XENOPHOBIC POPULISM IN DENMARK – THE WELFARE STATE UNDER PRESSURE

INTERIM COUNTRY REPORT ON QUALITATIVE FINDINGS – DENMARK

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Deliverable 2 for the project "Socio-Economic Change, Individual Reactions and the Appeal of the Extreme Right" (SIREN)

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This report represents the Danish contribution to the second part of the international project on Socio-Economic Change, Individual Reactions and the Appeal of the Extreme Right – SIREN. Seven other countries in addition to Denmark participate in the project: Austria, Germany, France, Belgium, Italy, Hungary and Switzerland. For the first part of the project, all countries performed a literature study.

The report is based on qualitative interviews with people on their attitudes to changes in the workplace and society and how these changes influence their political views.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to all of the many people who allowed us to interview them. Thanks to their hospitality we gained many new insights and learned a great deal about attitudes to work and society, politics and the system.

We also want to thank Landsforeningen for Socialpædagoger (The union for employees working in day-care centers in The Municipality of Copenhagen), who have given financial support to a part of the project.

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1. BACKGROUND

Politics in Denmark has seen wide-ranging changes over the past twenty years or so. In 1983 the Danish Parliament was debating issues related to immigration and immigrants. The nation became polarising as conflicting standpoints clashed head on. The right-wing Progressive Party (Fremskridtspartiet) saw an opportunity to promote its radical policies in the area. By the next general election, significant parts of these policies had been adopted by other parties. In 1995 the Progressive Party split in two. A break-away group founded the Danish People's Party (Dansk Folkeparti), which took a 12 per cent slice of the ballots in the November 2001 election. The Danish People's Party supports the present coalition government made up of Denmark's Liberal Party (Venstre) and the Conservative Party (Det Konservative Folkeparti), but wields no decisive political influence.

The macro socio-economic changes witnessed over the past decades include an expanded economy and lower unemployment figures. Needless to say, however, not all groups in Denmark have fared equally well despite the period of prolonged economic growth. Rural areas have high unemployment rates, they have comparatively more senior citizens, skills are scarce and there are more people on social welfare. Locally, many are having to deal with the restructuring initiatives put in place in the shape of privatisation measures, mergers, acquisitions and the adoption of new management philosophies, all of which can result to a sense of insecurity for some.

Public opinion has moved to the right on the immigration issue, and speaking or writing with a negative edge in the media on the subject of immigrants is no longer as politically incorrect as it once was.

1.1. The hypotheses

On the basis of the desk study, we found three hypotheses on the link between socio-economic change and right-wing extremism.

The immigration thesis

The hypothesis proposed here says that populist sentiments will probably be found among all groups threatened with marginalisation by continual modernisation. Insecurity, anxiety and frustration are responses to a newly emerging post-industrial world dominated by complex information technology systems.

Aversion to ethnic minorities is a consequence of the perceived cost of solidarity, i.e., the cost of accepting refugees in a climate of mounting unemployment, competition in the housing market and economic deprivation.

The political alienation thesis

This hypothesis says that support for populism is connected with the way in which mainstream political parties tackle issues of importance to voters. Trust in politicians is low among voters, as is trust in their own political skills. They are probably more afraid of the unknown and hence more inclined to support populist ideas put forward by politicians and negative publicity about immigration in the media.

The historical-sociological or crisis of socialism thesis

This hypothesis propounds that the international crisis of socialism is a key contributory factor in the emergence of the new right in Denmark. The old left is retreating in disarray and is unable to contest the image of ethnic minorities, globalisation and political and cultural elites as the new enemies of the Danish people propagated by the new right.

1.2.   The object of the report

We realised during the first stage of the project – the literature study – that working on the basis of a simple right/left political dichotomy would be too restrictive, not least because the Danish People's Party resists that type of pigeon-holing. Apart from its policy to limit immigration, several of its policies were traditionally the province of the social democrats, especially welfare state issues. For the purpose of this report we therefore elected to rename right-wing extremism xenophobic populism.

And it is the Danish People's Party that gives voice to this xenophobic populism. The Progressive Party has no public support of any significance any longer. Further, the number of people supporting neo-Nazi groups and similar organisations is tiny. For these reasons we focus primarily on support for and affiliation with the Danish People's Party.

The theses

While carrying out the project it proved necessary to refine our hypotheses to ensure greater articulation with the project's aims.

The immigration thesis

First of all we feel that the title *marginalization thesis* is more descriptive since it embraces the relationship between one's place in society and views on immigration. To target the hypothesis even more precisely towards the issues explored by the project, we have looked in particular at changes experienced by our interviewees in working conditions, and whether such changes have caused marginalization or represent a threat of possible marginalization. We then attempt to discover connections between our interviewees' perception of the changes and their political orientation.

The historical sociological thesis

We focus in this thesis on the way in which our interviewees apprehend the changes to the welfare society. What does it mean to feel that the welfare system is in jeopardy at the same time that the institutions and parties who fought to create the welfare state lack a credible response to the threats – does one seek out other parties that do appear to be addressing the issues?

The political alienation thesis

We approach this thesis mainly in connection with the other two.

The focus of the report is therefore how changes in working conditions impact on our interviewees' political orientation, with particular weight on the development of xenophobic-populist views. Do people feel that institutions such as trade unions, the government, employers/workplaces give the support necessary in relation to the potential negative consequences of the changes?

What do changes in society and the welfare system mean in more general terms for the political opinions of our interviewees, and their perception of the performance of the political parties in relation to the changes?

2. METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS

The data for this part of the SIREN project were collected through interviews. We wanted to shed light on the degree to which change over the past 15–20 years in social and economic conditions influenced the lives and political views of the individuals in the sample.

All eight countries participating in the project used the same interview guide[1]. The interviews were semi-structured and carried out with the aim of building a focused dialogue between the interviewer and interviewee. We wanted to get an open and nuanced account of the various aspects of our interviewees' lives and events. It was important to let them tell of their experiences in connection with the socio-economic changes in their own words. The interviews consisted therefore of a blend of the interviewees' general attitudes to the socio-economic changes and an account of the specific circumstances and incidents that led them to develop those attitudes.

In the first stage of the selection process we looked at what the interviewees had voted at the last general election. A key stipulation was that about half or the interview group should have voted for a populist or very right-wing party (in Denmark, as said, the Danish People's Party and the Progressive Party) and the other half for other parties. A second requirement was that members of the sample either were working or had worked in sectors where changes over the past 15–20 years had been particularly sweeping.

The following Danish sectors were selected:

Privatised, outsourced or otherwise restructured public undertakings

Within this category we sought interviewees connected with:
- Public transport, especially bus services
- Telecommunications
- Post office services
- Care sector

Selected private sector companies undergoing extensive restructuring processes

Within this category we sought interviewees connected with:
- IT sector
- Industrial sector

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[1] See Annex 1.

How were the interviewees found?

Three different approaches led us to 31 valid and useful interviews[2] out of 36 interviews in all. These processes were:

- Through personal connections in trade unions or personal networks. Eleven interviewees were found by this method.

- Through a welfare state study being run at CASA we had 14 interviews. The purpose of that project was to explore possible connections between people's values, perceptions of and political attitudes to the welfare state. Nine people in the sample interviewed in connection with that study were found suitable as they fulfilled the fundamental condition that they had worked in the past decade and hence experienced socio-economic changes.

- Through a polling institute specialising in voter surveys. People contacted on the telephone in connection with a survey were asked if they could consider taking part in an interview concerning their experiences of social and economic change and whether such experiences had any effect on their political standpoint. This method led us to eleven people.

We started looking for people through the first two processes, but found out that getting in touch with enough people who had voted for the Danish People's Party would be quite difficult by these routes. We decided to add a second and totally different route, a polling institute that performed voter surveys, and ask them if they in connection with their next survey could find about fifteen interviewees for us. The selection criterion was that they needed to have worked in one of our chosen sectors and that they had voted or considered voting for a populist party.

Processing the interviews

The interviews were tape recorded (except one). A detailed account of each interview was written down and illustrated with quotes taken from the recordings. Quotations were selected on the basis of whether they could be taken as corroborating or refuting our hypotheses and correlations.

Interview analysis

The project group of the eight countries decided on two main analysis models. For the first of these models the interviewees were divided into three groups according to labour market status:

- Advancement – this group included persons who objectively should have benefited from the changes. These people would be working mainly in the IT sector or other expanding areas such as consultancy firms for instance.

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[2] See Annex 2.

- Threat of Decline – this group covered people for whom the changes represented a threat due to outsourcing, privatisation, restructuring or other related measures. They would be people who still had jobs.
- Precarisation – the last group included persons excluded from the labour market who either worked in a subsidised job or lived on a public transfer income.

For the second model, the interviewees were divided into two groups:

- Those who felt attracted to xenophobic populist parties or ideas
- Those who did not feel attracted to populist parties or ideas

To help us categorise the interviewees we looked for statements and sentiments consonant with four attitude categories: outgroup rejection; ingroup favouritism; right-wing authoritarianism; and anti-system feelings. Those we defined as attracted to xenophobic populist sentiments must have expressed sentiments consonant with outgroup rejection and at least one of the other categories or admitted to membership in or having voted for a xenophobic populist party.

The practical work on the interviews continued as follows. First the two authors of the report went through four interviews together to make sure we shared the same understanding of the basic analytical criteria. Each of us then analysed interviews done by one the other, and submitted them thereafter to the each other for comments. Finally we went through the analyses together. We commented and amended them until we were satisfied that we agreed on each of them.

3. SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHANGE

The focus of this chapter is socio-economic change. We set out first changes in sectors in which our interviewees worked. They are:

- Telecommunications
- Transport sector – particularly public bus services
- Care for the elderly – particularly home care services
- Industry – particularly manufacturing
- IT

In the final part of the chapter we write briefly on immigration and integration in Denmark.

3.1. Privatised, outsourced or otherwise restructured public undertakings

Telecommunications

Globalisation and privatisation

Globalisation has put a strain on the old state telecom companies. In 1996, international competition in the telecommunications sector made itself felt across the board. It meant more contenders in the market and sharpened rivalry.

The Danish Parliament together with the telecom companies had made efforts to prepare themselves for the changes looming on the horizon. Parliament decided in 1990[3] to merge the four regional companies into a unified, stronger national company in an attempt to meet the new competitive climate in the international telecom market. The move first entailed converting the regional companies to public limited companies. This happened in 1994. The second stage was the actual merger to create a national company called TeleDanmark. This took place in 1995. In addition, the new structure meant combining a number of distinct units such as service, sales and telephony.

In 1996, the year of market liberalisation, TeleDanmark's share of the market began to fall. In 1997 the company concluded a strategic alliance with the US company Ameritech. The deal involved Ameritech buying 42 per cent of TeleDanmark's shares.

The company was streamlined even further to improve its competitive edge and TeleDanmark and Ameritech entered new markets outside Denmark. In 1998 TeleDanmark acquired the remaining shares in state hands – the privatisation process was now complete. In 2000 it changed its name to TDC and Ameritech was merged with an even bigger US company SBC. TDC was now a part of an enormous

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[3] Post & Tele Museum, Telefoni – historie 2000 (The history of telephony).

international conglomerate, and the story of the national telecom company had reached its conclusion.

Impact on working life

The mergers, fusions and restructurings completed over the past decade rationalised production and resulted in workforce cuts. Working methods were also changed to improve efficiency.

The same thing happened in the postal service – the only difference being the later onset of the process.

Public transport

Globalisation and outsourcing

Early in the 1990s, Danish county councils started to outsource their local bus services.[4] It opened up for wider competition and gave foreign-based companies an opportunity to put in tenders to run bus operations. The sharpened competitive climate led to increased concentration in fewer hands. Today, only a small number of bus companies remain, and the dominating one is owned by foreign capital.

A significant drop in prices occurred simultaneously with the first public tenders and competition hardened throughout the 1990s, leading to further price reductions. Savings were made by instituting fierce rationalisation measures. Other savings came by reducing profit margins and cutting management and driver-related costs. Finally, some savings were made through financing costs and higher ticket prices.

The small number of competing bus companies and the intensive rationalisation of the sector and the workplace have resulted in a situation where tenderers started to feel it necessary to set out required standards in greater detail. The largest transport company reacted by introducing a quality control system. At selected bus stops, checkpoints monitor that buses keep to their timetables. If a bus deviates from the schedule by as much as 5 minutes, the company is automatically fined.

Impact on working life

Intensive rationalisation measures in the companies also affected drivers' working conditions. Timetables were tightened – i.e. the time allotted to drive from bus stop to bus stop was cut. Drivers who previously worked for public transport companies were particularly affected because they also had to accept a new pay and working settlement with the private company. Fewer breaks was one of the consequences. Driving buses has practically always been a hard job, and rationalisation and streamlining measures

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[4] Transportrådet. Notat om licitering af den kollektive trafik. 2000 (The Council for transport, Note about privatisation of public transport)

have made it harder. Work as a bus driver is now one of Denmark's ten most hazardous jobs according to the Ministry of Labour.

The bus companies have been finding it increasingly difficult to fill vacancies, and it is probably for this reason that they said yes to a government offer of wage subsidies providing they took on jobless immigrants. In the Copenhagen area, 60 per cent of the drivers now are from an immigrant background.[5]

Public care services – care for the elderly

Globalisation and outsourcing

While there has been much talk of outsourcing services provided for the elderly, tenders have only been invited within a few areas, primarily within cleaning and food delivery. Only a few municipalities have farmed out their care services. However, the new Government has taken steps that require local councils to give the public a choice between public and private contenders in the area of home care. This has initiated a fresh debate on the issue.

Organisational changes

Although outsourcing is not widespread, the care sector is undergoing major organisational changes to rationalise and streamline the service. In the early 1980s the idea that people should remain in their homes for as long as possible became an item on the political agenda. The outcome was greater investments in the home care sector at the cost of the comparative neglect of the nursing home sector. However, one of the negative side effects was that elderly and psychiatric patients who formerly would have filled places in nursing establishments now had to stay in their own homes. This meant that the people dealt with by the home care service became increasingly demanding. In a further step, the home care service was merged with the nursing home sector becoming an organisational entity. Staff were supposed to work both in the nursing homes and out in the field with home-care patients. Finally, 'self-managing groups' were created. Staff were given total responsibility to plan their work in relation to a specific group of clients, and had moreover to find people within their own group to cover during holidays and in the event of illness among the staff. Previously each employee had had sole responsibility only for a very small group of clients.

The restructuring process involved cuts too. The intention was to make savings by introducing greater flexibility with enhanced staff responsibility and better qualifications. At the end of the 1980s, work methods came under the purview of the restructuring operation. An increasing proportion of older people in society required closer management of resources and documentation. The work of home helpers was

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[5] Hovedstadens Trafikselskab. (The Institution that organise public transport in the area of the capital of Copenhagen)

split into component parts, and the individual tasks were reallocated according to neo-Taylorist principles. The time spent on each task was increasingly recorded.

Training standards were changed too. The training course for home helpers was expanded from eight-weeks to a course lasting one or two and a half years. The result was the recruitment of a totally new age-group to the home care service. Home helpers had traditionally been older women with some experience of life. Today, the tendency is to recruit young women with naturally very limited backgrounds.

Other factors

In the early and mid-1990s the amount and standard of the help given to the elderly for personal care and hygiene became the subject of intense media scrutiny. The strategy of the press was generally to find and write about worst case scenarios. One paper reported the story of a pensioner whose nappy had been turned over rather than changed with a new one. This indicated an increased need to monitor and record work performed.

Over the past decade mounting numbers of immigrants have started to require care. A cultural dimension has thus entered the equation: care staff must now relate to wider cultural diversity among their clients.

