**European
Elections monitor**

The left-wing forces ahead in the general elections in Denmark

Corinne Deloy

Results

The Social Democratic Party (SD) came out ahead in the general elections that took place on 5th June in Denmark. Led by Mette Frederiksen it won 25.9% of the vote, taking 48 seats in the Folketing, the single house of the Parliament, i.e. one more than in the previous elections on 18th June 2015.

The People's Socialist Party (SF), led by Pia Olsen Dyhr won 7.7% of the vote and doubled its number of seats rising from 7 to 14. Undeniably it benefited from the present situation, i.e. the European elections that help to push global warming to the heart of public debate. This issue supplanted the others over the last days of the electoral campaign. "*It seems that the Danes voted in support of hope, the climate, children and the future,*" declared the party chair.

The Social Liberal Party (RV), led by Morten Ostergaard doubled also its number of seats: 8.6% of the vote and 16 seats (+8). Finally, the Red-Green Alliance (E) won 6.9% of the vote and 13 seats (-1).

Together the 4 parties comprising the Red Block (left-wing) won 91 seats, i.e. the absolute majority in the Folketing. Their victory has mainly come thanks to the progress made by the parties allied to the Social Democrats. "*Mette Frederiksen is not really in a strong position,*" indicated Jorgen Albaek Jensen, a political expert from the University of Aarhus.

The Liberal Party (V), led by outgoing Prime Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen achieved an honourable score of 23.4% and 43 seats (+9). "*We did well but there will be a change in government,*" declared the head of the outgoing executive. Likewise the People's Conservative Party (KF) led by Soren Pape Poulsen won 6.6% of the vote and doubled the number of its seats rising from 6 to 12.

However, the Danish People's Party (DF), a populist party led by Kristian Thulesen Dahl suffered a serious defeat winning 8.7% of the vote, i.e. its weakest result since the general elections in 1998. It lost more than half of its seats, dropping to 16 (-21). It is true that its defeat in the ballot box should be relativized since the populists have succeeded in influencing national political life. The issue of immigration has been central to political debate for many years and as time has gone by all governments have introduced increasingly restrictive measures. According to the Interior Ministry 114 of these measures to make access to Denmark more difficult for migrants were taken in the last legislature. "*Most anti-immigration, anti-asylum and anti-Islam positions, which mainly typified the Danish People's Party have gradually been normalised to become omnipresent. The 'dominant' parties have seized its discourse,*" said Suis Meret, professor at the University of Aalborg.

Asylum requests are at their lowest level in 10 years (2008), family reunion has dropped significantly, the issue of migratory pressure has therefore lost its important to the benefit of that of global warming. The populists undoubtedly paid for their sceptic positions on climate on 5th June.

The Liberal Alliance (LA) of Anders Samuelsen recorded a net regression winning 2.3% of the vote and 4 seats only (-9).

The four parties from the Blue Block (right-wing) won 75 seats in the Folketing.

New Right, a party created in 2016 by 2016 by Pernille Vermund, which is even further to the right than the

People's Party (the party wants to legislate more severely regarding migrants, but also regarding Danes born abroad), made its entry into Parliament with 2.4% and 4 seats.

As always turnout was high in Denmark: 84.50% i.e. +1.4% in comparison with the previous general elections of 2015.

General Election Results on 5th June 2019 in Denmark

Turnout: 84.5%

Parties	Number of votes won	% of votes won	Number of seats won
Social Democrats (SD)	915 393	25,90	48
Liberal Party (V)	825 486	23,40	43
Danish People's Party (DF)	308 219	8,70	16
Danish Social Liberal Party (RV)	304 273	8,60	16
People's Socialist Party (SF)	272 093	7,70	14
Red-Green Alliance (E)	244 664	6,90	13
People's Conservative Party (C)	233 349	6,60	12
The Alternative (A)	104 148	3	5
New Right	83 228	2,40	4
Liberal Alliance(LA)	82 228	2,30	4

Source : http://www.dst.dk/valg/Valg1684447/valgopgmid/valgopgHL.htm

"*Denmark has chosen a new majority and a new direction. Once again we are going give priority to social aid. Well-being, climate, education, children, future. Think of what we can do together. We are now going to change Denmark,*" declared Mette Frederiksen, adding that she hoped to form a minority government, quite a frequent practice in Denmark where the political system does not oblige a party to win the absolute majority in the Folketing, but to ensure that no majority forms against the government comprising one party. She is planning to use the support of the left to push through laws in certain areas, for example in education or healthcare, or to seek the support of the right in other, as in terms of the migratory policy.

Mette Frederiksen indeed defends extremely left-wing views on social issues, but positions herself far to the right on others, such as immigration. Hence, she has promised to work for the early retirement of people who have had long, hard careers and to stop budgetary cuts in the healthcare and education sectors a priority. "*It is clear that we must start spending more again,*" she maintained.

At the same time she has supported a restrictive migratory policy (reduction of family allowance for refugees, extension of the processing time of asylum requests, limitation of family reunion, toughening of detention conditions in prisons for those who have been refused asylum, the tightening of border controls,

the deportation of illegal immigrants) introduced by Lars Lokke Rasmussen. "*Some social democratic voters turned away from the party because they did not approve of our migratory policy; now they are coming back,*" noted Mette Frederiksen.

"*Mette Frederiksen knows that to succeed in Denmark, she must present a strict asylum and immigration policy*" stressed Ulf Hedetoft of the University of Copenhagen. "*The social democrats have openly changed the paradigm. Before 2015 the party supported integration policies. Now they support temporary residence permits, enabling the dispatch of refugees back to their countries of origin once security conditions have been met,*" maintained Susi Meret.

Aged 41, Mette Frederiksen is from Aalborg (north of Denmark) and a graduate in Administrative and Social Sciences from the University of Aalborg.

She joined the socialist youth movement when she was 15 and was elected an MP at 24, during the general elections on 20th November 2001. Four years' later she became the Vice-President of the Social Democratic parliamentary group and in 2011 she was appointed Employment Minister in Helle Thorning-Schmidt's government. In 2014 Ms Frederiksen took over the Justice portfolio. After her party's defeat in the general elections on 18th June 2015 she replaced Helle Thorning-Schmidt at the head of the Social Democratic Party and became the opposition leader.

She has managed to rally the different trends in her party, which she shifted to the left on socio-economic issues and to the right on immigration. This positioning was a pertinent one since the left-wing is now due to return to office.

Mette Frederiksen is due to take over from Lars Lokke Rasmussen. She will also become the youngest Prime Minister the country has ever had and the second woman to lead the Danish government after Helle Thorning-Schmidt.

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Publishing Director: Pascale JOANNIN