


EU-27 WATCH



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EU-27 Watch

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On the project

Due to the new treaty provisions of the Lisbon Treaty and the economic crises the enlarged EU of 27 member states is on the search for a new modus operandi while also continuing membership talks with candidate countries. The EU-27 Watch project is mapping out discourses on these and more issues in European policies all over Europe. Research institutes from all 27 member states and the four candidate countries give overviews on the discourses in their respective countries.

The reports focus on a **reporting period from December 2009 until May 2010**. This survey was conducted on the basis of a questionnaire that has been elaborated in March and April 2010. Most of the 31 reports were delivered in May 2010. This issue and all previous issues are available on the EU-27 Watch website: www.EU-27Watch.org.

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Denmark**The next best choice****Julie Herschend Christoffersen***

The “Next best Choice” was the way in which the left-wing newspaper Information described the choice of Herman Van Rompuy.¹ He might not be an international showstopper, but he is considered valuable because of his strong analytical sense and ability to create consensus. The Danish Prime Minister (PM) Lars Løkke Rasmussen emphasised this point when asked if he thought that the new President of the European Council was too unknown for the prestigious job: “You can be very good at your job, even if you are not well-known”.² The Danish Member of European Parliament (MEP) Jens Rohde, also from the PM’s Liberal party, did not agree with Løkke. He thought that Van Rompuy was chosen so as not to overshadow the heads of the national governments.³

Another newspaper called it a “sensible choice” to give the post to Van Rompuy since the EU is now in need of “peace” to implement the Lisbon Treaty.⁴ Kristeligt Dagblad, a centrist daily newspaper, is very critical towards the new figure and calls it unambitious and a waste of a good opportunity for profiling the EU.⁵ At the grassroots level, the Danish European Movement welcomed the new President of the European Council without any critical comments. The Youth division of the movement was, however, not satisfied with the new leaders, calling it a victory for those opposed to a strong EU.

Not a lot of attention has been paid to the question: which changes to the role of the rotating council presidency are expected? The shifting priorities of the rotating presidency are generally seen as having damaged the consistency of EU foreign policy and it is one of the main goals of the Lisbon Treaty to change this with the common High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. The Confederation of Danish Industry (Dansk Industri – DI) asks for more focus on financial issues, but does not mention the new role of the presidency. Jyllandsposten, a conservative daily, emphasises the possible fight for the spotlight and the lack of clarity in the division of labour. The Spanish Presidency will make precedence for the division of labour between the President of the European Council and the rotating presidency.

Danish Diplomat to the rescue

The Prime Minister had the same attitude towards Catherine Ashton as he had towards Van Rompuy: even though you are not a political superstar you can still be very fit for the job.⁶ The overall impression in the Danish debate when Ashton was named as the new High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy was that she was elected because, in terms of gender and political affiliation, she represented that which Van Rompuy is not. There was critique of her lack of foreign policy experience, but some leading dailies have stated that much of the critique was chauvinist⁷ and premature.⁸

Danish newspapers also covered extensively the appointment of Catherine Ashton’s new counselor, Poul Skytte Christoffersen, in late February 2010. Ashton personally requested the nomination of Skytte Christoffersen, until then Denmark’s Ambassador to the EU. The Danish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Lene Espersen, was very satisfied by the choice and called Ashton’s request “a huge acknowledgement of Skytte Christoffersen’s abilities and experience.”⁹ Ashton’s double role as both High Representative and Vice President of the European Commission is hardly mentioned in the Danish debate.

In favour of a strong Europe

On EU foreign policy, Espersen has also declared working for EU unity as her first priority: The “EU risks ending up as a “looser region” if we don’t learn how to agree and speak with [one] voice.”¹⁰ The Foreign Minister has expressed herself since February 2010 to be a strong supporter of a strong EU in the world. However, national experts are not too optimistic on behalf of the European External Action Service (EEAS). In general many observers argue that internal bickering is damaging Ashton and the EU, which is paradoxical considering the Lisbon Treaty was meant to strengthen the EU’s role in the world.¹¹

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Marlene Wind of the University of Copenhagen fears that Danish diplomats will not get the top positions in the EEAS hierarchy. With Denmark having an opt-out in vital policy areas, high-ranking officials should be from member states which are fully integrated into the EU.