Impact on working life

These developments mean that home care is now a much more demanding job both physically and mentally. It is also regarded as one of Denmark's hardest jobs according to the Ministry af Labour, despite efforts to improve working conditions by offering training in lifting techniques, better equipment and lifting devices.

Streamlining and task separation also mean that home helpers can not plan their work with the same degree of efficiency as previously. Many say that they have practically no time at all to speak to their clients, and if they do, they have to work all the harder to make up for lost time.

The difficult working conditions and public criticism have caused in part the increasing difficulties faced by employers to recruit qualified staff. A corollary of these difficulties is that many home helpers now feel burned out and exhausted by the their early fifties. So job security is relatively good – if one avoids exhaustion and burn-out.

Many local councils practise schemes to recruit jobless immigrants and efforts of a more focused nature have been made to persuade immigrants to enrol on training courses in home care.

3.2. Selected businesses in the private sector undergoing wide-ranging restructuring

IT sector

Globalisation

The IT sector is characterised by frequent takeovers. It is not unusual for people working in the sector to see their workplace taken over by as many as 2–4 different new owners in the space of 3–5 years. This is happening in a sector that is operating in a highly competitive international environment and companies owned by foreign interests. As a result staff have to face different organisational cultures depending on the national background of the new owners and management.

The IT sector is developing fast. The number of full-time jobs increased by 78 per cent as against 10 per cent in the labour market as a whole. The number of firms increased equally strongly, again by 78 per cent, against an average drop of 4 per cent within all other sectors.

Technological progress continues to be rapid, and the sector has needed large numbers of qualified people. Early in the 1990s many business colleges started training computer programmers to fill the need. Students started working before they had completed their studies, and were being paid far more than the average wage.[6] As the decade drew to a close, however, demand for new labour in the market tailed off, and within a few years the sector was seeing rising unemployment.

Impact on working life

Technological progress requires staff to keep abreast of developments so as not to fall behind. To take one instance, the sector has abandoned the large centralised control systems with standardised programs and taken up decentralised servers and PC solutions which allow individual workers to run programs tailor-made for their particular needs. To meet this change, key manufacturers have devised new training courses and require now that staff renew their permits to use programs annually. If they do not, they are banned from using the programs involved.

Work is characterised by long hours and high stress. Because business has decreased in recent years, staff who were given the opportunity to own shares in their companies have seen their savings disappear in step with the decline in the stock markets.

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[6] Fagforeningen Prosa/The union for employees in the IT sector

Manufacturing

Globalisation, outsourcing, mergers and takeovers

Over the past 15–20 years, tasks have been outsourced and entire manufacturing plants relocated to other countries, especially to Eastern Europe and Asia. Many of the traditional, large Danish companies have built new factories abroad when they wanted to expand production facilities. There are fewer manufacturing firms as a result, and they have lower turnovers and fewer jobs.

Organisational changes

Many manufacturers have put new work organisation schemes in place. Such schemes give greater responsibilities and better qualifications for workers to plan their own or their team's work. The strategy is also known as the anti-Taylorist approach.

The spotlight is on human resources. Søren Grunge[7] has given an account of the process. He says that the informal aspects of work are being increasingly formalised. For instance, formal networks are taking the place of informal ones; efforts are being made to specify tacit knowledge and articulate it in procedural terms; values are being converted into control mechanisms ousting the traditional role of rules and regulations. Workers' creativity is being systematised and technical systems now organise the work of self-managing groups. All this is possible thanks to the extremely advanced computer-driven systems such as the SAP system, which can be seen as an attempt to give conceptual and linguistic expression to the informal and invisible aspects of work.

Impact on working life

The ability to adapt is increasingly required of the workforce, as is the ability to think in abstract terms. Workers must relate to new knowledge, new tasks, deal with disruptions, new concepts and terms, new frames of reference.

The result could be job loss for some who lack the wherewithal to meet the new demands. The people at risk here are older workers and the unskilled.

3.3.   Immigration – integration – transfer income

In 2002 Denmark had 415,331 immigrants who made up 7.7 per cent of the population.[8] Immigrants have far fewer jobs than ethnic Danes – and immigrants from non-Western countries have the fewest. The rate of employment in this latter group in 2001 was 44 per cent as against 76 per cent among ethnic Danes.

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[7] Søren Gunge: *Organisatorisk forandring i et teknologiskledelsesperspektiv (Organisational change in the perspective of technology)*. Handelshøjskolen Århus 1996.

[8] Befolkningens bevælgelser 1994, Statistiske efterretninger & Nyt fra Danmarks Statistik 1996, 2002 (Statistics Denmark)

Jobs and their lack are dominant themes in the discourse on immigrants because relation to the employment market impinges on the wider integration of immigrants in society. According to an OECD survey, Denmark is the worst country at integrating immigrants into the labour market. Unemployment among immigrants not born in Denmark is extremely high, about 20 per cent among immigrants from developing countries. The rate for ethnic Danes is 5 per cent. Second generation immigrants are in a better situation. However, while general unemployment rates fell dramatically from 1994 to 2001, they did not fall equally dramatically among the population of first and second generation immigrants. We should also note that there was a continual period of economic growth from 1993.[9]

Immigrants from developing countries work mainly in jobs that do not require high qualificational levels. When they are self-employed it is generally in grocery, kiosks and restaurant businesses.[10]

One of the barriers immigrants meet in their efforts to find work is the disparity between the skills they have to offer and the qualifications required for the jobs available. Poor educational background and poor mastery of Danish are increasingly typical of many immigrants. A 1999 study showed that competence in Danish among the unemployed improved more on average among those who subsequently found work than those who remained outside the labour market. It indicates that poor skills and language abilities continue to hinder the integration of immigrants in the Danish employment market.

There are other possible explanations. One is based on the weak economic incentives in place, another on discrimination. But a study has shown that while there is a connection between these two factors and unemployment they are not the most serious factors. As mentioned, immigrant unemployment rates have fallen in the period; it is clear therefore that many want to find work despite the small economic rewards involved.[11]

Thirty-seven per cent of immigrants looking for work feel discriminated against on grounds of ethnic background. A further 6 per cent say they are discriminated against because of age or other factors.[12] This indicates, that ethnic discrimination is a real problem for immigrants and their offspring searching for work.

Finally, the way the Danish labour market is organised and jobs publicised may well represent further barriers.

Immigrants have the same rights to most social benefits as ethnic Danes. There are a few exceptions relating to state and early retirement pensions, which require that a person has lived in the country for at least ten years. Refugees with residence permits are not included in this stipulation, however.

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[9] Social Trends 2002, CASA and Danish Council of Social Welfare.

[10] Befolkningens bevælgelser 1994, Statistiske efterretninger & Nyt fra Danmarks Statistik 1996, 2002 (Statistics Denmark).

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid.

The proportion of non-Western immigrants that receive permanent benefits such as a state pension, early retirement pension, anticipatory pension or transitional benefit is lower than among ethnic Danes. The proportion of second generation immigrants, receiving permanent benefits is even lower. They are, of course, generally younger. However, the reverse is the case when it comes to short-term assistance, such as unemployment benefit and cash assistance. Immigrants from non-Western countries – and their offspring to an extent – receive these types of benefit far more often than ethnic Danes. The reason lies in their lower participation in the labour market, of course.[13]

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[13] Niels-Kenneth Nielsen, Rockwool Fondens Nyhedsbrev (Newsletter from Rockwool Fondens Forskningsenhed).

4. VIEWS ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHANGE

In this chapter we focus on the ways in which our interviewees have experienced changes at work and in society as a whole. We have divided the sample into three sub-groups as follows:

- *Advancement* – this category includes people, who from an objective point of view, should have been in a position to reap some of the benefits of the socio-economic developments. They are people working in areas which historically have provided good prospects in the form of promotion and competence-building, or in individual jobs with equally good prospects.

- *Threat of decline* – this category covers people working in industries or in occupations that have undergone significant change or are in the process of doing so. They work in public sector organisations on the verge of outsourcing or privatisation, in private sector businesses prone to takeovers and mergers and finally in areas where working procedures have undergone major restructuring. All the interviewees in this group were in work, but the impact of changes could threaten job security and/or undermine health and status.

- *Precarisation* – the people in this category are employed in state subsidised jobs or excluded from the employment market altogether due to incapacity or illness. They all live on welfare and are often marginalized in relation to the rest of society.

The objective state of our interviewees' occupations and sectors were used to help distribute them among the three categories. Needless to say, distinguishing entirely between objective factors and the opinions of the interviewees on matters such as future prospects was not always as straightforward as one might have wished.

The following subanalyses of the categories are organized under the three main headings: changes in working conditions; changes in local community (family, housing); and changes in society. For the *precarisation* category, an extra section has been added: living on income transfers.

4.1. Advancement. Perceptions/interpretations of socio-economic change and working and employment conditions

This category has 5 members – all of whom are male. Four work in the IT sector and one is a production manager in the manufacturing sector. Their ages range from 30 to 55. Two have worked in public sector organizations. One of them was already privatised and the other partially outsourced. The last three work in the private sector.

Developments over the past years have benefited our interviewees in this category. Three of the four working in the IT sector had found their jobs more or less by accident. They had no specialist training but developed their skills and steadily achieved a wider and deeper understanding of the ins and outs of information technology as they progressed. The fourth member, younger than the others, had followed a more organised

set up: he had completed a one-year basic vocational training course (EFG), passed a higher technical exam (HTX) and finally attended a computer proficiency course at business college. But he too continued to develop his skills when he started working.

This way of starting a career – step by step – had also been followed by the fifth person in the group who had a job in the manufacturing sector.

Changes in working conditions

The IT sector has been swept along by rapid changes as the latest technological innovation supplanted the last. Further training has been mandatory for workers in the sector to keep up. All our interviewees confirm that progress in their jobs requires them to accept personal responsibility and take active steps to develop and reinforce their qualifications.

> *You've just got to be that much ahead of developments and force yourself to keep up. Given the rate of change, knowledge is out of date after a couple of years, so it's a process of continual further training. It's a good thing really, because it keeps you on your toes and makes you feel responsible for your own progress. That's how it is, if you want to stay in a job like mine.* (Computer operator, 43, Liberals)

For authorised specialists in specialist fields, the qualification standards expected are particularly daunting. Workers are examined annually, and if they fail they lose their bonus for the coming year's training programme.

> *For instance, every October I have to take this exam in the platform to retain my specialist accreditation in that area. If I flunk the computer group wouldn't be able to use me in that platform until I'd managed to pass the test again.* (IBM specialist, 30, Danish People's Party)

The constant pressure to meet standards and think and act rationally makes people wonder if keeping up with the rapid changes and developments is within their grasp.

> *It's pretty awful. I don't even know if I'm going to manage to hang on in this race till I'm forty. When I get back home in the evening, for instance, it's practically impossible to stop ruminating over all of the things I'm involved in.* (IBM specialist, 30, Danish People's Party)

The interviewee employed in the manufacturing sector confirms that work is more intense, but suggests that this may have more to do with his own preference for challenging jobs requiring him to better his qualifications. But he does feel that the new climate of global competition has had an effect on working conditions, in relation to time, profitability and standards.

Others feel that despite the many changes and the need for increasingly higher qualifications, the wider freedom and higher all round competence in the sector today are a welcome adjunct. And if necessary for the job or firm on the other hand one works harder.

> *I haven't experienced any great problems – I've got used to organizing my own work over the years. You get a little more freedom if you meet the standardsand*

you're on hand when needed. (male software programmer, 55, Social Democratic Party)

The three men over forty feel they have been lucky in their careers and are more than happy with developments in their areas of work. The two younger members of the group, however, appear to be under greater pressure from the demands of their jobs.

Privatisation and outsourcing describe the working conditions of the two interviewees working in the public sector. Neither of them is opposed to privatisation or outsourcing in principle. It is how it is done that matters.

In the one case, the entire organization was privatised in one fell swoop. It was then restructured, leading to rationalisation and a flatter structure. But at the end of the day, the interviewee said, it was a good thing because it rejuvenated the organization.

> *We went through a few cuts in the 1990s, but I think we got through that relatively well. You might say that when you've got nothing to do, it's a shame to let people sit in a corner twiddling their fingers. ... So after the cuts were in place, people came in to help turn the organization around, and the result was better than anybody had imagined. We got the best of both worlds – our thoroughness coupled with XXX's [the firm's name] delegation of duties.* (male software programmer, 55, Social Democratic Party)

The firm was subsequently taken over again, this time by a US company which introduced yet another management philosophy. By this stage our interviewee was appearing less upbeat about developments. The new, inflexible decision-making structure meant that one's influence and competence is determined less on the basis of abilities and more on one's position in the hierarchy. Colleagues are no longer briefed, agreements no longer honoured. In addition he feels that the firm now prioritises short-term gain above planning investments for the longer term.

> *We were a government agency and a deal was a deal, and we kept our agreements. We were made into a private company, where a promise is a promise. Now we're an American company, and the approach to deals and promises is pretty fluid – if somebody can get away with a fiddle, it seems to be fine. ... We're just about to give an elderly, unwell worker the push, because it means money in the till. You didn't do things like that before. Efficiency, efficiency, efficiency.* (male software programmer, 55, Social Democratic Party)

In the other organization plans had been in place for several years to outsource several sections of an IT department. This has been done in some cases, other aspects have been put on ice. Our interviewee felt extremely frustrated by all this. He was particularly irritated about the cases where the decision to outsource was taken on the basis of political concerns rather than technical considerations and allowing workers to take part in the process. Decision-making at the top management level, which actually takes place a good distance away from the IT department in question, produced according to our interviewee only partial solutions. The outcome is that competent staff are leaving, resulting in a lack of resources to do the work.

But following a subsequent process in which staff were more actively involved and decisions taken closer to the IT department, attitudes were mollified to an extent.

From opposing outsourcing right from the start, we began to realise that it might be a good thing after all and worth looking into, if it were possible to restrict it to sensible areas and say right, we'll make a deal that covers all this boring routine work which would allow us to concentrate on more rewarding things. That was how it turned into an interesting process. (male mainframe expert, 46, left-wing sympathies)

In the industrial sector large numbers of businesses have relocated eastwards, making local jobs far less secure. Clearly, employees are worried that their own employer might decide to relocate some time in the future.

Factories are relocating and lots of companies are cutting down on jobs nowadays. There are reports about redundancies and cuts in the papers every day. We have a factory in Poland, and we compared production rates, and if we fail to deliver in terms of quality and time etc., our factory will be next in line to move. ... The government ought to do something to help improve our competitive chances through tax cuts and cutting taxes on work. (production manager, 34, Liberals)

Changes in the local community

In relation to changes in their local communities, this group of interviewees said they were worried about the appearance of gangs. One of them said that masses of people feel rootless and banded together in groups. He feels that a person who belonged to a specific group would find it difficult to turn his back on it. He compares rockers and fanatical Muslims and says we need to keep track of both of them.

Another had experience of street gangs in the neighbourhood. He thought it was the same people causing all the trouble, and that if they were removed from that environment they would quieten down. He told us about a gang of Somalis which made a nuisance of itself in the city centre.

Now it's the same 25 individuals causing all that trouble, and the others are OK. The unfortunate thing this year is that a group of fair-haired girls aged about 14– 16 are bullying the other lasses. (IBM specialist, 30, People's Party)

Changes in society

Several interviewees felt that globalisation represented a problem for society. One felt it was a consequence of the free movement of capital, and that it meant that companies took each other over instead of competing for markets. And that meant that money was calling the shots.

