



**Global Refugee Studies,  
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**WHY THE DANISH SOCIAL DEMOCRATS PARTY SHIFTED THEIR PARTY POLICY ON REFUGEES AND  
IMMIGRATION BEFORE THE ELECTION OF 2019?**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Political parties' often change their policies before the parliamentary elections in order to regain its lost grounds possibly because of defeat in previous elections or to attract more voters to gain majority in the parliament. The basic aim of each political party is to gain maximum votes and to form the Government. There are always certain goals which a main stream political party is pursuing and in the pursuit of these goals they often shift their policies. Sometimes a left-wing party changes its policy on a certain issue and takes a more right leaning approach before the elections. The purpose of this thesis is also based on finding the reasons why a political party shifts its policy from left wing to right wing or vice-versa, for this particular purpose I would like to take the Danish Social Democrats Party as my case study. The current Denmark's ruling party the Social Democrats Party took a major shift in its policy on immigration and refugees before the elections of 2019 or we could say they began to change its policy when they were in the opposition after the 2015 elections. The Social Democrats Party has always been a party of the left-wing but since 2015 it sharply moved its policy on refugees and immigrants towards a more right leaning approach. There could be possible reasons and factors attached to their shifting of policy towards the issue of refugees and immigrants. This paper will try to identify the possible reasons which forced the Social Democrats Party to take a shift in its policy while also looking at its last 25 years policy approach on refugees and immigration.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The main aim of this thesis is to understand the political strategies of Denmark's current ruling party the Social Democrats towards the refugees and immigration issues. The Social Democrats have always been a party of the center-left wing but in the last elections of 2019, the party took a distinct shift and moved its position towards the right-wing specifically on the refugees and immigrant policies, while becoming more left wing on the economic issues. This thesis will try to look at the Social Democrats policy stance towards immigration and refugees of the last 25 years and its impact on its election performance during all the elections which happened from 1994 till 2019. In all this time the Social Democrats party has been a vital part of the legislation done for the refugees and immigrants. The main focus will be to have a thorough look at the important legislations which the Social Democrats approved being in Government and opposed while being in the opposition. This will help in understanding the transformation of its policy towards refugees and immigrants during this (time) period.

The thesis will also highlight the shift Social Democrats took towards the immigrants and refugees policies in the previous elections of 2019. The Social Democrats shifted its stance from being the party of left-wing to becoming a right wing party on immigration and refugees' issues as in its election campaign it proposed strict immigration policy for the refugees and immigrants. As it is a main stream political party of Denmark it is imperative to understand the main factors which could have been involved in the significant shift of its approach towards refugees and immigrants. This thesis will use a proper theoretical framework while using the "Integrated theory of Party goals and Party Change" by Robert Harmel and Kenneth Janda. The theory will help us in understanding the dynamics of the party structure of a main stream party when it takes a shift in its party position. The theoretical framework will provide us the factors which could be the possible reasons for a party's shift in its ideology. The main aim is to understand those reasons and to analyze them with the policy shift of the Social Democrats in the elections of 2019.

According to the interest I mentioned above for my thesis and research the Research Question of my thesis is as follows:-

**THE POLICY OF DANISH SOCIAL DEMOCRATS PARTY IN THE LAST 25 YEARS (1994-2019) TOWARDS REFUGEES & IMMIGRATION AND WHY THE DANISH SOCIAL DEMOCRATS PARTY SHIFTED THEIR PARTY POLICY ON REFUGEES AND IMMIGRATION BEFORE THE ELECTION OF 2019?**

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN**

This chapter presents the methodology which will be used in writing this thesis. The main sources will be the secondary sources such as books, research articles published in the political sciences journals, official websites of Danish Political Parties, Statistics Denmark, UNHCR and other official websites of Denmark providing accurate information on Danish Asylum Seeking Laws. Therefore, the main focus will be using the secondary data and all possible internet sources related to the intended research areas which will provide adequate and relevant data aimed to structure this thesis.

### **STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS**

The First chapter will give the introduction of the Thesis and will present the research question of the Thesis. It will also include the Methodology regarding the tools through which the research of this thesis has been conducted along with the Structure of the thesis.

The second chapter of the thesis will give a brief historical view of the immigration and refugee policies of the Social Democrats party of the past 25 years i.e. from 1994-2019. The chapter will briefly explain the important laws and legislations the Social Democrats approved or opposed while being in the Government or in the opposition. This will give us an idea of the transformation of its ideology towards refugees and immigrants within this time period.

The Third Chapter will present the Theoretical Approach through which we will be able to construct our case. The Integrated theory of policy change and party goals by Robert Harmel and Kenneth Janda will be used in this thesis. It will explain four factors, which forces a political party to shift from its original ideology. Different approaches of political scientist's, authors and researchers towards mainstream political parties' structure will also be used. Further this chapter will formulate 4 Models and out of those 4 models, the most relevant Model or Model's will be selected which will be in complete relevance with our desired main stream party and will describe the concrete reasons in the shift of the political party's ideology.

The Fourth Chapter will be the application and analyzing of the relevant model or model's formulated in the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter on the Danish Social Democrats Party. With the help of applying and analyzing the relevant model or model's we will be able to find the reasons on why the Social Democrats Party took a political shift while moving its policy from left wing to a more right leaning towards refugees and immigrants before the election.

In the Fifth Chapter, I will wrap up the conclusion of all the chapters and will conclude the thesis with all the important findings within all the four chapters and will provide the references in the very end.

## CHAPTER 2

### IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE POLICIES OF SOCIAL DEMOCRATS FROM 1994-2019

This chapter will give a full back ground of the Denmark's Social Democrats party and its party policy on immigration and refugees from the year 1994 till 2019. The Social Democrats have been in the Government or in the Opposition during the past 25 years. The last 25 years will be divided into proper year wise phases which will give the important info regarding the legislations done for the refugees and immigrants and the stance of Social Democrats towards it while being in the opposition or in the government. As their political approach on the refugees and immigrants took a shift from left-wing to the right-wing in the last 5 years and also proposed a new policy for refugees and immigration before the elections of 2019. A detailed look of the Social Democrats stance towards immigrants and refugees in the past 25 years and its impact in the elections will help us in finding the possible reasons which forced the Social Democrats to change their party policy towards the refugees and immigration issue before the 2019 elections.

#### BACK GROUND OF DANISH SOCIAL DEMOCRATS PARTY

The Social Democrats Party is Denmark's biggest party at the local, regional and national level in the Parliament<sup>1</sup>. The party has 3 out of 13 Danish seats in the EU Parliament. The current party leader is Mette Frederiksen. The party was established in the autumn of 1871 by Louis Pio, Harald Brix and Paul Geleff. In 1924, it became the biggest party in the parliament and had its first term of Government with Thorvald Stauning as its Prime Minister. Since then the party has played a key role in influencing the Danish society while being an integral part of the Danish politics

The Social Democratic Party is historically the largest Danish political party as it led most Danish Governments from 1930's to early 1980's<sup>2</sup>. After the 1980's coalitions of non-socialist parties which were headed by Conservative People's Party and the Liberal Party governed Denmark till 1993. The Social Democrats then regained power and handled the country's affairs till 2001. Afterwards a center right Liberal-Conservative coalition held power from 2001 to 2011. The Social Democrats came into power again in 2011 while heading a center-left coalition Government. In 2015 elections it lost the elections and became the opposition once again.

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<sup>1</sup>The Social Democrat Party, available at the *Social Democrats Website*

<[www.socialdemokratiet.dk/da/partiet/in-english-the-social-democratic-party](http://www.socialdemokratiet.dk/da/partiet/in-english-the-social-democratic-party)> Accessed on April 25, 2020.

<sup>2</sup> Hans Folke, Christian Nokkentved and Michael I.A.Linton, "Denmark", *Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc.*, Accessed on April 27, 2020, <[www.britannica.com/place/Denmark/Denmark-since-the-1990s](http://www.britannica.com/place/Denmark/Denmark-since-the-1990s)>.



In June 2019 the then Danish Prime Minister Rasmussen from the Liberal party called for the parliamentary elections. At that time the core issues during the election campaign were Danish welfare state, climate change and also the immigration policy<sup>3</sup>. Mette Frederiksen the leader of the Social Democrats in her election campaign pledged on increasing public spending and to make necessary reductions in the greenhouse emissions. She reversed her party's stance on immigration and promised a more hardline approach while proposing strict laws for the immigrants and refugees in her election campaign which later on appealed to the anti-immigration voters of the Danish People's Party. It finished first at the polls capturing 26.2% of the votes with 48 seats. It formed Government with the support of other center left parties like the Socialist People's Party, Social-Liberal Party and Red-Green Alliance. Mette Frederiksen being the head of this alliance became the youngest Prime Minister of Denmark.<sup>4</sup>

### SHIFT IN SOCIAL DEMOCRATS POLICY TOWARDS REFUGEES AND IMMIGRATION

According to the sources I gathered for the historical background of the Social Democrats Party the Social Democrats were considered as a Humanist and an internationalist party which accepted the responsibility to receive the asylum seekers and to integrate the foreign migrants into the Danish society<sup>4</sup>. According to Sune Haugbolle in his article on policy shift taken by the Social Democrats towards Immigration, he claims that the last two decades the far right Danish political parties created a lot of pressure while cracking down on immigration through their strict policies all in the aim of protecting its welfare status and social harmony. These policies were heavily criticized by the left-wing parties including the largest party, the Social Democrats. The current party head Frederiksen has been a stern critic of Denmark's tough stance towards immigrants in the early 2000's and has completely denounced this policy considering it to be the "toughest in Europe"<sup>5</sup>.

During the 2000's the Social Democrats critical strategy was to prevent its supporters from going towards the Danish People Party, which always took a more strict stance towards refugees and immigrants. Both parties have a vote bank amongst the working and middle class voters<sup>6</sup>. In the 2000's the Social Democrats lost two consecutive elections from 2001- 2011 and an estimated 5-10% of their voters to the Danish People's Party. The Social Democrats under the leadership of Helle Thorning-Schmidt<sup>7</sup> (who also served as the Danish Prime Minister from 2011-2015) began to change their stance on the immigration policy.

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<sup>3</sup> Karina Kosiara Pedersen, "Stronger core, weaker fringes: the Danish general election 2019," *West European Politics* 43 no. 4 (2020) 1014, Doi: 10.1080/01402382.2019.1655920.

<sup>4</sup> Hans Folke, Christian Nokkentved and Michael I.A.Linton, "Denmark", *Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc.*, Accessed on April 27, 2020, <[www.britannica.com/place/Denmark/Denmark-since-the-1990s](http://www.britannica.com/place/Denmark/Denmark-since-the-1990s)>.

<sup>5</sup> Sune Haugbolle, "Did the Left Really Win in Denmark," *In Foreign Policy Website*, Published on June 7, 2019, <[www.foreignpolicy.com/2019/06/07/did-the-left-really-win-in-denmark-mette-frederiksen-social-democrats-danish-peoples-party-venstre-immigration-asylum/](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/2019/06/07/did-the-left-really-win-in-denmark-mette-frederiksen-social-democrats-danish-peoples-party-venstre-immigration-asylum/)> Accessed on April 29, 2020.

<sup>6</sup> The Local Dk, "Analysis: How Immigration shift was key to Social Democrats victory in Danish election," *In the Local Dk Website*, Published on June 6, 2019, <[www.thelocal.dk/20190606/analysis-how-shift-in-immigration-stance-was-key-to-social-democrat-Danish-election-victory](http://www.thelocal.dk/20190606/analysis-how-shift-in-immigration-stance-was-key-to-social-democrat-Danish-election-victory)> Accessed on April 28, 2020.

