**A Home in the Welfare State:**

**Social Housing in Canada and Denmark**


by

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**Abstract**

The project fills a gap in the literature on social housing policies and their connection to the welfare state and constellations of power in society. The project is theoretically informed by welfare state and urban theory. A comparative-historical case study approach is used to investigate the relationship between social housing, as conceptualized as a feature of the broader welfare state, and neoliberalization in Canada and Denmark. The research questions of the project are: 1) *To what extent have Canadian and Danish social housing policies faced retrenchment during the global political economic period of neoliberalization?* (2) *In a comparative perspective, how have social housing policies and their retrenchment affected housing inequality in Canada and Denmark?* (3) *To what extent can research on social housing policies, framed in a welfare state perspective, offer useful theoretical innovation and opportunities for future research?* The project contributes to the community of scholars by providing a thorough comparative history of social housing policies, as well as by offering new theorizing to link welfare state and urban studies research. In terms of its implications for society, the project connects the welfare state, social housing, and coalition building to aid in arguing a state responsibility to provide citizens with adequate and affordable housing. With housing pressure mounting and poverty deepening in urban centres around the world, this thorough analysis of the connection between housing and neoliberalization is crucial.

## Acknowledgments

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## Chapter I: Introduction • The Project of Comparing Canada and Denmark

One of the most pressing urban challenges confronting both Canadian and Danish cities is the lack of affordable housing (Kristensen, 2007; Suttor, 2016). Housing strain is borne most heavily on the shoulders of those facing systemic poverty, which has deepened around the world throughout the period of neoliberalization. Yet social housing policy is rarely included in studies of the welfare state – why? The main reason is because the relationship between urban development and the welfare state is ambiguous. More so than other aspects of the welfare state, housing is considered as a commodity as opposed to a universal right. Generally speaking, the extent to which the state should intervene in providing housing is more controversial than, for example, providing education or healthcare (Schafer, 2002; Suttor, 2016). States are variously accountable to private versus public goals in housing. As well, states distribute housing policy variously across government levels (including federal, provincial/county, and municipal), making housing policy comparison more complicated than, for example, unemployment benefits. In short, housing is theoretically and politically complicated (Esping-Andersen, 1985a). This has meant that housing provision is often excluded from welfare state studies, which has resulted in a stark lack of literature in this area overall, and especially in studies that link social housing policy to the broader global political economy and consider power in policy formation.[1,2]

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[1] As Esping-Andersen comments, "the welfare state has been approached both narrowly and broadly. Those who take the narrower view see it in terms of the traditional terrain of social amelioration: income transfers and social services, *with perhaps some token mention of the housing question*. The broader view often frames its questions in terms of political economy, its interests focused on the states larger role in managing and organizing the economy" (1990:1-2, italics added). The goal of the project is to explore the possibilities of situating housing as the focal point within a broad framework.

[2] For further reading see for example Therborn (2017, Chapter 1) for a review of the lack of research synergizing political economy, power, and the urban.

Considering the definition of the welfare state, as the mechanisms provided by the state to promote citizen wellbeing through economic and social equality, it is not difficult to argue that social housing provision has an important role. Wellbeing is dependent on having a safe place to live (Carter & Polevychok, 2004; Cooper, 2018; Shapcott, et al., 2010). The broad range of research coming out of the housing-first-type philosophy makes the case that individuals are much more likely to be successful, healthy, contributing, and integrated members of society if they have an adequate and affordable place to live; inversely, when lacking housing the hardships of poverty are exacerbated and the cycle becomes nearly impossible to break.[3] If providing adequate and affordable housing through social housing policies can promote citizen wellbeing and even social equality, then social housing can and should be empirically included as a part of welfare state infrastructure.

In addressing this gap in the literature, the project roots social housing as a component of the welfare state and, with this conceptualization as a grounding point, explores the relationship between neoliberalization and social housing in Canada and Denmark. The goal is to highlight the fact that political and economic changes have concrete effects on cities and to open the gateway for future research in this understudied area. The key research questions of the project are: (1) *To what extent have Canadian and Danish social housing policies faced retrenchment during the global political economic period of neoliberalization?* (2) *In a comparative perspective, how have social housing policies and their retrenchment affected housing inequality in Canada and*

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[3] The need for appropriate housing is widely accepted. For example, as stated by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), "access to good-quality affordable housing is a fundamental need and key to achieving a number of social policy objectives, including reducing poverty and enhancing equality of opportunity, social inclusion and mobility" (2018).

*Denmark?* (3) *To what extent can research on social housing policies, framed in a welfare state perspective, offer useful theoretical innovation and opportunities for future research?*

Why Canada and Denmark? There are many considerations involved in choosing which cases to study; however, beyond all other considerations, the seemingly simplest, yet most critical, starting point for case study research is to choose a case that will allow for the greatest possible amount of knowledge generation (Patton, 1990; Stake, 2008; Vaughan, 1992; Yin, 1989). The countries were strategically selected for optimal comparison of factors, current and historical, permitting degrees of freedom. Both countries are wealthy, advanced capitalist nations, which have suffered as a result of neoliberalization, and face a lack of adequate and affordable housing in city centers. Yet, Canada and Denmark have developed along different trajectories, favoured different types of economic organization, faced varied levels of retrenchment, and are responding to social housing and the increasing pressures of neoliberalization in different ways. The fact that both countries are wealthy, advanced capitalist nations, allows for a deeper comparative analysis as to why the nations differ in social housing policy and responses to the challenges of the 21$^{st}$ century. As a Masters' student at the University of Manitoba, Canada, I was fortunate to conduct a research-study semester at the University of Copenhagen, Denmark in 2017; although the project analyzes existing sources, experiential knowledge of any kind enhances case study research. Naturally, it is advantageous to be able to personally experience and question the case (Stake, 2008).

**Chapter Summaries**

Chapter I introduces the project and research questions. The chapter identifies the gap in the literature on social housing policies and explains why this gap exists. In addition, it justifies the importance of conceptualizing social housing as a feature of the broader welfare state. Lastly,

the chapter outlines the cases under study and the reasons for comparing Canada and Denmark. The key questions that the chapter aims to answer are: *Why are social housing policies rarely included in studies of the welfare state? Why should social housing policies be conceptualized as part of the broader welfare state and empirically included in welfare state studies? Why does the project compare Canada and Denmark specifically?*

Chapter II is focused on welfare state history and theory. The chapter begins with a brief historical context as to why and how the welfare state emerged in the advanced capitalist nations. A history of the early dichotomous models that sought to typologize welfare states is provided. These models laid the foundation for the Esping-Andersen model (1990) which is used to frame the project. An analysis of Esping-Andersen's three worlds of welfare capitalism and how this typology expands, not only the ability to typologize welfare states, but also to theorize how welfare states shape society, follows. Building on the work of Esping-Andersen, the chapter moves to a further exploration of Power Resources Theory to identify how powerful and well-organized labour movements are able to shape the welfare state in their interests. Focusing on social housing, the opportunity for theoretical extension and innovation between welfare state and urban theory follows. The chapter closes with a discussion of identified weaknesses and a justification of the frameworks used to inform the analysis. The key questions that the chapter aims to answer are: *How can the differences observed between welfare states be typologized? What are the impacts of the welfare state on citizens – and visa versa? What factors influence the differences in welfare states? How are welfare state and urban theory related?*

Chapter III describes the comparative case study process of inquiry, comparative-historical multi-method of analysis, and secondary data collection that are used for the project, as well as the weaknesses and strengths of these approaches. The key question that the chapter aims to answer

is: *To what extent can the methods employed in this project offer an important contribution to academia and community?*

Chapter IV frames the study through a broader political economy lens by considering the outcomes of shared global conditions. Both Canada and Denmark are wealthy, advanced capitalist nations and both countries have suffered the effects of neoliberalization. Yet, due to the varying robustness of the welfare state and working class power resources, the two countries have faced retrenchment to differing extents. The chapter outlines the neoliberal paradigm shift and the effect of neoliberalization on key dimensions of the welfare state in both Canada and Denmark. The final section compares the effects of retrenchment in both Canada and Denmark. The key questions that the chapter aims to answer are: *To what extent have Canada and Denmark faced welfare state retrenchment through the period of neoliberalization? What factors influence the differences in welfare state retrenchment in Canada and Denmark? How has welfare state retrenchment affected inequality in Canada and Denmark?*

Chapter V expands on the empirical relationship between the welfare state and social housing. General trends in social housing development are discussed and social housing policy in both Canada and Denmark are compared and contrasted. The effects of neoliberalization on social housing policy in both countries are analyzed. The key questions that the chapter aims to answer are: *To what extent have Canadian and Danish social housing policies faced retrenchment during the global political economic period of neoliberalization? What factors influence the differences in social housing policy retrenchment in Canada and Denmark? In a comparative perspective, how have social housing policies and their retrenchment affected housing inequality in Canada and Denmark?*

Chapter VI begins with a discussion of urban power and politics. The chapter offers concluding comparisons between Canada and Denmark and reinforces the need to understand power resources and to conceptualize social housing as part of the welfare state. A discussion of the need to confront neoliberal hegemony in Canada and the usefulness of critical comparative studies, follows. Suggestions for strengthening social housing through coalition building and suggestions for future research in this area are provided. Lastly, opportunities to extend Power Resources and Urban Political Economic Theory and future research in this area are outlined. The key question that the chapter aims to answer is: *To what extent can research on social housing policies, framed in a welfare state perspective, offer useful theoretical innovation and opportunities for future research?*

## Chapter II: Theory • Welfare State History, Typology, and Change

**The Beginning of the Welfare State**

      The term *welfare state* refers to the mechanisms provided by the state to promote citizen wellbeing through economic and social equality; modern day welfare states draw on a wide-range of elements, such as transfers, payments, insurances, services, legislation, and regulation. Historically, the emergence of the welfare state began in western Europe in the 19th century with the introduction of social insurance – or, employment-based programs which citizens contribute to in order to access funds should they be unable to earn income at some point in their future. The cityscape is centrally relevant to the story; key, large-scale transformations during this time period included population and demographic changes, as well as a continued rise in urbanization. Transformation of the urban space was coupled with the expansion of industrialization, an increased reliance on wage labour, and an overall solidification of the capitalist economic structure. These changes in economic and social structures in rapidly growing industrial cities, in turn brought forth new and unparalleled social problems, such as growing social insecurity, unemployment, and systemic poverty. Further fuelled by public debates and the work of social scientists, these issues raised serious concerns regarding the relationship between labour and the ruling class. Ultimately, this climate gave rise to increasing pressure on the state to take a more active role in assuring citizens wellbeing through concrete rights (Brooks & Manza, 2007; Kuhnle & Sander, 2010; Olsen, 2002; Therborn, 2017).

      Prior to this newfound pressure, central governments focused solely on infrastructure for the purpose of economic development and citizen protection from internal and external threats; therefore, the introduction of social insurance policies represented an entirely new

conceptualization of the role of the state. Spurred by social insurance, governments increasingly began to tackle other emerging public social problems. In the factories for example, attention was cast towards working standards and labour relations; issues surrounding the protection of workers, workplace health and safety, employer-worker relations, working hours, and the use of child labour became the increasing responsibility of governments. As well, states began to provide growing public services, such as health and education. In the 1920s in Europe, the welfare state agenda expanded to include working class housing. In Canada, welfare state construction was much more laggardly and residual, with basic programs still in infancy in the 1930s and the first housing provision for veterans and war workers belatedly realized in the 1940s. Despite these differences in timing, by the 20th century, political agendas across the advanced capitalist nations included economic, social, and welfare policies as essential issues (Kuhnle & Sander, 2010; Olsen, 2002; Suttor, 2016; Therborn, 2017).

**Locating Welfare States**

From conception in the 19th century through to the modern day, welfare states have continued to evolve and remain subject to contemporary academic inquiry. Throughout the world, countries have varying histories, state governments provide for their citizens through unique mixtures of welfare state mechanisms, and the effects of inequality are mitigated to varying degrees. For these reasons, especially central to academic research have been efforts to typologize the differences observed between welfare states.

<u>A History of the Early Dichotomous Models</u>

The earliest attempts of categorization included dichotomous models which situated welfare states along a continuum from least to most progressive based on quantitative and qualitative aspects. The first of these models charted states from *welfare laggards* to *welfare leaders* based on the time at which specific social programs were introduced. This was possible because, within the advanced capitalist countries, key welfare state mechanisms were typically introduced in the same order, but at different points in history. In general, the pattern shows that industrial accident insurance or workers' compensation, sickness insurance, old age pensions, unemployment insurance, and family allowances emerged sequentially to form the basic foundations of the welfare state. The consistency in order of appearance, with marked variation in timing, allows states to be ordered along the continuum based on how quickly they adopted each measure (Olsen, 2002; Olsen & O'Connor, 1998).

| Table 1: Introduction of Social Programs, Canada and Denmark | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Country** | **Program** | | | | | |
| | Workers' Compensation | Sickness Insurance | Old-age Pensions | Unemployment Insurance | Family Allowances | Social Housing |
| **Canada** | 1908[1] | 1957 | 1927 | 1940 | 1944 | 1949[2] |
| **Denmark** | 1894 | 1892 | 1891 | 1907 | 1952 | 1933[3] |
| [1] Provincial programs | | | | | | |
| [2] The first federal policy appears in 1938 but no social housing is built under this legislation; the first municipal social housing appears in 1947 in Toronto; federal policy in 1949 results in the first federally legislated social housing | | | | | | |
| [3] First laws allowing municipal public housing support are passed in 1887; first national social housing policies (including subsidies) passed in 1933 | | | | | | |
| Source: Adapted from Olsen & O'Connor (1998) | | | | | | |

As shown in Table 1, in Canada and Denmark, the welfare laggard versus welfare leaders model fits well. Canada trails behind Denmark in terms of the introduction of basic welfare state infrastructure, with the exception of family allowances, which are introduced earlier in Canada than in Denmark. In terms of social housing provision, the first laws allowing municipal public

housing support are passed in Denmark in 1887, with the first national social housing policies passed in 1933. In Canada, social housing legislation is first passed in 1938, but no social housing is built under the legislation. The first municipally funded social housing appears in 1947 in Toronto, and federal policy in 1949 results in the first federally legislated social housing.

Although it is important and interesting to note the timing of the appearance of social programs, using this measure alone to compare welfare states does not show the whole picture. The biggest issue that arises within this model is that the dates themselves are not reported consistently across countries; there is great variation between, for example, a date which marks the first time that legislation regarding a social program was announced, when the legislation in question was passed, or when the program became available to all citizens. These problems are evident in the case of social housing where uneven policies make comparison by date of adoption alone difficult. Even if dates were recorded consistently, the model misses the nuances of programs that vary greatly in terms of character, generosity, and universality. Lastly, the fact that dates of introduction capture only one moment in time, renders this approach static and does not allow for an analysis of change over time (Brooks & Manza, 2007; Olsen, 2002; Olsen & O'Connor, 1998).

Later attempts at rank ordering welfare laggards and welfare leaders used the percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) allocated to public social spending. Unlike per capita or absolute numbers, quantifying social spending as a percentage of GDP is a standardized and proportionate measure, allowing for changes in the level of economic activity to be controlled for. When this indicator is used, states that allocate less to public social spending are considered welfare laggards and those that allocate more are considered welfare leaders (Esping-Andersen, 1998; Korpi, 2003; Olsen, 2002; Olsen & O'Connor, 1998).

| Table 2: Social Public Expenditure, % of GDP, Canada and Denmark (2015) | |
|---|---|
| **Country** | |
| **Canada** | **Denmark** |
| 17.2% | 28.8% |
| Source: OECD https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=SOCX_AGG# | |

As illustrated in Table 2, in the cases of Canada and Denmark, comparing the percentage of GDP allocated to public social spending produces expected results: Denmark allocates much more than Canada and the result is a much more robust welfare state. However, this general comparison masks many nuances.

Due to its clean-cut comparability, GDP is a very attractive measure at first glance; however, a further look reveals that there are a number of issues that threaten its generalizability. As the term *welfare* is complex and can be defined in a variety of ways, there is no uniform consensus on what should be included within expenditures on social welfare. Due to this, many important services, such as active labour market, health, or education programs, have the potential to be excluded from the analysis. In addition, seemingly high levels of public social spending can be misleading. Activities and procedures at the administrative level, for example, may account for a portion of high cost, but may not translate into effective welfare efforts on the ground. Inefficiently addressing social problems can also create outwardly high spending in times of crisis, when poverty or unemployment rises quickly. In short, a high level of spending does not necessarily translate into an effective and robust welfare state (Esping-Andersen, 1998; Korpi, 2003; Olsen, 2002; Olsen & O'Connor, 1998). In terms of social housing provision, for example, GDP allocation is an exceptionally poor indictor. When government support for social housing as a percentage of GDP is analyzed, no direct correlation emerges between the level of government social housing spending and the size of the social housing sector. There are many reasons for this,

depending on the country under consideration. In Denmark, where social housing provision is among the highest in the world, GDP spending is comparatively low because large housing organizations, providing social housing through the non-profit sector, maintain social housing through the use of their own revolving funds (OECD, 2016; 2018).

Attempting to account for the shortcomings of the quantitative measures, a later dichotomous design introduced two new models: the *residual welfare state* and the *institutional welfare state*. In the residual versus institutional welfare state model, residual welfare states align with welfare laggards as least progressive, while institutional welfare states align with welfare leaders as most progressive. The major difference between the models is the inclusion of qualitative aspects into the analysis, which allows for a deeper investigation of the underlying nature of the welfare state, as well as changes within the welfare state over time (Brooks & Manza, 2007; Esping-Andersen, 1998; Olsen & O'Connor, 1998).

Within residual welfare states, public measures are not a priority of the state. Funds allocated to public social spending are low and the programs that do exist tend to cover a very narrow range of citizens and needs, with minimal benefits and rates. A defining feature of residual welfare states is the reliance on targeted and reactive programs, in which few citizens are eligible and benefits are very difficult to obtain. Overall, there is a heavy reliance on the market and private welfare, with the public safety-net acting as a last resort. On the other end of the continuum, institutional welfare states take the reverse approach. Funds allocated to public social spending are high and programs are very generous and offer broad coverage. Unlike the programs in residual welfare states, institutional welfare states are characterized by coverage that is easily accessible, high quality, and universal. With the goal of prevention, there is a prominence of state support and a strong de-emphasis on the market and private sector welfare (Brooks & Manza, 2007; Esping-

Andersen, 1998; Olsen & O'Connor, 1998). The residual versus institutional model is useful in expanding on the features of the welfare state and the differences between the Canadian and Danish welfare states – with the Canadian welfare state fitting the residual model and the Danish, intuitional. The residual versus institutional model also opened the door for the Esping-Andersen (1990) model, an even more in-depth, qualitative analysis of welfare state differences, which will ultimately form the theoretical basis of this project.

The Esping-Andersen Model

Drawing on this academic history, the welfare state scholar, Esping-Andersen, analyzed eighteen developed nations, through an immense and foundational project, which cumulated in his book *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* (1990). Through his work, Esping-Andersen identified three distinct welfare state regimes based on the dominant ideology expressed within each state. Esping-Andersen's trichotomous model expands scholarly research of the welfare state by stressing a number of qualitative dimensions which further illuminate the differences between the welfare regimes. By considering the intricate relationships between, and the varied emphasis on, social programs offered out of the private, civil, and public sectors in connection to the dominant relations between the market, family, and state, the in-depth framework allows scholars to identify the unique ways in which these forces interact in different states to produce varying results. Esping-Andersen's model marked a significant leap forward from the earlier continua by offering insights into the ways in which the welfare state critically shapes the nation and impacts citizen wellbeing. Outcomes of particular interest are the levels of decommodification, extent of social stratification, and citizen dispositions (Korpi, 1998a).

*Decommodification* is the process of lessening or completely dissolving citizens' dependency on employers and the market. In a highly commodified state, citizens must be involved in the market in order to secure their wellbeing; however, when this relationship is decommodified, citizens do not need to rely solely on employers or the market for their security (Brooks & Manza, 2007; Esping-Andersen, 1990:35-54). *Social stratification* refers to the level of hierarchy within a state based on factors such as wealth, power, or social status. Increased social stratification results in wider gaps between those on the top and the bottom of the hierarchy. Inequality can be analysed by examining the extent to which social stratification systems are either reproduced or diminished by the welfare state. In these ways, state-level economic decisions have far-reaching effects on the lives of citizens; marked differences can be observed depending on factors such as the level of income redistribution, the amount and types of social programs offered through various sectors, and the level of decommodification. These factors in turn influence social stratification issues, such as the levels of inequality, poverty, and unemployment within the state (Esping-Andersen, 1990:55-78).

Politically, the rhetoric of welfare states can also promote and ingrain various citizen dispositions. For example, in welfare states which provide limited support and emphasize the market, climates of competition, individualism, and strong negative attitudes towards those who rely on social programs flourish; in contrast, in welfare states which provide public, comprehensive, and universal support, attitudes of collectivism and solidarity are more common (Korpi, 2003). As will be discussed further in the Power Resources Theory section, not only do welfare states have political impacts on citizens, welfare states are also formed and continually shaped by the acts and demands of social and political actors whose influence is based on the amount of power they hold (Korpi, 1998a). Esping-Andersen's approach is unique as it includes

the relationship between the welfare state and the citizenry by stressing both economic and political impacts. With a consideration of these interconnected dimensions, Esping-Andersen's three welfare regimes are rooted in classic political economic ideology[4] and are so named the *liberal*, *conservative*, and *social democratic* welfare regimes.

*The Liberal Regime*

*Liberalism* is centred on the principles of limited government intervention, laissez-faire economic policies, and a heavy emphasis on the power of the free market and private property ownership (Ball, et al., 2006). In line with this ideology, Esping-Andersen's liberal regime is characterized by an overall lack of welfare state support: low levels of public social spending, limited income redistribution, minimal benefits and rates, and incomplete and narrow coverage. The liberal regime is similar to the earlier residual model, where few programs are provided universally or as a right of citizenship; rather, an emphasis is placed on reactive, targeted, means- or income-tested social assistance programs, which are very difficult to obtain. Liberal welfare states rely most heavily on the market and private welfare. Public measures are highly discouraged and considered only as a last resort; minimal aid is provided only when all other options have been exhausted (Esping-Andersen, 1990:26-27).

The low levels of support are rationalized as a way to motivate people to work, as opposed to seeking public support. With a weak social safety-net, citizens within this regime type are highly commodified and must have strong links to employers and the market in order to secure their wellbeing. Due to these characteristics, liberal regimes are characterized by high levels of social

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[4] This connection is summarized succinctly in Esping-Andersen's (1998) article. For a thorough review of the history and nuances of classic political economic ideology in general, see for example Ball, et al. (2006).

inequality and the existing, class-based, market-created, social stratification systems tend to be reproduced and reinforced within these regimes; lacking preventative and generous programs, interventions are unsuccessful at mitigating social stratification and sustain a class in poverty through insufficient reactive measures (Esping-Andersen, 1990:26-27).

Politically, the climate of the liberal regime fosters high levels of inequality, a strong sense of individualism, and negative attitudes towards public welfare and those who access social programs; falling so low as to have to rely on public support is considered the failure of the individual and, therefore, social assistance recipients are commonly viewed negatively. Cross-class solidarity and collectivism are undermined and there is an overall lack of broad support for public welfare programs (Esping-Andersen, 1990: 26-27). Canada is considered a liberal welfare state and was included within Esping-Andersen's original study.

*The Conservative Regime*

*Conservatism* is concerned with the retention of tradition and continuity within society (Ball, et al., 2006). With an emphasis on preservation, conservatism draws on an organic hierarchy achieved through adhering to traditional roles within the family and community, as well as through a strong recognition and respect of authority. Run by a paternalist state highly influenced by Christian rhetoric, the *conservative welfare regime*[5] is characterized by a reliance on social insurance programs, low levels of income redistribution across classes, and a drive to maintain the complex social hierarchy. Within conservative regimes, values have guided the development of the state more so than economic ideology (Esping-Andersen, 1990:27). Although the project's

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[5] The conservative regime is also referred to as the *corporatist-statist regime* or *corporatist regime* in Esping-Andersen's (1990) original work.

comparison will focus on the liberal and social democratic regimes, the conservative regime type remains important as neoliberalization has made conservative state principles increasingly influential in recent decades.

In general, in the conservative regime, citizens are highly commodified due to a heavy emphasis on social insurance programs. Social insurance funds are only available to citizens who have paid into the program and eligibility and benefit levels are based upon contributions, as opposed to need or universalism. Due to the necessity to be involved in the workforce in order to participate, there is an evident separation in the conservative regime between those who receive benefits and those who do not. The conservative regime succeeds in fostering a climate in which a strict social hierarchy is maintained. Because income redistribution across the classes is not a priority, income is solely redistributed within the pool of employed citizens, with support becoming available in times of need – such as periods of unemployment, sickness, or old age; this results in existing social stratification systems continuing to be strongly reproduced and reinforced. Moreover, politically, an acceptance of inequality is perpetuated within the conservative regime, as the system is based on the underlying principle that each individual has a place within the broader, social, organic hierarchy. Women in particular are subordinated in the conservative regime due to the importance placed on traditional, patriarchal gender roles and relations. The paternalistic nature of the state and inegalitarian gender relations are important organizing principles in the conservative regime, creating a climate in which women are subordinated in the private sphere (spending time in the home and caring for children), while men are commodified in the public sphere (securing income for the family) (Esping-Andersen, 1990:27; Geist, 2005).

Esping-Andersen further divided the conservative regime into two subtypes: the *achievement-performance model* and the *catholic model*. In the achievement-performance model,

a far more institutional model, welfare states are characterized by a low reliance on the private sector, generous benefits, and high levels of public social spending. However, neither universalism nor full employment are stressed within this model and spending is specifically targeted towards those employed in the workforce and their dependents, with an underlying goal of maintaining the social hierarchy. Nevertheless, compared to the liberal regime, poverty and income inequality are lower in the achievement-performance conservative regime. In contrast, in the catholic model, the welfare state is far more residual with a marked lack of programs. Religion is very prominent in these nations and has played a much more central role in the conceptualization of the welfare state. In the catholic model, the responsibility for ensuring wellbeing is placed on the self, the family, the community, and community groups (such as the church and private charities) respectively; in terms of assistance, the state is seen as a last resort. Due to a lack of public support, poverty and income inequality tend to be higher in catholic conservative regimes (Esping-Andersen 1990:27).

*The Social Democratic Regime*

  *Social democracy* emphasizes the strength of the state, universal welfare, and citizenship rights, while working conscientiously within the broader framework of the capitalist economy (Ball, et al., 2006). With the goal of securing the wellbeing of citizens, the *social democratic regime* is characterized by high levels of public social spending, extensive income redistribution, generous benefits and rates, broad and comprehensive coverage, and a strong social safety net supplemented by a wide range of programs and secured by legislation. Similar to the earlier institutional model, universalism is emphasized, public welfare is easy to obtain, and the focus is on proactive and preventative measures. In short, the social democratic regime is centered on universal public social services provided as a right of citizenship (Esping-Andersen, 1990:27-28).

Due to the robustness of the state in the social democratic regime, the market is not the sole influence on the class structure; citizens do not need to rely solely on employers in order to secure their wellbeing and are highly decommodified. Additionally, a focus on strong collective bargaining gives the employed more power in the workplace. Stratification systems tend to be reduced within these regimes as policies to promote income redistribution and full employment are emphasized. Due to this, social democratic regimes are typically characterized by low levels of social inequality. By using proactive, preventative, and generous programs, interventions are very successful in eliminating poverty and promoting egalitarianism (Esping-Andersen, 1990:27-28).

Politically, the social democratic regime fosters a climate of collectivism and cross-class solidarity among citizens. Because of the universality of the social democratic regime, programs are more often available to all, which creates broader acceptance of public welfare. Within this regime, the need for public support is not considered a failing of the individual; rather, the mindset is that to not provide support would be considered a failing of the state. Overall, there is an acknowledgement of wellbeing as a right of citizenship, a high level of support for public welfare programs, and an assertion that the state must be held responsible for ensuring citizen wellbeing through public welfare (Esping-Andersen, 1990: 27-28). It is within the social democratic regime type that Esping-Andersen categorized his home country of Denmark.

Key Esping-Andersen Model Considerations

As with any substantial scholarly work, researchers are aware of potential weaknesses within the Esping-Andersen model and it is prudent to respond to some of the main theoretical vulnerabilities. As a starting point, scholars have contended that the groups are too broad,

encompassing too many states into a single regime type, and have forwarded more finetuned clusters.[6] In his original work, Esping-Andersen notes the "price to be paid for making grand comparisons", commenting that, "I am convinced that readers knowledgeable about any of the eighteen nations included in the study will feel that my treatment of 'their' country is superficial, if not outright misrepresentative" (1990:2). Nonetheless, standing by the need for ideal types, Esping-Andersen provided a tongue-in-cheek response a few years later, stating that, "the kind of methodological dialectics that I have promoted … is almost certain to result in a world composed of eighteen distinct worlds of welfare capitalism"' (1993:136). In short, a refusal to yield, at some point, to a conceptual framework of ideal types results in a situation where classification becomes meaningless (Brooks & Manza, 2007).

In a similar vein, the differences between countries grouped into the same regime have been analyzed and used as the foundation for an evaluation of the overall model, resulting in an extension of the theory. An example from the Canadian context is the work of Olsen who analyzes the differences between Canada and the United States, which are both considered part of the liberal regime.[7, 8] While not wholeheartedly disagreeing with Esping-Andersen, Olsen nonetheless notes the universal nuances of the Canadian welfare state in comparison to the United States, extending the theory by calling Canada a *social liberal* welfare state. Canadians are, in general, very keen to point out their differences from their neighbour to the south. The question is, are the differences substantial enough to warrant a full reconceptualization of the typology?

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[6] For a further discussion on welfare state typologies, analyses expanding Esping-Andersen's model, and the lack of consistency in the literature (as will be discussed) see for example Abrahamson (2002:33-36).

[7] For a succinct summary of this argument, see Olsen & O'Connor (1998:14). The argument is also the backbone of two books (Olsen 2002; 2011).

[8] Similar work exists focused on Australia and New Zealand and their distinctiveness from the rest of the liberal regime countries (Castles & Mitchell, 1992; 1993).

It has also been argued that the model does not extend past the welfare states of the global north, making it inadequate in typologizing the countries in the global south. Esping-Andersen's work (as well as Power Resources Theory, to be discussed) was formulated and is based on the advanced capitalist nations of the global north. It is evident that for studies outside of the global north, more research into welfare state types is necessary to evaluate the possibilities of adjusting the empirics and extending the theory. Having written in this area, I note that some challenges in this field include logistical challenges in countries facing poverty, low and inconsistent tax bases, lack of consistent democracy, impacts of economic globalization, and foreign economic and policy intervention, as well as an overall pervasive eurocentrism in the literature. The welfare states of the global south are an understudied topic and a fruitful area for future research and theoretical innovation.[9]

Outside of these noted vulnerabilities, scholars routinely use different terms to describe similar typological distinctions, resulting in a lack of consistency among the literature. To provide an example relevant to this study, while researching the literature on Danish social policy, I found clusters emphasizing shared traits similar to the social democratic regime conceptualized as, for example, the *Nordic model* or *Nordic welfare model;*[10] *Scandinavian model, Scandinavian welfare model* or *social democratic Scandinavian welfare model;*[11] *social mobility regimes;*[12] and

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[9] For readers interested in exploring the welfare states of the global south in more detail, see for example Wehr, et al. (2012).

[10] See for example Anttonen & Sipila (1996) on the topic of social care; Rostgaard (2012; 2014) on the topic of social care and family policy, respectively; Lappi-Seppälä & Tonry (2011) on the topic of criminal justice; Andersen, et al. (2007) on the topic of globalization.

[11] See for example Abrahamson (1999; 2002; 2015) on the topic of welfare states; Amouroux, et al. (2011) on the topic of urban studies.

[12] See for example DiPrete (2002) on the topic of mobility; Jæger & Holm (2007) on the topic of education.

*coordinated market economy.*[13] Denmark has also been classified as its own model type with labels such as *welfare state Denmark* and *Danish model.*[14] In general, these studies were not concerned with describing or critiquing welfare state typologies as such, but rather the terms were used to signal a sort of common understanding that there is something uniquely 'Scandinavian' or uniquely 'Danish'.

Despite these critiques, it remains undeniable that Esping-Andersen's trichotomous typology has been greatly influential and largely accepted by academics in the field. The typology has proven useful, and moreover has the merit of concurrent and convergent validity, in that policy flow through diffusion and adoption tends to cluster within language groups and regions, and across elite colonial ties. In contemporary welfare state studies, approaches centered on Esping-Andersen's model are by far the most widespread and the regime types remain central to typologizing the differences observed between welfare states (Arts & Gelissen, 2002; Brooks & Manza, 2007; Castles, 2004). I argue that the classifications are a useful tool for researching welfare states differences in the advanced capitalist nations of the global north. As a model based on large-scale comparisons, Esping-Andersen's typology uses ideal types; as with all ideal types, the underlying assumption is that no state can match the model to perfection (Esping-Andersen, 1998). Nonetheless, the types can be used as benchmarks to note differences between states within the same grouping and over time, which is the key aim of this study. Focusing on large-scale, federal-level comparison can mask municipal and regional unevenness; to mitigate this, timelines are provided in the social housing sections to highlight the give and take between the municipal, regional, and federal levels. As my research will further explore, grouping Canada within the

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[13] See for example Hall & Soskice (2001) on the topic of labour markets.
[14] See for example Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs writing on a broad range of topics (2006).

liberal regime and Denmark within the social democratic regime is justified and social housing provision in each country is especially exemplary of the respective regime type. Both countries have changed as a result of neoliberalization and these changes are of fundamental importance, however, neoliberal retrenchments have not been significant enough to move the countries to other ideal types. Although many scholars have proposed different names and groupings among sub-fields of study, Esping-Andersen's typology is the most useful and accurate from a global political economy standpoint – specifically, because it allows for an analysis of power, as will be discussed in the Power Resources Theory section.