Before there were certain limits – as we saw – now everybody's forced to do what the big conglomerates want and nothing else. There are masses of executives busy feathering their own nests. What they do is put really short-sighted solutions in place, get a fat bonus, because they're increasing sales and profits by selling tons of things for delivery next year, and it looks as if sales in the company have shot through the roof, then they grab their bonuses and push off to fresh pastures. (male software programmer, 55, Social Democratic Party)

Some are more generally concerned about the impact on society of the rising demands in the private and public sectors. Not all, they suggest, will be able to keep pace with the

demands for better qualifications and keep ahead of increasingly rapid changes in society.

> *Many young people are going to get into a fix because of the high theoretical standards asked for nowadays. Obviously, there's a need for skilled labourers, but they've still got to calculate angles and such like. I'm a bit worried that some of them'll start drinking and using dope just to get by, and be lost for society.* (computer operator, 43, Liberals)

No hostility to immigration or immigrants was apparent among the interviewees, but several were concerned about the way integration is carried out. Some feel that the problems are not as great as are claimed in some quarters.

One mentions the media as partly to blame for antagonising groups and that they often give an angle to the stories they publish. The same person also believes that the focus of the media is too narrow because the TV channels have to compete for ratings and local papers are being swallowed up by the big ones.

Some mention fear of terrorism – especially threats originating outside Denmark – after 11 September, and the economic consequences. Mounting crime is also a concern. Not being able to leave the front door unlocked for a minute is a depressive and pessimistic sign of the times.

One of the interviewees says it is all due to parents not looking after their children well enough because they need to go out and earn money.

> *Things are very bad, criminality is on the rise. And it's because people are too busy making ends meet and have no time to see to their kids. They put earning money before raising their children properly. There are experts on education, youth clubs and schools that are supposed to give the children a proper grounding, but we can't let institutions bring up the kids.* (computer operator, 43, left-wing sympathies)

Another has similar thoughts. He feels that the young lack an adequate sense of duty nowadays.

Others say they are exasperated by or simply lack confidence in the politicians. The only thing politicians care about, they say, is getting votes at the next election. They lack ideals and their solutions to complex issues are too simple.

Finally there are those that are worried about the environment, and what their children and grandchildren will have to deal with in that area.

Values

Some of the members of this group mention honesty as the prime value. Others are open-mindedness, kindness, self-sufficiency, fairness, and respect for others.

4.2. Threat of Decline. Perceptions/interpretations of socio-economic change and working and employment conditions

This group – Threat of decline – had 15 members, eight females and 7 males. Ages ranged from 24 to 62. They are working in manufacturing, transport, telecom, elderly care and day care, and one was self-employed. Educational levels varied from lower to intermediate. None had a higher education. Some had become foremen or members of the middle management in the course of their careers.

Changes in working conditions

All of the participants in this group have witnessed changes in the area of work, changes that unquestionably have made their jobs more demanding with added pressures not least in the area of production rates.

The workplaces of some of the interviewees were once in the public sector, but have either been outsourced or privatised. New pay systems have been introduced, and new reorganization are continually being initiated where previously little changed from day to day.

> *Before and after privatisation – it's two completely different things. Before there was a sort of laissez faire atmosphere. We were a government agency in the finance area. I had a job in a section that was running with a profit, so we could afford to be a bit toffee-nosed if we wanted. But that's all in the past. People do their work, but they haven't the courage to speak out any more. And they're being squeezed on the wage front. And the one measure is launched after the other.*
> (Telecom worker, female, 52, left-wing sympathies)

A male bus driver, 61, confirms that work is more intensive and breaks fewer. Checks are also carried out to make sure that drivers keep to the timetables.

But others feel that privatisation has had positive results. They say that people are beginning to see their work in wider terms than just as a place to go and earn money. Privatisation, they say, has brought efficiency measures that were needed anyway, and has highlighted the content of the work, giving it more meaning.

> *People have woken up. That's thanks to privatisation. Your work isn't just a place where you pop in and get a wage. There's got to be a meaning to it, and when there is people accept responsibility and put in more for the business.* (Telecom worker, male, 62, Liberal)

In the care sector restructuring and money-saving measures have been the order of the day. Each individual task has been analysed in detail and timed, and processes carefully mapped out. Our interviewees describe how their work has been split into two modules: a cleaning and a personal module. A home helper adds that cleaning is now limited to four of their clients' rooms: sitting room, bedroom, kitchen and bathroom. It means that staff have less opportunity to plan the day's work with their clients.

> *We have to start from scratch every time now – we used to be able to make our own plans before. It's hard to find time for extra chores like washing tiles or getting rid of layers of grease in the kitchen even though it's obvious it needs doing. You fly in*

and fly out like a white tornado because you have so many to get round. (Female, 34, home helper, Social Democratic Party)

The high level of stress has caused many to leave. And with a high staff turnover the pressure on the remaining staff increases even more. They fall sick in consequence, and the whole system becomes a vicious circle with people starting and leaving continually.

> *One of our homehelpers just started again on a part-time basis. She's been in hospital having a new knee put in. … All those years working as a homehelper ruined it. … And there's another colleague. She had to leave because she'd had three slipped disks. She's just been operated for them. So it's like – it's all go. As soon as somebody starts again, somebody else disappears.* (female home help, 24, People's Party)

But there have been some improvements. There has been a focus on working conditions, especially the heavy lifting and practical aids have been introduced. In the day care sector, better equipment is available too, such as electric prams.

Work in the manufacturing sector is more stressful too.

> *I've become more stressed over the past 5 years. We have to work so quickly that when I get home in the evening I'm so tired I fall asleep around 6 o'clock and wake after a couple of hours, get undressed and go back to sleep. It's incomprehensible how some people manage to go to meetings in the evenings or follow a sport. Where they find the strength is beyond me.* (Blue collar worker, male, 49, People's Party)

Not only has work become more stressful, according to some, employees have to shoulder more responsibility. Others feel that the changes in their work have given them more challenges. For those more influence and more responsibility and greater autonomy are all essentially to be welcomed.

> *I think there's more leeway to make decisions – as a middle manager – when you don't have those rigid guidelines. That was 20 years ago. If anybody told you to do something in a particular way, you did it. And you didn't bat an eyelid. You did what you'd been doing for years. There's more of a chance to experiment now – try new ways. … It's brilliant!* (Foreman, male, 49, People's Party)

There are others who are less confident about the changes. For instance, the introduction of self-organizing teams has left some with the feeling that they have to follow a certain set of social rules, and that if they protest they might be putting their job on the line. A blue collar worker told us that he disagreed with the rest of his team about introducing a particular type of rotation system. He thought it was a good idea, the rest did not.

> *I felt totally defeated. Then the process manager rang and said I would have to toe the line. So I said OK. And you opt for the easy way out. He said yes, but it's easier to give one the sack than three. So I said OK, I'll shut up. That hurt.* (Blue collar worker, male, 42, Liberal)

Apart from the increased stress levels the changes have had other impacts, notably on the type of qualifications required as well as ability to learn. Theoretical abilities are becoming increasingly necessary to perform abstract thinking for example. For some, such demands are more than they feel they can handle.

The way things are now, everybody needs theoretical training. But it's not necessary at all – there's no place for ordinary people with other skills. In a few years it'll be impossible for ordinary people like me. You have to be so intelligent, so intelligent. It's not fair. (Blue collar worker, female 39, People's Party)

The way work is organised has changed as well. Some find adjusting to and learning new techniques difficult. Parallel with the wider responsibilities and freedom to make plans employees are expected to solve personnel conflicts to a greater degree than previously.

We are supposed to be much more independent at work. We're expected to resolve all sorts of conflicts which the foremen used to sort out before. But there aren't any foremen left either. (Blue collar worker, male, 49, People's Party)

The public sector has adopted independent planning philosophy as well. Although personnel in the elderly care sector have less opportunity to organise the practical aspects of their work, the teams are responsible for rosters, holidays and finding replacements in the event of illness.

Immigration has brought about cultural change in the workplace, a development to which several of our interviewees referred. Staff now have to tackle different cultures at work, and for some it is difficult. A home helper recounted how she once was delegated to look after a Turkish woman, whose family wanted things done according to specific rules. For instance, she was not allowed to remove the lady's face-veil to wash her, nor was she allowed to communicate directly with her, all communication had to go through her sons. The home helper herself insists on the importance of direct contact, even in a case like this where the woman's poor Danish meant that communication mainly consisted of gesticulating and eye contact.

The family needs to be told why we do what we do. It' understandable that it's difficult for them, but she is the important one – she's the one we're supposed to be caring for. (Home helper, female, 34, Social Democratic Party)

A woman in day care says that it is extremely complicated at times explaining to parents why they need to pick up their child before 4.30 p.m., and when the parents are immigrants it is particularly difficult:

Sometimes they do get a bit irritated, and tell you off in no uncertain terms. They just lose their temper because we can't – that is, it's mostly if we're dealing with people with a different – how should we put it? – a different colour – that's the worst situation. They just don't like being told they have to get here in time. (Child minder, People's Party)

Several regret the passing of the sense of solidarity and community, and that people no longer take care of each other.

In the 1970s people stuck together, and we used to meet up after work. People had the time and strength to get on and put up with things. Today some people only manage to take care of themselves and get home after work to recuperate with the family. (Telecom worker, female, 52, left-wing sympathies)

Several of our interviewees felt that this growth in individualism has had effect on union activists too – they do union work more for their own sake than for the sake of their mates on the shop floor.

There are also those who distinguish between the trade union movement as a whole and local shop stewards, who are worthy of more respect in their eyes because they do a practical job that benefits the whole firm, and they keep their hands off party politics.

> *You see – I'm not really a union person, I can't deny it. And I don't really like it, it is too narrow-minded. What is it they say? Scratch my back and I'll scratch yours, and everything'll turn out just hunky dory. And they've been driving that home as hard as they can. ... Our shop stewards aren't like that. They're not involved in politics, they don't stand on the barricades.* (Foreman, male, 49, People's Party)

Changes in the local community – family life and housing

It is not only the sense of lost values of worker solidarity that animates interviewees. Some of them feel the sense of community they felt as children also seems to have disappeared. People work and have just time for their families. They do nothing for people outside their circle of family and friends. There is a loss of vitality, say some, and people are expected to keep to themselves and their nearest and dearest.

> *If you look at people's faces they look bad-tempered. It doesn't take much. People give you a honk if you haven't started driving over the crossing when the lights change green. Down in the super market there's nothing but children being told off and a great racket going on. If you greet people in the street with a 'good morning' they look as if you've insulted them. From a community point of view, it's a shame. We're a country of bad-tempered people without energy.* (Blue collar worker, male, 49, People's Party)

Some are preoccupied with the changes they see in their own neighbourhoods and parts of the city they frequent. Some focus on immigrants and the culture and values they bring with them to Denmark. Others feel that they can not say anything of a negative/critical nature about foreigners without being labelled racist. This causes some of them to avoid talking about things which they would had said if it had been about a Dane.

> *It's maddening being told you have to be careful about how you speak about foreigners. ... Let's say, for instance, they don't know you have to leave the laundry [in the block] clean and tidy after you've used it, and we go and tell the housing association people, and you're told you're a racist. So you get angry and start acting like a racist. If I'd been complaining about Madsen next door though, there wouldn't have been a problem. ... I've seen things like this myself in the association.* (Blue collar worker, male, 49, People's Party)

Changes in society

The direction developments in society have taken, some say, show that money is the decisive factor and that in a global order money and people can be moved around at will. The escalation of individualism has led to a predominance egoism.

All the jewels in the Danish crown are being taken over by rich foreigners. They're just as bright as us. So the crown jewels are disappearing just as automatically. ... Egoism is too dominating. ... and solidarity and everything that kept society from falling apart has gone. That's it in a nutshell. (Bus driver, male, 61, Social Democratic Party and Conservative Party)

Many of the interviewees in the sample said they were concerned about the future of the welfare state and that savings can be made in the health care sector etc. One says that defending the welfare state and the care of the elderly is a major challenge. Others are less sure if the welfare state can be defended, and are anxious about their own prospects as elderly citizens.

There are too many changes. I don't even know if I'm supposed to work until I'm seventy, where the work is supposed to come from and at which pace. It's impossible to keep track today, and I'm only 49. I can't plan anything, when I'm going to retire and whether my pension is going to be enough to live on. Now they're talking about removing the early pension scheme, so what's going to happen to the state pension? You just can't keep up with all the changes they're making. (Blue collar worker, male, 49, People's Party)

Some say they are concerned about immigration and crime, others about the costs of running the welfare society. Rising unemployment, rationalisation and immigration are issues to which our interviewees return frequently.

And then there's – I'm quite apprehensive about the high unemployment level and that's where many of the problems of second generation immigrants lie. ... But I'm also worried that Danes may not be running the country any more in a few generations. (Blue collar worker, male, 42, Liberal)

A number are critical of politicians for not handling immigration properly. Several criticise the private sector.

You know society isn't really multi-ethnic because integration hasn't worked. The private sector hasn't lifted a finger to help integrate these youngsters. (Telecom worker, female, 52, left-wing sympathies)

But others feel that there is more violence and crime in society, and some are afraid that terrorism could come to Denmark.

Although some interviewees criticise immigration in general, the main problem in the eyes of most of them is that the integration of immigrants and refugees is simply not working (see chapter 5 below). A number believe that if too many immigrants come to Denmark it will be impossible to integrate them properly. Others feel that society has not demanded enough of immigrants and refugees, and that it is too easy to get social welfare in Denmark. A few criticise immigrants as a group.

Politicians are also targeted. Some say they have little trust in them, others that it is the people at the top who have all the advantages anyway and yet others that politicians have forgotten what people said.

Values

A large number prize work highly, and getting by without help. Others say that you have to sow before you reap. Many say that their family is one of the most important aspects of their life, and others pinpoint freedom and justice as principal values.

4.3. Precarisation: Perceptions/interpretations of socio-economic change and working and employment conditions.

Twelve of our interviewees belong in this category, five women and seven men aged 31–72. One is following a job training course, another on long-term sick leave. The rest retired early either because of incapacity or illness. They either have or had jobs in the transport, care, manufacturing and trade/clerical sectors, and one had been self-employed. Some had no training, others were skilled workers, and one had been a correspondent.

Changes in working conditions

We find in this category many people who have worked hard since a very young age. The course their careers have followed has often been quite varied, with a number of different jobs in a variety of sectors. Some changed jobs due to incapacity. As the pace of work has mounted many of them came to a point at which they were no longer able to do their work properly, some experienced a lack of help and support from unions, employers or system in this situation. A woman had developed an allergic reaction to detergents after 21 years in the same job:

> *You've slaved for them for 21 years, and what do you get for it? Dumped. That's how I felt. They had nothing to offer. I'd been looking after patients for 21 years even though I didn't have proper training. I worked tons of evenings when they needed someone. Night shifts – I've been doing three shifts in a row for years when staff was short – because I lived in the vicinity, when somebody was ill or there was a blizzard I used to cross the fields to do a night shift. And I didn't mind. But I was disappointed the day they dumped me.* (Former cleaning assistant, female, 72, Liberal)

The sense of not being respected is also the experience of a former home helper who retired early. She had requested a vacuum cleaner on several occasions to help her in her work, but was never heard. She also says that she felt burned out when working with particularly taxing patients, who were either dying or suffering from severe mental or physical disorders.