<sup>7</sup> Sune Haugbole, "Did the Left Really Win in Denmark," *In the Foreign Policy Website*, Published on June 7, 2019, <[www.foreignpolicy.com/2019/06/07/did-the-left-really-win-in-denmark-mette-frederiksen-social-democrats-danish-peoples-party-venstre-immigration-asylum/](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/2019/06/07/did-the-left-really-win-in-denmark-mette-frederiksen-social-democrats-danish-peoples-party-venstre-immigration-asylum/)> Accessed on April 29, 2020.

According to Sune Haugbolle the Social Democrats adjusted the immigration policy towards a more restrictive approach as having a more socialist and humanist approach towards refugees and immigrants became a reason of their defeat in the elections which took place from 2001-2011<sup>8</sup>. According to Sidsel Overgaard<sup>9</sup> in her article on the 2019 Denmark's elections she states that during the Parliamentary elections of 2015 the populist anti-immigrant Danish People's Party's support increased to 21% and was only a few percentages behind the Social Democrats. In the 2015 elections the DPP got enough votes and with their support the then center-right government gained more power in the parliament. She further explains in her article on the 2019 Denmark's elections<sup>10</sup> that most of the voters of the DPP in 2015 elections were former Social Democrats supporters which shifted from the Social Democrats to the Danish People's Party as the Social Democrats did not come up with an active restrictive policy towards refugees and immigrants.

The Social Democrats under Frederiksen's leadership changed their stance and became more restrictive<sup>11</sup> in their approach towards refugees and immigrants as for e.g. they supported the previous Government in a controversial plan which was to stop accepting the annual quota of the UN refugees. This highlighted the shift in their immigration policy which moved its focus from integration to returning migrants to their countries of origin. Afterwards they supported the previous government policy of seizing cash and other valuables of the refugees in order to spend for their stay in Denmark. They also proposed for the closure of the asylum centers in Denmark and suggested to detain the asylum seekers offshore while establishing facilities in North African countries.

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<sup>8</sup> Sune Haugbole, "Did the Left Really Win in Denmark," in *Foreign Policy Website*, Published on June 7, 2019, <[www.foreignpolicy.com/2019/06/07/did-the-left-really-win-in-denmark-mette-frederiksen-social-democrats-danish-peoples-party-venstre-immigration-asylum/](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/2019/06/07/did-the-left-really-win-in-denmark-mette-frederiksen-social-democrats-danish-peoples-party-venstre-immigration-asylum/)> Accessed on April 29, 2020.

<sup>9</sup> Sidsel Overgaard, "In Denmark's Election, A Shift to the Left-Unlike in much of Europe," In *NPR Website*, Published on June 7, 2019, <[www.npr.org/2019/06/07/730286066/in-denmarks-election-a-shift-to-the-left-unlike-in-much-of-europe](http://www.npr.org/2019/06/07/730286066/in-denmarks-election-a-shift-to-the-left-unlike-in-much-of-europe)> Accessed on April 30, 2020.

<sup>10</sup> Sidsel Overgaard, "In Denmark's Election, A Shift to the Left-Unlike in much of Europe," In *NPR Website* Published on June 7, 2019, <[www.npr.org/2019/06/07/730286066/in-denmarks-election-a-shift-to-the-left-unlike-in-much-of-europe](http://www.npr.org/2019/06/07/730286066/in-denmarks-election-a-shift-to-the-left-unlike-in-much-of-europe)> Accessed on April 30, 2020.

<sup>11</sup> Sune Haugbole, "Did the Left Really Win in Denmark," In *Foreign Policy Website*, Published on June 7, 2019, <[www.foreignpolicy.com/2019/06/07/did-the-left-really-win-in-denmark-mette-frederiksen-social-democrats-danish-peoples-party-venstre-immigration-asylum/](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/2019/06/07/did-the-left-really-win-in-denmark-mette-frederiksen-social-democrats-danish-peoples-party-venstre-immigration-asylum/)> Accessed on April 29, 2020.

In the next sub-chapter, we will take a deeper look into the legislations done for the refugees and immigrants from the year 1994-2019 and the stance of Social Democrats towards them while being in government and in opposition. The main focus will be on the stance of Social Democrats as how they proposed new laws for refugees and immigrants (being in government) and which laws they opposed while being in the opposition. This will help us in making an idea of how their stance changed within this time period

## **IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE POLICIES IN SOCIAL DEMOCRATS GOVERNMENT (1994-2001)**

### **FROM 1992-1994: IN OPPOSITION**

In 1992 when the Civil war broke out in former Yugoslavia almost 9000 asylum seekers entered Denmark. In November 1992 the “Yugoslav Act” was passed which provided the temporary residence permit to the people of former Yugoslavia through the (Act of Parliament L933 of 28/09/1992). This act was supported by **the Social Democrats Party** in the Parliament. This new law was in accordance with the Section 1 of Alien act i.e. particularly for the people who were in urgent need of medical treatment.<sup>12</sup> The spontaneous asylum seekers (Section 15) could obtain temporary residence permits in Denmark. The law further stated that these people had no such right of family reunification but the rules could be made a little easier if there are any special cases of humanitarian nature for spouses and children which were minors (Section 4, subsection 4a).<sup>13</sup> Initially the act only applied to the spontaneous asylum seekers who had arrived in Denmark before December 1992. Afterwards the Social Democrats also supported the amendment in this act which was done in June 1993. This act was meant to cover the needs of those asylum seekers who arrived after that date as well. The Social Democrats also supported the Government which initiated an invitation scheme which was introduced in accordance with (Section 15a) for the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina who were in great need for protection and could be granted temporary residence in Denmark if they were not given protection anywhere else (Act of Parliament L459 of 30/06/1993).<sup>14</sup>

### **FROM 1994-1997: THE IMPORTANT LAWS PASSED IN SOCIAL DEMOCRATS GOVERNMENT**

When the Social Democrats formed the Government in September 1994<sup>15</sup> they continued the above mentioned scheme which the previous Government initiated. In this context a local office was made fully operational in Zagreb which had the authority to issue temporary residence permits. At the same time a visa application requirement was started for all the people from Bosnia and Herzegovina. By the end of 1994 the first Bosnian refugees who arrived in Denmark in 1992 had been in the country for 2 years and at that time the time limit for the asylum claims cases which were under process got expired.

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<sup>12</sup> Camilla Hvidtfeldt and Marie Louise Schultz-Nielsen, “Refugees and asylum seekers in Denmark 1992–2016,” *The Rockwool Foundation Research Unit* 133 (2018) 48.

<sup>13</sup> Rikke Hvilshøj, “Aliens (Consolidation) Act,” *Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs*, Act No. 945 (2006) 3.

<sup>14</sup> Hvidtfeldt and Nielsen. Ibid. P.48.

<sup>15</sup> Archives, “The Danish Parliament,” *Elections 1994*, accessed on April 26, 2020, Available at <[http://archive.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/arc/2087\\_94.htm](http://archive.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/arc/2087_94.htm)>.

To provide solution for this problem the Social Democrats Government passed a new provision in the Alien Act in January 1995 (Section 9, subsection 2, paragraph 5) and the new Act was called “Bosnian Act” which helped the asylum seekers whose visa applications got expired. This act meant that those Bosnian refugees whose application for asylum had been refused would be granted temporary residence permits (Act of Parliament L34 of 18/01/1996) which would become permanent after two years.<sup>16</sup>

The earlier provisions for accepting refugees from the areas under conflict were amended to a Quota Scheme in April 1996 through the (Act of Parliament L327 of 30/04/1996). In the same year there were more administrative changes made by the Social Democratic Government towards the asylum seeking process. As they were aimed to make the processing of asylum seeking cases more efficient. These changes were also related to the working of Refugee Council to providing counselling to the asylum seekers. Further, the Danish Immigration Service was given the charge of hearing the asylum cases, which earlier the Police department was handling through the (Act of Parliament L381 of 14/06/1996).<sup>17</sup>

It is to be noted here that during the 1994 parliamentary elections all the right wing parties of Denmark were quite outspoken on anti-immigration in their election campaigns<sup>18</sup>. Social Democrats on the other hand chose to have a dismissal towards the anti-immigrant rhetoric. When the Social Democrats formed the government, the Social Democrats Party head and the then Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen claimed that there has been some very positive features in his government’s refugee policy. The most important one was that the refugees who came from the former Yugoslavia were returning to their country. Further his government has taken proper measures in ensuring that the “false refugees” which did not have the proper documentation and reasons would be sent back. Afterwards the right-wing parties carried on their anti-immigrant stance in the Danish politics but the Social Democrats with their law making in the parliament for the immigrants and the refugees chose a strategy of dismissal towards the anti-immigrant rhetoric<sup>19</sup>.

From the above mentioned facts we can have a very clear understanding that when the Social Democrats took over the government in 1994 the Yugoslavian refugee crisis was on the rise. They continued previous government’s policies and initiated easier laws in order to facilitate the asylum seekers.

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<sup>16</sup> Camilla Hvidtfeldt and Marie Louise Schultz-Nielsen, “Refugees and asylum seekers in Denmark 1992–2016,” *The Rockwool Foundation Research Unit* 133 (2018) 48.

<sup>17</sup> Hvidtfeldt and Nielsen. Ibid. P.48.

<sup>18</sup> Kristina Boreus, “Including or Excluding Immigrants: The Impact of Right-Wing Populism in Denmark and Sweden,” In: *Diversity, Inclusion and Citizenship in Scandinavia*, ed. Bo Bengtsson, Per Strombald and Anne-Helen Bay (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010), P.9.

<sup>19</sup> Boreus. Ibid. P.10.

## **1997-2001: ENTRY INTO DUBLIN CONVENTION AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF KOSOVO EMERGENCY ACT BY THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS GOVERNMENT**

On September 1, 1997 the Social Democrats government brought the Dublin Convention into force in Denmark with the aim of handling the Asylum cases in one EU country only namely the first EU country in which the Asylum seeker entered. This meant that if a foreign national tried to seek asylum in Denmark then he or she would go through a proper interview. The interview was used to demonstrate the basis for refusing entry by sending the asylum seeker to another safe third country or by transferring that asylum seeker to another EU member state under the Dublin Convention if it had arrived through another EU country. It was the responsibility of that EU country to handle the case of asylum of that individual on which it first arrived<sup>20</sup>.

If the asylum seeker came directly into Denmark then the asylum seeker would be needed to fill out an application form and then was summoned for an interview with the Danish Immigration Service. After the interview an assessment was made which determined that whether that applicant is at risk or is facing any kind of persecution which falls under the provisions of Geneva Convention or the Danish Alien Act. The assessment was partly based on the information, which is provided by the asylum seeker. The Danish Immigration Service further would investigate the case and circumstances of the asylum seeker and through the findings they would grant or refuse the asylum application, which used to go through proper scrutiny.<sup>21</sup>

At the same time, Denmark joined the Schengen Agreement which was mostly based on the Dublin Agreement and did not bring any major changes. The Social Democratic Government brought some changes in the Danish Alien Act in July 1998. It emphasized that the residence permits which were granted under Section 7, subsection 2 of the Danish Alien Act required proper basis which “involved a well-founded fear of persecution or similar injustice”.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Camilla Hvidtfeldt and Marie Louise Schultz-Nielsen, “Refugees and asylum seekers in Denmark 1992–2016,” *The Rockwool Foundation Research Unit* 133 (2018) 49.

<sup>21</sup> PLS Ramboll Management Study, “The Country Profile: Denmark,” *The European Commission* (2001) 14, accessed on April 28, 2020 <[https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/e-library/docs/pdf/denmark\\_final\\_en\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/e-library/docs/pdf/denmark_final_en_en.pdf)>.

<sup>22</sup> Rikke Hvilshøj, “Aliens (Consolidation) Act,” *Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs*, Act No. 945 (2006) 3.