**Theories of Power and Extending Theory**

Power Resources Theory

    Literature focused on locating welfare states makes evident that welfare states differ. But why? Based on Esping-Andersen's work (1985a; 1985b; 1990), closely associated with the political dimensions of the welfare state typology, and emphasized in the foundational work by Korpi (1978; 1980; 1983; 1989; 1991; 1998a; 1998b),[15] *Power Resources Theory* aims to further explain why welfare states have developed and continue to change along differing trajectories. By incorporating political factors and an emphasis on variation, Power Resources Theory marks a turning point in welfare state research (Brooks & Manza, 2007; Esping-Andersen, 1985a; 1985b; 1990; Korpi, 1983; 1989; Stephens, 1980). True to its namesake, Power Resources Theory asserts that welfare states are formed and continually shaped by the acts and demands of political and social actors whose influence is based on the amount of power they hold.

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[15] See also Esping-Andersen & Korpi (1985; 1987); Himmelstrand, et al. (1981); Stephens (1980).

As a fundamentally Marxist approach, Power Resources Theory rests on the postulation that class conflict between labour and capital is intrinsic to capitalism and that power is overwhelmingly possessed by the capitalist class, due to its position within the capitalist economy and its ownership and control over the means of production. However, Power Resources Theory argues that, in spite of this power imbalance, power relations are flexible and can shift when high levels of labour strength result in a working class with significant power resources and the ability to create and shape the welfare state and social policy to reflect their demands. While capitalist power is a hard constraint overdetermining either a residual or institutional path, a well-organized working class can gain and maintain power by using its organized capacities to support decreasing commodification and social stratification. When the working classes' impact achieves concrete change, labour strength is typically reinforced, which allows for a cycle of increasing power resources and policy advancement. Unlike other theories, Power Resources Theory focuses on variations, both across time and between countries (Korpi, 1998a; 1998b; 2003).

Power Resources Theory elaborates on the working classes' ability to shape policy by distinguishing between two types of power resources: political power resources and organizational power resources. *Political power resources* include the presence of a strong center-left political party willing to represent the interests of labour; the working classes' power resources are advanced dramatically when labour is able to either create or affiliate with such a party. *Organizational power resources* include labour groups – namely unions and coalitions. Labour strength can be achieved through high union density, well organized labour, broad coalitions with other classes, and a strong sense of solidarity and unity (Esping-Andersen, 1998; Korpi, 1998a; 1998b).

Power Resources Theory is prefaced on Esping-Andersen's typology; the existence of differing regime types is foundational, as the cornerstone of Power Resources Theory is cross-national variability. Due to the interest in analyzing differences in order to forward theory, comparative studies are implicit in Power Resources research (Brooks & Manza, 2007; Korpi, 1998b; O'Connor & Olsen, 1998; Olsen & O'Connor, 1998). Stemming from Power Resources Theory studies, such comparative research using quantitative methods shows that strong positive correlations exist between the working classes' power resources, the level of welfare state expenditures, and the quality of public programs – including indicators such as ease of access, benefit levels and rates, and universal coverage; inversely, social issues such as unemployment, gender inequality, poverty, and social stratification decrease as the working classes' power resources increase.[16]


Synthesizing Power Resources Theory with Political Economic Urban Theory

Combining welfare state and urban theory reinforces the theoretical basis of the project by connecting the importance of power in both the formation of the welfare state generally and in the cityscape specifically. The role of power in shaping the urban space was largely ignored by urban sociology up until the end of the 1960s, and it continues to be largely ignored in many non-critical urban studies across disciplines today. A political-economic model of urban theory addresses this

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[16] For further reading, see for example Björn (1979); Boreham & Compston (1992); Boreham, et al. (1996); Bradley, et al. (2003); Brady (2003a; 2003b); Cameron (1978; 1985); Conley and Springer (2001); DiPrete (2002); DiPrete & McManus (2000); Dryzek (1978); Erikson & Åberg (1987); Esping-Andersen (1978; 1985a; 1985b); Gangl (2004); Hewitt (1977); Hicks (1991; 1999); Hicks & Misra (1993); Hicks & Swank (1984; 1992); Huber & Stephens (1993; 2000; 2001); Kangas (1991a; 1991b); Kenworthy (1999); Korpi (1980; 1989; 1991); Korpi & Palme (1998); McFate, et al. (1995); Moller, et al. (2003); Myles (1989); O'Connor, et al. (1999); Olsen (1988; 2002; 2011); Page & Simmons 2000; Palme (1990); Ringen & Uusitalo (1992); Stephens (1980); Väisänen (1992); Wennemo (1992); Williamson & Weiss (1979).

gap by centering the city as not simply the product of some sort of natural process, but as firmly political and driven by political and economic power – the same forces that drive the welfare state. In this conceptualization, the features of a city are not ahistorical, they do not develop within a vacuum. As with Power Resources Theory, *Political Economic Urban Theory* is Marxist-based and views the structure of the city as dominated by capitalist interests – cities concentrate, represent, and manifest wealth and power, marked by the degree of accumulation experienced by the rich and exploitation by the poor. When considered through this lens, class antagonisms can be analyzed to varying degrees in the patterns and life of the city (Hannigan, 2010a; Therborn, 2017).

In the Political Economic Urban Theory view, urban elites are not the only actors shaping the city. Since their emergence, cities have been the site of protest, with conflicts driving change and determining the social and physical nature of the city (Hannigan, 2010a; 2010b; Therborn, 2017, Zuberi, 2010). I synthesize Power Resources and Political Economic Urban Theory by relating urban collective power resources to working class power resources – specifically, I introduce *urban political power resources*, which include the level of ability for the urban collective to create or affiliate with community-based organizations and city, regional, or national governments, as well as to bargain for collective interests in public consultations on urban development; and *urban organizational power resources*, which include creating strong and united coalitions, able to enact successful urban protests. By extending the welfare state empirics, the project contributes to theory elaboration in both the welfare state and urban traditions through identifying and analyzing these links.

Power in opposition to capital interests certainly includes labour unions and in Power Resources Theory research labour is a key factor in fateful political coalitions. By contrast, broad-

based coalitions of micro-organizations and -communities are commonly observed in urban movements. Modern day urban collective action coalesces around shared geography in small-scale disputes or broad issues in large-scale disputes and, contrary to Power Resources Theory explanations, organized labour may be very marginal or absent in the urban collective action.[17] In addition to unions and the working class, such urban collective coalitions can include any number of groups ranging from the poor and marginalized, unemployed youth and students, environmentalists, community-based organization activists, progressive architects and city planners, and the middle class – the latter especially vocal and volatile in urban action when political economic conditions threaten their class position (Hannigan, 2010a; 2010b; Therborn, 2017; Zuberi, 2010).

Despite the different factions of society mobilized, the oldest catalyst of urban collective action, demanding urban rights for the poor, is still very relevant in urban action today. The most visible urban collective action movements of our time focus on forwarding progressive social justice agendas, often with people living in poverty and in disadvantaged communities mobilized, to force concessions from urban elites; in line with the liberatory rationality Power Resources Theory compares, these actions are most commonly centered on alleviating urban poverty, affordable housing issues, and halting environmental destruction – which is borne most heavily on the shoulders of the poor and marginalized. Overall, forwarding class-based interests and demanding changes to the city against exclusive capitalist benefit (Hannigan, 2010a; 2010b; Therborn, 2017; Zuberi, 2010). The robustness of housing policy specifically is a particularly useful indicator of political mobilization and social democratic welfare state building. Housing

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[17] For further reading see for example Gould (1991) on the strength of neighbourhood-level mobilization.

policy is central to wellbeing and has therefore historically been a major source of political class conflict and public pressure, and a top demand among the working class and the general population. Housing policy creation has historically been motivated by either a perceived threat of, or actual, revolutionary surges, increasing left-wing or communist party power, or rising working class militancy (Esping-Andersen, 1985a).

Extending Theory

Power Resources theorists have been quite open to acknowledging gaps in the theory; as Korpi notes, the "power resources approach is a work in progress, not an arrival" (1998a:xii).[18] Within the framework of the project, there are two main vulnerabilities of Power Resources Theory to consider. The first is that Power Resources Theory has difficulty expanding past the borders of the state, grappling with increasing global integration, and accounting for the new actors that have emerged from this integration. It has been argued that national power resources become less meaningful as government power has been constrained by economic globalization and as it becomes ever easier for capital to transcend national boundaries. With growing deregulation, international considerations become ever more important as assets become more mobile, economic actors gain more flexibility, and the strength of capital is increased significantly; at the same time, global integration has an inverse effect on labour and the working classes' power resources, as well as government authority, which are situated heavily within national borders (Brooks & Manza, 2007; Korpi, 1998a; O'Connor & Olsen, 1998; Olsen, 2002; 2011; Olsen & O'Connor, 1998).

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[18] In this vein, see also (Esping-Andersen, 1998).

This is undeniably true; however, the power of states and nation-bound actors remain central. Political Economic Urban Theory supports Power Resources Theory by studying the continued power of states since the advent of increasing neoliberal globalization. The underlying stance of Political Economic Urban Theory is that, while global capital is important to consider, state-level power relations nonetheless hold strong as the most dominate forces creating the conditions of urban life (Hannigan, 2010a; Therborn, 2017; Zuberi, 2010). From the 1980s onwards, while it has been argued that Power Resources Theory has struggled to respond to critiques of its ability to remain relevant in the neoliberal world, Urban Political Economic Theory has responded well to the challenge of increasing global economic connections and the neoliberal paradigm shift, and in fact strengthened the argument for the importance of theory centered on nation-based power struggles (Hannigan, 2010a; Zuberi, 2010).

Most importantly, globalization is a variable process and a choice; although there have been increasing pressures to become more global since the neoliberal paradigm shift, within the advanced capitalist nations, the decision ultimately lands on national and local actors' and their acceptance or rejection of policies and processes allowing for globalization. Therefore, states remain of critical importance and cities firmly imbedded within them.[19] Power has certainly shifted during the period of neoliberalization, in turn retrenching the welfare state and manifesting in the city space, but as opposed to defined as predominantly a shift from national to global power, it has rather been a shift in power from the citizenry (including the working class, labour unions, and urban coalitions) to capital, with states remaining central actors (Therborn, 2017). Framing

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[19] The importance of the nation state seems only to be increasing in recent years – as evidenced by, for example, the national and international condemning of Russia's actions in Crimea, rising border control in response to refugee movement, increasing anti-refugee and -immigrant policy, Brexit, the emergence of new nation states, as well as the continued demand for them (Therbon 2017, Chapter 10).

globalization through a Political Economic Urban Theory lens supports the Power Resources tradition by reaffirming the importance of national actors, grounding an analysis of how increasing neoliberal challenges have weakened the power resources of the working class – which in tandem is reflected in policy retrenchment. To highlight this, an analysis of the increasing pressures to globalize and the internal policy constraints created by the neoliberal paradigm are included in the project.

A related vulnerability of Power Resources Theory is that it tends to overemphasize the working classes' power resources and has had a difficult time theoretically accounting for or incorporating rapid social-structural changes during the period of neoliberalization. It is argued that Power Resources Theory's assumptions can mask some important considerations, such as the roles of other policy and welfare advocates, when the actions of the working class are seemingly irrational, the potential for divisions within and the weakening of the working class, and the fact that center-left political parties do not always follow through with progressive policy (Baldwin, 1989; Brooks & Manza, 2007; Castles 1978; 1982; Castles & McKinlay, 1979; Esping-Andersen, 1998; Korpi, 1998a; O'Connor & Olsen, 1998; Olsen, 2002; 201; Olsen & O'Connor, 1998). Power Resources studies have predominantly analyzed the building and changing of the welfare state throughout the long history of working class strength (from around 1870 to 1980) when trade unions and labour parties constituted a significant force in society. These comparative-historical studies find that the power of the working class strongly influences welfare state robustness[20] – a

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[20] For further reading, see for example Björn (1979); Boreham & Compston (1992); Boreham, et al. (1996); Bradley, et al. (2003); Brady (2003a; 2003b); Cameron (1978; 1985); Conley and Springer (2001); DiPrete (2002); DiPrete & McManus (2000); Dryzek (1978); Erikson & Åberg (1987); Esping-Andersen (1978; 1985a; 1985b); Gangl (2004); Hewitt (1977); Hicks (1991; 1999); Hicks & Misra (1993); Hicks & Swank (1984; 1992); Huber & Stephens (1993; 2000; 2001); Kangas (1991a; 1991b); Kenworthy (1999); Korpi (1980; 1989; 1991); Korpi & Palme (1998); McFate, et al. (1995); Moller, et al. (2003); Myles (1989); O'Connor, et al. (1999); Olsen

relationship which I am extending in relation to social housing provision. As will be discussed in Chapter IV, neoliberalization has largely undermined the working classes' power resources, divided and weakened unions, and influenced center-left parties to largely abandon the interests of the working class. This decline of power resources coupled with convergence to the liberal model supports Power Resources Theory, which theorizes that, with a weak working class comes a residual welfare state. Moreover, synthesizing Political Economic Urban Theory allows for theoretical innovation by highlighting the importance of broad-based coalitions in forwarding largely class-based interests. As unionism and working class power have declined during the period of neoliberalization, these urban coalitions become ever more important to acknowledge and incorporate into theory, especially for scholars searching for realistic strategies to achieve successful, progressive resistance in the 21st century.

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(1988; 2002; 2011); Page & Simmons 2000; Palme (1990); Ringen & Uusitalo (1992); Stephens (1980); Väisänen (1992); Wennemo (1992); Williamson & Weiss (1979).

## Chapter III: Methods • Studying the Welfare State and Social Housing

In this project, the process of inquiry is *comparative case study* and the method of analysis is *comparative-historical multi-method*. Primary and secondary data are used. Each of these methodological considerations will be elaborated on in the following sections.

### Comparative Case Study

This project conducts a *comparative case study* of social housing in the countries of Canada and Denmark. In addition to the cases themselves, their activities and the ways that they function, the project will situate the cases within a historical background and broader contexts – specifically, social, political, and economic frameworks. By comprehending the internal functioning of the social housing policy cases through their relationship to broader structures, the case study analysis will be used instrumentally to advance and refine sociological knowledge and theory. Throughout this process, there will be the opportunity for questioning existing, and ascertaining new, generalizations. Comparative case studies offer a unique opportunity to reflect on similarities and differences, as well as their real-world outcomes. In this way, referencing a current, functioning example can be used as a rubric for political action and social policy formation.[21]

### Comparative-Historical Multi-Method

Historical methods have a deep-rooted past in sociology, playing an important role in the sociological canon. Historical foci in sociological research took a back seat in the mid decades of the twentieth century, until a resurge in the 1970s and 1980s (Singleton & Straits, 2010). Similarly,

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[21] For further reading see Stake (2008) on collective case studies.

utilizing comparative-historical methods in research on the topics of the welfare state, social policies, and inequality remains a relatively new undertaking. Prior to the 1970s, the bulk of research in this area focused on describing social processes in an isolated state; areas of interest included how the welfare state or a specific social program emerged and the extent of poverty or inequality in the state in question. Economic shocks in the early 1970s sparked new welfare state research: searching for solutions to growing economic problems, studies compared the advanced capitalist nations en masse. Although these studies opened the floodgates to large-scale, comparative, and empirical welfare state and inequality studies, uncovered broad patterns, and allowed for critical questioning of popular theories, they were limited to quantitative data sources, which were easily standardized and statistically comparable, but arguable masked nuanced qualitative dimensions (Esping-Andersen, 1998; Olsen, 2002; 2011; Olsen & O'Connor, 1998).

Incorporating these methodological considerations, the project uses *comparative-historical multi-method* research which fills the gap by considering both qualitative and quantitative data. In general, comparative studies enhance case study research by providing frames through which to learn and reflect on the cases at hand (Stake, 2008). More specifically, using this approach allows for a multi-layered analysis, which is particularly well-suited to studying political economic variation (Esping-Andersen, 1998; Olsen & O'Connor, 1998). From the perspective of the qualitative tradition, multi-method research is integral, as searching for rich, in-depth knowledge inherently leads to incorporating multiple methods and diverse data (Denzin & Lincoln 2008; Flick, 2014). Although incorporating quantitively sources, drawing on this qualitative perspective and supported by an underlying sociological critical theory, the project is best conceptualized as situated within the qualitative tradition.

Using comparative-historical multi-method research in a qualitative tradition to analyze how broader, political-economic contexts influence the creation, quality, and impact of welfare states and social policies, as well as the extent to which varying states are successfully addressing social challenges and reducing inequalities, opens opportunities for broad and critical thinking that can benefit both the scholarly community and communities struggling with housing (Denzin, 2000; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; 2008; Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000). Actively rejecting ethnocentrism by considering alternatives to the status quo, comparative-historical multi-method research can afford new insights into the practices in the researchers' and/or readers' home country by providing a wider context and perspective (Olsen, 2002; 2011). Comparing the ways that different nations are addressing social inequalities and the varied outcomes can contribute ideas that challenge neoliberal hegemony. The findings of case studies using comparative-historical multi-method research can provide concrete political strategies and forward policy recommendations by engaging concertedly in political praxis through the envisioning and constructing of rubrics for more just, equitable, and democratic societies (Denzin, 2000; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; 2008). Despite the rich research opportunities that the mixed comparative-historical research method provides, there is a lack of critical, contemporary sociological research that utilizes cross-national comparisons of welfare states and inequality (Esping-Andersen, 1998; Olsen, 2002; 2011; Olsen & O'Connor, 1998). In terms of research focused on social housing, conceptualized as a feature of the broader welfare state, research using this method is so far non-existent. The opportunity exists to fill a sociological research gap that offers an important contribution to both academia and community.

**Data**

The project utilizes a number of secondary and primary data sources:

1) Secondary scholarly literature, including key global political economy, welfare state, and social housing studies, are used to inform welfare state history and theory, global political economic context, and social housing history.

2) Primary government documents are used to inform political economic context and social housing history.

3) Primary elections data are used to inform political context.

4) National data compiled by Statistics Denmark and the European Commission are used to inform Danish economic, political, and housing context.

5) Primary cross-national data compiled by the Luxembourg Income Study (LIS) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) are used to inform comparisons of poverty, inequality, and unionism (as related to Power Resources Theory), as well as housing, social housing, and homelessness (as related to social housing).

As listed above, the project uses qualitative and quantitative sources. When using qualitative sources, researchers must consider the origin of the document and reflect on the context surrounding the original purpose and audience (Gaborone, 2006). Analyzing qualitative sources requires interpretation and interpretation will differ based on context and viewpoint (Hodder, 2000). This methodological vulnerability is not unique to this project; in all primary and secondary social science research, decisions must be made on how to interpret data. (Denzin, 2000). When interpreting data, it is prudent to ask: How does the data fits into what is already know about the topic? Are there patterns of similarities? Differences? How does the data correspond to related

theories? (Hodder, 2000). When this methodological issue is addressed, qualitative sources allow for in-depth analyses and provide rich descriptions.

While the same qualitative considerations apply to government documents, there are additional issues to take into account. Much of the documents produced by governments are publicly accessible, including for example, parliamentary minutes, departmental reports, transcribed speeches, policy proposals and statements, census or other government statistic reports, and consultant reports. That said, certain government information is not publicly available because it contains private or sensitive information or has been withheld at the discretion of some level of the bureaucracy. For the documents that are available, discerning origin and authenticity is complex: we can expect that many government documents and speeches are largely written by civil servants, and that policy proposals may include information gathered from consultants, even though the reports may not include the names of contributors and be attributed solely to a politician or government ministry. Generally, it is appropriate to consider the documents as representative of government position and policy if they have been accepted and endorsed (Gaborone, 2006).

To further reinforce the information collected and interpreted from qualitative sources, it is prudent to incorporate multiple sources and other types of data where available (Hodder, 2000). Incorporating quantitative, cross-national collections provides comprehensive, large-scale, comparable data sets, key to analyzing social structures and engaging in cross-country comparisons (Singleton & Straits, 2010). Existing sources such as these are usually strong data sources; data collected by world organizations or the governments of the advanced capitalist nations are typically meticulously collected, accurate, and extensive. When comparing data from different sources, key difficulties can include how the data was originally collected, how concepts in the data are defined or identified, and how finetuned details affect the comparability of country

specific social programs and policies (Cochrane, 1993; Heidenheimer, 1985; Heidenheimer, et al., 1990; Jones 1985, Olsen, 2002). In order for a comparison to be meaningful, there must be comparable data. This data dilemma poses a double-edged-sword problem. On the one edge, the researcher must be careful not to compare data that are not in fact analogous; on the other edge, the researcher must not put up blinders and disregard important aspects of one case simply because those aspects are not easily comparable (Stake, 2008). To counter this vulnerability, when analyzing quantitative sources, attention must always be paid towards making sure that data collected from different countries is both comparable and well-rounded.

**Project Limitations**

The main limitation is that the research area of this project is largely understudied in the English-language world. In Canada, research on social housing policy gained traction in the 1970s and continued into the early 1990s. Unfortunately, very little has been written since then. For the time being, I must draw solely on sources in English, so the Danish literature will be largely unincorporated (with the exception of excerpts which have been translated by bilingual authors). I am assured by my Danish mentors that, even when both languages are considered, in general and especially when compared to other aspects of the welfare state, there is a stark lack of literature on social housing – and even more so in terms of studies focused on longitudinal and political-economy research. I will conduct my study by incorporating the secondary data that exists in the field and by thoroughly reviewing the primary data available. The lack of knowledge in this area makes this study exceptionally compelling and challenging.

Other limitations of this study pertain to tractable scope. Methodologically, in order to facilitate broad cross-country comparison, the project focuses mainly on federal-level policy and

does not dive into the nuances at the provincial, regional, or municipal levels – of which there are many, particularly in decentralized Canada. Timelines are provided in the social housing sections to highlight some of the municipal, regional, and federal unevenness and can be used as a starting point for further research. In addition, the project directs its main focus on class, as conceptualized in the Marxist tradition. In this project, I will not be able to conduct a thorough analysis of other salient differences based on age, gender, race, nor the intricate interactions among these axes, in relation to social housing. A brief discussion of the relationship between housing, capitalism, colonialism, and racism is included and can be used, in conjunction with the references of this project, as a jumping off point for further research in this area. Certainly many interesting and worthwhile studies could be done with different foci in the future.[22] For example, much of social housing in recent years has been directed specifically at the elderly; women experience specific, intersectional challenges when faced with both the pressures of poverty and patriarchy; race is incredibly important in a Canadian context where Indigenous Canadians have been denied rights since colonization and face acute and specific housing needs, and in Denmark, where surges in refugee numbers have strained the housing system and incited racist sentiments. That said, the underlying point of departure for this political-economic project is that, regardless of the type of

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[22] There is literature incorporating gender and race into the same theoretical tradition employed in this project; see for example O'Connor & Olsen, 1998 as a starting point for further discussion. For further feminist extensions of the theory, see for example Borchorst and Siim (1987); Dahlerup (1987); Dickinson and Russell (1986); Fraser (1989); Gordon (1994); Hernes (1987); Nelson (1984); Norris (1987); Orloff (1993); Piven (1984); Ruggie (1984); Skocpol (1992); Wilson (1977). For further intersectional feminist and race extensions of the theory, see for example Boris (1995); Mink (1990); Williams (1989; 1995). Beyond the brief commentary here, I did not actively review the literature on these alternate axes as they relate to social housing; referencing the bibliography of this project would be a worthy starting point for scholars interested in conducting research on these topics.

oppression under consideration, economic relations and factors will be relevant (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000).

Despite the limitations, a growing openness to look for progressive solutions and increased interest in considering policy alternatives makes the project very timely. Research on the need for adequate and affordable housing to mitigate the effects of poverty adds strength to the applicability of the project. Overall, the fact that the research area is understudied offers an opportunity to advance sociological knowledge and possibly a chance to influence policy or diffuse liberatory ideas. As noted, one broad aim of this project is to begin the discussion of social housing as a key policy area within welfare state research. This project constitutes a first step and my hope is that it will inspire further research in the areas of social housing, urban policy, and urban planning through a political-economy lens.

## Chapter IV: Context • Neoliberalization and the Welfare State

**Broad Changes in the Global Political Economy**

Broadly speaking, the post-war years are generally considered the 'golden age' of the welfare state, with the working class consolidating and gaining significant power resources, while social programs and coverage expanded and strove towards the ideals of Esping-Andersen's social democratic welfare regime. This period ended in the 1970s when international events, such as the 1971 Nixon Shock, 1973 Oil Crisis, and the Volcker Shock at the end of the decade, created shock waves felt across the increasingly globalized world (Korpi, 2003). Questioning the validity of the expansion of the welfare state that had dominated global policy in previous years, the global political economic climate underwent a dramatic paradigm shift. Taking hold in the 1980s, neoliberalism promoted extreme conservatized liberalism and liberal-economic ideology, characterized by movement towards the ideals of Esping-Andersen's liberal welfare regime. This change marked a complete opposition to the preceding goals of social democracy. Worldwide, welfare states faced retrenchment: austerity measures were taken and the free market was emphasized, unions were undermined and working class power resources were weakened, inequality increased, rhetoric encouraged accountability, and those who faced poverty were targeted as lazy and undeserving of sympathy or support.[23]

At the same time, politics during the 'golden age' were generally defined by strong and accountable mass parties with clear identities which sustained committed voters by mobilizing and giving voice to the citizenry. Through a combination of representation and procedural legitimacy,

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[23] For further in-depth analyses of the global neoliberal paradigm shift, see for example Bourdieu (2003); Brown (2016); Foucault (1991); Harvey (2005); Gamble (2014); Glyn (2012); Peck (2010).

parties secured a government by the people and for the people. In tandem with neoliberalization, this form of democracy largely disintegrated and political parties, citizen sovereignty, government accountability, and, overall, popular democracy were undermined. Neoliberal rationality argues that government intervention in the free market society is unproductive and damaging; deregulation and free market reliance is the ally of neoliberalization – both in market and democratic philosophy. Fuelled by the Washington Consensus, national autonomy generally decreased, and the range of economic and social policy alternatives constricted, curtailing the policy latitude of national governments (Gamble, 2014; Mair, 2013; Streeck, 2014a; 2014b). Generally speaking, through this timeframe several strong, mutually reinforcing political trends can be observed in the advanced industrial states.

Through the period of neoliberalization, it can be argued that the once tied components of democracy fractured, with parties increasingly focusing on procedural functions at the expense of representation. With the strengthening of procedural functions, parties have retreated from citizen democracy, while aligning themselves more closely with elites and the state. This process has been hastened by moving policy decisions to the jurisdiction of non-elected bodies, thereby further estranging sovereignty and accountability, to the benefit of capital. These changes have largely disengaged the citizenry and secured the interests of the wealthy – with whom the political elite have become closely aligned or, in some cases, indistinguishable from. As representative functions have eroded, solidarity has weakened – both amongst the citizenry, as well as between the citizenry and the parties. The citizenry is disengaging in a variety of ways; electoral participation, party loyalty, and party membership have generally declined within the advanced industrial nations, while electoral volatility has increased. Broadly speaking, neoliberalization has further weakened popular democracy by systematically undermining collective identities within the citizenry – most

notably by weakening the power resources of the working class and the parties which support them (Gamble, 2014; Mair, 2013; Streeck, 2014a; 2014b).

Though welfare state scholars tend to agree on these overarching, economic and political trends from the end of the Second World War through to the 1980s, there is less consensus on the years to follow. Has the age of neoliberalism ended? Or are we still facing a dominant ideology of extreme liberalism? Prominent welfare state scholars have argued that neoliberalism ended as early as the late 1990s,[24] while others caution against tying such a neat and hasty bow on such a massive and complex global political economic ideology.[25] At the time of writing, the topic is hotly debated at academic conferences and in popular opinion columns.[26]

In this project, the analysis is grounded on political economic theory and an exploration of *neoliberalization* as a process. It explores the process and effects of neoliberalization by identifying neoliberal trends in policy and rhetoric, which continue to appear in present day, to varying degrees in different states around the world. In this project, neoliberalization involves the conservatization of liberalism: reforming the policy, institutions, culture, and dispositions of liberalism, by reinstating liberal absolute private property rights to secure conservative social hierarchy. The process of neoliberal reproduction involves forging coalitions between liberals and conservatives based on absolute private-property rights, with strong anti-social citizenship, -democratic development, and -working class stances. Power is understood to be unevenly distributed across social networks; while all individuals have agency, due to their position in

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[24] See for example Abrahamson (2015) who argues that as the 1990s came to a close neoliberalism ended, followed by a period which he labels the *social investment* or *competition* state, defined by a 'productivist' agenda. In my view, the neoliberal and productivist state are too similar to warrant a paradigm shift, but the argument is a good starting point for research on the subject.
[25] See for example Brown (2006), Comaroff (2011), Gamble (2014), Peck (2010).
[26] Prompted by events such as, for example, the 2008 Financial Crisis, Brexit in the UK, the election of Donald Trump in the United States, and the resurgence of populism.

capitalist networks, powerful individuals have far more sovereign agency and therefore capacity to create and disband sacred rules, than do their weaker counterparts. Among individuals who lack power in the capitalist network, semi-sovereign agential change and variation, and structural shifts can be achieved through political organization and coalition building. This political economic definition recognizes mutations, adaptations, continuities, and fluidities in the process of neoliberalization, in relation to shifting social coalitions and reorganizing social networks. In this conceptualization, class organization, past and ongoing, influences distinctive coalitions, policy, and outcomes. Due to its ontological and epistemological boundaries, this project rejects definitions that center specific policies or outcomes as categorical neoliberal state goals that define a monolithic neoliberal state. This conceptualization of neoliberalization as a process allows for both socio-political coalition and cross-jurisdiction tactical adaptability. The project charts welfare state retrenchment as an outcome of neoliberalization. In this project, *welfare state retrenchment* is the dismantling of social rights and increasing of inequality through regressive policy changes.

With these definitions as a grounding point, the following sections provide a broader context of the events throughout the process of neoliberalization in both the Canadian and Danish cases, respectively. Each general overview outlines historical highlights from the Prime Ministers of the neoliberal era and the general voting patterns. This is followed by a cross-section of the policy implications for traditionally key components of the welfare state; moving from the micro- to macro-level, the sections include a brief discussion of family benefits, education, labour policy, health and elder care, and foreign policy. Lastly, the welfare outcomes are discussed for both countries. The chapter concludes with a quantitative comparison of Canada and Denmark to highlight the fact that, although both countries have been affected by neoliberalization, the levels of inequality vary based on the broader, underlying welfare state regimes; in a comparative

perspective, Denmark's social democratic welfare state has been more resilient to the effects of neoliberalization than has Canada's liberal welfare state. Due to the fact that social housing is typically not considered within a welfare state framework, the purpose of the broader context is to provide a general backdrop of the political climate and general trend in the changes taking place – in this way, it is intended that the context provides a frame through which to analysis social housing within a broader global and national setting and in relation to other policy changes and events.

**Polity Neoliberalization in Canada**

Historical Highlights

Canada's three biggest modern federal parties are the *New Democratic Party* (NDP), *Liberal Party*, and *Conservative Party*; the NDP and Conservative Party, respectively, are considered the country's left- and right-wing parties, while the Liberal Party occupies the centre. Although provincial governments hold a significant amount of power in Canada and account for variations seen throughout the country, a thorough review at the provincial level is outside the scope of this project. The following context will focus on the federal level.

Based on ideas supporting program expansion, it was largely the Liberals who were instrumental in building the Canadian welfare state at the federal level from the 1940s to the 1970s. Nonetheless, Canada's left-wing and labour politics are a significant part of the welfare state story. Early postwar welfare state building in the 1940s was a response to surging working class power resources and a growing labour vote. In the 1960s, welfare state agendas were in part a response to the NDP, which was formed in 1961. Although the NDP have never held power at the federal level, the party constituted a significant force in forwarding the need for a strong welfare state,

especially when minority Liberal governments were dependent on the NDP in the 1960s and 1970s (Baker, 1997; Olsen, 2002; Suttor, 2016).

From a social democratic viewpoint, the project can be argued to have some marked successes; while undeniably very laggardly in development, strongly rooted in the liberal regime, and residual in comparison to social democratic nations, Canada nonetheless had incorporated a number of universal elements by the early 1970s. Due to this, Canadians enjoyed higher levels of protection than citizens in other liberal states – most notably their neighbours to the south (Gough, et al., 1997; Guest, 1997; Myles, 1996; Olsen, 2002; 2011; Suttor, 2016). Federal programs such as Family Allowance, Unemployment Insurance, and Old Age Security, developed in the 1940s and early 1950s, were grounded in universalism and offered support to citizens at key points in the life course by supporting children and families, the unemployed, and the retired, respectively (Baker, 1997; Banting, 1987; Gough, et al., 1997; Myles, 1996; Olsen, 2002; Suttor, 2016). Central policy was emphasised and the Canadian Assistance Plan, a matched cost-sharing agreement between the federal and provincial governments, ensured that social assistance and social services programs offered by the provinces fell in line with federal guidelines. In short, by the early 1970s, Canada had gradually created a relatively comprehensive liberal welfare state with the potential to become more universal and generous (Baker, 1997; Banting, 1987; Gough, et al., 1997; Myles, 1996; Olsen, 2002; Suttor, 2016).