Two of our sample had worked in the transport sector. They tell how outsourcing affected their working conditions. When a bus route is transferred from public to private hands, the collective agreements change too. A female bus driver told us how conditions had deteriorated in several areas. Cuts were made in the number of breaks and several perks for older staff were either cut back or cut out altogether. She sometimes drove the bus for 6–9 hours without a break. A male driver reports similar experiences adding that

employers cut the time set to get from one bus stop to the next. This was one of the reasons why he had to stop working. He says:

It was more and more nerve-racking – the timetables were tightened and we were pressed to the hilt ... different routes were mixed together. I drove a city bus in Y-town, and I've being doing it since 1985. ... We had a fixed timetable to start with – and I can tell you we got to know our passengers. We talked a lot about that – that there shouldn't be so many different drivers doing the same route – it would lose us customers. It was just to get more out of us. ... So, in the end I took a few days off sick. I couldn't take any more of it. (Bus driver in subsidized job, male, 65, Liberal)

Outsourcing in the transport sector meant that the original collective agreement between the employers and the Transport Workers' Union was transferred to the General Workers' Union. The female bus drivers feels that the new agreement was much worse than the one negotiated by the Transport Workers' Union.

It's the fault of that disgusting social democratic union – the General Workers' Union. They couldn't care less about people on the shop floor. They accept any deal, even if it means destroying us. They just want the agreement in place. Four or five years ago I was a member of the Transport Workers' Union. They had one agreement while the General Workers' Union have at least five and a half just in the bus transport sector in the Copenhagen area. It comes down to the company you're working for. (Former bus driver on early retirement pension, female, 55, People's Party)

Living on income transfers

Many of our interviewees in this group have had a lot to do with the social services to get their early retirement pensions. Some say the process was unpleasant, others that it was positive, and that the advice given was clear and helpful.

The negative experiences people spoke of related to difficulties in getting in touch with the authorities and knowing which rules applied to what in which area. It was virtually impossible at times to find out what they needed to know. Relations with the social service were therefore not always good.

The right hand hasn't got a clue what the left hand is doing. Most of the time I had to find out what my rights were on my own. They specially employed a woman to go through the 5000 unfinished files. That helped, and things started moving in my file too, and I got my early retirement pension. Just to mention one thing, the only meetings I've had with the officers were ones I'd made an appointment for myself. (Former bus driver on early retirement pension, female, 55, People's Party)

Our interviewees did not object to rules and regulations, but they must be clearly set out and made known to applicants. They want officers to point to a sheet of paper and offer advice on to how to proceed. If they merely point to the rules and say that's how it is, that is not good enough. There are so many rules and they are so incomprehensible that it is virtually impossible for ordinary people to make any headway. Without advice, clients feel completely at sea.

They gave me a mountain of forms to complete. ... Every year the same mountain arrived. It's about the worst thing they could do to a person [voice falters] – doing

that. It makes you so angry. It's like they get hold of you and squeeze everything out of you because they want to know everything. ... I don't know what else to say, look at me, try to see how much I'm suffering. In the end it made me ill mentally too. (Former cleaning assistant, female, 72, Liberal)

Several of these people feel that if they can not take any more information or lack information then that is their hard luck. People often feel that officers and others involved in processing their applications want to know absolutely everything. It reminds them of a big brother mentality of surveillance, control and distrust.

People in general find it difficult to understand why decisions in their cases go the one way or the other. This is partly because the reasons are not given by the authorities and partly because applicants have little knowledge of their legal rights on the one hand and what is left to the discretion of the authorities to decide on the other. People also feel that they are expected to show gratitude to the social authorities and demonstrate how dependent they is on the officer in charge.

Some of the interviewees who were granted benefits on grounds of health and incapacity, have been in touch with other parts of the social services. But opinions vary here too about treatment. Some say that the help given was excellent, especially by the health services – even though mistakes were made along the line.

I'd had thrombosis in my left leg and stomach, because they'd given me the wrong blood type while I was being treated. I was in hospital for 6 weeks and have been away on sick leave since they discharged me. ... It's been a wicked time. I don't know what's going to come of all of it. ...Apart from that mistake, I've been treated very well. (Bus driver, male, 49, on long-term sick leave, Social Democratic Party)

They strongly dislike being compared to alcoholics and have the impression that people look at them suspiciously because they live on an early retirement pension. One says,

You can call me a snob if you like, but I'd rather people realised there is a difference between people with an invalid pension and people with an early retirement pension. I don't want to be put in the same category as drunks or the like or criminals. (Correspondent, female, 45, political preference unknown)

All of these people had a job before putting in a claim for an early retirement pension, and it means a lot to them. It is important for them to support themselves and their families as long as possible. Most take the trouble to point out that they never had any dealings with the social services before, and that they had always had a job, as indeed have their spouses.

If we've learned anything it's that we had to work for everything. It's too easy today for people to get hold of things. It's not that I grudge them their washing machines and cars. But they should work for them. They should work and save. That's what I had to do. I've never been out of work, and never taken a penny from the state. I don't know what it's like. But one has never been unemployed. (Former cleaning assistant, female, 72, Liberal)

Having colleagues at work and a job and a place to go where one makes a difference, are important for our interviewees. They return to the subject of their working lives again and again.

I got on like a house on fire with the 10 ladies I had over there. That was what hurt most when I had to stop. ... They sent me lots of letters afterwards. But I felt uneasy about visiting them. I only did it a couple of times. (Former cleaning assistant, female, 72, Liberal)

Having a job helped them withstand some of the things they had to put up with.

People are afraid of getting older and losing their job, doesn't matter who they are. That was why I carried on driving after three muggings.(Former bus driver on early retirement pension, female, 55, People's Party)

When these people lost their jobs and, in some case, were divorced as well, they entered a new stage of life. They missed their work and co-workers and other aspects of their former, married lives.

Having a job you enjoy and where you can do something useful when you get up in the morning and it brings in some money. ... The most important thing is a good job and a nice place to live – not the one-room flat I'm living in now. I'm hoping I'll be able to get a three room flat in six months. (Bus driver, male, 49, on long-term sick leave, Social Democratic Party)

Changes in society

Many of the members of this group shared a common concern for the welfare society too. What with waiting lists and cuts, especially in the health and elderly care services, it does not seem too healthy itself.

I'm really very glad we've got a welfare society, but hospitals in particular seem to have slid, because I'm quite sure that most people pay their taxes with pleasure – however much. If only the system worked, but unfortunately, in my opinion, and we see evidence of it all the while, it doesn't. (Nursing home cook, female, 57, left-wing sympathies)

There are those who believe the system is a good one, and that Denmark in general is a very fair society – especially in comparison with other countries.

We have a relatively just society, I just want to say. When you look at the tensions in the east, there's a big difference between Denmark and, say, India. I've seen small kids starve there. We gave a handful of rice to a little kid about 6 or 7 years old. Fifty grams of rice. He took it, pressed it to his body and ran off. Then he came back and said, thank you madam, thank you madam, thank you madam. Just think of it, children like that are happy to get 50 g rice. In Denmark you never see people happy to get rice. They're annoyed if they can't have a toy from Bilka [a supermarket chain]. (Bus driver, male, 49, on long-term sick leave, Social Democratic Party)

Reactions to immigration in this group vary widely as well. Some feel that immigration is straining society and that most are coming for economic reasons. It is very common, moreover, not to distinguish between refugees and immigrants. Too much is spent on aid to developing countries according to some, and others repeat previous concerns that integration does not seem to be working as well as it should.

As in the other groups, the growth in violence and crime in society is mentioned as a negative development by a large number of the interviewees.

Values

A further common thread is the value put on work. Several emphasise the fact that they had got on very well until illness struck or they were too exhausted to continue. Several mentioned that one should accept responsibility but not giving oneself goals that are too difficult to meet. The family is also said by several to be a key value in their lives.

4.4. Summary

Changes in the workplace and society have affected all of our interviewees, but the effects and their significance have varied, as have the responses of our interviewees.

In interviewees included in the group entitled *Advancement* have been in a position to reap the benefits of the changes, and most of them say they have in fact done so. The pressures on work have increased, and they are expected to improve their qualifications constantly. While, the general impression is that the new demands are manageable, some say they doubt if they will be able to keep going. Some have seen their workplace privatised or outsourced – the results being both negative and positive depending primarily on whether one as member of the workforce feels involved in an open process in which all the cards are laid on the table. There is some concern for the direction society is taking in a broader perspective – issues such as globalisation, immigration and crime recur – but in the main our interviewees say they do not feel threatened, and some have suggestions for political solutions, or are confident that such solutions will be found.

In the group entitled Threat of Decline, the interviewees have witnessed a variety of changes in the shape of privatisation, outsourcing, cuts in manpower, takeovers and changed working practices. Responses vary depending on how the measures have been put through, and what they have meant for the individual's particular situation. In the public bus transport sector, changes are predominantly considered to have been bad since they led to increased work pressures and fewer benefits. In the telecommunications sector and the post office, interviewees say some outcomes have been good, others bad – depending again on whether the focus is on increased pressures or a more interesting job. In the home care sector, the feeling is that the changes have generally been for the worse, resulting in increased pressures and poorer services for the elderly and vulnerable. In the manufacturing sector, changes involve takeovers and sale of businesses, and the introduction of new working philosophies such as the creation of teams with greater responsibility for and power over each team member. Some see these changes as a challenge, others as a threat of increased pressures.

Some point to the disappearance of the sense of solidarity either in their workplaces or in local community. There are concerns in this group about globalisation, immigration and crime, but experiences vary. Some are more worried about the future of the welfare state, and are especially concerned about the savings being made in the elderly care sector and the waiting lists for hospital treatment. Immigration makes some people

anxious – for others it is crime and welfare costs, and for yet others it is the poor performance of integration initiatives.

The group Precarisation covers people who have undergone tremendous changes – some have been injured at work and subsequently excluded from the labour market, others have been unable to put up with the demands or the job either due to illness or personal problems. All have been in contact with the welfare authorities to obtain the assistance to which they have a right. Experiences in this area have varied considerably. Some were given very good help, others were less satisfied. Several say that it was extremely difficult to understand the complicated rules.

There is widespread concern among the members of this group about the state of the welfare system. Several feel that it is not working – not least in the area of the health service and care for the elderly. But the degree to which the system is perceived to be fair varies. Crime and immigration are mentioned also by this group as arenas of significant change in society. Some focus on the costs of immigration, others on the failure of integration measures to work properly.

5. SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHANGE AND POLITICAL ORIENTATION

5.1. General background

Over the past ten years immigration has become a permanent fixture of the public and political discourse. The first overtly critical stance was taken the Progress Party. The Danish People's Party took up the chase, calling on politicians to take a stand on the issue. While the Danish People's Party evolved from a protest party to a mainstay of the present right-leaning Government's support basis, the Progress Party declined into relative insignificance.

One of the most important policies of the Danish People's Party is to limit the number of refugees and immigrants in Denmark The party opposes the multi-ethnic society and claims it is fighting to preserve the Danish way of life. But it is also seen as a champion of the welfare system – at least inasmuch as it is a system for the Danish population. One of its key policies in this area is, for instance, that society shall treat the elderly with respect and dignity, and that ill or infirm people should be taken care of.

Most of the interviews on which this report is based were done in the spring and summer of 2002. This was just before Denmark's EU presidency term and just after a new right-leaning government had come to power, with, as said, the support of the Danish People's Party. In the draft finance bill presented thereafter, there were clear signs of the party's leverage: investments were proposed to cut waiting lists; to provide assistance to the vulnerable; to tighten policies in the refugee/immigrant area. Two other factors that probably exerted some effect were the 11 September terror attack on the USA and the imminent expansion of the EU. A small number of the interviews were made during the spring of 2001 – that is, before 11 September.

5.2. Interviewees' political orientations

The political opinions and allegiances of our interviewees make up a diverse patchwork. As noted already, the interviewees were selected on the basis of their voting preferences. However, we discovered that voting preferences and opinions do not always match, at least not in the area of xenophobic and populist policies and attitudes.

Seven persons had recently given their vote to the Danish People's Party. Three of them, however, gave no sign of holding clearly xenophobic, populist convictions, nor do they express strong outgroup opinions in relation to immigrants as such. So if we are to apply the criteria of this project to determine the preferences of our interviewees, we cannot categorise them as being attracted to right-wing populism.

The opposite is the case for the four people who had not voted for the Danish People's Party or the Progress Party but who nevertheless felt that xenophobic and populist

policies had some appeal, which was evident in the way they spoke of immigrants, nationalism and in their general attitudes to the system. Two of these four had voted for the Liberal Party, one for the Social Democratic Party and one changes his voting preferences from election to election. Just the same, two of the four have contemplated giving their vote to the Danish People's Party.

Another four interviewees had contemplated voting for the Danish People's Party or the Progress Party. Despite this, in our opinion they were not attracted by xenophobic and populist ideas. Some say they thought of voting as a way of lodging a protest, others that their reasons for voting for either the Danish People's Party or the Progress Party related to their tax policies.

Of our interviewees, ten had changed their political orientation within the latest years. Three oscillate between different parties.

Of the remaining seven, five had transferred their allegiances to the Danish People's Party: three from the Social Democratic Party; one from the Conservative People's Party; and one from left-wing sympathies. Finally, one had moved from the Social Democratic Party further to the left, another from the left to the Social Democrats and Conservatives.

Because our sample were carefully chosen, according to a range of criteria and parameters, there is no basis on which to perform quantitative analyses of the material. So while we can point to correlations found in the interview data, it is impossible conclude definitively on the incidence of such correlations.

In the following we use from time to time expressions such as 'several', 'some' and 'people'. This shall only be understood as conveying a wider applicability of the themes we address than to one person.

We have formed two categories for our interviewees in this chapter, dividing them into those who feel an attraction to xenophobic/populist ideas and those who do not (cf. the two tables below). The rest of the chapter is structured over these two main groups, but with the addition of the three categories applied in the last chapter: Advancement; Threat of Decline; and Precarisation.

Table 1.1 Interviewees considered to be attracted to xenophobic populism

Interview Number	Sex	Age	Employment market situation	Place of residence	Voting pattern in recent years
No.2464	M	30	Advance	City	Social Democracy/ Liberals to Danish People's Party*
No.1	M	42	Decline	Provincial town	Liberals
No.8	M	49	Decline	Provincial town	Conservatives to Danish People's Party*
No.19	F	27	Decline	Suburb	Liberals on occasion Social Democracy
No.20	M	49	Decline	Provincial town	?
No.916	F	34	Decline	Village	Social Democracy
No.1290	F	39	Decline	Provincial town	Social Democracy to Danish People's Party
No.1868	F	24	Decline	Provincial town	Danish People's Party*
No.1953	F	?	Decline	Provincial town	Danish People's Party
No.2384	M	49	Decline	City	Danish People's Party
No.5	F	55	Precarisation	Copenhagen	Social Democracy to Danish People's Party
No.12	M	37	Precarisation	Village	Progressive Party
No.13	F	53	Precarisation	Suburb	Left-wing to Danish People's Party
No.15	M	58	Precarisation	Provincial town	Various
No. 829	F	72	Precarisation	Village	Liberals

* Indicates that the person in questions is classified as 'attracted' mainly on the basis of having voted for the DanishPeople's Party. However, further analysis has shown that the picture is not as clear cut as voting preference may give the impression of.