Changes were also made in the family reunification and the issuance of the permanent residence permits through the (Act of Parliament L473 of 01/07/1998). The changes in the family reunification rules required the resident spouse to provide the financial support for the spouse entering the country. On the other hand, the resident spouse should have held a permanent residence permit in Denmark for a minimum of 3 years thus a total of 6 years of residence in total. The possibilities of refusing the cases of family reunification increased in which the immigration authorities had slightest doubts of a pro forma or forced marriage.<sup>23</sup>

The Social Democrats Government passed the Kosovo Emergency Act in April 1999 through the (Act of Parliament L251 of 28/04/1999). This new legislation meant that Denmark could take a fixed quota of displaced people from Kosovo (the former Yugoslavia) who were still in Kosovo or in nearby areas. The residence permits, which were issued through this legislation, were temporary but were renewable after 6 months. This legislation also covered the spontaneous asylum seekers from Kosovo who could be in need of temporary protection; it was also mentioned in (Article 9, sub section 9e).<sup>24</sup>

In March 2000 the UNHCR issued new recommendations which concerned the displaced Kosovo Albanians. As the majority of them were now able to return home but in some cases there were special circumstances which meant that they still needed protection. The Kosovo Emergency Act was redrawn in May 2000 by the Social Democrats Government. The temporary scheme ended and new laws were made in the Alien Act for people who still needed temporary protection (Act of Parliament L427 of 31/05/2000). During the same time the rules for family reunification with a spouse were made stricter with the introduction of a new clause called “attachment requirement”. It meant that the couple needs to have the same level of attachment for Denmark which they have for their own country. Furthermore a requirement for family reunification was also introduced which stated that the family member who is a resident in Denmark should have an adequate living accommodation at his or her proposal (Act of Parliament L424 of 31/05/2000)<sup>25</sup>

The time period from 1997-2001 indicates to us that the Social Democrats government took some cautionary measures towards refugees after the implementation of the Dublin convention. Further they passed new laws for family reunification which required more additional conditions to be fulfilled. This showed the start of a cautionary approach of Social Democrats towards refugees and immigrants as they were shifting it from an easier policy to a bit cautious stance.

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<sup>23</sup> Camilla Hvidtfeldt and Marie Louise Schultz-Nielsen, “Refugees and asylum seekers in Denmark 1992–2016,” *The Rockwool Foundation Research Unit* 133 (2018) 49.

<sup>24</sup> Rikke Hvilshøj, “Aliens (Consolidation) Act,” *Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs*, Act No. 945 (2006) 10.

<sup>25</sup> Hvidtfeldt and Nielsen. *Ibid.* P.50.

## GENERAL ELECTIONS OF 2001 AND THE RISE OF DANISH PEOPLE'S PARTY

The general elections in Denmark were held in November 2001. The right-wing parties namely the Danish Liberal Party and the conservatives won the elections and formed the government with the support of the emerging Danish People's Party. The Danish People's Party<sup>26</sup> took the anti-immigrant stance to another level and this stance resulted in the unprecedented rise of the Danish People's Party in the opinion polls before and during the election campaign. The anti-immigrant policy campaign was adopted mostly by all the parties even the outgoing coalition government which was led by the Social Democratic Party tried to highlight their tightening policies toward refugees and immigrants during their campaign but it did not appeal to their voters as they lost the elections. The Social Democrats party suffered and continued to suffer in the next election too as the internal division between the "humanists" and the ones who were in favor of a more restrictive immigration policies increased. The Social Democrats were highly criticized by its voters and supporters for not having a coherent and distinct restrictive policy towards refugees and immigrants<sup>27</sup>.

The Danish People's Party gained a significant growth in its voters from (7% in 1998 elections to 12%) in the 2002 elections which made them the third largest party in the Danish parliament<sup>28</sup>. The success in the elections did not give them any higher posts in the governing system but the new right-wing coalition of the Liberals and the Conservatives depended heavily on the support of the Danish People Party. As in 2002<sup>29</sup> with the support of the Danish People's Party the then government passed some new tough laws for the refugees and immigrants.

The Danish People's party at that time was emerging to be the new nationalist party of Denmark. Most of its voters support did not come from the far-right wing but from the traditional voters of the Social Democrats<sup>30</sup> and the left wing parties, which wanted a restrictive immigration and asylum policies. As in the elections, a quarter of the voters of the Danish People's Party were (the) former voters of the Social Democrats and 10-12% were the supporters of the other left-wing Socialist People's Party<sup>31</sup>.

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<sup>26</sup> Eva Ostergaard-Nielsen, "Counting the Cost: Denmark's Changing Migration Policies," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 27 no.2 (2003) 448.

<sup>27</sup> Nielsen. Ibid. P.449.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid P. 449.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid P. 449.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid P. 449.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid P. 449.

## FROM 2002-2006: WHEN SOCIAL DEMOCRATS WERE IN OPPOSITION

### THE COALITION GOVERNMENT OF DANISH LIBERAL PARTY AND CONSERVATIVES

In November 2001 the then existing Danish Government which was a coalition Government made up by the Social Democrats and Social Liberals were replaced by the Danish Liberal Party and the Conservatives<sup>32</sup>. The Social Democrats were then in the opposition and they supported the then Liberal Government in the introduction of the “age 24 rule”<sup>33</sup>. The “Age 24 Rule” required both the spouses to have reached the age of 24 years only then they could be eligible for the family reunification. For refugees (also of B status) at that time it was possible to have exemption from the above rules if they married before fleeing their country. Later the Age 24 rule was further modified and it gave exemptions to the refugees who got married after fleeing their home country. The Social Democrats along with the other parties supported the “Age 24 rule” as they considered it a protection for young women and men who are forced to get married in an early age by their parents also they considered it that this rule will keep the immigration cases down towards family reunification<sup>34</sup>. The Social Democrats backed both the reasons related to the “Age 24 rule”.

The Social Democrats supported the rules meant for immigrants who were willing to come to Denmark for Study, Internship and Au-Pair work and new schemes were introduced to attract highly qualified labor. In June 2003 the immigration laws were made more flexible for the immigrants. As they got the possibility to gain permanent residence status after 5 years and in some cases within 3 years which used to take 7 years. This was because of the political desire to provide benefits for immigrants to become integrated into Danish society more quickly. It was beneficial for the ones who were part of Danish labor market throughout their period of residence this was done through the (Act of Parliament L425 of 10/06/2003) the Social Democrats also supported this law in the parliament.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Kristina Boreus, “Including or Excluding Immigrants: The Impact of Right-Wing Populism in Denmark and Sweden,” In: *Diversity, Inclusion and Citizenship in Scandinavia*, ed. Bo Bengtsson, Per Strombald and Anne-Helen Bay (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010) 13.

<sup>33</sup> Jorgen Andersen, “Restricting Access to Social Protection for Immigrants in the Danish Welfare State,” *Benefits*, 15 (2007) 258

<sup>34</sup> Kristina Boreus, “Including or Excluding Immigrants: The Impact of Right-Wing Populism in Denmark and Sweden,” In: *Diversity, Inclusion and Citizenship in Scandinavia*, ed. Bo Bengtsson, Per Strombald and Anne-Helen Bay (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010) 16.

<sup>35</sup> Camilla Hvidtfeldt and Marie Louise Schultz-Nielsen, “Refugees and asylum seekers in Denmark 1992–2016,” *The Rockwool Foundation Research Unit* 133 (2018) 51.



The Social Democrats also supported the new reforms, which were introduced from July 1, 2003 in the labor market activation and education for the adult asylum seekers<sup>36</sup>. For this purpose the asylum seekers had to sign an agreement with the government authority responsible for housing the asylum seekers interested in education and labor market activation program. The asylum seeker were also given this opportunity that if they will abide by the agreement they will also get the facility of having the supplementary allowance. In this program the individuals who were over 18 years of age had to participate in the courses in the Danish language, culture and society. Also all asylum seekers got the basic social welfare allowance. Further, in January 2004 the “28 years”<sup>37</sup> rule was introduced. This was relevant for the family reunification of spouses and it meant that those who have lived in Denmark for 28 years are exempted from the requirement of “Degree of attachment to Denmark”. This was done through the (Act of Parliament L1204 of 27/12/2003). After Denmark entered into EURDAC and the Dublin II Regulation in 2005, it became a general rule to take the fingerprints of asylum seekers. This was in order to check if they had earlier sought for the asylum in any other EU member state this was done through the (Act of Parliament L323 of 18/05/2005).

During the election campaigns in 2007 the Social Democrats did not campaign on immigration issues the way the other right wing parties were doing. The Social Democrats suggested that the asylum seekers who have been rejected asylum should be allowed to work in Denmark<sup>38</sup>.

The Social Democrats also came into support of the rejected Iraqi asylum applicants<sup>39</sup>, who were rejected along with their families which included children. They were waiting in the asylum centers for a long time and were not allowed to work or live outside the camps. They could not be sent back to Iraq because of the on-going armed conflict. Both the government and the opposition parties were thinking on the measures to reduce these refugees situation. The Social Democrats suggested that these families should be allowed to live outside the camps along with their children but also should be allowed to work. This was widely criticized by almost all the right wing political parties who reacted that allowing the asylum denied people to work and live outside the camp will attract more refugees from all over the world. In the election campaign of 2007 almost all the parties agreed on the anti-immigrant stance which helped the right-wing parties to put their main opponent the Social Democrats under immense pressure towards rhetorical agreement on anti-immigrant stance. The Social Democrats chose their strategy of dismissal on the anti-immigrant stance which seemed to be their preferred strategy in the election campaign of 2007 too.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Camilla Hvidtfeldt and Marie Louise Schultz-Nielsen, “Refugees and asylum seekers in Denmark 1992–2016,” *The Rockwool Foundation Research Unit* 133 (2018) 52.

<sup>37</sup> Hvidtfeldt and Nielsen. Ibid. P.52.

<sup>38</sup> Archives, “The Danish Parliament,” Elections 2007, accessed on 28-04-20  
<[http://archive.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/arc/2087\\_07.htm](http://archive.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/arc/2087_07.htm)>.

<sup>39</sup> Kristina Boreus, “Including or Excluding Immigrants: The Impact of Right-Wing Populism in Denmark and Sweden,” In: *Diversity, Inclusion and Citizenship in Scandinavia*, ed. Bo Bengtsson, Per Strombald and Anne-Helen Bay (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010) 15.

<sup>40</sup> Boreus. Ibid. P.15.

The time period from 2002-2006 showed that the Social democrats did not opt for a more strict immigrant policy but they were more cautious in their stance as they supported the Age 24 rule which was meant to prevent earlier marriages of young girls and boys of the immigrant families. They supported the program for the refugees' education and labor market showed that they were supportive of a more proper process of refugees' integration in the system. Still they did not opt for a strict immigration policy in their election campaign of 2007.

## **FROM 2007- 2011: IN OPPOSITION**

### **NEW LAWS OF INTEGRATION TESTS AND POINTS SYSTEM FOR REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS**

In April 2007 the Liberal's government passed new laws for family reunification. As in the new rules the adult family members coming to Denmark for the purpose of family reunification were not simply to sign an Integration agreement or declaration. But they also had to pass an integration examination which required the testing of the knowledge of the Danish language and society. An exemption from these requirements was only provided if the refusal of a residence permit came into conflict with the Article 8 of European Convention on Human Rights. This new law was passed through the (Act of Parliament L379 of 25/04/2007). The Social Democrats opposed this law as they terminated it when they came into government in 2012.<sup>41</sup>

The Liberal-Conservative coalition parties won the elections in November 2007. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2007 the Liberal-Conservative coalition government was formed which was supported by the Danish People's Party and the New Alliance<sup>42</sup>. In March 2010 the Point system<sup>43</sup> was introduced for the purpose of permanent residence. An applicant could be eligible for permanent residence after 4 years of residence in Denmark and also had to score a total of 100 points. Out of these 70 points were for the fulfilment of compulsory requirements such as employment, ability to show the funds to support oneself and passing of Danish examination. The remaining 30 points were supplementary requirements like active citizenship and other integration activities, this was done through the (Act of Parliament L572 of 31/05/2010). In July 2011<sup>44</sup> the point system was also introduced for family reunification. It required the spouse living outside Denmark to fulfill a point requirement. For the people under 24 years of age they had to acquire 120 points and people who were above 24 had to get 60 points. The same amendment to the act of "Attachment Requirement" was also tightened up as the two spouses had to show "significantly greater" attachment to Denmark and not "just greater" which was earlier required. The guarantee sum was increased from DKK: 50,000/- to DKK: 100,000/- this was done through the (Act of Parliament L601 of 14/06/2011).