The potential, however, was dashed in the 1980s. In line with the broader neoliberal shift, the political economy changed significantly in Canada with the election of the Conservative Mulroney government in 1984. For clarity, Table 3 lists the Canadian Prime Ministers from 1984 to the time of writing.

| Table 3: Canadian Prime Ministers (1984-Present) | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Prime Minister** | **Years** | **Party Affiliation** |
| Brian Mulroney | 1984-1993 | Progressive Conservative[1] |
| Kim Campbell[2] | 1993 | Progressive Conservative[1] |
| Jean Chretien | 1993-2003 | Liberal |
| Paul Martin | 2003-2006 | Liberal |
| Stephen Harper | 2006-2015 | Conservative |
| Justin Trudeau | 2015-Present | Liberal |
| [1]Anteceding the Conservative Party [2]Appointed | | |

During the Mulroney government, the neoliberal assault on the welfare state was dramatic and overt – gaining momentum throughout Mulroney's first term and becoming especially pronounced during his second. Government rhetoric emphasized restraining spending, reducing debt and deficit, and relying on the private sector. A move towards the extremes of the liberal regime type was pursued through the elimination of universal programs and scaling back of funding levels, as well as reducing coverage, decreasing accessibility, and increasing reliance on means-tested benefits (Baker, 1997; Esping-Andersen, 1996; Guest, 1997; Myles, 1996; Olsen, 2002; Suttor, 2016). These changes were of key importance, setting the stage for the decades to come. The retrenchment of the Canadian welfare state was very much in line with the expectations of a Conservative government at that time; however, the actions of the governments to follow were much more surprising, interesting, and, it can be argued, more detrimental to the welfare state.

With the election of Liberal Prime Minister Chrétien in 1993 was the expectation of a rejection and reversal of Conservative policies and a fundamental change in ideology; campaign promises seemed backed by a genuine interest in a wide range of progressive goals including improving childcare, alleviating unemployment, and reducing poverty (Baker, 1997). Upon entering government, the Liberals began a consultation process, including views from the left to the right, from experts of all stripes, key stakeholders, and lobby and advocacy groups. However,

after the consultation, the Liberals did not borrow equally from the wide-range of views represented. Instead, at the moment when many Canadians expected a rejuvenating of social policy, the Liberals fully embraced the global *Third Way* trend,[27] by shifting the party platform sharply to the right in order to gain a stronger footing within the neoliberal political economic climate. The Liberals embraced past Conservative policies, heightened neoliberal reforms, and attacked universalism – overall severely retrenching and decentralizing the Canadian welfare state (Suttor, 2016). The actions of the Third Way liberal governments are especially stark considering the historical legacy of the Liberal Party; overall, the Liberals severely retrenched the welfare state that their party had previously worked to build.

Underlying this profound shift was the move to base and justify policy decisions on objective and rational economic grounds, as opposed to rooting policy in social justice and universalism (Baker, 1997; Olsen, 2002). Spearheaded by Finance Minister, and later Prime Minister, Paul Martin, the decision-making position of economists and policy makers was emphasised, and many robust social programs were reduced to tax benefits (Battle & Torjman, 1995). This allowed for major social program changes to be pursued without public consultation or debate. As was common during the neoliberal period, the Liberals narrowed the policy field by arguing that there was no alternative – that it was an objective and rational economic fact that debt had to be curbed by reducing government expenditures (Coates, 2005; Esping-Andersen, 1996; Gamble, 2014; Glyn, 2012; Mair, 2013; Streeck, 2014a; 2014b; Suttor, 2016).

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[27] The Third Way is a very interesting version of neoliberalization. Entering the global political economic world arena in the 1990s, the Third Way proved the power of traditionally center-left parties to forward and maintain devastating structural changes fueled by neoliberal rhetoric. For further reading on the Third Way, see for example Coates' (2005) analysis of New Labour in Britain for a poignant case study of the phenomenon.

In more recent years, Prime Minister Stephen Harper led Canadians through the 2008 Financial Crisis. In Canada, the recession was not as dramatic as in other countries; nonetheless, it was the most difficult economic crisis that the country had suffered since the 1930s Great Depression. As expected from a Conservative Prime Minister, the period saw a continued retrenchment of the welfare state and withdrawing of funding for social and welfare programs. The recession affected many Canadian families and the lack of public support, which only continued to dwindle, resulted in many Canadians left unable to recuperate their financial security. Following the crisis, the Conservatives sought to reinstate economic growth through aggressive austerity measures and a commitment to neoliberalization (Brodie, 2009; Root, et al., 2014).

In many ways a welcome change from the long Stephen Harper years, the current Canadian Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, has largely appealed to the younger generations through his political branding and public image (Marland, 2013). Comparisons with the United States and the Trump Presidency have bolstered this appeal; the differences in public appearance between the two leaders are stark. However, underneath all this, the current Prime Minster has continued to adhere to the Liberals' Third Way, and this has only become more biting as his period of leadership has progressed to the time of writing (Bittle, et al., 2018; Gordon, 2018).

Voting Patterns

Although contributing to welfare state development, labour politics in Canada have historically always been much weaker than in Europe. Historically, Canada's labour vote was dwarfed by the farmer vote until World War II. In addition, union influences and labour migration from the United States encouraged apolitical unionism. As a heavily decentralized federation, it has been argued that regional divides and cultural differences splinter the working classes' power

resources. Parties differ significantly between the national and provincial levels, to such an extent that voters oftentimes associate with different parties at the respective levels of government. In addition, it can be argued that Canadian federalism impedes welfare state development and robustness – multiple levels of government result in more opportunities for veto, increased opportunities for the business lobby and their political allies to halt progressive policy development, increased ability to negate responsibility to other government levels, and greater fragmentation of working class power resources. Once in place, decentralized government structures can be difficult to alter. These trends appear to have been significant during welfare state development and have sharpened through the period of neoliberalization (Brooks & Manza, 2007; Cross & Young 2004; Suttor, 2016). Adding to this, with the strength of the Third Way in Canada, radical and anti-system resistance has withered as parties have moved towards the center of the political spectrum and abandoned marked differences in ideology and policy (Carty, et al., 2000; Cross & Young, 2004; Suttor, 2016). As Power Resources Theory would argue, perhaps this is why Canada has not been able to grow into a more social democratic welfare state.

Throughout time, the attitudes of Canadians towards political parties have progressively soured. During the period of neoliberalization, the confidence of Canadian voters in political parties has reached unprecedented lows. From the 1970s to 2000s, the average rating of political parties, as considered on a scale from 1 to 100, dropped by 20 points. By 1997, survey data showed that a negative opinion of political parties had increased to a majority; in tandem, negative sentiments, such as the belief that governments do not care about constituents and that politicians are out of touch with voters, increased (Carty, 2000:28–29; Cross & Young, 2004).

In general, voter turnout in Canadian federal elections has wavered from approximately 80 – 60% and decreased over time, as seen in Table 4.

**Table 4: Voter Turnout in Canadian Federal Elections, % of Eligible Voters (1958-2015)**



Y-axis: VOTER TURNOUT (0–100)
X-axis: FEDERAL ELECTION YEAR

Data points: 1958: 79.4, 1962: 79, 1963: 79.2, 1965: 74.8, 1968: 75.7, 1972: 76.7, 1974: 71, 1979: 75.7, 1980: 69.3, 1984: 75.3, 1988: 75.3, 1993: 70.9, 1997: 67, 2000: 64.1, 2004: 60.9, 2006: 64.7, 2008: 58.8, 2011: 61.1, 2015: 68.3
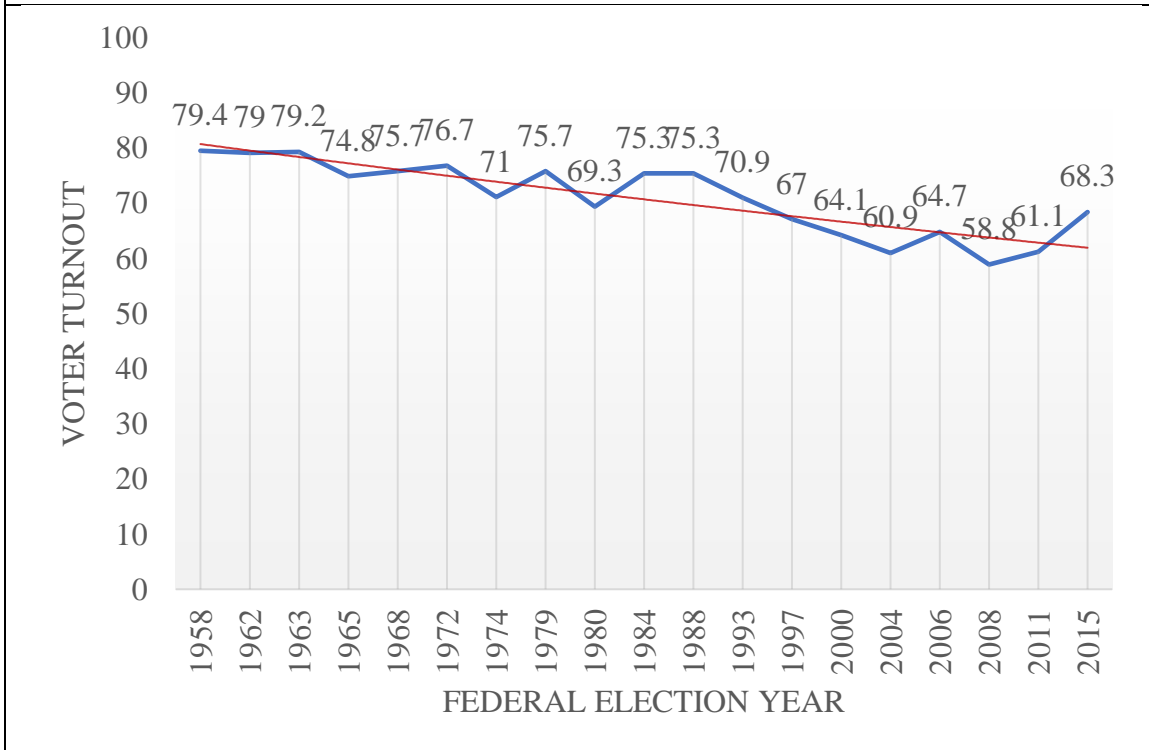
Source: Elections Canada
http://www.elections.ca/ content.aspx?dir=turn&document=index&lang=e&section=ele#ftn4

As Table 4 shows, the highest turnout took place in 1958 with 79.4% and the lowest in 2008 with 58.8%. This decline falls in line with the broader international trend of decreased voter turnout.

At the same time, party membership in Canada is problematically weak, inconsistent, disproportionate, and unengaged. Overall, data shows that very few people are members of political parties. Estimates of party membership fall at around 2% of all eligible Canadian voters and data suggests that the number has decreased through the period of neoliberalization (Carty, 1991:23; Cross & Young, 2004). Party membership changes drastically in Canada, with a high degree of sporadic membership near nomination and election periods, rather than consistent party membership throughout the election cycle. To add to the problem, Canadians who do belong to

political parties are not representative of the general population. The most pressing factor facing political parties is that they are failing at attracting new and long-term members, while at the same time, existing members tend to be disproportionately older than the general population (Cross & Young, 2004; Howe & Northrup, 2000:89). In addition, more men than women are members of political parties, with women representing only approximately one-third of members; historically, the right-wing has received disproportionate support from men, while women are more likely to support the Liberals or NDP. Canadians with party membership also tend to be more educated and earn higher incomes. This fact, coupled with the rising sentiment that decision-making power within political parties is reserved for the elite, exacerbates the problem of attracting party members by painting political parties as out of touch with the realities of everyday Canadians; it is argued that the process is cyclical as democratic credibility is further worsened by the lack of diversity and representation (Cross & Young, 2004).

Even for those who are members, engagement with their party is very low, both in terms of quantity and quality. In general, the majority of party members spend either no time or very little time engaged with the party through political activities. The quality of engagement is severely lacking, for example, survey data shows that donating money or putting up an election sign were the most commonly reported 'activities' – both of which are hardly active. This adds to the outward image that members do not have significant influence within the party (Cross & Young, 2004). Declining voter turnout and lacking party membership are major problems as these trends fundamentally undercut democracy, citizen sovereignty, and government accountability. In short, these withdrawals create a hollow democracy: elections without voters and parties without members are not democratic, viable, nor sustainable (Mair, 2013).

Policy Implications

As the global political economy began to change in the 1980s, the word from Canadian parliament was that hard choices had to be made. But hard choices for whom? In Canada, neoliberalization clearly forwarded the interests of capital by deregulating labour policy, dropping corporate taxes, and promoting global trade and business investment; in contrast, the citizenry was met with a dramatic lack of state support. As successive governments attacked family, education, unemployment, and health policies, reduced and restructured government spending in social programming, and undermined the working classes' power resources through neoliberal rhetoric, it was clearly the working class who were left to pay for the hard choices (Baker, 1997; Breitkreuz, 2005; Coates, 2005; Guest, 1997; Myles, 1996; Olsen, 2002).

During the Mulroney government, Canada's Family Allowance was eliminated and replaced with the Child Tax Benefit – a means-tested benefit administered by the Canada Revenue Agency that targeted low-income families. This change ushered in a reliance on the market and self-sufficiency over public support for the family. Meager fiscal remedies such as means-tested tax deductions, benefits, and credits, as well as modest payments, have been largely unsuccessful at supporting families or reducing child poverty. Retrenched fiscal measures have not addressed larger systemic problems; for example, with no national childcare policy, many Canadians are left without adequate childcare and are forced to rely on the market or family (Brodie, 2009).

The federal budget of 1995 introduced the replacement of the Canadian Assistance Plan with the Canadian Health and Social Transfer. The introduction of this social spending block grant was a defining moment in neoliberal policy development in Canada (Brodie, 2009). The Canadian Health and Social Transfer systematically reduced and restructured funding. Introduced by the Liberals, and backed by the International Monetary Fund, Conservative provincial leaders,

economists, and business lobby groups, the new scheme reduced the overall amount of federal money directed at the provinces, changed the funding structure from matched to block, and granted the provinces more responsibility over key policy areas such as education, health, and social assistance (Davidson-Harden, et al., 2009; Suttor, 2016). By decentralizing policy, the power of the federal government was undercut, and uniform national standards were dissolved (Olsen, 2002). In their place, the federal government forwarded policy rationalization backed by increased neoliberal ideology (Brodie, 2009). With the combined tightening of resources, the result was a provincial race to the bottom (Baker, 1997). As the provinces confronted rapid and dramatic decreases in federal funding, provincial services faced significant cuts (Brodie, 2009; Suttor, 2016). Between the years 1995-1998 alone, federal transfers to the provinces were cut by approximately $5 billion (Davidson-Harden, et al., 2009). Moving forward, the Canadian Health and Social Transfer also had a damaging effect on future social programming efforts as it diminished funding, depleted tax revenue, and strengthened the power of the Minister of Finance to cut budgets (Battle & Torjman, 1995).

The funding cuts and restructuring bolstered neoliberal education policy at the provincial level. Coupled with a decrease in funding, Canada's education system has faced increased marketization and privatization at both the school and university level. On average, university tuition fees in Canada doubled from 1990-2000. During the same time period, students who graduated with their first undergraduate degree, on average faced a student debt that rose from approximately $8700 in 1990 to $28,000 in 2000 (Davidson-Harden, et al., 2009). Funding opportunities for research have prioritized projects that fit within the neoliberal paradigm, creating a stratification system of academic disciplines, with research funding increasingly directed towards the applied and hard sciences, such as science, technology, and medicine, which have profitable

outputs and are closely aligned to market goals, and away from the humanities and social sciences (Davidson-Harden, et al., 2009; Kandiko, 2010). With teachers, parents, and students facing dramatically increasing financial responsibilities and risk, the fear is that Canada education system has begun to contribute to inequality as opposed to mitigate it (Davidson-Harden, et al., 2009).

Throughout the period of neoliberalization, the working class has faced a low quality job market, increasingly unstable and low-paying employment, and a dramatic lack of state support. Unemployment during the 1980s was high and changes in labour policy had accelerated the reliance on contract workers, while reducing well-paying, secure, full- and part-time positions. Unable to find adequate work, workers turned to Unemployment Insurance. Yet at this critical time, federal funding for Unemployment Insurance was withdrawn overall and limited to programs focused on job retraining and development; in tandem, amounts were cut, and benefits became increasingly difficult to access, with shorter benefit periods and drastically reduced coverage. The program was suffering repeated restructuring, which continued to minimize the federal government's responsibilities to unemployed Canadians (Baker, 1997; Brodie, 2009). In the 1990s, towards the end of the Conservative period, of unemployed workers who paid into Unemployment Insurance, 83% qualified; by 2008, only a mere 43% were eligible to receive coverage (Brodie, 2009). The situation was dire for the retired as well; Old Age Security lost its universal character as the benefit was clawed back through taxation from seniors with higher incomes (Baker, 1997; Esping-Andersen, 1996; Guest, 1997; Myles, 1996; Olsen, 2002).

In 1996, the Liberals crystalized their commitment to neoliberal ideology by renaming Unemployment Insurance, Employment Insurance. The change in name was fundamental as it carried with it an entirely reconceptualised role for Unemployment Insurance; the focus shifted from centering the need for job creation and the structural barriers that limit employment, to

blaming the individual for a lack of responsibility and employability. Benefits became viewed, not as security for those who fell on hard times due to the market, but as temporary and contingent handouts provided to those unable and unwilling to succeed due to personal failures such as laziness. The growing idea of state or welfare dependence was shamed and access to benefits became increasingly tied to coercive stipulations such as job search requirements or engagement in low paid work or volunteerism (Baker, 1997; Breitkreuz, 2005; Myles, 1996; Olsen, 2002; Suttor, 2016). Without an emphasis on security as a guaranteed universal right of citizenship, commodification increased dramatically as a strong attachment to the market became more and more necessary (Olsen, 2002). Even for those employed, incomes have become increasingly inadequate since the 1990s, with many people employed part- or full-time still facing poverty (Zuberi, 2010). The Liberals campaigned with the slogan "Jobs! Jobs! Jobs!" and emphasize jobs they did, but perhaps not in the way that Canadians had expected.[28]

Medicare in Canada covers all necessary medical and hospital services as a universal right of citizenship. Five pillars guide the program: universal coverage, accessibility, portability, comprehensiveness, and public administration. Although Medicare has some gaps in coverage, for example drug costs, long-term care, and home care, the program is uniquely universal for a liberal welfare state. The broad support and pride for the healthcare system is an interesting anomaly in Canada, as it stands in opposition to an otherwise competitive and individualistic nation, by stressing the need for a collectivist approach and robust public funding and management. At the same time, these tenants, as well as the huge potential for short-term profitability from privatization, make Medicare particularly vulnerable to neoliberal assault. Since the 1980s,

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[28] For further comparative welfare state reading, see Esping-Andersen's discussion of "junk jobs" (1990, Chapter 8).

healthcare has been under attack by funding ceilings, freezes, and cuts, as well as the move towards increased commodification of services; this underfunding, coupled with the increase in private clinics, privatized or contracted support services, and public-private partnerships, are causing an internal erosion of the system. As with education, the Canadian Health and Social Transfer cut healthcare funding and, from 1996-1998, the provinces' healthcare funding dropped by $6 billion. The provinces have dealt with these blows in different ways, but overall, neoliberal changes have threatened Medicare's underlying pillars. Despite this, Medicare has not faced the same level of retrenchment as other policy areas and Canadians continue to have access to medical and hospital services. Canadians continue to have a strong feeling of commitment to providing health services to all Canadians. From the 1970s to 2000s, public opinion remained unwavering in support of Medicare. It is interesting that attempts to drastically change the Canadian healthcare system are seen as direct attacks on underlying, core, Canadian values, even though the Medicare program is exceptional by Canadian and liberal welfare state standards (Schafer, 2002; Whiteside, 2009).

Eldercare, unfortunately, is not addressed through Canada's universal healthcare system and often becomes the responsibility of the family. Focusing on the baby-boomer generation, a recent study found that, of those providing care for a parent, 40% were spending $6,000 a year on average in order to provide care; of the same sample, 35% allocated greater than 42 hours per week to caregiving activities. For these individuals, public support is minuscule to none. The 1998 Caregiver Tax Credit, a meager tax credit that attempts to compensate families for unpaid caregiving work, has been largely unsuccessful, not only due to the low rates, but more fundamentally because the only way to claim credit is against taxable income. The 2004 Compassionate Care Benefit did not show much improvement. Funded through unemployment payroll deductions, the program compensates paid leave only those who have a consistent working

history, are currently working, and can prove that their income has dropped due to the need to provide care. The policies are not at all sensitive to the fact that most caregiving falls on women, who often do not have an eligible work history or the substantial independent taxable income necessary to receive the benefits (Brodie, 2009).

In macro-level policy, North America has been a global leader in forwarding liberalizing trade. In 1986, Canada and the United States began free trade negotiations. In 1989, the Canada-United States Free Trade Agreement was established. The agreement reduced trade barriers, eliminated trade tariffs, and addressed issues such as the trade of services and trade dispute resolution. The Canada-United States Free Trade Agreement was later superseded by the North American Free Trade Agreement in 1994 which grew the agreement to include Mexico, making it the world's largest free trade zone (Government of Canada, 2017; 2018a). These close partnerships with the United States, as well as England, have also encouraged Canada's involvement in war. Like all countries, Canada is involved in war in order to secure national or allied interests, however, these motives are often overshadowed by the powerful rhetoric and national identity tied to peacekeeping. It is true that Canadian Prime Minister Pearson won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1957 due to his involvement with the United Nations in resolving the Suez Crisis and thereby formed the peacekeeping model, as well as that overall, virtually every peacekeeping mission mandated by the United Nations' has included Canadians. However, it is also true that Canada's commitment to peacekeeping has dwindled since the mid-1990s, that, year after year, Canada's weapon exports rank among the top 15 worldwide and have risen over time, and that Canada has been involved in a wide range of direct, offensive military interventions, combat, and abuses (Jefferess, 2009). Still, many Canadians were shocked by Hillier who, in 2005 as Chief of Defence, stated bluntly that,

"We are not the public service of Canada. We are not just another department. We are the Canadian Forces and our job is to be able to kill people" (Ward, 2008).

In a similar vein, Canada's identity as a benevolent nation has blurred the reality of immigration and refugee policy. It can be argued that Canada's identity as a humanitarian nation that celebrates multiculturalism is neither as deep nor as broad as many Canadians are led to believe. In the area of newcomers, this rhetoric has historically acted as a shield and justified a myriad of racist and exclusionary policies motivated by economic interests (Madokoro, 2016). As neoliberalization accelerated in the 1990s, multiculturalism and immigration fueled policy debates; emphasis changed from forwarding multiculturalism to focusing on integration, compatibility, self-sufficiency, and resiliency. In addition, interest shifted to promoting temporary foreign workers and, from 2005-2012, Canada saw unprecedented increases: temporary foreign workers close to doubled, growing from approximately 24% to 44% of all migration. At the same time, immigration to Canada became more difficult, with stricter selection criteria and a focus on economically utilitarian newcomers, and refugees faced increased screening (Abu-Laban, 1998; Roberts & Mahtani, 2010; Root, et al., 2014). Once arriving in Canada, the overall retrenchment of the welfare state can hit newcomers especially hard due to the other systemic barriers they face. In addition, newcomers face growing poverty and social exclusion as public funding for settlement has decreased and settlement services lack funding and face privatization pressures (Root, et al., 2014). Attempts to limit newcomers' access to health coverage, social assistance, and key services has increased, and family reunification and immigrating with children has become substantially more difficult. Emphasis has moved to focus on the short-term, economic outcomes of immigration as opposed to long-term nation building, creating a sharp divide between newcomers with financial

resources and those without. In lieu of a public safety net, focus has shifted to the market, non-profit organizations, and the family to provide support (Root, et al., 2014).

<u>Welfare Outcomes</u>

As the review of the changes illustrates, through the period of neoliberalization Canada has been pushed towards a more extreme liberal welfare state model. Universalism has been further undermined as funds have constricted, and benefits have become increasingly contingent upon a relationship to the labour market. In relation, stigma has grown towards those who access benefits. With dramatic funding cuts and the change in funding structure, social service agencies, universities, and health authorities have been forced to compete over scarce resources. Support for social programs has become divided and solidarity has been diluted as the focus of interest groups has shifted to competition over funding as opposed to opposition to the overall funding structure. In this climate, every group suffers and is forced to struggle to survive (Baker, 1997). The power resources of the working class have also been weakened by the competition, as well as the reduction of the power of unions, and associated deregulation of employment policy. The neoliberal rhetoric of individualism, consumerism, and responsibility divides workers and undercuts ideas of collective action, the right of citizens to government support, and the power of the mobilized working class to influence policy in their favour (Baker, 1997; Olsen, 2002; Streeck, 2014b).

The Third Way has been very prominent in Canada. During the Liberals Third Way governments of the 1990s in particular, it can be argued that the state largely retreated from the public sphere; the role of the citizenry was devalued, and the state became less engaged, responsive, and obligated to the public and the interests they forwarded (Gamble, 2014; Mair,

2013; Streeck, 2014b). The opposition that remained faced difficulty in the face of the federal government. Lobbying became more challenging as policy making power became less democratic and moved further into the hands of economists and the Minister of Finance. With the emphasis on tax benefits in social programming, amounts were easily adjusted without the need for parliamentary or public consultation (Baker, 1997; Battle & Torjman, 1995). Overall, policy became less social and more administrative in nature, as focus increased on procedural functions at the expense of representation, Third Way parties aligned themselves more closely with elites, and policy decisions were moved to the jurisdiction of non-elected bodies (Mair, 2013). In addition, as its key demographic faced increasing divisions, the strength of the New Democratic Party dwindled and the voice of the left in organized parliament weakened (Baker, 1997; Battle & Torjman, 1995; Olsen, 2002). Since the onset of neoliberalization, the power resources of interest groups forwarding the need for a strong welfare state have diminished in Canada.

**Polity Neoliberalization in Denmark**

Historical Highlights

There are three levels of government in Denmark. The central government, run through the Danish Parliament (*Folketing* in Danish), is led by a Prime Minister. Regional governance is carried out through five regions (*regioner* in Danish) and municipal governance through 98 municipalities (*kommuner* in Danish). The number of municipalities was reduced in the early 1970s and in 2007 through local government reforms. The second local government reform in 2007 also dissolved the counties that had previously been responsible for regional governance and replaced them with regions. Governance in Denmark is highly influenced by consensus-based decision making. With many parties and a proportional representation system, absolute majority

governments are incredibly rare, and decisions are often reached through extensive negotiations and compromise between parties in the parliament. In general, governments using proportional representation, such as Denmark's, are more likely to facilitate welfare state building (Brooks & Manza, 2007).

Social security and employment policies advanced quickly in the Nordic countries under social democracy in the 1930s (Esping-Andersen, 1985a). Following the war years, Denmark had largely achieved the global political economic goal of social democracy. Leading into the 1970s, Denmark had developed a robust welfare state, rooted strongly in the social democratic tradition. However, in the following years, instability shook both the economic and political foundations of the system. Compared to the neighbouring Nordic countries, Denmark faced the most acute financial pressure and greatest level of retrenchment in the 1970s. Denmark suffered greatly from the 1973 Oil Crisis and low levels of growth, inflation, and rising unemployment became problematic. The success of the welfare state was brought into question and, in the early 1970s, public support for the system fell to its lowest point (Christiansen & Petersen, 2001). Closely in line with international trends, the 1970s marked a period of political turbulence in Denmark.

The 1973 election, referred to as the *Earthquake Election*, saw the appointment of Poul Hartling of the (misnamed) *Venstre Party* (translated as Left Party), an economically liberal, centre-right party that had not headed the government since 1953. As well, 28% of the votes were secured by three new right-wing parties: the Christian Democrats (*Kristeligt Folkeparti* in Danish), the Centre Democrats (*Centrumdemokraterne* in Danish), and the Progress Party (*Fremskridtspartiet* in Danish) (Karpantschof, 2011). The election is so called because it marked a significant shift away from the last twenty years of largely Social Democrat leadership, which previously had only been interrupted for a short term by the Danish Social Liberal Party from

1968-1971. For clarity, Table 5 lists the Danish Prime Ministers from the Earthquake Election to the time of writing.

| Table 5: Danish Prime Ministers (1973-Present) | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Prime Minister** | **Years** | **Party Affiliation** |
| Poul Hartling | 1973-1975 | *Venstre* 'Left' |
| Anker Jørgensen | 1975-1982 | Social Democrat |
| Poul Schlüter | 1982-1993 | Conservative |
| Poul Nyrup Rasmussen | 1993-2001 | Social Democrat |
| Anders Fogh Rasmussen | 2001-2009 | *Venstre* 'Left' |
| Lars Løkke Rasmussen | 2009-2011 | *Venstre* 'Left' |
| Helle Thorning-Schmidt | 2011-2015 | Social Democrat |
| Lars Løkke Rasmussen | 2015-Present | *Venstre* 'Left' |

Following the upheaval in the 1970s, the 1980s were a period of relative stability, marked by a clear shift to the neoliberal right and increased interest in incorporating liberal ideals. Between 1970 and 1990, the Danish welfare state was confronted by economic austerity and reorganization attempts, as well as a crisis of falling ideological and electoral support. Social democracy lost hegemony through a series of events in the 1970s and 1980s, including accepting European Union membership in 1972, the Earthquake Election in 1973, and the right-wing Foursome Government in 1982, led by Poul Schlüter (Bøggild, 2011; Christiansen & Petersen, 2001). With Poul Schlüter's election came the first strong indicators of neoliberal ideology influencing the Danish government. A member of the right-wing Conservative Party (*Det Konservative Folkeparti* in Danish), who was backed by a right-wing coalition, Poul Schlüter pursued neoliberal economic policy while retaining traditional values (Bøggild, 2011).

The starkest of Denmark's neoliberal Prime Ministers to date, however, was Anders Fogh Rasmussen: a member of the Venstre 'Left' Party, in power from 2001-2009. A decade before his election, Anders Fogh Rasmussen published a book entitled *Fra Socialstat til Minimalstat* or,

*From Social State to Minimal State* (1993) in English translation. Arguably a neoliberal manifesto, *From Social State to Minimal State* (1993) celebrates the ideas of dismantling the welfare state, promoting the free market, abolishing collectivism, and supporting elite 'freedom' – which, in neoliberal terms, underscores the freedom of individualism, the individual's right to free choice without expert opinion, private property rights, and access to the free market economy (Bøggild, 2011; Thörn, 2011). As summed up in Rasmussen's 2002 New Year speech, "We want to put man before the system"; with "man", referring specifically to the elite white-ethnic-Dane (Bøggild, 2011:122).

The power constellation during Anders Rogh Rasmussen's time as Prime Minister was incredibly unusual in Denmark's history as it constituted an absolute majority for the right-wing, supported by the Conservatives and the Danish People's Party (*Dansk Folkeparti* in Danish). A right-wing populist party with feverish nationalistic, anti-expert, and anti-immigrant stances, the Danish People's Party was favoured in the aftermath of 9/11 when xenophobic sentiments were growing in Denmark (Bøggild, 2011; Karpantschof, 2011). Due to the Danish proportional political system, with a threshold of only 2%, such majorities are very uncommon. In fact, since 1945, Denmark holds the world record for minority governments in parliamentary democracies (Damgaard, 2004). The Social Democrats, for example, have never achieved an ideological majority; building alliances and forming policies influenced by a wider range of political input meant that core policies were historically alloyed (Jespersen, 2011). However, in the case of Anders Rogh Rasmussen, the neoliberal right-wing power bloc was free to lead without having to negotiate a consensus with members of the centre or left-wing (Karpantschof, 2011).

Lastly, elected in 2009 and again in 2015 to present day, Lars Løkke Rasmussen of the Venstre 'Left' Party has followed closely in his predecessor Anders Fogh Rasmussen's footsteps

– although arguably in a less drastic and overt manner (Amouroux, et al., 2011; Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006).

Though largely dominated by right-wing parties, as Table 5 shows, there were pockets of Social Democrat leadership during this timeframe. When party policy is followed chronologically, there is an evident shift towards the right of the political spectrum. Although Social Democrat leaders, both Poul Nyrup Rasmussen (Prime Minister from 1993-2001) and Helle Thorning-Schmidt (2011-2015), largely conformed to the Third Way. These leaders have become progressively much more neoliberal in their policies and rhetoric than former Social Democrats. This is notable in both new policies developed during the periods of leadership, as well as inaction in terms of changing preceding policies. Most notable during Helle Thorning-Schmidt's leadership, although many of the overtly racially discriminatory elements of public policy from the preceding government were changed, the underlying foundation of policy remained largely the same – or, in other words, consistently capitalist (Abrahamson, 2015; Christiansen & Petersen, 2001).

Voting Patterns

Drastic changes in government and the political economy created unsatisfied voters. During the 1980s, a deep polarisation in voting patterns began to fester in Denmark, as opposition grew against neoliberalization and as a gender division became increasingly apparent between the left and the right – with more men shifting support towards the right (Thörn, 2011:87). During the 2000s, party loyalties have been questioned, especially in response to the Social Democrats Third Way and rising racial tensions. Previous to the Earthquake Election, the Social Democrats had long been a significant organizational power resource for the working class and their lengthy

period of leadership had allowed for the building of a robust welfare state; however, the Third Way shift has weakened this relationship and created divisions among the working class. The situation has been further exacerbated by the fact that, while the more concrete left- and right-wing both have strong stances, integration policy has deeply divided the Social Democrats and left them without a clear policy direction (Jønsson & Petersen, 2012). This has prompted some voters to align with less centrist parties, such as the Red-Green Alliance (*Enhedslisten*, in Danish) on the left or the Danish People's Party on the right (Amouroux, et al., 2011; Jønsson & Petersen, 2012).