On voting preferences:

/ indicates that the person vacillates between several parties

The word 'to' signifies change

Table 1.1 Interviewees considered not to be attracted to xenophobic populism

Interview Number	Sex	Age	Employment market situation	Place of residence	Voting pattern in recent years
Nr 10.	M	46	Advance	Copenhagen	Left-wing
No.11	M	55	Advance	Copenhagen	Social Democracy
No.791	M	43	Advance	Village	Liberals (voted once for the Progress Party many years ago)
No.1584	M	34	Advance	Village	Liberals
No.2	F	52	Decline	Copenhagen	Left-wing
No.3	F	38	Decline	Copenhagen	Social Democracy
No.4	M	61	Decline	Suburb	Conservatives/Social Democracy
No.6	M	62	Decline	Village	Conservatives Once for the Progress Party
No.9	M	56	Decline	Copenhagen	Left-wing to Social Democracy to Conservatives
No.7	F	46	?	Village	Mixed: Conservative, Liberals, Democratic Centre, Christian People Party
No.14	M	47	Precarisation	Village	Social Democracy
No.16	M	56	Precarisation	Provincial town	Social Democracy/Socialist People's Party
No.17	F	57	Precarisation	Provincial town	Socialist People's Party
No.18	F	45	Precarisation	Village	?
No.1621	M	49	Precarisation	City	Social Democracy
No.2097	M	65	Precarisation	Village	Social Democracy to Liberals

On voting preferences:

/ indicates that the person vacillates between several parties

The word 'to' signifies change

5.3. Interviewees attracted to xenophobic populism

In this section we set out probable correlations between the opinions our interviewees express in relation to socio-economic changes and changes in their political views in the direction of xenophobic populism. The criteria used to identify interviewees for this group are based on their views on immigrants, the expression of outgroup attitudes and

authoritarian leanings, nationalistic feelings or lack of trust in politicians and the system.

5.3.1. Advancement

Of all our interviewees, only one individual from the category *Advancement* was placed in the xenophobic populism group, the main reason being that he had voted for the Danish People's Party. He says he did so as a form of protest because nobody else was prepared to address the immigration issue. His former voting preferences were the Social Democrats or Liberal Party.

This interviewee said that he felt pressured by never-ending further training requirements and the pace of work, but we cannot see in the interview any factors in his work that could be related to his political stance. He says of this anomaly,

> *I obviously know I voted for the Danish People's Party at the last election, but it was to register a protest. Nobody was doing anything about any of the problems. It's not about minimizing figures and getting rid of people. It's about integration, standards and consistency. I like the idea that if you refuse to control your own children – like what happened in Kokkedal* [town in Denmark] *– then you lose your allowance. There's a connection between hand-outs and behaviour.* (IBM specialist, male, 30, Danish People's Party)

This interviewee, nonetheless, displays a differentiated approach to immigrants, and has no monolithic or generalised picture of immigrants as a group. He says, for instance,

> *There are gangs going around harassing people.* [He has observed this from his home – he lives in the vicinity of several cafés and pubs.] *They're not interested in enjoying themselves, just stealing and fighting. There was this gang of Somalis, they were really vicious, but really it was only a couple of them – the rest were hangers-on.* (IBM specialist, male, 30, Danish People's Party)

In his occupation he works alongside a range of nationalities. This is what he says in this connection:

> *You know, in my line of work, nobody's a racist. We work together irrespective of nationality and race.* (IBM specialist, male, 30, Danish People's Party)

Nor does he give vent to any nationalistic views or significant opposition to the system. The reason he gives for voting for the Danish People's Party is aligned with his feelings that crime and violence are on the rise, and that the authorities should be implementing a consistent integration policy which demands things of immigrants and refugees. Therefore his political orientation seems to have a connection with general changes in the welfare society together with his impression that politicians are failing to take the problems seriously.

5.3.2.   Threat of Decline

Nine of our interviewees belong to this group: five voted for the Danish People's Party; two for the Liberal Party; one for the Social Democrats; the voting preferences of the final member are unknown.

Changes in working conditions

We found in the case of two of our interviewees who had jobs in the home care sector a connection between changes in working practices and political views. They both feel that working conditions in the sector have deteriorated. There are too many changes and savings which are detrimental to the elderly and mean that staff have to work harder. It is impossible to do their jobs as one would have liked. One of them says that as soon as something has been changed, it is changed again. She says she feels that neither politicians nor decision-makers know much about conditions.

> *Everybody that's got anything to do with these things – who say we'll save a bit here and save a bit there, less heating here, and that'll give us the money we need – they should pay us a visit and see the results of what they're doing.* (Female, 24, nursing home, People's Party)

She does not feel that her union would be able to help her in her circumstances. Although she feels that the Danish People's Party has the problems at their political agenda, she is not convinced that they will make a big difference.

A number of the interviewees have jobs in the manufacturing sector. One is a line manager, the others unskilled workers. It is more difficult to find expressions linking changes in working conditions to political views in the interviews. They have all experienced wide-ranging changes at their workplaces: some businesses have been taken over by foreign companies, others have faced drastic cuts in manpower. In the main, however, the interviewees are positive when it comes to changes that lead to more influence, more responsibility and more tasks. Two of them – the line manager and one of the unskilled workers – see the changes as more of a challenge than a problem. Others criticize the increased pace of work and that qualification requirements are mounting continually. One says there is no point stirring up a hue and cry over the changes.

A woman with a job at a printer's says that the people who make the decisions know nothing of how things actually work in practice. She distrusts and despises politicians, business executives and the social elite whole-heartedly. She describes politicians and leaders as 'chicken' because they lack the courage to make the right decisions. While she is happy about the level of worker participation, she is nevertheless concerned about the pressure for more theoretical training.

> *There are people sitting at the top, and they don't have a clue about what's going on in the factories and the community. They're just busy making as much money as possible. If they find out things have to be done this way or that, the whole machinery starts up. You know, those directors, bosses and people high up in society. They think they can just press a few buttons, and the changes will come of themselves – but they don't.* (Manufacturing worker, female 39, People's Party)

She does not connect her opinions here with her feeling of the mounting importance of theoretical training and the threat it could represent for her work.

Another woman in this group, who works for an office supplies retailer, agrees with the other three that her work is more challenging now. Finally, there is a child minder for whom the changes have resulted in better equipment. On the other hand, however, she feels that both the local authorities and parents are offloading more of the responsibility for raising the children on to child minders. None of these women indicate in so many words that changing working conditions have altered their political views.

Changes in society

If we look at the changes mentioned by our interviewees more broadly in societal terms, we find several connections between changes and political orientation.

The manufacturing worker referred to above is not the only person to express a distrust of politicians or feel that, as an ordinary member of the public, he is neither listened to nor heard.

The interviewees express a common concern for cuts in welfare and often associate cutbacks with spending on immigrants and refugees. The printer's assistant sees no need to mince her words:

> *I can't see any reason for cutting back on schools, the elderly and hospitals. They could send all the black back – or shoot them – no, you are not allowed to say so. As far as I'm concerned they can stay here, but lots of them just scrounge on society. There are Danes who scrounge as well. But there are lots of them in the town, I see them in the shops. And I have to say I can't stand them – even though some of them are nice. For instance, when you're a customer in one of their pizza shops – I've nothing against them.* (Manufacturing worker, female 39, People's Party)

The attitudes of this woman to immigrants are the most extremist of all our interviewees.

But others see in principle the same connection between cuts in welfare budgets and spending on immigrants and refugees and aid to developing countries. There is a widespread feeling that the taxes paid by the older generation have built society, and they deserve to be treated properly in their latter years, which several feel that they are not. One says,

> *You just can't treat [the elderly] the way you sometimes hear about. Some places they turn their nappies over and that sort of thing, because the council wants to save money. And at the same time they're letting all these immigrants into the country and giving them new bikes and what not – I just think it's wrong. It shouldn't be like that.* (Line manager, male, 49, Danish People's Party)

This often leads to calls for spending on immigrants and refugees to be cut. Several are of the opinion that rather than helping immigrants and refugees in Denmark, they should be helped in their country of origin. But same interviewees also say from time to time that aid to developing countries ought to be cut too.

> *Without wanting to sound like a racist, I think we ought to stop giving so much to the Third World countries. They [the authorities] look at places like Bolivia, the Sudan – and feel they ought to help – but you've got to look after your own country as well. It's all at the expense of the young and the old, and it's the old people who worked hard, who went through the war, which left its mark on them.* (Home helper, female, 34, Social Democratic Party)

Apart from the view that spending on immigrants, refugees and overseas aid puts further pressure on the welfare system, some say they have experience of differential treatment. One says:

> *Now, it may be a bike and – if you're Danish you won't get one, you have to work for it yourself.... It causes unnecessary friction between everybody. It may well be that sort of thing that starts those fights – that's what I think anyway.* (Child minder, Danish People's Party)

A woman relates a story about some friends whose son was trying to get an apprenticeship at a garage.

> *But then along came the council and said – let's call him Mustafa – and said that Mustafa had to be integrated, so we're giving him your training place. The council favoured him over Peter. The training place was subsidised by the council and they paid an apprenticeship wage. If Peter had been the apprentice they would have had to pay a full wage, but since it was Mustafa, they only had to pay half. Hardly surprising people start hating foreigners.* (Home helper, female, 34, Social Democratic Party)

But this woman understands the council's need to prioritise because it is vital that immigrants get work in Danish firms and learn the language. But she does not believe the quota system, which allocates jobs to a certain number of immigrants, is the right way to go about it because it damages other people's prospects. This woman is the only one that have experiences on first-hand. The other interviewees that express displeasure with differential treatment have primarily knowledge from the press.

Several express concern about mixing different cultures. They feel it could threaten tiny, peaceful Denmark. Others extend the argument saying that immigrants need to be forced to adapt. Some have come into conflicts with immigrants themselves – both as colleagues and clients – and put the blame on cultural differences. A home helper says that it can become very difficult indeed meeting some of the demands of immigrant families. They have their own set of rules and expect the home helper to follow them. She feels that others expect her and the Danes to adapt.

> *We're trying to be ethnically friendly – we want to keep up with the rest. We do too much to accommodate those foreign values while we should be upholding Danish values. If things continue at this rate, we'll all end up being Muslims.*
> *I do not want to be a Muslim – the advantages of the Danish system are that women have a vote, I don't want things forced on me. I hope Danish women pull themselves together.* (Home helper, female, 34, Social Democratic Party)

As far as she is concerned, that some immigrants employed as home helpers are unable to eat together with the elderly when pork is on the menu is a bother. She feels that eating with the elderly is important as a way of inducing them to eat. She tells a story of

a religious colleague who actually adapted her religion to her job by praying a couple of times more at home.

This kind of approach, saying that if immigrants are willing to fit in at the workplace it is okay, we also find in other interviews. The other person working in the healthcare sector says

> *Well, I'm not a racist in any shape or form, but I don't like people who make a fuss – I don't. I just don't like it. I've nothing against – they can work here if they want, we've even had some coming out with us in work-training with headscarves on – that's okay, they want to work – that's fine.* (Nursing home assistant, female, 24, Danish People's Party)

Some of the line manager's colleagues have been immigrants or refugees, though only on a work-training basis. None of them remained with the firm because, he explains, they were unable to speak Danish well enough to manage the work. He also says that having colleagues who had to pray every now and then during the day could cause problems for the production process. But if they could adapt their need to pray to the production line then Muslims should present no difficulties, he says.

> *So if it's that – that flexible I mean, we could say that if it can be done to fit in during the breaks, I can't really see that it would make any difference – or cause any trouble.* (Line manager, male, 49, Danish People's Party)

Some temper their views on immigrants and refugees by adding a proviso to the effect that they are not all the same. This is done by people who have first-hand experience of immigrants and those whose information comes from the press.

Several express a concern for rising crime rates – and some are worried about terrorism as well. Some link immigration and cultural differences to these concerns.

> *For example, in the Vollsmose area [a district of Odense] they fool the police into coming round by ringing in a false complaint, and then they lay into them. We all know what the next thing will be. The worst lot are those second-generation immigrants, who've been manipulated by someone or other. It's a matter of honour for them – you just can't mix so dissimilar cultures. You can tell an ordinary Danish person off and still be on good terms afterwards, but if you say anything to one of those second-generation immigrants, you're jeopardising their honour, and that means they'll be out for revenge.* (Manufacturing worker, 42, male, Liberal Party)

The fear of terror was not only intensified by 11 September but is fuelled as well by a sense that some refugees and immigrants behave in completely different ways. One of our interviewees brought out a picture showing a small boy dressed as a suicide bomber with explosive devices strapped round his waist taking part in a Palestinian anti-Israel demonstration in Copenhagen.

> *I'm livid about, I really am. It's their approach – he [the boy] hasn't a clue about it. If the boy is to have any life in Denmark he [his father] should be deported. If he wants to parade that sort of system he'd have done better staying put and done something to help to get his country back on its feet, that would be doing something useful – he can't here. I hope not at least.* (Line manager, male, 49, People's Party)

Another has a wider concern, the spread of lawlessness in the land.

> *I may sound mental, but I'm worried we might end up with another Beirut again. It really unnerves me. Because that lot don't own an ounce of respect for our police force.* (Manufacturing worker, 42, male, Liberal Party)

None of the interviewees were acquainted with any criminal immigrants themselves, however.

Every person in this group wanted to see immigration limited, not simply because they want to see a ceiling put on numbers, but because they feel it is necessary to improve integration they say. One explains what it is about the new government that appeals to him most:

> *I feel that as far as immigration policy is concerned – that it's being addressed – that we're doing something about it – it can't be good for anybody just letting more and more people into the country. We have to have a plan of action.... There's room for lots of people, but if it's going to work, people have to be given a chance to make it work.* (Line manager, male, 49, Danish People's Party)

A desire widely shared among the interviewees is immigrants required to adapt to the Danish way of life. Some feel that the new government, with the support of the Danish People's Party, are on the road to putting this in place. One comments that care needs to be taken to ensure that people can not simply come here and receive handouts:

> *We have to make sure they don't think that it's alright to come here and then just stay in their homes and enjoy themselves. It's obviously necessary to take action – don't you think? Otherwise the whole caboodle's going to grind to a halt if we all sit around doing nothing. We're going to need money for our pensioners too – we'll be pensioners ourselves one day – God willing.* (Child minder, Danish People's Party)

Some have a feeling that refugees and immigrants are demanding assistance. They know this, they say, from reading the papers – they have not encountered any instances of such demands being made themselves. Some mainly criticise immigrants, others are critical of the system and former governments for not having done enough and promised too much.

Some also believe that immigrants can not be bothered to work. The people in this group have worked practically all their lives; to them, joblessness is practically an unknown quantity, and could be a contributory factor to the widespread belief that if you really want to find a job you will.

> *I think they're just grousing: "You don't like us, I'm a foreigner, so nobody likes me". A take like that won't work any more because they've been here for so many years. It may have been like that, early on, when not many wanted to employ people like that, but not anymore.* (Female, 24, nursing home, Danish People's Party)

Finally, some members of the group focus particularly on their local community and view globalisation and the EU with considerable scorn. They say that agendas are set by the big players and that Danish politicians are like poodles. One feels insecure because

the EU is so big, another complains that money just disappears down the EU drain, and that Danish jobs are under threat. On the subject of the EU, one says:

> *There's no justice any more. They can't push us around. The big ones are browbeating the small ones, and we are one of the small ones.* (Manufacturing worker, female, 39, Danish People's Party)

But the group does have some members who do not feel threatened by the prospects.

Summing up

To sum up we find that few of our interviewees link changes in working conditions to their political views. Nonetheless, quite a few members of the group, it must be said, have either witnessed or have reason to fear changes that could sideline them or worsen working conditions and increase the likelihood of infirmity. On the other hand, a couple in this group who vote for the Danish People's Party do not feel the same sense of concern in relation to changes in working conditions. On the contrary, for them the changes are more of a stimulus.

Turning to more encompassing changes in society as a whole, several point to a connection between the changes they see unfolding and their attitudes. It is the fear that the welfare state may be giving up on its weakest members – especially the older generation who, they say, built Denmark. Against this concern they point to spending on immigrants and refugees who receive transfer incomes and which are therefore felt to put the welfare system at risk. At the same time, several deplore the apparent lack of pressure put on immigrants and refugees to conform to working patterns and Danish culture, and the lack of consistency in matters related to criminal behaviour. Former governments have failed to address these issues, they feel, but several are convinced that the Danish People's Party are prepared to do so. Finally, the group is characterised by a sense of hostility to globalisation and the EU.