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<sup>41</sup> Camilla Hvidtfeldt and Marie Louise Schultz-Nielsen, "Refugees and asylum seekers in Denmark 1992–2016," *The Rockwool Foundation Research Unit* 133 (2018) 52-53.

<sup>42</sup> Archives, "The Danish Parliament," Elections 2007, accessed on 28-04-20  
<[http://archive.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/arc/2087\\_07.htm](http://archive.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/arc/2087_07.htm)>.

<sup>43</sup> Camilla Hvidtfeldt and Marie Louise Schultz-Nielsen, "Refugees and asylum seekers in Denmark 1992–2016," *The Rockwool Foundation Research Unit* 133 (2018) 53.

<sup>44</sup> Mons Bissenbakker, "Attachment Required: The Affective Governmentality of Marriage Migration in the Danish Aliens Act 2000–2018", *International Political Sociology*, (2019):8-9, Doi: 10.1093/ips/olz001.

The Social Democrats was in opposition from 2007-2011 and during this time frame they opposed almost all the laws mentioned above and specially the introduction of the points system required in family reunification and immigration. The next subchapter will highlight how the Social Democrats changed the above mentioned laws when they gained the government in 2011.

## **FROM 2011-2015: IN GOVERNMENT**

### **FROM 2012-2014: CHANGES IN LAWS UNDER THE COALITION GOVERNMENT OF SOCIAL DEMOCRATS, SOCIALIST PEOPLE'S PARTY AND SOCIAL LIBERALS**

In October 2011 a new coalition government of the radical left parties was formed in Denmark which consisted of Social Democrats, Socialist People's Party and the Social Liberals. Most of the tough laws<sup>45</sup> of the previous center right government were terminated or eased by this new government led by the Social Democrats. The point system for the family reunification and the immigration examination were terminated. They removed the application fees and decreased the language competence for the spouse coming to Denmark to lower intermediate. This was done through the (Act of Parliament L418 of 12/05/2012). The requirement of "significantly greater attachment to Denmark" required for the two spouses was also eased to only "greater attachment"<sup>46</sup>. The guarantee sum of DKK: 100,000/- which was earlier required was reduced to DKK: 50,000/-. The "28 year rule" was changed to "26 years rule" which gave exemption to the requirement of "attachment requirement" after 26 years of residence in Denmark. Further on the points system which was required for the permanent residence was terminated in 2012 through the (Act of Parliament L572 of 18/06/2012).

For refugees the Social Democrats government<sup>47</sup> brought some flexibility in the rule that they could obtain permanent residence after living in Denmark for 8 years even if they do not fulfill any other requirement. In May 2013, the asylum seekers who had lived in Denmark for at least 6 months were given permission to live and work outside the asylum centers through the (Act of Parliament L430 of 01/05/2013). The casework in the starting phase of the asylum process was transferred to the Immigration Service from the Police. Denmark signed up for the Dublin II regulation in June 2013 which like the previous Dublin Agreement explained that the applications from the asylum seekers should be processed in the first EU member state in which the asylum seeker first entered. The new regulation also gave great importance to the children in case they were unaccompanied and was asylum seekers through the (Act of Parliament L1619 of 26/12/2013). In February 2014 the coalition Government split as the Socialist People Party left the administration and a new government was formed by the Social Democrats and Social Liberals. In May 2014 change in the criteria of the selection of the quota refugee was made.

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<sup>45</sup> Camilla Hvidtfeldt and Marie Louise Schultz-Nielsen, "Refugees and asylum seekers in Denmark 1992–2016," *The Rockwool Foundation Research Unit* 133 (2018) 54.

<sup>46</sup> Hvidtfeldt and Nielsen. Ibid. P.54.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid. P.54.

The war in Syria increased the flow of asylum seekers to Denmark. In February 2015<sup>48</sup> the then Social Democrats government decided to introduce a new temporary protection status for certain groups of refugees whose situation in their home country was considered as arbitrary acts of violence and attacks on civilians. The Social Democrats initiated this law keeping in view that it will give more importance to the fact that this change does not expand access towards asylum in Denmark but simply grants temporary residence to a group of people who would become eligible for residence permit under the Section 7.2 of the Alien Act. It was done through the (Act of Parliament L153 of 18/02/2015) and was aimed at supporting only the people who fell under the refugee convention.

The time period 2011-2015 showed that the Social Democrats government not only ended the points system but also eased laws for the refugees as they could get permanent residence after 8 years of their stay in Denmark. They also initiated some laws in order to settle the Syrian refugees under the temporary protection status and did not take a strict stance in completing blocking the refugees from entering into Denmark.

### **DEFEAT IN 2015 ELECTIONS AND THE EMERGENCE OF DPP AS THE LARGEST CENTER RIGHT PARTY**

The general elections of 2015<sup>49</sup> brought undesirable results for the Social Democrats. They overtook the liberals while taking 47 seats and became the largest party in the parliament. However this result was not enough for them to form a government and to remain in the office. They won electorally but they lost the office as the “blue bloc” collectively gained higher votes. For the Social Democrats it was a great loss. The Social Democrats gained the voters of the Liberals whose seats decreased from the previous elections of 2011 and were reduced from 47 to 34.

This election again proved the acceptance (while raising more support for) of the Danish People’s Party’s nationalist approach<sup>50</sup> as they mostly campaigned on strict immigrant policy. Their message was well received by the public and they gained a significant increase in their votes from the previous elections. Their seats in the parliament increased from 22 to 37, which made them the largest party of the right-wing. The Party founder Pia Kjaergaard was replaced by Kristian Thulesen Dahl and this replacement became successful for the Danish People’s Party in the elections of 2015. The new party leader along with the other party members played the anti-immigration, anti-EU and nationalistic card extremely well during their campaign. The Danish People’s Party had attracted the most part of the dis-satisfied Liberal voters and they also gained the traditional voters of the Social Democrats who shifted to Danish People’s Party.

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<sup>48</sup> Camilla Hvidtfeldt and Marie Louise Schultz-Nielsen, “Refugees and asylum seekers in Denmark 1992–2016,” *The Rockwool Foundation Research Unit* 133 (2018) 55.

<sup>49</sup> Karina Kosiara Pedersen, “Tremors, no earthquake: the 2015 Danish parliamentary election,” *West European Politics*, 39:4(2016) 873.

<sup>50</sup> Pederson. *Ibid.* P.874.

With their loss in the 2015 elections the Social Democrats began to change their stance on immigration and refugees. Their change in stance could be seen in the next chapter where they favored all the restrictive laws of the then Liberal government while being in the opposition. Their change in stance is visible according to chapters mentioned below.

## **FROM 2015- 2019: IN OPPOSITION**

### **THE REFUGEE CRISIS AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATS SUPPORT TO THE LIBERAL GOVERNMENT**

In February 2016 the Social Democrats supported the then Liberal's Government's new rules<sup>51</sup> regarding family reunification which were made tough for the people who were under the temporary protection status as the qualifying time for family reunification was changed from one year to 3 years. The possibility of obtaining a legal residence changed from 5 to 6 years with a condition that the applicant must pass the Danish Language test (level2) instead of level 1. The applicant must provide the full time employment record of the past 2 and half years out of the last 3 years at the time of their application. The guarantee money was increased to 100,000 DKK/-. During this time, the Social Democrats party supported government and demanded for tightening the family reunification laws. It expected that the ones who will arrive after tough scrutiny would be more suitable for integration. The Social Democrats and the Danish People's Party gave preference to welfare over humanitarianism when they both agreed to have control spending over the family reunification cases. This was done through the (Act of Parliament L102 of 03/02/2016).

Further, it supported the government in the new law Article 40(9) of the Alien act<sup>52</sup>, which allowed the Police to seize the asylum seekers assets in order to cover the cost of refugee assistance like accommodation, food and health services. It further gave the right to the Police to take away all the valuables of the asylum seekers such as cash, gold or jewelry (dubbed as Jewelry Law) if it exceeded the amount of 1340 Euros on their arrival in Denmark. If the asylum seekers have adequate funds then the Danish Immigration Services will not provide any kind of financial help or state sponsored accommodation. The amendments in the law also abolished the provision for living outside the refugee camps after 6 months thus staying in the camp was made compulsory for all the asylum seekers.

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<sup>51</sup> Emily Cochran Bech, Karin Borevi and Per Mouritsen, "A civic turn in Scandinavian family migration policies: Comparing Denmark, Norway and Sweden," *Comparative Migration Studies* 5 no.7 (2017) 6-7, DOI 10.1186/s40878-016-0046-7.

<sup>52</sup> Rene Kreichauf, "Legal Paradigm Shift and Their Impacts on the Socio-Spatial Exclusion of Asylum Seekers in Denmark" In: *Geographies of Asylum in Europe and the Role of European Localities*, ed. B. Glorius and J. Doornik, *IMISCOE Research Series*, Springer, Cham, (2019) 55.

After the heavy influx of refugees<sup>53</sup> in Europe, the EU and Turkey entered into an agreement in March 2016 with an aim to slow the rate of refugees entering into Europe from Turkey to the nearby Greek islands. This agreement was supported by the Social Democrats along with other political parties of Denmark as it proved to be successful in a way that there was a big reduction in the number of refugees entering Greece. It proved helpful as in the year 2016 the gross numbers of asylum seekers were the lowest in the past years. However, it was felt later on that this reduction in the number of refugees entering from Greece is for a short while and a temporary solution as the refugees and migrants will take other routes like across the Mediterranean from Libya to Italy.

In May 2017<sup>54</sup> the Social Democrats also supported the government in the law which allowed Denmark to ignore the provisions of the Dublin III law and refuse the admission of refugees at the border during crisis situations. This law was known as “Emergency Break” and it could be prolonged for 4 months during a time of refugee crises, this was done through the (Act of Parliament 17/05/2017). Also in June 2017 a three piece of legislation was made through the (Act of Parliament L702, L703, and L704 of 08/06/2017). The laws were “Order and Discipline in accommodation centers for unaccompanied foreign children, strengthening the use of biometrics for the identity of foreign nationals in asylum cases and lastly increasing the financial support for the asylum seekers in case of repatriation”.

As I mentioned above with the loss in the elections of 2015 the Social Democrats began to change their stance on immigration and refugees policies. They approved of almost all the laws presented by the Liberal government. This showed that they were shifting to a more restrictive and tough immigrant policy as they approved all the tough laws mentioned above. The next subchapter will highlight the shift in their party policy on immigration and refugees and also the change in their leadership which proposed tougher stance.

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<sup>53</sup> Camilla Hvidtfeldt and Marie Louise Schultz-Nielsen, “Refugees and asylum seekers in Denmark 1992–2016,” *The Rockwool Foundation Research Unit* 133 (2018) 56.

<sup>54</sup> Hvidtfeldt and Nielsen. Ibid. P.56-57

## SHIFT IN IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE POLICY & VICTORY IN 2019 ELECTIONS

After losing the elections in 2015 and in response to the refugee crisis of 2015, Mette Frederiksen<sup>55</sup> became the new party head. She took a step further and planned the policy of immigration and refugees in accordance with the center-right Government's line. Social Democrats thus gradually adopted the policies of the far-right parties on immigration and refugees. During the time of 2015-2019 when they were in opposition they voted in favor of almost all the proposals of the center-right government which included the "Jewelry law", permitting the border guards to confiscate the personal assets in order to pay for the "Stay in Denmark." They also supported the "Handshake law" which was a compulsion for everyone to shake hands at the Danish citizenship ceremony. While supporting the center-right Government in the legislation of all these (strict) laws the Social Democrats came up with a proper and coherent immigration and refugee policy. Their new policy emphasized on strict entry control on one side and then further providing the ones who enter into Denmark with similar financial facilities like everybody else in Denmark. They also proposed massive investments in Africa and the Middle East so that the refugees originating from these areas could be stopped.

