



DANISH INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
STRANDGADE 56 • 1401 Copenhagen K
+45 32 69 87 87 • diis@diis.dk • www.diis.dk

DIIS Brief

Danish positions on key developments in the European Union

**Summarised by Gry Thomasen
February 2007**

**Gry Thomasen is Student Assistant at the research unit EU's internal dynamics,
DIIS**

This brief provides a summary of the Danish contributions to the EU-25/27 Watch No. 4, 2007. EU-25/27 Watch, is edited and coordinated by the Institut für Europäische Politik (IEP) in Berlin, and is part of EU-CONSENT. EU-CONSENT is a EU Framework Programme 6 network of excellence for joint research and teaching comprising almost 50 research institutes that addresses questions of the mutual reinforcing effects of deepening and widening of the EU. See <http://www.eu-consent.net>

The manuscript was finished in November 2006. The entire EU 25/27 Watch was published in January 2007. Contributors to the Danish report were Anne Mette Brondbjerg, Ian Manners, Catharina Sørensen and Anne Mette Vestergaard.

Executive summary

The biggest surprise in the current Danish debate is that there is still very broad coverage of EU issues involving the media and public conferences, particularly regarding the Constitutional Treaty; energy and the environment; enlargement to South Eastern Europe and beyond; and more recently the difficult relations between Russia and the EU. The public debate over the Constitutional Treaty is active, while the government looks forwards to what the German Presidency, as well as the 'No' countries, put forward as suggestions after the French Presidential elections. Following Denmark's four-point suggestion at Lahti for an EU energy policy, the Danish concerns over renewable supply, increased efficiency, a liberalised market, and more research in order to improve energy security have heightened. After the Commission's report of enlargement and integration capacity, the Danish debate has focused on support for the Croatian bid for EU membership, whilst emphasising the need for considerable reforms in Turkey. Finally, following the rebuke by Denmark, Sweden, Estonia and Poland in Lahti on the question of human rights in Russia after the murder of Anna Politkovskaya, the failure to overcome the Polish-Russia impasse at the EU-Russia summit is also important in the Danish debate.

Expectations for the German Presidency

In general there are high expectations for the German Presidency. The Danish hope is that the German Presidency will be very ambitious and, together with the Rome Declaration 2007, set a positive tone for the June 2007 European Council meeting. It is recognized that the French elections in April and May will give the German Presidency only a small margin of time in which to work before the European Council in June 2007.

On the institutional question it is expected that the German Presidency will continue the Finnish work on mapping the different interests of the member states. The Danish perspective is that the

German Presidency will end up suggesting some scenarios, allowing the EU to move beyond the Constitutional Treaty. The Danish government was quite pleased with the Constitutional Treaty, but there is very little chance that the existing text will now be ratified by referendum in Denmark. The Danish expectation is that the German Presidency will mark a 'point of departure' for 'clarification regarding the fate of the Constitutional Treaty'.

Elements for the Rome declaration 2007

The substance of the 'Rome Declaration 2007' is not yet debated in Denmark, but the government would be expected to focus on 'Europe of results'. The absence of debate is interesting in itself and appears to reflect three factors in the current Danish-EU relationship. Firstly, it seems that there is relatively little interest in looking forward to celebrating the Treaty of Rome, particularly as Denmark was not a founding member. Secondly, it may also be the case that the subject of the Declaration has the potential to be sensitive for many in Denmark. Thirdly, it is the case that the Danish government is waiting for clarification on the status of the Constitutional Treaty and proposals from Germany (as well as from France and the Netherlands) suggesting a way forward. Despite these three factors, it is the case that Denmark is generally supportive of 'European values' and would probably welcome a declaration acknowledging the value of peace, freedom, democracy, human rights and equality, as well as a clear separation between politics and religion.

The future negotiations of the Constitutional Treaty

Publicly Prime Minister Fogh Rasmussen supports the treaty. Fogh Rasmussen has suggested the possibility of a shorter treaty containing some of the elements of the existing document. This now appears to include support for more effective decision-making, elements to improve the democratic standing of the EU, an EU-president, an EU Foreign Minister and clarity on the structures and values of the EU. The Prime Minister has distanced himself from the concept of 'cherry picking' as it is important that citizens do not feel that something is being implemented behind their backs and that the outcomes of the referenda in France and the Netherlands are respected. The final Danish position on whether to have a referendum on a treaty will depend on the legal content of the Treaty and the political context. The Government's position on possible scenarios for the Constitutional Treaty is generally supported by the rest of the Parliament, with the exceptions of the Danish People's Party and the Unity List. The Danish Parliament agreed on 31 May 2006 on a joint statement to the government in which it stated that the Parliament still found the Constitutional Treaty a good basis for European cooperation and called upon the government to work actively for adoption of the Constitutional Treaty, taking into account the results of the ratification processes of the member states. The Parliament called upon the government to work for open Council meetings, openness and simplification of the EU's working procedures – including publicity on lobbying, early orientation of the national parliaments, the complete right of access to

documents for EU citizens, strengthening of EU-cooperation on climate and environmental problems, the fight against terrorism and organised crime – including human trafficking, the advancement of research, development and education, growth and employment, and a more efficient foreign policy and added consideration on environment, health and consumer protection in the implementation of the Internal Market.

