32	36
Socialistisk folkeparti	.	5	4	.	6	6	.	11	10
Radikale venstre	6	2	1	8	9	9	14	11	10
De uafhaengige	—	—	—	—	6	5	—	6	5
Retsforbundet	—	—	—	9	—	—	9	—	—
Kommunistiske parti	1	—	—	5	—	—	6	—	—
Slesvigsk parti	1	1	—	—	—	—	1	1	—
Dansk samling	.	.	—	.	.	—	.	.	—
Fredspolitisk folkeparti	.	.	—	.	.	—	.	.	—
Candidates without party affiliation	—	—	—	.	.	.	—	—	—
<b>Total</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>175</b>

The number of eligible voters had increased from 1960 to 1964 by one quarter of a million. In part this was due to the lowering of the age limit from 23 to 21 years.

In the capital the increase of voters was less than in other parts of the country. On the other hand, the adjoining Copenhagen *amt* was responsible for one fourth of the total increase.

Participation in the election was only insignificantly lower than in 1964. The voting figures for the Folketing elections in the 1960's have been several per cent higher than in the four immediately preceding elections during the previous decade.

On the local level significant changes in election participation have taken place between 1960 and 1964. Thus, e.g. there was a noticeable decrease from 85,3 per cent to 82,8 per cent in the capital. In contrast, there was only an insignificant decrease in the Copenhagen *amt*'s electoral district. With over 88 per cent participation, it ranks among the districts with the highest voting figures in the entire country.

The electoral districts which showed an increase are, as a rule, in the Jutland region. This was also the only region where an increase in participation took place. For the first time in the post-war era the voting figures of Jutland exceeded the national average.



The Folketing elections of 1960 brought about a considerable change in Danish party politics. The 1964 Folketing election had only little effect on the relative strength of the parties. The big advance made by the socialist parties four years earlier was consolidated. Then the socialist parties gained for the first time in the post-war era almost one half of the votes cast — an increase of seven per cent over the figure of 1957. The same parties suffered only very insignificant losses in the 1964 election and polled a total of 48,9 per cent of the votes.

The success of the socialist parties in the 1960 election did not result in any decisive swing towards radicalism in practical politics, in spite of the fact that the socialists' gains in both votes and seats were to a great extent the result of the sensational success of the leftist socialist Socialistisk folkeparti.

This party had been founded in the winter 1958–59 by a group of expelled former

leaders of the Danish Communist Party, who had lost in the long struggle to transform the Communist Party to a national and democratic leftist socialist party. In addition to former communist voters, also a number of former Social Democrats with leftist leanings have rallied around the Socialistisk folkeparti. By its demand for a total and unilateral disarmament of Denmark the Socialistisk folkeparti has also won votes from the supporters of the non-socialist, but earlier strongly pacifist Radikale venstre.

The presence of the Socialistisk folkeparti's eleven representatives in the Folketing meant a considerably stronger leftist radical element in the Danish Parliament than in Norway and Sweden. The direct influence of the Party has, however, so far been rather limited. Socialdemokratiet — which is closer to the centre than its Norwegian and Sweden counterparts — has preferred, as so often before, to cooperate with the bourgeois party with most lenient views towards reforms: Radikale venstre.

The cooperation of these two parties has been characteristic of Danish politics for the best part of the current century. Even in the years of their success in the 1930's, the Social Democrats were not able to command an absolute majority in Parliament, but have been forced to seek the cooperation of non-socialist parties in order to remain in government position.

After the 1957 election the Radikale venstre entered into direct coalition government with the Social Democrats and the Retsforbundet. In the 1960 elections the Radikale venstre suffered considerable losses, especially in densely populated districts. Thereafter the party has concentrated on farming communities (primarily in the Island Region) where the Radikale venstre traditionally enjoys the reputation of standing for the small farmers' interests.

In spite of the gains made by the Socialistiske folkeparti, the 1960 election was a significant victory to the Social Democrats. It is apparent that in addition to labour, the Social Democrats have also won the support of certain groups of civil servants. The gain of seats by the Social Democrats was not, however, sufficient to compensate for the losses suffered by their two coalition partners. A parliamentary majority was, nevertheless, maintained by the inclusion of a representative from Greenland in the cabinet, which otherwise consisted only of the representatives of the Social Democrats and the Radikale venstre between 1960-64.

The bourgeois losses in the 1960 election did not greatly affect the largest of the opposition parties — Venstre. Like all other Danish parties to the right of the Social Democrats, it makes the claim of being a representative of liberal ideologies and it has lately even added the word "liberal" to its name. The Venstre always has had a pronounced agrarian colouring. In recent years its supporters in the larger cities have constituted a more radical group within the party.

