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Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies
Integrating Diversity in the European Union (InDivEU)

The Politics of Differentiated Integration: What do
Governments Want? Country Report - Denmark

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European University Institute

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Integrating Diversity in the European Union (InDivEU) is a Horizon 2020 funded research project aimed at contributing concretely to the current debate on the 'Future of Europe' by assessing, developing and testing a range of models and scenarios for different levels of integration among EU member states. InDivEU begins from the assumption that managing heterogeneity and deep diversity is a continuous and growing challenge in the evolution of the EU and the dynamic of European integration.

The objective of InDivEU is to maximize the knowledge of Differentiated Integration (DI) on the basis of a theoretically robust conceptual foundations accompanied by an innovative and integrated analytical framework, and to provide Europe's policy makers with a knowledge hub on DI. InDivEU combines rigorous academic research with the capacity to translate research findings into policy design and advice.

InDivEU comprises a consortium of 14 partner institutions coordinated by the Robert Schuman Centre at the European University Institute, where the project is hosted by the European Governance and Politics Programme (EGPP). The scientific coordinators of InDivEU are Brigid Laffan (Robert Schuman Centre) and Frank Schimmelfennig (ETH Zürich).

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Abstract

This report reviews the salience of differentiated integration (DI) in Denmark as well as the shifting positions of Danish governments on DI models and mechanisms. DI was generally a low-salience issue at the level of conceptual models in Denmark in 2004-2020, which is reflected in the government positions, as Danish governments did not take clear public stance on conceptual DI in either 2008, 2012 or 2017-2020. This was the case despite that the EU in general was as salient as economic and social/welfare issues in the period. By contrast, DI mechanisms were highly salient in the Danish debate, driven by discussions on the Danish opt-outs. Danish governments, it seems, would rather engage in public discussions on concrete policies and mechanisms than at the abstract conceptual level when it comes to DI. In 2008 the government wanted to abolish the opt-outs on JHA, the euro and defence. In 2012, it wanted to abolish the opt-out on defence and replace the JHA opt-out with an opt-in model. Neither succeeded. In 2017-2020, after the JHA opt-out referendum in 2015, this position had somewhat changed, supposedly making governments less eager to argue for abolishing the opt-outs. However, the Social Democratic government in 2019-2020 was the only government analysed that did not position itself clearly negatively towards the Danish opt-outs and, as a consequence, DI mechanisms, indicating a policy shift since previous periods.

Keywords

European Union, Denmark, differentiated integration, opt-out

Summary of Results

I. Salience

At the level of conceptual models, differentiated integration (DI) was generally a low-salience issue in Denmark in 2004-2020 when using the occurrence of conceptual key words as an indicator. This is the case even though the EU in general was as central as economic and social/welfare issues, as the analysis of government programmes shows. In contrast, DI mechanisms were highly salient in the Danish debate, with discussions on opt-outs representing almost all the references to these mechanisms and enhanced cooperation much less. This can be attributed to the politicisation of the Danish opt-outs, with discussion on referendums in the late 2000s and the actual referendum on the Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) opt-out in 2015. DI instances, like DI models, generally have low salience, with the Fiscal Compact Treaty and the Financial Transaction Tax being exceptions to the general rule.

II. Position

Reflecting the low salience of conceptual DI in the period analysed, Danish governments did not take a clear public stance on conceptual DI models in either 2008, 2012 or 2017-2020. This shows that Danish governments will rather engage in public discussions on concrete policies than at the abstract conceptual level when it comes to DI. In 2008 the government wanted to abolish the opt-outs on JHA, the euro and defence. In 2012, it wanted to abolish the opt-out on defence and replace the JHA opt-out with an opt-in model. Neither succeeded. In 2017-2020, after the JHA opt-out referendum in 2015, this position had somewhat changed, supposedly making governments less eager to argue for abolishing the opt-outs. However, the Social Democratic government in 2019-2020 was the only government analysed that did not position itself clearly negatively towards the Danish opt-outs and, as a consequence, DI mechanisms, indicating a policy shift since previous periods. In 2017-2020, opposition parties were more willing to directly address conceptual DI. Some wanted a multiple end points model, so that Denmark could position itself among the less integrated member states, while others supported a multi-speed Europe, so that core countries could play the role of integration drivers to make up for the lack of appetite for European integration in the Danish political context.

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1. Introduction

This report investigates the salience of differentiated integration (DI) in the Danish governmental discourse between 1990 and 2019. It also probes into the position of Danish governments on the issue of DI in selected peak-salience years (2008, 2012, 2017-2020).

The report distinguishes three levels of abstraction in the governmental discourse on DI. **First**, two different models of DI are distinguished at the conceptual level. On the one hand, the “multi-speed EU” model depicts DI as a temporary phenomenon and implies that all member states (MS) will ultimately reach the same level of integration. On the other hand, the “multi-end EU” model depicts DI as a potentially permanent feature of European integration. In this model, the MS do not necessarily strive to reach similar levels of integration. Instead, each MS can “pick and choose” to adjust its own level of integration to national preferences and capacities. **Second**, the analysis focuses on mechanisms of DI. On the one hand, the mechanism of enhanced cooperation allows a limited group of MS – under certain conditions – to pursue deeper integration without having to involve all MS. On the other hand, the mechanism of “opt-outs” allows MS to refrain from participation in common policies. In short, enhanced cooperation allows a MS to integrate more than other MS, while “opt-outs” allow a member state to integrate less than other MS. **Finally**, the analysis looks at various instances of differentiated policies and policy fields. A total of twenty-one instances is included in the analysis. They are grouped in four different categories: (a) instances of enhanced cooperation, (b) instances of opt-out policy fields, (c) instances of inter se agreements, and (d) instances of external agreements. Inter se agreements are agreements which EU member states conclude outside the framework of the European Union. External agreements pertain to agreements between the EU and non-EU states.

The results are based on an analysis of various government documents (appendix 1). The material included government programs, Prime Minister’s speeches, Prime Minister’s European Council statements and parliamentary debates. All material was collected in mid-June 2020. The **salience** of DI models, DI mechanisms, and DI instances is assessed by counting keywords (appendix 2) in the above-mentioned documents. The assumption is that the more a government talks about DI, the more relevant it is. While keyword counts in government programs and PM speeches show the salience of DI at specific moments in time, the analysis of parliamentary debates allows us to identify trends over time as well as situational peaks. As the conjugation of words in Danish changes the ending, the stem of the word was searched for rather than the word in its full length. Similarly, often only one of the words was searched for (i.e. “geometri”) rather than the key word in full translation (i.e. “variabel geometri”) in order to catch all appearances of the word. Regarding the government’s **position**, the results are based on a manual sentiment analysis of parliamentary debates. To this end, references to DI keywords in parliamentary debates were manually coded as negative, neutral, or positive. The second section of the report details the results of the salience analysis. The third section details the results of the position analysis.

2. How salient is DI for Danish governments?

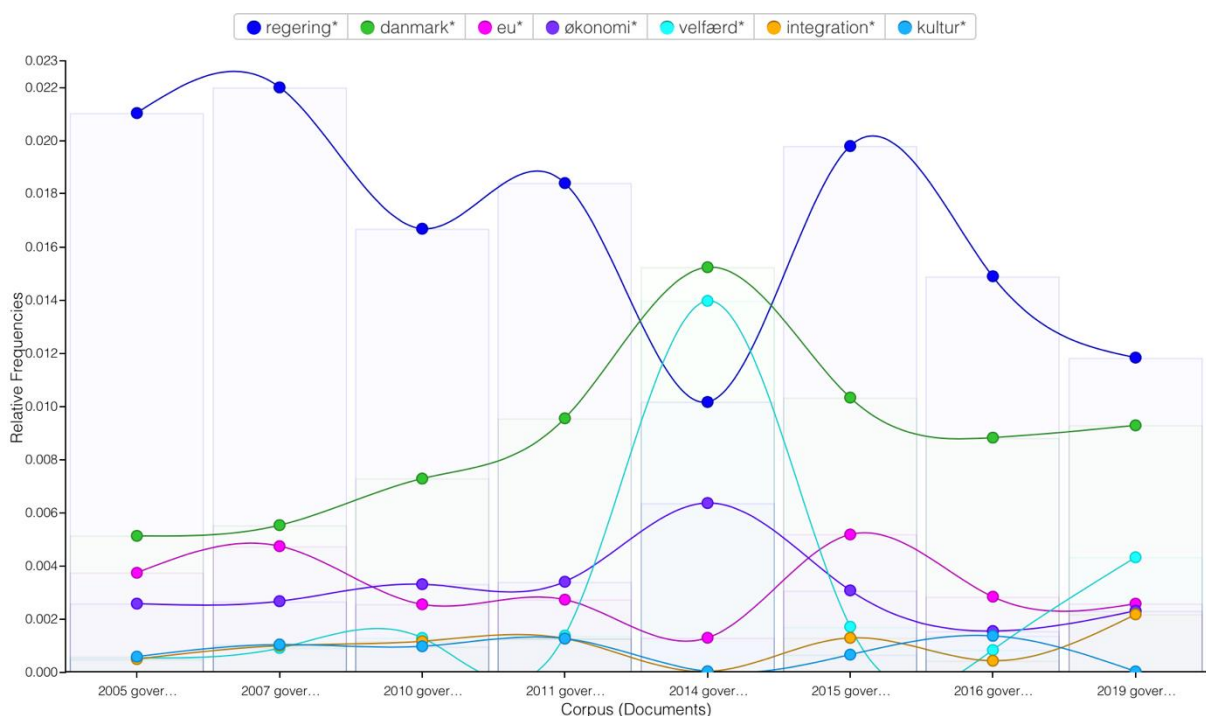
The salience of differentiated integration (DI) in Danish discourse was analysed using different methods: manual word counts, computer-assisted word counts and close reading. The methods were used to evaluate the degree to which DI was referred to in 1) government programmes, 2) Prime Ministers’ first speeches and the subsequent debates, 3) Prime Ministers’ European Council statements and subsequent debates in the national parliamentary committees, and 4) parliamentary debates. Three levels of abstraction were distinguished: DI models, DI mechanisms and DI instances. The analysis is structured around the categories of material laid out in Table 1. Category 6 (parliamentary committee debates) is not included in this section on salience but will be discussed in the section on the position of Danish governments.

2.1 Government programmes

A computer-assisted word count showed that the eight government programmes in the period 2004-2020 contained no references to any of the key words associated with DI models. However, government programmes did contain some references to key words associated with DI mechanisms, which were limited to references to the Danish opt-outs in five out of eight years. Only very limited references to specific DI instances were detected.