Absorption capacity

The coverage of the European Commission's report 'Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2006-2007' in the Danish media had a clear focus on the statements about Turkey. In both the written media and television news the focus was on discussions about the so-called warnings to Turkey from the Commission to fulfil the Ankara Protocol and take steps regarding the relationship with Cyprus. The part of the report that discusses the EU's absorption or integration capacity was debated in public seminars in Copenhagen. Absorption capacity was also discussed in newspaper articles, with an article in *Jyllandsposten* stressed that amongst others, Prime Minister Fogh Rasmussen had made himself spokesman for drawing a line on the number and size of states that the EU can absorb. Thus in his opening speech to the Parliament he only mentioned the Balkans and Turkey as potential members of the EU, provided they were able to measure up to the common European standards and values. In addition he stressed that there are no short-cuts to EU membership.

European Energy Policy

In his opening speech to the Danish Parliament, Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen underlined concerns about energy supply as one of the big challenges for Denmark. Energy is thus high on the Danish political agenda. Denmark has implemented the electricity and gas directives to the fullest and has gone on to separate the ownership of the supply grid and production.

The Danish government's declared wish is to get an ambitious, coherent European energy policy where energy efficiency is a central element. The future policy strategy on energy will focus on substantially increasing the use of renewable energy and setting ambitious goals for utilizing energy more efficiently and effectively. It seeks to substantially enhance efforts to foster research and development within the energy field in order to develop both existing and new renewable energy sources. The strategy will combine political regulation and market mechanisms, in order to ensure that investments are made in areas where we get maximum energy and environmental value for our money.

Expectations with regard to the European Union

With the exception of the Danish People's Party and the Unity List, the parties in the Danish Parliament adopted a joint statement regarding the European Commission's green paper on a European energy strategy. The statement set out the Danish priorities for the action plan on a European energy strategy. The Danish statement underlines the importance of a unified, ambitious, and well-founded joint energy-policy which are able to meet the challenges of the coming decades. These challenges are the greater dependence of imported fuel, reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, and support for innovation, job creation and economic growth. The fact that the Commission's green paper takes no concrete stance on the EU's increasing dependence on imported oil gives the Danish Parliament cause for concern. The emission of greenhouse gases from oil products is growing rapidly and is now cancelling out the reductions being made in other areas, and oil is that resource which, to all appearances, we will run out of first. This makes it important to carry out a thorough analysis of the EU's growing dependency on oil and to prepare an ambitious strategy regarding ways to move away from this dependency.

Energy policy in a security context

Energy is increasingly discussed in a security context – it is seen as very important to avoid a situation where states or regions can put Europe in an unfortunate position because of Europe's growing energy dependency and the general pressure on the energy market, which could be used as political pressure on the EU. In this context, the Prime Minister has specifically stressed that energy is also about security policy.

Justice and Home Affairs/European Immigration Policy

Because of the Danish opt-out concerning Justice and Home Affairs, aspects of Danish EU-policy in this field are limited. Denmark can only participate in EU judicial cooperation on an intergovernmental basis. However, Denmark opted into Schengen relevant instruments on an intergovernmental basis.

The Danish position on a European immigration policy is focused on issues like effective readmission agreements and enhanced cooperation with countries of origin and transit, including assistance to migration management. After the meeting in Tampere in September the Danish Minister of Justice Lene Espersen expressed relief that that Denmark was not left out of European police and terror cooperation because of the Danish opt-out. The Danish Government strongly supported effective European cooperation to combat terrorism and organised crime, including trafficking in women. The Constitutional Treaty, which the government supports, provides Denmark with a basis for participating in such enhanced cooperation.

Russia and the European Neighbourhood Policy

Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCA) with Russia and the Ukraine

Denmark has been in the EU mainstream when drafting the mandate for the new agreement with Russia and Ukraine. Despite the rebuke over human rights made by Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen to the Russian president at the European Council in Lahti, Denmark has supported the common line. In public the Prime Minister brought forward issues concerning the democratic development in Russia, the situation in Georgia as well as Chechnya, and the murder of Anna Politkovskaya. When it comes to the content of a new agreement, energy security is of course a Danish concern – even though Denmark is a net exporter of energy. Another Danish concern is securing a stable environment for business relations with Russia. Reciprocity in conditions for investments will be a key issue, the ultimate aim being that the EU and Russia become more and more like one large market.

The German initiative for a new Eastern Policy

Denmark was a fervent supporter of the Eastern enlargement. But even if the 2004 enlargement is perceived as a success, the appetite for further enlargement is less present. Whereas membership is not questioned when it comes to the Western Balkans, Denmark is unlikely to see new countries (Ukraine, Moldova or others) in quite the same way. Relations with the EU's new neighbours are high on the agenda: Denmark has recently reopened an Embassy in Kiev, and a bilateral programme has allocated 40 million Danish Kroner to Ukraine from 2004 to 2007. The financial assistance is expected to increase as of 2007. The renewed focus on the European Neighbourhood Policy should be seen in that context. Seen from a Danish perspective it is important that the upcoming German Presidency make a priority out of the ENP by transforming into action the June 2006 European Council conclusions on strengthening the Neighbourhood Policy.