



PREFERENTIAL VOTING IN DENMARK: THE VOTERS'
INFLUENCE ON THE ELECTION OF FOLKETING CANDIDATES

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Under these conditions the position of the voter is to a certain degree similar to that of the English voter in the first-past-the-post system. If the voter does not want to vote for the candidate or candidates put up in his district, he can only avoid helping to support their election by voting for another party — or by not voting at all.

Almost all list systems of proportional representation are, however, constructed in such a way that gives the voters the possibility of making a choice among the various candidates nominated by the same party. (Lakeman & Lambert, 1955, pp. 92–96) Among the various procedures the Danish system is one of the most complicated, and for the foreign observer the most difficult to grasp. Since an exhaustive description of the system is not to be found in English scientific literature,¹ it is necessary to give a brief account of the system before the main theme of this article — the voter's use of the possibilities — can be discussed.

The Three Forms of List Organization

Denmark's unicameral legislature, the *Folketing*, is elected for a period of four years. It has nowadays 179 members, of whom 175 represent Denmark proper. The country is divided into 23 constituencies (*storkredse* and *amtskredse*). The votes decide first the distribution of 135 seats (*kredsmandater*) among the parties by use of a modified Sainte-Laguë-formula. Secondly, the remaining forty seats (*tillægsmandater*) are used to correct departures from the principle of proportional representation. Thirdly, when it has been determined how many seats each

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party has won in each constituency, the elected candidates are appointed from those candidates, who are nominated by the party in the constituency."

The nomination of candidates for the *Folketing* takes place in 124 nomination districts (*opstillingskredse*). Each of the 23 constituencies contains a minimum of two and a maximum of eight such districts. The most usual procedure is for each party to nominate one candidate in each nomination district, but particularly smaller parties often nominate fewer candidates in the constituency than there are nomination districts. In general in these cases one of the candidates is put up in two or more nomination districts at the same time.

The electoral law provides the parties with the possibility of using three different forms of list organization in the constituency. These forms differ first and foremost in that they give the voters varying degrees of influence on the election of candidates.

(1) A party can use a so-called simultaneous list organization (*sideordnet opstilling*), meaning that all the candidates are listed simultaneously in all the nomination districts in the constituency. A variation of this form of list organi-

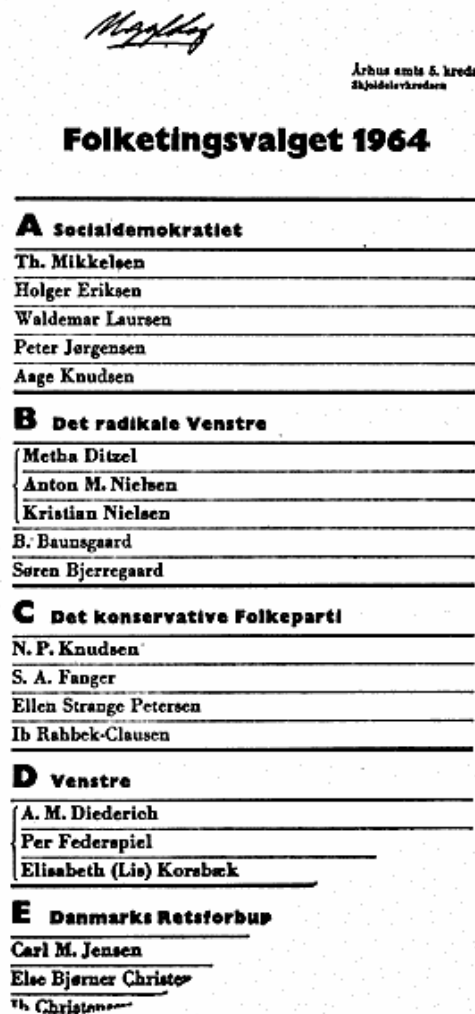


Figure 2.

Section of a Danish ballot paper.

zation is for some of the candidates to be simultaneously listed in several nomination districts, while other candidates are listed only in one nomination district.

When the party uses simultaneous list organization, the ballot paper looks like section D in Fig. 1 (*Venstre*). Candidates are listed in alphabetical order, names are printed in the same size of type, which along with brackets to the left of the names indicate to the voters that the candidates are simultaneously put up. What the ballot paper looks like when only some of the candidates are put up simultaneously can also be seen from Fig. 1 Section B, *Det radikale Venstre*.

The voter can either put his cross against the name of the party (*partistemme*), or against the name of one of the candidates (*personlig stemme*). In the latter case, his ballot is regarded as cast for that candidate when the votes are apportioned. On the other hands, party votes cast in the nomination district are divided among all the candidates of the party in relation to the number of personal votes received.

When the election results have been calculated, and with the aid of the distribution methods stated in the electoral law (Kenneth E. Miller, pp. 74–77) it is found that the party, for example, has gotten one candidate elected in the constituency, the actual designation of the person concerned is a simple process: the candidate who has gotten the most votes is elected.

It is worthy of note that when simultaneous list organization is used, by casting a personal vote the voter not only supports the candidate concerned *directly*, but also *indirectly*, by virtue of the fact that with his vote he is exercising influence upon the proportion of party votes the candidate will be given. And vice versa — if the voter does not indicate any preference as to persons — he does not have any influence on which of the candidates in the constituency is elected.

(2) The simultaneous list organization is used less frequently today by the parties than in earlier times.² A much more common form of list organization is that each of the party's district organizations in the constituency nominates one and only one candidate. An example of this kind of party list is the one for *Det konservative Folkeparti*, Section C in Fig. 1. At the top of the list, under the name of the party, the name of that candidate whom the party has put up in the nomination district is printed in bold type. Beneath, in alphabetical order are the names of all the other candidates in the constituency, printed in smaller type.

The voter also has a choice here between voting for the party or voting for one of the people listed. As it is the case when simultaneous list organization is used, the candidate who has gotten the most votes is considered elected. But the number of votes the candidates receive is determined by an essentially different method from that used with simultaneous list organization. As far as the voter's influence on the selection of candidates is concerned, it is of no importance whether he gives a party vote or votes for the candidate who is put up in the nomination district. In both cases in the final count his vote is considered as cast for the first candidate. To vote for the person instead of the party has meaning only as an indication of sympathy for, or support of the nomination district's candidate. It can be psychologically important for a candi-

date to know that his candidature is directly supported by the voters – or in the words of a Danish politician: it gives the man elected "a more secure feeling that he has his seat on the strength of the voters' confidence and less as a result of the good graces he enjoys with the few who have suggested him as a candidate". (Poul Møller, 1961, p. 156) But outside of this, these personal votes have no effect.