In line with the international trend, party membership has fallen dramatically in Denmark, from around 20% in the 1960s, to a low of about 5% in the 2000s. However, opposite of the international trend, Denmark has not witnessed a decline in voter turnout, which typically averages around 85%. Nonetheless, the period has been marked by increased internal and external constraints that have reduced the power of political parties and narrowed the policy field. Internal constraints include actors such as the central bank, courts, media, and independent state enterprises; the central bank in particular exerted significant influence in the 1980s by promoting the free market economy through the liberalization of capital flows, fixed exchange rates, and a new monetary regime (Damgaard, 2004). External pressures include namely the European Union, created in 1993, although influences have been felt from other international actors and multinational corporations as well.[29]

In a critical view, the European Union functions as a policy making apparatus that acts outside of the restraints of state democracies. In pushing for retrenchments and forwarding the

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[29] For further reading on external constraints, see for example Damgaard (2004) for a broad overview, Marginson & Meardi (2012) for an overview of the influences of multinational corporations, and Minbeava & Navrbjerg (2016) for a case study of a Danish company taken over by a multinational corporation.

neoliberal agenda, this elite political system transcends national boundaries, limits policy space and instruments, removes accountability, excludes citizens from democracy, and quells opposition. Other similar transnational policy making organizations include the World Trade Organization and International Monetary Fund. Although these institutions are depoliticized to the extent that they lack the components of popular democracy – there are no demos, competition, opposition, or accountability – when analyzed within the context of neoliberalization, these institutions are profoundly and inarguably political based on the types of policies, recommendations, and coercions they forward. The European Commission of the European Union offers social policy related 'recommendations', the freedom of countries to accept or reject these recommendations varies greatly depending on context and power relations. By acting as transnational, rather than citizen-elected, bodies, institutions such as the European Union are able to promote austerity policies that may otherwise have been rejected democratically by citizens. In this way, such organizations fuel the breakdown of democracy in favour of the proliferation of the free market (Gamble, 2014; Korpi, 2003; Mair, 2013; Streeck, 2014a; 2014b).

Policy Implications

In general, Denmark has faced many of the trends associated with neoliberalization, such as calls for privatizations, general cutbacks, tax reforms and reductions (especially to the benefit of high-income groups), declining emphasis on unconditional universal coverage, increasing emphasis on individual responsibility and the market, and a shift to valuing security over equality (Abrahamson, 2002; 2015; Christiansen & Petersen, 2001; Damgaard, 2004; Jønsson & Petersen, 2012; Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006).

In Danish family policy through the period of neoliberalization, allowances for families with children have been scaled back, the father's quota for parental leave was abandoned, and increased sanctions were introduced towards single mothers receiving state support who refuse to reveal the identity of their child's father (Rostgaard, 2014; Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006; Wehner, et al., 2004). The changes have been drastic, and it has even been argued that the retrenchment of benefits could account for the very low Danish birthrate and trend of Danish women having fewer children than they originally hoped (Esping-Andersen, 2009).

In the field of education, the merging of administrative areas within Denmark has resulted in increased responsibility of the municipalities for more schools. At the university level, forced merging has resulted in fewer universities, there has been increased pressure from the state for students to finish their degrees within a shorter timespan, research (especially in the social sciences) has faced increasing politicized funding pressures, and university boards and administrative positions have changed from elected through autonomous self-governance to appointed. As a majority of these appointments come from outside the university, business interests within the university have increased dramatically in recent years (Abrahamson 2015; Kolind, et al., 2013; Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006).

Following the Oil Crisis, unemployment quadrupled in Denmark (Korpi, 2003). At the same time, unemployment benefits in Denmark through the period of neoliberalization have been characterized by stricter eligibility, lower benefit rates, dramatic reductions in length, and restricted long-term access to the system. As well, there has been an increasing emphasis on activation as a precondition for receiving aid or remaining on support, echoing the global trend in 'workfare' replacing welfare (Christiansen & Petersen, 2001). Similarly, social assistance has been restructured by introducing more restrictive eligibility criteria, increasing the reliance on means-

testing, lowering rates, shortening periods of support, and overall generally discouraging recipiency through punitive measures. In general, a split between the undeserving and deserving poor can be seen in policy planning, creating a divide between those who are considered unproductive members of society (the *undeserving poor* who are undeserving of sympathy and support) and those who are considered productive and 'self-empowered' members of society (the *deserving poor* who are deserving of sympathy and support) (Abrahamson, 2002; 2015; Christiansen & Petersen, 2001; Jønsson & Petersen, 2012; Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2006). Lastly, the pension system has suffered from the extension of pension age and restriction of access to early retirement. In 1998, it became financially less beneficial to retire at 60, while waiting until 62, or even better 65, afforded increasing financial benefits. Responses to the small changes were dramatic; support for the Social Democrats dropped by 50% and did not recover for many months (Abrahamson, 2015; Kristensen, 2002; Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2006).

In Danish health care policy, the merging of administrative areas has resulted in fewer hospitals. At the same time, there has been an increase in marketization in health care – in terms of private health insurance, privatization of hospital services, and use of private hospitals and elder care centres (Abrahamson, 2015). As a result, social care and health care have become more consumer-oriented and market-driven (Højlund, 2009). With the shift away from universalism and an increased reliance on the individual's responsibility for their health and wellbeing, social inequality in health and mortality rates have been increasing (Brønnum-Hansen & Baadsgaard, 2012; Diderichsen, et al., 2012).

In the similar policy area of elder care, nursing homes have faced closures and there has been an increase in variation in levels and quality of care services as the system has been

decentralized (Blackman, 2000; Højlund, 2009). Overall there has been a restriction in eligibility, shorter periods of care, reduced availability of practical assistance, and cut backs to coverage rates. New Public Management principles have been introduced, which have increased surveillance and cut backs to the amount of time spent with the elderly people in care. At the most extreme end, in some areas barcodes were installed on doorframes which home helpers were expected to scan at the time of entry and exit (Rostgaard, 2012). Increasingly, emphasis has been placed on older people needing to remain self-dependent, as well as on the freedom of choice of care provider – with the underlying assumption that the individual is best equipped to make decisions regarding their care (Blackman, 2000; Højlund, 2009). This emphasis on freedom of choice puts pressure on people in need of elder care to make choices about care providers. It has been documented that many users seek help from case managers, even though case managers are not technically permitted to make the choice on behalf of the user; additionally, studies have shown that the final choices are often arbitrary – either based simply on the most successful advertising or on the location of a service provider at the top of a list (Rostgaard, 2012).

At the broadest level of policy analysis, on the international stage Denmark has largely adopted European Union economic policy, fostered closer economic ties with the Eurozone, and advocated free trade (Miles & Wivel, 2013; Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006). Denmark's xenophobia was arguably first realized on the international stage through global media attention paid to the Cartoon Crisis of 2005 (Bøggild, 2011). Aggressive and hostile policies towards refugees and immigrants have defined Danish politics in recent years.[30] Denmark joined

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[30] It can be argued that significant changes have occurred in the image of the country from a peaceful nation to one which has acted with hostilities towards newcomers. For a more thorough discussion of racism in general welfare policy in Denmark, see for example Jønsson & Petersen (2012) or Mourtisen & Olsen (2013).

both wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, froze developmental aid, tightened security and border controls, and bolstered anti-immigration and -terrorism laws (Bøggild, 2011; Jønsson & Petersen, 2012; Miles & Wivel, 2013; Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006). Access has been restricted in terms of entering Denmark and, once a newcomer arrives, efforts have been made to make staying in the country more difficult and less attractive. In terms of the previously discussed divide between the undeserving and deserving poor, it is evident that newcomers are frequently viewed as the most undeserving of sympathy, support, and aid (Jønsson & Petersen, 2012; Mouritsen & Olsen, 2013). Welfare benefits for immigrants and refugees have been made drastically more difficult to access, certain benefits have been withdrawn or tiered to ensure new immigrants receive less, and the exploitation of temporary foreign workers has been a topic of debate (Jønsson & Petersen, 2012; Mouritsen & Olsen, 2013; Stokes-DuPass, 2015).

There has been increasing emphasis on cultural cohesiveness and on promoting very specific and narrow definitions of Danish heritage, shared culture, and values. Coupled with an active reinforcement of the divide between newcomers and white-ethnic-Danes, there is growing attention paid to who and what is Danish (*danskhed*) and who and what is un-Danish (*udansk*). The creation of a national Value Commission in 2011 and a national cultural cannon codified this divide more concretely by outlining Danish culture and values through a specific and narrow narrative. Among other aspects, emphasized are conformity,[31] Danish literature and language, and Christian-based, Danish celebrations. The underlying aim of policy for newcomers already in the country is to force assimilation to this specific narrative. Yet even the most 'Danish' non-white-ethic-Dane can never hope to achieve success in this endeavour because, at the same time, there is

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[31] Based on the underlying tenets of the Law of Jante (*Janteloven* in Danish). For further reading, see Stokes-DuPass, 2015:87-92.

a broad understanding that people of colour and/or Muslims are fundamentally 'un-Danish' (Bøggild, 2011; Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006; Stokes-DuPass, 2015).

These changes have been framed and justified through neoliberal and assimilation-based rhetoric that presumes criminality within the immigrant population, without any demonstrated relationship to deviance, other than symbolic-national. Take for example by Bertel Haarder, who as Minister of Integration, Immigrants, and Fugitives, called the extreme measures "acts of kindness" in an interview in October of 2003: "It is an act of kindness to slam the money-box shut when faced with a refugee or immigrant who is perfectly able to work but just won't get up in the morning. It is an act of kindness to do so for someone who refuses to accept the offer of education or training, who refuses to take a job seriously or Danish instruction seriously. It is an act of kindness, because it gets the person in question to learn good habits" (Jønsson & Petersen, 2012:133).


Welfare Outcomes

Overall, The Danish welfare state is characterized by a strong emphasis on preventative measures and social services as opposed to social transfers. Despite neoliberal attacks, the ideological importance of public welfare remains strongly routed in Denmark. Although the parties in leadership since the 1980s have been influenced by free market ideology and neoliberalization, retrenchments have been much less severe than in other countries. Historically, the Danish welfare state has been built on broad political compromises, reached through extensive negotiations between many parties; in general, these types of proportional representation systems, and the welfare state building they achieve through broad political compromises, can be difficult to undermine (Brooks & Manza, 2007; Christiansen & Petersen, 2001). In addition, Danish

politicians are very careful in approaching retrenchments to the welfare state, as parties suggesting even small welfare state changes have historically resulted in dramatic voter backlash. Strong egalitarian dispositions and very strong public support for the welfare state are frequently reconfirmed in opinion polls (Christiansen & Petersen, 2001; Kristensen, 2002).

That said, neoliberalization in Denmark, as in other states, has produced a gap between citizen dispositions and ruling ideas, a dismantling of legitimation feedback, and a disconnect between state and population. As evidenced by the synthesis of material referencing a broad range of welfare state policies, the Danish welfare state has experienced changes which have moved it farther away from the ideal type of the social democratic regime and have weakened the working classes' power resources. One of the key defining features of the social democratic regime is universalism. Drawing on the review, the retrenchment of key policy areas of the Danish welfare state can be linked back to the dwindling emphasis on unconditional universal coverage in policy. From a social democratic standpoint, neglecting universalism is a major cause for concern when considering the future success of the welfare state. This is because, as the welfare state becomes less universal, benefits and coverage become more targeted. In turn, targeted benefits and coverage allow for stigmatization and alienation of those who rely on the welfare state to fester. When stigmatization and alienation increase, legitimation feedback is fractured, and broad support dwindles. And when broad support decreases, the overall system becomes more susceptible to further retrenchment. When we compare the current Danish welfare state to the rest of the world, it is true that it remains a forerunner in welfare state robustness and labour strength. As discussed, since Esping-Andersen's model focuses on ideal types, it remains very fitting to group Denmark among the social democratic nations. At the same time, it is important to note that the undermining of universalism is a threat to the welfare state and increases the risk of further dismantling.

Although the changes described may not yet have been significant enough to move Denmark from Esping-Andersen's social democratic welfare state regime type, they do illuminate the fact that, from a social democratic standpoint, it is critical to be aware of the current undermining and to advocate for universalism, lest the Danish welfare state continue to lose its social democratic nature.

**Comparing Neoliberalization in Canada and Denmark**

As the review of the neoliberal context of Canada and Denmark shows, both countries have followed similar, broad trends and have faced retrenchment in recent years. Despite these similarities, in a comparative perspective, the social inequality outcomes have differed. Due to the fact that Denmark's welfare state is fundamentally social democratic, and Canada's is fundamentally liberal, even with the retrenchment outlined, Denmark's welfare state still offers more support than Canada's. Throughout the period of neoliberalization, Denmark's welfare state has suffered in key areas, but overall it remains far more resilient than Canada's. While the qualitative case studies are key to analyzing the political economic context within each country, the quantitative indicators take the context a step further by providing a broader comparative backdrop that emphasizes the differences in inequality in the liberal versus social democratic welfare states. Although both countries have faced neoliberal retrenchment, the resulting inequality has varied due to the robustness and resiliency of the welfare state model. As will be shown, despite retrenchment, the Danish welfare state continues to regulate the economy to a greater extent and to offer more support to its citizens, resulting in more equality than in Canada. This further justifies the continued placement of Canada within Esping-Andersen's liberal regime and Denmark, social democratic.

Inequality is largely mitigated through providing robust benefits. Table 6 shows the net replacement rate for a one-earner couple with two children who had previously been earning the average wage in their home country. This is the proportion of income retained through unemployment benefits following job loss. As illustrated in Table 6, the most recent data from 2016 shows that this percentage was slightly higher in Denmark than in Canada, at 65% compared to 61%, respectively.

| Table 6: Net Replacement Rate, One-earner Couple (Two Children), Canada and Denmark (2016) | |
|---|---|
| **Country** | |
| **Canada** | **Denmark** |
| 61% | 65% |
| Source: OECD https://www1.compareyourcountry.org/benefits-taxes-wages/en/0/23+24+25/default/2016/CAN+DNK | |

Table 7 shows the percentage of the median income that an employed low-income family (in the bottom percentile), consisting of a couple with one-earner and two children, made in 2016 in Canada and Denmark.

| Table 7: Net Income of a Low-income Family, One-earner Couple (Two Children), % of Median Income, Canada and Denmark (2016) | |
|---|---|
| **Country** | |
| **Canada** | **Denmark** |
| 50% | 70% |
| Source: OECD https://www1.compareyourcountry.org/benefits-taxes-wages/en/1/27+28/default/2016/CAN+DNK | |

In Canada, a low-income family with one-earner and two children made 50% of the median Canadian income in 2016. In the same year, in Denmark, the same type of family made 70% of the median Danish income.

Assuming that all applicable benefits are paid, Table 8 shows the number of hours that a low-income family (in the bottom percentile) consisting of a one-earner couple and two children, would have had to work per week in 2016 in order to escape poverty.

| Table 8: Hours of Work per Week to Exit Poverty, One-earner Couple (Two Children), Canada and Denmark (2016) | |
|---|---|
| **Country** | |
| **Canada** | **Denmark** |
| 39 | 0 |
| Source: OECD https://www1.compareyourcountry.org/benefits-taxes-wages/en/0/23+24+25/default/2016/CAN+DNK | |

In Canada, a low-income family consisting of a one-earner couple and two children, would have had to work 39 hours a week in order to escape poverty in 2016. In the same year in Denmark, due to the benefits provided, the same family would not have had to work and would not have been in poverty.

Most Recent Data on Taxation

The benefits afforded by the Danish welfare state are financed through the tax system (Kristensen, 2002). To pay for social services, taxes are higher in Denmark than in Canada, as is expressed in Tables 9, 10, and 11. As shown in Table 9, for an average single person with no children, the tax rate in Canada was 15.44% in 2017, while in Denmark it was 36.06%.

| Table 9: Average Income Tax Rate, Single Person at 100% of Average Earnings (No Child), Canada and Denmark (2017) | |
|:---:|:---:|
| **Country** | |
| **Canada** | **Denmark** |
| 15.44 | 36.06 |
| Source: OECD https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=AWCOMP# | |

As shown in Table 10, for the wealthiest Canadians and Danes, the top marginal tax rate in 2017 was 53.5% and 55.8%, respectively.

| Table 10: Top Marginal Tax Rate, Canada and Denmark (2017) | |
|:---:|:---:|
| **Country** | |
| **Canada** | **Denmark** |
| 53.5 | 55.8 |
| Source: OECD https://stats.oecd.org/index.aspx?DataSetCode=TABLE_I7# | |

As shown in Table 11, overall, tax revenues accounted for 46% of GDP in Denmark in 2017, versus 32.2% in Canada. In Denmark, income and profits, as well as goods and services were taxed at a higher rate than in Canada (making up 29.1% and 14.6% of the GDP, compared to 15.4% and 7.7% respectively). In Canada, taxes on property, social security contributions, and payroll taxes made up a higher percentage of GDP than in Denmark (3.8%, 4.6%, and 0.7%, compared to 1.8%, 0%, and 0.3% respectively).

| Table 11: Tax Revenues, % of GDP, Canada and Denmark (2017) | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Type of Revenue** | **Country** | |
| | **Canada** | **Denmark** |
| Taxes on Income and Profits | 15.4% | 29.1% |
| Taxes on Goods and Services | 7.7% | 14.6% |
| Taxes on Property | 3.8% | 1.8% |
| Social Security Contributions | 4.6% | 0% |
| Payroll Taxes | 0.7% | 0.3% |
| All Tax Revenues | 32.2% | 46% |
| Source: OECD http://www.compareyourcountry.org/tax-revenues?cr=oecd&lg=en&page=0&charts=call+ c5000+c1000+c2000+c4000+c3000+c6000&template=10 | | |

Trends in Poverty and Inequality

Table 12 compares the total relative poverty in Canada and Denmark. The indicator is the

percentage of the total population who belong to a household with income levels less than or equal

to 50% of the median income in their home country.

| Table 12: Relative Poverty Rates, % of the Total Population, Canada and Denmark (1987-2013) | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Year** | **Country** | |
| | **Canada** | **Denmark** |
| 1987 | 11.4 | 10.1 |
| 1992 | ⋮ | 7.2 |
| 1994 | 11.3 | ⋮ |
| 2000 | 12.4 | 5.4 |
| 2007 | 12.1 | 6.2 |
| 2013 | 13.7 | 5.7 |
| ⋮ Data not available | | |
| Source: Luxembourg Income Study http://www.lisdatacenter.org/lis-ikf-webapp/app/search-ikf-figures | | |

While Canada's relative poverty rate has continued to rise, Denmark's rate has dropped

since the late 1980s. Note that, even at its higher level at the end of the 1980s, Denmark's poverty

rate was lower than Canada's in the same year. By 2013, the rate in Canada was more than double that of Denmark.

While relative poverty rates illuminate what percentage of the population are living in relative poverty, they fail to account for the inequality between those in poverty and the wealthy. One way that this type of income inequality can be measured is through percentile ratios. Shown in Table 13, the percentile ratios for Canada and Denmark are the ratio of income obtained by the household in the lowest percentile in relation to the income obtained by the household in the highest percentile in each country.

| Table 13: Percentile Ratio (P90:P10), Canada and Denmark (1987-2013) | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Year** | **Country** | |
| | **Canada** | **Denmark** |
| 1987 | 3.9 | 3.2 |
| 1992 | ⋮ | 2.9 |
| 1994 | 3.9 | ⋮ |
| 2000 | 4.2 | 2.8 |
| 2007 | 4.2 | 2.8 |
| 2013 | 4.5 | 2.9 |
| ⋮ Data not available | | |
| Source: Luxembourg Income Study http://www.lisdatacenter.org/lis-ikf-webapp/app/search-ikf-figures | | |

Similar trends can be observed in the change in percentile ratios in Canada; while in 1987, the household with the top 10% earned 3.9 times more than the household in the bottom 10%, by 2013, the ratio had increased to 4.5 times. In Denmark, the ratio has remained relatively constant, lowering slightly from the household with the top 10% earning 3.2 times more than the household in the bottom 10% in 1987, to 2.8-2.9 times in the 2000s. Despite the country-level changes, in a comparative perspective, Denmark's ratios remain consistently lower than those of Canada.

As a last measure of comparative income inequality, the Gini coefficient is a model that assigns countries a number along a continuum ranging between two ideal types: the absolutely equal society and the absolutely unequal society. In the *absolutely equal* society, income is distributed so that every person receives the exact same amount; in the Gini coefficient model, this ideal type society would be assigned a value of 0. In the *absolutely unequal* society, one person receives all of the income, while everyone else receives nothing at all; in the Gini coefficient model, this ideal type society would be assigned a value of 1. The Gini coefficient differs from percentile ratios in that percentile ratios indicate how much more the top versus bottom income earners receive, whereas the Gini coefficient measures the concentration of income in a society. The Gini coefficient is a slightly less intuitive measure because it uses ideal types and because the smallest change signifies a big leap between 0-1; nonetheless, when understood correctly it is a concise summary measure that allows for the comparison of income inequality across nations.

| Table 14: Gini Coefficients, Canada and Denmark (1987-2013) | | |
|---|---|---|
| Year | Country | |
| | Canada | Denmark |
| 1987 | 0.283 | 0.255 |
| 1992 | ⋮ | 0.238 |
| 1994 | 0.284 | ⋮ |
| 2000 | 0.315 | 0.225 |
| 2007 | 0.315 | 0.238 |
| 2013 | 0.321 | 0.249 |
| ⋮ Data not available | | |
| Source: Luxembourg Income Study http://www.lisdatacenter.org/lis-ikf-webapp/app/search-ikf-figures | | |

In Canada, the Gini coefficient has risen over time, consistent with the rest of the inequality indicators presented. In comparison to Demark, income concentration in Canada has been

consistently more unequal. For Denmark, the Gini coefficient is especially interesting as it shows that even though relative poverty rates and, to a lesser extent, percentile ratios have decreased in Denmark over time, in recent years larger shares of the states' total income are in fact held by smaller numbers of income earners; in other words, Denmark has become more unequal since 2000 (although it has yet to reproduce the levels of income inequality experienced in the late 1980s).

Trends in Unionism and Effects on Power Resources

As of the most recent data available, labour force participation rates are approximately the same in both Canada and Denmark. As shown in Table 15, the rates in 2017 among 15-64-year-olds were 78% in both countries.

| Table 15: Labour Force Participation Rate, 15-64-year-olds, % in Same Age Group, Canada and Denmark (2017) | |
|---|---|
| **Country** | |
| **Canada** | **Denmark** |
| 78.5% | 78.8% |
| Source: OECD https://data.oecd.org/emp/labour-force-participation-rate.htm | |

However, of those participating in the labour force, union density and collective bargaining coverage vary greatly. Table 16 charts union density in Canada and Denmark between 1960 and 2015. Information on trade union membership is collected from survey and administrative data. Union density is calculated as union members as a percentage of total employees.

**Table 16: Union Density, % of Employed, Canada and Denmark (1960-2015)**



Source: OECD
https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=TUD#
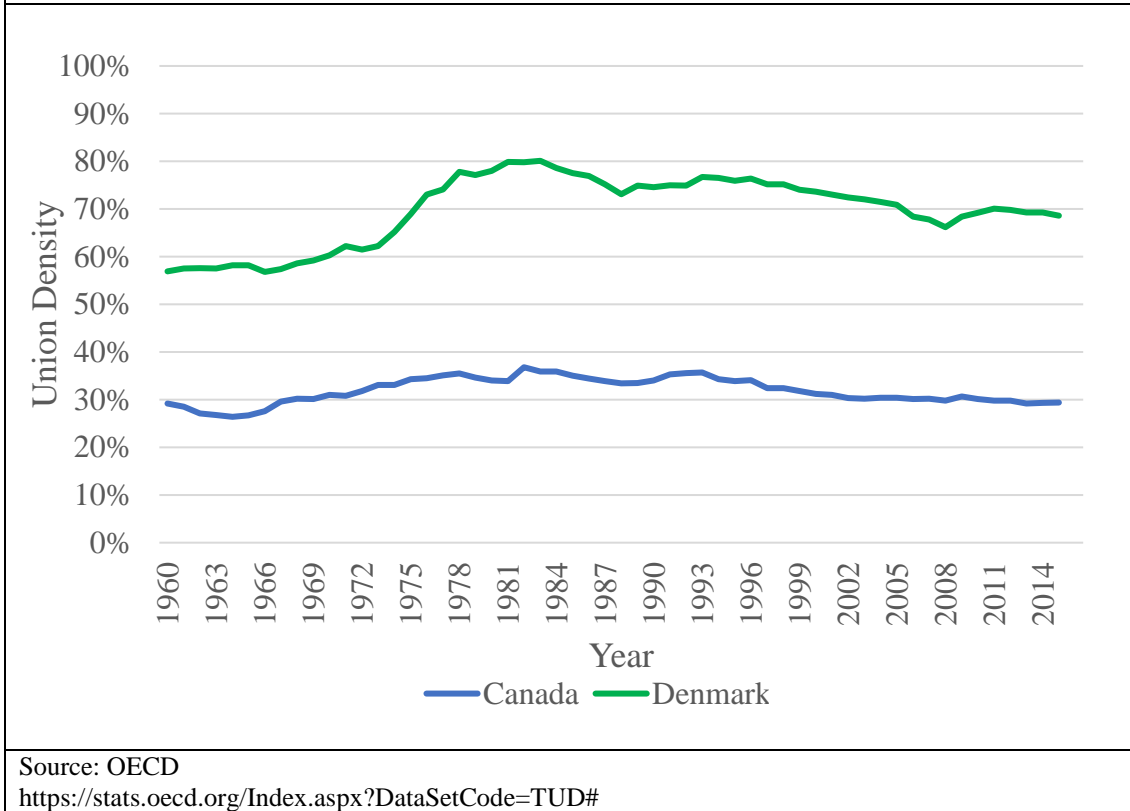
During this period, union density has averaged 31.6% in Canada, compared to 69.4% in Denmark. As of the most recent data available, in 2015, union density in Canada was 29.4% and 68.6% in Denmark. The highest union density in Canada occurred in 1985 at 35% and has dropped since that time. In comparison, the lowest union density occurred in 1965 at 26.7%, only 2.7% below the 2015 figures. In Demark, the highest union density occurred in 1980 at 78% and has dropped since that time. In comparison, the lowest occurred in Denmark in 1960, the earliest date in the time series, at 56.9%.

Table 17 shows collective bargaining coverage in Canada and Denmark. Collective bargaining coverage is calculated as employees who are covered by collective bargaining agreements, as a percentage of all wage earners with bargaining rights.

| Table 17: Collective Bargaining Coverage, % of Employed with the Right to Bargaining, Canada and Denmark (1960-2015) | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Year** | **Country** | |
| | **Canada** | **Denmark** |
| **1960** | 31.8% | 79.0% |
| **1970** | 33.8% | 80.0% |
| **1980** | 37.1% | 82.0% |
| **1990** | 38.0% | 82.8% |
| **2000** | 32.3% | 85.0% |
| **2010** | 31.4% | 83.0% |
| **2015** | 30.6% | 84.0% |
| Source: OECD https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=TUD# | | |

During this period, collective bargaining coverage has averaged 33.6% in Canada, compared to 82% in Denmark. As of the most recent data available, in 2015, collective bargaining coverage in Canada was 30.6%, its lowest percentage in the time series, and 84% in Denmark, 1% below its highest percentage in the time series, which occurred in 2000.

Outside of this comparative data, country-level data shows that unionism in Canada is most prominent in the public sector. At 72% in 1984 and 71.3% in 2005, union density in the public sector has remained relatively consistent through the period of neoliberalization. In the private sector, however, density decreased from 25.9% to 17.5% in the same time period. Although public sector unions have not experienced a dramatic decrease in numbers, they have been subject to government coercion and neoliberal restructuring. The bargaining power of public unions has been undermined through tactics such as stripping collective bargaining rights and changing arbitration procedures through legislation, involuntarily extending collective agreements and contracts, removing the right to strike, forcing back-to-work and essential service legislation, increasing layoffs and mandatory unpaid days off, and introducing wage controls, cuts, and freezes. Many of Canada's public unions have not exerted resistance to such changes, even though they are in direct

opposition to the interests of their members. For those who have, the increasing power imbalance has made it difficult for unions to negotiate; public sector employees have therefore experienced cutbacks to wages and benefits, a decrease in job security, as well as chronic understaffing and overworking. Although private sector union density is much lower, survey data suggests that private sector unions are much stronger and are close to 3 times more likely to be successful in workplace negotiations (Camfield, 2007). Overall, the approach in Canada through the period of neoliberalization has not been to eliminate public unions, but rather to disintegrate their power resources.

In Denmark, attempts at undermining unionism have occurred. Labour negotiations have been largely decentralized, with repercussions particularly evident in terms of working hours and pay, where more flexibility in the scheduling of working hours and an increase in agreements that fail to include wage rates have been noted. Due to decentralization, trade unionists have expressed concern over weakened power resources and increasing inequality in union-employer bargaining at the company-level (Jensen, 2012). In addition, the increase in multinational corporations operating in Denmark has altered the traditional bargaining structures as multinational corporations can have disruptive effects on bargaining and favour decentralization (Marginson & Meardi, 2012). Issues with the working conditions within multinational corporations in Denmark have been noted, including using threats of outsourcing in negotiations, as well as unacceptable health and safety standards (Minbeava & Navrbjerg, 2016). That said, union density and collective bargaining coverage is comparative high, and the working classes power resources have historically been, and remain, much more robust in Denmark than in Canada.

## Chapter V: Focus • Social Housing, the Welfare State, and the Global Political Economy

**Broad Historical Trends in Social Housing**

General Overview

Broadly conceived, social housing includes diverse types of housing supports, varying in the amount of housing included, the kinds of people considered, and the responsible provider. Within this project, social housing will be operationalized as residential rental housing which is priced and allocated according to regulations rather than the free market; in this way, social housing is conceptualized as a welfare state supported, in-kind income transfer program (OECD, 2016; 2018; Suttor, 2016).

Social housing history began in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and has grown to modern day through various policies, changing providers, and differing architectural and urban planning styles. Within each country, this has resulted in a complex collage of social housing infrastructure and policies. The first social housing projects were provided by groups such as unions, factory owners and employers, charities and philanthropists, and religious orders, to house workers as rapid industrial and urban growth ballooned in tandem with a poor working class severely lacking adequate housing. The role of national and municipal governments increased, typically with national governments subsidising workers housing and municipal governments building up local services and infrastructure. Typically, government-backed social housing policies were established in line with broader welfare state development by the end of WWII (Esping-Andersen, 1985a; OECD, 2016; 2018; Scanlon, et al., 2015). The increased role of government was fueled by many factors, including the need to maintain political power, house the workforce in affordable dwellings, and exert planning influence in the rapidly increasing urban areas (Scanlon, et al., 2015). Welfare states

were fundamental to city-shaping during this time to the extent that they sought to address urban segregation, not only through arms-length welfare state apparatuses, but through concerted urban planning and development, encouraging and supporting community-based social planning, and, most importantly, recognizing a government responsibility for providing and regulating housing (Therborn, 2017). Differences in the timing and robustness of social housing policies varied based on political and power constellations, the onset of urbanization, and the conceptualization of social housing policies as either part of, or separate from, the welfare state (Suttor, 2016).

Following the war years, housing was a top political priority. The United Nations included the right to an adequate standard of living in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 2019). Social housing was largely considered to be the answer to the housing crises facing most advanced capitalist nations. At this time, social housing policy was generally at its strongest, social housing production was high, and the state was a powerful actor. To a greater extent, housing was viewed as government responsibility and a key part of welfare state infrastructure (Scanlon, et al., 2015). By offering middle class style apartments in mixed-income neighbourhoods, social housing was able to mitigate urban segregation during this time period to varying degrees. In the liberal welfare states, the separation of market and social housing policy, with a strong reliance on the free market, typically resulted in laggardly and residual social housing policies – as in Canada.

In Europe, social housing was typically incorporated early on, as key social policy and part of overall welfare state building. Industrial capitalism brought the need for urban workers housing to the fore – which was often recognized when it became impossible to ignore the growing deplorable conditions and the strong voices and actions of the labour movement (Suttor, 2016; Therborn, 2017). The working class included the need for housing along with their struggle to secure job security, appropriate wage levels, unemployment benefits, and pensions; creating a

robust social housing sector was an important dimension of the working class and left-wing political agenda. The underlying thrust was that policy should not simply help people to pay free market rental rates; instead, the focus should be to build low-cost housing and reconceptualise community to serve the working class for the long term. Social housing was very quickly incorporated as a main pillar of social policy, following quickly on the heels of the introduction of the first social security initiatives. Extensive social housing was key to the political aspirations of the European social welfare reformers of the 20th century, and the models developed at this time were generally quite similar across countries. Seeking to increase employment, restore economic stability, accommodate growing populations, and make up for housing that had not been built or had been destroyed during the war, the general trend across Europe was a prominence of new housing construction supported heavily by the state in order to ensure adequate and affordable housing for all. In general in Europe, social housing has been conceptualized for many decades as a decommodified social service and as an integral part of the welfare state, as a key factor in providing adequate and affordable housing for a wide-range of citizens (Scanlon, et al., 2015; Suttor, 2016).

Today, social housing policies in Europe differ in terms of their emphasis on universal versus targeted approaches. These policy differences have become more entrenched with time, firstly as the acute wartime housing crisis subsided and secondly in the wake of neoliberalization. Social housing sectors in Europe have historically been largest in the northern and socialist countries (Scanlon, et al., 2015). Up until WWII, social democratic governments in the Nordic countries supported the creation of non-profit and cooperative housing built and run by unions and other social groups for working class families. During the war, housing production ground to halt across the Nordic countries. In the post-war period, governments responded to overcrowding,

urban migration, poor housing conditions, rising prices, and the overall acute and growing need for new housing. The Nordic countries enacted extensive public control over housing, increased housing production through employment programs, financed new building through state loans with low, fixed-interest rates, and began defining housing policies to a greater extent as part of welfare state infrastructure (Esping-Andersen, 1985a). Denmark follows this broader social democratic trend.