Interestingly, EU-related issues were generally as central as economic and socially related issues (Figure 1). In the Danish context, integration generally refers to the debate on immigration rather than on questions of European integration and it was consistently less salient than EU-related issues. In only two out of eight years (2014, 2019), the EU was less salient than welfare (*velfærd*). The EU even surpassed economic issues (*økonomi*) in salience in three out of eight years (2010, 2011, 2014).

Figure 1 - The salience of EU-related issues in government programmes (relative word frequencies)



Note: The words analysed were government (*regering*), Denmark (*danmark*), EU, economy (*økonomi*), welfare (*velfærd*), integration, culture (*kultur*).

A qualitative analysis of the government programmes confirms that DI was only discussed to a very low degree in government programmes, and only directly when concerning the Danish opt-outs. The 2005 government programme underlined that the planned referendum on the Constitutional Treaty would not affect the Danish opt-outs. The 2007, 2010, 2011 and 2015 government programmes all proclaimed that the governments wanted referendums to abolish or ease up the Danish opt-outs to varying degrees, mainly concerning those on the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and on Justice and Home Affairs (JHA). An actual referendum to replace the original full JHA opt-out with an opt-in model was held on 3 December 2015, and was held because of the need for the opt-out to be revised in order for Denmark to remain in Europol under new rules. However, the government's proposal was rejected in the referendum.

In conclusion, both quantitative and qualitative analyses of Danish government programmes in 2004-2020 have shown that DI remained a low-salience issue except when it specifically concerned the Danish opt-outs, especially the opt-out on JHA and, to a lesser degree, the CSDP opt-out.

2.2 Prime Minister's first speeches and subsequent parliamentary debates

A quantitative analysis of Prime Minister first speeches in the Folketing showed that no references were made to DI models either in speeches or in the subsequent parliamentary debates. As in the government programmes, the references to DI mechanisms were almost exclusively limited to opt-outs. Particularly the 2007 parliamentary debate following the first speech contained a relatively high number of references to opt-outs (*forbehold*) even though no such references had been made in the 2007 first speech (Appendix 3).

A qualitative analysis of the material revealed several interesting points. First, it showed that the single reference to enhanced cooperation (*forstærket samarbejde*) in the 2005 first speech did not refer to the DI mechanism (but had the meaning of 'stronger collaboration'), even though the term was used in relation to Europe, thereby limiting almost all the references to DI mechanisms to opt-outs. Second, the qualitative analysis confirmed that the Danish opt-outs were indeed particularly salient in the 2007 parliamentary debate following the first speech. This was a consequence of the statement made by the newly re-elected right-wing government that it wanted a referendum on the Danish opt-outs, which the nationalist Danish People's Party, serving as the government's parliamentary support, heavily criticised in the debate following the first speech. Third, the qualitative analysis revealed that the 2007 first speech did actually refer to the opt-outs but by using the term '*undtagelser*' rather than the much more widely used term '*forbehold*.' In the subsequent debate, the opt-outs were referred to almost exclusively as '*forbehold*.' The pattern was repeated after the same government with a new Prime Minister was re-elected in 2009 (Appendix 4).

A computer-assisted word count showed that the first speeches and subsequent parliamentary debates contained no references to any of the key words associated with specific DI instances.

2.3 European Council presidency speeches and parliamentary debates

A computer-assisted word count showed that very few references were made to the conceptual key words associated with DI models in the European Council presidency speech in 2012 and in the subsequent parliamentary debates in both the European Parliament and in the Folketing. Only in the subsequent debate in the Folketing were some references made to the key words associated with DI mechanisms. A manual word count showed, however, that none of these referred to DI, since the Danish word for opt-out (*forbehold*) can have several meanings: one dictionary translates *forbehold* as reservation, reserve, proviso, condition and qualification. It can also be used in tandem with other words: *med forbehold for* means with reservations or tentatively; *at tage forbehold* means to take certain reservations; *uden forbehold* means without reservation or unconditionally.

2.4 Future of Europe speeches

A computer-assisted word count showed that no references were made to the conceptual key words associated with DI models in the Danish Prime Minister's Future of Europe speeches in the European Parliament, the subsequent debate or in the citizen consultation. However, on both occasions some references were made to the key words associated with DI mechanisms, exclusively referring to the Danish opt-outs. One reference to DI instances was identified in the material. The reference was made by Jeppe Kofod, then MEP from S&D, later nominated as Minister of Foreign Affairs in 2019, in the debate subsequent to the FoE speech in the European Parliament. He referred to the Financial Transaction Tax, and he criticised the Danish government for fighting it at the European level.

2.5 Prime Ministers' statements at the European Council

The Danish Prime Minister (PM) makes a statement to the European Affairs Committee of the Folketing both before and after each European Council meeting. A computer-assisted word count showed that

only limited references were made to the conceptual key words associated with DI models in these statements from December 2006 to 2020. These were all either references to two-speed Europe (2011) or multi-speed Europe (2012). A close reading showed that the single reference to two-speed Europe in December 2011 was made by an opposition politician during a debate on the European Stability Mechanism (ESM). All five references to a multi-speed Europe referred to the same statement made by the Prime Minister in October 2012 (which is also in the material), where she concluded that Europe was multi-speed during a debate on the Danish position on the Fiscal Compact Treaty.

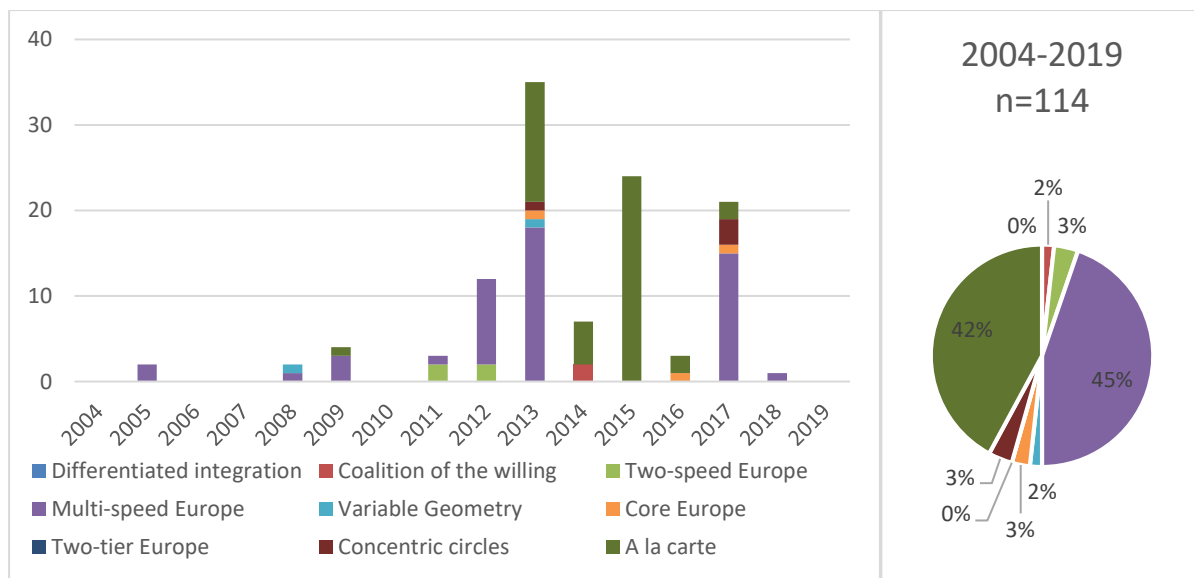
Some references were made to the key words associated with DI mechanisms. These overwhelmingly referred to opt-outs (Appendix 5). Some references were also made to specific DI instances. The Fiscal Compact Treaty was by far the most salient when looking at instances of enhanced cooperation and inter se agreements (Appendix 6).

2.6 Parliamentary debates

A manual word count of the Folketing parliamentary debates using the Parliament’s repository¹ was conducted in order to show the salience over time in the period 2004-2020. It should be noted that debates in parliamentary committees are not included here – these are covered in category 6, which will be dealt with in the next section on governments’ positions on DI. However, a search in the repository containing all the summaries of meetings of the European Affairs Committee showed that only very limited references to conceptual key words associated with DI models were made in parliamentary committee debates. This reflects the low salience of conceptual DI models in Danish government discourse.

The manual word count showed that conceptual DI models were low-salience issues in parliamentary debates as well (Figure 2). Only 114 references in total were made. 89.5% (n=102) of the references were made in 2012-2017. This could be attributed to the discussion following the debt crisis, which is supported by the relative salience of the Fiscal Compact Treaty, as was described in the section above.

Figure 2 - Salience of DI models (conceptual keywords) in parliamentary debates (2004-2020)

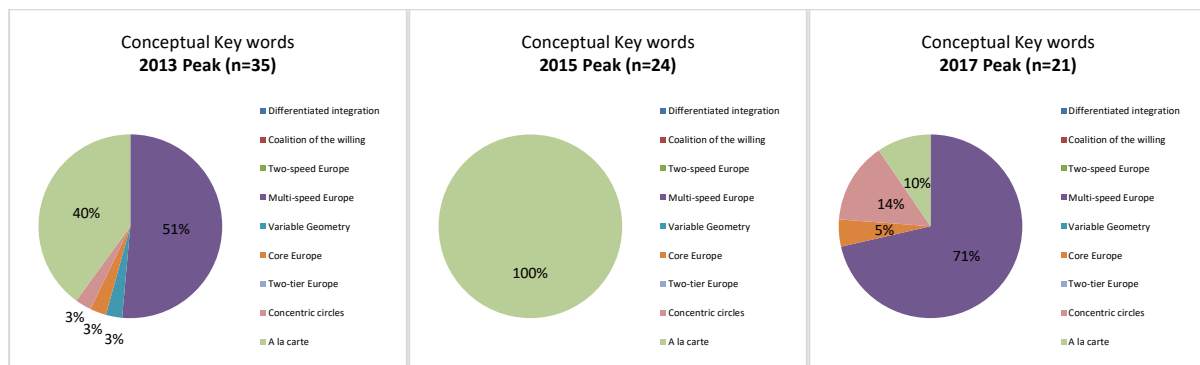


¹ www.folketingstidende.dk

In six out of 17 years, zero references were made to conceptual key words. In 14 out of 17 years, fewer than 15 references were made. A breakdown of all the references to key words (n=114) showed that ‘multi-speed Europe’ and ‘à la carte’ were by far the most mentioned (Figure 3). This means that the references are more or less equally divided between the key words associated with the ‘different speed’ model and the ‘different end points’ model, making them equally salient in the Danish context. However, the central point is that conceptual-level DI is low-salience when looking at parliamentary debates. Furthermore, a qualitative assessment of the debates shows some degree of conflation between the models and not an altogether clear-cut differentiation between the two models in most instances.

