



Migration and the rise of nationalist right-wing parties: Confrontation, isolation or engagement?

Date: 11 March 2010

Venue: University of Copenhagen, South Campus. Njalsgade 126
Building 23: room 23.4.39 (seminar), room 23.0.50 (Tariq Ramadan lecture).

Agenda

09.30 – 09.50

Registration

09.50 – 10.00

Opening remarks

10.00 – 11.30

Session I. Responding to the new political landscape

The growing popularity of nationalist right-wing parties is altering the political landscape and has left mainstream parties in an ongoing search for an adequate response. Governments in countries such as Denmark, the Netherlands, and the UK are increasingly 'talking tough' about migration and experimenting with more assimilationist approaches to integration. Despite these various attempts to accommodate the (perceived) concerns of voters, none of the mainstream parties have so far succeeded in halting public anxieties or the rise of nationalist right-wing parties. What are the main challenges mainstream parties face in light of these developments, and how have they responded so far? Faced with the growing popularity of nationalist right-wing parties, should mainstream political parties pursue strategies of confrontation, isolation or engagement in order to neutralise their support?

Speakers:

Jeroen Dijsselbloem, member of the Dutch parliament and immigration spokesperson for the Labour Party (PvdA)

Astrid Krag, member of the Danish Folketinget and spokesperson on integration for the Socialist People's Party

Nick Lowles, editor of Searchlight Magazine in the UK

Chair: **Mary Dejevsky**, chief editorial writer and columnist for *The Independent* in the UK

11.30 – 11.45

Coffee break

11.45 – 13.15

Session II. Understanding the rise of nationalist right-wing parties

It is generally assumed that the global economic downturn has aggravated hostility towards foreigners, who are perceived as a threat to jobs, livelihoods, and 'national values'. This has coincided with growing anti-Muslim sentiment, as seen in the recent ban on minarets in Switzerland, and the fierce debate over the use of the headscarf in France and other European countries. But is the economic downturn the key contributing factor? Or are other factors – including political distrust and cultural anxiety – more important determinants? In what ways are the concerns of voters reflected in the campaign strategies of nationalist right-wing parties, and how important is anti-immigrant discourse in this process?

Speakers:

Montserrat Guibernau, professor of politics at Queen Mary University London, UK

Matthew Goodwin, research fellow in the Institute of Political and Economic Governance (IPEG) at the University of Manchester, UK

Jørgen Goul Andersen, professor of political sociology, Aarhus University, Denmark

Chair: **Elena Jurado**, head of research at Policy Network

13.15 – 14.15

Lunch

14.15 – 15.45

Public lecture: Multiculturalism and the politics of intolerance

Tariq Ramadan, professor of contemporary Islamic studies at the University of Oxford

Chair: **David Goodhart**, founder and editor of Prospect magazine