When the "usual" form of list organization is used, the voter still has a third possibility; namely, to vote for one of the party's other candidates in the constituency, in other words, for one of those whose names are listed in smaller type on the ballot. In determining winning candidate the vote is counted for the candidate indicated.

This last method of voting, which here will be called *effective personal voting*, is characterized by the fact that the voter explicitly indicates that in the final count his vote should not be given to the candidate that is put up in his own nomination district, but instead should go to one of the party's other candidates. No matter what motives the voter has for choosing effective personal voting, it expresses the fact that he prefers another person elected than the candidate nominated by the party organization in the nomination district where he votes.

If one compares the voter's position under the two forms of list organization sketched above, both similarities and differences can be seen. The similarities consist in the fact that the voter in both cases has a free choice among different people; in both cases he can also cast a party vote, even though the effect of the vote on the choice of persons is different. The principal difference is that in the first case the party organization has placed the candidates on a completely equal level in the competition for votes, while in the latter situation the candidate put up in the voter's nomination district partly has the formal advantage of being placed on the ballot in a special way (at the top and in bold type), and partly the overt advantage that all the party votes in the nomination district are given to him. This latter fact is of much practical importance when the number of voters in the nomination district concerned is relatively large in relation to the number of voters in the constituency's other nomination districts, or when the party's strength in the nomination district is relatively strong in relation to the party's strength in the other nomination districts. This relationship is not without importance for those nominated by the parties. In all parties a struggle can be seen among the candidates to be put up in the so-called "safe" districts, that is, districts where because of their size and/or party strength there is the highest probability of getting a candidate elected. In many cases, for example, a member of the *Folketing* moves his candidature from one district to another, more "safe" district if he has a chance to be nominated there.

(3) The electoral law provides the parties with the possibility of using still another form of list organization, the "party-list-form of list organization" (*parti-listeopstilling*). This form, which is used today only by two of the parties, *Socialdemokratiet* and *Danmarks kommunistiske Parti*, can be characterized by the fact that the party organization in the constituency announces the names of the candidates to the election committee in a definite rank order in which the

party organization wishes the candidates elected. On the ballot this rank order is seen by the fact that the candidates are not listed in any of the orders sketched above, but are placed in the rank order the party has given, though modified in that the nomination district's candidate is put at the top regardless of placement on the "party-list".

Under this form of list organization the voter has the same possibilities for casting his vote as under the "usual" form of list organization. In other words, he can vote for the party, for the nomination district's candidate or for one of the other candidates in the constituency.

As will be evident from this explanation and more clearly from Fig. 1, A, *Socialdemokratiet*, much awareness and a large degree of knowledge of the electoral law is demanded of the voter in order to see which form of list organization his party has used. To understand what effect it has on the selection of candidates to cast a party vote or a personal vote requires even more of the voter, and this applies especially if the party has announced a "party-list".

If this is the case, in broad outline the selection of the party's elected candidates is made in the following way:

After the number of seats won by the party in the constituency has been determined, the total number of votes for the party is divided by a number which is one larger than the number of seats allotted to the party in the constituency. The quota determined in this way is called the party's *fordelingstal* in the constituency. If one of the candidates gets a total number of votes that is equal to or larger than the quota, he is considered elected regardless of the place he has on the "party-list". If the number of candidates who get a number of votes equal to or larger than the quota is higher than the number of seats won by party in the constituency, the candidates who have received the largest total vote are declared elected.

In the 1960 election about one half of the candidates of *Socialdemokratiet* were elected in this way; the rest of the candidates had to be picked by a method provided for in the electoral law for cases when the number of candidates with a vote count greater than the quota is less than the number of seats won in the constituency.

When this is the case, the number of votes which the person or persons already elected have gotten beyond the quota is transferred to the rest of the candidates in the constituency by an extremely complicated method which to a certain — albeit modest — degree favors the candidates placed at the top of the "party-list".³

Repeated returns from the Danish *Folketing* elections have shown that the candidates who are elected in the constituencies by "party-list-form of list organization" generally also would have been elected if the party had used the "usual" form of list organization. Of the total of 74 Social Democratic candidates elected in this way in 1960, only three would have been replaced by others if the "usual" form of list organization had been used. (*Statistiske Meddelelser* 1961: Folketingsvalget 15-11-1960, p. 19) Part of the explanation for this lies in the way in which at any rate the "party-list" of the Social Democrats is made up.

According to the party's laws, the rank order should be determined in such a way that the candidate in the nomination district within the constituency where the party has gotten the largest share of the votes in the previous election is *automatically* placed at the top of the "party-list" – and so on. Since as a rule within the individual constituencies the urban districts have the largest number of voters and the highest proportion of Social Democratic supporters, the Social Democrats' form of list organization mainly favors the candidates who are put up in the characteristically urban nomination districts.

Or, to put it in another way: because "party-list" rank order reflects the party's position of strength in the constituency's nomination districts and because there is a certain connection between the party's position of strength and the number of voters in the nomination districts, the use of the "party-list" by the Social Democrats does not mean any essential change in regard to who is elected. With other parties, whose voter composition is different, the use of the "party-list" might lead to greater deviations.

The Reform of 1920

The legal rules described above were enacted in 1920, and they were introduced in the elections of the same year, when the Danish electoral system was changed from being prevalingly a first-past-the-post system to a list system of proportional representation. The provisions of the electoral law, which have undergone only minor changes since 1920, are the expression of a compromise. An attempt was made to transfer some of the attributes of the first-past-the-post system to the list system of proportional representation – there was a desire not to break with the past completely.

In 1920 there was general agreement among the Danish parties that it was desirable to preserve the close relationship between the candidates and their supporters as it existed under the first-past-the-post system. It was felt that the voter's personal knowledge of and confidence in the nomination district's candidate was one of the principles upon which the electoral arrangement should rest, and under the list system of proportional representation that relationship of confidence should be expressed by giving a possibility of voting for the district's candidate personally.