The Venstre has been in close cooperation with the Konservative folkeparti during most of the post-war era. The foundations for this cooperation were laid in 1950-53, when both parties shared government responsibility. The moderate and very slightly dogmatic Konservative folkeparti was in the immediate post-war period overshadowed by the Venstre, but the 1960's have witnessed considerable conservative successes.

The party closest to classical liberalism is the Folketinget's currently smallest party, De uafhaengige. The other bourgeois parties have avoided closer cooperation with De uafhaengige because of their negative attitude to certain aspects of the welfare society and their critical views regarding many forms of governmental control.

Like the Socialistiske folkeparti — at the other extreme wing of the Folketinget — De uafhaengige, too, was founded in the 1950's and won its first parliamentary seats in 1960. In contrast, the other four major parties — Socialdemokratiet, Radikale venstre, Venstre and Konservative folkeparti — have been represented at the Folketinget ever since the First World War or even earlier. They are occasionally referred to as the "four old parties". They often enter into special consultations and agreements

among themselves that might be of a great political consequence, excluding from them the Socialistiske folkeparti and De uafhaengige.

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Like in Sweden, TV broadcasts had a great impact on the election campaign. Broadcasting time was divided into eleven equal periods among the eleven parties appearing on the ballot. Parties with no seats at the Folketing were allowed to participate, too, under equal conditions with the big parties.

No fewer than five of the participating parties had special views on questions of foreign and defense policy, which influenced the campaign. In consequence Denmark's foreign and defence policies, i.e. its relations to NATO and the question of nuclear arms, received no more attention in the debate than usually.

The large parties, however, concentrated on questions of domestic politics in their campaign. For example, the cabinet's housing programme came under attack. The bourgeois opposition demanded the lifting of certain restrictions on construction in order to increase production. The Socialistiske folkeparti proposed the establishment of a special capital fund for the financing of housing projects. This would have enabled, in the party's opinion, the lowering of the rent level. The bourgeois opposition parties took the opposing view that the lifting of rent control would be the best means to bring about a more reasonable lowering of the rents.

In this connection the question of governmental control of certain lands came up again. A government bill for increased official control was defeated by a wide margin in a referendum held one year before the election.

Th general economic policies took a prominent place in the debate. Taxation questions came to the limelight e.g. by the Social Democrats' proposition for the collection of taxes at the source of income.

The composition of the cabinet may be considered, however, to have been the main issue of the campaign. The gain of only a few seats by the Social Democrats would have been sufficient to give the socialists a parliamentary majority. The bourgeois groups warned that the outcome of the election might result in the formation of a cabinet by the Social Democrats alone, with the support and influence of the Socialistiske folkeparti. As a consequence, the Social Democratic party – which now for the first time in a long while was conducting a real campaign against both right and left – was forced to give extensive guarantees to the effect that no parliamentary cooperation with the Socialistisk folkeparti would be considered.

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The increased number of voters resulted in that all of the parties represented at the Folketing, with the exception of the Radikale venstre and De uafhaengige, could claim an absolute increase in the number of votes cast for them in the 1964 election. However, only the Konservative folkeparti gained also proportionally and won new seats.

Even though changes in the voting figures for the parties were relatively small on the national level, noticeable changes did take place within the election districts. This resulted generally in a more even distribution of th relative strength of the large parties. The pronouncedly urban parties, Social Democrats and the Konservative folkeparti improved their position in the predominantly agrarian communities. The Venstre suffered losses in these districts but made some gains in the bigger cities.

In the Hovedstaden (capital) district the proportion of votes cast for the Venstre increased by 1.4 per cent to 6.6 per cent of the total. This increase was primarily due

to the candidates put up by the so called Liberal Debat group. In certain questions of domestic policy these representatives have shown somewhat less opposition to the Social Democratic party line than the Party's leadership. In the spring of 1965 two of the Liberal Debat group's representatives gave their support to the Social Democratic cabinet's tax bill with the consequence that they were ousted by the Venstre parliamentary group.

In spite of its gains in urban centres, the primarily agrarian communities, especially in Jutland, constitute by far the most important base of support for the Venstre. All the districts where the Venstre was the largest party are in this region (four districts in 1964 against five in 1960).

The Social Democrats, on the contrary, have suffered some losses in the capital district. Thus the party's support in the Hovedstaden district decreased by 1.5 per cent of the total votes cast. The 1964 figure was the lowest since 1945, 48.8 per cent. In the suburbs and outskirts of Copenhagen the loss was still some tenths of a per cent higher.

Also in the second biggest city, Aarhus, the Social Democrats suffered a setback by a couple of per cent, while they managed to hold their position in the other two big provincial cities, Odense and Aalborg. In all of these three cities the Social Democrats polled more than one half of the total vote.