5.3.3. Precarisation

Two members of this group have voted for the Danish People's Party, one for the Progress Party, one for the Liberal Party and one for a variety of parties.

Changes in working conditions

The most far-reaching change to working conditions for several members of this group is that they no longer have a job at all. Some of them feel that the organisations they would have expected to offer some assistance – i.e. the trade unions and the government – failed in their duty.

For one woman we see a connection between her political standpoint today and the changes she had experienced. She had worked as a bus driver and had also been a card-carrying member of the Social Democratic Party. The bus service was privatised, and after that she experienced several times to be attacked by passengers. She was also

obliged to change her trade union from a public sector union to one for drivers in the private sector. She felt let down by the help offered by both union and bus company. She also feels it is unfair that foreign drivers are given subsidised jobs. Her capacity to influence thinking in the new trade union has been minimal, she feels, and maintains that foreign drivers are given special treatment. In addition, some aspects of the welfare system are being threatened with regard to the elderly, early retirement pension rights, etc. She is very angry and bitter with regard to the system, her employer, trade union and the Social Democrats:

> *I worked actively for the Social Democratic Party for a decade because I believed it could make a difference – I'm sorry to say I don't think that any more, so today I'm a member of the Danish People's Party, I'm a chairwoman. You just don't have any say with the Social Democrats, only the central party hierarchy does, and I wasn't given any position of responsibility there.*
> *I switched to the Danish People's Party because they changed their policies – I haven't. The Social Democrats have forgotten people on the factory floor.* (Former bus driver, 55, female, on early retirement pension, Danish People's Party)

Another woman was made redundant after years of hard work. She had developed a serious allergy which made her cleaning job impossible. She was helped by a dermatologist and after many years of toing and froing she was finally awarded industrial compensation. About her trade union she says:

> *I don't think the union can take credit for that, because they didn't lift a finger to help me – they did nothing to help me find another job. I was not offered other work. That was wrong, I feel, because they could easily have got up and said – she has slaved for so-and-so many years, so we feel she deserves an easier job.* (Former cleaning assistant, female, 72, Liberal Party)

She has considered giving her vote to Pia Kærsgård – leader of the Danish People's Party – of whom she says:

> *I like listening to her when she speaks. She doesn't use all big words nor she give election promises. If she had her way I'm quite sure in spite of everything that many things would be better for people on the shop floor.* (Former cleaning assistant, female, 72, Liberal Party)

For others in this group, it was not just their work that caused them to leave the employment market, they had problems in their personal lives as well. For them it is less easy to separate out the implications of changing working conditions.

Changes in society

The arguments put forward by this group are more focused than those of the other groups in relation to claims such as: politicians will not listen; nobody bothers about ordinary people; Denmark is a small country and we want to stay Danish. They are concerned about cuts in welfare and feel Denmark can not afford to give aid to developing countries.

> *And we've got to cut back on our help to developing countries, because if we can't manage to run our own, how are we going to pay for others'? I've had to manage*

whether I've had money or not – I've always had to. (Former home helper, female, 53, People's Party)

Failure to distinguish immigrants from refugees is common in this group – everybody is tarred with the same brush. And some of their comments on immigrants and refugees are relatively vehement. However, they often subsequently modify their opinions saying that people they have actually worked with are not criminals, they are alright.

We'll have to get our act together about refugees and the like or the town square will be full of people crouching on mats. We managed to get a debate on the possibility that the country could be taken over. But you mustn't think I'm against all of them. My little grocer is just lovely. I've helped him understand VAT and that sort of thing – you know, all that bureaucratic stuff. (Former bus driver, 55, female, on early retirement pension, Danish People's Party)

Several say they feel they are being cheated, or that some people are exploiting the system.

I'm not saying we shouldn't help people who need help – obviously we should. But there's a difference between helping people in need and helping people who just want to exploit the system. (Former self-employed, male, 37, Progress Party)

The object of our interviewees' indignation is primarily immigrants who allegedly exploit the system.

The 'proper' refugees, people who really need help, they should be allowed to come and be helped in Denmark. But not people whose only aim is to exploit the system. The desire to limit immigration is shared by a large proportion of this group.

I have got nothing against foreigners, and I have nothing against foreigners who come to Denmark and find a job. But I do not like all those people who come here to scrounge everything they can get hold of. It's that lot I don't like. The real refugees, people who really need help – they should be allowed in, and many of them want to work. But all those economic refugees, they should be sent back. (Former cleaning assistant, female, 72, Liberal Party)

How to tell deserving from undeserving refugees is a problem to which our interviewees have no real solution, however.

Many members of this group link crime and immigration. Some feel that the authorities have a kid-gloves approach to immigrant crime.

Two of the interviewees live in an area with a significant number of immigrants, and are therefore able to speak of events in their local community. Only one of the two has direct experience of a problematic situation: some young immigrants were acting in a threatening manner at a tube station. He also says that some of his immigrant neighbours make a noise, but he has no idea why, and he has apparently done nothing to find out. The information of the rest of the group about crime has been culled from the written media.

Some members of the group have the impression that people are treated differently, an impression that fuels their hostility.

I'm infuriated with my union today – not that our foreign drivers should suffer, absolutely not – but they do nothing but bow and scrape to them for God's sake. They organise events for foreigners – but they don't organise anything called a night out for Danes. We're told we're welcome to their foreigner's events – but where is it we're actually living – who's supposed to be adapting to whom here? I'm only asking. (Former bus driver, 55, female, on early retirement pension, Danish People's Party)

Another says that people who look after themselves and are not in debt to anybody can not get anything, but people who owe considerable amounts can. Although all members of this group live on social assistance today, they have all had a working life; some of them say they do not like being compared with people who have never had a job – people who sit on public benches and drink.

Restricting one's outlook to the local environment is even more common in this group. The EU is referred to with considerable ill feeling. One says she disapproves of open borders because, she says, she wants to protect Denmark, and she feels that the EU wields too much influence. Another says,

They can call themselves globalists as much as they like – I'm just a localist. We became members [of the EU] on the basis of empty promises; farmers are given handouts for keeping fields fallow and producing fruit of a certain size. We're getting EU license plates now. We'll have to drive around with that rubbish. It's not good enough. We voted no. (Former bus driver, 55, female, on early retirement pension, Danish People's Party)

This person feels that politicians ignored the result of the referendum on the Maastricht Agreement in 1992.

Summing up

The typical member of this group has a life characterised by poor health and – for some also - mental problems. They are no longer employed and have to get by on public assistance. There are two lines of approach that indicate a more direct correlation between changes in working conditions and political attitudes. One of them is also about major failings on the part of unions, employers and system. Apart from this, political standpoints are often justified with reference to impressions that the welfare system lacks sufficient cash and that many people should not be getting the assistance given to them. Few have seen foreigners taking advantage of the system or breaking the law at first hand. They base their opinions on what they read in the press. Most relate primarily to their local community, and confidence in politicians and the political system is low. Finally, some members of this group set economic refugees up against proper refugees.

5.4. Interviewees who are not attracted to xenophobic populism

Placement in this group is decided by the absence of outgroup attitudes. The point of looking at this group is to attempt to invalidate our theses by asking why these recipients have not modified their political views in a xenophobic-populist direction.

5.4.1. Advancement

This group consists of four men whose voting preferences at the last general election were as follows: one voted for the Social Democratic Party, one for a left-wing party, and two for the Liberal Party. According to our marginalization thesis none of the interviewees in this group should feel any attraction to xenophobic-populist ideas.

Two of our interviewees (both with jobs in the IT sector) have not modified their political convictions since they were quite young. One of them has been active within the trade union most of his working life as a social democratic shop steward. The other has never had a union position, but he has been active in the proces related to outsourcing and restructuring in the company.

There is a certain amount of concern in relation to immigration in this group, but it has no significance for their basic political standpoints. They say:

> *It's a difficult question. Obviously none of us like it when Estonians and Poles come across here, steal from shops and then just deported back home. That sort of people aren't immigrants or refugees in my view. Immigrants and refugees are people who come here to live, and clearly they have an impact, but I believe we should do our bit, and we're certainly not doing more than our bit at the moment.* (Software programmer, male, 55, Social Democratic Party)
>
> *Immigration – I wouldn't say I'm for it – but I wouldn't say I'm against it. I believe in principle that I have no more right to be here than people born in Africa or elsewhere. I think it [immigration] could be enormously beneficial, but I realise that problems can arise, or rather – I see that it could cause problems that could be solved.* (Mainframe expert, male, 46, left-wing sympathies)

The second interviewee whose career has been in the IT sector has tended to vote for the Liberal Party, though he did once vote for the Progress Party on account of their tax policies. He says this was before they went 'raving mad'. On the topic of immigration he says:

> *Problems related to immigration are not as pressing as many parties make them out to be. There are real problems in some areas, where immigrants have been rounded up in ghettoes and efforts to integrate them have largely failed. But in my experience, in face-to-face situations they are absolutely just as good as other people, it's when they gang up things go wrong – they want to prove themselves to others. Like the rockers – they go around in packs to demonstrate who's calling the shots.* (Computer operator, male, 43, Liberal Party)

Nor does the member of the group working in the industrial sector entertain attitudes of a xenophobic-populist nature. He respects Pia Kærsgård in some areas, but not on the matter of immigration:

> *The only thing Pia Kærsgård is good at is sensing the public mood, even when it's a mean mood . She is a good communicator, and is in the front line when it comes to talking about threats to the fabric of society. I do not think much of her immigration policy – it's far too hackneyed, but her views on investing in hospitals, the elderly etc. are important, and I sympathise with them.* (Production line manage, male, 34, Liberal Party)

Summing up

The views of this group on immigration are more sophisticated than those of the group 'Attracted'. They do not feel that changes represent a threat either to themselves or society as a whole, though they are aware that problems do arise in relation to immigration and integration efforts. But they feel that the problems can be solved. Nor is globalisation considered a threat, although they admit of problems in this area too. Their views are slightly more sophisticated, and they point to political solutions to the problems. Their accounts therefore support the marginalization thesis.

5.4.2. Threat of Decline

Three women and three men make up this group. The women's political preferences are divided among a left-wing party, the Social Democrats and the Liberals, and the men's between the Conservatives and the Liberals. One of the men votes for the Conservatives at general elections and the Social Democrats at local elections. Another has voted for the Progress Party on one occasion, and a third has changed his political allegiances throughout his working life, starting from the left, progressing via the Social Democrats to the Conservatives, his present preference.

None of the three women feel particularly affected by changes in society, though the first of them is worried she may not be able to keep going until she reaches 65. Her criticism is aimed at the business sector.

> *This sense of powerlessness is about capitalisation as well, because every initiative seems to be about streamlining; in the end colleagues at work won't know their own names. The agenda is set in Denmark by the business community. Everything has to pay – make a profit at the other end. There is too much support for this profit business.* (Telecom worker, female, 52, left-wing sympathies)

None of these women distinguish between social groups supported by the welfare system, contrary to the 'Attracted' group. In general they feel that society should take care of its most vulnerable citizens. And there should be redistribution, or efforts to ensure that the private sector creates enough jobs to go round.

> *In relation to the global situation, poverty is the biggest challenge. I have never understood people who get worked up about them [refugees] fleeing to find a better life. They only have the one life, and they themselves would do everything in their power to improve their life if they had a chance.* (Telecom worker, female, 38, Social Democratic Party)

The group's three men are also critical of the way the integration of immigrants has been handled. They call for greater consistency. But their criticism is directed at the system, not the immigrants. One of the three is a bus driver. He does not approve of the system of subsidised wages for immigrants, which, he fears, generates bad feelings and a sense of pessimism among the other drivers. But again, the criticism is of the system, not the immigrants. He is emphatic that he does not believe the Danish People's Party has the solution. He says,

You know, the people who support the Danish People's Party – they are too petty in comparison with the type of people we need in society. Their opinions and solutions are too light weight. Society is far too complex just to point a finger at foreigners and say it's all their fault.... Your approach has to be slightly more subtle than that. (Bus driver, male, 61, Social Democratic Party and Conservative People's Party)

Another uses his own experience as an immigrant to the USA to reflect aspects of the Danish approach. He also makes a clear distinction between immigrants and refugees.

When I arrived in the USA I was told that I had come there of my own free will – I was an immigrant, in other words. They said my papers would have to be in order before I left Denmark, and they were checked – I couldn't get off the boat before they had been checked. I was told in no uncertain terms that I had to behave in a lawful fashion and support myself, and that if I didn't they would send me back without hesitation. Denmark, in comparison, just hasn't understood what immigration is about, and they are too high and mighty to find out how other countries deal with it. And if you listen to members of parliament today, they talk about refugees-immigrants as the same thing – they don't know the difference.
(Telecom worker, male, 62, Liberal Party)

Finally there is the man who changed his political standpoint progressively throughout his working life. He is employed by the post office, and attempts were made once to sack him because of clashes with the management. He has since created his own job in a different area and department. He feels there is a strong connection between changes in working conditions and his political views. As a young postal worker he gave his vote to the Communists and Socialist People's Party. He subsequently started to support the Social Democratic Party, but after being promoted to a management post, he started voting for the Conservatives.

I think it's got something to do with the notion that being a wage worker in comparison with being self-employed or a manager [is different] – it became clearer, when I had the opportunity to see there was a difference. As a manager you need to think in wider terms than what's in the next wage packet. That's my opinion – the result is that I vote Conservative today.
What was it Lotte Heise [Danish celebrity] said – you vote Communist with your heart and later Conservative with your mind. I think that's a natural development, and it's been the same for years. (Post office middle manager, male, 56, Conservative Party)

Turning to immigration he says:

You have to make demands on them, to learn Danish – I'm not saying that they should renounce Islam – but they need to understand they are living in a different culture. We should never have herded them into ghettoes, where they are now it's like a Turkish town in miniature.

The biggest mistake was to let specialists deal with the foreigners. Say a family had been moved from their homeland to a place where they had Danish families as neighbours, things would have been much better. In the little town where I live we have about 6–8 families – from Sri Lanka, Macedonia, and wherever. There are no problems – not with the children at school either. (Post office middle manager, male, 56, Conservative Party)

Some of the members of this group also condemn the trade unions – either because they feel they have become allies of the system or because they represent a career path for people who want to do that sort of work. Others, trade union members, support it, are not totally uncritical either. Several say that society has become more materialistic and egoistic, and that it is impossible to have much faith in politicians or that they just do not listen.

Summing up

There is not as much concern about changes in society and working conditions as among members of the group attracted to xenophobic populism. Whether the reason has to do with objective factors or personal idiosyncrasies is impossible to tell. What we can say is that members of this group generally express concern for many of the same things, but that their conception of the problems is more refined. Like the other group, several would like to see more consistency in the approach to integration, but it is more common here to criticise the government and business for not having done enough to integrate immigrants and refugees in the employment market. There are also fewer in this group who level criticism at the actions and culture of the immigrants.

5.4.3.   Precarisation

Many of the members of this group share the sense that the welfare society is in peril with cuts being made. But they don't make the same kind of antagonism between the elderly and vulnerable on the one hand and the immigrants and refugees on the other hand. An elderly, male bus driver express a slightly vague concerning for the welfare society. He was made redundant after extended illness. He was unable to take the stress and pressures of the job. He now has a subsidised job at a youth club. He drives their bus and acts as a general handyman, an arrangement with which he is very happy. He says,

> *The tax levels are far too high, but I would never want the elderly to suffer, so I'd rather pay more tax to help them have a good life – and I'll be old myself one of these days. And I'm not at all sure about the immigrants – if too many of them perhaps get a bit too much. You can't tar everyone with the same brush – as said, I've nothing against immigrants.* (Bus driver in supported job, male, 65, Liberal Party)

Another member of the group, used to working alongside immigrants , says,

> *I know a few from where I drive my taxi, and they have become hauliers and the like and you wouldn't believe how industrious they are. It just goes to show that they are just as different as we are – some Danes can't be bothered to work – and spending the tax payer's money on them is just unacceptable.* (Bus driver, male, 49, on long-term sick leave, Social Democratic Party)

They share with the other groups a measure of concern for the rate of immigration. They feel also that demands should be made on immigrants in connection with integration measures.