On the other hand, there was also a desire to remove one of the drawbacks thought to characterize the first-past-the-post system, namely, that the voters were bound by the party's nominations in the individual nomination districts. The voter would be given the chance to choose among more candidates from the same party. "The electoral law should be such that the voter, without forsaking his party, has a choice among more people", was one of the main motives for the conservative politician, Asger Karstensen, who more than any other man influenced the new electoral system. (*Folketingstidende* 1919/20, B. col. 953.)

During the debates in the *Folketing*, apart from the fear expressed from various sides that the voters' access to choosing among more candidates would lead to

"unhealthy competition among the candidates of the same party" (*Folketings-tidende* 1919/20, cols 2030, 2070), apparently not much thought was given to how these provisions about personal vote casting would function in practice. Behind the entire debate lay a conception of the voter as a rational being to whom the electoral law should give the possibility of making a choice among the different methods of casting his ballot, based on his knowledge of the mechanism of the electoral system and his familiarity with the party's candidates.

The Voters' Knowledge of the System and the Candidates

The question is to what degree the present-day Danish voter measures up to the concept one apparently held of him in 1920. Does he understand the provisions of the electoral law about personal voting?

In connection with each election a considerable effort is made by the daily press and other mass media to acquaint the voters with the possibilities they have at their disposal in the ballot box. To what degree these efforts bear fruit remains uncertain. However, keeping in mind the electoral law's complicated provisions, one can doubt whether their knowledge is very widespread.

Even for the voter who knows a great deal about the Danish electoral system, it may be said that his possibility for judging if and to what degree a personal vote can exercise any influence on the election of candidates is extremely minimal. The electoral system with its combination of constituency seats and supplementary seats, and with its complicated rules for the election of candidates makes it impossible to judge correctly. A leading Danish politician has very pointedly characterized the Danish method of election as being so complicated that "even experts are totally ignorant of who in reality benefits from their vote" (Poul Møller, 1961, p. 156).

Next, one could ask: Do the voters know the candidates put up by the party in the constituency? No survey has been made in order to answer that question in Denmark, so there is no definite knowledge on this point. Foreign surveys, among others those undertaken in Norway and Sweden (Valen & Katz, 1964, pp. 140 ff. and *Sveriges Officiella Statistik: Riksdagsmannavalen, åren 1959—1960*, II, 1961, p. 65), suggest that only a limited number of voters know the parties' candidates; whether or not it is justifiable to draw parallels cannot be discussed here, but at first glance it seems there is nothing to indicate that the situation in Denmark is very different from that in the other Scandinavian countries.

Although an estimation of the voters' knowledge of the candidates is difficult, in any event one can demonstrate that the form of election campaign that is carried on in Denmark can only to a slight degree prompt voters to use the personal vote. Outside of the agitation of women's organizations to get female voters to vote for female candidates, and that of a private organization ("Komiteen for Erhvervspolitik") to encourage voters to use the personal vote for certain candidates connected with trade and industry, apparently almost no efforts are made to encourage voters to use their right of effective personal voting. As early as the first election in 1920, the parties agitated to electors to vote for parties

and not for persons (*Statistiske Meddelelser*, 4. 60. 3, p. 23), and that attitude has not changed essentially since. Little by little the election campaigns of the parties have become mainly a struggle among the *parties*, and the campaign as carried out in the radio and on television a struggle among *party leaders*. In the printed election propaganda the names of the candidates are stressed to only a modest degree, and *if* it does happen, very seldom is one of the candidates in a constituency stressed at the expense of the others. A survey would most likely show the existence of a social norm – not completely effective to be sure – whose substance is that a party's candidates must not compete with each other.

With an electoral system whose mode of operation is impossible to grasp easily, with an election campaign that is only to modest degree carried out as a campaign among persons, and with a negative attitude in the party organization toward competition among the party's own candidates, one would not expect any particularly great use made of the right to cast an effective personal vote. The actual vote count supports this expectation.

Analysis of the 1960 Vote

A study was made on effective personal voting in the election of the Danish *Folketing* in November 1960. Data was included from all the nomination districts in which a party's voters have had the possibility of choosing among the following three ways of casting their vote:

- 1) voting for the party (*party vote*).
- 2) voting for the candidate whom the party organization has nominated in the nomination district (*ineffective personal vote*).
- 3) voting for another candidate put up in the constituency by the party organization (*effective personal vote*).⁴

In the 1960 election, 45 per cent of all the votes cast were personal votes, but effective personal votes made up only a lesser part of these, as can be seen from Table 1. The degree of all personal voting seems to be somewhat identical

Table 1. Extent of personal voting in percentage of the total number of votes. All Parties⁵

	Copen- hagen	Is- lands	Jut- land	To- tal
Personal votes (effective + ineffective)	42	45	46	45
Effective personal votes	19	14	10	14

throughout the entire country. However, there is an important difference between the proportion of effective personal votes in the three main parts of the country.

If the situation within the country's 23 constituencies is examined, it can be seen that the average figures given in Table 1 conceal great differences within the individual parts of the country and among the various parties.⁶ There seems to be a tendency for the proportion of effective personal votes to be largest in the constituencies where the country's largest cities are located, and this is confirmed when the proportions of effective personal votes in the distinctly urban

areas and that in the rest of the country are compared. In 1960 effective personal votes in nomination districts where 90 per cent or more of the population lives in urban areas⁷ made up 18 per cent of the total vote. In districts where under 90 per cent of the population lives in urban areas effective personal votes only made up 10 per cent.

Average figures, like those appearing above and in *Appendix 1*, do not present a clear picture of the extent of effective personal voting. A more detailed examination will show further that these figures conceal an extremely large fluctuation from one nomination district to another within the individual constituency. As an illustration of intra-party variation, figures are listed in Table 2 for the effective personal vote in a constituency chosen at random.

Table 2. Effective personal votes in percentage of the party's total number of votes in the nomination district. The constituency of Holbæk. Four "old" parties.⁸

	Social- demokra- tiet	Radi- kale Venstre	Konser- vative Folke- parti	Ven- stre
1. nomination district	9,9	4,2	2,3	13,5
2. nomination district	9,2	13,1	14,9	3,1
3. nomination district	13,6	22,5	13,5	2,9
4. nomination district	1,8	11,9	16,9	8,1
Constituency of Holbæk	8,4	11,0	11,2	6,4

These data indicate clearly that the conclusions from average constituency figures can be more misleading than guiding.