Since the Social Democrats during their 2015-2019 period moved rightward<sup>56</sup> on the immigration policies. They did not completely followed the policies of the Danish People's Party but they supported the Liberal led government in almost all the policies which were heavily influenced by the Danish People's Party. For the past decades, immigration has been the most important issue in almost all the Danish elections<sup>57</sup>. In the view of the Social Democrats the Danish society mostly supports a restrictive immigration policy so in order to seek the government a tough immigration policy is a pre-requisite.

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<sup>55</sup> Maj Jensen Christensen, "Danish Social Democrats form young and progressive government," *In Progressive Post Website* Published on July 3, 2019, <<https://progressivepost.eu/spotlights/danish-social-democrats-form-young-and-progressive-government>> Accessed on April 30, 2020.

<sup>56</sup> Karina Kosiara Pedersen, "Stronger core, weaker fringes: the Danish general election 2019," *West European Politics*, 43:4 (2020) 1014, Doi: 10.1080/01402382.2019.1655920.

<sup>57</sup> Pedersen. Ibid. P.1019.

As the DPP <sup>58</sup> sought to attract working class voters to the anti-immigrant right, the Social Democrats also opted for a more hardline policy which was not entirely similar but in line with (some of) the ideas of the Danish People's Party (as shown in the previous chapter sub-chapters). In the 2019 elections they campaigned with a more accurate immigration policy which provided proper solutions for the refugees and immigrants issues and thus this policy shift helped them in winning back the trust of their voters which in 2015 elections shifted and voted for the Danish People's Party.

This chapter helped us in understanding the immigration and refugees policies of the Social Democrats in the past 25 years. We can have a clear idea that while being in government as mentioned above in the periods from 1993-2001 and from 2011-2015 the Social Democrats led coalition government's initiated flexible rules for immigrants and did not do tough lawmaking for the immigrants and refugees. After losing the elections in 2015 and while noticing their core party voters shifting towards the parties which have a strict stance on immigration, they came to a point which demanded them to shift their political ideology and have a strict immigration policy (if they were to get the power back again). This gives us an opportunity to further elaborate the reasons of the possible ideological shift of the Social Democrats while analyzing it through the theoretical framework. The theoretical framework will help us understand the reasons, which push a mainstream political party to take a policy shift. The 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter of this thesis will theoretically analyze the factors involved in the political shift of the main stream political parties.

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<sup>58</sup> Sune Haugbole, "Did the Left Really Win in Denmark," *In Foreign Policy Website*, Published on June 7, 2019, <[www.foreignpolicy.com/2019/06/07/did-the-left-really-win-in-denmark-mette-frederiksen-social-democrats-danish-peoples-party-venstre-immigration-asylum/](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/2019/06/07/did-the-left-really-win-in-denmark-mette-frederiksen-social-democrats-danish-peoples-party-venstre-immigration-asylum/)> Accessed on April 29, 2020.



## CHAPTER 3

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND MODEL FORMATION

#### INTRODUCTION

In almost every election political parties shift their political positions. For example a right-wing conservative party can present a new vision for a welfare state and can show a positive attitude towards it. Likewise, a left wing Social Democratic Party could become more nationalist in its approach while taking a more right wing position. These changes exist in political environment and political science researchers are trying to find the answers on this question i.e. what makes a party to change its political stance or ideology before elections? There are possible (various) factors linked to this question and studies show how political parties deal with these factors i.e. loss of temporary voters, loss of core party voters, and loss in previous elections<sup>59</sup>. In order to have concrete info we need to understand these political dynamics theoretically which can help us in formulating such reasons and develop a strong research case.

#### THE INTEGRATED THEORY OF PARTY GOALS AND PARTY CHANGE

This thesis will use the Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change by Robert Harmel and Kenneth Janda. This theory<sup>60</sup> basically integrates two topics i.e party goals and party change. According to this theory political parties change their positions according to their party goals. This theory also assumes that all parties have multiple goals but there is one goal which is more important than any other goal. That one particular party goal (as mentioned in the theory) is called its primary goal.

The intergrated theory<sup>61</sup>also focuses on the fact that party change is not a usual phenomenon and it simply does not “just happen”. There is a complete thought process involved in the through out process while bringing slightest of a change in a party position. The decisions<sup>62</sup> to bring change in party policy also brings changes in the party structure and it faces a lot of resistance within the party. In order to bring a successful change in party policy (it) first of all requires a solid reason which mostly refers to observing the existing changes in the political environment and how bringing changes will effect the party and its coalition partners. The theory also points<sup>63</sup> on the external reasons in a political environment and their impacts on a particular party and which could become possible reasons for a party to setting its “primary goal”. This theory not only tries to explains those reasons but also explains the magnitude through which a party changes its party position.

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<sup>59</sup> James Adams, Michael Clark, Lawrence Ezrow, and Garrett Glasgow, 2004 “Understanding Change and Stability in Party Ideologies: Do Parties Respond to Public Opinion or to Past Election Results?,” *British Journal of Political Science* 34, No.4 (2004) 590. <[www.jstor.org/stable/4092291](http://www.jstor.org/stable/4092291)>.

<sup>60</sup> Robert Harmel and Kenneth Janda, “An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change” *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 6, No.3 (1994) 279, Doi: 10.1177/0951692894006003001.

<sup>61</sup> Harmel and Janda. Ibid. P.261.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid. P. 262.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid. P. 262.

With the external reasons<sup>64</sup> the theory includes different factors mentioned in the literature of political environment changes. In the text the theory lists some relevant external reasons such as constitutional reforms, provision for public funding and benefits, emergence of relevant new parties and of course the results of seats and votes gained/lost by the parties in the elections. These reasons could be considered as Social, economical and political changes which took place outside the party's domain. The external reasons like public funding and constitutional reforms are the "universal" reasons and is applied to all the political parties. The others like the previous election results and the emergence of new political parties directly effects a party and its policy structure.

The theory also states that as the political parties are basically conservative organizations<sup>65</sup>, any of these external reasons mentioned above could cause a party to change its stance or adopt a different ideology. The external reasons could catch the attention of someone in the party who could consider it a best fit reason and will emphasize that adopting or shifting the party policy is needed in order for the party to "do better" in the coming elections.

The external reasons some times could be so directly related to the party's "primary goal"<sup>66</sup> that it forces the party leadership or the decision makers to shift its position. The pressure sometimes could be exerted by the core party voters to go through a complete reevaluation of the party's policy in order to seek their primary goal.

The theory further explains some important points towards party goals. The theory identifies<sup>67</sup> that each party has its own "primary goal" and the primary goal varies from one party to another. Such goals may include (vote maximizing, office maximizing, representation of core party voters or their participation and policy/ideology)

The primary goal such as vote maximizing could also be considered as an external reason<sup>68</sup> towards a political party's shift in its position. As it will impact more on to the parties which are vote maximizers or whose primary goal is vote maximization rather than on the parties which are policy oriented.

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<sup>64</sup> Harmel and Janda. Ibid. P.267.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid. P. 267.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid. P. 268.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid. P. 265.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid. P. 266.

The theory also assumes that not all the political parties get affected<sup>69</sup> by the external reasons. It is because the external reasons only affects the parties whose primary goal is related to that reason and not all the parties share the same primary goals.

The theory further explains some alternative party goals<sup>70</sup> which could become the possible reasons or factors for a political party to change their political behavior or ideology. The very first is its strategies of vote maximization i.e. looking at previous electoral performance and how to increase its votes in the coming elections. The second is the primary goal of office maximization as some parties are more interested in gaining the hold of the government offices rather than seeking government.

The third alternative primary goal<sup>71</sup> which the theory mentions is for the parties which are policy or ideology seeking. Such parties stand for their ideology and winning election or losing votes is not that much important to them than their party policy or ideology. In such parties the top leadership or their coalition partners are more concerned about the policy purity (in connection to their ideological goals).

The fourth alternative goal<sup>72</sup> for a political party mentioned in the theory is the retaining of its core party voters. A democratic political party will always be concerned about its core party voters and supporters and will get affected if a majority of its party voters and supporters shift to another party. It also includes the shifting of its temporary voters which are the ones who can shift their affiliations from one election to another.

#### **THE 4 IMPORTANT GOALS**

I would be taking 4 important goals mentioned in the theory and also above to get a deeper understanding of the parties' primary goals and how parties adjust their positions with them. The important goals are **vote maximization or defeat in previous elections, shift of core / temporary party voters** and the factors involved in the ideological change of parties **when they lose the government office or when they are seeking it**. According to the theory these 4 goals are the possible factors which could become the possible (motives) for a party to have a shift in its policy in order to seek their ultimate goals. It is also possible that sometimes all these 4 goals could act like a combined reason for a party shifting its policy or maybe a single goal/factor out of these 4 could be a possible reason for a party's ideological and policy shift from its original stance. I would like to emphasize more on the alternative goals mentioned in the theory as it will help us in understanding the political party's policy change in accordance with the party's primary goals.

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<sup>69</sup> Harmel and Janda. Ibid. P.268.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid. P. 268.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid. P. 270.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid. P. 271.

Below I would like to explain in detail the 4 important reasons/factors mentioned in the integrated theory (involved in a party's change in policy) while referring to other studies as well.

### **CHANGE IN POLICY AFTER DEFEAT IN ELECTIONS**

According to the theory one of the major primary goals of a main stream political party is obtaining sufficient votes to gain the government control. A defeat in elections<sup>73</sup> or a poor performance in the elections could give a huge set back to a main stream political party whose basic aim is to gain maximum support and voters. A defeat in elections could possibly be, because of the drop of voter's support which in a bigger defeat could rise up to 20% or in a small defeat the loss of vote could be as low as 5%. According to Anthony Downs<sup>74</sup> it also explains the importance of vote seeking, he argues that "the main goal of every party is to obtain maximum votes and winning the elections as without votes and victory a party cannot form a government or even hold a government office". Deschouwer<sup>75</sup> also emphasizes in his study of electoral defeats that "Electoral Defeat is considered to be the mother of change in a party's ideological behavior but only when the primary goal of a party is vote maximizing or being defeated in the elections". Thus the parties could change their positions or can adopt a policy which can save them from having a defeat in elections. This could become one of the factors in a policy shift of a party.

### **CHANGE IN POLICY TO GAIN GOVERNMENT OFFICE**

According to the theory<sup>76</sup> mostly main stream parties are more concerned in gaining the government office. Their focus is more inclined towards adopting or adjusting to the policies which could give them maximum votes in order to hold or regain a government office. Even in the situation of a coalition government, some main stream parties position themselves so well that they can put their terms and conditions towards the leading party of the coalition in order to have the government office of their own choice. Strom<sup>77</sup> also refers towards these parties and argues that some parties only contest elections in order to have an executive office as with these they can have a control over the governmental and sub-governmental appointments. These parties<sup>78</sup> have their own private aims and mostly in coalition governments the success of these parties is viewed through their participation in the cabinet government and also the number of ministries it gained. This is another vital reason for some main stream parties which change their political stance before elections.

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<sup>73</sup> Robert Harmel and Kenneth Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change" *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 6, No.3 (1994) 260, Doi: 10.1177/0951692894006003001.

<sup>74</sup> Edward C. Banfield, "Review of an Economic Theory of Democracy, by Anthony Downs," *Midwest Journal of Political Science* 2, no. 3 (Aug., 1958) 324, Doi: 10.2307/2109186.