A breakdown of the three peak years (2013, 2015, 2017) showed that ‘à la carte’ was the only key phrase referred to in 2015. This supports the point that this peak may be attributed to the discussion related to the 2015 referendum to modify the JHA opt-out to an opt-in model. In 2013 and 2017 the references were more diverse, but in both years ‘multi-speed Europe’ was the most mentioned key phrase. 2013 might be a peak year due to the Bloomberg speech by then UK Prime Minister David Cameron, when he first announced that he wanted to hold a referendum on the UK’s membership. Brexit sparked much debate in Denmark on the Danish membership, as the UK was seen as an important partner and virtually a ‘soul-mate’ within the union – the often-repeated story about Danish accession is that Denmark ‘followed’ the UK into the union, since the Danish application for membership of the European Communities was made the day after the British applied. Denmark’s strong economic links to the UK were central in the argumentation on joining the EC. As was previously described, 2017 might be a peak year due to the debate following the ‘polycrisis’ and the FoE debate initiated by the Commission white paper.

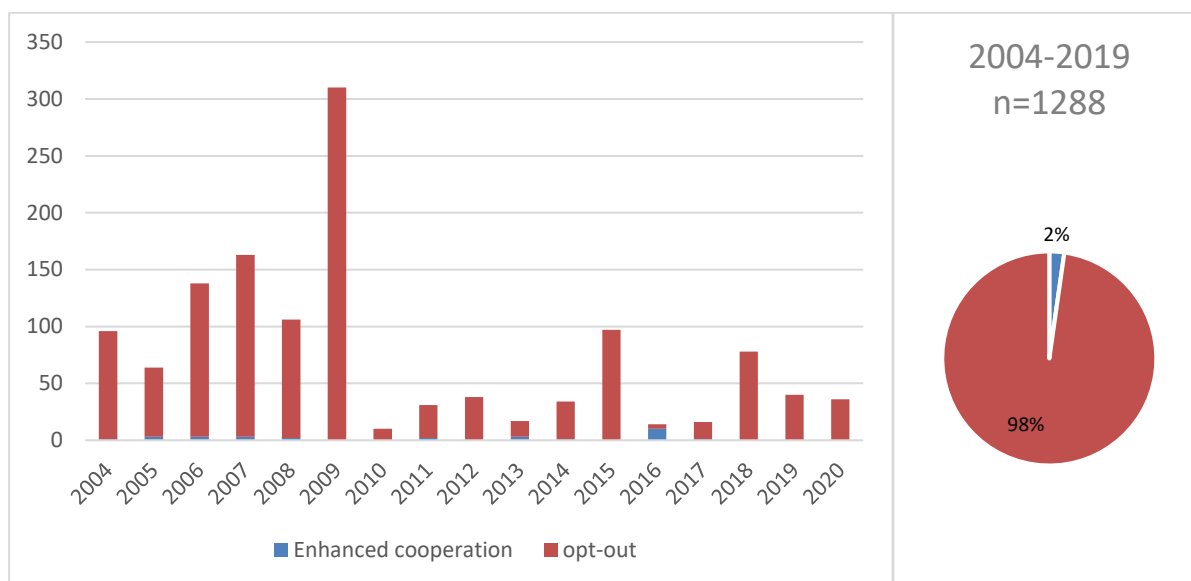
Figure 3 - Breakdown of the salience of conceptual key words in parliamentary debates in the three peak years



Finally, the analysis compares the keyword “Future of Europe” (FoE) to the conceptual keywords (appendix 7). The results suggest no correspondence between the salience of FoE and of conceptual key words associated with DI models, except in 2017. The peak in 2017 can be explained by the debate following the ‘polycrisis’ in 2016 following the economic and financial crisis, the refugee crisis and Brexit, which also explains the relatively high FoE salience. The FoE salience might be related to the Commission white paper. All these crises served as important reference points in the Danish context at the time.

Turning to DI mechanisms, these turned out to be far more salient issues in parliamentary debates. A manual word count of key words associated with DI mechanisms (opt-out/enhanced cooperation) showed that they were referred to 1288 times. Figure 4 shows the salience over time. The plot shows that 68% (n=877) of the references were made in the period 2004–2009. This suggests no correspondence with the salience of DI models. 2009 was a peak year, representing 24% (n=310) of the references. As was suggested in sections 2.2 and 2.5, opt-out was by far the most salient DI mechanism. This is supported by a breakdown of the references to DI mechanisms in parliamentary debates, which shows that 98% of the references concerned the opt-out mechanism.

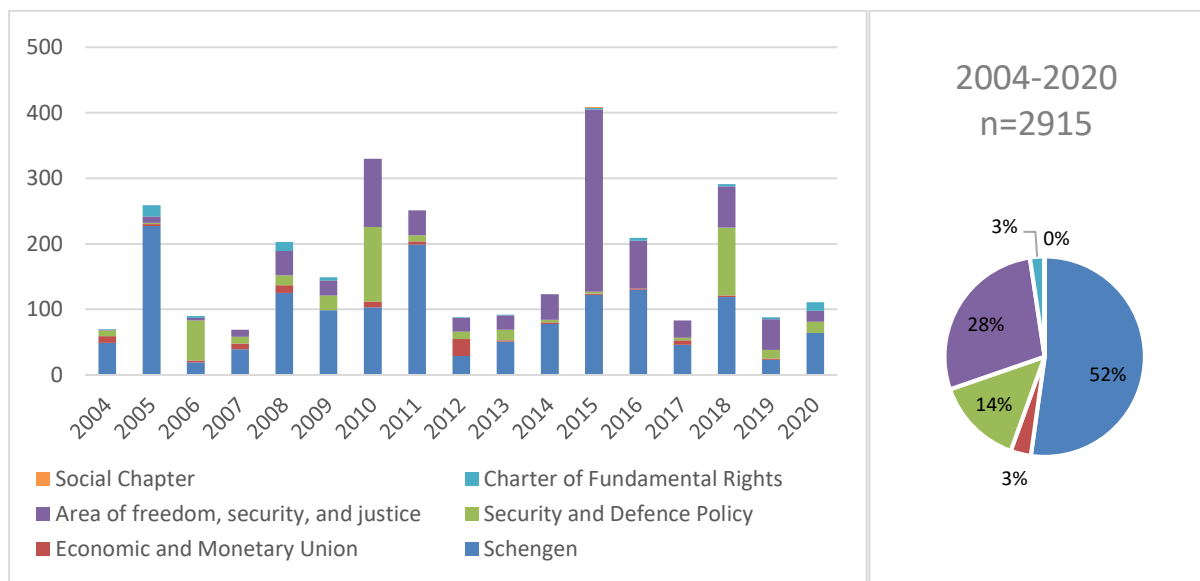
Figure 4 - Salience of DI mechanisms in parliamentary debate (2004-2020)



In the peak year of 2009, all the references made concerned opt-outs. Why did Parliament discuss opt-outs so much in 2009? This can, of course, be attributed to the fact that since 1993 Denmark had opted out from four EU policies and that these events were widely discussed, especially in the late 2000s. The four opt-outs (JHA, CSDP, the euro and EU citizenship) were agreed after the Maastricht Treaty was rejected in a Danish referendum in 1992. They were discussed in the late 2000s partly as a result of the government’s 2007 proposal to hold a referendum to abolish all four opt-outs under Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen. This proposal was repeated in 2009 by his successor (and party colleague), Lars Løkke Rasmussen, after he formed a new government when Fogh Rasmussen took the position of NATO Secretary-General. The Lisbon Treaty was central in this debate, as it gave the possibility of modifying the JHA opt-out into an opt-in model (Adler-Nissen & Gammeltoft-Hansen 2010). The JHA opt-out was designed as an exemption to supranational cooperation on Justice and Home Affairs, enabling Danish governments to participate in intergovernmental cooperation in this area. As participation in the area has generally expanded and moved from the intergovernmental to the supranational level since the opt-out was introduced in 1993, the opt-out has been growing too.

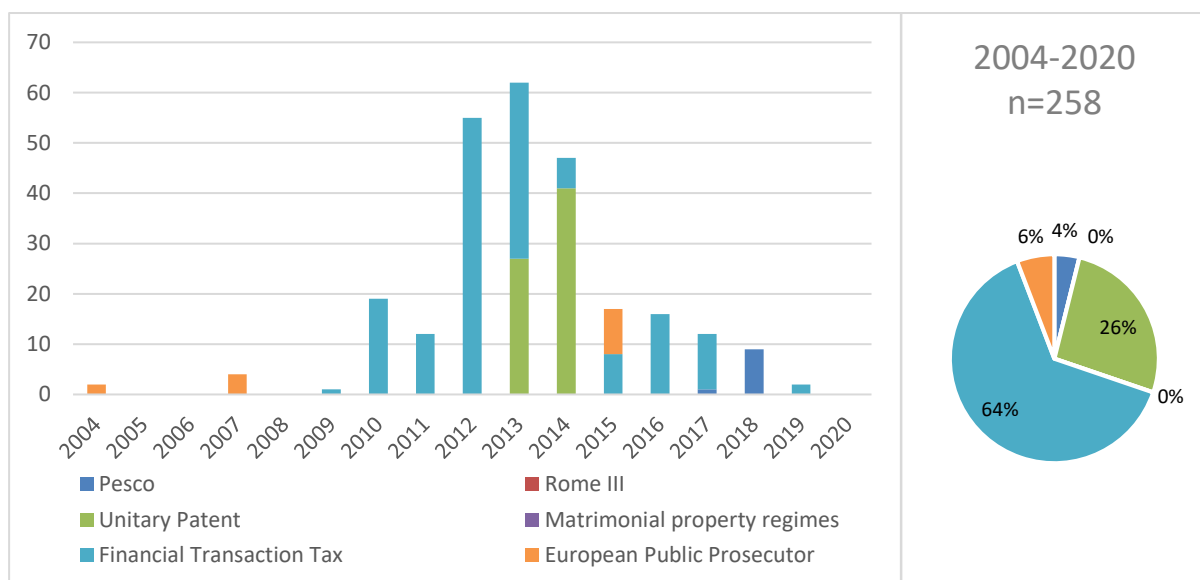
When looking at the salience of opt-out areas, Schengen, the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice, and security and defence policy stand out as the three most salient areas, in that order (Figure 5). The JHA opt-out covers both Schengen and the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice, which are the two most salient areas. The breakdown suggests that the JHA opt-out was highly salient in the period analysed, while the defence opt-out was less so but still salient. By comparison, the euro opt-out and especially the EU citizenship opt-out (which has been redundant since the adoption of the Amsterdam Treaty in 1997, when EU citizenship was defined as supplementary rather than superseding national citizenship) are low-salience issues.