In this sample case of the Holbæk constituency, the candidates in four of the districts were members of the *Folketing* and the effective personal vote in the districts where these candidates were nominated was lower than the effective personal vote in the rest of the districts.⁹ On the basis of this ascertainment it is natural to ask whether, for all the parties and throughout the entire country, there is a tendency for the nomination districts of the members of the *Folketing* to be characterized by a low effective personal vote? And, is the higher effective personal vote in the neighboring districts an expression of the fact that the voters in these districts to a considerable extent use effective personal votes for *Folketing* members?

Renominated Legislators

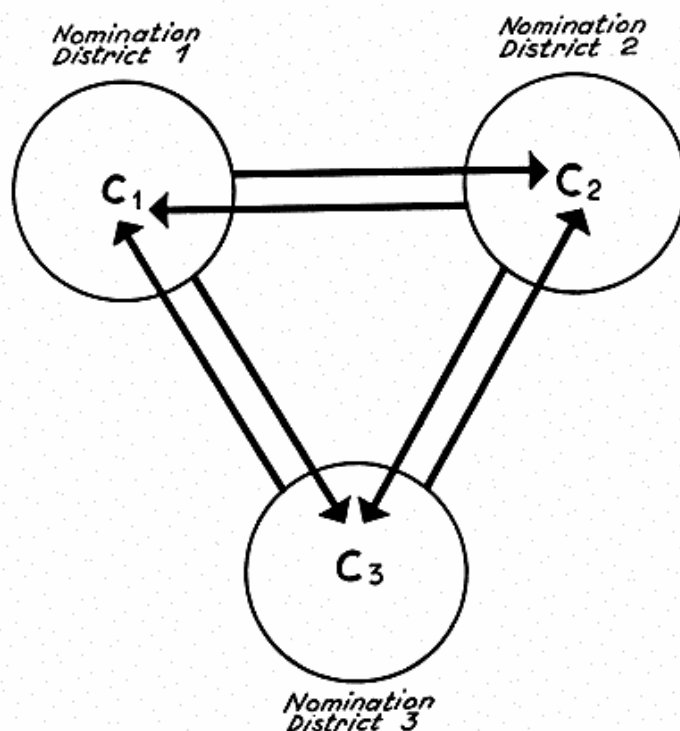
In order to answer these questions, for every single candidate included in the material the magnitude of the dimensions of the effective personal vote in the candidate's nomination district has been calculated in terms of percentage of the party's total number of votes in the nomination district. In the same way, the number of personal votes cast for each candidate in the constituency's *other* nomination districts has been calculated in terms of percentage of the party's share of the votes in these districts. By using this procedure, one gets the effective personal votes from two different points of view; namely, partly as votes

cast for the benefit of a candidate in another of the constituency's nomination districts, and partly as votes which do not benefit the nomination district's own candidate. In other words, every single effective personal vote can be considered simultaneously both as "lost" or "won". "The loser" is the candidate put up by the party in the district where the voter has voted, and "the winner" is the candidate in another nomination district to whom the voter has given his vote. From this picture, it is clear that just as each effective personal vote can be looked at from these two points of view, every single candidate can be also simultaneously considered as "loser" and "winner".

The connection between the two ways of looking at this can be illuminated with the help of a simple illustration, showing the movement of votes within a constituency. (Fig. 2) A constituency is here thought of as having only three nomination districts in which a party has put up the three candidates C_1 , C_2 , C_3 .

Figure 2.

Exchange of effective personal votes in a constituency with three nomination districts.



The arrows illustrate the individual voter's possibilities for exercising influence on the election of candidates in the individual nomination districts. It is seen that the effective personal votes in district 1 (the votes which C_1 "loses") are equal to the number of votes which C_2 and C_3 "win" from district 1, etc. The general connection between the two ways of looking at effective personal votes, is:

$$\sum_1^n \text{"won" votes} = \sum_1^n \text{"lost" votes}$$

where the constituency consists of n nomination districts.

If one apportions the calculated loss percentages and the calculated profit percentages of the individual candidates for each party in each constituency¹⁰ into two groups by means of giving to the one group all the percentages which are larger than average for the "constituency-list" concerned, and giving the other group all the percentages which are less than the average, one can compare the differences in the losses and profits between *Folketing* members and other candidates from the effective personal vote. This rather complicated way of calculating makes comparisons possible among all "constituency-lists", comparisons that are not affected by the differences between the proportions of the effective personal vote in different parts of the country, nor by the differences among parties. Lastly, it eliminates the sources of error which would creep in with comparisons between the absolute number of votes, because the individual nomination districts within the constituencies do not have equally sized populations.¹¹

Table 3. Profit and loss by effective personal voting for candidates in "constituency lists" where only one of the candidates was a member of the *Folketing* (MF).

	MF	not MF	all
Great profit – little loss	39	20	59
Great profit – great loss	2	20	22
Little profit – little loss	3	31	34
Little profit – great loss	0	117	117
All candidates	44	188	232

(C = 0,577; X² = 116,8; P < 0,001)

Table 3 examines all the "constituency-lists" in which only one member of the *Folketing* was put up. It can be seen that in these "constituency-lists" almost 90 per cent of the renominated members lost a relatively low number of effective personal votes in their own nomination district in relation to the number of effective personal votes in other nomination districts. And at the same time, they got relatively many personal votes from the rest of the constituency's nomination districts, compared to the number of personal votes which the other candidates in the constituency received. Conversely, about 60 per cent of the candidates who were not members of the *Folketing* suffered a relatively large loss of personal votes in their nomination districts, without significant compensation through the votes from the other nomination districts. Especially this last figure shows the marked tendency for effective personal votes to cluster around relatively few people in the "constituency-lists" where only one of the candidates has a political position as *Folketing* member beforehand. Table 3 along with Tables 4 and 5 shows clearly that the incumbent candidates were almost without exception characterized by relatively small losses and relatively high profits in the exchange of effective personal votes within each "constituency-list" when they were put up as the only *Folketing* member; when they were listed in larger numbers, even when the majority of the candidates in the constituency were members of the *Folketing*, the same tendency is found, although less pronounced and to a

Table 4. Profit and loss by effective personal voting for candidates in "constituency lists" where less than 50 per cent of the candidates were members of the Folketing (MF).