The losses in the big cities were almost completely compensated for by the gains made in more agrarian communities. The Social Democrats were now, as in 1960, the largest party in all the election districts in the Hovedstaden and Island regions, and they also carried more than one half of the districts in the Jutland region.

The Konservative folkeparti's support increased by more than two per cent and its voting figure for 1964 — 20.1 per cent — is only some tenths of one per cent lower than the Venstre's. The party registered a gain in almost all electoral districts, though the increase of votes was lower in cities than in suburban and agrarian communities. As before, the party is decidedly stronger in urban districts than in other communes. Especially in the capital region the Konservative folkeparti is quite influential.

The smaller Folketing parties did not sustain as severe losses as had been predicted. This time the Radikale venstre maintained its position in the capital region where it had suffered a serious setback in 1960. Also in the bigger provincial cities the party managed to keep its earlier share of votes. The losses suffered in the smaller cities and in the agrarian communities had the result, however, that the party as a whole continued the downward trend that began in 1957.

Also the support of the Socialistisk folkeparti decreased between 1960 and 1964 by some tenths of one per cent. The decrease was somewhat more pronounced in the provincial cities and in Copenhagen's suburban communities than in Copenhagen itself. With 12 per cent of total votes in the Hovedstaden district, the party is still undisputably the region's third largest party.

Some gains by the Socialistisk folkeparti were noticeable in the smaller cities and in the more agrarian communities. As before, the Party's position in these communities was, however, considerably weaker than in the country as a whole.

De uafhaengige was the Folketing party which suffered the heaviest losses. Its share of the total votes cast decreased by more than one fourth and this held for all types communities. Regionally the losses were heaviest in Jutland, which, nevertheless, remains the region where the De uafhaengige are strongest.

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No fewer than eleven party designations appeared on the ballot in 1964 — two more than in the previous election. Of the parties participating in the 1964 election Dan-

marks retsforbund, Danmarks kommunistiske parti and Dansk samling had not been represented at the Folketing during the preceding parliamentary term. Consequently, in order to be registered as a party, each of these parties had to collect 10000 signatures. This was not necessary in the case of the Slesvigsk parti and the Fredspolitisk folkeparti because they had been represented at the Folketing prior to the election.

The Slesvigsk parti won one seat in the 1960 election. The Fredspolitisk folkeparti was proclaimed a party in the spring 1964 by a dissenter from the Socialistisk folkeparti. He belonged to a group of three representatives who at this time left the Socialistisk folkeparti's Folketing group. (The other two remained outside party groupings for the remainder of their term. None of the three sought re-election in the 1964 election.)

Both Danmarks retsforbund and Danmarks kommunistiske parti had been represented at the Folketing prior to the 1960 election, when they both lost their seats in an almost catastrophic defeat.

The retsforbundet's programme is based on Henry George's land rent theory, and as a parliamentary party it is a unique phenomenon in Scandinavian politics. In the 1960 election the Retsforbundet's misfortune continued, and it is only in some smaller Jutland districts that the party has any following. The Communists were able to register in the 1964 election a gain of some tenths of a per cent in the capital region and in the bigger provincial cities but as a whole the party's share of the total vote remained at the same insignificant level as in the previous election.

The Slesvigsk parti — which represents the German minority in the Danish-German border region — was unable to hold on to its district seat, in spite of the fact that there was no decrease in its votes.

All the above three parties have been represented at the Folketing for several decades. The other two parties which participated unsuccessfully in the 1964 election have no such parliamentary background. Dansk samling won three and four seats, respectively, in the elections of 1943 and 1945, but has not participated in the Folketing elections since 1953. In the 1964 campaign the party rallied against the EEC. The Fredspolitisk folkeparti was formed only a short time before the election. Denmark's total disarmament is the party's only goal. The party did not take any stand regarding domestic politics.

Neither Dansk Samling nor the Fredspolitisk folkeparti had any success. Neither of them polled even 10000 votes.

In addition to the 175 representatives from Denmark proper the Danish parliament also has two representatives from both Greenland and the Faroe Islands. The representatives from Greenland have not joined any of the party groups. In 1964 one of the representatives from the Faroe Islands was elected on a Social Democratic ballot, and he joined the Social Democratic Folketing group. The other was a candidate for the Folkeflokk, which obtained the seat previously occupied by the Sambandsparti. He remained outside party groups.

After losing one seat, the radical Venstre had no more basis for a joint government with the Social Democrats. The Social Democrats have gained sole responsibility for government and thereby after seven years Denmark once again had a clear minority government in power. Their support was 43 per cent of the members of the Folketinget, which was about the same basis as in the Social Democratic government of 1953-57.

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