

DENMARK

Dates of elections: December 4, 1973 (December 13, 1973 in the Faeroe Islands)

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held to renew all the members of the *Folketing*, which was dissolved before the expiration of its term. Previous general elections had taken place on September 21, 1971.

Characteristics of Parliament

The unicameral Danish Parliament, the *Folketing*, is comprised of 179 members, 2 of whom are elected in the Faeroe Islands and 2 in Greenland. It normally has a 4-year term.

Electoral system

The right to vote at a *Folketing* election is held by every Danish subject of at least 20 years of age who is permanently domiciled in Denmark, provided that he has not been declared incapable of conducting his own affairs.

Electoral registers are revised continuously. Voting is not compulsory.

Any person who is entitled to vote is eligible for membership of the *Folketing*, unless he has been convicted of an act which "in the eyes of the public makes him unworthy of being a member of the *Folketing*".

Parties already represented in Parliament qualify to contest an election by notifying the Ministry of the Interior; non-represented parties, by at least 10,000 electors giving the same notice. Any elector can do so provided his nomination is supported by at least 25 and at most 50 electors. The candidate must indicate the party he supports, or whether he is independent of parties. The parties can refuse to recognize candidates, who are then regarded as independents.

No candidate may seek nomination in more than one electoral area or for more than one party, or declare himself independent and at the same time support a party.

In metropolitan Denmark, the electoral procedure provides for a unique method of ensuring the proportional representation of political forces as faithfully as possible. Its main characteristics are as follows:

1. Metropolitan Denmark is divided into 3 zones (Great Copenhagen, Jutland, Islands), split into 23 electoral areas which are further subdivided into 103 constituencies.

2. The parties can choose 3 ways of designating their candidates: a single candidate per constituency; several candidates per constituency, with indication of an order of priority; or a single candidate per constituency, with indication of an order of priority by constituency. In this way, candidates receive both personal and party votes. The elector can vote either for a candidate or for a party, and can impose his own order of preference vis-a-vis the latter. He can vote for any one of the candidates or parties in his area and is therefore not bound by the lists drawn up for his particular constituency.

3. The seats are filled in 2 stages:

First, 135 Deputies are elected in the light of the results obtained by each party in the electoral area, the seats being distributed according to the St-Lague method.

Forty supplementary seats are then distributed in each of the 3 zones among the parties which

- fa*) have won at least one area seat, or
- fb*) have obtained, in 2 out of 3 zones, at least as many votes as the average number of valid votes cast in the zone per area seat, or
- (c)* have obtained at least 2 % of all valid votes in the country as a whole.

A fictitious distribution of the 175 seats then takes place among the parties fulfilling the above conditions, in proportion to the total number of votes cast for these parties throughout the country.

From the number of seats thus allotted to each party, the number of area seats already obtained in each case is deducted. The figure thus arrived at is the number of supplementary seats due to the party.

Candidates who have been nominated but who have not obtained a sufficient number of votes to be elected figure on a list of substitute members drawn up by the Minister of the Interior after each general election. These substitute members fill those seats in the *Folketing* which become vacant between general elections.

General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

The elections were announced on November 8, 1973, after the ruling Social Democratic administration — which had run a minority Government

since the last elections — had failed to obtain a parliamentary majority in support of one of its bills which aimed to increase taxation on householders. Prime Minister Joergensen opted to seek a dissolution in the light of the fact that his Government's parliamentary majority was doubtful. One important factor in his decision was that a member of the Social Democrats — Erhard Jacobsen — had resigned from the party and formed a new one called the Social Democratic Center.

The Progress Party was similarly a newcomer to parliamentary elections; headed by Mogens Glistrup, a lawyer, its demand for tax reductions and simplified administration was a dominant feature of its platform.

A total of 11 parties contested the elections. As indicated by the election returns, all 5 parties represented in the outgoing Parliament lost votes. **With** 46 seats, the Social Democrats remained the largest party, but 6 of the previous Cabinet ministers were not returned. The Progress Party followed closely with 28 seats. Altogether 10 parties were to be represented in the *Folketing*.

After the elections, Prime Minister Joergensen resigned and, on December 19, 1973, a minority Liberal Democratic Cabinet was sworn in with Mr. Poul Hartling as Prime Minister.

Statistics

1. *Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats in the Folketing*

Number of registered voters.	3,460,677
Voters	3,070,253 (88.7 %)
Blank or void ballot papers.	17,050
Valid votes.	3,053,203

Political Group	Number of Candidates	Votes obtained	<i>lo</i>	Numb of Sea in th <i>Folket</i>
Social Democrats	.104	783,145	25.6	46
Progress Party	.195	485,289	15.9	28
Liberal Democrats	.108	374,283	12.3	22
Radical Democrats	.100	343,117	11.2	20
Conservatives	.95	279,391	9.2	16
Social Democratic Center	.103	236,784	7.8	14
Socialist People's Party	.104	183,522	6.0	11
Christian People's Party	.57	123,573	4.0	7
Communists	.100	110,715	3.6	6
Single Tax Party	.95	87,904	2.9	5
Left Socialists	.59	44,843	1.5	—
Others	.8	637	0.0	—
				175

* Number of seats for Metropolitan Denmark only.

2. *Distribution of Deputies according to Professional Category (%)*

Managers and administrative executives.	29.1
Teachers.	11.4
Personnel in administrative, clerical and commercial fields.	10.9
Self-employed: liberal professions.	9.7
Civil servants and other employees of the central Government	6.8
Farmers.	5.1
Self-employed: trade and transport	3.4
Skilled workers.	2.9
Technical employees and foremen	2.9
Self-employed: crafts and industry.	2.3
Housewives.	1.7
Unskilled workers.	1.1
Self-employed and labourers: gardening and fisheries.	0.6
Others (including other self-employed, civil servants, students and persons engaged in agriculture).	12.1
	100

3. *Distribution of Deputies according to Sex*

Men.	151
Women.	28
	179

4. *Distribution of Deputies according to Age Group .*

20-30.	9
30-40.	30
40-50.	46
50-60.	67
60-70.	26
Over 70.	1

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5. *Average Age: 49 years and 2 months*