	MF	not MF	all
Great profit – little loss	61	28	89
Great profit – great loss	5	23	28
Little profit – little loss	6	38	44
Little profit – great loss	5	161	166
All candidates	77	250	327

(C = 0,549; $X^2 = 141,3$; P < 0,001)**Table 5. Profit and loss by effective personal voting for candidates in "constituency lists" where 50 per cent or more of the candidates were members of the Folketing (MF).¹²**

	MF	not MF	all
Great profit – little loss	26	4	30
Great profit – great loss	6	1	7
Little profit – little loss	8	2	10
Little profit – great loss	19	27	46
All Candidates	59	34	93

(C = 0,424; $X^2 = 20,4$; P < 0,001)

certain degree due to statistical-technical reasons. Correspondingly, those candidates who were not members of the *Folketing* in most cases suffered relatively large losses without getting a relatively great profit. This applies to a marked degree where these candidates were a minority in relation to *Folketing* members, in which case almost 80 per cent of them were "losers".

It is worthy of note that as a rule the candidates can be divided into two groups, those who are predominantly "winners" (that is to say, receive relatively many personal votes from the other nomination districts, without at the same time there being cast very many effective personal votes in their own nomination district) and those who are predominantly "losers". Only a small number of candidates is found in the other two groups. However, this tendency is not a particular feature of the "constituency-lists" in which former *Folketing* members are listed. A complete examination of all the profits and losses of the candidates included in the analysis shows that a general tendency does exist. (Table 6)

Table 6. Frequency distribution of all candidates in regard to profit and loss by effective personal voting. Percentage of all candidates of the party.

	great profit little loss	great profit great loss	little profit little loss	little profit great loss	ALL	(N)
Socialdemokratiet	31	8	11	50	100	(124)
Radikale Venstre	29	7	17	47	100	(87)
Konservative Folkeparti	30	9	11	50	100	(101)
Venstre	28	8	18	45	99	(99)
Danmarks Retsforbund	24	13	19	44	100	(102)
Socialistisk Folkeparti	28	12	17	43	100	(86)
Danmarks kommunistiske Parti	28	10	13	49	100	(118)
De Uafhængige	32	9	17	42	100	(69)
All parties	29	9	15	47	100	(784)

In so far as one dares draw any conclusion from this observation, it must be that to the extent voters use the possibility of choosing among the individual party's candidates, there is a marked tendency toward identical judgement of the candidates in the entire constituency. Only among 15 per cent of the candidates does a relatively high popularity in the nomination district (if one can interpret a low effective personal vote in such a way) not correspond to a relatively high popularity in the remaining nomination districts within the constituency. It is worthy of note that the tendency manifests itself in all parties, and in the strongly urbanized constituencies as well as in the distinctly rural constituencies.

It has now been shown that those already elected — those who have been *Folketing* members up to the time — as a whole belong to the group of candidates who enjoy the benefit of the provisions of the electoral law. At this point no general identification of this group of candidates will be attempted. Aside from *Folketing* members, only the female candidates will be considered.

Female Candidates

There has long been an awareness of a clear tendency for female candidates to receive relatively more personal votes, also effective personal votes, than the men.¹³ If one inquires into which of the candidates received the most personal and the most effective personal votes in the 1960 election, one also finds an appreciable preponderance of women.

Upon closer analysis of effective personal voting in the "constituency-lists" where women are found, the picture becomes more varied. As Table 7 shows,

Table 7. Profit and loss by effective personal voting for female candidates. All parties.

	number of female candidates
Great profit — little loss	44
Great profit — great loss	17
Little profit — little loss	6
Little profit — great loss	25
Total female candidates	92

most female candidates indeed were predominantly "winners", but a not insignificant number — over 25 per cent — were predominantly "losers". Furthermore, there are many female candidates who, although receiving a relatively large number of personal votes from the constituency's other nomination districts, at the same time still surrendered relatively large number of effective personal votes from their own nomination district to the constituency's other candidates — and since as a rule only one woman appears on the individual party's "constituency-list", that will mean to the male candidates.

The difference can be tentatively explained in the following way: the nomination of a female candidate makes many women in the constituency's other

nomination districts cast an effective personal vote for this candidate, but at the same time in the nomination district concerned there are many voters – and one dares say male voters – who react against a female candidate's election by casting an effective personal vote for the benefit of one of the male candidates from a neighboring district. The nomination of a woman thus motivates two *different* categories of voters, within and outside the nomination district, respectively, to cast a personal vote.

If one compares the female candidates' distribution with regard to loss and profit with the distribution of all the candidates (Tables 6 and 7), a significant difference is seen. ($P < 0,001$)

In comparing the loss and profit of *Folketing* members and other candidates from effective personal voting, a definite tendency was found for *Folketing* members to be "winners" to a predominant degree. It is now natural to ask whether there is a difference in the distribution of effective personal votes among female *Folketing* members and other female candidates. As Table 8 shows, the

Table 8. Profit and loss by effective personal voting for female members of the Folketing (MF) and for other female candidates. All parties.

	MF	not MF	All
Great profit – little loss	13	31	44
Great profit – great loss	2	15	17
Little profit – little loss	0	6	6
Little profit – great loss	0	25	25
Total female candidates	15	77	92

($C = 0,329$; $X^2 = 11,2$; $P < 0,01$)

female *Folketing* members were almost without exception "winners" and in any event all got a relatively large profit from the other nomination districts, while the remaining candidates did not markedly tend to win more personal votes and to surrender fewer than the constituency-list's remaining (male) candidates.

To be a woman thus seems to be no guarantee for getting many effective personal votes – and from another point of view – the idea that exists in the Danish parties, and especially among the male candidates, that the nomination of a female candidate invariably lessens the chance of the other candidates being chosen is indeed to a certain degree a justified ascertainment, however not one without exceptions.

Who are the Effective Voters?

No attempt has ever been made to identify the relatively small portion of voters who cast their votes for a candidate put up outside their own nomination district. Thus, it is not known whether it is party members in particular who utilize the possibility of effective personal voting or whether it is mainly unorganized, perhaps "floating" voters. Nor can anything be said about the motives of those concerned; it is not known, for example, to what extent direct opposition to the nomination district's candidate is involved. Other motives, as for example, the desire to support a specific candidate whose political opinions the voter

sympathizes with, or the desire to support a candidate who is considered a representative for a specific social category or a specific interest organization, may also play a certain role. As long as no survey has been undertaken, partly for the purpose of identifying the voters who utilize the possibility of effective personal voting and partly to clarify the motives of the voters concerned, these questions must go unanswered. A survey of this sort would also be difficult to conduct satisfactorily, precisely because this unidentified voter category is relatively few in number.