Other observers are also sceptical about the role of the EEAS. They fear that the EU will turn into the role of a mediator rather than a powerful actor, and that the rest of the world will turn away from the EU in world politics.¹² Towards the end of March 2010 the very critical attitude in the media towards Ashton seemed to fade away as she picked up the pace and the EEAS started to come together.

A half open door

The Danish debate concerning the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) has been dominated by the rather complicated procedures the Commission is setting up for the petitions. The EU-critical grassroots movements, such as "Radikal EU-kritisk netværk" and "Folkebevægelsen med EU", were initially against this development. Folkebevægelsen answered a Commission-hearing stating that the wording in the Lisbon Treaty should be interpreted in the least restrictive way. Furthermore, the Commission should be obliged to take the request seriously and not only consider it.¹³ Also, MEP Morten Messerschmidt from Dansk Folkeparti wants all restrictions on the petitions removed.

More EU-friendly grassroots are also complaining over the complicated procedures. The Danish branch of the NGO-network Concord Denmark has launched the first ECI, "Keep your promises to the poor". Despite the enthusiasm over the possibility to have direct influence over the Commission's agenda, the NGO fears that the new demands require a lot of resources that are not available to most grassroots movements.¹⁴ A consequence of this could be a favouring of the lobby industry instead of the grassroots movements, since they are the only ones who have the resources to make petitions of this kind.¹⁵ The European Movement, a pro-EU group, argues that the ECI is only a small part of the positive democratic development the EU is undergoing with the Lisbon Treaty.

¹ Information: Det næstbedste valg, 10 November 2009.

² Søndagsavisen: Løkke: Nye EU-ledere kan blive profiler, 19 November 2009.

³ Nordjyske Stifttidende: Jens Rohde: EU-Udnævnelser: Hvor er mod?, 24 November 2009.

⁴ Dagbladernes Bureau: Fornuftigt Valg, 20 November 2009.

⁵ Kristeligt Dagblad: Europæisk Selvmål, 21 November 2009.

⁶ Søndagsavisen: Løkke: Nye EU-ledere kan blive profiler, 19 November 2009.

⁷ Information: Hvorfor er baronessen usynlig?, 24 February 2010.

⁸ Jyllandsposten: Europas ansigter, 21 November 2010.

⁹ Jyllandsposten: EU's udenrigstjeneste får en dansker i spidsen, 26 February 2010.

¹⁰ Berlingske Tidende: EU står alt for ofte fuldstændigt afklædt og forpjusket tilbage, 6 March 2010.

¹¹ Mandag morgen: Knald eller fald for EUs udenrigstjeneste, 8 March 2010.

¹² Weekendavisen: EU's udenrigspolitik: Høje FUSP, 29 January 2010.

¹³ Folkebevægelsen mod EU: Giv borgerne reel indflydelse!, 30 January 2010, available at:

http://www.folkebevaegelsen.dk/spip.php?article2276&var_recherche=giv%20borgerne%20reel%20indflydelse (last access: 19 May 2010).

¹⁴ Politiken: EU spænder ben for sin egen folkelighed, 15 April 2010.

¹⁵ Information: EU åbner døren for direkte borgerindflydelse – men ikke helt, 7 April 2010.

Denmark**A neighbour in the EU***Julie Herschend Christoffersen**

The prospect of Icelandic membership into the EU is widely welcomed in Denmark. This will shift the balance in the EU towards the north and hence Denmark. Denmark has even offered assistance to prepare for some of the negotiations Iceland will be having with the EU. The social democrat Member of European Parliament (MEP) Dan Jørgensen is welcoming Iceland into the EU, as only common solutions can bring a way out of the crisis about.¹

Public debates in the media are sympathetic to the present economic plight of Iceland, but there is a general consensus that Iceland will have to live up to its responsibility and pay for its mistakes. The Icelandic “No” to Icesave II² was seen as a way of “voting No to reality”.³ It is widely expected that Iceland will join the EU together with Croatia in spring 2012,⁴ when Denmark is holding the Presidency of the Council.