<sup>75</sup> Kris Deschouwer, "The Survival of the Fittest: Measuring and Explaining Adaptation and Change of Political Parties," *European Consortium for Political Research, Limerick, Ireland* (1992) 9 (as cited in Harmel and Janda, 1994).

<sup>76</sup> Harmel and Janda. Ibid. P.270.

<sup>77</sup> Kaare Strom, "A Behavioral Theory of Competitive Political Parties," *American Journal of Political Science* 34, no.2 (1990) 567, Doi: 10.2307/2111461.

<sup>78</sup> Harmel and Janda. Ibid. P.273.

## CHANGE IN POLICY WHEN CORE PARTY VOTERS SHIFT

According to the integrated theory<sup>79</sup> most of the main stream parties' primary aim is to be very careful while planning its party policy as it directly relates to its core party voters. Such political parties ensure that they formulate such policies which are acceptable to its majority of the core party voters. The Integrated Theory<sup>80</sup> also emphasizes that the core party voter's may shift to the other rival party or parties because of various reasons for e.g. when the core party voters feel unsatisfied towards a political stance of their party and the rival party's approach is more acceptable to them and this gives them a reason to shift to the other party. A sudden shift of core party voters could decrease a main stream party's chances of winning the elections. Bruce<sup>81</sup> further emphasize that the party activists in America's presidential parties are mostly motivated by the implementation of the policies they voted for as this has a strong impact of their representation in the elections and also in the vote maximization.

Almond and Powel<sup>82</sup> also explain that the political party is a structure of accumulated interests of certain groups and societies. Its structure thus involves in ensuring that its voter's preferences are met. This is also a possible factor for a party to change its political position or to adjust its party stance. As adopting or shifting the party policy in line with their core party voters and supporters could increase the chances for a main stream party in winning the elections.

## CHANGE IN POLICY WHEN TEMPORARY VOTERS SHIFT

According to the integrated theory<sup>83</sup> mostly main stream parties are also concerned when their temporary voters or members shift to other parties. These are the party activists who mostly give funds to the party and occasionally assist the party while giving votes but their affiliation is not always consistent as they could leave the party whenever they feel they have better options provided by the other party. Zariski<sup>84</sup> also explains that these temporary activists may form a separate group or a wing within the party. The members of this wing or group share the same ideology or have a common identity they may have the same purpose and will act collectively in order to achieving their own goals. This could also serve as a reason for a party to shift its ideology.

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<sup>79</sup> Robert Harmel and Kenneth Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 6, No.3 (1994) 271, Doi: 10.1177/0951692894006003001.

<sup>80</sup> Harmel and Janda. Ibid. P.269.

<sup>81</sup> John M. Bruce, John A. Clark and John H. Kessel, "Advocacy Politics in Presidential Parties," *American Political Science Review* 85, no. 4 (1991) 1090, Doi: 10.2307/1963937.

<sup>82</sup> Gabriel A. Almond and G. Bingham Powell, "Evaluating Political Goods and Productivity," *International Political Science Review* 3, No. 2 (1982) 174-175, <[www.istor.org/stable/1600769](http://www.istor.org/stable/1600769)>.

<sup>83</sup> Robert Harmel and Kenneth Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 6, No.3 (1994) 274, Doi: 10.1177/0951692894006003001.

<sup>84</sup> Raphael Zariski, "Party Factions and Comparative Politics: Some Preliminary Observations." *Midwest Journal of Political Science* 4, no. 1 (1960) 33, Doi: 10.2307/2108754.

## STRUCTURE OF THE CHAPTER

In this chapter I will use these 4 goals/factors highlighted by the integrated theory of party goals and party change which will help us in understanding the key points/reasons involved in the change of policies parties go through before elections. As our main aim is to do research on the policy shift of the **mainstream political party** (the Social Democrats), I will emphasize on understanding the difference between the structure of a mainstream political party and the niche parties as both differ in their party structure. Next I will give a brief explanation of the party structure and internal dynamics involved in a main stream political party when it goes through policy shifts. Afterwards These 4 Factors will be discussed in detail; **No.1 Change in policy because of the loss of core party voters, No.2 Change in Policy because of the loss of Temporary Voters, No.3 Change in Policy because of defeat in previous election and lastly No.4 Change in Policy to gain government office.** With the help of the available literature, studies and empirical findings related to these 4 factors mentioned above I will formulate 4 Models which will determine the reasons of the shift in the political attitude of a mainstream political party. Towards the end of this chapter, we will be able to get the most suitable model or models, which will properly link to the situation (case study of the social democratic party) of the Social Democrats party's possible policy shift before the elections of 2019. I will test the suitable model/models in the next chapter as this chapter will conclude at the formulation of the 4 models.

## DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PARTY STRUCTURE OF MAIN STREAM AND NICHE PARTIES

In order to understand the factors which become the reasons for a mainstream political party to change its ideological position we first need to understand the difference between the political structure of mainstream parties and the niche parties. As with this understanding, we could get a deeper knowledge of the working of the political parties and the factors involved in their political shifts. A study<sup>85</sup> which explains the relationship between a change in party position and difference between the niche-mainstream parties structure, shows that mainstream parties possess a more “catch-all” approach and could be responsive to almost all the voters’ shifts.

Another study<sup>86</sup> which is about the difference between a mainstream and a niche party argue here is that Niche parties are the parties which belongs to a specific ideological family i.e. (they are communist, green or radical right). Niche parties do not show a change in their policies and ideologies in response to the change in common public opinion or demands. They possess a solid interest in long term policy making rather than having short term election gains.<sup>87</sup>

It does not mean that niche or mainstream parties do not have a common organizational feature. In fact some mainstreams parties have some common features like the niche parties. For example Social Democratic and or Socialist parties may share some characteristics of niche parties and might act more like a niche party than a mainstream party<sup>88</sup>. In comparison with the center and right wing parties, Social Democratic or Socialists parties are less responsive to the shift in public opinion. They share stronger ties with the social groups and above all respond to the preferences of their electorates and their supporters<sup>89</sup>. In this research (work) I will only be discussing the party structure of the mainstream parties and not the niche parties as the main stream political parties do change their political ideologies in order to gain their party goals whereas the Niche parties do not. The main aim of this research is to understand the reasons involved in the shift in the policy of the Danish Social Democrats party (towards refugees and immigration), which is a mainstream political party of Denmark.

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<sup>85</sup> Lawrence Ezrow, Catherine De Vries, Marco Steenbergen, and Erica Edwards, “Mean Voter Representation and Partisan Constituency Representation: Do Parties Respond to the Mean Voter Position or to Their Supporters?” *Party Politics* 17, no. 3 (May 2011) 278, Doi: 10.1177/1354068810372100.

<sup>86</sup> James Adams, Michael Clark, Lawrence Ezrow, and Garrett Glasgow, "Are Niche Parties Fundamentally Different from Mainstream Parties? The Causes and the Electoral Consequences of Western European Parties' Policy Shifts, 1976-1998," *American Journal of Political Science* 50, no. 3 (2006) 513, <[www.jstor.org/stable/3694232](http://www.jstor.org/stable/3694232)>.

<sup>87</sup> Adams, Clark, Ezrow and Glasgow. Ibid. P.514.

<sup>88</sup> James Adams, Andrea B. Haupt, and Heather Stoll, “What Moves Parties?: The Role of Public Opinion and Global Economic Conditions in Western Europe,” *Comparative Political Studies* 42, no. 5 (May 2009) 621, Doi: 10.1177/0010414008328637. <https://doi-org.zorac.aub.aau.dk/10.1177%2F0010414008328637>.

<sup>89</sup> Adams, Haupt and Stoll. Ibid. P.632.

## FINDINGS ON POLITICAL PARTIES AND THEIR POLICY SHIFTS

I have collected some more relatable findings which will further support the points mentioned (on the policy change of political parties) in the Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party change and will further help in elaborating our research. The change in party's stance or ideology can be seen in the earlier studies as Kirchheimer<sup>90</sup> in his thesis (1966) explains that many western parties changed their policy positions in their parties after the World War II. He further explains that in shifting or changing their policies they have become less ideological and more "catch-all" in their approach.

Another study<sup>91</sup> which analyzed the policy shift of political parties from changing their position from left to right or vice versa before the election showed that parties go through a proper thinking process before adjusting their political approach. As most of the time the party position of political parties is stable, that stability is because of the uncertainty related to the political environment with which the party leadership is confronted. When a political party changes its policy position they think of the possible consequences for e.g. the reactions of its voters, its rival parties and could the change in policy endanger the future coalitions or alliance building?

Wolinetz<sup>92</sup> also considers parties as adaptive organizations which adjust their policies towards the audiences whose votes they seek. Further he states that this shifting of policies could be because of the effects of disappearing party supporters. He emphasizes that the parties and parties system will survive as parties adjust their policies with the changing choices of their voters.

After these important findings I have collected 4 more important findings in direct link with the 4 factors I extracted from the integrated theory. Here are 4 important findings. First of the finding's<sup>93</sup> shows that political parties become most responsive when the public opinion changes or when they consider that their voters may shift from left wing to right wing or vice versa.

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<sup>90</sup> Andre Krouwel, "Otto Kirchheimer and the catch-all party," *West European Politics*, 26 no.2 (2003) 26, DOI: 10.1080/01402380512331341091, <<https://doi.org/10.1080/01402380512331341091>>.

<sup>91</sup> Ian Budge, "A New Spatial Theory of Party Competition: Uncertainty, Ideology and Policy Equilibria Viewed Comparatively and Temporally," *British Journal of Political Science* 24, no. 4 (1994) 449. <[www.jstor.org/stable/194029](http://www.jstor.org/stable/194029)>.

<sup>92</sup> Geoffrey Pridham, "Book Review of Parties and Party System in Liberal Democracies, by Steven B Wolinetz [Ed.]" *International Affairs 1944-1955*. London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 65, no. 3 (1989) 534, Doi: 10.2307/2621745, <<https://www.jstor.org/stable/2621745>>.

<sup>93</sup> James Adams, Michael Clark, Lawrence Ezrow, and Garrett Glasgow, "Understanding Change and Stability in Party Ideologies: Do Parties Respond to Public Opinion or to Past Election Results?" *British Journal of Political Science* 34, no. 4 (2004) 590. <[www.jstor.org/stable/4092291](http://www.jstor.org/stable/4092291)>.



Second finding<sup>94</sup> show that parties are also very much responsive when the rival parties of same ideological approach shift their policies for e.g. the leftist party will respond to the policy shift of the rival left-wing party and the right-wing party will respond to the policy change of other rival right-wing party. The third finding<sup>95</sup> show that parties do respond to the previous poor election results and shift their policies in order to regain the lost grounds within the political system. The fourth and last finding<sup>96</sup> shows that some parties also respond and adjust their political policies to the external threats like the climatic change, social and economic conditions.

The above mentioned findings provides us with the important factors that why parties change their policy stance but it fails to provide us with a framework that can explain these factors (in detail) and how these parties respond towards them . It further requires a thorough understanding of the structure and inside features of a mainstream political party. I propose that party structure and its features is very much important in understanding the intensity through which political parties react to these factors (temporary voter shift, core party voter shift, in gaining government offices and defeat in previous elections). The information about the party structure of a mainstream political party will give us an understanding of the inside i.e. whether a party is more leadership dominated or core party voters dominated. The knowledge of this difference is the most important key for this research.

#### **HOW THE INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF MAIN STREAM POLITICAL PARTIES WORK WHILE GOING THROUGH POLICY SHIFTS**

A mainstream political party can also be seen as an organization which like every other organization seeks a lot of goals. A study<sup>97</sup> on political parties argues that a political party looks for only three basic goals i.e. votes, policy and office. All political parties work hard for voters support, but parties differ in determining their preference that they value policy more or office. Mostly main stream political parties<sup>98</sup> have the aim of seeking votes and forming their own majority government. These political parties seek votes and in return offer collective benefits to the state and Society. They also acts as a tool which solves the collective problems of a society plus taking further and necessary actions when needed and take necessary decisions for the state.