Figure 5 - Salience of opt-out policy areas in parliamentary debates (2004-2020)



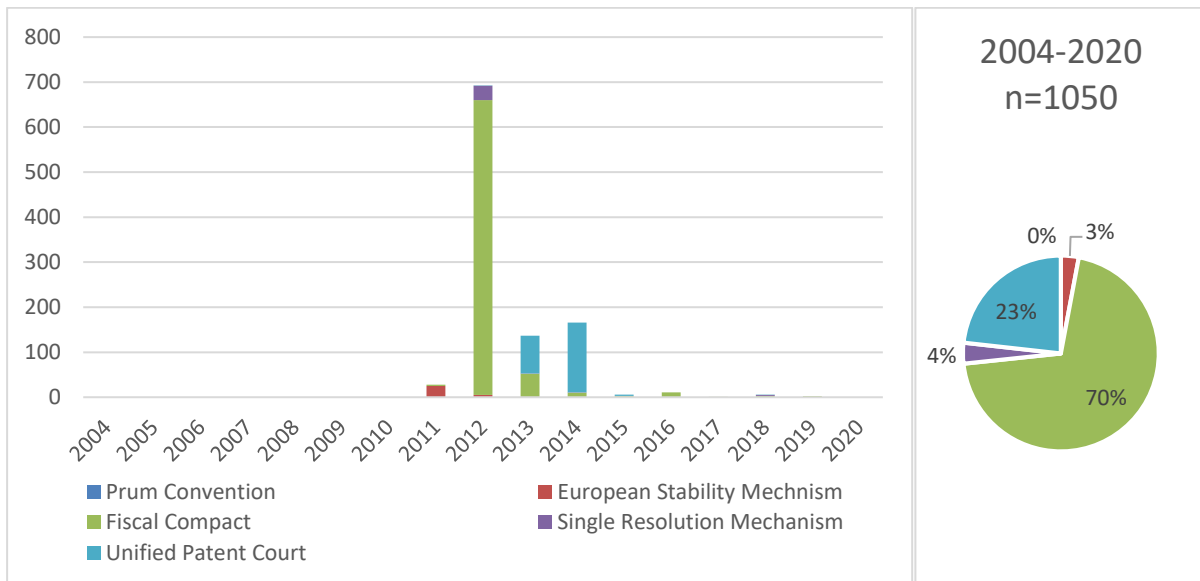
A breakdown of the instances of enhanced cooperation (Figure 6) shows that the Financial Transaction Tax was by far the most salient instance in the period analysed, representing 64% of the 258 references. The Unitary patent was somewhat salient in the period too, representing 26% of the references. The European Public Prosecutor and Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) were both low-salience in the period. This might be attributed to the fact that Denmark did not participate in these policies because of the opt-outs.

Figure 6 - Salience of instances of enhanced cooperation in parliamentary debates (2004-2020)



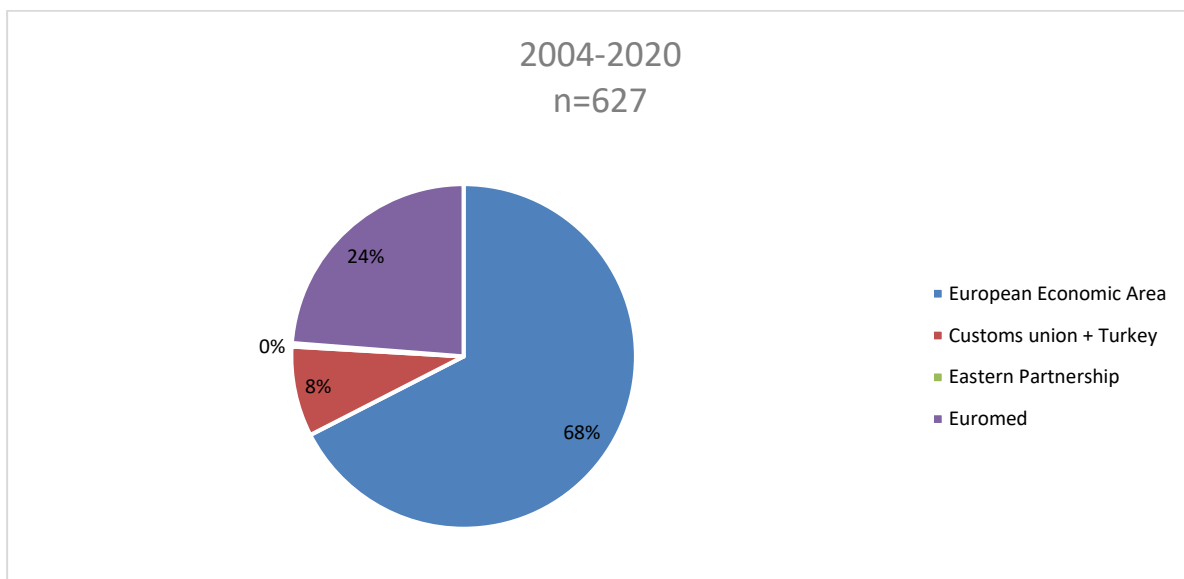
The analysis was repeated for instances of inter se agreements. Figure 7 shows that the Fiscal Compact was by far the most salient keyword in this category (70% of all references). The references to the Fiscal Compact are highly concentrated in the year 2012 (655 of 739 references). The second most salient inter se agreement was the Unified Patent Court, which was debated mainly in the years 2013 and 2014.

Figure 7 - Salience of instances of inter se agreements (2004-2020)



Turning to instances of external DI, the European Economic Area (EEA) is by far the most salient of the four instances investigated. This may be partly attributed to the fact that Norway, an EEA member state, is seen as a very important international partner of Denmark. Euromed is the second-most salient external DI instance. A closer reading of the parliamentary debates referring to Euromed shows, however, that almost all the references were to the partnership with Israel, which has been repeatedly discussed in the Danish parliament. The left-wing Red-Green Alliance (Enhedslisten) has since the early 2000s repeatedly proposed that the Danish government should urge the other members of the EU to suspend the partnership with Israel until human rights and democracy are respected. The customs union with Turkey was a relatively low-salience issue. The Eastern Partnership was referred to only twice in the period analysed.

Figure 8 - Breakdown of salience of external DI instances (2004-2020)



2.7 Summary

The various analyses have shown that conceptual DI models were generally low-salience issues in Denmark in 2004-2020 when using the occurrence of conceptual key words as indicators. This is the case even though the EU in general was as central as economic and social/welfare issues, as the analysis of government programmes showed. In contrast, DI mechanisms were highly salient in Danish debates, with discussions on opt-outs representing almost all of the discussion on such mechanisms, and enhanced cooperation much less. This can be attributed to the politicisation of the Danish opt-outs in discussion on referendums in the late-2000s and the actual referendum on the JHA opt-out in 2015. DI instances, like DI models, are generally low-salience, with the Fiscal Compact Treaty and the Financial Transaction Tax being exceptions to the general rule.

3. What positions do Danish governments have on DI?

This section reviews the positions of shifting Danish governments on DI. First, a quantitative overview will show the result of a coding of summaries of parliamentary committee debates. Second, a qualitative assessment of the changing governments' views on DI will be presented, structured around the chosen periods: 2008, 2012, 2017-2020. The qualitative assessment will be based on close readings of the parliamentary committee debates and government programmes together with other sources such as official government strategies and academic publishing.

3.1 Quantitative overview

Parliamentary committee debates were searched on the basis of the salience analysis in section 2.6, which showed that 'multi-speed Europe' and 'two-speed Europe' were the two most salient conceptual key phrases associated with the EU-at-different-speeds model, while 'à la carte' and 'concentric circles' were the two most salient conceptual key phrases associated with the EU-at-different-end-points model. These four key phrases along with the two key phrases associated with DI mechanisms (opt-out/enhanced cooperation) were searched for in the repository containing the summaries of all the meetings of the European Affairs Committee of the Danish Folketing. The low salience of conceptual DI models was indeed reflected in the number of documents that came up in the search of parliamentary committee summaries in 2008, 2012 and 2017-2020.

Figure 9 - Government positions - Results of document search

<i>Individual documents (n=127)</i>	2008	2012	2017-2020	Total
Multi-speed Europe	0	4	2	6
Two-speed Europe	0	3	0	3
À la carte	0	0	0	0
Concentric circles	0	0	0	0
Opt-out	12	14	46	72
Enhanced cooperation	0	4	12	16

No summaries were found that used the key words associated with the EU-at-different-end-points model. Only nine documents were found that contained the key words associated with the EU-at-different-speed model, with the majority of them being from 2012. Opt-out, again, was a more fruitful key word. 88 documents were found that contained one of the key words associated with DI mechanisms. A summary of the coding of the 97 documents is presented in figures 10 and 11. The coding was conducted using Nvivo 12.6.0.

Figure 10 - Position on Multi-speed Europe (two-speed + multi-speed)

<i>Coded statements (n=9)</i>	Negative	Neutral	Positive
Government	1	4	0
Opposition	0	2	2
2008	0	0	0
2012	1	4	2
2017-2020	0	2	0

Figure 10 suggests that the government was slightly negative while the opposition was slightly positive towards the idea of a multi-speed Europe in 2012. However, the very limited number of statements makes it difficult to draw any solid conclusions. In addition, the coding showed that all the documents contained single references to the conceptual key words. A close reading confirmed that in these instances the European Affairs Committee did not have conceptual discussions on DI.

Figure 11 - Position on DI mechanisms (opt-out + enhanced cooperation)

<i>Coded statements (n=385)</i>	Negative	Neutral	Positive
Government	62	188	5
Opposition	36	64	30
2008	9	17	3
2012	39	63	12
2017-2020	50	172	20

Figure 11 suggests that Danish governments have generally been neutral or negative with regard to DI mechanisms, while the opposition has been split between a positive and a negative view of them. The opposition split does not reflect a left-right divide but rather a centre-extreme divide. The Danish People’s Party, which in most of the period was the most extreme right-wing national conservative party, and the Red-Green Alliance, which was the most radical left-wing party in the entire period, together constitute the most Eurosceptic members of the Danish parliament. On the other hand, the traditional old governing parties in Danish politics (the Social Democrats, Venstre, the Social-Liberals, the Conservative People’s Party) were the most pro-EU members of the Parliament in most of the period and also generally wanted to remove the opt-outs or ease them up. Most of the references were to the opt-out mechanism, not enhanced cooperation (28 of the 385 references were to enhanced cooperation). This reflects the fact that Danish governments have – until recently – been fairly vocal about their wish to abolish the Danish opt-outs through a referendum. This will be qualified in the qualitative assessment in the following sections.