Tower Apartment Communities

During the mid-1950s to 1970s in both North America and Europe, modernist, large-scale, concrete, moderately high,[32] tower apartment communities were built en masse on the peripheries of large cities to quickly and inexpensively accommodate the growing housing need. Many of these were social housing communities. In general, in line with the overall building of the welfare state, the intention was largely to fill the acute need for new housing, thereby increasing quality of life by moving people out of the inner cities and allowing for the rundown and unhealthy buildings to be updated or demolished (Berry, 2010). Facing post-war material and economic shortages, the goal was to build as much new housing as possible with few resources (Esping-Andersen, 1985a). Many new tower apartment communities were located in beautiful open green areas on the outskirts of cities. In some cases, in western Europe for example, the layouts were selected from urban planning competitions; the winning community plans were considered the most visionary, modern, and capable of increasing the goals of the welfare society. Compared to the traditional, labour-intensive, brick and mortar building methods, new technology allowed for dramatically efficient construction; the components of the tower buildings could now be factory produced and

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[32] Typically ranging from 5 to 20 storeys at the most.

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then assembled quickly after transportation to the new housing site (Turkington, et al., 2017; Ærø, 2004). Tower apartment communities across the world were based on the same planning ideology and look remarkably similar, even in cases where the political interests and reasons for the new housing differed (Bøggild, 2011).

Mass production style construction was supported by the state in both Canada and Denmark, with a varied portion of the new buildings allocated to the social housing sector. In general, the apartments themselves were often welcome upgrades from previous living conditions in the cities and were comparatively large and well-equipped. In Canada, tower apartment communities were often built with the underlying goal of eradicating slums and increasing business prospects in city centers. In Denmark, tower apartment communities were meant to fulfill the social democratic goal of creating a fair and equal welfare society, in which each citizen could realize the right to healthy housing with access to collectively shared green space and ample sunlight (Turkington, et al., 2017; Ærø, 2004). At the beginning stages, the new developments were largely successful in both countries, with mixed initial residents, social activities and associations, no substantial or uncharacteristic social problems, and no modern-day stigma (Jørgensen, 2010).

Unfortunately, at the same time as tower apartment communities were developed to meet the housing shortage, the housing dreams of North Americans and Europeans were crystalizing. The changing preferences of the population did not correspond to the investment in new rental buildings.[33] In contrast, the appeal of homeownership flourished as living in modern housing in outlying areas with generous yard space became an achievable dream for many new middle class families. General economic prosperity, new longer-term credit, state subsidization of single-family

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[33] For further reading on sociological explanations for changing preferences, see Bourdieu (2005).

home development, increased expectations of living standards, and overwhelming reliance on the automobile as the main mode of transport, opened up the countryside to viable development for the middle class (Gehl, et al., 2006; Jørgensen, 2010; Ærø, 2004). In the 1960s and 1970s, tax subsidies, interest deductions, and low interest rates to promote home ownership, created a real-estate environment where financial investments on property were generally recovered quickly and the middle class could largely afford to buy their own homes (Grant, 2006). The appealing notions of private home ownership, the ability to control and personalize the home space, and a closeness to nature became attainable, without the need to sacrifice the many advantages of living an urban life. The idea of individual outdoor space, which could be used as an area for gardening and relaxation for adults and as a personalized play space for children, was a major draw and stood in stark contrast to other forms of dense living with shared, communal green spaces. Due to the growing state support for private, costlier, and non-universally accessible suburban housing, urban centres and periphery tower apartment communities experienced flight as many middle class families moved into single-family detached homes in suburban areas (Gehl, et al., 2006; Jørgensen, 2010; Ærø, 2004).

As more and more tower apartments stood vacant, they began to be rented to people with acute housing needs. Economic diversity quickly narrowed and residents became much less mixed, with an overrepresentation of new immigrants and refugees, as well as people experiencing long-term unemployment, persistent poverty, and problems with substance abuse. At the same time, the disadvantages to the fast-tracked, cheap building methods were beginning to show as some buildings fell into disrepair, with poor maintenance adding to the problem in some cases. Difficulties of social isolation and poverty were further exacerbated as the monofunctional urban planning meant that the tower apartment communities were largely cut off from the rest of the

cities and lacked jobs and services for residents – which were typically located in other more commercial and industrial parts of the main cities. Often the communities were isolated from surrounding neighbourhoods and appeared to be more like removed islands than adjacent communities (Berry, 2010; Gehl, 2007; Jørgensen, 2010; Therborn, 2017; Turkington, et al., 2017; Ærø, 2004). Through these processes, the tower apartment communities began to fester the urban segregation that they had originally attempted to mitigate.

Instead of upheld as bastions of new, increased wellbeing for residents, the communities were stigmatized by general society: villainized by the media, scrutinized by architects and urban planners, and avoided by people from other parts of the cities (Berry, 2010; Gehl, 2007; Guest, 1997; Jørgensen, 2010; Therborn, 2017; Turkington, et al., 2017). Overall, there was wide-ranging opposition to tower apartment communities at this time from mass media, architects and urban planners, and academics.[34] Although there were problems associated with the tower apartment communities, critically considering the extreme amount of general distaste and the pointed criticism, it seems clear that the root of 'concern' was and remains to be classism and racism. The finger pointing began as tower apartments came to increasingly house the poor and racialized, and, in response, middle class suburban neighbourhoods feared losing their residential class status. At the same time, this growing hegemonic stigma served to support the expansion of profitable, private, single-family homes, and mass debt. Notably, today's elite condominium skyscrapers (which are much higher, more imposing, and often purposefully isolated through gating) do not face any of the same scrutiny (Therborn, 2017); while studies criticized the effects of high rise

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[34] See for example Cappon (1971), Devlin (1980), Evans (2003), Morville (1969), Oda, et al. (1989), Richman (1974), Turkington, et al. (2017:49-60).

living on the poor, there has been little to no research on how high rise living effects the urban elite (Berry, 2010).

In more recent years, rehabilitation of tower apartments and social housing have faced variable success. City planning approaches have changed (and competed) throughout time depending on various factors, including the leading planning paradigms, and the political leadership at the national, regional, and municipal levels (Jørgensen, 2010). Incorporating the lessons from the previous era of planning, current architecture and urban planning rubrics now largely advocate low-rise, mixed-use communities with a continued concerted effort at ensuring economically diverse residents and visitors. The idea is that communities built in these ways can satisfy the need for the density found in tower apartments, while approximating more closely the amenities of the single-family detached home, thereby decreasing urban segregation and promoting individual and community wellbeing (Ærø, 2004). The aim is that by blending communities and mixing residents, social housing will face less stigmatization. In both Canada and Denmark there are examples of tower apartment communities that have been altered or rebuilt to approximate this model and new social housing is incorporated into this style of architecture and urban planning to varying degrees in both countries. However, in addition to the initial setbacks of stigmatization in the post war years, social housing has faced varying levels of continued stigmatization and retrenchment in the wake of neoliberalization, as will be discussed further in the following sections.

Gentrification and Urban Democracy

Starting in the late 1970s, a common trend in Canada, Denmark, and indeed across the advanced industrial states, is gentrification. *Gentrification* is the process of shifting an areas socio-

economic status upwards, therefore pricing out the existing (and typically low-income) residents. Gentrification processes, often fueled by urban renewal schemes, accelerated dramatically through the 1980 and 1990s. Globalization decisions in cities around the world have included growing demands for elite power in the city space; in these cases, struggles over urban spaces and gentrification have displaced people living in urban centers and resulted in increasing homelessness (Larsen & Lund Hansen, 2008; Lund Hansen, 2011; Smith, 2005).

Lastly, in the age of neoliberalization, urban democracy has followed the same trends as political democracy. Decisions about urban space are increasingly made by private institutions as opposed to elected representatives. In lieu of public institutions, departments, and agencies, there has been an increase in administrative bodies, such as business improvement districts, which operate under private control or influence. These bodies are gaining more control over the urban space and reducing democratic decision making and public accountability, thereby moving urban politics further from government to governing (Hannigan, 2010b). While these broader trends are largely shared by both Canada and Denmark, each country has varied in terms of urban policies and creating, sustaining, and adapting social housing.

**Social Housing Policy in Canada**

Modern day social housing in Canada is rental housing primarily targeted to low- to mid-income households otherwise unable to afford adequate housing. It is a mix of subsidized public, non-profit, and cooperative housing, which together accounts for about 4% of the overall housing stock (Hackworth, 2009; OECD, 2016; 2018). Social housing is administered by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), the provinces, and the territories. Social housing policies in Canada have historically faced many political obstacles and the general trend has been

free market reliance. Compared to the other advanced capitalist nations, Canada's engagement in social housing began much later and has faced significant neoliberal retrenchments.

## Historical Highlights

*Early History*

As early as 1887, federal reports included the need for Canada's federal government to address low-income housing. Across the country, high rental costs and stark power imbalances between tenants and landlords were especially serious problems for the poor. The lower-class members who owned houses faced municipal taxes that were proportionately much greater than those for upper-class homeowners. Overall, the working class were generally living in excessively costly, unhealthy, and poorly-built rental houses, in violation of general sanitary standards. Although the situation was acute, overcrowding, which was a key problem in most other cities of the advanced capitalist nations, was not yet affecting Canadians. As a result of the reports, stricter municipal laws on sanitation were recommended, and it was suggested that the solution to the crisis was for the working class to simply invest in homeownership – of course this was unhelpful and ineffective advice due to rising land costs, low wages, and the unaddressed unequal municipal housing taxes (Guest, 1997). In 1909, the federal government created the Commission on Conservation, which was intended to promote urban planning legislation to the provinces as the solution to growing urban poverty. The Commission was later abolished in 1921 after reaching no success in persuading the provinces to adopt legislation (Hulchanski, 2002).

By the end of WWI, the lack and extremely poor quality of housing had become a cause of social unrest. By the beginning of the 20th century, the problems of overcrowding in unfit buildings had arrived in Canada and, with few houses built during the war years, housing pressures

continued to increase. The first, unsuccessful efforts from the federal government to address overcrowding resulted in a money lending scheme, in which not all provinces or municipalities participated, that was limited to people able to invest into homeownership; it did not address growing slums or the need for low-cost rentals, and therefore avoided providing housing aid to the lower-classes (Berry, 2010; Guest, 1997).

By the 1930s, housing remained firmly free market driven. Adding to the challenges of the Great Depression, problems of overcrowding and slum-living were leading to sickness. More and more people were housed in dire quality; rental rooms were typically filled with several beds, and beds in basements were placed next to the coal furnaces used for heating at that time. In addition, the exorbitant rents of this type of poor housing were further crippling the working class. The market enjoyed a huge power imbalance, leaving low-income renters with little to no power resources in the face of their landlords. At that time, a social housing movement began to gain momentum in Canada as reports and coalition support from architects, urban planners, social workers, parts of the construction industry, unions, and municipal governments, began to challenge the lack of intervention and call urgently for the state to be responsible for low-income housing as part of public work projects (Bacher, 1988; Berry, 2010; Guest, 1997; Suttor, 2016).

Alas, spearheaded by the Ministry of Finance and against the advice of housing reports and the social housing lobby, the responses at the federal level downplayed concerns over unemployment and refused to acknowledge that growing numbers of Canadians could not afford private market rental rates. Policy in 1935 was drafted with involvement from Canadian mortgage companies as a wolf in lamb's clothes, meant to masquerade as a response to the social housing lobby. The *Dominion Housing Act* sought to foster job creation and strengthen the private market, through a focus on assisting upper-class homeownership and attempting to stimulate the private

housing market to build new (and high cost) houses – there was no social housing provision (Bacher, 1988; Berry, 2010; Guest, 1997; Hackworth, 2009; Suttor, 2016). In the face of the Great Depression, these stipulations were ineffective and housing construction declined dramatically. By 1938, pressure mounted and new federal legislation, in the form of the *National Housing Act*, included the first provision for the funding of public, low-cost, rental housing projects. In the end, due to intentionally-difficult stipulations within the legislation, uneven provincial interest, the time it took to begin the projects, and ultimately the beginning of WWII, not one new low-cost rental housing project was built and not one dollar of the allocated 30 million was spent. When WWII began, all existing housing programs were aborted. Increasing overcrowding, more palatably coined as 'doubling up' by politicians, in increasingly dilapidated existing buildings, was peddled to Canadians as simply a price of war (Bacher, 1988; Berry, 2010; Guest, 1997; Suttor, 2016).

This rhetoric began to backfire when it became increasingly clear that the housing crisis was significantly damaging the war effort. Urban population rapidly increased alongside munitions production in major cities; housing shortages were extreme, overcrowding was rampant, and rent was increasing. In 1943, it was estimated that approximately two thirds of Canadians were unable to afford adequate housing; furthermore, such housing was in very limited supply as few new houses had been built since the Great Depression. Evictions and homelessness were endemic; official homeless shelters were at capacity with unmanageably long waiting lists and makeshift housing was increasing in old factories and abandoned buildings. Due to this, *War Time Limited Housing* was created as a federal crown corporation responsible for building cost-recovery, temporary, affordable rental homes for war workers and veterans; although the production of approximately 46,000 homes during the 1940s was not meant to aid low-income families, was solely earmarked for employed Canadians earning low- to mid-incomes, and only modestly

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reduced shortages, this unprecedented government intervention, as well as the simultaneous building of basic welfare state infrastructure, raised questions about how social housing policy, as a component of broader social security, would progress in the postwar years (Bacher, 1988; Guest, 1997; Hannigan, 2010a; 2010b, Suttor, 2016; Wade, 1986).

War Time Limited Housing opened the door for social housing policies at the end of the 1940s, as will be discussed in the following section; however, leading up to the end of the decade, private market mentality remained firmly in place. Although large-scale federal policy intervention was advocated by progressive voices, overall, policy in the 1940s further liberalized the housing market; the aim of new housing construction was employment, in order to avoid a serious economic depression following the war, as opposed to addressing the social reality of low-income housing needs – again, social housing provision was not included. As the war ended, hundreds of thousands of retuning veterans, unable to all be accommodated by War Time Limited Housing, increased pressures and created unrest; veterans living with relatives in overcrowded housing festered intergenerational-stress which impeded government goals, including veteran rehabilitation, increasing productivity, and increasing population. No longer in use, munitions plants increasingly became emergency homeless shelters (Bacher, 1988; Guest, 1997; Hannigan, 2010a; 2010b; Suttor, 2016; Wade, 1986). In response to the increasingly volatile political issue, the National Housing Act was amended and a new federal crown corporation, the *Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation* (CMHC) was created in 1945-1946 to address the housing shortage through bolstering private market housing initiatives (Hackworth, 2009). Opened at a symbolic distance from the political core of Ottawa, in a building intentionally mimicking that of an insurance company head office, the CMHC's success would be measured by the extent to which it could limit government intervention in the market. With negligible progressive housing policy,

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the overall aim remained for Canadian families to achieve home ownership through the private market. To that end, the CMHC's policy for average Canadians included supplying lower mortgages and down payments, while increasing amortization periods and loan amounts. War Time Housing Limited was amalgamated with the CMHC. The CMHC did continue to aid in building low- to mid-income veteran housing; however, once the war was over, the majority of the homes built were sold on the private, for-profit market and, although many of the structures were meant to be temporary, some still stand today as private homes (Bacher, 1988; Guest, 1997; Hannigan, 2010a; 2010b; Suttor, 2016; Wade, 1986).

*Post-war History*

By the end of the 1940s, housing needs were still acute and social housing expectations were high following the end of the specialized War Time Limited Program. The first broad social housing projects were built in Canada at the end of the 1940s, allowable through amendments to the National Housing Act in 1949 (Hackworth, 2009). Social housing at that time was characterized by a mix of public housing, owned by the CMHC, and municipal or non-government charitable limited dividends housing owned by a sponsor corporation, largely using a rent-geared-to-income model. The policies were intentionally weak, lacking institutional support. Compared to the War Time Limited Program, direct housing provision from the federal government was withdrawn, the political social housing responsibility was shifted towards the provinces, and provincial and municipal cost burdens were higher. Social housing production was low, and, because the provinces increasingly bore the political pressure, the federal government avoided the responsibility to expand social housing. In the 1950s, and increasingly so in the early 1960s, the federal government remained a firm believer that social housing should be oriented towards elite

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economic development goals, not poverty alleviation, and provide nothing over the absolute minimum, so as not to compete with the private housing market (Bacher, 1988; Berry, 2010; Guest, 1997; Hannigan, 2010a; 2010b; Hulchanski, 2002; Suttor, 2016). In general, gearing rent to income can be problematic for several reasons. Rent-geared-to-income rates can fail to reflect the attributes of the apartment and can fail to cover the provider costs. In countries such as Canada where social housing rents are geared-to-income, social housing stock is typically small (Whitehead & Scanlon, 2007a; 2007b).[35] Due to these policy decisions, from 1949 up until the mid 1960s, social housing in Canada was insignificant and, to the majority of the large low-income population, arguably irrelevant, at less than 0.5% of the overall housing stock (Bacher, 1988; Berry, 2010; Guest, 1997; Hannigan, 2010a; 2010b; Hulchanski, 2002; Suttor, 2016).

At the same time, encouraged by government and CMHC incentives and subsidies, large-scale, mass produced, corporate construction of low-density suburban housing overtook the small-scale local construction of previous decades and resulted in a proliferation of new suburban communities on the large cities' edges. In older, rundown areas of cities, early urban renewal projects were backed by public investment; however, instead of affordable housing, municipalities increasingly opted for constructing more profitable large-scale industrial and commercial complexes in city centers (Grant, 2006). Due to this, poor Canadians living in inner cities were increasingly displaced; some moved to the new social housing projects which, in line with the broader trend previously discussed, were located in tower apartment communities on the periphery of the cities. While new developments certainly assisted many Canadians, particularly those capable of homeownership, alleviating the needs and bolstering the living conditions of those who

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[35] Further examples include the United States, Australia, and Ireland (Whitehead & Scanlon, 2007b).

were not accommodated in social housing, and could not engage in the private market, remained persistently neglected. For this population, slum-like dwellings were still very much a problem – in the early 1950s, close to a quarter of urban dwellings were still without a bath or shower and by the mid-1950s, doubling up was still a reality for many families (Bacher, 1988; Berry, 2010; Guest, 1997; Hannigan, 2010a; 2010b; Suttor, 2016).

From the mid-1960s through the 1970s, urban growth was rapid and housing costs rose substantially, aggravating a vocal middle class increasingly unable to achieve homeownership. At the same time, the affordable and social housing lobby grew within the labour movement. A national role in housing was politically important to the mainstream, and private market issues such as housing affordability, urban renewal, and the creation of private rental apartments were incorporated into the broader political agenda (Guest, 1997; Suttor, 2016). The new National Housing Act of 1964 included public social housing stipulations that allowed the sector to grow. In 1971, the federal Ministry of State and Urban Affairs was created to advise on urban issues and federal initiatives (Hulchanski, 2002). Although homeownership remained the end goal of Canadian housing policy, as part of the broader urban trend, and along with the general expansion of the welfare state, social housing production rose in Canada during this period. Changes in federal government, active policy, and funding, as well as the creation of provincial housing corporations to administer social housing, were of key importance. As discussed, low cost, tower apartment communities were an effective solution to meet the need for affordable and adequate private and social housing. The building of new private and social rental housing together in the growing postwar suburbs allowed for more urban, social, and economic integration. The model was public social housing, developed, owned, and operated by government agencies; all of the social housing built during this period was targeted at low-income renters, with almost half

allocated for the elderly, and virtually all of the rents were determined by income level. At this point in history, social housing was viewed as mainstream politics and did not face the stigmatization of today. With properly funded, institutional capacity, social housing stock rose from about 0.3% of the overall housing stock in 1961 to approximately 3.5% by 1981; although still a very small percentage overall, and housing less than 10% of Canada's low-income renters, the change was significant in the Canadian policy context where animosity towards social housing, fueled in part by historical colonial racism, had been rampant (Guest, 1997; Suttor, 2016).

In line with the broader trend, there were many factors that together shifted the socially and economically integrated housing into segregated and stigmatized housing. As time progressed, rental production slowed dramatically and very few people with a mid-income chose to rent. With few affordable options, the tower apartment communities became saturated with low-income renters. Poverty and stigmatization grew, and both the private and social apartment blocks were conflated in the middle class mind. In the 1970s, a review of Canadian housing policy echoed earlier lobbies by noting the continued plight of poor Canadians, the lack of low-cost and acceptable quality dwellings, the unrestraint – and in most instances, outright reinforcing – of the free market, and the fact that the majority of housing subsidies to date had been spent on further improving the conditions for mid- and high-income Canadians. New tenant organizations and locally organized activist groups also lobbied in favour of maintaining social housing. At the same time, on the other end of the spectrum, general public protest against social housing increased as it became associated with the poor and racialized (Guest, 1997; Hackworth, 2009; Suttor, 2016).

*Model Changes*

In response to growing pressure, the federal government changed the social housing program model in 1973 through the National Housing Act, from the reigning public housing model to non-profit and cooperative models (Hackworth, 2009; Hulchanski, 2002). While government was still responsible for funding and provision, in the non-profit model, social housing was operated by public or private community-based organizations, while in the cooperative model, social housing was jointly operated by the residents. The new models responded to local concerns and the social housing lobby: non-profit and cooperative housing would be community-based and would mix tenants paying private market rental rates with tenants paying rent-geared-to-income, low-income rental rates in the same buildings. Private non-profits were sponsored by groups such as labour unions, social service agencies, faith-based organizations, ethnic associations, service clubs, community groups, NGOs, and neighbourhood associations. Due to federal government policy and funding changes, by the end of the 1970s, the non-profit and cooperative models dominated new production, with public model social housing no longer built. The changes connected municipal governments with federal governments, local concerns and needs with national policy, and housing policy with urban planning. Non-profit, cooperative, community-based, mixed-income housing models had a long history of success in Europe (including Denmark) and were well received in Canada. Overall, there was a strong consensus on government intervention in the housing market and social housing policy at the time. With the mixed-income component, policy was more universal, less stigmatized, and enjoyed higher and more widespread levels of support and political opinion (Berry, 2010; Hackworth, 2009; Suttor, 2016). In 1968 the *Co-operative Housing Foundation* was formed with support from the labour movement, credit unions, and small local cooperative movements. With this larger backing, as the cooperative

housing movement grew throughout the 1970s, it focused on capacity building and increasingly

asserted itself as highly organized and an effective political advocate for social housing. Growing

into a federation with regional and national tiers, the renamed *Co-operative Housing Federation*

negotiated program resources and structures with CMHC (Suttor, 2016). Surveying the policy past,

these non-profit and cooperative models are largely considered the best models developed in

Canada's social housing history (Berry, 2010; Hackworth, 2009; Suttor, 2016).

*Neoliberalization and Gentrification*

As neoliberal attitudes grew in the 1980s, the government sought to tighten public spending

and housing was no exception (Suttor, 2016). The Ministry of State and Urban Affairs was

disbanded in 1979. Free market reliance grew in federal housing policy. By the mid-1980s,

subsidies for land development, home-ownership, and private market rental were largely cut, with

intervention in the market deemed disruptive to economic equilibrium (Hulchanski, 2002). Social

housing came under mounting pressure as it slowly became the chief tax-supported exception in

the housing sector. At the federal level, there was a shift towards thinking about social housing as

a targeted service, rather than a part of the broader welfare state infrastructure; in tandem, income

targeting became more intense, as well as population targeting, specifically towards people

experiencing homelessness and people with disabilities. Overall, social housing was increasingly

viewed as costly and ineffective at solving the housing needs of poor Canadians; the inability to

afford housing was more and more considered to be a personal, income-related problem instead of

part of a broader systematic trend. Adding to federal distaste, the funding structure of social

housing was more difficult to cut because of multi-year funding commitments. In a move towards

retrenchment, the state role in social housing ceased to expand and policy lead was firmly shifted

from the federal to provincial government levels; although the federal government still maintained the main role in funding and policy at this time, program management (including project selection, funding allocation, and social housing accountability) became a provincial role. Programs became less of the intentional joint federal-provincial, federal-municipal policy initiatives of previous years as the federal government withdrew to simply providing funds and the provinces were allocated more and more of the social housing responsibility. This change allowed for continued uneven policy between the provinces into the 1990s (Suttor, 2016).

In the cityscape, after the suburban boom of the post-war years and uneven industrial-commercial urban renewal, inner cities in the 1970s to 1980s showed the harsh effects of general long-run neglect. With inner cities falling into disrepair, the general response was urban renewal, which largely resulted in gentrification. In many Canadian cities, capital was invested into improving the neighbourhoods and the lower-classes were priced out in order to appeal to new middle class residents interested in central city living. Slowly starting in the 1970s and expanding rapidly in the 1980s, apartment buildings turned into condominiums that were much too expensive for the original tenants and many low-cost rental apartments and rooms that had sprung up in old houses were priced out or emptied through stricter rooming house regulations and reconverted into single family homes (Hannigan, 2010a; 2010b; Suttor, 2016). Studies suggest that, between 1981-2001, gentrification affected over 25% of Canadian inner-city census tracts, and was especially acute in Toronto and Vancouver (Zuberi, 2010). The process of gentrification varied across Canada; a notable exception was Quebec, where the working class largely occupied the older neighbourhoods and held significant political power resources as the core supporters of the provincial government. Instead of gentrifying their homes, provincial and municipal governments converted many of them into cooperatives in order to simultaneously maintain the inner cities and

improve resident's quality of life (Suttor, 2016). Even with the Quebec experience taken into account, with all of these broadscale changes taken together, in the 1980s increases in homelessness in Canada in general became shocking (Hannigan, 2010a; 2010b; Hulchanski, 2002; Suttor, 2016).

Since the 1940s, recessions had always triggered economic stimulus and job creation through housing construction, but this was not the case during the recession of the early 1990s when neoliberal ideas contradicted the use of countercyclical spending (Berry, 2010; Suttor, 2016). In the 1990s social housing was severely retrenched and decentralized in the context of the overall neoliberal attack on the welfare state. Changes were fueled by rhetoric of reducing state spending in response to economic hardship. Federal government funding for new social housing construction ended permanently, with the exception of social housing on reserves; this dropped the annual social housing production from approximately 25,000 new-built units per year to 0 (Hulchanski, 2002). Ending the production of cooperative housing was especially devastating as it undermined the most significant and well-organized social housing advocacy group, the Co-operative Housing Federation and its allies, which meant that further social housing cuts faced less vocal opposition. Funding for existing social housing buildings changed from individual agreements to a lump sum that would slowly shrink to zero over the years as the original individual agreements expired. Rent-geared-to-income suites increased rent from 25% of income to 30%. The state role in social housing policy was fully withdrawn and responsibilities were relegated to the provincial and municipal levels, ending the connection between housing needs at the local level and policy responses at the federal level. Within this context, the government increasingly viewed lower levels of government as a way to offload costs and responsibilities, rather than a joint policy partner. This retrenched social housing policy as these levels of government had depended on

federal support and increasingly lacked policy latitude and funding power in the context of rising neoliberalization and free market clout. Perhaps most important in the long run, the decisions to move policy responsibility to the provinces meant that the federal government no longer had a direct responsibility to re-engage in social housing in the future should economic hardship come to pass (Berry, 2010; Hackworth, 2009; Suttor, 2016).

The policy decisions of the 1990s meant that social housing, as a percentage of the overall housing stock, would steadily decline over the years and come under increasing funding pressures. As the percentage shrunk, the logic that it should target groups with the highest needs was reinforced – people experiencing homelessness, struggling single mothers, women facing abuse, people with disabilities, and Indigenous people were increasingly targeted (Berry, 2010; Suttor, 2016). In tandem, attitudes towards social housing were quickly changing; in addition to the persistent idea that social housing was ineffective at solving housing needs and too costly, there was rising sentiment that social housing was largely accommodating families that were 'not poor enough' to warrant subsidized rents – regardless of the reality that social housing allocation was becoming more and more targeted. Due to the funding cuts, the advocacy voice for social housing was largely undermined, and neoliberal lobby was received far more readily by a sympathetic government, than lobby from the remaining social housing advocates – who increasingly came to be isolated as 'special interest groups', outside of mainstream society (Suttor, 2016).

*Recent Events*

From 2000-2018, there has been some weak federal re-engagement in low- to mid-income affordable housing; in general, the trend is a continuation of federal avoidance of finding long-term funding solutions, provincial divergence, and uneven targeting. Federal funding for social

housing has been disjointed, posed as time-limited (creating constant funding uncertainty), and has declined from 2010-2018. Due to retrenchment and decentralization, there is great variation between the provinces and territories when it comes to social housing. Recent efforts at incorporating affordable housing into private developments have included variably successful public-private negotiations; for example, allowing developers special privileges in exchange for rent-geared-to-income units in the new buildings. Overall, during the 2000s there has been no return to the social housing capacity prior to the 1990s. Up until the time of writing, social housing agreements have been expiring, with lack of funding for repairs, and no political conversation on how policy can sustain social housing, let alone expand the sector. Neoliberalization is prevailing in policy and housing is left mainly to the free market, while urban and economic disparities widen (Berry, 2010; Cooper, 2018; Hackworth, 2009; Hulchanski, 2002; Shapcott, 2008; Shapcott, et al., 2010; Suttor, 2016).

It seems that the much anticipated 2017 National Housing Strategy will continue this trend. From its official website, the strategy is summarized as "a 10-year, $40-billion plan that will strengthen *the middle class*, fuel our economy and give more Canadians across the country a place to call home" (Government of Canada, 2018b; italics added). To address housing needs of low-income Canadians, funding to the provinces will seek to rehabilitate older social housing, while new affordable housing will be targeted at "the most vulnerable Canadians" (Government of Canada, 2018b). While a thorough discussion of homelessness initiatives is outside the scope of this study, suffice it to say that the Canadian federal government has never created a national strategy to end homelessness (Homeless Hub, 2018a). When announcing the National Housing Strategy, Trudeau said that, "housing rights are human rights, *everyone* deserves a safe and affordable place to call home" (CBC, 2017; italics added) – ironic considering the strategy's aim

to reduce homelessness by only 50%. It remains to be seen how the strategy will affect Canada's social housing, homelessness, and urban landscape in the long run.

Timeline

Although it does not capture all of the changes in Canadian social housing history, the following timeline illustrates the process of establishing social housing in Canada through major historical events. In particular, the timeline seeks to highlight municipal-provincial-federal unevenness by incorporating some of the key events at the municipal and provincial levels which are not included in the federal historical analysis. Sources are included at the end of the timeline for further reading and research.

**1887**      Early federal reports start to include the need for low-income housing

**1909**      The federal government creates the *Commission on Conservation* to promote
              urban planning legislation to the provinces

**1914-1918**  **WWI** Overcrowding leads to social unrest over lack and poor quality of housing

**1921**      *Commission on Conservation* abolished due to complete ineffectiveness

**1929-1939**  **Great Depression** Overcrowding and slum-living are leading to sickness; social
              housing movement begins to gain momentum

**1935**      *Dominion Housing Act* downplays public housing concerns, strengthens private
              market, fosters job creation through high cost housing construction, assists upper-
              class homeownership

**1938**      *National Housing Act* includes the first provision for federally funded, public,

low-cost, rental housing; due to intentionally-difficult legislation, uneven provincial interest, and the beginning of WWII, no new housing is built under the scheme

**1939-1945**  **WWII** All existing housing programs are aborted; overcrowding is peddled as the price of war; homelessness is unmanageable

**1941-1947**  *War Time Limited Housing* builds approximately 46,000 affordable rental houses for war workers and veterans; population targeted model

**1945-1946**  *Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation* (CMHC) created to limit government intervention in the market and help Canadian families achieve homeownership; *War Time Limited Housing* is amalgamated with the CMHC and the majority of houses are sold following the war

**1947**  In Toronto, a municipal plebiscite is successful in securing $6 million for the *Regent Park* redevelopment, a plan to clear slums and create municipal social housing in tower apartments; Toronto is the focus in terms of successful municipal social housing policies and continues to expand low-income housing and publicly funded senior housing in the 1950s; income/population targeted models

**1949**  *National Housing Act* allows for federally funded public social housing; policies are weak and lack institutional support; political responsibility is shifted towards the provinces; federal-local connections grow slowly; under this legislation, social housing grows to 0.5% of the overall housing stock by 1964; income targeted model

| | |
|---|---|
| **1949-1950** | Ontario, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland pass legislation to allow for provincial social housing funding; public housing projects are built in response to the 1949 *National Housing Act* including *Regent Park* in Toronto, *Jeanne Mance* in Montreal, *Bayers Road* in Halifax, and *Ebsary Estate* and *Churchill Park* in St. John's; income/population targeted models |
| **1949-1964** | Ontario leads in social housing production and urban renewal by providing provincial funding to ease the cost burden on municipalities; production is highest in Toronto; income targeted model |
| **1950-1960** | Nation-wide suburban growth and urban renewal; slum-living continues to be problematic in cities |
| **1950-1970** | Quebec focuses on cooperative models as opposed to public models; movement led by the working class; mixed-income model |
| **1962** | Ontario announces a *Twelve Point Program* for housing, including social housing production, early rent supplement legislation, provincial grants for non-profits and cooperatives, and the formation of a *Housing Advisory Committee*; wide-range of models |
| **1963-1964** | The Ontario *Advisory Housing Committee* creates the frame work for the *Ontario Housing Corporation*; *Ontario Housing Corporation* is created to manage social housing; spearheads the provincial housing corporation model |
| **1964** | Social housing production to date is greatest in Nova Scotia, Ontario, Manitoba, and British Columbia; wide-range of models |
| **1964** | *National Housing Act* allows public social housing sector to grow; tower apartment communities are increasingly built; under this legislation, social |

housing grows to 3.5% of the overall housing stock by 1981; income targeted

model

**1964-1970**   Provinces adopt provincial housing corporations modeled after the *Ontario*

*Housing Corporation*

**1965-1970**   Social housing lobby grows among the labour movement; private market issues

such as housing affordability, private rental apartments, and urban renewal are

politically important to the middle class; municipal costs for social housing are

reduced

**1967**        Ontario is considered a leader in terms of managing urban development,

especially in Toronto

**1967-1970**   Lobby grows against social housing; there are big protests in Toronto, and to a

lesser extent in Montreal (revolving around the Milton Park redevelopment

proposal), against large-scale social housing projects passed without community

consultation; protests against social housing are fueled by classism and racism in

Toronto; both private and social tower apartment communities are conflated in the

middle class mind; much lobbying and protesting against tower apartment

communities is misplaced, since many flash-point developments are private and

not social; in response, lobby also grows in favour of social housing

**1968**        *Co-operative Housing Foundation/Federation* is created with support from the

labour movement, credit unions, and local cooperative movements; focuses on

capacity building and advocacy, as well as negotiating program resources and

structures with the CMHC; mixed-income model

**1969**       Montreal creates a *municipal housing corporation* focused on social housing and

rehabilitation; tries to limit displacement, which had accelerated in the 1960s due

to urban renewal projects; mixed-income model

**1969**       Social housing production is bolstered in Manitoba by provincial NDP

government, especially in Winnipeg; wide-range of models

**1970**       *Gentrification* trends emerge, especially in Toronto and Vancouver

**1971**       To date, Ontario has used the bulk of federal funding, over 60% of social housing

built to date located in Ontario and mainly in Toronto; wide-range of models

**1971**       *Ministry of State and Urban Affairs* is created to advise on urban issues and

federal initiatives

**1972-1975**   Social housing production is bolstered in BC by provincial NDP government;

strong BC provincial rent supplement program is created; wide-range of models

**1973**       *National Housing Act* changes the federal social housing model from the public

housing model to non-profit/cooperative, mixed-income models due to lobbying

against the public model and lobbying in favour of adapting social housing policy

to be more responsive to local needs; these models are largely considered the best

models developed in Canada's social housing history;[36] the models are supported

by Quebec which had historically favoured cooperative social housing

**1973**       Ontario creates a provincial *Ministry of Housing* and *Community Housing Branch*

and allocates funding to non-profit and cooperative social housing construction;

British Columbia, Alberta, and Quebec follow suit

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[36] As per Berry (2010), Carter & Polevychok (2004), Cooper (2018), Hackworth (2009), and
Suttor (2016).