We can't let every single one of them in. There has to be a balance. We are willing to integrate, but they need to learn Danish and find work. And we have to address those issues. If we don't things will get worse. It's an absolute necessity, learning to speak Danish, and they owe it to the country they want to live in. Politicians have not been able to find a solution yet. (Bus driver, male, 49, on long-term sick leave, Social Democratic Party)

Several members of this group are generally happy with the way society is shaping up. They highlight the low percentage of poor people in society, the democratic system and that society is just. One says that politicians are doing what they can, and another that he can see why savings need to be made, and it could hardly be otherwise. But two of the women are less happy about the state of society. One feels that the social system has stopped functioning because of the waiting lists and cuts. The other says that systems fostered by society seem to be more important than people. Of politicians she says,

The whole bunch is a disgrace. I'm not joking. There are far too many career politicians. I get really cross when I see people, members of the Progress Party, give in and become conservative instead. (Former correspondent, female, 45, voting preferences unknown)

Summing up

While persons in this group concur with other interviewees in their concern for the plight of the welfare state what with cuts and immigration issues, the proportion who believe they have a functioning, just society, is nonetheless higher.

5.5. Other explanations

The orientations we have examined thus far indicate that other explanations, in addition to those suggested by our theses, may have some relevance.

There is a good deal of evidence that the way the press deals with welfare issues, including the impact of immigration, has an effect on the way many people perceive changes in society. It would therefore be useful to ask whether there exists a correlation between the approach of different elements of the press and the way people form their opinions.

Quite a number of our interviewees maintain that the elderly are very poorly treated indeed, that cuts are being instituted in hospitals, schools etc., and that life for vulnerable groups is getting harder. The ideas of interviewees in these areas are based on what they have read in the press rather than through personal experience. This applies to the impression some have of immigrants in Denmark – especially the notion that immigrants are criminals and are given considerable assistance denied to other vulnerable members of society. Interviewees who have worked hard all their lives – like their parents – are particularly prone to this way of thinking. The common view is that people should manage on their own.

Some of the stories in the press appear to have a very long half-life. Three of our interviewees referred to reports published in the press many years ago. Two of them cite

the story of the refugee children who were given brand new bicycles. Another remembered the story of the residents of a nursing home whose nappies had not been changed, but turned over.

There is a possible connection between the type of media people use and their opinions. For instance, people who follow several different media – the broadsheets, the programmes of the national broadcasting corporation etc. – tend to have more sophisticated ideas on immigrants, immigration and integration than people who confine themselves to local media sources and the tabloids. Some of our interviewees pointed to this connection, though not all.

It looks also as if there is a connection between expressed values and one's view of social trends. Some of our interviewees value having a job and supporting oneself. Such views often run parallel with a sense of antagonism towards recipients of assistance, aside from the elderly, who struggled to build Denmark. For instance, some claim that immigrants and refugees accept social assistance without having done anything to deserve it.

We have not been able to trace in our material any correspondences in which gender or age play a significant role.

5.6. Typology of 'attracted' and 'not attracted'

Overall people who feel relatively secure seldom entertain xenophobic-populist ideas. They are well placed in the labour market, they generally see changes as challenges with potentially beneficial effects, and they do not depend on social assistance. On the other hand, not all of the interviewees who feel threatened or are already marginalized express xenophobic-populist attitudes.

The great majority of our interviewees say they are concerned about where society is heading, about immigration and integration issues, but they highlight different aspects.

Attracted

The interviewees that exhibit an attraction to xenophobic populism can be divided into two subgroups.

The first consists of those who express clearly that, as far as they are concerned, refugees and immigrants represent a problem for society. Their reasons are that immigrants and refugees cheat, sponge on society or participate in crime. This group often alleges a connection between spending on immigrants and refugees on the one hand and the need for money for the elderly and hospitals on the other, or sets the one against the other. Denmark should look after vulnerable Danes first, before helping everybody else – i.e., refugees and immigrants in Denmark and people in developing countries. The claims put forward by this group are that politicians refuse to listen, that nobody takes care of the man in the street, that Denmark is a small country, that we have to stay Danish. Some feel that immigration is a threat to Danish ideals. Some

express hostility towards immigrants, but most qualify their words saying that they do not, of course, mean everybody.

The group is made up of people whose jobs have tended to be extremely heavy. contributing to their exclusion from the employment market at some time in their life. At the same time they have experienced failings on the part of employers and, in some instances, the authorities and the trade unions too. And when they approached the welfare authorities they met an almost impenetrable wall. But we also find people who are still working who nevertheless say that changes in society make them feel insecure, both at work and in general. They are worried they may not be able to satisfy increasing demands for better qualifications and efficiency, and changes in the welfare system concern them also.

The opinions submitted by this group support the thesis that changes in working conditions, which have marginalizing effects, influence the political orientation of the interviewees towards a xenophobic-populist stance. A further contributory factor could be the degree to which people feel protected or supported by social institutions against negative trends, and how much protection and help they have expected. The protecting bodies may be unions, local councils, or the system as a whole. The people with the most uncompromising xenophobic-populist sentiments often say that they felt betrayed by the unions, employers or other elements of society.

Another group describes a slightly more vague concern about the costs of the welfare system, but generally without pointing to immigrants as the scapegoats. There may be too many of them, they feel, because they put too heavy a financial strain on society. There is a general tendency in this group to criticise society for failing to put in place a workable integration policy, though politicians and decision-makers must bear the brunt of this criticism, not immigrants as a group.

There are people here who feel that changes in working conditions represent a threat, and people who feel that such changes are more of a challenge. It is also essential to look after the elderly, they say, and that requires keeping a careful eye on spending on immigrants and refugees. The comparison between the elderly and immigrants is not as pointed as made by the first group. Some say they have voted for the Danish People's Party in protest against the other parties. Their accounts support the thesis that when changes in society seem to represent a threat, the political orientation of the interviewees tend to be drawn towards xenophobic-populist policies.

Not attracted

Finally we have the interviewees who clearly reject right-wing populism – both when voting and in their responses in the interviews. This group comprises to a greater degree people with an ability to grasp the nature of the changes, whose views on trends in the welfare state are considerably more balanced. While some people in this group have been excluded from the labour market, the overall impression is that society is just, and its democratic nature should be applauded. We can subdivide this group as well, into those who support their trade union and are allied to the Social Democrats or parties

further to the left, and those who have never supported any trade union or social democratic welfare state, preferring to ally themselves with the more liberalistic parties. The accounts of this group falsify in many respects the causal connections between the theses, in that they respond differently to the changes they have met.

6. SUMMARY

This report represents the Danish contribution to the second part of the international project on Socio-Economic Change, Individual Reactions and the Appeal of the Extreme Right – SIREN.

Background

In 1983 the debate on immigration issues started to become increasingly polarised in Denmark. In the lead-up to the last election in November 2001, several Danish parties started to address the issues of immigration and integration. At that election, the Danish People's Party won a good segment of the ballot, and has since supported the present government.

The terms *right-wing populism* or *extreme right* are not applicable to the People's Party. Apart from its opposition to immigration and the multicultural society, their key issues are issues that originally were claimed by the Social Democrats – not least their policies on the elderly and vulnerable in society. We are therefore inclined to think that a term such as *xenophobic populism* fits the party and the developments in Denmark better.

At the macro level, the tendency over the past ten years has been towards a better economy and less unemployment. But that can not disguise the fact that several elements of Danish society have not benefited much from the economic upswing. At the same time, the workplaces are undergoing far-reaching changes in the form of privatisation and outsourcing of public sector organisations, investment cuts in certain areas of the public sector, takeovers, the sale of private sector businesses and, finally, comprehensive restructuring programmes.

The report asks the following main questions:

- What is the impact of changes in working conditions on the political views of the interviewees – with a particular focus on the development of xenophobic-populist ideals. What type of support have interviewees received from parties such as trade unions, authorities, employers/workplaces in relation to the negative consequences arising from the changes?

- What do changes in society and the welfare system mean in a broader perspective for the political orientations of our interviewees, including their perception of the political parties' response to these changes?

The data

Ou of thirty-six people interviewed, thirty-one interviews were chosen for detailed analysis.. These represented the following areas of working life: telecommunications, public bus transport, care services for the elderly, manufacturing and the IT sector.

Some of the interviewees had a job at the time of the interview, others were excluded from the ordinary labour market. When selecting our interviewees, we laid weight on composing a group of which about half had recently voted for a xenophobic-populist party (primarily the Danish People's Party).

Interviewees' perception of change

Changes in the workplace and society have affected all of our interviewees, but the effects and their significance have varied, as have the responses. Some have benefited from the changes, even though pressures have increased at work (Advancement). These interviewees tend to express a broader concern for the direction society is taking – i.e. globalisation, immigration and crime – but generally do not express any sense of being under threat themselves.

Other interviewees have been put in a more precarious position by the changes, with the threat of unemployment or infirmity (Threat of Decline). Reactions to changes often depend on how they happened, and their effect on one's position. Some see the changes as a challenge, others as a sign of increased pressures and unemployment. Some feel that the sense of solidarity has disappeared, either among work colleagues or in the local community, and some are concerned about globalisation, immigration and crime. Some are particularly worried about the future of the welfare state, pointing to cuts in spending on the elderly and waiting lists for hospital treatment. Others focus on the relationship between immigration, crime and costs, yet others on the lack of success of integration policies. Finally, there are those who express concern about the possible impact of globalisation.

A last group of interviewees consists of people outside the ordinary labour market (Precarisation). They have all been in touch with the social authorities in an attempt and obtain the assistance to which they have a right. There are varying perceptions among the group as to whether assistance and support were given in a satisfactory manner. Concern about the welfare state is widespread in this group, and several feel that it is not working. Others feel the system is fair. Crime and immigration are also referred to here as two areas where changes have been most apparent. Some focus on the high cost of immigration, others on the failure of integration measures. The consequences of globalisation are also a matter of concern for some.

Socio-economic change and political orientation

The dominating impression is that people who feel relatively secure are seldom exponents of xenophobic populism. They have good jobs, they equate change with challenge and potential benefits, and they are not dependent on the support of the welfare system. On the other hand, not all of our interviewees who feel threatened or are already marginalized express xenophobic-populist attitudes. The great majority of our interviewees say they are concerned about where society is heading, about immigration and integration issues, but they highlight different aspects.

Some of the accounts given by our interviewees support the thesis that changes in working conditions that have a marginalizing effect will cause the development of a xenophobic-populist orientation. A contributory factor appears to be whether one feels protected and supported by social institutions in relation to the negative consequences of change. Those who express pronounced xenophobic-populist attitudes often say they feel let down by unions, workplace, or other elements of the system.

> *It's the fault of that disgusting social democratic union – the General Workers'*
> *Union. They couldn't care less about people on the shop floor. They accept any*
> *deal, even if it means destroying us. They just want the agreement in place.*
> (Former bus driver on early retirement pension, female, 55, Danish People's Party)

The accounts of another group support the thesis that changes in society that are perceived as a threat affect political views in the direction of xenophobic populism.

> *I can't see any reason for cutting back on schools, the elderly and hospitals. They*
> *could send all the black back – or shoot them – no, you are not allowed to say so.*
> *As far as I'm concerned they can stay here, but lots of them just scrounge on*
> *society. There are Danes who scrounge as well.* (Manufacturing worker, female
> 39, People's Party)

The concerns of others for the economy of the welfare state are less distinctly worded. There is a general criticism of the failure to implement a successful integration policy, but it is criticism that is aimed at the government and decision-makers, not at immigrants as a group.

> *I feel that as far as immigration policy is concerned – that it's being addressed –*
> *that we're doing something about it – it can't be good for anybody just letting more*
> *and more people into the country. We have to have a plan of action.... There's*
> *room for lots of people, but if it's going to work, people have to be given a chance*
> *to make it work.* (Line manager, male, 49, Danish People's Party)

There are finally some interviewees who reject out of hand right-wing populist ideas. This group consists to a greater degree of people with an ability to grasp the nature of the changes, whose views on trends in the welfare state are considerably more balanced. But some of the members of this group have been excluded from the labour market to a greater or lesser degree. The accounts of this group falsify in many respects the causal connections between the theses, in that they respond differently to the changes they have met.

Other explanations

There is a good deal of evidence that the way the press deals with welfare issues, including the impact of immigration, has an effect on the way many people perceive changes in society. The types of media people use may also have an effect. If people follow several different media – the broadsheets, the programmes of the national broadcasting corporation etc. – it may give them a more sophisticated outlook on immigrants, immigration and integration, while confining oneself to local media sources and the tabloids may contribute to a more restricted view.

There is an apparent connection between values held and people's perception of changes in society. Having a job and supporting oneself are often considered key values. On the other hand, such values incite hostility towards people who receive public assistance – with the exception of the older generation who are credited with having built present-day Denmark.

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ANNEX 1
DEVELOPMENT OF QUALITATIVE INSTRUMENT

CENTRE d'ETUDES de l'EMPLOI
Gabrielle Balazs, Jean-Pierre Faguer, Pierre Rimbert

INTERVIEW GUIDELINES

1. How to present the study

The way the survey is introduced to interviewees will be decisive: we must avoid making the mistake to trigger expected answers or, by touching on controversial issues, to raise the respondent's suspicions. It is both tempting and easy for the interviewer to offer the respondent a pretext for statements that one might expect from him or her, for example by asking direct questions on the "negative" effects of immigration. How can one do justice to racist remarks without entering into the reasoning, without accepting the reasoning? A technique that is not useful for our study is one usually applied in opinion polls: the collection of separate data and information on the respondent's biography on the one hand, and, on the other, his/her political views. The interviews would remain sterile if the link between the two is not explicitly established.

We therefore have to make sure that the respondent's points of view on RWE issues are expressed as answers to questions relating to SEC.

It can be expected that persons asked about their political opinions in a survey on the "appeal of the extreme right" will refuse to answer ("why me?"). As the French literature review for WP1 indicates, even those active in politics themselves, and *a fortiori* the sympathisers, often do not admit to their approval of extreme right-wing policies. Among the evasive practices, the thematic displacement should be especially highlighted: while they refuse to give their political opinions, the interviewees declare themselves on apparently unrelated issues (welfare benefits, recruitment for employment in the public sector, housing, etc.). To capture this displacement it is necessary not to interrupt but to pay special attention to the digressions and the anecdotes, which in reality express the "repressed" although they are sometimes interpreted as wandering beyond the subject or as relaxation.

For all these reasons it is important to present the research as a study on economic change and its consequences. Although the study should mainly be presented as a socio-economic project, the aspect of political opinion should not be disguised.

A possible introduction could be: *"A study on changes in working life and what politics/policy can do"*. It is also possible to use the ambiguous term "crisis" (or an equivalent) that covers both economic and political aspects.

How to avoid symbolic violence?

The relationship in an interview between a highly educated investigator and, for example, a respondent "without diploma" automatically generates symbolic violence that falsifies the interview: it leads to an asymmetry of position in the social hierarchy, an asymmetry of linguistic capital, use of unadjusted words (e.g. term of "career" used with a blue-collar worker employed at the same place for 30 years, or with a person who has been unemployed for five years).