It is, however, more than plausible guesswork to assume that a large portion of the effective personal votes cast for female candidates are cast by women who wish to see their own sex represented in the *Folketing*. In most Danish parties the female members work to get women nominated, who have a real chance of election; from the opposition to the nomination of women, which from time to time can be seen in the party organizations, one dares to conclude that the male party members and the male candidates have a certain fear of the female voters' reactions if women are nominated.¹⁴

The voters' utilization of the possibility to influence the choice of persons can be interpreted to reveal how the party's nominations have been accepted. Only a minor portion of the voters even utilize the possibility, and those who do, vote in significant proportions for the candidates who already are members of the *Folketing*, and therefore, as a rule, also have the greatest chance of being elected. From this, one dares to conclude — in any case as far as the 1960 election is concerned — that the voters by and large do *not* utilize the possibility of exercising influence as a *protest* against the parties' nominations.

If effective personal votes are considered as an expression of the voters' wishes to support the candidates they know and whose political opinions they sympathize with, it is not surprising, bearing the character of the Danish election campaign in mind, that it is the *Folketing* members who get the largest profit from effective personal vote. In the constituencies where they are put up these candidates are, as a rule, the best known figures; their statements and actions generally get more press coverage between and during the election campaign.

If this interpretation of the main motive for effective personal voting is correct, one would expect that effective personal voting in the "constituency-lists" where no member of the *Folketing* figures would be lower than in the "constituency-lists" where there are such members. To what extent it is possible to establish something like this is shown by Table 9. The expected tendency seems marked, apart from the fact that it does not hold true for *Det Radikale Venstre* — the smallest of the four parties — where effective personal voting in these nomination districts still lies above the national average.

Table 9. Effective personal votes (in percent of all votes) in "constituency-lists" where none of the candidates were MF (compared with effective personal votes in all "constituency-lists"). Four "old" parties.

Socialdemokratiet	2 %	(11 %)
Radikale Venstre	19 %	(18 %)
Konservative Folkeparti	7 %	(21 %)
Venstre	7 %	(11 %)

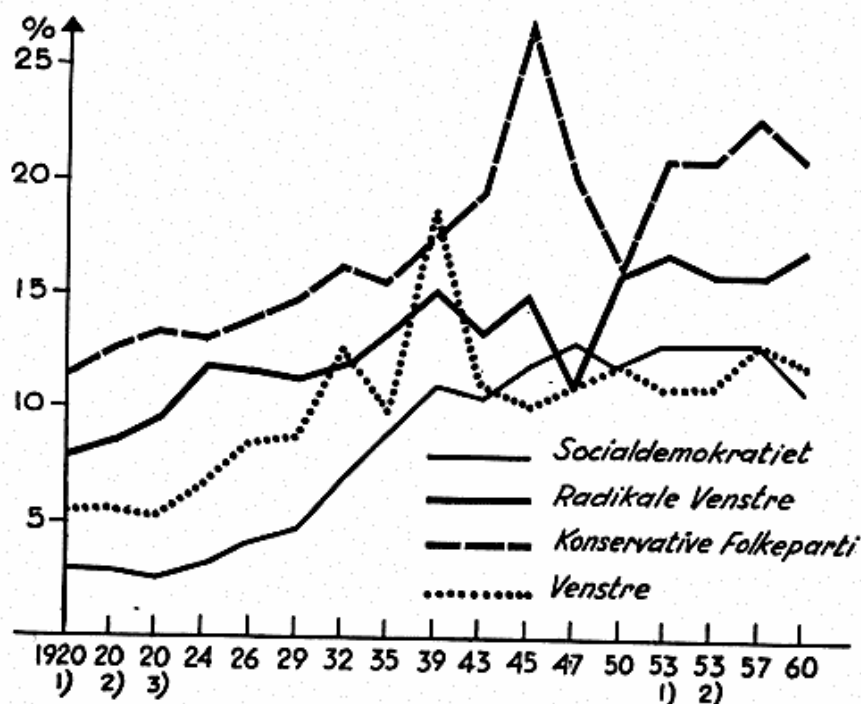
Differences Among the Parties and Among Urban and Rural Denmark

An examination of the rough average figures in Appendix 1 alone is enough to confirm that there are essential differences in the use of effective personal voting in the various parties. These differences cannot be solely explained by the variables used thus far. Very likely there is a tendency for the parties with the many female candidates also to be the parties in which the effective personal vote is largest; but if the voting in the individual "constituency-lists" were examined one would find that there is far from any clear connection between a large effective personal vote and the occurrence of female candidates. Nor can one explain some parties' large number of effective personal votes by referring to the fact that these parties counted many *Folketing* members among their candidates. The party which renominated the most *Folketing* members during the 1960 election, *Socialdemokratiet*, was characterized by the relatively lowest number of effective personal votes and conversely, the highest number of this type of votes was found in one party — *Danmarks kommunistiske Parti* — which only renominated five *Folketing* members.

It is not possible to go into a more detailed analysis of these differences among parties in this paper; many things indicate that an explanation of the differences can only be established through a longitudinal analysis which goes back as far as 1920, since the differences found in 1960, as can be seen from Fig. 3, have manifested themselves after the introduction of the list system of proportional representation.

Figure 3.

Extent of effective personal voting in Danish parties 1920–1960, Four "old" parties.¹⁾



If there are differences in the extent to which the voters in the various parties make use of the possibility of exercising influence on the choice of persons, there are, however, also significant points of similarity. Among voters of all parties there is a clear tendency for the extent of effective personal vote to be much larger in the strongly urbanized nomination districts, including the Copenhagen districts, than in the others; as it has already been mentioned, the portion of voters who cast effective personal votes is almost twice as large in the urban districts as in the other parts of the country.

Table 10 compares the behavior of city voters and the rest of the voters. All the candidates included in this study are divided into four groups with regard to sex and incumbency, and the size of the effective personal vote for the nomination districts where these candidate groups were nominated is indicated.

Table 10. Effective personal voting (per cent of total number of votes) in strongly urbanized and in less urbanized nomination districts. Comparison of nomination districts with different types of candidates. All parties.