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<sup>94</sup> James Adams, and Zeynep Somer-Topcu, "Policy Adjustment by Parties in Response to Rival Parties' Policy Shifts: Spatial Theory and the Dynamics of Party Competition in Twenty-Five Post-War Democracies," *British Journal of Political Science* 39, no. 4 (2009) 828. <[www.jstor.org/stable/27742774](http://www.jstor.org/stable/27742774)>.

<sup>95</sup> Zeynep Somer-Topcu, "Timely Decisions: The Effects of Past National Elections on Party Policy Change," *The Journal of Politics* 71, no. 1 (2009) 238, Doi: 10.1017/s0022381608090154.

<sup>96</sup> Adams and Topcu. Ibid. P.831.

<sup>97</sup> Michael Laver, "Book Review of Policy, Office or Votes? How Political Parties in Western Europe Make Hard Decisions by Wolfgang C. Müller and Kaare Strom," *The American Political Science Review* 96, no. 1 (2002) 243. <[www.jstor.org/stable/3117889](http://www.jstor.org/stable/3117889)>.

<sup>98</sup> Joseph A Schlesinger, "Book Review of Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Party Politics in America by John H. Aldrich," *The American Political Science Review* 93, no.4 (1999) 966, Doi: 10.2307/2586143. <<https://www.jstor.org/stable/2586143>>.

This work emphasizes on the selection of candidates, the membership structure or other mechanism which shows the internal party democracy. In order to understand how party structure works when a party changes its position, I again emphasize towards one important aspect i.e. the nature of the party which shows the party is leadership dominated or core party voters dominated. This understanding is very important, as it will determine who controls the party policy, the top leadership or its core voters/workers.

According to a seminal work<sup>99</sup> on party structure it explains that the parties, which are more leadership dominated the leaders of these parties are the ones who have the real influence in setting and controlling the party's plan. These parties have a weak internal structure as it lacks the in-side checks and balances. These parties have very few veto points in their party decision-making and thus are possessed by only the top leadership. The parties, which are core party voters dominated parties, differ with the leadership dominated parties. The core party voters<sup>100</sup> dominated parties have high level of internal party structure where party activists (internal or external) share the decision power on the policy positions. This means that the party workers who are more policy motivated whose participation in the party is entirely on the policy platform is called as the believers or core voters. The study also highlights that the parties which are not the core party activists parties could be called as the Leadership dominated parties and are likely to have the motives of vote seeking or to gain political office in their policy goals.

With the above mentioned explanation of leadership and core party voters dominated parties we can find a different power balance within these two groups. The core party voters dominated parties are dominated by the sincere activists who strongly comply with party's policy and work for party's benefits. The officials whose aim is to secure important positions and are status oriented can be characterized in leadership dominated parties. On the other hand<sup>101</sup> the primary focus of the leadership of the core party voters dominated parties is to ensure that its party voters and sincere officials are intact with the party, as their support can put the party into a more powerful position. In my understanding and according to the integrated theory a core party voter's dominated party can adjust its party policy keeping in view the majority choice of its voters. They will shift its policy in line with the demands of their core party voters.

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<sup>99</sup> Gijs Schumacher & Nathalie Giger, "Do leadership-dominated parties change more?." *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties*, 28 no.3 (2018) 350, DOI: 10.1080/17457289.2017.1403920.

<sup>100</sup> Schumacher and Gijer. Ibid. P.350.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid. P.350.

In contrast to that we can say that the leadership-dominated parties<sup>102</sup> are more likely to give preference to office seeking over the policy seeking goals as securing a political office will enhance material goals such as power and authority of its party leadership. In addition securing powerful position within political system allows the leadership to gain control within the party and suppress any challenger who they fear. It is important to mention here that with the above-mentioned explanation we theoretically understand and will further analytically operationalize the difference between the core party voters dominated and leadership-dominated parties.

#### **FORMULATION OF OUR 4 MODELS**

Through the above mentioned distinction between the core party voters dominated and leadership dominated parties. We can formulate some **models** which will show the degree through which the parties change their positions in response to the **4 factors** I extracted from the integrated theory of party goals and party change. As I mentioned in the beginning the 4 factors which are temporary voter shift/change, core party voter shift, elimination from governmental office or gaining it and defeat in previous elections. These 4 factors are linked with the goals we mentioned earlier which the political parties seek i.e. firstly to gain support of the average voters by responding to the temporary voters. Secondly by providing support to the core party voter's areas in response to core party voters shift. Thirdly by avoiding the defeat in elections and further holding a government office.

We can now analyze individually all the 4 factors (mentioned in the integrated theory of party goals and party change) the main stream political parties are confronted with and how does the party structure intervene in the party's responsiveness? Let us first look into the core party voters dominated parties. If they wish to change their policy stance or if the party members inside the party feels that they require a better policy to keep its voters intact or if they sense that they need adjustment in the party policy towards a certain issue as because of their previous policy they lost a considerable amount of their core voters then they do propose a change in its policy to their party heads. In order to do so they would first need to rise above the powerful internal veto players who could be the party's core workers , the core party voters dominated parties share the decision making power within the party. By this authority, sharing the voice of the core party voter has a much better reach than the voice of the temporary voter. If the majority of the internal veto players inside the party allows the change in the political party's policy than the core party voters dominated party will respond accordingly.

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<sup>102</sup> Schumacher and Gijer, "Do leadership-dominated parties change more?," Ibid. P.351.

Further on the Leadership dominated parties, according to my understanding if they wish to change their political position then it is not difficult for them as they have weak party structure; they face a difference in balance of power within the party activists and the leaders, which are more inclined to the party leadership. In these parties there is no such active check and balance so it is easier for the senior leaders or the (careerists) of the party to pursue the vote seeking techniques. This helps them to achieve their ultimate goal of securing a political office. A possible way of doing it is to follow the strategies the senior leaders in the party suggest. The strategies of these leaders could be risky as the party could lose more votes to its rivals rather than gaining.

From the above-mentioned explanation of the two parties, we can now formulate them into two models

**MODEL 1: When core Party voters shift and Parties Reaction:**

About the reaction on this factor (as mentioned in the Integrated Theory of Party goals and Party change) in this case, if the core party voters and supporters leaves the party or shifts to another party just because of having differences on certain party policies than the main stream political party which is too concerned about its core party voters, supporters or activists is expected to shift its party policy while making it in accordance with the demands of its party voters and supporters before the elections than the leadership dominated parties.

**MODEL 2: Temporary voters shift and Parties Reaction:**

In this case the core party voters dominated party are least expected to adjust their party position because of the shift in their temporary voters during the election time than the leadership dominated parties.

While moving towards the third factor i.e. the election defeat I argue in line with a study<sup>103</sup> on The Effect of past national elections on party policy change by Zeynep Somer Topcu in which she explains that mostly parties are often stuck in a position where they cannot decide between office seeking and policy seeking objectives. In easy words, parties seek to strengthen their vote bank in the coming elections and in order to do so they adjust their political position but at the same time, they are more concerned about their policy goals. Therefore, they are expected to change their position if they have proper awareness about how far the public choice have become away from their position of the party i.e. how poorly they performed in the previous election<sup>104</sup>.

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<sup>103</sup> Zeynep Somer-Topcu, "Timely Decisions: The Effects of Past National Elections on Party Policy Change," *The Journal of Politics* 71, no. 1 (2009) 239, Doi: 10.1017/s0022381608090154.

<sup>104</sup> Topcu. Ibid. P.239.

The above mentioned info can help us in understanding the importance of previous election results. Previous election<sup>105</sup> results is a necessary source of knowledge for the parties, it shows them the direction in which the public opinion stands. When a party faces defeat in election it is expected that it will put itself into a risk taking behavior i.e. changing its party position or adjusting its policy, which could attract more voters. On the other hand, the parties, which have gained votes, will continue with their party policy in order to avoid negative effects of changing their policy position. Parties, which lost their votes in the previous elections, plan in a way where they could avoid future losses. According to my understanding if a core party voter dominated party faces a defeat in the elections it is likely that it will analyze its election strategy and will try to find the reasons. If the core party voters dominated party finds that it's sincere or core party voters shifted to the other rival parties then this can become a major reason for them to change their party policy and make it in line with their voter's demands. The defeat in elections and that too because of the disappearance of its partisans in the elections can force a core voter's dominated party to change its party position. On the other hand, in my understanding the parties, which are Leadership dominated, will tend to care more about the defeat as they will be in a weaker bargaining position in the formation of coalition and will be left with the very small options of holding public office for the party leadership.

With the above explanation of the two parties, we formulate our Model 3 related to the factor of election defeat.

### **MODEL 3: Defeat in Previous Election and Parties Reaction:**

In this case the core party voter dominated party is expected to shift its party position due to the loss in previous elections whereas the leadership dominated party is also likely to shift its political position.

Finally in explaining our fourth and last factor i.e. change in policy for gaining the government office, we can expect that the political parties<sup>106</sup> could be motivated to shift their policies in order to pursue the goal of office seeking while maximizing its vote bank. I propose here that when the office seeking parties are in opposition they are expected to take the risk of policy change, as these parties are in more need to accomplish their office seeking goals.

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<sup>105</sup> Topcu. Ibid. P.239.

<sup>106</sup> Michael Laver, "Book Review of Policy, Office or Votes? How Political Parties in Western Europe Make Hard Decisions by Wolfgang C. Muller and Kaare Strom," *The American Political Science Review* 96, no. 1 (2002) 243.  
<[www.jstor.org/stable/3117889](http://www.jstor.org/stable/3117889)>

As mentioned earlier, the party head in the leadership-dominated parties is more concerned about holding a government office. When such a party does not make it to attain the government office while losing in the election or if not being invited in a coalition government, it also loses its ideology. Vice versa when such parties remain in government they are least expected to change their political position as no (wise) party would risk its stable position.

With the help of the above-mentioned explanation, we can formulate our 4<sup>th</sup> Model related to the factor of elimination from office

**MODEL 4: For Gaining the Government Office and Parties Reaction:**

The Leadership dominated parties are more expected (inclined) to change their political position before the election period being in opposition than the core voters dominated parties.

**RESULTS**

With the formulation of the 4 Models and with the help of the studies of different political analysts and authors used in this research work we have a clear understanding of the party structure which is involved in when main stream party changes its political position. In our case the Model 1 and Model 3 best suits our research interests. Model 1 is about when core party voters shift from its respective party to another rival party and Model 3 is directly linked to the Model 1. Both these models are interlinked as shifting of the core party voters to the other rival party will result in a poor performance of a main stream political party and eventually in a defeat in elections. These factors could become the possible reasons for a mainstream political party to change its position in order to bring its core party voters back and regain power by winning the elections. I will be taking Danish Social Democrats Party as my mainstream party of interest and would apply the Model 1 and Model 3 on it. The Danish Social Democrats took a major shift in its policy while moving from left to a more right-wing approach (in connection to migration and refugee policies) before the previous elections of 2019. It lost its core party voters to the far-right Danish people’s Party and this became a reason for their defeat in the elections of 2015. The core voters shifted to the Danish People’s Party as the Social Democrats did not have a coherent and strict policy on immigration and refugees. In the next chapter I would be applying Model 1 & Model 3 and will analyze how much this model actually applies in the case of Social Democrats and with the analysis we will be able to get the answer of our research question.