The investigator may perceive – and try to avoid – the phenomenon when the respondent feels obliged to give a "good answer", or when she/he seems to respond to a civil servant that investigating her/his private life.

In order to reduce this symbolic violence as much as possible, we should try to set up a relationship of active and methodical listening, as far removed from the pure "laissez-faire" of the non-directive interview as from the interventionism of the questionnaire. It combines total availability of the interviewer to the person being questioned, submission to the singularity of a particular life history – which can lead to adopting the interviewee's language, views, feelings, and thoughts – with methodical construction, founded on the knowledge of the objective conditions common to an entire social category.

Multi respondent situations:
Multi-respondent interviews are sometimes hard to avoid. Some groups (women, blue-collar males) actually prefer talking in groups. Still the presence of more than one interview partner (esp. the husband, peers, etc.) might distort the information provided by the respondent; the respondent might not feel free to say what they really think. For this reason it was decided that multi-respondent interviews should be avoided. In case of multi-respondent interviews, the situation must be made clear in the interview analysis.

2. The issues

Is it necessary to stuff oneself with detailed and falsely universal interview guidelines apart from the section on the indispensable variables? Whatever the recommendations on that, it can be expected that each research team will proceed according to its usual research methods. Moreover, the structure and the process of each interview will be determined by the situation of the interviewee rather than by the specifications of interview guidelines.

That is why the common method presented here (presentation of the study, issues to be addressed, their sequence, suggestions regarding conducting the interview) need to be translated into the context of each team.

It is suggested to start each of main section with a very general question. It is possible to start the interview with the current occupational (or employment) situation of the interviewee. Depending on the situation, socio-economic change can be directly

approached (*"What has changed in your job/life over the past years?"*) to give respondents the freedom to take the conversation into any direction they want. Interviewers should keep the sub-points (see below) in mind throughout the interview and ask additional questions where required to get the necessary information, especially on political attitudes, racism, immigrants...

Then the interviewee could be asked about the economic transformations in his or her business sector (industry) and see how these have affected his or her personal situation. Finally, the more political aspects should be addressed, the social world view, political opinions. If there is no opportunity before, one might close the interview with biographical variables. What is crucial is to capture the interviewee's principal schemes of political engagement or of the refusal of such an engagement. In order to do that the general thematic areas developed in the following are taken as starting points. We have to keep in mind that the interviewee will rarely be "a good historian" of his or her biography.

A) Socio-economic change

The topics suggested here are not exhaustive. Rather, they are openings to start or restart the interviewee's statements. *Conversely, not all the issues have to be addressed. The aim is to reach the end of the interview with all the variables essential for interpretation.* Trusted informers should be used. The information provided in these "expert interviews" is vital as it supplies the background to the interview (It may be helpful to also tape these conversations for reference later on).

In the following we do not form too many questions because every team is familiar with the interview technique. *Similar topics are mentioned under different headings throughout the interview guidelines in order to multiply the opportunities to ask questions coming from different openings. If the structure of the two main topics (SEC and politics) has to be respected, the order of the following sub-points has no importance.*

1. The occupational situation of the interviewee

Suggested opening question (the tone of the question have to fit to the interviewee's status):

"So, you're working in telecom, how does it go?"

or

"Could you outline your employment history?"

Topics:

- Company, size of the company, subcontractor or core company, private or public, position within the company, status, seniority, income

- Working conditions, working hours, flexibility, work rhythm, workload / strain

- Relationship with superiors, with colleagues, with customers (humiliations, verbal violence, work hazards, isolation ...)

=> The way interviewees construct their story is of particular importance here (continuity or discontinuity?)

2. *Economic and social transformations in the 1980s and 1990s, point of view about changes, "crisis"*

Interviewers collect background information about recent transformations in the sector, company, etc. of the respondent before the interview.

The following sub points are to be kept in mind and additional questions should be asked if answers are not provided in the conversation with the respondent.

- The interviewee's 'story' of these changes

- Since when have the transformations affected your life (working life, private life, family life)?

- Experience of unemployment (interviewee's own or by somebody close), experience of non-standard employment (precarious, temporal / agency work, public work schemes)

3. *Changes of living and working conditions – insecurity, precariousness, relative decline*

To be addressed with a question such as:

"How do people in your company live through these changes?"

- Particular transformations of working and living conditions

- Consequences of stress, health effects

- Effects on those close to you, on your neighbours, on the neighbourhood

=> The investigator may encourage the respondent to develop examples of good or bad experiences.

4. *Pressures for success*

- Is the interviewee suffering/Has she/he suffered from pressures (social, media) to be "modern", to be "the best", to be "successful at any price"; is she/he prepared to make sacrifices to achieve that (flexibility)?

- Pressures on women to achieve everything at once (in working life, private life, children)

Theses themes may be introduced by questions such as:

"What do others want or expect from you?"

"What do you think is important to achieve in working life?"

"What expectations did your parents have relating to your career?"

5. National / international

This point should only be addressed in relation to SEC if the juxtaposition national/international is at the heart of the problems of the nation, of nationalism, of protectionism and of the hostility towards the EU.

Multinational companies, mergers and acquisitions, foreign investment, relocation of jobs, competition from abroad, in Germany: East vs. West, European union and the changes, the EURO, etc. Are there any effects of immigration in the particular sector the interviewee is employed in?

The investigator may deal with several points such as:

- The particular effects of economic internationalisation on the business sector

- The relation with the EU and its manifestations (subsidies, free-charge areas/taxes, production restrictions)

- If applicable, make the interviewee talk about disputes between regions (especially border regions), language disputes, about the relationship between region, language and nation.

6. Perception of the occupational group:

Relates to precarious/decline/advancement not on the individual level but on the more general level of the occupational group.

Questions/information can relate to changes within the group, the privileges of others, "relative deprivation", etc.

Job commitment plays an important role here: does the respondent identify with the occupational group or is she/he only "doing a job"?

Topics:

- Perception of his or her position within the occupational group (feelings of distrust, of stigmatisation, of being ignored, marginalised as a person)

- The perception of threats at work: is employment threatened? by what? by whom?

- Problems of self-classification: the non-classifiables, neither workers nor bourgeois (how some categories are thrown into the nothing)

Examples for opening questions:

[If the occupational group is not yet clear:] *How do you usually introduce yourself in terms of your occupation or employment? Is it easy or difficult for people to imagine what you actually do?*

What is the current situation of [occupational group, e.g. engineers, waiters, farmers]*? Have income, prestige, security improved or worsened in recent years? To what extent do you feel that your occupational group is advantaged or disadvantaged (by politics, by the administration etc.)?*

Within the group of [engineers, waiters, farmers etc.]*, within your occupational association (representation of the occupational group): do you feel highly accepted*?

Instead of an occupational group respondents may identify rather with the company, the region etc. If so the wording of the questions should be adapted.

B) The relations with politics (history of political opinions or activities)

It's very important not to suggest to the respondent a change in topic by interrupting the interview between part A and part B. If we want to capture the link between SEC and political vision of the world, we have to link the two parts ourselves with the help of a linking question that shows continuity. Moving from SEC questions (problems) to political opinions may probably also be achieved by questions such as:
"How should politics react to these problems?"
"How should it have reacted...?"

"What can be done about the changes we just talked about?"

1. Political opinions
Again a very general question should be used to start with. A well known problem is that a lot of people, in particular right wing or extreme-right wing oriented persons, claim: "I don't want to speak about politics", „I don't make politics" or "I'm not engaged in political issues". These statements are usually used by respondents to deny the political significance of their discourse. When this happens, interviewers should try to get round the difficulty rather than insist. They should also let the respondent choose and develop the political topics themselves.

Questions on party politics, voting behaviour should be avoided at the beginning:

Suggested questions:

"What do you think about programs for the reduction of unemployment [or any problem raised by respondent] *proposed by this/the previous government?"*

"Who do you think is responsible for the problems (SEC, to be specified) we talked about?"

"Have the economic transformations changed your opinions or your political activities?"

(In France, for example, the presidential elections will have to be addressed)

- *"Which candidate do you feel close to?", "Which candidate(s) would you never vote for?"*

- *"Do you consider to abstain from voting?"*

2. Relations with politics

Voting behaviour is an issue that should be addressed. Direct questions however might scare the respondent off. Perhaps an indirect way of asking could be found? The topic of economic, demographic and intellectual decline seems to be a permanent figure of RWE discourse, just like nostalgia for a golden age might be an indicator of social decline.

The questions will be about:

- Activities: political, trade unionist; the political capital (position in politics: grassroots activist, leader, expert, editor, security guard)

- "Alternative" politics: associations, charities, NGOs

- The balance of political experiences (reasons for bitterness, for success)

- The events that marked the entering into politics. Biographical framework explaining the contact with political activists (youth movement, charity, workplace, trade unions, etc.)

- Experiences of politics in private life: conflicts with neighbours, family conflicts, conflicts at work, in public transport, aggression

- Perception of changes in politics (in France a typical expression of this relation is: "all rotten" followed by statements against the "elites")

3. Political view of the social world

The interviewee "should select topics". That means you should give the interviewee the possibility to talk about the issues s/he seems to be particularly interested in, topics s/he shows emotions when addressing them (security, unemployment, state, housing policies, immigration etc. etc.). So please encourage the interviewee to go on whenever in the course of the interview you have the feeling that an issue was raised on which the interviewee has strong views or when the interviewee becomes particularly interested.

Let the interviewee select the issues himself/herself and also the left or right-wing connotations they attach to them:

- Security at work, of housing, in the neighbourhood

- School and intellectuals

- State and civil servants

- International politics (Middle East, September 11 attack, war in Afghanistan)

- Immigration

- Globalisation of the economy, European integration

Possible introduction:

"What do you think are the most important political issues in your country at the moment?"

Eventually:

"Who will most likely bring about an improvement of the situation?"

If the interviewee does not address racism, in-group/out-group feelings, immigration, these issues can be raised as a topic:

"What do you think of the current immigrant debate?"

4. Frictions with groups the interviewee feels threatened by

The interviewer will pay particular attention to frustration or resentment indicators, especially when the interviewee criticises groups socially situated immediately below or above. For example, the resentment of old permanent blue collar workers against young temporary workers, or "inner" employees fearing immigrant employment.

Some situations, such as job search, search of housing, applying for welfare benefits, are occasions that get people in contact with the authorities. In such situations they might have strong feelings of injustice and develop strong views on those who, in their opinion, illegitimately benefit from the system.

C) Biography, history of education, social history

We will have in mind the list of variables that a indispensable for the interpretation of the qualitative material. This information will be asked for at any favourable moment during the interview or at the end of the interview. Details on the biography that have not been raised throughout the interview should be addressed now.

- Age, gender, nationality

- Parents' professions or occupations (note all denominations or titles in detail)

- Family situation, occupation of the husband, wife, children. Education, education of children, success/failure, difficulties

- Marginalisation or integration of the family:

  Social mobility (rise or decline), geographic mobility, family immigration

Illnesses, accidents, social misfortunes (early death of parents, prison, psychiatric hospital)

- Up-bringing: authoritarian, liberal, no supervision

- Education, studies: private (religious) or public, curricula, diploma, subject: science technical or humanities, difficulties in school, experience of school failure, changing schools

- Other status ambiguities: autodidact, degradation of position

3. *Conducting the interview*

The political events or data mentioned by the interviewees need to be positioned within the national history. They should allow the researcher to grasp the issues within the collective memory about which "populist opinions" or extreme right positions can be formed.

Great freedom will be given to each interviewer and to each interviewee to present the mindset that organises the respondent's world view, whether it refers to the history of the enterprise, the history of the occupation, the region, the family or of any category the interviewee might use to explain what has happened to him or her.

We will also be sensitive to the "return of the repressed" without encouraging it. For example, the topic of immigration will only be addressed by the interviewee him/herself without suggestion by the interviewer. We will be attentive to obsessive topics. It is important for our subject to let the interviewee deviate, make digressions, to talk about other topics than the ones addressed.

Relating to the biographical part on the other hand, it is necessary to be as directive as possible in order to out as much accurate and detailed information about the respondent's occupational, school or social career. The political point of view and the "political career" should also be described very precisely.

ANNEX 2
SOCIO-GRAM ON THE INTERVIEWEES WE HAVE CHOSEN*

Interview No.	Status	Sex	Age	Place	Voted at last election	IT	Telecom/ Post.	Trans-port	Industry	Care	Others
INTERVIEWEES CONTACTED THROUGH PERSONAL CONNECTIONS IN TRADE UNIONS AND PERSONAL NETWORKS											
No. 1	Decline	M	42	Provincial town	Liberals				X		
No. 2	Decline	F	52	Copenhagen	Left-wing		x				
No. 3	Decline	F	38	Copenhagen	Social Democrats		x				
No. 4	Decline	M	61	Suburb	Conservative/ SocialDemocrats**			x			
No. 5	Precarisation	F	55	Copenhagen	Danish Peoples Party			x			
No. 6	Decline	M	62	Village	Conservative		x				
No. 7	?	F	46	Village	Liberals						Self-employed
No. 8	Decline	M	49	Provincial town	Danish Peoples Party				X		
No. 9	Decline	M	56	Copenhagen	Conservative		x				
No. 10	Advancement	M	46	Copenhagen	Left-wing	x					
No. 11	Advancement	M	55	Copenhagen	Social Democrats	x					
INTERVIEWEES FROM A WELFARE STUDY RUN AT CASA *											
No. 12	Precarisation	M	37	Village	Progressive Party						Self-employed
No. 13	Precarisation	F	53	Suburb	Danish Peoples Party					x	
No. 14	Precarisation	M	47	Village	Social Democrats						Trade/administration
No. 15	Precarisation	M	58	Provincial town	Unknown				X		
No. 16	Precarisation	M	56	Provincial town	Social democrats/ Left-wing**				X		
No. 17	Precarisation	F	57	Provincial town	Left-wing					x	
No. 18	Precarisation	F	45	Village	Unknown						Trade/administration
No. 19	Decline	F	27	Suburb	Liberals						Trade/administration
No. 20	Decline	M	49	Provincial town	Unknown				X		

Interview No.	Status	Sex	Age	Place	Voted at last election	IT	Telecom/Post.	Trans-port	Industry	Care	Others
INTERVIEWEES CONTACTED THROUGH A POLLING INSTITUTE IN VOTER SURVEYS											
No. 1868	Decline	F	24	Provincial town	Danish Peoples Party					x	
No. 1953	Decline	F	?	Provincial town	Danish Peoples Party				X		
No. 1621	Precarisation	M	49	City	Social Democrats			x			
No. 916	Decline	F	34	Village	Social Democrats					X	
No. 2097	Precarisation	M	65	Village	Liberals			x			
No. 829	Precarisation	F	72	Village	Liberals					X	
No. 1290	Decline	F	39	Provincial town	Danish Peoples Party				X		
No. 1584	Advancement	M	34	Village	Liberals				X		
No. 791	Advancement	M	43	Village	Liberals	x					
No. 2464	Advancement	M	30	Storby	Danish Peoples Party	x					
No. 2384	Decline	M	49	City	Danish Peoples Party				X		
Total	Pre: 11 Dec: 14 Adv: 5 ?: 1	18 M 13 F	20-39: 8 40-59: 18 59-: 5 ?: 1	Village: 10 Provincial town: 9 City/Suburb: 12	Liberal/Cons: 10 SocDem: 7 Left-wing: 4 DF/FP: 9 Unknown: 3	4	4	4	9	5	5

* From a project about the Welfare Society we had 14 interviewees, but we found that only 10 of them were useful for the project. We have given priority to interviewees who have not been without work for a long period, and who have faced changes in their working life.

** When two parties are named, the interviewee voted at the first at the general election and the second at the municipal election