		Characteristics of Candidates				
		Woman MF	Man MF	Woman not MF	Man not MF	All candidates
Socialdemokratiet	{ Urb. \geq 90 %	10	15	17	21	15
	{ Urb. < 90 %	5	5	16	8	7
Radikale Venstre	{ Urb. \geq 90 %	—	17	19	28	24
	{ Urb. < 90 %	23	5	12	16	14
Konservative Folkeparti	{ Urb. \geq 90 %	23	23	21	26	24
	{ Urb. < 90 %	—	12	18	19	17
Venstre	{ Urb. \geq 90 %	—	16	18	16	16
	{ Urb. < 90 %	—	8	9	12	11
Danmarks Retsforbund	{ Urb. \geq 90 %	18	12	23	22	21
	{ Urb. < 90 %	—	8	9	13	12
Socialistisk Folkeparti	{ Urb. \geq 90 %	—	3	40	23	22
	{ Urb. < 90 %	—	—	17	7	8
Danmarks kommunistiske Parti	{ Urb. \geq 90 %	10	12	37	28	24
	{ Urb. < 90 %	—	—	14	18	17
De Uafhængige	{ Urb. \geq 90 %	—	—	13	11	12
	{ Urb. < 90 %	—	—	22	9	10
All parties	{ Urb. \geq 90 %	17	16	19	22	18
	{ Urb. < 90 %	7	7	15	12	10

In this table, a large part of the relationship considered in this paper emerges — party for party. In all parties there is a clear difference between strongly

urbanized districts and the other districts, along with the fact that for each party there is a clear, although not completely general, tendency within the two groups for a net migration of votes from the districts where the candidate was not a member of the *Folketing* to candidates who were members before the election. This can be seen clearly from the fact that the voters make most use of the right of effective personal voting in districts where the candidate was not a member of the *Folketing*. In some of the parties this use is most frequent where a female candidate is listed. Now it must be emphasized that comparison among districts with female and male candidates must be made with a certain reservation, as the number of female candidates in various parties is too small to prevent the possible effect of personal factors on the average figures noted. On the other hand, there is excellent agreement between the figures for the female candidates in Table 10 and the conclusions that could be drawn from Tables 7–8.

One imagines that the difference between urban and other districts can be explained in various ways. A conceivable explanation, in line with the concepts held in 1920 about the relationship between the voters and the candidate, would be that in the predominantly rural districts there still exists to a marked degree a relationship of trust between voters and candidate. Therefore only a few voters are motivated to use an effective personal vote, while conversely, voters in the cities do not perceive in the same way the nomination district as a natural political unit.

Another, but not necessarily alternative explanation concerns nominations. In the distinctly urban districts — especially in the metropolitan districts — the parties may nominate other type of candidates than in the country's other districts, namely, those who for various reasons must be expected to be known to many voters, or for other reasons imagined to motivate numerous voters to use the possibility of exercising influence on the choice of persons. Not the least because tendencies toward differences here can be shown way back to 1920, an illumination of these problems calls for a longitudinal examination alongside the present type of analysis in order to verify plausible, but uncertain guesses.

Conclusion

It has been mentioned that the legislature introduced the opportunity for personal voting in 1920 in order to preserve the close personal relationship between the candidate and his electors which existed under the majority system. At the same time it tried to improve the electoral system by allowing effective personal voting so that voters need not feel themselves absolutely bound by the party organizations' nominations. In spite of the legislative changes, no significant activity was undertaken during the first years to change the behavior of the voters and to get them to use the new possibilities. The voters in the 1920's also seemed to have followed the same pattern of voting as formerly: almost all cast an inef-

fective personal vote, while the number of party votes and especially effective personal votes was very small. Right up until 1939, ineffective personal votes made up about 90 per cent of the total vote for *Socialdemokratiet*, and a similar, though not so marked, tendency existed in the other parties, where the share of ineffective personal votes was never under 80 per cent at any time.

Gradually there came a change in the direction of an increasing portion of the votes being cast as effective personal votes. The tendency manifested itself in all parties, as is partially shown in Fig. 3. In this respect the new election arrangement seems to have required a certain adjustment period before voters became familiar with its possibilities.

After the Second World War the trend continued; from election to election the proportion of personal votes has decreased (from 70 per cent in 1945 to 41 per cent in 1964). But at the same time there is a continuous tendency for the proportion of effective personal votes to increase, although the tendency is weak, often broken and very diverse for the individual parties and parts of the country.

The electoral reform of 1920 gave the Danish voters almost unlimited possibilities for exercising influence on the election of candidates. But these changes were not made because of a desire that the voters should utilize the possibilities. It became apparent that the voters continuously supported the candidate who was listed in their nomination district. Only 25 years after the introduction of this arrangement did a movement begin which in recent years seems to have loosened the tie between candidate and voters.

It is tempting to interpret this development as one among many indications of a common tendency in Danish politics for the voters to no longer perceive the nomination district as a natural unit. In this sense, and considering the fact that the forum of political discussion has been shifted from the local election campaign to the nationwide campaign in the various mass media, the voters' possibilities for and need of personal contact with the local candidate has been reduced, and thereby also the familiarity with the local candidates has been diminished. The constantly increasing number of party votes and the constantly decreasing number of ineffective personal votes indicate such a change.

But at the same time some of the voters — and an increasing portion — apparently feel a certain personal attachment to the candidates outside the local nomination district but within the constituency. The fact worth noting about these voters is that only a few of them apparently use their effective personal vote in the way the fathers of the 1920-law imagined, namely, as a means of expressing dissatisfaction with the district's own candidate.

Today — and perhaps today more than earlier — the possibility of exercising influence on the election of candidates is used to support definite candidate-categories which for various reasons have the best conditions for being known among the voters, for becoming "names" in the consciousness of the voters.

Most notably, the Danish system of preferential voting acts in the direction of supporting and strengthening the position of the politicians already elected.

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Appendix 1. Extent of effective personal voting in Danish political parties. The election to the Folketing, 15th November, 1960.