3.2 Qualitative overview

3.2.1 2008: The Treaty of Lisbon and the Danish opt-outs

In 2008, the centre-right Danish government consisted of the two conservative-liberal parties, Venstre and the Conservative People’s Party. The government was led by Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen, the chairman of Venstre, who had been serving as head of government since November 2001. According to the analysis of parliamentary committee debates and the salience of conceptual DI key words in parliamentary debates in the Folketing and in other sources, the Danish debate about DI was limited to heated discussions on the Danish opt-outs in the context of the Treaty of Lisbon, which

was signed in December 2007, ratified by the Danish Folketing on 24 April 2008 and entered into force on 1 December 2009 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark 2020).

The government's perspective

In the government programme of the newly re-elected centre-right government in December 2007, it was stated that “time had run out” for the Danish opt-outs and that their continued existence should be decided on with a referendum. The wish to abolish the opt-outs was voiced in a section of the government programme entitled “Denmark in the heart of Europe.” It clearly stated that “the Government finds that Denmark’s interests are best served if we are fully and wholly in the EU.” The sentiment was repeated in the Prime Minister’s first speech to the parliament on 27 November 2007. Wanting to put Denmark at “the heart of Europe” by abolishing the Danish opt-outs with a referendum would suggest that the Danish government was somewhat opposed to DI in 2008, or at least to this DI mechanism.

The criticism of the Danish opt-outs was backed up in academic publishing in 2008. The Danish Institute for International Studies (2008) published a report on the evolution of the Danish opt-outs since 2000, which concluded that the opt-outs limited Danish influence at the European level. *Udenrigs*, a quarterly publication on foreign policy published by the Danish Foreign Policy Society (2007), had the theme of the Danish opt-outs and the Lisbon Treaty in the last edition of 2007, which was published in January 2008.

On 21 February 2008, the government concluded a political agreement entitled “Danish policy on Europe in a globalised world” with a broad majority in the Folketing consisting of the Social Democrats, the Socialist People’s Party, the Social-Liberals, New Alliance and, of course, Venstre and the Conservative People’s Party, the two governing parties. The deal did not mention conceptual DI models but dealt with the Danish opt-outs in a special section entitled “Denmark’s special position.” This section mentioned the possibility of changing the JHA opt-out under the Lisbon Treaty, but underlined that all changes to the opt-outs should be supported with a referendum.

The opposition's perspective

In 2008, the opposition was torn on the question of the Danish opt-outs – and, as a consequence, on DI.

The Danish People’s Party, a right-wing populist party which gave the government parliamentary support in 2008, strongly opposed abolishing the Danish opt-outs. In a debate in the Folketing on the Treaty of Lisbon, Member of Parliament (MP) Morten Messerschmidt said:

“We want collaboration where country differences are respected. To use EU language, we want a **multi-speed EU**. We will not be pressed into a certain formula and that is exactly what the Lisbon Treaty does” (Morten Messerschmidt, Folketinget, 8 April 2008).²

This was the only reference to ‘different speed’ model key words identified in parliamentary (and committee) debates that year.

The Social Democrats, which led the opposition at the time, agreed with the government on the question and in early 2008 proposed a ‘Big Bang model’ in which abolishing the four opt-outs would be voted on as a whole (Information 2008).

The Socialist People’s Party had a more nuanced view on the subject. It opposed the introduction of the euro in Denmark but was willing to ease up the opt-out on defence and parts of the JHA opt-out.

² Author’s translation. Original statement: “Vi vil et samarbejde, hvor man respekterer landenes forskellighed. Vi vil så at sige, for at bruge EU’s sprog, have et EU i flere tempi. Vi vil ikke presses ind i en bestemt formel, og det er præcis det, som Lissabontraktaten gør.”

The Social Liberals, which at the time were led by Margrethe Vestager, were vocally against the Danish opt-outs and wanted referendums on abolishing each of the opt-outs individually. New Alliance, a newly elected political party founded by, among others, former members of the Social Liberals, agreed that the opt-outs should be abolished.

The Red-Greens was the only party on the left of the Danish Parliament to be vocally anti-EU and part of the 'nej-partierne' (the No parties), which is the common denomination for the group of Eurosceptic parties in the Danish parliament.

3.2.2 2012: Times of crisis

Towards the end of 2011, Denmark elected a new left-wing government consisting of the Social Democrats, the Socialist People's Party and the Social Liberals, ending a decade of right-wing rule. There was a strong sense of crisis and a need for crisis management in both the Parliament and the government. This was reflected in the government's policies in the period.

The government's perspective

The newly elected government's programme was published in October 2011 after two weeks of intense negotiations between the three parties in 'the Black Tower' of the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Copenhagen, which almost ten years later is still an important point of reference in Danish politics. Particularly the Social Liberals are credited with pressing the Social Democrats long and hard on economic policy. The programme describes the government's aims for Danish EU policy in a section entitled "An active Denmark in a strong Europe." This laid out the government's ambitions for the Danish presidency in the first half of 2012. There were no mentions of conceptual DI in the section, but it did describe the government's policy on the Danish opt-outs, which was that the defence opt-out should be abolished with a referendum and that the JHA opt-out should be replaced with an opt-in model, also following a referendum.

Coding of parliamentary committee debates revealed three government references to conceptual DI in the debates of the European Affairs Committee in 2012. Two of these were coded as neutral and were made in the Committee by the Prime Minister, such as:

"The Prime Minister agrees with Lykke Friis [MP from Venstre] that 'periphery Europe' is not a nice term, but we need to realise that we have a **multi-speed Europe**" (Helle Thorning-Schmidt, European Affairs Committee, 17 October 2012).³

This led to a short discussion with an MP from the Danish People's Party, which was in opposition to the government, who misrepresented the Prime Minister's statement saying that the Prime Minister had said that the government *wanted* a multi-speed Europe. This was then corrected.

Nothing in the above statements indicates that the government supported a multi-speed model of DI. The third government reference was coded as negative. On a proposed strengthening of Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), The Minister for Foreign Affairs said in the committee:

"I can fully understand that the euro countries are considering strengthening their cooperation. It is also in our interest that the situation in the euro zone is stabilised. Even though we do not participate in the euro, we are deeply dependent on it. Such strengthening can of course lead to a reinforcement of the tendency toward a **multi-speed Europe**. That for us is a natural consequence of our opt-outs. But we have an interest in and will with due respect for the opt-outs work to avoid splitting the

³ Author's translation. Original statement: "Statsministeren syntes ligesom Lykke Friis ikke, at "Udkantseuropa" er et specielt rart udtryk, men vi må se i øjnene, at vi har et Europa i flere hastigheder."

cooperation established into A and B teams” (Villy Søvnald, European Affairs Committee, 12 October 2012).⁴

As the above quote shows, the government was clearly slightly negative towards DI in the period. This, of course, was connected to the government’s policy on the opt-outs. As the quantitative overview showed, there were many references to the opt-outs in the period. A close reading showed that most of the references that were coded as government and neutral were by ministers informing the European Affairs Committee on which areas Denmark did not participate due to the opt-outs when reporting on meetings of the European Council. These were formulated neutrally. However, with the government’s policy in mind, one can speculate on whether informing about the limits of Danish influence due to the opt-outs was part of the campaign to ease them up. 26 references to opt-outs were coded as government and negative. A closer reading showed that these negative references exclusively concerned the opt-outs on defence and JHA, which the government wished to abolish or revise. The following illustrative example was uttered by the Minister for Defence:

“The Minister for Defence said that when we could participate in Afghanistan it was because it was an international coalition within NATO. The EU can principally go the whole way, but NATO cannot. That is why it is a shame that we have placed ourselves where we can’t fully participate in the EU. He therefore felt that the **defence opt-out** is standing in the way for Denmark to as effectively as possible contribute to creating peace in the world” (Nick Hækkerup, European Affairs Committee, 16 November 2012).⁵

Another example, this one on the JHA opt-out, was uttered by the Minister for Justice:

“The Minister for Justice said that our **JHA opt-out** means that we will not participate in adopting the proposal, but we can ourselves introduce the rules into Danish law afterwards. The Minister for Justice felt that it was a good proposal. With regard to the fact that we again see how we are affected by the **opt-out**, the Minister for Justice said, there is no doubt that the **JHA opt-out** has consequences since cooperation on the JHA has evolved quickly. The government therefore feels that the opt-out should be gone. The Minister for Justice will leave it up to others to decide when to push the button” (Morten Bødskov, European Affairs Committee, 17 October 2012).⁶

A referendum on the opt-outs was never held during this administration, as the Prime Minister postponed it in June 2012 as a result of the euro crisis. On this occasion she expressed serious scepticism towards the Fiscal Compact Treaty and the Single Resolution Mechanism (Politiken 2012).

Some government references describing enhanced cooperation were found in the period. These were all, however, descriptive and did not reflect a certain position on the enhanced cooperation DI mechanism. They either stated that an enhanced cooperation was under way or that Denmark would not participate in it.

⁴ Author’s translation. Original statement: “Jeg har fuld forståelse for, at eurolandene overvejer en styrkelse af deres samarbejde. Det er også i vores klare interesse, at situationen i eurozonen stabiliseres. Selv om vi ikke er del af euroen, er vi dybt afhængige af udviklingen. En sådan styrkelse kan selvfølgelig føre til, at tendensen til et EU i flere hastigheder forstærkes. Det er for vores vedkommende en naturlig konsekvens af vores forbehold. Men vi har en interesse i – og skal med fuld respekt for vores forbehold arbejde for – at undgå en opsplitting af samarbejdet i fasttømrede A- og B-hold.”

⁵ Author’s translation. Original statement: “Forsvarsministeren sagde, at når vi kunne deltage i Afghanistan, var det fordi det var en international koalition inden for NATO. EU kan principielt gå hele vejen, men det kan NATO ikke. Derfor er det ærgerligt, at vi har placeret os et sted, hvor vi ikke kan være med hele vejen inden for EU. Derfor mente han, at forsvarsforbeholdet står i vejen for, at Danmark så effektivt som muligt kan være med til at skabe fred i verden.”

⁶ Author’s translation. Original statement: “Justitsministeren svarede, at vort retsforbehold betyder, at vi ikke deltager i vedtagelsen af forslaget, men vi kan selv indføre reglerne i dansk ret efterfølgende. I øvrigt mente justitsministeren, at det var et godt forslag. Med hensyn til at endnu engang ser, at vi er ramt af retsforbeholdet, sagde justitsministeren, at der er ingen tvivl om, at retsforbeholdet har konsekvenser, idet samarbejdet på RIA-området har udviklet sig meget hurtigt. Derfor mener regeringen stadig væk, at retsforbeholdet skal væk. Hvornår man skal trykke på knappen, ville justitsministeren lade være op til andre at afgøre.”