**1974**           Vancouver creates a *municipal housing corporation* to coordinate and develop social housing

**1976-1985**    Public and cooperative social housing in Quebec are bolstered by the Parti Québécois; many older rental buildings are rehabilitated through cooperative conversion

**1977-1980**    Provinces push for more autonomy in developing housing policy

**1978-1979**    Federal *Ministry of State and Urban Affairs* disbanded

**1978-1993**    *Urban Native Housing*, *Rural and Native Housing*, and *Residential Rehabilitation Assistant Program on Reserve* programs developed and extended

**1979-1983**    BC, Manitoba, and Quebec introduce rental housing allowances for seniors

**1980-1990**    Federal subsidies for land development, home-ownership, and private market rental are cut; social housing is coming under increasing pressure; social housing responsibilities are increasingly devolved to the provinces, homelessness increases dramatically; income/population targeted models

**1981-2001**    Urban renewal and gentrification affect over 25% of inner-city census tracts, especially in Toronto and Vancouver; effects are less intense in Quebec, where working class movements in inner cities have used political power resources to lobby the government to convert older homes into cooperatives

**1987**           Ontario focuses on new social housing for people with substance abuse problems, people experiencing homelessness, and single people with low incomes; Quebec focuses on people experiencing homelessness; population targeted models

**1990-1993**    **Economic Recession** Downturn is especially severe in Ontario; social housing in Ontario comes under threat

**1990-2000**    Nation-wide homelessness continues to be very problematic

**1993**    Federal government funding for existing social housing changes from individual

agreements to lump sums that will slowly shrink to zero over the years as the

original individual agreements expire; federal funding for new social housing

construction ends permanently with the exception of social housing on reserves;

social housing policy is devolved to the provincial level; rent-geared-to-income

levels rise from 25% to 30% of income

**1993-2000**    Social housing stock declines and comes under increasing funding pressure; social

housing advocacy is undermined; provincial responses vary significantly with the

most severe retrenchment in Ontario, where social housing is devolved to the

municipalities, and the least in BC and Quebec where a modest ongoing priority

for social housing is maintained; population/income targeted models

**1995**    Ontario ends provincial funding for new social housing production under

neoliberal provincial government; Ontario's social housing advocates lobby

against devolution to the municipalities; significant power resources are lost as

advocates in Ontario become consumed with provincial-municipal financial and

program restructuring

**1998**    Ontario deregulates private market rents

**1999**    *National Homelessness Initiative* includes modest re-engagement of federal

funding for affordable and transitional housing

**2000-2018**    Weak federal re-engagement in low- to mid-income affordable housing;

disjointed, time-limited funding creates funding stress; social housing agreements

expiring; engagement in sustaining affordable and social housing strongest in BC, Alberta, and Quebec

**2001-2018**    Series of modest *Affordable Housing Initiatives/Investment in Affordable Housing Initiatives* which provide funding to the provinces to develop programs shaped by federal criteria; most uptake in BC, Alberta, and Quebec; most new affordable rental housing per capita is constructed in Alberta, especially between 2007 and 2010; Ontario remains retrenched and has limited uptake

**2008-2011**    **Financial Crisis** Prompts new housing construction to stimulate the economy, with federal funds allocated to affordable and social housing

**2017**    *National Housing Strategy* strong focus on the middle class; includes federal funding to the provinces to rehabilitate older social housing and create new affordable housing; aim to reduce homelessness by 50%; population/income targeted models

Timeline information was collected from: Bacher (1988), Berry (2010), Cooper (2018), Government of Canada (2018b), Grant (2006), Guest (1997), Hackworth (2009), Hannigan (2010a; 2010b), Hulchanski (2002), Shapcott (2008), Shapcott, et al. (2010), Suttor (2016), Wade (1986), and Zuberi (2010).

<u>Welfare Outcomes</u>

Surveying the broad housing policy history in Canada, it is clear that there has been an overreliance on the free market, reoccurring lack of intervention, inconsistent government support, increased decentralization, and targeting as opposed to universalism. Of all the advanced capitalist

nations, Canada's housing system is the most market- and private sector-based and social housing as a percentage of the overall housing stock is among the most negligible (Hulchanski, 2002).[37] Compared to the other advanced capitalist nations, Canada's social housing policy adoption was significantly laggardly, with private market rentals meant to accommodate a low- to mid-income class which, in other countries, were increasingly provided for through social housing. A persistent trend in Canada has been the assumption that low-income housing needs should be met by the private market through filtering. *Filtering* is a laissez-faire approach that assumes that the poor will occupy accommodations where price has declined as a result of deteriorating quality. In other words, it is considered acceptable that the poor should live in the places that, given a choice, no one would want to. Due to this negligence, in examining the history of low-income housing in Canada, the need for social housing has morphed from the destitute requiring urgent, temporary housing assistance, to a much larger lower-class requiring long-term housing assistance to afford deteriorating housing stock. The problem has been exacerbated by a long history of insufficiently-funded social housing projects, in chronically short supply, and persistent affordable housing shortages, together constricting the lower-classes housing options. Now, housing market failure is intensified by the fallout from the neoliberal surge in insufficiently paid employment, unemployment, and retrenchment of the social safety net. Many Canadians face intersectional pressures as neoliberalization has attacked both housing and social policies (Berry, 2010; Carter & Polevychok, 2004; Guest, 1997; Suttor, 2016).

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[37] Canada's system is even more market- and private sector-based than the United States, which has more extensive homeownership interventions. Social housing stock as a percentage of the overall housing stock is the second smallest in Canada (only smaller in the United States) (Hulchanski, 2002).

Throughout Canada's social housing history, another identifiable trend is that the main drivers of social housing policy have been the prevailing national economic situation, housing and urban development trends, and the general thrust of policy within the larger welfare state infrastructure – the realities that the poor face in the private housing market have never been a central consideration in policy formation. Historically, urban poverty issues have simply not been weighty in national affairs. Although there has been advocacy for housing intervention and no shortage of good quality, supportive research reports, Canada's social welfare and labour politics have historically been feeble, and this significant lack of power resources has resulted in a political climate where active policies face difficulties gaining traction. Although labour strongly supported general welfare state expansion, social housing has been abdicated in political labour platforms in Canada. In addition, there has historically been a large rural farming vote, as well as significant hostile lobbying against social housing projects from powerful capitalist stakeholders including the lumber, development, construction, mortgage, and real estate sectors. Coupled with government allies, this capitalist power was able to halt specific projects, as well as dissuade general social housing policies. Overall, strong, progressive policy has been largely absent from the history of Canada's social housing (Bacher, 1988; Berry, 2010; Guest, 1997; Suttor, 2016).

In reviewing social housing history, Canada's government structure has allowed for easy decentralization. Negligible federal intervention in housing policy has been justified by pointing to the fact that, in Canada's constitution, property and civil rights are provincial responsibility. However, from reviewing the history, it can be argued that social housing policy in Canada is in fact federal policy led, whether it be through activity or negligence; even with increasing decentralization, there is no denying that the dominant factors – such as fiscal stimulus, monetary, and tax laws and policies; lending regulation; direct mortgage financing and insurance – are either

entirely or principally federally led. Additionally, federal government directs the CMHC, decides on the strength of policy, and dictates funding amounts and arrangements, which are the crucial underpinnings of policy at the provincial and municipal levels. Nonetheless, the responsibility for social housing remains contested – perhaps because it is, more importantly, unwanted by neoliberal governments. Overall, it appears that social housing has faced inconsistent support at all levels of Canada's decentralized government system and, in addition to the lacking federal policy, social housing confronts a myriad of added barriers at the various provincial and municipal levels (Berry, 2010; Carter & Polevychok, 2004; Guest, 1997; Hulchanski, 2003; Suttor, 2016).

Social housing in Canada lacks comprehensive, universal policy. Without a strong social housing history, the negligible policies that have existed have been very vulnerable to dismantling. Social housing policies are not considered part of welfare state infrastructure in the same way that, for example healthcare in Canada is, and they lack broad support (Hackworth, 2009). Negative public perception, fuelled by classism, racism, and general stigmatization, by a society that largely imagines hard work, thrift, and independence as the virtues of the good homeowning citizen, further undermine broad support for robust social housing policy. Housing in Canada is highly commodified as it is not viewed as a fundamental part of the welfare state, but rather a function of the private market. The creation of the CMHC, not as a federal, program delivering department, but as a private market-driven crown corporation,[38] further ingrained the separation between federal policy and welfare state infrastructure on the one hand, and housing on the other. Overall, Canada's social housing policies exemplify the liberal welfare state regime type, with an overall

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[38] And further, as a political corporation. Tasked with data collection and dissemination, the CMHC often includes or omits data based on its political economic aim. In the 1990s, strong free market promotion resulted in data that largely omitted statistics on rental demand, affordability, and completions, as well as social housing provision.

lack of availability, low social spending, targeted programs, and a high level of commodification due to a heavy overreliance on the free market (Berry, 2010; Cooper, 2018; Guest, 1997; Suttor, 2016).

Today many Canadians continue to suffer from housing problems. Urban inequality is growing in tandem with income inequality. Urban centers in Canada manifest the socio-economic hierarchy through increasing urban economic segregation, with growing separations between wealthy and poor neighbourhoods marking Canadian cities (Hulchanski, 2002; Shapcott, et al., 2010; Zuberi, 2010). For Canadians with the lowest incomes, the realities of free market rentals are poor quality at high cost: often renting a single room or a basement suite, in buildings that are falling into disrepair, in unsatisfactory neighbourhoods, while still suffering the strain of unaffordable rent. These types of precarious rental situations manifest the effect of welfare state retrenchment. Half a century later, old postwar developments still account for almost half of Canada's rent-geared-to-income units. Even with escalating concerns over needed repairs and general quality decline, these units often offer more acceptable accommodations than the low-rent options provided through the private market – and the rental costs are typically less than half the private market rates (Berry, 2010; Suttor, 2016).

Although social housing policy in Canada is firmly liberal in nature, during the relative height of its production, it did have an influence on the shape of Canadian cities and suburbs. At its most robust, there was a unified advocacy, a strong federal policy lead, and greater consistency across Canada in social housing policy. Poor housing conditions and unaffordability in Canadian history have been most successfully protested by large coalitions formed across class lines when these broad issues affected a myriad of Canadians, as in the period from 1960-1980. At the same time, social housing was supported by minority government politics, which helped advanced social

housing policy in the mid-1960s and early 1970s. With a consideration of Canada's social housing past, a progressive strategy in the future would necessitate a concerted effort to address affordability, a re-engagement in securing long-term funding, and a systematically significant social housing policy with a strong connection and interaction between federal, provincial, and municipal responsibility.[39]

**Social Housing Policy in Denmark**

Modern day social housing in Denmark (*almene boliger* in Danish) refers to non-profit housing constructed, owned, and operated by housing associations and municipalities. The system and related subsidies are secured by national regulations and legislation. When renting social housing, a significant entry deposit is required, which is typical across all rental accommodations in Denmark. Rents do not respond to free market forces. The rents cover financial costs of the building, calculated based on the buildings' historic costs, when it was built, and if it has been renovated. Cost-based rents are typically around 3% of the property acquisition price, with rent increasing or decreasing in response to changes in running costs. Price differences between social and market rental housing vary, with the greatest variation in dense and attractive cities and the least in rural or less attractive areas. Due to this and to housing demand, most social housing is located in towns and cities, with the greatest number of units in Copenhagen, as seen in Table 18. Regardless of location, tenants do not have the right to buy their social housing accommodations. Social housing regulations and controls have remained relatively similar throughout social housing history in Denmark. Through this system, social housing rents allow for long-term cost recovery

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[39] For further reading on Canadian housing policy recommendations, see Carter & Polevychok, 2004, or Cooper, 2018 (includes a further focus on Manitoba).

of the building and a sustained social housing stock (Jørgensen, 2010; Kristensen, 2007; OECD 2016; Scanlon, et al., 2015; Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007; Whitehead & Scanlon, 2007b).

| Table 18: Share of Social Housing in Denmark by Municipality | |
|---|---|
|  |  |
| Source: Google Maps, 2019 https://www.google.com/maps/place/Denmark/ | Source: Kristensen (2007) |
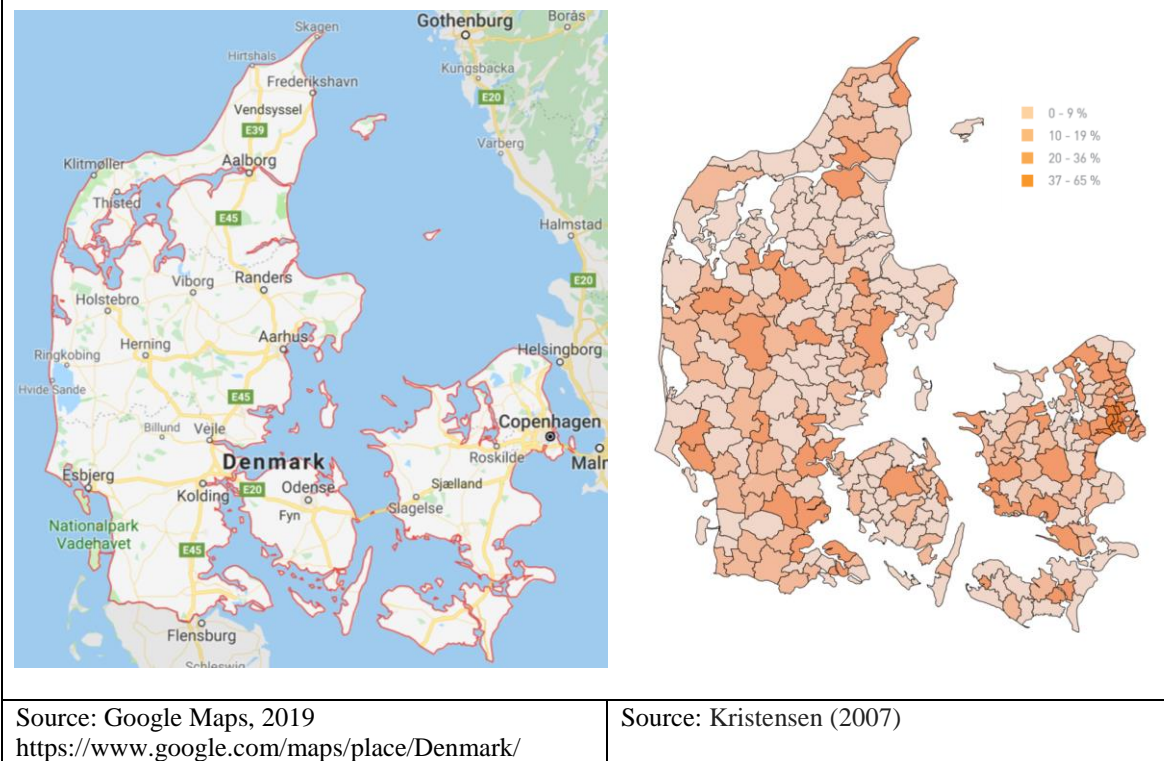
Overall, non-profit social housing makes up about 22% of the Danish housing stock. Considered as a proportion, this means that just over 1/5 of all housing units are social housing units in Denmark (Kristensen, 2007). Close to all current social housing in Denmark is owned by non-profit housing associations. This type of social housing makes up 20% of the overall housing stock. A very small percentage of social housing is owned publicly by the municipalities and is used mainly as emergency, short-term housing. This type of social housing makes up about 2% of the overall housing stock (Housing Europe, 2015; Kristensen, 2002; OECD 2016; Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007; Whitehead & Scanlon, 2007b). As of the most recent figures collected in 2013,

there were approximately 550 housing associations (BL, 2018). Among the Nordic countries, tenant democracy is the most developed and far-reaching in Denmark. Each association includes a general board, as well as individual estate boards. Tenants have had a right to the majority of board seats since 1984, ensuring tenant democracy and consensus-based decision making. The associations vary greatly in the number of units they manage, with some overseeing fewer than 10, and others over 30,000 (Kristensen, 2002; 2007; Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007). In total, there are approximately 7,000 social housing estates (called *member sections* in Denmark) and around 614,500 total dwellings, most of which are family-sized apartments. Multi-storey buildings account for approximately three quarters of all social housing units. The remaining approximate quarter of units are mainly in cluster, terraced, and semi-detached houses. A small 2% of social housing units are detached houses (BL, 2018; Housing Europe, 2015; Kristensen, 2002; 2007; OECD 2016; Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007; Whitehead & Scanlon, 2007b). Every estate is an autonomous financial unit and must balance its budget, meaning that subsidies are not transferred between estates under the same association nor between associations. The housing associations are supervised by the municipalities who are responsible for approving budgets, accounts, and certain social housing decisions, including building purchases and sales, as well as new social housing construction (Kristensen, 2002; 2007; Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007; Whitehead & Scanlon, 2007b).[40] All of the housing associations are part of a broader nation-wide organization called the National Federation of Housing Associations (*Boligselskabernes Landsforening* in Danish). The National Federation acts as a lobby for the social housing sector, negotiates with the national

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[40] In the past, these decisions were made through a national system that allocated a quota annually to each municipality (Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007).

government, and provides associations and estates with consulting, education, and other services (Kristensen, 2002).

Within each municipality, social housing availability is divided into two groups. 75% of available social housing is allocated based on a waiting list system which includes a small fee to be paid annually. The ability to join the waiting list is unrestricted and open to everyone over the age of 15.[41] There are also internal waiting lists which allow tenants to move into more desirable apartments managed by the same housing association. The characteristics of the distribution of the majority of social housing is notable as it makes the Danish system universal in character and exemplifies social democratic principles. The remaining 25% of available social housing falls outside the waiting list system; municipalities can allocate the remaining 25% based on needs assessments.[42] The assessments are not based on income, but rather situation, for example priority will be given to people or families experiencing homelessness, or to people in dire or dangerous housing situations. The municipality can also allocate social housing to fill specific needs in the local community. For example, municipalities may provide social housing to young people in areas with an aging demographic, to students or employed individuals in deprived areas, to specific workers where there is a shortage of key labour, or in some cases any employed person in order to increase social mix and mitigate increasing urban segregation (Kristensen, 2007; OECD 2016; Scanlon, et al., 2015; Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007; Whitehead & Scanlon, 2007b). In liberal countries, eligibility criteria typically face regular reassessments, and failure to meet criteria can result in rent increases or lease terminations. Across Europe, social housing is generally secure

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[41] Originally, there were no age restrictions set on when one could apply, however a minimum age restriction was introduced in 1993 and now the applicant must be over the age of 15 (Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007).
[42] For apartments designed for people with disabilities and for the elderly, municipalities are responsible for all tenant assignments (Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007).

housing. In most countries, social housing offers tenant a lifelong home, even if there are changes in family size of income. Although some countries technically do have legal stipulations regarding increasing rent when income exceeds a maximum threshold, in reality these provisions are rarely enforced partly because they are administratively difficult and also because they would result in pushing out stable tenants who are generally viewed as beneficial for increasing social mix. In Denmark, 100% of the adult population is eligible for social housing and there are no income requirements. For tenants that are allocated by the municipality, the social housing sector does not regularly reassess tenants to ensure that they continue to fulfill any applicable original eligibility (OECD, 2016; 2018; Scanlon, et al., 2015; Whitehead & Scanlon, 2007b). While sitting tenants do not have the right to buy their unit, they do have the right to trade their dwelling with someone living in an apartment managed by the same housing association, a unit managed by a different association, or someone living in private sector rental housing. If they are temporarily working in another area, tenants may sublet their social housing unit for a limited amount of time. Children may also 'inherit' social housing units from their parents if they have previously lived in the unit (Kristensen, 2007; OECD, 2016; 2018; Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007; Whitehead & Scanlon, 2007b).

At the time of writing, 88% of the cost of new social housing construction is financed by government mortgages, 10% is financed by the municipality, and tenant deposits account for the final 2%.[43] Tenants rents are used to repay the mortgage. Unlike privately-owned properties, social housing is exempt from property taxes.[44] As of 2004, there is an upper limit cap on construction costs. The National Fund for Non-Profit Housing Associations (*Landsbyggefonden* in Danish) was

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[43] These percentages have changed slightly over the years.
[44] Cooperative housing is also exempt from property taxes (Kristensen, 2007).

created in 1967. Any social housing payments in excess of the mortgage amount are added to the national subsidy fund. As of 2000, many of the mortgages from the post-war social housing boom have been fully repaid and the number is growing. For these estates, approximately 50-66% of rents are stored in the fund, while the rest are channeled into municipal funds. The funds are used for new social housing construction, repairs, refurbishments, renovations, social development plans, and guidance to the housing associations. The fund also acts as a failsafe to prevent buildings from neglecting necessary maintenance and renovations that would outprice tenants (BL, 2018; Housing Europe, 2015; Kristensen, 2002; 2007; Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007; Whitehead & Scanlon, 2007b). Social housing is, on average, the most newly-built in Denmark. A mere 2% of social housing units are pre-war constructions and over half were built in the years following 1970 (Kristensen, 2007). The proportion of social housing units increased in numbers up until the early 2000s; it has now stagnated, with the most recent data available listing 1,250 units built in 2012. The sector seems unlikely to decrease (Housing Europe, 2015; Kristensen, 2007). The following sections provide a history of social housing policy in Denmark. In addition, notes on rent regulations, housing allowances, and cooperatives are provided, and the historical analysis includes key changes in the broader housing market.

*Rent Regulations and Housing Allowances*

In addition to generous universal welfare state infrastructure to limit inequality and a large social housing sector, private sector rents are also regulated in Denmark by municipal rent controls and housing allowances are provided to further ensure housing affordability. In Denmark there are two main housing allowances, *Boligydelse* (housing subsidy for rental and housing costs) and *Boligsikring* (rent subsidy for rental costs). Subsidies are based on tenure neutrality principles,

which means that they are largely not dependent on tenure type. In general, people with low incomes receive housing benefits regardless of tenure type (Housing Europe, 2015; Kristensen, 2007; OECD, 2016; 2018; Scanlon, et al., 2015; Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007; Whitehead & Scanlon, 2007b). In the rental sector overall, 9 out of 10 low-income households report receiving a housing allowance in Denmark (OECD, 2016; 2018). Pensioners who own their own home are also eligible for housing-cost subsidies (Scanlon, et al., 2015). As an underlying characteristic in Denmark, the welfare state is responsible for housing its citizens; this is manifested in social housing policies and municipal allocation allowances. It is also responsible to ensure that all citizens can afford housing, which is manifested in rent controls, housing subsidies for rental and ownership, and, in special circumstances for families without any income living in social housing, the municipality paying the entire rent (Kristensen, 2002). While rent regulations and housing allowances are not the focus of the chapter, key changes are included within the historical analysis.

*Cooperatives*

Unlike in Canada, where cooperative model housing is considered social housing, cooperative housing in Denmark is not the same as social housing. When a person enters a cooperative (*andelsboliger* in Danish), they purchase a share of the property. Cooperatives operate through cooperative housing associations to which rent is paid and used towards paying off loans, operation costs, and shared maintenance. Currently, there are three different ways that cooperative housing prices are assessed. The choice between the methods is decided by the residents. Approximately 22% of cooperatives are valued at the original purchase price. Approximately 57% are valued based off of the most recent public valuation. Approximately 21% are based off of the market price as assessed by a real estate appraiser. The original purchase price method is typically

favoured by cooperatives where residents maintain the view that cooperative housing should be non-profit and where residents intend to continue living in the cooperative, while private valuation is preferred by residents who want to make a profit off of their cooperative unit, often in order to move to more expensive, larger housing. Public valuation is often the compromise reached among divided cooperatives. Due to the different valuation methods, there are significant differences between cooperative unit prices. Units that are valued based off of the original purchase price are often comparable in price to social housing units, while units based on public or private valuations are comparable in price to freehold flats. Due to these differences, cooperative housing is considered a unique housing sector in Denmark and is not included as part of the social housing sector. It makes up approximately 18% of the overall housing stock. The majority of cooperative units are found in Copenhagen, where they make up 1/3 of all housing. Outside of Copenhagen, cooperative housing percentages are very low, around 3-4% of all housing (Kristensen, 2007). Cooperative housing is governed by its own regulations and legislation, and the majority of units are influenced by the free market. Obtaining cooperative housing (and private sector rentals for that matter) is difficult in Denmark, where 'good connections' are essential. In contrast, in social housing the waiting list system determines access, and social relationships nor income are considered (Kristensen, 2007; Scanlon, et al., 2015; Ærø, 2004). Covering the entire history of cooperative housing is outside of the scope of this project, but key changes are included within the historical analysis.

Historical Highlights

*Early History*

The very earliest working class housing emerged in Denmark in the late 17th century, when blocks of flats in the city center were built for workers. Standards varied greatly, with poor quality housing typically built by free market speculators and more sound construction built through the earliest social efforts (Ærø, 2004). Housing provision later emerged as a broader policy issue around the middle of the nineteenth century (Christiansen & Petersen, 2001; Esping-Andersen, 1985a; Jørgensen, 2010; Kristensen, 2007). At this time, private rental housing was developed in tandem with rapid industrialization and urbanisation. The working class largely lived in rental housing in larger towns, and townhouses in small towns. Working class private rental units were small and lacked all modern conveniences, while the wealthy who lived in private rental housing lived in large, well-equipped units. In the late 19th century, single-family homes were built on the outskirts of urban areas for members of the establishment. Pressure on the state to provide adequate and affordable housing for the poor emerged in Denmark at this time and was particularly concentrated in Copenhagen. This was due in part to the massive cholera epidemics in Copenhagen in 1853, fueled by poor sanitation and housing conditions. The first housing association were formed, and the first social housing was constructed by medical associations, charities, employers, trade unions, and worker cooperatives starting in 1854. Early social housing was available for the poor, large families, and workers. Some of the social housing projects of the late 19th century used cooperative housing models. To establish cooperative housing, money was saved through a housing association and used for the construction of a collectively owned dwelling. In 1887, the first law allowing public housing support was enacted (Kristensen, 2007). Social Democrats first exerted political influence in the early 20th century in local communities through municipal

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socialism. Gaining majorities on municipal councils, Social Democrats introduced policies based on universalism and used these experiences in future national-level welfare state building (Christiansen & Petersen, 2001). Most notably, in 1903, the Social Democrats gained a municipal majority in Copenhagen; during WWI the Social Democrats kept private development prices down and created public housing on municipally owned land (Therborn, 2017). Until the end of WWII, municipal supported associations and cooperatives such as these were the main providers of social housing in Denmark (Kristensen, 2007).

By the 1920s, the housing market had become an area of significant public concern and constituted a key discussion in Danish politics at the national level (Christiansen & Petersen, 2001; Esping-Andersen, 1985a; Jørgensen, 2010; Kristensen, 2007). In response, the first state-led social housing policies were enacted in 1933 with subsidies for non-profit social housing intended specifically for low-income housing (Kristensen, 2007; Ærø, 2004). Discussions on housing grew in parallel with the overall development of the welfare state. The social housing system was built by successive social democratic governments, with the support of the national social housing organization and the working classes' organizational power resources – including trade unions and cooperative movements (Christiansen & Petersen, 2001; Esping-Andersen, 1985a; Jørgensen, 2010; Kristensen, 2007; Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007). When WWII began, Denmark introduced rent freezes and controls, and rationed dwellings. As the war continued, prices rose as the housing shortage intensified. Municipalities faced increasing pressures to provide social housing. Housing associations, with the support of city councils, were expanded in the urban areas (Kristensen, 2007).

*Post-war History*

Amongst the Nordic countries, while Denmark had more working class slums in urban centers, housing standards were generally much higher on average and shortages were less acute following the war (Esping-Andersen, 1985a). There was nonetheless a major need for new dwellings and economic development in Denmark. With little construction during the war years, as well as a growing population, post-war state-supported increases in urban industry, and growing migration from the countryside into the urban centers, there was an increased demand for housing – especially for workers (Christiansen & Petersen, 2001; Esping-Andersen, 1985a; Jørgensen, 2010; Kristensen, 2007). Denmark experienced modernization later than its European neighbours, with a large peasant and agricultural population until the mid-1940s. At the end of WWII, close to 50% of Danes lived rurally, but industry and urbanization grew rapidly following the war. It was close to impossible for new families to find housing. Overcrowding was a serious issue in the cities and many dwellings lacked bathrooms and central heating (Esping-Andersen, 1985a; Kristensen, 2007; Ærø, 2004). There was an estimated 60,000 dwelling shortage in Denmark, with approximately 5,000 families experiencing homelessness and sheltered temporarily by municipalities. Housing prices remained consistently high; to combat social unrest and the threat of increasing unemployment, rent controls remained (Kristensen, 2007).

In 1946 the first national housing reforms were introduced in Denmark. The reforms included extensive public control over the housing market, rent subsidies, and rent controls, particularly for older housing in Copenhagen (Esping-Andersen, 1985a). The reforms also including the Housing Subsidy Act, which included housing loans for new construction and secured the national social housing system. These loans and laws supported the social housing associations, which were viewed as the most effective solution to the mass housing shortage. As a

response to the acute housing shortage, and supported by national policy and by municipal governments as a way to solve local social problems, non-profit housing associations and social housing units grew dramatically during this period. From the 1940s to 50s, social housing was typically located centrally and built in small scale. The goal was to secure healthy and high-quality dwellings with ample green space for everyone (BL, 2018; Housing Europe, 2015; Jørgensen, 2010; Kristensen, 2007; Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007).

Housing problems were politically important before the war and became a key part of welfare state building after 1945. During Danish welfare state building, the Social Democrats worked to regulate capitalism and increase redistribution, egalitarianism, cross-class solidarity, and social justice. Under these broader goals, urban policy and planning were key to regulating public versus private interests in the city. At this time, social housing was referred to as common housing (*almennyttigt boligbyggeri* in Danish), because it was intended for everyone, regardless of class. Emphasis was on creating uniform, democratic apartments, with single-family houses largely absent from the cityscape. Understood as crucial to overall welfare and wellbeing, social housing thrived in this period, characterized by a strong social mix and cross-class solidarity (Bøggild, 2011; Kristensen, 2002; 2007). Social housing became a key political pillar in overall welfare state building and the system created in 1946 has remained largely unchanged until present day (Kristensen, 2002; 2007). Denmark's society and urban landscape were largely created through post-war welfare state building, and are a direct manifestation of these urban planning visions and political ambitions (Jørgensen, 2010; Ærø, 2004).

To help create housing policy and ensure urban democracy, the Ministry of Housing and Construction and the Danish Building Research Institute were established in 1947 and the Building Regulation Law was produced in 1949 (Bøggild, 2011; Jørgensen, 2010; Kristensen, 2002; 2007).

From 1945 to the mid-1960s, the goal of the welfare society was to build as many new dwellings as fast as possible. Housing was (and continues to be) heavily subsidised, with public subsidies for both rental and owner-occupied housing covering close to all housing types (Kristensen, 2007; Ærø, 2004). Throughout the 1940s and 50s, Denmark favoured rental apartment construction. Universal social housing policies enjoyed broad political support and in an international lens, construction levels were among the highest in the world (Esping-Andersen, 1985a). The housing situation slowly improved over the next decades and reached stability in the late 1960s (Kristensen, 2007; Ærø, 2004).

As construction and economic activity rebounded after the war and life returned to normal, confidence in progress and the future of Denmark started to return. The 1940s and 50s were marked by general optimism in society – albeit cautious optimism. Until the 1960s, an emphasis on calculating, forecasting, and rationality dominated debates in Denmark. The welfare state was solidified during this period. Combating mass unemployment and diminishing inequality were high priorities in order to create a stable society and to avoid conditions of conflict and chaos that could lead to further wars (Jørgensen, 2010).