Turning away from Europe?

A number of observers in the media have taken notice of a change in the Turkish attitude towards the EU. The general feeling concerning Turkey in the Danish media is that Turkey is turning away from Europe as a result of EU’s indifferent attitude towards Turkey.⁵ Turkey’s new active foreign policy in the Middle East is largely perceived as a turning away from Europe. However, the Turkish embassy in Copenhagen has publicly contested this view and claimed that there is nothing in the new Turkish foreign policy that contradicts its possibilities for pursuing a European future.⁶

The second theme that has been present in the Turkish debate concerns the Armenian genocide. The Swedish declaration on the Armenian genocide sparked some debate concerning the need for recognition of the genocide in Turkey. However, the Danish Foreign Minister has stated that no similar vote will be held in the Danish parliament.⁷

A new Visa regime

The Western Balkans do not enjoy a lot of attention in the Danish debate. Apart from what is expected to be Croatia’s accession within the coming years, not a lot of enthusiasm is linked to the prospects of EU-membership for the Western Balkan countries. The issue of visa liberalisation sparked some evaluations on the positive effects this will have on the development of the region, as well as the issue that Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina are still stuck with visa demands.⁸

A forgotten policy

The European Neighbourhood Policy is something that is barely being mentioned in the Danish media and an assessment of these projects has not been very present in the debate. The Russian President Medvedev visited Denmark in May 2010 and therefore put more focus on the bilateral relationship with the big neighbour in the east rather than other relations between Denmark and Eastern Europe.

Denmark launched the “Arab Initiative” in 2003, which was created to strengthen dialogue concerning reform in the Middle East and Northern Africa.⁹ The EU-backed Union for the Mediterranean is a central part of the multilateral “leg” in the “Arab Initiative”, but the Initiative attracts far more attention than the EU’s activities in this respect.

¹ Folkebladet: Velkommen Island, 27 February 2010.

² Icesave II was a bill that should approve a state guarantee on the debts of the Depositors’ and Investors’ Guarantee Fund. For information on Icesave in general see Wikipedia: Icesave dispute, 20 June 2010, available at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Icesave_dispute (last access: 6 July 2010).

³ Politiken: Torskedumt, 6 January 2010.

⁴ Information: Island i EU – en saga blot?, 28 February 2010.

⁵ Jyllandsposten: Tyrkiets kurs, 28 December 2009; Politiken: Tyrkerne vender blikket mod øst, 25 Oktober 2009.

* Danish Institute for International Studies.

⁶ Jyllands-Posten: Fejlagtig analyse, 13 January 2010.

⁷ DR2 Deadline: Diplomatsk krise mellem Tyrkiet og Sverige, 12 March 2010.

⁸ Politiken: Godt nyt for Vestbalkan, 1 December 2009.

⁹ Danish ministry of Foreign Affairs: Danish-Arab Partnership Programme, 11 May 2009, available at: <http://www.um.dk/en/menu/DevelopmentPolicy/WiderMiddleEastInitiative/> (last acces: 6 July 2010).

Denmark**Non Eurozone EU member state supports Greek financial package**

Katrine Prytz Larsen*

In Denmark, the financial package for Greece was generally perceived to be a positive act: in the government's view, it was necessary to help Greece. Greece's potential withdrawal from the Euro is perceived as an existential threat to the Euro itself. The "Greek tragedy" is seen as a product of decades of neglect, corruption and unwillingness to reform the economy.¹ According to the financial newspaper *Børsen*, Denmark faces small problems compared to other European member states such as Greece and Spain. Foreign Minister Lene Espersen underscored Denmark's strong international position, but at the same time pointed to the need for a stronger Europe. She called for a modernisation of the single market and the creation of new e-trade solutions requiring strong coordination on both the EU and national levels.²