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## CHAPTER 4

### APPLYING AND ANALYZING THE 2 MODELS

#### CHAPTER STRUCTURE

In this chapter I will be applying and analyzing the 2 Models out of the 4 Models which I formulated in the previous chapter. The 2 Models will be applied on the Danish Social Democrats Party while keeping in mind that it best matches with the situation of the Social Democrats party's shifting of its ideology towards refugees and immigration before the elections of 2019. I have thoroughly explained the Social Democrats Party's policy on immigration and refugees and its transformation in the past 25 years i.e. from 1994-2019 in the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter. It gave us an idea on when it began to change its policy on immigration and refugees. Further with the help of the the Integrated Theory on Party goals and Party change and with our thorough research on the structure of a main stream party, we got an understanding of the importance of the main stream party's "primary goal" and how it adjusts its policy or policies in order to achieve its ultimate primary goal. This chapter will properly apply and analyze the 2 Models while taking the case study of Social Democrats Party's possible policy shift in the elections of 2019. After applying the 2 Models we will be able to find the answer of our research question.

#### APPLYING AND ANALYZING THE 2 MODELS

In the previous chapter we formulated 4 Models which could be considered as the factors or reasons because of which a main stream political party changes its stance or adjusts its policy in order to achieve its primary goals. We discussed in detail the basic party goals or in other words basic possible reasons which forces a party to restructure or shift its policies to achieve its aims. As mentioned earlier and as explained by Anthony Downs<sup>107</sup> (that) every political party's primary aim is to win the elections and forming its own government. With the help of the literature provided in the previous chapter we have this knowledge about the main stream parties that most mainstream political parties shift or transform their positions before elections. We discussed in chapter 2 regarding the Social Democrats Party's defeat in the 2015 elections and how it shifted its policy stance on immigrants and refugees while being in the opposition and supporting all the laws presented by the then Center-right Liberal Government thus shifting its approach to the more right-leaning wing.

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<sup>107</sup> Edward C. Banfield, "Review of an Economic Theory of Democracy, by Anthony Downs," *Midwest Journal of Political Science* 2, no. 3 (1958) 324, Doi: 10.2307/2109186.

We also discussed in the later part of Chapter 2 that the Social Democrats changed its stance on immigration and refugees and in its election campaign of 2019 how it came up with a (new) coherent and restrictive immigration policy. We were not sure about the reasons of its possible stance shifting towards refugees and immigrants. I carried out this research in order to find out the possible reasons which forced the Social Democrats to take a shift in its policy. With the help of the data and our empirical findings in our 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter and in my understanding the 2 Models i.e. Model 1 and Model 3 best matches with the case of Social Democrats. These 2 Models could be the 2 possible reasons in the case of Social Democrats Party's possible ideological shift before the 2019 elections.

The 2 Models are as follows:-

**MODEL 1: When Core Party voters shift and Parties Reaction:**

About the reaction on this factor (as mentioned in the Integrated Theory of Party goals and Party change) in this case, if the core party voters and supporters leaves the party or shifts to another party just because of having differences on certain party policies than the main stream political party which is too concerned about its core party voters, supporters or activists is expected to shift its party policy while making it in accordance with the demands of its party voters and supporters before the elections than the leadership dominated parties.

**MODEL 3: Defeat in Previous Election and Parties Reaction:**

In this case the core party voter dominated party is expected to shift its party position or policy due to the loss in previous elections whereas the leadership dominated party is also likely to shift its political position.

The Model 1 and Model 3 could be the best match with the Social Democrats Party's case. If we combine both of these 2 above mentioned models we could get the main primary goal of the Social Democrats which became the possible reason for its ideological shift. Let us combine the 2 Models; the (Model 1) explains that the core party voters dominated party will change its policy before the elections while adjusting it in line with the demands of its core voters. Further a core party voter's dominated party will shift its policy after being defeated in the previous elections. Both these cases apply with the case of Social Democrats Party with the example of the 2015 elections. In the 2015 elections<sup>108</sup> the Danish People's Party emerged as the second largest party in the parliament and the largest party of the right-wing by securing 37 seats. In common viewpoint they gained the support of the former voters of the Social Democrats<sup>109</sup>.

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<sup>108</sup> Karina Kosiara-Pedersen, "Tremors, no earthquake: the 2015 Danish parliamentary election," *West European Politics*, 39 no. 4 (2016) 873.

<sup>109</sup> Pedersen. Ibid. P. 874.



We can further analyze our 2 Models while looking at the possible reasons of the Social Democrats policy shift which happened after the 2015 elections. This will help us in linking the 2 Models with the case of Social Democrats and its policy shift towards the immigration and refugees. The reasons could be found while looking at the elections of 2015.

During the Danish parliamentary elections of 2015<sup>110</sup> the refugee crisis in Europe was at the highest point. The rhetoric of bringing tough immigration and refugee laws was gaining more acceptances in the common public. In this scenario the Danish People's Party's policy stance on immigration and refugees gathered more support as in the opinion polls its popularity increased to 21% which was only a few percentage points behind the Social Democrats. Many voters who were supporting the Danish People's Party were (the) former voters of the Social Democrats Party who wanted a more strict policy on immigration and refugees.

The rise of the Danish People's party as the largest right-wing party after the elections of 2015 showed how gradually their popularity increased in the main stream politics since its creation in 1995. Their stance on immigration and refugees was widely accepted as within these past 2 decades i.e. (1995-2015) they began to gain the support of those voters who were the traditional voters of the Social Democrats Party.<sup>111</sup>

With winning 37 seats in the 2015 elections the Danish People's Party supported the then right-wing Liberal government to form their government in 2015. The Social Democrats and the other left-wing parties could not gain maximum majority in that election and became the opposition for the next 4 years. During their time in the opposition the Social Democrats party gradually changed its approach towards refugees and immigrants. As they thought that in order to win an election they need to have a more right-wing approach on immigration. <sup>112</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Sidsel Overgaard, "In Denmark's Election a shift to the left-Unlike in much of Europe" in *NPR website*, Published on June 7, 2019 <<https://www.npr.org/2019/06/07/730286066/in-denmarks-election-a-shift-to-the-left-unlike-in-much-of-europe>> Accessed on May 10, 2020.

<sup>111</sup> Elis Gjevori, "Denmark's left wins election by adopting right-wing rhetoric" in *TRT World Website*, Published on June 6, 2019 <<https://www.trtworld.com/europe/denmark-s-left-wins-election-by-adopting-right-wing-rhetoric-27298>> Accessed on May 10, 2020.

<sup>112</sup> Sanne Ostrup Wadel, "Four Historical Danish General elections and one to come?" in *Aarhus BSS website*, Published on March 22, 2019 <<https://bss.au.dk/en/insights/samfund-1/2019/four-historical-danish-general-elections/>> Accessed on May 10, 2020.

The Social Democrats Party<sup>113</sup> won 25% of votes in the Danish Parliamentary elections in 2015 elections but could not form a government as the right-wing bloc won more seats than the left-wing bloc. In the last 100 years the social democratic party has been part of the government which is more than any other political party in Denmark. In the years from 2000- 2015 the Social Democrats formed the government only once i.e. from 2011-2015. This could be possible because of its previous too liberal and pro-immigration policies. These policies<sup>114</sup> became the reasons for its core party or traditional voters i.e. the working class voters to move towards the Danish People's Party. The Danish People's Party's policy towards immigrants and refugees has always been more restrictive this policy attracted the voters of the Social Democrats to be more inclined towards the Danish People's Party. The loss of its core party voters and with the aim of winning them back from the Danish People's Party and also (to an extent) from the Liberal Party forced the Social Democrats to change its stance on refugees and immigrants and bring a new immigration and refugees policy before the 2019 elections.

After combining and further analyzing both of our 2 models we can say that the disappearance of the Social Democrats core voters which shifted to the Danish People's Party became the cause of defeat for the Social Democrats in the elections of 2015. This gives us a clear reason of the Social Democrats shifting of its policy towards refugees and immigrants after the elections of 2015 and further changing it. As with the above mentioned models and with their combined explanation we get a clear answer to our Research question which also was "why the Social Democrats changed their Party policy on immigration and refugees". The Answer lies in these two reasons (according to my understanding). These two reasons became the solid factors of their defeat in elections; these two reasons are inter-linked with each other. If we combine these two reasons we can get one concrete reason which could also answer our research question. The answer to our research question and the main reason of Social Democrats policy shift towards refugees and immigrants could be that the Social Democrats lost the 2015 elections mainly because of its party voters shift towards the Danish People's Party. In order to regain its voters and supporters and further loss in the next election the Social Democrats opted for a shift in immigration and refugees policy. The shift in their refugees and immigration policy resulted in the formation of a new and coherent refugees and immigration policy by the Social Democrats party in 2018.

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<sup>113</sup> Peter Nedergard, "Back to its roots; why do the Social Democrats want a more restrictive immigration policy", *Friedrichsbert Stiftung*, (2018) 1.

<sup>114</sup> Nedergard. Ibid. P.1.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

This thesis was based on the aim of finding the main reasons that why the Danish Social Democrats Party changed their party policy on immigration and refugees before the Denmark's parliamentary elections of 2019. As the Social Democrats party took a shift from being a left wing party on immigration and refugees related issues to becoming a more right leaning party before the elections of 2019. In understanding the reasons involved in the ideological shift of the Social Democrats party it was also imperative to understand the dynamics involved in a main stream political party's structure when a main stream political party shifts from its ideology.

The research work and findings in this thesis helped us in understanding the main possible reasons involved in the ideological shift of the main stream political parties. The main stream political parties shift their policies in order to achieve their political goals. According to our research findings and understanding mostly political parties are driven by their different political goals and often do not change their stance but on their primary goals they do change their political stance. Mostly the primary goal of every political party is to win the elections and form its own government and for that they adjust their policies.

We discussed in detail the party structure of the main stream political parties which helped us in understanding the internal functioning of the party when they intend to bring changes in their policies. The Integrated theory of Party goals and Party changed helped us in formulating 4 Models which further explained the possible reasons for a party to shift or change its ideology in order to achieve its primary goal which is to win the elections. As the main focus of our thesis was to find the possible reasons which forced the Social Democrats to change its ideology on immigrants and refugees before the elections of 2019 for that we had to look into its historical background and previous year's policy stance on immigration and refugees.

We thoroughly looked and analyzed the policy stance of the Social Democrats party on refugees and immigration in the last 25 years where they were in government and in opposition. This helped us in understanding the transformation of its policy and when and how it shifted from its left-wing stance on immigration and refugees to a more right-leaning position. The Social Democrats changed their party policy on immigration and refugees after they suffered a defeat in the elections of 2015.

According to our understanding and findings we were able to draw two very important reasons which forced the Social Democrats to shift its party stance. The two possible reasons were firstly the shifting of its core party voters to the Danish People's Party which resulted in the defeat of 2015 elections and secondly the defeat in elections itself. These two reasons were of great relevance with the 2 Models which we formulated with the help of the integrated theory. After testing our 2 Models with the reasons of the Social Democrats defeat in the elections of 2015 we got our main reason and also the answer of our research question. The answer to our main research question is that the Social Democrats changed its stance on immigration and refugees as their previous policy was more pro-immigration whereas its party voters were demanding a more restrictive party approach and policy towards immigration and refugees.

According to our findings the Danish People's Party always had a more restrictive stance on immigration and refugees so the traditional voters of the Social Democrats shifted towards the Danish People's Party. This resulted in the defeat of Social Democrats in the elections as they could not form a government in 2015. However the Social Democrats changed their stance on immigration and refugees and supported all the laws of the then Liberal government while being in the opposition in the years 2015-2019. In order to achieve their primary goal that is firstly to win back its former voters and supporters the Social Democrats came up with a new and coherent refugees and immigration policy in the year 2018. This new policy proposed some restrictive and cautious laws towards refugees and immigrants and helped them gaining back the support of its former voters which shifted to the right-wing parties and particularly to the Danish People's Party.

Towards the end we can conclude that mostly the political parties are seeking power and authority. As securing a victory in elections not only ensures power and authority in the government offices to a political party but also allows it to do the legislation of its own choice and further implementing it. With the case study of the Social Democrats party we understood this fact quite clearly that in order to win the elections parties can shift their policies while adjusting them in accordance with their voter's demands.

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