*Policy Liberalization*

The Nordic countries all followed the same path in terms of post-war housing policy creation, later diverging in the 1960s and 70s as housing shortages were alleviated. Throughout the 1930s and 40s, the Danish labour movement, supported by the work of social theorists, fought for housing to be considered a fundamental social right. Unfortunately, a true right to housing was never realized in Denmark. Instead, Denmark's housing market faced a gradual liberalization through the 1950s and 1960s, secured by housing policy reform legislation in 1958 and 1966, with

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an emphasis on housing subsidies as opposed to universal housing rights (Christiansen & Petersen, 2001; Esping-Andersen, 1985a; Jørgensen, 2010; Kristensen, 2007; Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007). During this period, housing policy became highly politicized with arguments over free market regulation of prices and loans. The left-wing leadership at the time was forced to reach a consensus with the right-wing. This resulted in a compromise and the new 1958 Housing Act, which included a state withdrawal from providing loans, rent controls relaxing, and the introduction of tax deductions on mortgage payments, in exchange for increased rent allowances. As the Danish housing system liberalized significantly, the Social Democrats faced scrutiny for their compromise from renters, other left-wing parties, and the labour movement. A small 17% of new-built housings were supported by state loans in the mid-1970s, compared to 74% in the late 1950s; in the same time period, private buildings jumped from 74% to 82% of new-built housing (Esping-Andersen, 1985a).

As economic development accelerated in Denmark during the 1960s and 70s, there was a sense of rapid change and optimism for the future. Planning on a broad scale was influenced by planners, as well as social scientists (Jørgensen, 2010). Between the 1966 to 1974, there was a building boom in Denmark when industrial construction methods and increasing economic prosperity led to unprecedented building activity of social housing and single-family homes. Up until the late 1960s, the biggest concern regarding Danish housing was the shortage of dwellings. After the need was met in the 1960s, focus shifted to housing subsidy allocation and housing prices. There was an emphasis on increasing both individual and collective housing affluence, and both single-family detached homes and social housing tower apartment communities were built with public subsidies. As housing conditions improved, the average number of dwelling inhabitants fell (Esping-Andersen, 1985a; Kristensen, 2007; Ærø, 2004).

The only housing type that did not flourish was private rental. During and after the war years, building and renting private rental housing was unattractive due to a lack of subsidies and strict rent regulations, which allowed the social housing sector to flourish in contrast. Private rental stock peaked in the mid-1960s and has declined overall since that time. The Housing Agreement of 1966 retracted some rent regulations. For tenants unable to afford higher rents, a new housing benefit was introduced and rent allowances were extended. The agreement also allowed for the sale of rental dwellings into freehold flats. This change was criticized heavily for benefiting the owners at the expense of renters, as property values increased. The Housing Agreement of 1966 resulted in many large private rentals converted into new freehold flats and many older properties divided into flats and sold individually. The key problem was that many units in very poor conditions were sold at exorbitant prices. Due to such extreme speculative sales, the Housing Agreement was amended in 1972 making properties built before 1966 ineligible for sale as freehold flats. Amendments to the Housing Agreement in 1975, further resulted in many flats sold to cooperative housing associations (Esping-Andersen, 1985a; Kristensen, 2002; 2007). With all of these factors combined, since the 1960s, private rental tenure has decreased, while social housing tenure has close to doubled (Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007). Today, new freehold flats are typically new-built constructions and are generally elite housing available to only the wealthiest Danes (Kristensen, 2007).

Compromising with the right-wing in creating the 1966 Housing Reform was arguably one of the key decisions that influenced falling Social Democrat party support, especially at the municipal level, among left-wing and working class voters. In terms of its broader goals, the 1966 Housing Reform did not differ significantly from the 1958 Housing Act. Further eliminating rent control, bolstering of homeownership tax privileges, and allowing the sale of freehold flats faced

strong disapproval from the left-wing electorate. Both of the housing acts were criticized heavily by left-wing parties and trade unions due to the acts' privileging of homeowners and reliance on the free market in providing housing finance. Although the Social Democrats did attempt to pass reform bills, as more and more people bought homes and benefited from tax deductions, further reforms were difficult to pass (Esping-Andersen, 1985a). The results from this liberalization in the 1960s are mixed. These changes did achieve some positive results: across the globe, Danes have one of the highest housing standards, and, among the Nordic countries, the lowest level of overcrowding; many working class Danish families own their own homes and, despite housing liberalization, the Danish social housing sector remains one of the most robust in the world. That said, the housing acts stunted social policy goals at the time, created problems of inflation and speculation in real estate, and drove up the costs of private market rental and housing (Esping-Andersen, 1985a; Kristensen, 2007; Ærø, 2004).

*Suburban Boom*

Between 1955-1975, industrial building methods became very popular as the solution to the urgent post-war housing shortage, and were supported by state subsidies. New building methods allowed for tower housing to be factory-produced, transported, and assembled quickly on site. The new communities promised to provide people living in inner-city slums with dramatic increases in quality of life (Ærø, 2004). In line with the global trend, in the 1960s and 70s expanding cities by building large-scale, tower complexes, in outlying areas became common and there was a surge of social housing built in this style in Denmark. Among its European neighbours, Denmark was a leading nation in terms of tower apartment housing construction (BL, 2018; Housing Europe, 2015; Kristensen, 2007; Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007). These tower apartment

communities were promoted by the Ministry of Housing and funded through building and mortgage interest subsidies, with housing allowances available for residents (Kristensen, 2002; 2007). At the height of social housing production in the 1960s-70s, approximately 10,000 units were constructed every year (Kristensen, 2007). New social housing tower apartment communities offered well-equipped, modern, large, healthy, open apartment. Comparatively speaking, social housing units in Denmark were (and arguably still are) some of the best-equipped and largest. The post-war units typically had/have large balconies, two bathrooms, and four or five rooms. Part of the reason for the size of the post-war units was that, in the late 1960s to early 1970s, it was realistic that social housing could compete with the single-family home as the most popular dwelling type among families. Social housing was broadly enjoyed, and tenant demographics were identical to the demographics of the overall housing stock (Jørgensen, 2010; Kristensen, 2007; Ærø, 2004).

In the post-war years, suburbs grew due to the building of both social housing tower apartment communities and single-family detached houses backed by favourable state loans. Suburban development was especially pronounced in the 1960s to early 1970s. At the same time, wages and general affluence increased dramatically and homeownership became accessible to many people. In line with the global trend, prior to 1940, owning a home in Denmark, rather than renting, posed no obvious financial advantage. This situation changed in the 1960s when buying a house was the best investment that a financially stable Dane could make. Home ownership became more advantageous and accessible due to continued inflation and increasing marginal tax rates on the one hand, and government loans with low interest levels and low property taxation, including a stipulation that housing loan interest payments could be deducted from taxable income, on the other. Homeownership was popular among the mid- to upper-classes and was particularly advantageous to Danes with the highest taxable incomes. Single-family houses began to be built

in both large and small towns across the country and increasing car reliance opened up the countryside for suburban single-family detached houses (Bøggild, 2011; Jørgensen, 2010; Kristensen, 2002; 2007; Ærø, 2004). Between 1960 and 1975, approximately 500,000 single-family homes were built (Ærø, 2004).

As suburbs ballooned, home ownership became accessible and popular among not only the upper- and middle-classes, but also the working class. Control over a house and yard and the simultaneous advantages of countryside living and urban life were attractive. From the 1960s to the present day, most Danes consider the single-family detached home to be the ideal dwelling (Bøggild, 2011; Jørgensen, 2010; Kristensen, 2007; Ærø, 2004). As single-family home ownership grew, it became difficult to fill the suburban social housing tower apartment communities; financial support from the state, municipalities, and mortgage credit institutions became necessary. With increasing emphasis on individuality, the desire for private happiness superseded public happiness. Private happiness was largely achieved through the suburban single-family home lifestyle (Bøggild, 2011; Jørgensen, 2010; Kristensen, 2007; Ærø, 2004). As is the trend across the advanced industrial nations, today the most common tenure type in Denmark is owner-occupied, and access to home ownership has increased due to support from the government and market (Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007).

*Squats in Copenhagen*

In the late 1960s the demographic of Copenhagen was changing quickly. As Danes moved into single-family homes and to a decreasing extent suburban social housing, houses in the cities were vacated. Families flocked to the new suburbs. As life drained out of the urban centres, buildings became dilapidated. They were redeveloped into non-residential areas, abandoned and

slated for urban renewal, or demolished to accommodate car traffic. Along with suburban housing, Denmark's first mall opened in 1966, and added to the abandoning of shops in the urban centers. By the late 1960s, Copenhagen was in crisis as industry closed and moved to rural areas with lower labour costs. From the state's view, buildings in disrepair and slums were problematic. They began to be cleared. From the 1960s to 1980s, there was a push to condemn and renovate remaining private rentals, which were considered to have slum-like living conditions; this was resisted by the sitting residents who were largely university students and people with very low incomes (Jørgensen, 2010; Kristensen, 2007).

At the same time, squatting was becoming very popular in Copenhagen in individual apartments, whole buildings, and even large areas of undeveloped land (Bøggild, 2011). The Danish squatters collectively called themselves slum stormers (*slumstormere* in Danish) (Karpantschof, 2011). Prominent examples of squats include the first Slumstormere movement that squatted the Christiania area between 1965-1971; Christiania, developed in 1971 and still existing today – although the community has changed due to continued urban clashes, police threats, political agreements with government, and gentrification largely via tourism; and the Danish BZ movement (*BZ-bevægelsen* in Danish), a militant squatting group which rejected hierarchies, patriarchal structures, and instituted systems, and which frequently clashed with police and controlled many fortified buildings around the city of Copenhagen as part of the larger BZ movement (Bøggild, 2011; Karpantschof, 2011; Smith, 2005; Thörn, et al., 2011).

Throughout the 1960s to 1980s, activist citizens' groups protested the rational planning paradigm and urban demolition. In particular, the demolition of poor housing and squats, and the construction of large through streets sparked outrage. Many critical protests took place in Copenhagen throughout this time period (Jørgensen, 2010; Kristensen, 2007). Notable examples

of specific urban battles include the Battle of Byggeren in 1980, a two-week long urban uprising drawing thousands of protesters over attempts to demolish a large free space, playground-like, recreation area in Copenhagen's Nørrebro neighbourhood, which ultimately was lost (Karpantschof, 2011; Lund Hansen, 2011; Thörn, et al., 2011); the 1986 squatter uprising, resulting in an urban barricade lasting 9 days, supported by the Danish BZ movement and Christiania (Karpantschof, 2011; Thörn, et al., 2011); and the 2007 riots which began when the Danish BZ movement controlled Youth House (*Ungdomshuset* in Danish) was cleared in March of 2007 following a dramatic clash involving police, military, and helicopters. In the case of the Youth House, the house was promptly demolished as soon as the residents were cleared. A month-long violent riot followed, with street fires, burning vehicles, tear gas, and approximately 1,000 arrests (Karpantschof, 2011). In the same month, a house was demolished by police in Christiania, adding to the street battles between squatters and police (Lund Hansen, 2011). Following the month-long protest, urban revolts continued and began to exhaust Copenhagen's police force, which had been forced to call for national reinforcements on several occasions. A year later, in July of 2008, activists were compensated with a municipal building to act as a replacement for Youth House (Karpantschof, 2011; Thörn, et al., 2011).

State responses to these urban movements in the 1960s and 1970s often resulted in dialogue-seeking measures. In the 1980s more violent measures were taken with deployment of riot police becoming common. In response, squatting culture changed as well, from more of a hippie culture to a militant style. In 1992 and 1993, police violence in response to urban protest and squatting reached its height with media exposing police severely beating arrested people, sexually harassing women, and tear gassing children living in squatter communities without reason. In 1993, Denmark's acceptance of EU membership resulted in mass urban protests and 11

people were shot near a Danish BZ stronghold in the Nørrebro neighbourhood of Copenhagen (all of whom survived). The police abuse was noted in 1994 in an Amnesty International Report and was shocking and upsetting to many Danes, who had a history of being regarded as a highly democratic country. Following these events, the unit responsible, a riot unit of the Copenhagen police, was disbanded, although heavily armed police presence was still common in the 2000s (Guardian, 1993; Karpantschof, 2011).

As this brief overview illustrates, Denmark has a strong history of rejection of capitalism through urban protests and squats which have often resulted in major, and sometimes violent, urban conflicts, especially in Copenhagen when slum clearance policies were enacted. While these conflicts were a direct result of Copenhagen's large-scale demolition plans, the protests were rooted in a broad class conflict over social justice and rights for the poor (Lund Hansen, 2011; Thörn, et al., 2011). There was a unifying ideological dimension to the squats that allowed for coalition building: a rejection of capitalism, and an emphasis on collectivity, DIY culture, and youth revolt. Christiania is a particularly interesting and relevant example, having survived ongoing, intensive attempts at dismantling. This has largely been achieved by fostering clear ideological stances, concerted coalition-building across broad spectrums of people, bringing in supporters from across the country, and enacting urban protests. Concerted coalition building has included support from across the class spectrum, as well as from academics, musicians, other squatters, rural communities, local and international tourists, professionals, cultural figures, media, and youth (Karpantschof, 2011).

*Reforms and Financial Crisis*

In the 1970s, in an attempt to unite town and suburban planning, local government was reformed through the reduction of municipalities. In 1965 there were 1,345 municipalities and 24 counties which were restructured into 275 municipalities and 14 counties between 1970 and 1974. The mergers created heated debates, most notably in cases where areas made up of mainly owner-occupiers, largely supporting center-right municipal governments, and renters, largely supporting social democratic municipal governments, were merged (Jørgensen, 2010). It also began to decentralize social housing policy to the municipal level; the new, larger municipalities were created so that local governments would be more capable of handling tasks devolved from the national level (Kristensen, 2002).

At the same time, Denmark and most notably Copenhagen, was entering a financial crisis. The Oil Crisis in the mid-1970s resulted in an economic recession and increased unemployment. House prices and new building stagnated and problems began to emerge with a lack of affordable housing (Christiansen & Petersen, 2001; Esping-Andersen, 1985a; Jørgensen, 2010; Kristensen, 2007). In response, the Housing Agreement of 1975 replaced the 1966 agreement and focused on new dwelling construction to stimulate the economy; specifically, the act stipulated that 40,000 dwellings would be built each year for the following four years, of which 8,000-10,000 would be social housing units. The agreement also supported the formation of private cooperative housing associations, resulting in a dramatic increase in that sector. Under this agreement, when a private-sector housing property was put on the market, it had to be offered to the current residents first. Many residents' groups took over property by buying their buildings at market price and setting up cooperative housing associations. In addition to this stipulation, the 1975 Housing Agreement

also offered subsidies for new cooperative housing construction. At that time, cooperative housing was the most heavily subsidized housing type in Denmark (Kristensen, 2002; 2007).

Up to and following the war years, the first task of the welfare society was to meet the need for housing (Ærø, 2004). In the mid-1970s, planning goals were shifting. In line with the broader global trend, by the early 1970s, a lack of investment and drastic economic restructuring had proliferated slum-like living conditions, especially in Copenhagen where, as previously mentioned, poor tenants and squatters were concentrated (Lund Hansen, 2011). Focus shifted to the demolition and urban renewal of old unhealthy and dilapidated buildings. Large-scale regeneration projects became a priority in the inner cities, with most occurring between 1975 to 2000, and many met by urban protests (Jørgensen, 2010; Kristensen, 2007; Ærø, 2004). Outside the cities, in the suburbs, low-density housing, developing from the garden city planning ideal, including cluster and terrace homes, was becoming popular. Today a key feature of the Danish suburban landscape and the welfare housing project, this type of housing became the most common type of new-built dwelling in the late 1970s and exceeding new-built single-family homes and tower apartments in the early 1980s. Low-density housing was meant to foster community responsibility and was a reaction to the 1960s boom in single-family detached homes, criticized as wasteful, conformist, and bourgeois, and to the tower apartment communities, criticized as not meeting residents' needs (BL, 2018; Housing Europe, 2015; Kristensen, 2007; Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007; Ærø, 2004).

Ambitious growth plans halted in the aftermath of the 1973 Oil Crisis and were permanently shelved due to increasing neoliberalization in the 1980s. Housing tax rules changed in 1986 when the amount of housing loan interest payments that could be deducted from taxable income decreased and stricter mortgage requirements were adopted. By 1987, housing-related tax

deductions were approximately halved, housing demand began to fall dramatically, prices fell, and

housing construction stagnated. At the same time, unemployment was growing rapidly under the

Conservative government, as shown in Table 19. Unemployment was especially problematic in

Copenhagen, where the city was approaching a state of bankruptcy, as will be discussed further in

the section on Copenhagen's financial crisis (Jørgensen, 2010; Kristensen, 2002; 2007).

**Table 19: Net Unemployment, % of Labour Force, in Relation to Governing Party, Denmark (1981-2017)**



National Governing Party Key: Red = Social Democrat, Green = Conservative, Blue = Venstre 'Left'

Source: Adapted from Statistics Denmark
https://www.dst.dk/en/Statistik/emner/arbejde-indkomst-og-formue/arbejdsloeshed
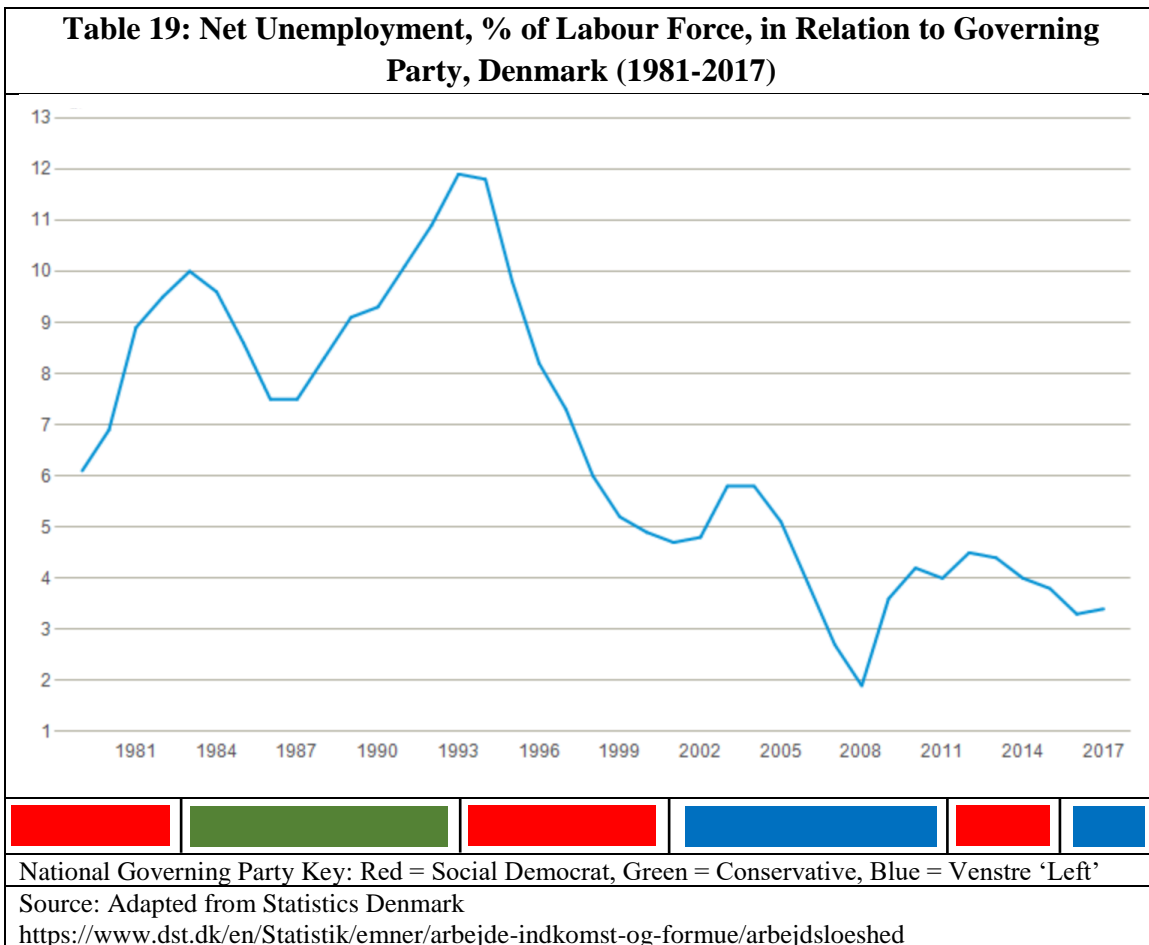
*Gentrification*

In Denmark, spatial planning is mainly regulated through the Danish Planning Act. Up

until the late 1970s, city and rental housing renewal typically included massive demolitions of

slum-like areas and new construction. Due to massive opposition to such tactics, especially the aforementioned riots in Copenhagen, urban renewal approaches changed through the Urban Regeneration Act of 1983. The legislation focused on slum clearance was replaced with legislation on preservation, regeneration, urban renewal, and redevelopment, which specifically introduced a requirement that the public should be involved in the planning process to the greatest extent possible, with provisions including the need for consultation and veto rights. These changes came with a large expansion of urban renewal state funding. This led to new tactics including building preservation and further private rental to cooperative housing conversions. Support is divided over the new approach; although, in writing, the process allows for more resident consultation and less dramatic evictions, it is clear that in many cases gentrification[45] has priced sitting tenants out of their homes (Jørgensen, 2010; Kristensen, 2007).[46] In Copenhagen, for example, studies show that approximately 20% of the original residents of urban renewal neighbourhoods have either chosen or been forced to move because of unaffordability, as will be discussed further in the section on modern day Copenhagen (Edgar, et al., 2002). Drawing on this data and other neighbourhood-level qualitative studies, it can be argued that the trend of gentrification has been prominent in Denmark, where policies aimed at improving deprived neighbourhoods or increasing social mix are easily used as gentrification schemes (Larsen & Lund Hansen, 2008; Lund Hansen, 2011).[47]

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[45] Gentrification has been a trend in city centers across the world and especially in cities competing for global capital accumulation through world city status, of which Danish cities such as Copenhagen and Aarhus have embraced tentatively, but increasingly, especially in recent years (Larsen & Lund Hansen, 2008; Lund Hansen, 2011; Therborn, 2017).

[46] See for example Larsen & Lund Hansen (2008), Lund Hansen (2011) for analyses of Copenhagen; for other work in the social democratic states, see Hedin, et al. (2012) for an analysis of Sweden.

[47] One stark example is the city of Copenhagen's housing policy manual of 2000 which focused on fostering the "economically sustainable population", which was later framed by the Head of Planning in Copenhagen, Holger Bisgaard, as removing the "trash" from the city (Lund Hansen, 2011:302).

As discussed, these types of urban transformations have often forced marginalized people to demand their rights to the city through urban protests.

*Shifting Demographics*

In the social housing sector, the vacant flats that emerged in the mid-1970s grew as time progressed. Vacant units were more and more difficult to fill, placing the responsible housing estates under further financial strain. People moved out of social housing units as home-ownership had become more accessible and attractive. Vacant units were increasingly rented by people experiencing acute housing need and social problems. Adding to this problem was the internal waiting list systems which allowed resourceful tenants to move to desirable units, while municipal allocations increasingly filled units in less desirable estates and increased housing segregation. Growing stigmatization began to create a negative cycle. By the early 1980s, building damage, decay, and stigmatization added to the problem. As a response to the changes in the sector, the maximum size for new social housing units was also capped at this time. In 1985, a large-scale intervention was launched for approximately 6.5% of social housing estates in Denmark classified as 'troubled'. The initial solutions were to renovate in order to improve damage, decay, and open spaces, as well as to stabilize and improve the finances of the housing associations through subsidies and restructured mortgages. Although the quality of the dwellings were improved, the problems continued with social mix declining and social problems increasing. From this experience, it was decided that social initiatives were needed to improve overall conditions (Kristensen, 2002; 2007).

Since this time, addressing deprivation and segregation in tower apartment communities has been on the national political agenda. There have been pushes from government to allow for

large-scale renovations through the use of the national subsidy fund, for easier demolitions, for businesses to rent units, to make the areas more attractive to higher-income groups, and to increase social initiatives focusing on crime prevention, increased integration, and employment. Selling social housing units has also been attempted through pilot projects (Jørgensen, 2010; Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007). The projects have not resulted in significant changes since, in addition to municipal and Ministry approval, the general association board, as well as the estate board must also agree to renovate, demolish, or offer apartments for sale, and the majority of boards have been strongly opposed. As well, under current legislation if social housing is sold, the total revenue is given to the National Fund for Non-Profit Housing Associations, which in turn would use the funds to finance the social housing system (Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007). On the contrary, due to self-financing and control, as well as the need to house people due to increasing unemployment, financial crisis in Copenhagen, and displacement through gentrification, social housing production kept pace with numbers from the 1970s, with approximately 8,000 social housing dwellings built every year between 1980 and 1990 (Kristensen, 2002).

Throughout the 1980s, the Danish government was gradually decentralizing. This trend continued into the 1990s. Starting in 1994, the process of building, allocating, and approving the accounts and budgets of social housing was decentralized and moved from nationally regulated to overseen by local municipalities, with the municipal share of co-financing for new buildings increased slightly (Kristensen, 2002; 2007). New social housing production decreased in the 1990s, with approximately 4,000 new social housing units built annually. This reduction was influenced by the changes to social housing policy, as well as by the general decrease in new building across housing types, and the national housing policy debates in the late 1980s which (inaccurately) predicted a dramatically decreasing population in Denmark in coming years.

Despite the decrease in unit numbers from the previous decades, social housing nonetheless grew its numbers by 53% between 1980 and 1998 (approximately 3% every year) due to the comparative slowdown in other types of construction (averaging approximately 1% annually during the same time frame). Due to this, social housing as a percentage of the overall housing stock grew from 14% in 1980 to 20% in 1998 (Kristensen, 2002).

In 1993, the newly created City/Urban Committee released an action plan with the aim to improve housing segregation in specific urban areas and social housing estates by 1998. The committee was comprised of 12 government ministers and identified a broad set of social initiatives, including social supports and programs, to supplement the physical and economic initiatives identified in 1985. There was also a trial period of rent reductions to encourage financially stable people to continue living in social housing estates. Although the trend did not reverse, the plan seemed to halt further decay of the sector. The results were used to argue that long-term resources and initiatives were necessary, as well as education and job training opportunities; based off of these findings, continued social support for the sector was included in new legislation in 2000. It was reasoned that the high level of government funding funneled into the physical, economic, and social initiatives was warranted, compared to the social expenses that could be incurred by the country if housing segregation was left unchecked (Kristensen, 2002; 2007). As well, planners have responded to the problems associated with high rise tower apartment communities. A return to small scale, low-density social housing units has become popular among city planners in Denmark, which combines some of the attractive qualities of the single-family detached home with higher density and promotion of community integration and activities. The number of new dwellings constructed annually in high-density, low-rise, non-detached buildings surpassed those built in tower apartments in the 1980s and 1990s and urban planners now actively

advocate for compact, mixed-use cities (BL, 2018; Housing Europe, 2015; Jørgensen, 2010; Kristensen, 2007; Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007; Ærø, 2004).

*Financial Crisis in Copenhagen*

Copenhagen faced a period of turbulence during the 1990s. In 1993, the situation was its most dire and the city faced bankruptcy. A variety of measures were taken to recuperate the city. Government policies and funding included limiting the size of malls outside of city centers to combat the draining of urban life, targeting old industrial districts and waterfront property in the urban centers for urban regeneration, and channeling substantial funding and investments into elite housing and cultural institutions (Jørgensen, 2010). By the 1990s, consultations were required for development and large-scale neighbourhood renewal projects, with the aim to ensure that planners acted as facilitators for residents. In the mid-1990s, the Vesterbro neighbourhood was regenerated as the first major project in Copenhagen as part of the Urban Renewal Act. The neighbourhood remains a contested example of gentrification masked as renewal guided by resident input. Other developments in the 1990s and 2000s have used legislation to avoid consultations (Bøggild, 2011; Jørgensen, 2010; Kristensen, 2007; Larsen & Lund Hansen, 2008; Lund Hansen, 201).[48] At the same time, to quell falling housing demand and prices, mortgage conditions were changed; this

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[48] To get around consultations, the Danish government has used legislation to enact development projects. The elite Ørestad development in Copenhagen, which started in 1991, is an example. Here, the public was able to provide feedback after an architectural competition in 2004 had resulted in four winning proposals. There was no opportunity to object to the new development since it was pre-determined through legislation. The approval of a massive mall in 2000, which exceeded the Planning Act's maximum allowable size for a store outside of a city centre, added to the intense disapproval and criticism of the development. Nearby residents and politician protested the mall and created a formal organization in opposition. Despite all opposition, the Ørestad development, including the mall (which is Scandinavia's largest) was completed in 2004. The project continues to face criticism to present day (Jørgensen, 2010).

has resulted in increasing housing prices since 1993 across the country, but most dramatically in Copenhagen and other large urban centers (Kristensen, 2007). The national government forced Copenhagen to sell some municipal owned social housing to improve the tax base. Most social housing units are owned by housing estates, which were unaffected by the legislation. Of the municipally owned units in Copenhagen, 7% were sold in the 1990s, with 90% bought by the sitting tenants (Edgar, et al., 2002). As the 1990s progressed, urban living became desirable once again and new residents further improved the tax base. By the late 1990s, Copenhagen had recuperated financially, although housing shortages loomed, particularly among low-income and young people (Jørgensen, 2010; Kristensen, 2002).

*Neoliberalization and Racialization*

In 1998, the Ministry of Housing changed its name to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, which reflected the increasing trend of urban politics as weighty in national affairs, which had characterized the 1980s and 1990s (Kristensen, 2002). In 2001, with the change in government to the neoliberal party led by Anders Fogh Rasmussen, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs was abolished and duties were relocated to other ministries. This had several negative effects: it made housing policies less transparent, reduced the overall regulation in the housing sector, and made lobbying for housing issues much more difficult. Further, the collaboration and negotiation between the national government and national housing federations (including the National Federation of Housing Associations representing the social housing sector), that had characterized social democratic governments, was largely abandoned by the new government in the early years of its leadership. Social housing advocates lost substantial political power resources due to this change (Kristensen, 2002; 2007; Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007).

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Housing policy was tainted with the racism characteristic of the right-wing, neoliberal power bloc. Social housing was of particular distaste as it simultaneously existed outside of free market control and housed a high proportion of immigrants. Anders Fogh Rasmussen used urban planning strategically to incite racism and further divide Denmark. He centered the urban space as highly political, talking about urban segregation as a 'cultural struggle' or 'cultural battle' and moving key Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs duties to a new Ministry of Integration, Immigrants, and Fugitives. This change was supported by the growing stigmatization and racism, as well as political discussion which favoured integrating social housing policy with broader social policy in order to mitigate segregation. In contrast to its role during welfare state building, urban planning in the neoliberal age has frequently been used as a tool to increase security, preservation, and gentrification (Bøggild, 2011; Kristensen, 2002; Larsen & Lund Hansen, 2008; Lund Hansen, 2011).

With the introduction of the neoliberal government, there was heavy emphasis on integrating newcomers to Danish values. In 2004, a committee to address 'ghettoization' was created and in 2010 the government released an 'anti-ghettoization' strategy. In announcing this strategy, the Prime Minister identified 29 'state-authorised ghettos', arguing that these social housing estates, home to many newcomers, were 'black spots' – enclosed communities that did not belong to the larger Danish society and should therefore be demolished (Bøggild, 2011). These attacks were resisted by tenants who were largely opposed to the labeling of their homes as ghettos, were against demolitions, and were satisfied with their dwellings and especially to be living close to other newcomers, family, and relatives (Bøggild, 2011; Whitehead & Scanlon, 2007b; Ærø, 2004).

As social housing is often associated with attracting immigrants, studies suggest that disapproval for social housing is growing in line with rising anti-immigrant sentiments (Kristensen, 2007; Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007; Whitehead & Scanlon, 2007b). Table 20 shows the most recent data on the attitudes of Danes towards immigrants from outside of the European Union.

| Table 20: Attitudes Towards Immigrants from Outside the EU, Denmark (2014-2018) |
| --- |
|  |
| Original survey question: Please tell me whether each of the following statements evokes a positive or negative feeling for you. Immigration of people from outside the EU… |
| "I don't know" responses removed |
| Source: Eurobarometer<br>http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Chart/index |

As shown in Table 20, negative attitudes towards immigrants from outside of the EU have been prevalent in recent years. From 2014-2018, fairly negative and very negative responses have consistently accounted for over half of the population. Across the time series, an average of 60% of Danes expressed negative attitudes towards immigrants from outside of the EU, while 40% express positive attitudes. Evidently, public opinion in Denmark is very divided. Unfortunately, many municipal governments fear that social housing will attract immigrants, increase crime in the area, and cost the municipality money by burdening the welfare system. With municipalities

searching to avoid this, social housing has faced a retrenchment in terms of universalism. A strong

preference towards building social housing with restricted access, for example, only available for

those with disabilities or the elderly,[49] has emerged. For such apartments, municipalities are

responsible for all tenant assignments, which allows them to avoid providing housing for

newcomers. Due to this, the majority of newly built social housing is available only to specific

target groups (Kristensen, 2007; Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007; Whitehead & Scanlon, 2007b).

Further attacks on the social housing sector by the neoliberal government included

attempting to introduce the sale of social housing units through two pilot projects in 2001 and

2005. Neither resulted in significant changes, with only 45 units sold in total. Few dwellings were

included in the initiatives and there was dramatic resistant from local authorities and social housing

associations (Bøggild, 2011; Kristensen, 2007; OECD, 2016; 2018; Whitehead & Scanlon, 2007b).