The Greek crisis triggered a debate about Denmark's position as a non-Euro country, giving rise to arguments from the governing parties that Denmark, for the time being, should keep its opt-out regarding the Economic and Monetary Union. EU Commissioner for Climate Action Connie Hedegaard, however, highlighted the possibility that the economic and financial crisis might result in a divided Europe with the Euro countries and the non-Euro countries moving at two different economic speeds. Denmark, as a non-Euro country, thus might risk being left out of future discussions about European financial and economic regulation.³

Priorities for the Europe 2020 Strategy

The government held a positive view towards the Europe 2020 Strategy. Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen stressed the need to focus on a different kind of crisis management by phasing out national aid packages and avoiding state aid.⁴ Also EU Commissioner for Climate Action Connie Hedegaard and the Danish Chamber of Commerce voiced their optimism towards the Strategy.⁵

The financial and economic crisis was seen as a special chance to change the position of Europe globally through the creation of European economic growth. Reform, innovation and research were often mentioned as key components on which the Europe 2020 Strategy should focus. They were perceived as necessary to secure the future success of Europe as well as its influence on the global arena. Both the leader of the opposition party the Danish Social-Liberal Party, Margrethe Vestager, and the Danish Consumer Council highlighted the need for reform as an important tool to create economic growth as well as a greater focus on research and innovation in Europe.⁶ Sofie Carsten Nielsen and Member of Parliament (MP) Lone Dybkjær of the Danish Social-Liberal Party called for a greater role for the Commission and said the Europe 2020 Strategy should be linked more closely to the EU budget to create a carrot-and-stick mechanism. Among the opposition parties, the debate was thus focused on expanded economic control and reform as the European way forward. Four Members of European Parliament (MEPs) representing the Social Democrats, the Socialist People's Party, the Conservatives, and Venstre, in line with Jesper Jespersen of the Roskilde University supported the idea of a European Monetary Fund. Hans Skov Christensen, head of the Confederation of Danish Industry (Dansk Industri – DI) conceived the crisis as a serious threat to Europe's role in the world economy and to Denmark as a country. He said the European Council would have to send a clear message to the Commission that it has to continue promoting reforms.⁷ DI generally expressed its concern with problems existing within the EU, which challenge Europe's role in the world economy. DI thus put the increase of European productivity, initiatives to create growth and enhance competitiveness, and labour market reforms to match the demographic development as top priorities for the future EU strategy.⁸ Furthermore, MEP Dan Jørgensen commented that the Europe 2020 Strategy lacks a focus on unemployment, climate change, and the opportunity to create green jobs.⁹ The financial newspaper *Børsen* also voiced its critique of the EU's financial policy saying that the EU is not well enough coordinated when it comes to economic policy. Thus, the stronger economies in Europe are not obliged to secure growth in the EU by conducting expansive financial policies.¹⁰

* Danish Institute for International Studies.

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- ¹ Berlingske Tidende: Den græske tragedie version 2.0, 9 February 2010.
- ² Berlingske Tidende: I front for dansk vækst, 15 April 2010; Erhvervsbladet: Det handler om, hvad Danmark skal leve af i fremtiden, 19 March 2010; Børsen: Nødvendig hjælp til Grækenland, 13 April 2010.
- ³ Politiken: Connie Hedegaard advarer: Nu kører eurotoget, 10 May 2010, available at: <http://politiken.dk/politik/article967472.ece> (last access: 17 May 2010).
- ⁴ Statsministeriet: Statsminister Lars Løkke Rasmussens tale på VL-Døgn 2010, 9 February 2010.
- ⁵ Kristeligt Dagblad: EU-vækstplan skal reducere antallet af fattige, 4 March 2010; Dansk Erhverv: Ny EU-strategi skal bringe os ud af krisen, 11 December 2009, available at: <http://www.danskerhverv.dk/Nyheder/Sider/Ny-EU-strategi-skal-bringe-os-ud-af-krisen.aspx> (last access: 1 April 2010).
- ⁶ Politiken: EU's ledere skal også multitaske, 26 March 2010, available at: <http://blog.politiken.dk/vestager/2010/03/26/eus-ledere-skal-ogsaa-multitaske/> (last access: 18 May 2010).
- ⁷ Børsen: EU: Hans Skov Christensen: Det er sidste udkald for Europa, 26 March 2010.
- ⁸ Dansk Industri: Europa skal have fokus på konkurrenceevne og reformer, 26 March 2010; DI Indsigt: Europa taber terræn til USA og Kina, 30 March 2010.
- ⁹ Altinget.dk: Dan J.: Forkert fokus i 2020-strategi, 31 March 2010, available at: <http://www.alinget.dk/artikel.aspx?id=112482> (last access: 1 May 2010).
- ¹⁰ Børsen: Nødvendig hjælp til Grækenland, 13 April 2010.