The opposition's perspective

Coding of the parliamentary committee debates identified four opposition references to conceptual DI in 2012. Two were coded as neutral and two as positive. All four referred to a statement by the Prime Minister that “we need to realise we have a **multi-speed Europe**” (European Affairs Committee, 17 October 2012).⁷

One of the references that were coded as opposition and positive was made by MP Nikolaj Villumsen from the Red-Green Alliance, which gave parliamentary support to the government.

“Nikolaj Villumsen did not doubt that the EU we know today will end up as a thing of the past; something new will happen. He described it as positive that the Prime Minister had realised that the EU goes at **multiple speeds**. The Fiscal Compact and the Euro Plus Pact were examples of this” (Nikolaj Villumsen, European Affairs Committee, 25 October 2012).⁸

This statement, which is rather neutral, still reflects the Eurosceptic stance of the Red-Greens. At the time, the party supported the EP candidates from the People's Movement against the EU, a political association in Denmark which was represented in the European Parliament from 1972 to 2019. They also did not approve of abolishing the Danish opt-outs.

The other positive reference regarding conceptual DI was made by MP Pia Adelsteen from the Danish People's Party.

“Pia Adelsteen was happy that the Prime Minister said that we already have a **multi-speed Europe**. For her, nothing was wrong with that” (Pia Adelsteen, European Affairs Committee, 17 October 2012).⁹

Both Eurosceptic parties therefore referred slightly positively to conceptual DI, although the evidence is sparse.

No other opposition parties referred to conceptual DI in the period. However, numerous references were made to the Danish opt-outs. Of these, 12 were coded as opposition and positive. Most of them were made by politicians from either the Red-Green Alliance or the Danish People's Party. Some were also made by the Liberal Alliance (renamed in 2008 after being known as the New Alliance), which reflected the party's critical stance toward the government's proposal to abolish/revise the defence and JHA opt-outs.

Venstre and the Conservative People's Party both largely agreed with the government on the question of the opt-outs. Particularly Venstre pressured the government on the issue of an opt-out referendum in the European Affairs Committee meetings, especially after the government's statement in June 2012 that it would be postponed.

3.2.3 2017-2020: Brexit and the remnants of the refugee crisis

Denmark was ruled by two different governments in the 2017-2020 period. The first one, the third to be led by Lars Løkke Rasmussen, then chairman of Venstre, was a multi-party government consisting of Venstre, the Liberal Alliance and the Conservative People's Party. This centre-right government lost power in the general election on 5 June 2019, in which the left gained a majority in the Folketing. Since 27 June 2019, Denmark has been governed by a Social Democrat one-party government with Mette Frederiksen as Prime Minister.

⁷ Author's translation. Original statement: “(...)vi må se i øjnene, at vi har et Europa i flere hastigheder.”

⁸ Author's translation. Original statement: “Nikolaj Villumsen var ikke i tvivl om, at det EU, vi kender i dag, ender med at blive for tid; der kommer til at ske noget nyt. Han betegnede det som positivt, at statsministeren havde erkendt, at EU kører i flere hastigheder. Det var finanspagten og europluspagten jo eksempler på.”

⁹ Author's translation. Original statement: “Pia Adelsteen var glad for, at statsministeren sagde, at vi allerede har et Europa i flere hastigheder. Det var der for hende at se ikke noget galt i.”

The government's position

One reference was found in the period to DI models by a Danish Prime Minister. It was made by Lars Løkke Rasmussen in March 2017, when he summarised the informal European Council meeting which took place on 9-10 March 2017:

“Thirdly, there was a broad consensus that the possibility of a **multi-speed Europe** shouldn't be about creating new geographical splits in EU cooperation and that it should be open to all. We had a good talk about how to be realistic in the discussion because today cooperation has built-in flexibility with the Treaties. We are a full member of Schengen but not the euro, and in other places in Europe it is the other way around. With the existing Treaties it is possible to deepen collaboration and it will be like that in the future, but it is important not to exclude anyone” (Lars Løkke Rasmussen, European Affairs Committee, 17 March 2017).¹⁰

This statement summarises a discussion and the DI model was not discussed further in the European Affairs Committee. One other government reference to DI models was identified in parliamentary committee debates. This was in April 2017 by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who participated in a discussion in the European Affairs Committee on the Balkan candidates for future membership. There, he said:

paper on the future of Europe and the five scenarios – especially if one looked 10, 20 years ahead. If it was a **multi-speed Europe**, one could discuss whether there were different ways to be associated with the EU. It was not either/or today either, because things were discussed on the go and opened up, for example visa exemption, which was also in demand” (Anders Samuelsen, European Affairs Committee, 20 April 2017).¹¹

No other references to DI models by Prime Ministers, government ministers or MPs from governing parties in the European Affairs Committee or general debates in the Folketing were found in the period analysed. This largely reflects the salience analysis and the qualitative assessment of the other years: Danish governments generally do not publicly discuss DI at the abstract level. This was nicely put by Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen in October 2017 at a European Affairs Committee meeting, where he talked about an upcoming European Council meeting:

“We will also be discussing the future of the EU as a follow-up to the informal dinner in Tallinn about Macron's ideas, among other things. Yesterday, I met with Council President Tusk and I used the meeting to emphasise that the Danish government still supports the plan that we shook hands on in Bratislava with a focus on delivering concrete results in concrete areas with concrete significance for the citizens: growth and employment, effective management of the migration challenge and security and safety. These are areas where progress has been made and where we can make further progress if we keep focused. This should not be understood as if I was not ready to discuss new ideas or initiatives that can be in the interests of Denmark and Europe, but we will use our energy to solve concrete problems rather than discuss verbose ideas” (Lars Løkke Rasmussen, European Affairs Committee, 12 October 2017).¹²

¹⁰ Author's translation. Original statement: “For det tredje var der bred enighed om, at muligheden for et EU i flere hastigheder ikke handler om at skabe nye geografiske opdelinger i EU-samarbejdet, og at det må være åbent for alle. Vi havde i øvrigt også en god drøftelse om det med at være realistiske i diskussionen, for det er allerede sådan i dag, at samarbejdet har en fleksibilitet indbygget i sig inden for traktaterne. Vi er fuldt medlem af Schengensamarbejdet, men ikke medlem af euroen, og andre steder i Europa forholder det sig omvendt. Med de eksisterende traktater er det muligt at gå mere i dybden med bestemte samarbejdsrelationer, og det vil det også fortsat være, men det er vigtigt, at det ikke ekskluderer nogen.”

¹¹ Author's translation. Original statement: “Udenrigsministeren sagde, at det åbnede op for en større diskussion i tråd med hvidbogen og de fem forslag til EU's fremtid – især hvis man talte 10-20 år frem. Var det et EU i flere hastigheder, kunne man diskutere, om der var forskellige måder at være tilknyttet EU på. Det var ikke enten-eller allerede i dag, for man diskuterede ting løbende undervejs og åbnede op for ting, f.eks. visumfrihed, som også blev efterspurgt.”

¹² Author's translation. Original statement: “Vi skal også drøfte EU's fremtid som opfølgning på den frie middagsdrøftelse i Tallinn om bl.a. Macrons ideer. I går mødtes jeg med DER's formand, Donald Tusk, og jeg brugte det møde til at understrege, at den danske regering fortsat støtter den plan, som vi gav hinanden hånden på i Bratislava med fokus på at

This last sentence, it can be argued, sums up the approach of Danish governments to conceptual DI.

Numerous government references to DI mechanisms were identified in the period. Only nine of these regarded enhanced cooperation. Figure 12 summarises the coding of government references to opt-outs.

Figure 12 - Position on opt-outs in 2017-2020

(n=144)	Negative	Neutral	Positive
Centre-right government (2017-June 2019)	26	86	2
Social Democrat government (June 2019-2020)	0	28	2

This was the only period in which government references to opt-outs were coded as positive (one other reference in 2017 was coded as government and positive regarding DI mechanisms – this regarded enhanced cooperation in the area of taxation). Unlike previous governments, no government in this period stated a wish to abolish or revise the Danish opt-outs in their government programmes (2016 and 2019). The centre-right government leaned negative on opt-outs in parliamentary committee debates. However, the Social Democrat government leaned positive and was the only government with no negative references in any period.

This reflects an actual change in EU policy with the newly elected Social Democrat government led by Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen. This shift was well summarised by the government’s Minister for Defence in November 2019:

“The Minister for Defence answered Kim Valentin that she, despite the defence **opt-out**, participated in the meetings and that many of the decisions were not relevant to Denmark. Her experience was that NATO and E12 were faster decision-making machines while the EU would eventually mature so it would one day be relevant to ask the Danish people if Denmark should go further into the room. But now it was difficult to find substantive arguments to say yes to that. And the committee should take that from a person who in her time was in the very frontline with good arguments against the **opt-outs**” (Trine Bramsen, European Affairs Committee, 8 November 2019).¹³

The Minister for Defence, like so many other government ministers and MPs from the governing Social Democratic party, had previously argued against the Danish opt-outs and wanted to abolish them with a referendum. Today, however, this position has changed. Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen has been described in Denmark as “history’s most Eurosceptic Prime Minister” (Altinget 2020a). This was reflected in the Danish position on the Multiannual Financial Framework negotiations in summer 2020 and membership of the Frugal Four. It was also reflected in statements made by the Prime Minister on the European response to the Covid-19 crisis, in which she clearly stated her opposition to ideas about a common debt and an increase in the EU budget (Berlingske 2020).

levere konkrete resultater på konkrete områder, der har konkret betydning for borgerne: vækst og beskæftigelse, effektiv håndtering af migrationsudfordringen og sikkerhed og tryghed. Det er områder, hvor man faktisk gør fremskridt, og hvor vi kan gøre yderligere fremskridt, hvis vi fastholder fokus. Det skal ikke forstås sådan, at jeg ikke er parat til at diskutere nye ideer eller nye initiativer, der kan være til gavn for Danmark og for Europa, men at vi hellere skal bruge kræfterne på at løse konkrete problemer end på at diskutere vidtløftige ideer.”

¹³ Author’s translation. Original statement: “Forsvarsministeren svarede Kim Valentin, at hun trods forbeholdet deltog i møderne, og at der var mange beslutninger, som ikke var relevante for Danmark. Hun oplevede NATO og E12 som hurtigere beslutningsmaskiner, men EU-samarbejdet kunne gå som sagt gå hen og modnes, så en dag kunne det muligvis blive relevant at spørge danskerne, om Danmark skulle længere ind i rummet. Men nu var det svært at finde afgørende argumenter for at sige ja til det. Og det skulle udvalget tage fra en, der i sin tid gik forrest med gode argumenter imod forbehold.”