PARTY	CONSTITUENCY	Socialdemokratiet	Radikale Venstre	Konservative Folkeparti	Venstre	Danmarks Retsforbund	Socialistisk Folkeparti	Danmarks kommunistiske Parti	De Uafhængige
		Søndre storkreds } København	22	31	24	15	16	18	28
Østre storkreds }	14	27	29	18	24	42	33	12	
Vestre storkreds }	16	28	19	18	17	20	28	13	
Københavns amt	24	22	26	17	23	13	18	15	
Frøderiksborg	4	24	7	8	13	6	11	5	
Holbæk	8	11	11	6	15	5	14	—	
Sorø	6	10	23	—	4	1	6	9	
Præstø	5	8	15	7	10	5	21	—	
Bornholm	2	11	—	—	10	—	4	—	
Maribo	6	17	15	15	12	7	10	—	
Odense	10	—	13	13	13	12	19	11	
Svendborg	5	10	8	15	10	4	13	5	
Hjørring	5	11	16	9	20	8	9	16	
Thisted	6	3	—	5	7	—	3	5	
Aalborg	10	14	35	11	—	10	29	7	
Viborg	5	—	—	—	7	2	3	13	
Randers	8	—	8	11	8	2	10	—	
Aarhus	6	—	25	—	26	9	22	6	
Skanderborg	3	17	4	5	7	—	11	14	
Vejle	5	20	10	7	8	5	21	6	
Ringkøbing	9	15	17	10	13	8	9	15	
Ribe	9	15	—	21	9	8	12	7	
Haderslev m.fl.a.	7	—	22	—	11	11	18	9	
All constituencies		11	18	21	11	15	18	22	11

NOTES

¹ A brief and not quite complete description is given in English by Miller, Kenneth E., *The Danish Electoral System, Parliamentary Affairs*, vol. 18, pp. 71-81, especially pp. 77-78.

² From the outline in Appendix 1, one can get an impression of the frequency with which this form was used by the four "old" parties (Socialdemokratiet, Radikale Venstre, Konservative Folkeparti and Venstre, cf. note 8 below), as the empty spaces in the table indicate that the party in the constituency concerned uses one or another form of simultaneous list organization.

³ Law concerning election to the Folketing (Lov nr. 171 of 31. 3. 1953) § 47. An example of selection of a candidate by "vote transfer" can be found in *Statistiske Meddelelser* 4. 142. 3, pp. 143-145. In *Statistiske Meddelelser* 1965: Folketingsvalget 22. 9. 1964, pp. 216-221 a description may be found based on calculated examples of selection of candidates under the various forms of list organization, among these also use of the "party-list".

⁴ In the study, the number of votes are included for all the candidates put up in the 1960 election, except those who were put up in the constituencies by total or partial simultaneous list organization, and candidates who were put up as the party's only candidate in a constituency. Out of a total of 875 candidates, 784 are included in the survey, as 82 candidates were listed in connection with one or another form of simultaneous list organization, 6 candidates were the only candidates in their constituency and 1 candidate was put up outside the parties.

⁵ Source: *Statistiske Meddelelser*, 1961: Folketingsvalget 15. nov. 1960 pp. 17-18. The Statistical Department used a slightly different basis of calculation from that used in the survey, but this is of no significance for these figures.

⁶ A survey of the extent of effective personal voting in the different constituencies and within the different parties can be found in Appendix 1.

⁷ By urban areas is meant connected, built up areas with at least 200 inhabitants, connected in the sense that as a rule the distance between the houses is at most 200 meters. (See *Statistiske Meddelelser*, 1962: 13, p. 6). The calculation of the degree of urbanization in the individual nomination district was made by the Institute of Political Science, Aarhus.

⁸ "Old" parties is a term often used in Danish politics for Socialdemokratiet, Venstre, Konservative Folkeparti and Det radikale Venstre. In the elections of the recent years, these four parties have rather constantly received about 85-90 % of the total vote cast in the Danish Folketing election. The remaining portion of the votes has fallen to various smaller, newer parties; in 1960 Socialistisk Folkeparti, Danmarks Retsforbund, Danmarks kommunistiske Parti and De uafhængige along with a small party, Slesvigsk Parti, which represents the German minority.

⁹ Candidates for Socialdemokratiet in the 4th district, Det radikale Venstre in the 1st district, Venstre in the 2nd and 3rd districts.

¹⁰ For sake of convenience, the term "constituency-list" will be used to denote the candidates who are listed by the party in the same constituency.

¹¹ In *Statistiske Meddelelser* 1965: Folketingsvalget 22. 9. 1964, pp. 21-27 an analysis is made of the effective personal vote in the 1964 election. In these calculations there is no consideration taken of the fact that the nomination districts within the individual constituency can vary greatly with regard to number of voters and that this can have significant influence on the calculations of "net loss" and "net profit".

¹² With the exception of "constituency-lists" where all the candidates were members of the Folketing.

¹³ See *Statistiske Meddelelser* 1961: Folketingsvalget 15. 11. 1960, p. 18, and for more comprehensive analysis *Statistiske Meddelelser* 1965: Folketingsvalget 22. 9. 1964, pp. 23. 26; However, cf. remarks in footnote 11.

¹⁴ As an example of a debate about the nomination of women in "safe" places, see *Socialdemokratiets Kongres protokol*, 1945, pp. 57 and 141-143. As regards the nomination of women for the Folketing election, see further E. Strange Petersen, ed. *Kvinderne og Valgretten* (Copenhagen 1965) pp. 168 ff.

¹⁵ Source: *Statistiske Meddelelser* 1920-60 concerning general elections. From 1945 only rounded percentages are available.

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	Vestre storkreds	14	27	29	18	24	42	33	12
	Københavns amt	16	28	19	18	17	20	28	13
Frøderiksborg		24	22	26	17	23	13	18	15
Holbæk		4	24	7	8	13	6	11	5
Sorø		8	11	11	6	15	5	14	—
Præstø		6	10	23	—	4	1	6	9
Bornholm		5	8	15	7	10	5	21	—
Maribo		2	11	—	—	10	—	4	—
Odense		6	17	15	15	12	7	10	—
Svendborg		10	—	13	13	13	12	19	11
Hjørring		5	10	8	15	10	4	13	5
Thisted		5	11	16	9	20	8	9	16
Aalborg		6	3	—	5	7	—	3	5
Viborg		10	14	35	11	—	10	29	7
Randers		5	—	—	—	7	2	3	13
Aarhus		8	—	8	11	8	2	10	—
Skanderborg		6	—	25	—	26	9	22	6
Vejle		3	17	4	5	7	—	11	14
Ringkøbing		5	20	10	7	8	5	21	6
Ribe		9	15	17	10	13	8	9	15
Haderslev m.fl.a.		9	15	—	21	9	8	12	7
		7	—	22	—	11	11	18	9
All constituencies		11	18	21	11	15	18	22	11