Denmark**Satisfied with its performance as conference host****Katrine Prytz Larsen***

The Danish government was satisfied with its performance during the December 2009 Copenhagen conference; however, the negotiation strategy of the EU was conceived as somewhat imperfect. The Danish EU-Commissioner for Climate Action, Connie Hedegaard, pointed to the lack of leadership on the part of the EU as one of the main reasons for the failure in Copenhagen. She thus suggested that the EU would have had to step up offers to bring funds to developing countries at an earlier stage during the conference.¹

On the part of the opposition, the Copenhagen conference was generally considered a failure since no binding agreement was reached. The People's Movement Against the EU said the EU treated the developing countries in an arrogant way during the negotiations.²

The Danish EU-Commissioner for Climate Action, Connie Hedegaard, and Member of European Parliament (MEP) Jens Rohde both argued in favour of raising the 20 percent reduction goal to 30 percent due to the potential economic effects it might entail.³ The government generally supported the idea of the EU taking the global lead on climate change and there was a broad consensus on raising the reduction goal. Former commissioner and Director-General for Environment, Jørgen Henningsen, said that the EU's 20 percent reduction goal is too small to foster climate friendly technology advances.⁴ Rina Ronja Kari, spokesperson for the People's Movement Against the EU, commented that Denmark's membership of the EU forced Denmark to work for an unambitious climate deal at the 2009 Copenhagen conference. While the EU will cut 20-30 percent, some experts have pushed for cuts of up to 40 percent.⁵ Greenpeace voiced their regret that the EU did not decide on a 30 percent emissions reduction instead of 20 percent. Jan Søndergård of Greenpeace thus commented that the EU's 20 percent goal had already proven to be unsuccessful.⁶

Europe's future potential

On the more positive side, MEP Dan Jørgensen commented that there is still a chance for the EU to become a leading global power on climate change.⁷ However, this would require a greater will on the part of the EU, more ambitious reduction goals and the ability to speak with one voice.⁸ Both Commissioner Connie Hedegaard and ECON Pöyry's director, Jørgen Abildgaard, supported Jørgensen's argument and said that the EU must show itself as a motivating force on global climate change.⁹ Mandag Morgen, a think tank, similarly commented that the EU could have great possibilities of setting the agenda on climate policy in the years to come.¹⁰

In general, the debate seldom concerned the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its role in negotiating a global climate change agreement. The general opinion was that Denmark, as a small country, needs to participate in international development cooperation both within the EU and the United Nations.¹¹ The Minister for Climate and Energy, Lykke Friis, thus stated that it was still the government's goal to work to reach a binding agreement within the organisation of the United Nations.¹²

Financing mitigation and adaptation efforts in developing countries

The government expressed satisfaction with Denmark's effort on development aid. MEP Dan Jørgensen commented that it is unrealistic to believe that Denmark's development aid in itself will cover the costs of climate change adaptation in developing countries. He called for more money as well as new market based initiatives, such as a quota trade charge used for investments in adaptation in developing countries.¹³ It is a bad sign that the EU is going to reuse the development aid to fund climate change adaptation in developing countries.¹⁴

Uffe Torm of Danish Mission Council Development Department, an umbrella organisation for Danish churches, also pointed to the growing need for humanitarian aid as a consequence of climate change and the global food crisis. He therefore found it very positive that the development consequences of climate change were mentioned in the draft for a new Danish development policy. However, he

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criticised the fact that the Danish government in spite of its previous promises had not approved any extra funding to cover the increased costs facing the developing countries.¹⁵ Troels Dam Christensen, coordinator of the 92 Group, an umbrella NGO group, further commented that there is a strong presumption that the rich countries and Denmark are going to reuse the development aid to fund climate change adaptation in developing countries and that this was a very disappointing thing.¹⁶ Greenpeace added that it was unclear whether the EU's climate aid for developing countries through 2012 would be financed by new EU funds or by the EU countries' development aid until now.¹⁷ This statement was supported by the People's Movement Against the EU, who commented that the developed countries as a group should set aside a new sum of money for the sole purpose of helping the developing world adapt to climate change.¹⁸

¹ ZealandDenmark: Høring sluttede med klapsalver, 15 January 2010.