The opposition's perspective

No opposition references to conceptual DI were found in the parliamentary committee debates. In general debates in the Folketing, however, 2017 was a peak year for the salience of conceptual DI key words (Figure 6). 16 references were made to multi-speed Europe in the period (15 in 2017, one in 2018), all by opposition politicians.

The Eurosceptic Danish People's Party, which gave parliamentary support to the centre-right government in 2017-2019, did not engage in discussion on DI as such; the party largely wanted less integration. It forcefully, however, engaged in discussions on the Danish opt-outs, often speaking in favour of them, and some party members believed in following the United Kingdom's exit from the Union. Differing statements, however, have spread doubts about the party's policy on this question (Altinget 2020b).

The Red-Green Alliance, on the other hand, which later gave parliamentary support to the Social Democratic government in 2019-2020, directly addressed conceptual DI in Parliament in 2017:

“That's why we say that we want collaboration in several rooms. The formulation of a multi-speed collaboration means that everyone walks in the same direction but at **different speeds**. That's not what we want” (Søren Søndergaard, Folketinget, 1 December 2017).¹⁴

The Red-Greens explicitly supported a multiple end points model in which Denmark should put itself where sovereignty and self-determination could be ensured.

The Social Democrats, later the governing party, repeated the analysis made by former Prime Minister and Chairman Helle Thorning Schmidt in the European Affairs Committee in 2012 that “we have a multi-speed Europe” and pointed out the risk of such a model for Denmark. In 2017 their spokesperson on European Affairs, Claus Larsen-Jensen, said in the Folketing:

“We will get a split European Union, **a multi-speed Europe**. We feel that it is necessary for us to have a proper debate in this House and an open-hearted debate with the people about the fact that Denmark in such a situation will risk ending up as more marginal [...] We are truly worried that as a consequence of other states enhancing their collaboration in a number of areas we will diminish our participation and influence” (Claus Larsen-Jensen, Folketinget, 1 December 2017).¹⁵

This statement indicates that the party was against DI when it hurts Danish interests. However, the party wanted to keep the Danish opt-out and therefore supported DI mechanisms as legitimate tools.

The Social Liberals, traditionally pro-EU with federalist traits, also directly addressed the conceptual DI discussion in the Folketing. Their spokesperson on European Affairs, Zenia Stampe, said:

“I think, actually, that we are more inclined to play along with **a multi-speed Europe**, where some drivers, some countries, go together on different areas and will drive there. We think that can create more dynamic and in a way be a better strategy towards our goal, which is a stronger, more dynamic and ambitious collaboration. We think that the idea of **a multi-speed Europe** is a more realistic route to get to stronger collaboration than a strong Europe where everyone walks at the same pace, because we don't and we never will. So even though we previously have been quite sceptical towards **a multi-speed Europe**, we believe in it more now” (Zenia Stampe, Folketinget, 24 March 2017).¹⁶

¹⁴ Author's translation. Original statement: “*Det er derfor, vi siger, at vi ønsker et samarbejde i flere rum. Formuleringen et samarbejde i flere hastigheder betyder, at man alle sammen går i den samme retning, bare i forskelligt tempo. Det er ikke det, vi støtter.*”

¹⁵ Author's translation. Original statement: “*Men vi får altså et opdelt EU, vi får et Europa i flere hastigheder. Vi synes, det er nødvendigt, at vi får en ordentlig debat her i huset og en åbenhjertig debat med befolkningen om, at Danmark i den situation risikerer at lande mere marginalt som medlem af EU [...] Vi er oprigtigt bekymret for, at i kraft af at andre lande øger deres samarbejde på en række områder, så mindsker vi vores egen deltagelse og indflydelse.*”

¹⁶ Author's translation. Original statement: “*Derfor tror jeg i virkeligheden, at vi nok er mere tilbøjelige til at spille på det med et Europa i flere hastigheder, hvor der er nogle drivkræfter, nogle lande, der går sammen på forskellige områder og er drivkraft der. Det tror vi sådan set kan skabe mere dynamik og på den måde være en bedre strategi hen imod vores mål,*

This statement shows how the party actually shifted towards a more positive attitude to a multi-speed DI and that this turnaround stems from a pragmatic approach.

3.3 Summary

Danish governments did not take a clear public stance on conceptual DI models in either 2008, 2012 or 2017-2020. This both reflects the low salience of conceptual DI, as has been shown in a previous section, and that Danish governments will rather engage in public discussions on concrete policies than at the abstract conceptual level when it comes to DI. Danish governments in 2008 and 2012 claimed to be working to abolish or ease up the Danish opt-outs but did not succeed. In 2017-2020, after the JHA opt-out referendum in 2015, this position changed, making governments tone down their opposition to the opt-outs. The Social Democratic government in 2019-2020 was the only government analysed that did not position itself clearly negatively towards opt-outs, and as a consequence DI mechanisms, indicating a policy shift compared to previous periods. In 2017-2020 the opposition parties were more willing to directly address conceptual DI. Some wanted a multiple end points model, so that Denmark could position itself among the less integrated member states, while others supported a multi-speed Europe, so that core countries could play the role of integration drivers to make up for the lack of appetite for European integration in the Danish political context.

som er et stærkere og mere dynamisk og ambitiøst samarbejde. Der tror vi sådan set, at ideen om et Europa i flere hastigheder er en mere realistisk vej at komme til et stærkere samarbejde end et stærkt Europa, hvor vi alle sammen skal gå i takt, for det gør vi ikke, og det kommer vi aldrig til. Så selv om vi tidligere har været ret skeptiske over for et Europa i flere hastigheder, tror vi mere på det nu.”

Appendices

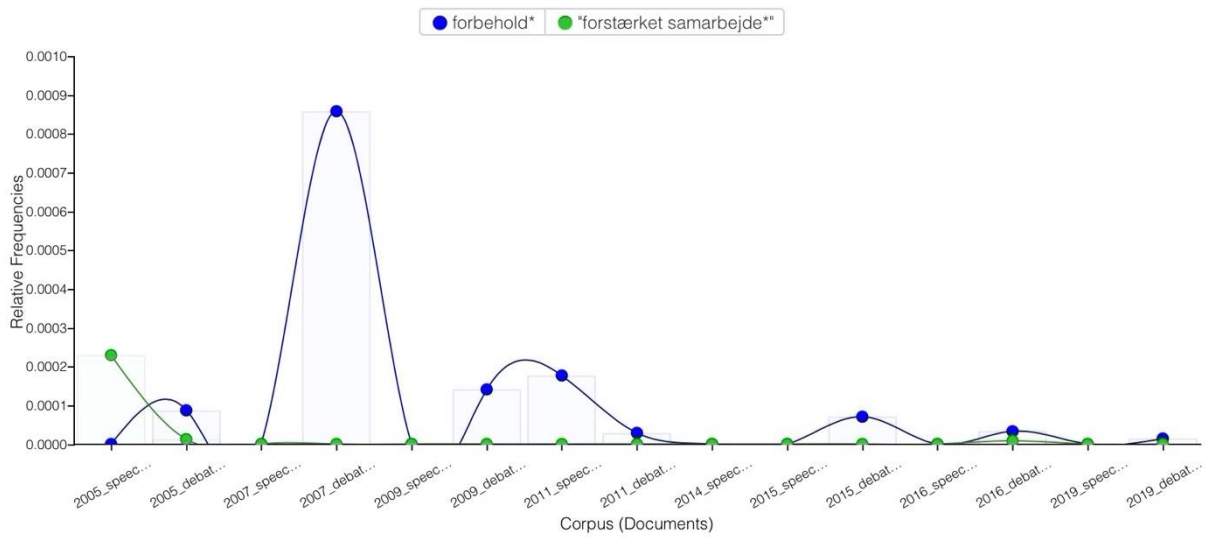
Appendix 1 Overview of the documents analysed

	Category of document	Time period	Number of documents	Details
1	Government programmes	2004-2020	8	2005, 2007, 2010, 2011, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2019
2	Prime Minister's first speeches and subsequent parliamentary debates	2004-2020	15	2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2019
3	European Council presidency speeches and parliamentary debates a. In the Danish Parliament b. In the European Parliament	2004-2020	3	Presidency speech 2012 a. 2012 b. 2012
4	Future of Europe speeches and parliamentary debates a. in the European Parliament b. on citizen consultation	2017-2020	3	a. 2018 b. 2019
5	Prime Minister statements on the European Council	Dec 2006-2020	87	Not publicly available before December 2006.
6	Parliamentary committee debates	2008 2012 2017-2020	179	Summaries from the European Affairs Committee.
7	Parliamentary debate	2004-2020		The repository of the Danish parliament (www.folketingstidende.dk) was used, covering all the debates in the Folketing in the period, but not of its committees (covered in category 6).

Appendix 2 Danish translations of keywords

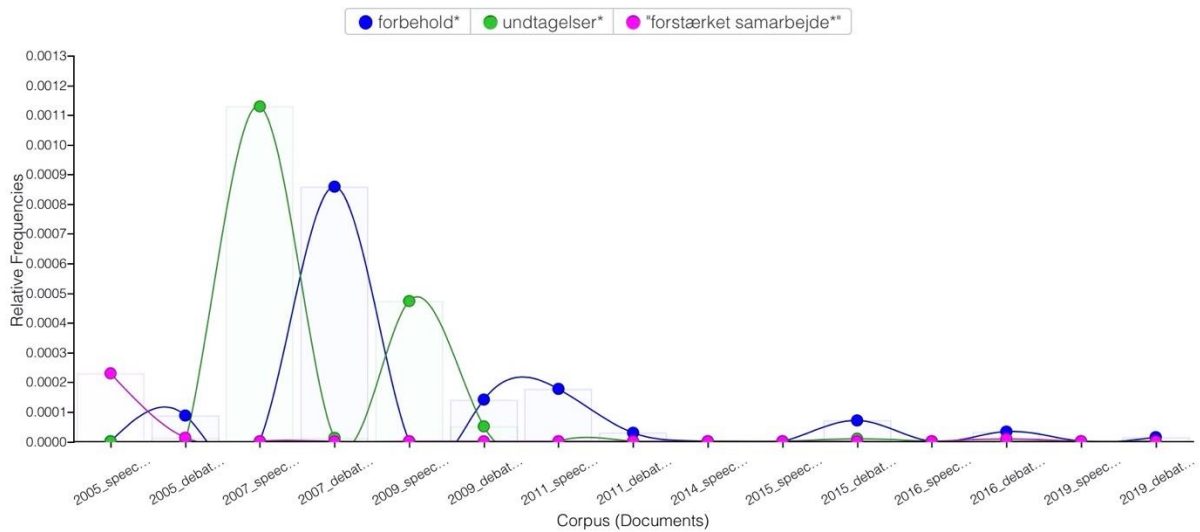
Key word	Danish Translation	Notes
DI models (conceptual keywords)		
Differentiated integration	differentieret integration	
Coalition of the willing	koalition af villige	
Two-speed Europe	Europa i to hastigheder	
Multi-speed Europe	Europa i flere hastigheder	
Variable geometry	variabel geometri	
Core Europe	kernen af Europa/kerne-Europa	
Two-tier Europe	Europa i to lag	
concentric circles	koncentriske cirkler	
à la carte	à la carte, tag selv-bord, buffet	
Future of Europe	Europas fremtid, EU's fremtid	
DI mechanisms		
Enhanced cooperation	forstærket samarbejde	
opt-out	forbehold	
DI instances – enhanced cooperation		
Pesco	Pesco	
Rome III	Rom III	
Unitary patent	Enhedspatent	
Matrimonial property regimes	ejerforhold mellem ægtefæller	
Financial Transaction Tax	skat på finansielle transaktioner	
European Public Prosecutor	Europæisk Anklagemyndighed	
DI instances – opt-out policy fields		
Schengen	Schengen	
Economic and Monetary Union	økonomisk og monetær union/ømu,	The Danish opt-out on the euro was included
	euroforbehold	
Security and Defence Policy	Fælles sikkerheds- og forsvarspolitik, forsvarsforbehold	The Danish opt-out on the CSDP was included
Area of Freedom, Security and Justice	området for frihed, sikkerhed og retfærdighed, retsforbehold	The Danish opt-out on justice and home affairs was included
Charter of Fundamental Rights	charter om grundlæggende rettigheder, charter for grundlæggende rettigheder	
Social Charter	sociale charter	
DI instances – inter se agreements		
Prüm Convention	Prüm-traktaten	
European Stability Mechanism	europæisk stabilitetsmekanisme (esm)	
Fiscal Compact	finanspagten	
Single Resolution Mechanism	den fælles afviklingsmekanisme	
Unified Patent Court	Patentdomstolen	
DI instances – external agreements		
European Economic Area	det europæiske økonomiske samarbejdsområde, eøs	
Customs Union + Turkey	toldunion + Tyrkiet	
Eastern Partnership	Østpartnerskabet	
Euromed	Euromed/Euro-Mediterranean Partnership/Euro-Middelhavs-partnerskabet	

Appendix 3 Salience of DI mechanisms in Prime Minister’s first speeches and subsequent parliamentary debate (relative word frequencies) (note: 2014 speech and debate is one document)



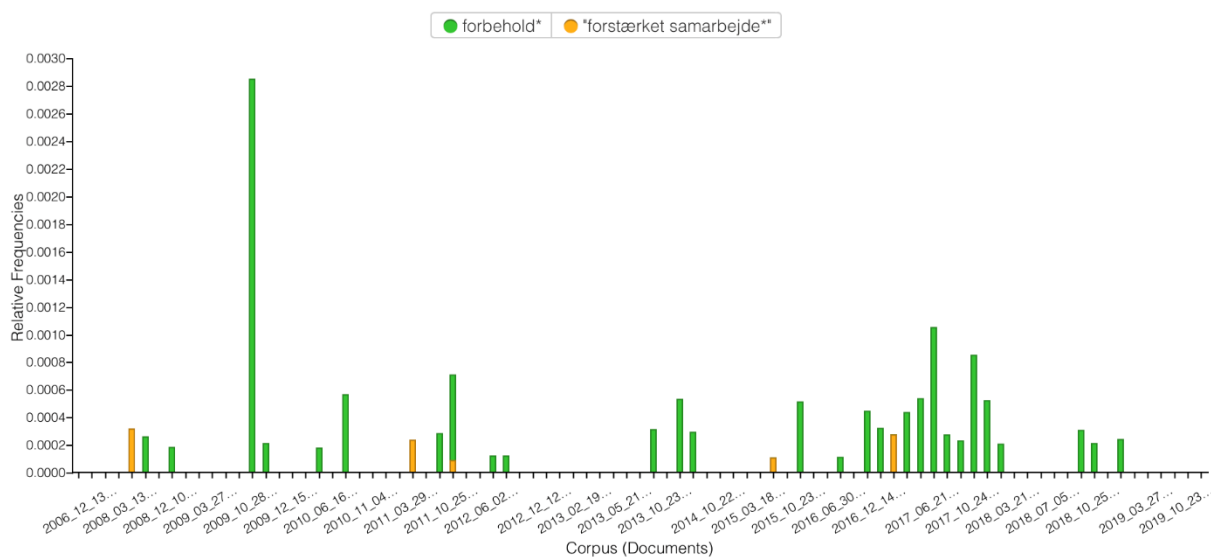
Note: The analysed words were (in this order) opt-out (“forbehold”) and enhanced cooperation (“forstærket samarbejde”).

Appendix 4 Salience of DI mechanisms (“*undtagelser*” added) in Prime Minister first speeches and subsequent parliamentary debate (relative word frequencies) (note: 2014 speech and debate is one document)



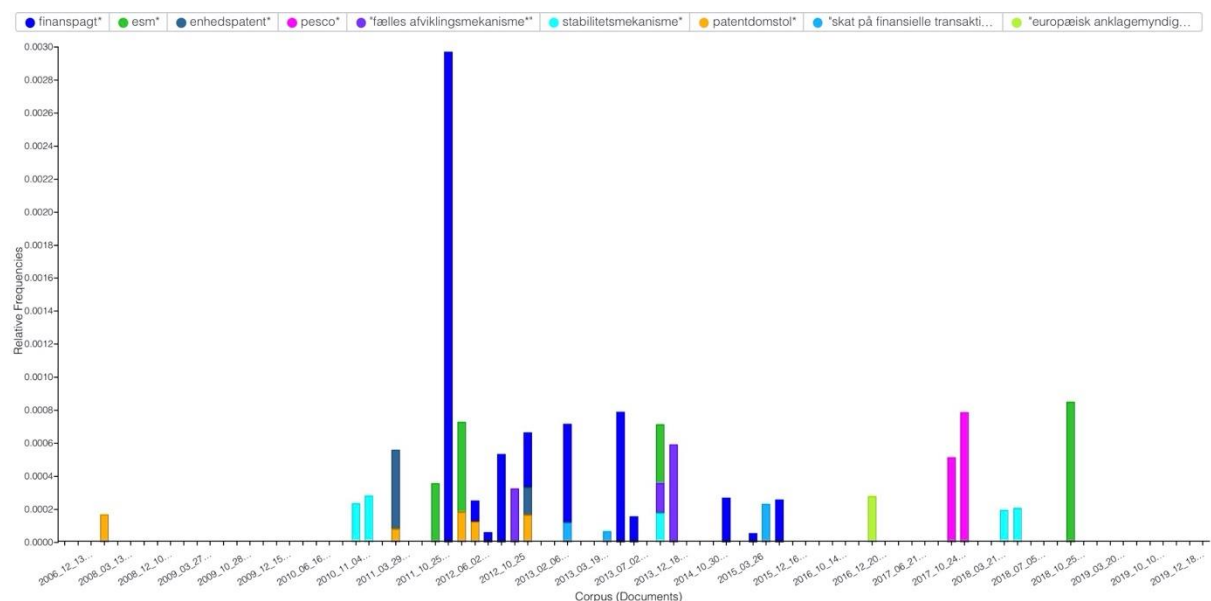
Note: The analysed words were opt-out (“forbehold” and “undtagelser”) and enhanced cooperation (“forstærket samarbejde”).

Appendix 5 Salience of DI mechanisms in Prime Minister’s statements on European Council (relative word frequencies)



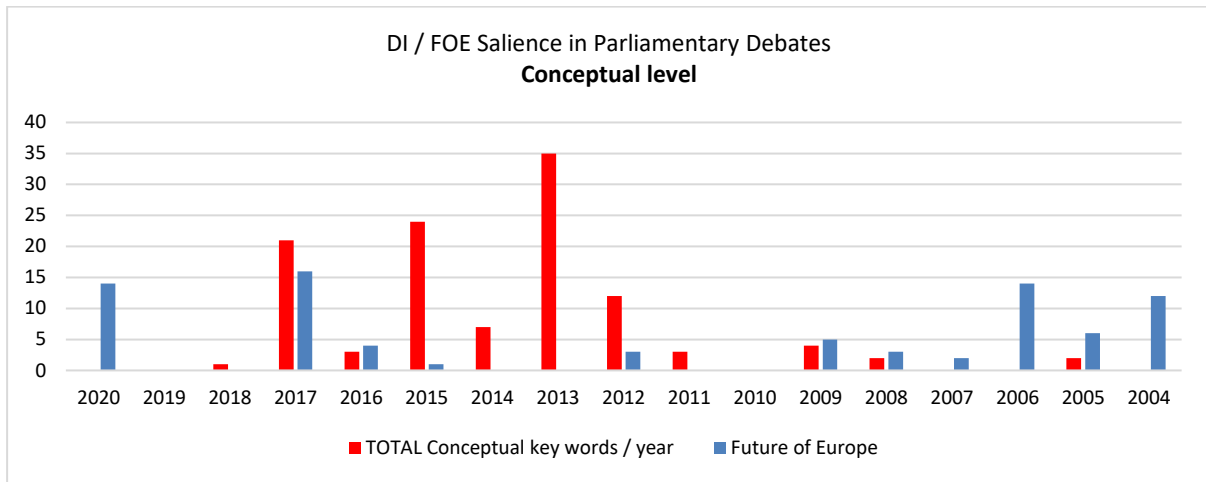
Note: The analysed words were opt-out (“forbehold” and “undtagelser”) and enhanced cooperation (“forstærket samarbejde”).

Appendix 6 Salience of DI instances in Prime Minister’s statements on European Council (relative word frequencies) (note: only includes DI instances with search hits)



Note: The analysed words were Fiscal Compact Treaty (“finanspagt”), ESM (“esm” and “stabilitetsmekanisme”), Unitary Patent (“enhedspatent”), PESCO, Single Resolution Mechanism (“fælles afviklingsmekanisme”), Unified Patent Court (“patentdomstol”), Financial Transactions Tax (“skat på finansielle transaktioner”) and European Public Prosecutor (“europæisk anklagemyndighed”).

Appendix 7 Salience of conceptual keywords (Future of Europe added) in parliamentary debates (2004-2020)



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