² Arbejderen: Efter Hopenhagen, 23 December 2009.

³ LandbrugsAvisen: EU-Parlamentet vil have højere klimamål, 11 February 2010.

⁴ Information: CO2-reduktion: EU's mål for klimaet er allerede klaret af krise og CO2-kreditter, 18 March 2010.

⁵ Lolland-Falsters Folketidende: EU svigter ulandene, 22 December 2009.

⁶ Arbejderen: EU undergraver FN, 30 March 2010.

⁷ Frederiksborg Amts Avis: EU vil højne klimamål, 11 February 2010.

⁸ Fyens Stifttidende: Den allersidste chance, 7 February 2010.

⁹ Information: CO2-reduktion: EU's mål for klimaet er allerede klaret af krise og CO2-kreditter, 18 March 2010.

¹⁰ Mandag Morgen: Europas klimachance, 19 February 2010; ZealandDenmark: Høring sluttede med klapsalver, 15 January 2010.

¹¹ Ulandsnyt: Klimakonferencen II, 23 January 2010.

¹² Information: Efterspil: Løkke afviser kritik af COP15-forløb, 27 January 2010.

¹³ Politiken: Hvis klimamødet skal blive en succes..., 4 December 2009; Fyens Stifttidende: Den allersidste chance, 7 February 2010.

¹⁴ Nordjyske Stifttidende: Ulande snydes for et stort klimabeløb, 22 March 2010.

¹⁵ Politiken: Fattigdom, frihed og forandring, 14 April 2010.

¹⁶ Nordjyske Stifttidende: Ulande snydes for et stort klimabeløb, 22 March 2010.

¹⁷ Arbejderen: EU undergraver FN, 30 March 2010.

¹⁸ Arbejderen: Efter Hopenhagen, 23 December 2009.

Denmark**The Danish opt-outs**

Katrine Prytz Larsen*

As a result of the Treaty of Lisbon entering into force, the Danish opt-outs were brought up. The opt-out regarding justice and home affairs and the opt-out regarding common defence were especially debated. According to these two opt-outs, Denmark only participates in EU judicial cooperation at an intergovernmental level and does not participate in the elaboration and implementation of decisions and actions which have defence implications.¹ All four opt-outs were maintained in the Treaty of Lisbon and thus Denmark was precluded from Europol cooperation, including the combating of international crime and terrorism. Furthermore, the opt-out regarding common defence meant that Denmark was unable to participate in the combating of piracy off the coast of Somalia – an issue which has been of great concern to the Danish shipping industry.²

The EU debate in Denmark focused mainly on the four Danish opt-outs and the possibility of an upcoming referendum. It was especially discussed how such a referendum ought to go about. The government parties have on a number of occasions argued that all four opt-outs should be voted on together as a full package so as to make it a final decision whether to become a full member of the EU.

The government party's spokesperson on the EU, Michael Aastrup Jensen, said the next referendum on the Euro could be the last chance for Denmark to become a member of the Euro. Therefore, the Danish government should be careful while deciding on a referendum, since the Danish position might be drawn in a negative direction by the Greek economic crisis.³ MEP Morten Messerschmidt stressed that Denmark must have the freedom to choose whether it wants to be a member of the Euro or not.

The opposition, on the other hand, argued that the opt-outs should be voted on separately. According to them, a full package referendum would only protract the process of giving up the opt-outs. The Danish European Movement welcomed the idea of a Danish referendum, stating that the opt-out regarding common defence was regarded as detrimental to Danish interests economically, politically, and culturally.⁴ The referendum would be the way to find out whether Denmark is now finally willing to become a full member of the EU.⁵ They pointed out the Socialist People's Party as the single most important factor preventing a referendum from becoming a reality.⁶

¹ Folketingets EU-oplysning: The Danish Opt-Outs, available at: http://www.euo.dk/emner_en/forbehold/ (last access: 20 April 2010).

² Ibid; Jyllands-Posten: Hvad venter du på, Lars Løkke?, 19 April 2010.

³ Børsen: Græsk krise skubber dansk euro-afstemning, 8 February 2010.

⁴ Jyllands-Posten: Hvad venter du på, Lars Løkke?, 19 April 2010.

⁵ Kristeligt Dagblad: Afskaf EU-forbehold, 10 March 2010.

⁶ Information: Sig nu ja, SF, 21 April 2010.

Questionnaire for EU-27 Watch, No. 9

Reporting period December 2009 until May 2010 – Deadline for country reports 21 May

All questions refer to the position/assessment of your country's government, opposition, political parties, civil society organisations, pressure groups, press/media, and public opinion. Please name sources wherever possible!

1. Implementation of the Lisbon Treaty

On the 1 December 2009 the EU-reform ended with the entering into force of the Lisbon Treaty. However, the new treaty provisions still have to be implemented. Some procedures and conditions have to be determined. In other cases, procedures, power relations, and decision-making mechanisms will change due to the new provisions.

- How is the work of the new President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy, assessed in your country? Which changes to the role of the rotating council presidency are expected?
- How is the work of the new High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton, assessed in your country? Please take into particular consideration both her role within the European Commission and her relationship to the Council of the European Union.
- On 25 March 2010 a "Proposal for a Council Decision establishing the organisation and functioning of the European External Action Service" was presented. How is this concept perceived in your country? Which alternatives are discussed?
- On 31 March 2010 the European Commission presented a proposal defining the rules and procedures for the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI). What are the expectations for the ECI in your country? What are the various positions concerning the rules and procedures?

2. Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy

The European Commission has given its opinion on Iceland's application for EU-membership and a decision from the Council is expected before the end of June. Croatia seems to have settled its border dispute with Slovenia. Against this background:

- Which countries does your country expect to become members of the European Union in the next enlargement round? What are the opinions in your country on the membership of these countries?
- How are the membership perspectives of those countries discussed, which are not expected to become a member in the next enlargement round?

The Eastern Partnership and the Union for the Mediterranean were the last major projects dealing with the European neighbourhood:

- How are these projects assessed in your country?

3. European economic policy and the financial and economic crisis

The European Council agreed on 25/26 March on the key elements of the Europe 2020 strategy, the successor of the Lisbon strategy. While not being on the formal agenda the economic and financial situation in Greece was discussed. The European Council agreed on a finance package combining bilateral loans from the eurozone and financing through the International Monetary Fund.

- How is the finance package for Greece assessed in your country? Are there any opinions on the process, how the agreement on the package was reached?
- Which lessons should be drawn from the Greek case for a reform of the Stability and Growth Pact?
- How is the idea of "a strong coordination of economic policies in Europe" perceived in your country? What concepts of an European economic governance are discussed in your country and which role do they assign to the Euro group?
- How is the Europe 2020 strategy discussed in your country? What are the priorities for the Europe 2020 strategy from your country's perspective?

4. Climate and energy policy

The climate conference in Copenhagen took note of the Copenhagen Accord but did not reach a binding agreement. The next conference of the parties (COP 16 & CMP 6) will take place at the end of November 2010.

- How is the Copenhagen conference assessed in your country? Please take into consideration the negotiation strategy of European Union and the results of the conference.
- Does the European Union need to change its own energy and climate policy in order to give a new impulse to the international negotiations?
- Is a global agreement within the UNFCCC the best strategy to fight climate change? If not, which alternative strategy should the European Union follow?
- What is your country's position on financing mitigation and adaptation efforts in developing countries?

5. Current issues and discourses in your country

Which other topics and discourses are highly salient in your country but not covered by this questionnaire?