After the failure of the attempted sales, a ministerial report was written, arguing that the sector

should liberalise and be determined by the free market, but it was also unsuccessful in dismantling

the system (Kristensen, 2007). Following this trend, there have been increasing political demands

for social housing reforms, simplification of the regulatory structure and legislation that secures

social housing, increased reliance on the market and, in more extreme cases, calls for withdrawing

government funding, abolishing bricks-and-mortar support, deregulation of the subsidy system,

and a retrenchment to targeted social assistance. Increasingly, there is a push towards introducing

market-based systems as opposed to the non-profit cost-based rents. Critics of the social housing

system in Denmark have tried to argue that the cost-based social housing rents distort the housing

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[49] Social housing that is well-equipped for elderly people is called sheltered housing in Denmark. There is also a small amount of non-profit cohousing for the elderly. Non-profit housing does not include in-home care or support but all elderly people in Denmark are eligible to receive in-home support from the municipality. Help is granted based on needs, and housing type is not a relevant factor (Kristensen, 2007).

market. They push for market-oriented rents (Kristensen, 2002; 2007; Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007; Whitehead & Scanlon, 2007b).

*Devolution*

Another significant threat is the devolution of housing policy to the municipal level. Prior to 2007, municipalities were responsible for planning in cities and towns, while counties were responsible for planning in the surrounding countryside. In 2007, local government reform further reduced the number of municipalities to 98 and replaced the counties with five regions. Following national policies, and with input from stakeholders and the public, regions create broad spatial development plans and targets, which are passed on to the municipalities. From these broader goals, the municipalities create general development and land use plans every four years. Further local plans include details regarding allowable construction on specific properties. In terms of social housing, local authorities and social housing associations determine frameworks and objectives in consultation. In effect, the new 98 municipalities are fully responsible for the concrete details of city, town, suburban, and rural planning. By devolving urban development and housing policy from the county/regional level to municipal level, intercity areas are no longer covered by a sole, regional planning authority. While overall strategies can be produced by the five regions, undertaking new plans rests on gaining the support of each municipality in the administrative region (Jørgensen, 2010; Kristensen, 2007).

Critics of the amalgamation of municipalities argue that the diverse planning responsibilities are too great. Planning needs in Denmark vary drastically. As living preferences have changed again, some large suburban residential districts are suffering from a concentration of low-income people, while many small towns are facing depopulation and recession. The large

urban centers are becoming evermore attractive and densely populated, while peripheral Denmark struggles with abandoned homes and communities. As well, Denmark is highly committed to environmentally-sustainable construction and it is argued that the change has reduced the emphasis on environmental protection, as municipal economic concerns take precedence over largescale regional environmental planning and protection of undeveloped land (Jørgensen, 2010; Whitehead & Scanlon, 2007b).

Social housing policy was also devolved through the local government reforms, resulting in more responsibility placed at the municipal level. These changes have placed pressure on municipalities which are now responsible for greater numbers of social housing apartments and which have seen funding responsibilities for new-built social housing increase slightly. In addition, municipalities continue to struggle with the stigmatization of social housing and compete to attract desirable citizens, including working couples with children and the wealthy. Due to these factors, the rate of new-built social housing has been slowing since 1998, but has yet to drop as a percentage of the overall housing stock (Christiansen & Petersen, 2001; Housing Europe, 2015; Kristensen, 2002; 2007).

*Recent Events*

These debates and devolutions have been ongoing throughout the 2000s. Despite these neoliberal demands and changes, retrenchment of the social housing system and attempts at diminishing the social housing stock have been unsuccessful for a variety of reasons. The first set of factors are the lack of affordable housing and the general fragility of the housing market in Denmark, combined with politicians' generally low level of knowledge about the intricacies of the social housing system and how changes could affect the overall high-pressure housing market. It

is understood that in high-pressure areas, changes would have to be approached cautiously as any sudden changes could destabilize the precarious housing market.

The second set of factors are the robust social housing sector that is secured by a network of tenant democracies and strong and effective lobbying bodies, as well as the fact that, regardless of growing stigma and attempts at retrenchment, social housing remains mainstream politics in Denmark and is widely supported. Demand for social housing has only been growing since the 2008 recession. In addition, the National Building Fund has been growing as mortgages are repaid and excess rents are transferred to the fund. Due to these reasons, social housing has not been retrenched in Denmark and discussions are ongoing in terms of how best to address the affordable housing shortages, especially in high-pressure housing markets such as Copenhagen and Aarhus (Bøggild, 2011; Housing Europe, 2015; Kristensen, 2002; 2007; Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007; Whitehead & Scanlon, 2007b).

In other housing related policies, there has been ongoing debate over housing subsidies, which have come under increasing attack in the period of neoliberalization. There has been a push by conservative economists in the housing sector to gradually introduce greater free market reliance and to target housing subsidies; while strains on the welfare system have also prompted discussions regarding the phasing out of housing subsidies altogether (including allowances, benefits, and tax deductions). These recommendations have surfaced in Denmark again and again over the last 30-40 years but there is no political agreement on the extent or pace of changes and large-scale changes are not considered politically feasible due to the uncertain employment and economic consequences. In addition, calls to retrench the long-standing housing subsidies have been faced with broad-based resistance, as the vast majority of Danes benefit from subsidies which have allowed for high housing standards. Restructuring, reducing, or removing subsidies is seen

as an overall reduction in welfare as it would result in many Danes losing housing subsidies. Without subsidies, it is feared that increasing prices would force young people to leave home later, families to live in smaller dwellings, and elderly people to move out of their original homes. It would be especially detrimental to already vulnerable groups and result in increased poverty and inequality. Due to these wide-ranging issues and broad public support, there have only been very minor adjustments and there are no immediate dramatic threats to housing-related welfare in Denmark (Kristensen, 2002; 2007).

While social housing and housing subsidies have been relatively unscathed, there have been retrenchments in some other housing policy areas. While rent regulations and controls remain extensive and together cover approximate 88% of the entire rental sector, rent regulations and controls only apply to older housing stock, with new dwellings built after 1991 now unregulated (OECD, 2016; 2018). In the early 2000s, it seemed as though private rental housing would become obsolete, but today, the private rental sector has largely changed from poorly-equipped, cheap apartments, into modernized, elite rental housing. The dramatic urban regeneration efforts and ensuing gentrification from 1970-2000 were largely targeted at slum-like private rental housing and new private rental housing is increasingly build in Copenhagen as elite housing. To try to mitigate this, Copenhagen introduced a policy that stipulated that for every high-income apartment, one low-income apartment had to be built, but unfortunately, the policy lasted for only a few years, from 2001-2003 (Kristensen, 2007; Ærø, 2004). In cooperative housing policy, while the current cooperative housing is not under threat, new cooperative housing construction is not considered as financially advantageous as freehold flats. Subsidies for new cooperative building no longer exist (having been phased out between 2000-2004) and the future is politically uncertain

in terms of the continued exemption from property taxes (Kristensen, 2007). Lastly, tax deductions on mortgage interest further diminished in the early 2000s (Kristensen, 2002).

*Summarizing Modern Day Copenhagen in a Comparative Perspective*

Copenhagen has a distinct position within the broader Danish planning context. It is the largest and most expensive city in Denmark and is considered one of the most liveable cities and most attractive tourist destinations in the world. Many smaller cities and rural areas in Denmark have manageable social housing waiting lists or in a small number of cases a surplus of social housing units (most notably in Jutland) (Kristensen, 2007; Scanlon, et al., 2015; Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007). Despite the fact that Copenhagen has the highest proportion of social housing units (accounting for approximately 1/3 of the overall housing stock in the greater Copenhagen area), waiting lists can be very long (10, 20, or even 30 years in the most desirable neighbourhoods). This problem is echoed in the other large urban city of Aarhus. While waiting list data cannot be used as an indicator of mobility, studies on affordability note that in the big cities where housing costs are high and waiting lists for social housing are long, affordability of private housing (and especially home ownership) is a key problem among double-earner households and key workers including firefighters, police offices, nurses, and teachers (Kristensen, 2007; Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007).

Housing prices across Denmark have risen considerably since 1993. Single-family home prices in Denmark increased by 153% between 1993 and 2005, with the largest increases taking place in the 2000s. There are great regional differences: in Copenhagen, prices have climbed the fastest, with an average increase of 45% between 2000-2005; meanwhile, in some rural areas, prices dropped during the same period (Bøggild, 2011; Kristensen, 2007). Housing and property

prices continued to increase until 2008, when the financial crisis resulted in a rocky downturn. Multiple European countries faced massive problems with defaulting mortgages. While each country handled the situation differently, Denmark encouraged mortgage re-negotiations. Following 2008, housing prices in Denmark recovered quickly and have increased again following the crisis, most dramatically in Copenhagen (Housing Europe, 2015).

Though property rights have been at the forefront throughout the period of capitalist development, in the age of neoliberalization renewed stress has been placed on private property (Lund Hansen, 2011; Smith, 2005). Home ownership in particular is celebrated as a way to showcase freedom, individuality, influence, status, and wealth. This housing type is also closely tied with the ideal of the nuclear family (Kristensen, 2007; Ærø, 2004). For the wealthy in Denmark, housing size continues to increase and there is a growing trend of owning a second home. For others, home ownership in general is a milestone they hope to reach. Outside of Copenhagen housing is on average half the cost of housing in Copenhagen, making it possible for people with relatively low incomes to own their own house. Many young families choose to or are forced to live outside of main cities, such as Copenhagen. Some commute to work, however an hour commute (or longer) in Denmark is considered problematic, creating strain on work-life balance and the environment. Due to these issues, and the fact that wage levels are comparable across the country, it has become difficult to recruit new key employees in the Copenhagen area (Kristensen, 2007).

Gentrification is a continued issue in Copenhagen. The Danish urban renewal policies have resulted in clear, albeit slow, gentrification. At the beginning of the urban renewal phase, housing benefits were paid to tenants to ensure that they would not be priced out of their homes. The social objective was to improve the living conditions of tenants in deprived neighbourhoods, not to force

them out. Eventually, however, some of the housing benefits were withdrawn, particularly for employed people, and studies show that approximately 20% of original residents have either chosen or been forced to move because of unaffordability. People receiving social benefits and pensioners continue to receive the housing benefits in these urban renewal areas (Edgar, et al., 2002). Today, the planning focus is largely on revitalization to increase desirability and life on the streets in large urban centers, such as Copenhagen (Kristensen, 2007). As part of this focus, planning deregulation has increased in Copenhagen, loosening planning requirements has become allowable in up-and-coming areas in an effort to attract the 'creative class'. Several districts of Copenhagen have been highly deregulated in an attempt to create 'exciting' city areas, which opens the city up for further gentrification (Jørgensen, 2010).

The solution to providing affordable housing, however, especially in Copenhagen, is complicated. Among the EU countries, Denmark has among the highest housing and construction costs (Housing Europe, 2015). Due to incredibly high costs, upper limits on social housing construction costs, and the way that social housing rents are currently calculated, building new social housing in Copenhagen would not necessarily result in 'affordable' rents (Kristensen, 2007; Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007; Whitehead & Scanlon, 2007b). Problems of unaffordability and urban segregation are echoed across European countries that have geared rents to investment expenditure (Whitehead & Scanlon, 2007a). In Denmark, new ways to provide affordable housing in Copenhagen is a constant challenge for municipal authorities, who continue to commit to increasing the number of affordable rental units with varying success (Kristensen, 2007; Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007; Whitehead & Scanlon, 2007b).

*Considering European Union Pressures*

In European countries, prior to the 2008 recession, attention to social housing policy seemed to be growing. Although concrete funding and action had not followed suit, there did seem to be a renewed interest in the extent to which social housing could alleviate housing needs and political housing pressures. There was a small, but growing, acceptance that affordable housing issues require direct attention as the problems are not solved by unregulated economies (Hills, 2007; Whitehead & Scanlon, 2007a; 2007b). European social housing policies have responded differently to the financial crisis of 2008. In countries where social housing is financed by banks, markets, and significant public aid, new social housing construction has halted due to the withdrawal of the private sector and retrenchment of the public sector.[50] In countries where there are significant power resources, social housing is a part of welfare state infrastructure to ensure adequate and affordable housing, and countercyclical spending is used to ensure investments and jobs, social housing has fared much better. Financing through highly regulated, long-term financing (including bonds and savings accounts) and diverse public aid sources have sustained the social housing sector.[51] Due to these varied outcomes, as well as growing pressures from unemployment, inequality, and immigration, social housing policies are gaining traction again as a key part of the solution to housing affordability. Social housing is recognized by national governments as a cost-effective solution to complex social problems (Housing Europe, 2015).

At the same time, issues surrounding housing have grown in importance to the European Union. Before the financial crisis, the EU had already become concerned about social housing and its effect on competition in the housing market. After 2008, the EU has imposed stricter private

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[50] See for example Ireland, Italy, Spain, Portugal (Housing Europe, 2015).

[51] Including Denmark. For other examples, see Austria, France (Housing Europe, 2015).

and social housing policies as a response to both the role of housing in the banking crisis and the effects on housing caused by the recession (Scanlon, et al., 2015). European Union monetary constraints and policy have reduced funding for social housing and attacked principals of universalism, placing increasing pressure on countries to abandon universal social housing policy, which its neoliberal economists argue distorts free market competition (Scanlon, et al., 2015; Whitehead & Scanlon, 2007b). The European Union has reprimanded some countries, where social housing policies are more universal and available to a wider range of incomes, for subsidizing people who, in their neoliberal frameworks, are 'not poor enough' to warrant housing assistance; providing state subsidies for mid- to high-income families goes against the European Unions' competition law. As opposed to viewed as publicly-funded housing that is available to all, across Europe pressure has been increasing to make social housing more targeted (Scanlon, et al., 2015; Whitehead & Scanlon, 2007a). Despite interest in social housing as a potential avenue to mitigate inequality, due partly to EU pressure, municipal involvement in the provision of social housing across Europe is declining and public-private partnerships are increasing. In Denmark, initiatives have been introduced to reach public-private partnerships, with some of the new social housing units built with decreased government subsidies and increased private investment (Bøggild, 2011; Whitehead & Scanlon, 2007b). In 2014, the European Union recommended that Denmark further "reduce regulatory burden" in order to increase 'construction competition' (Housing Europe, 2015:44).

Timeline

The following timeline illustrates the process of establishing social housing through major events in Danish social housing history. The timeline highlights municipal developments, namely

in Copenhagen, in relation to national events. Sources are included at the end of the timeline for further reading and research. Although not a complete list of all the events, the timeline is especially useful to demonstrate that social housing policy formation occurred earlier and has been much more robust and resilient in Denmark, compared to Canada. In Denmark, the current universalistic social housing system was largely secured by 1946, whereas in Canada, the first useful federal social hosing policy appeared in 1949 and was very weak and susceptible to easy dismantling.

| | |
|---|---|
| **1700** | Early working class housing includes blocks of flats in city centers |
| **1850** | Housing provision emerges as a broader policy issue, especially in Copenhagen |
| **1853** | There are massive cholera epidemics in Copenhagen, fueled by poor sanitation and housing conditions; the first housing associations are formed |
| **1854** | First social housing is constructed by medical associations, charities, employers, trade unions, and worker cooperatives, to house the working class, large families, and the poor; population targeted models |
| **1887** | First laws passed allowing municipal public housing support; under this legislation, municipally supported projects are the main providers of social housing until 1946, population/income targeted models |
| **1900** | Social Democrats begin exerting influence through municipal socialism across the country |
| **1903** | Social Democrats gain a municipal majority in Copenhagen |
| **1914-1918** | **WWI** Municipal Social Democrats keep private development prices down and create public housing on municipally owned land in Copenhagen |

**1920**          The housing market is an area of significant public concern and key area of discussion in national politics

**1933**          First national social housing policies enacted including subsidies for non-profit social housing; income targeted model

**1939-1945**     **WWII** Legislation includes rent freezes, rent controls, and dwelling rationing; there is a housing shortage and prices rise; municipalities are under increasing pressure to provide social housing and housing associations expand in urban areas; income targeted model

**1945**          There is an acute need for new dwellings and economic development; overcrowding and poor housing conditions are serious issues

**1946**          *Housing Subsidy Act* secures the national social housing system (which is very similar to the current system); housing associations and social housing units grow dramatically; universal model

**1946-1950**     Universal social housing policies enjoy broad support; construction levels for social housing are among the highest in the world; universal model

**1947-1949**     *Ministry of Housing and Construction*, *Danish Building Research Institute*, and *Building Regulation Law* are established to create housing policy and ensure urban democracy

**1951**          *Rent Act* expands progressive rent and eviction regulations

**1958**          *Housing Act* is created with a consensus from the right-wing and includes a state withdrawal from loan provision, relaxing of rent controls, introduction of tax deductions on mortgage payments, increasing rent allowances; housing policy is

significant liberalized and the legislation is heavily criticized by the left-wing and

trade unions

**1960**        Post-war housing shortage problems are alleviated

**1966**        *Housing Agreement* is created with a consensus from the right-wing and includes

a retraction of rent regulations and controls, expansion of homeownership tax

privileges, new housing benefit, and an expansion of rent allowances; under this

legislation, rental dwellings can be turned into freehold flats; the legislation is

heavily criticized by the left-wing and trade unions; Social Democrat party

support falls, especially at the municipal levels

**1966-1974**   There is a building boom for suburban social housing tower apartment

communities and single-family homes, both of which are heavily subsidized;

Denmark is a leading European nation in terms of tower apartment construction,

with approximately 10,000 new units constructed every year during this period;

universal model

**1970**        Social housing begins to suffer from vacant flats

**1970-1974**   *Local Government Reform* results in 275 municipalities and 14 counties; social

housing policy begins to be decentralized

**1970-1990**   Copenhagen faces massive suburban flight, slum-like living conditions, and

squatting; tension builds over state slum clearances and there are significant urban

protests which intensify in 1980s

**1972**        *Housing Agreement* includes legislation that properties built before 1966 are

ineligible for sale as freehold flats, due to problems with massive sales and

speculation

**1973**     **Oil Crisis** Causes financial crisis and increased unemployment, especially in

Copenhagen; housing prices and new building stagnant and problems emerge with

a lack of affordable housing; halts previous ambitious growth plans

**1975**     *Housing Agreement* focuses on new dwelling construction to stimulate the

economy, including 8,000-10,000 social housing units per year; the legislation is

especially supportive of cooperatives, which are the most heavily subsidized

housing type; the legislation supports the formation of private cooperative

housing associations, includes a stipulation that when private-sector housing is

put on the market, it has to be offered to the sitting tenants first, and includes

subsidies for new cooperative housing construction; legislation results in a

dramatic increase in cooperatives

**1975-2000** Large-scale demolitions and urban renewal takes place in inner cities; urban

protests result

**1980-1990** Approximately 8,000 new social housing dwellings are built every year; new-built

high-density, low-rise, non-detached housing surpasses new-built tower apartment

communities; population targeted models emerge, especially for new-built social

housing, which is targeted at people who are elderly or have disabilities

**1983**     *Urban Regeneration Act* is created in response to urban protests, with a focus on

preservation; introduces a stipulation that public should be involved in the

planning process to the greatest extent possible; expensive preservation takes

place in Aarhus; *gentrification* trends emerge

**1984**     Tenants gain the right to a majority on all social housing boards, ensuring tenant

democracy and consensus-based decision making

| | |
|---|---|
| **1985** | 6.5% of social housing estates are classified as 'troubled' and undergo renovations; additional subsidies and restructured mortgages are offered to housing associations; addressing deprivation and segregation in tower apartment communities becomes a part of the national political agenda |
| **1986-1987** | Home-ownership related tax deductions are drastically reduced, mortgages become stricter, housing demand and prices fall, and construction stagnates; Copenhagen is plagued by unemployment and approaching bankruptcy |
| **1990-2000** | Approximately 4,000 new social housing units are built annually universal/population targeted models |
| **1993** | Copenhagen faces bankruptcy; in response, funding increases for urban renewal, and elite housing and cultural institutions, Vesterbro is regenerated, mortgage conditions are changed, and Copenhagen is forced to sell 7% of municipal owned social housing to improve the municipal tax base |
| **1993** | A minimum age restriction of 15 is introduced for social housing waiting lists |
| **1993** | The new *City/Urban Committee* releases an action plan to improve housing segregation by 1998; social initiatives are introduced and rent reductions are piloted to encourage financially stable people to continue living in social housing; the action plan halts further decay and is used to argue for long-term resources and initiatives |
| **1994** | Building, allocating, and approving accounts and budgets of social housing are devolved from the national to municipal level; municipal co-financing amounts for new social housing buildings increase slightly |

| | |
|---|---|
| **1998** | Social housing stock reaches 20% of overall housing stock; the rate of new social housing building further slows |
| **1998** | *Ministry of Housing* changes its name to *Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs*, reflecting the increased trend of urban politics as weighty in national affairs |
| **2000** | Continued support for social housing is included in new national legislation |
| **2000-2004** | Subsidies for new cooperative building are phased out |
| **2000-2019** | Many of the mortgages from the post-war social housing boom have been fully repaid and the number is growing, resulting in increasing social housing funds |
| **2001** | The neoliberal Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen is elected; the *Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs* is abolished; housing policies become less transparent, regulation decreases in the housing sector, lobbying for housing issues becomes more difficult, collaboration and negotiation between the national government and national housing federations is abandoned, social housing advocates lose substantial political power resources, and racism is used as a dividing tactic |
| **2001** | The first sale of social housing units pilot project is launched and overall has no significant results |
| **2001-2003** | Copenhagen introduced a policy that stipulated that for every high-income apartment, one low-income apartment has to be built |
| **2004** | A national *Committee to Address Ghettoization* is created |
| **2005** | The second sale of social housing units pilot project is launched and overall has no significant results |

**2007**        *Local Government Reform* results in 98 municipalities and the counties are

replaced with five regions; municipalities become fully responsible for urban

planning; social housing policy further devolved; municipal funding

responsibilities for new-built social housing increase slightly

**2008**        **Financial Crisis** Demand for social housing grows; Copenhagen suffers from

housing downturn; European Union imposes stricter private and social housing

policies

**2010**        *Anti-ghettoization Strategy* is released with 29 social housing estates labeled as

state authorised 'ghettos', strategy is resisted by tenants

**2012**        Approximately 1,250 new social hosing units built; universal/population targeted

models

Timeline information was collected from: BL (2018), Bøggild (2011), Christiansen & Petersen (2001), Edgar, et al. (2002), Esping-Andersen (1985a), Housing Europe (2015); Jørgensen (2010), Karpantschof (2011), Kristensen (2002; 2007), Larsen & Lund Hansen (2008), Lund Hansen (2011); OECD (2016; 2018), Scanlon, et al. (2015), Scanlon & Vestergaard (2007), Therborn (2017), Thörn, et al. (2011), Whitehead & Scanlon (2007a; 2007b), and Ærø, 2004.

<u>Welfare Outcomes</u>

Overall, social housing is considered a major policy component of the Danish welfare state and has been comparatively resilient during the period of neoliberalization. Looking at the housing history, despite stigmatization and attempts at retrenchment, it can be argued that in Denmark, there is a clear and long-running commitment to ensuring adequate and affordable housing for all

(Scanlon, et al., 2015). Viewed comparatively, Danish housing policies have resulted in generally high housing standards. On average, Danish social housing is very adequate and housing in Denmark in general is considered among the highest quality in Europe and continues to improve. Compared to the rest of Europe, Danes with the lowest incomes are overall very well-housed due to successful long-term housing policies (Kristensen, 2007). Attempts to drastically reduce social housing stock through sale or demolitions have been unsuccessful as social housing is highly integrated into welfare state infrastructure and has proven to be close to untouchable (Kristensen, 2002). Nonetheless, neoliberal trends and a move towards neoliberal ideals can be recognized within the social housing sector. Policy has been decentralized, stigma has increased towards those who live in social housing, and access has become less universal and more restricted to target populations such as people with disabilities or the elderly.

The local government reforms in 1974 and 2007 reduced the number of municipalities and counties, and later restructured the counties into administrative regions. These local government reforms and recent Planning Acts have placed more pressure on municipalities to be responsible for housing and housing policy (as well as many other welfare state services). There is fear that devolving housing policy will decease social housing production and increase the threat of dissolving federal-led housing policy, although dramatic changes have not yet occurred (Kristensen, 2002; 2007; Whitehead & Scanlon, 2007b).

Increasing immigrant and refugee numbers and the obligation of municipalities to house refugees has had an impact on allocation decisions in recent years. At the same time, the preference of most white-ethnic-Danes to live in single-family homes has grown in line with neoliberal ideology favouring individuality and private property. For financially stable households that do live in social housing, the living situation is often seen as short-term – with the residents often

moving into owner-occupied housing once they can afford it, instead of staying in social housing and passing it along through the family (Kristensen, 2007). In addition, limitations in terms of construction costs and dwelling sizes can make social housing units more attractive and well-suited to those with a low- to mid-income (OECD, 2016; 2018). Together, these trends have skewed the demographic living in social housing and there has been a significant increase in ethnic minorities living in social housing in recent years (Kristensen, 2007).

Although social housing is still available to all Danes, there has been a growing stigma attached to living in social housing since the 1970s as it has increasingly housed marginalized people and ethnic minorities. From the most recent data available, the percentage of ethnic minorities has increased in the social housing sector. In 2007, ethnic minorities, immigrants, and their descendants made up 8% of the overall Danish population. Approximately 60% of all ethnic minorities in Denmark lived in social housing in 2007. From 1994-2015, social housing residents who are ethnic minorities rose from approximately 12% to 25% of all social housing residents. Ethnic minorities are largely concentrated in specific tower apartment communities built in the 1960s and 70s. There are rare exceptions where ethnic minorities make up almost 100% of the residents of an estate (Kristensen, 2007; Scanlon, et al., 2015; Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007; Whitehead & Scanlon, 2007b).

Outside of allocation decisions, social housing disproportionately houses minorities for a number of other reasons: they often tend to live in cities, have larger families, have low incomes, and often prefer to live among a support system of other refugees or new immigrants. In Denmark, the concentration of minorities in tower apartment communities is seen as problematic and some estates have been vilified as ghettos by government and media (Kristensen, 2002; Whitehead & Scanlon, 2007b). Denmark defines a ghetto or ghetto-like area as an area where over 50% of adult

residents are not active in the labour market, or where 40% or more of the adult residents are not active in the labour market and 40% or more of the residents are immigrants from non-western countries or their descendants. In 2007, among social housing, there were 100 housing associations with about 34,000 total residents that were considered 'ghetto-like' by the former definition, and an additional 61 housing associations with about 16,000 residents added by the latter definition. These types of housing areas are typically found in major urban centers. In the same year, there were approximately 900,000 people in total who lived in social housing units, which means that the 50,000 'ghetto-like' residents made up under 6% of all residents (Kristensen, 2007). Although many of the tower apartment communities in Denmark are labeled by government and planners as 'ghettos', this is not accurate or appropriate terminology. Even though many estates do concentrate marginalized people, the apartments are typically adequate and well-functioning (if not impressive by Canadian social housing standards). Typically, the maintenance and service are high in social housing units, with caretakers and professional administrators operating and maintaining the buildings. In fact, social housing is in general better maintained than low-income private rental housing in Denmark. There is a mix of reasons for this: social housing stock tends to be newer, professionally maintained, not motivated by profits, and decisions are reached by tenants (Jørgensen, 2010; Kristensen, 2002; 2007). Residents report feeling happy with their home and community, enjoying living close to relatives and family members, and are not interested in moving. Based off of survey data, the main issue that influences dissatisfaction among residents are the negative reputation that the neighbourhood has and how other people perceive the neighbourhood, especially if it is perceived as a ghetto. Most people feel that the negative reputation of their neighbourhood is undeserved (Bøggild, 2011; Jørgensen, 2010; Kristensen, 2007; Ærø, 2004).

On the one hand, urban segregation is undeniably problematic if it creates areas where socioeconomic inequality is passed down through generations; this situation conflicts deeply with the fundamental Danish values of welfare and equality (Kristensen, 2002). On the other, it can be argued that racism in government and a strong emphasis on integration, rather than concern for wellbeing, are the underlying motives to the amount of attention paid towards the perceived threat of urban segregation and social exclusion. Regardless of motive, the increasing stigmatization is a major problem facing the future of social housing in Denmark. In response to this problem, social housing associations are working to increase social housing competitiveness with private sector dwellings and to implement social initiatives such as establishing schools, promoting community development, and running employment and crime prevention initiatives (Housing Europe, 2015; Kristensen, 2007).

Solidarity and universalism have been the underlying tenant of Danish social welfare policy from its beginnings and have assured distribution to the weakest groups in Danish society. Social housing is vital for municipalities to achieve social initiatives and policies, and historically, municipal allocations have always concentrated very vulnerable people (Kristensen, 2002; 2007; Scanlon, et al., 2015; Whitehead & Scanlon, 2007b). Today, a tense situation has arisen as affordability problems, inequality, immigration, and racism have grown in Denmark. It has proven controversial to provide for the neediest, when the neediest are no longer white-ethnic-Danes. Due to this, even though Denmark has a universalist tradition when it comes to social housing access, there is a trend towards social housing concentrating specific demographics. The majority of new social housing construction in Denmark is intended for elderly people and people with disabilities (Whitehead & Scanlon, 2007b). There has been a growing municipal reluctance towards approving new general construction due to a fear that it will welcome politically expensive social problems

into the community; municipalities are often more likely to approve specialized social housing which allows them to largely avoid an influx of refugees, new immigrants, or social problems (Scanlon & Vestergaard, 2007). These problems have led to questioning and undermining of welfare state universalism in Denmark, as many Danes do not see themselves benefiting from social housing policy (Kristensen, 2007).

Despite the neoliberal threats, falling proportions, and difficulties in new development felt across Europe, social housing has remained important socially and politically. In Denmark, social housing is a significant percentage of the overall housing stock. Considering the European countries, social housing policies in five countries have been most resilient: Austria, France, Sweden, the Netherlands, and Denmark. Of these countries, Denmark is the only country where the proportion and universal role of social housing is expected to remain intact, due in large part to investments in social housing to stimulate the economy during recession and the social housing sectors ability to sustain funding (Scanlon, et al., 2015). Although there has not been a successful, direct attack on dismantling social housing in Denmark (as has been seen in other policy areas during the same time period) from a social democratic standpoint, the changes in the sector are most certainly cause for concern. As social housing becomes less universal and more segregated and stigmatized, it risks losing broad support and becoming more susceptible to liberalization and dismantling (Kristensen, 2002).

**Comparing Social Housing Policy in Canada and Denmark**

Trends in Social Housing

Collecting comparative data on social housing can be difficult. The tables in this section draw on cross-national data collected by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and

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Development (OECD). Unfortunately, for some indicators the OECD does not include certain social housing statistics due to data limitations – which means that data is often missing for either or both Canada and Denmark. Despite these gaps in data collection, the differences between social housing policies and their effects in Canada and Denmark can still be compared along multiple lines.

The most simple and stark contemporary comparative social housing snapshot is the number of social housing dwellings and the associated percentage of social housing in relation to the overall housing stock in Canada and Denmark, as shown in Table 21.

| Table 21: Social Housing Stock, Raw Numbers and % of Overall Housing Stock, Canada and Denmark (2011, 2013) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Year** | **Country** | **Number of Dwellings** | **Social Housing Stock** |
| **2011** | **Canada** | 604,200 | 4.1% |
| **2013** | **Denmark** | 614,555 | 22.2% |
| Source: OECD http://www.oecd.org/social/affordable-housing-database.htm | | | |

In Canada, as of the most recent data collected by the OECD in 2011, there were 604,200 social housing dwellings, making up 4.1% of the overall housing stock. Comparing the raw numbers, there are 10,355 more social housing dwellings in Denmark as opposed to Canada and, due to the smaller population size, social housing made up 22.2% of the overall housing stock in 2013 (OECD, 2018).

Although comparative data is only available for the early 2000s, changes in the overall social housing stock over the years reflects the effects of recent policy decisions.

| Table 22: Social Housing Trends, % of Overall Housing Stock, Canada and Denmark (2000-2013) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Country** | **Years** | | |
| | **2000** | **2011** | **2013** |
| **Canada** | 5.2% | 4.1% | ⋮ |
| **Denmark** | 19.0% | ⋮ | 22.2% |
| ⋮ Data unavailable | | | |
| Source: OECD http://www.oecd.org/social/affordable-housing-database.htm | | | |

In Canada, social housing has decreased slightly from 5.2% of the overall housing stock in 2000, to 4.1% in 2011. In Denmark, social housing stock has risen slightly from 19.0% in 2000 to 22.2% in 2013. Analyzing the trends in social housing policies for each country, at this point it can be expected that Canada's social housing stock will continue to decline, while Denmark's is more likely to remain constant.

Canada and Denmark also differ in the providers of their social housing stock, as shown in Table 23.

| Table 23: Providers of Social Housing, %, Canada and Denmark (2011, 2013) | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Provider** | **Country** | |
| | **Canada[1]** | **Denmark[2]** |
| **National Authorities/Public Agencies** | 20.0% | 0.0% |
| **Regional and/or Municipal Authorities/Public Agencies** | 80.0% | 3.7% |
| **Social Housing Non-profit/Cooperative** | 0.0% | 96.3% |
| **For Profit/Individual Providers** | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| [1] Data from 2011 [2] Data from 2013 | | |
| Source: OECD http://www.oecd.org/social/affordable-housing-database.htm | | |

In Canada, 20% of social housing is provided by national authorities/public agencies, in this case the federal government, and 80% is provided through regional and/or municipal authorities/public agencies, in this case the provincial governments and municipal governments and agencies. This reflects the small percentage of social housing administered at the federal level and the majority of provincial and municipal administered social housing.

In Denmark, the composition is different. A very small 3.7% is provided through regional and/or municipal authorities/public agencies, in this case the social housing that is owned by municipalities. The majority is provided by non-profit/cooperatives, in this case the social housing that is owned by non-profit housing associations.

To clarify the terms and difference, although Canada has offered social housing through public, non-profit, and cooperative style models, the housing is provided by governments – federal (20%), and provincial/municipal (80%) which are responsible for administration regardless of model. In Denmark, social housing is either provided by municipalities (3.7%) or non-profit housing associations (96.3%). Cooperative housing in Denmark is not included in these figures since it is considered a separate housing type in Denmark. Notably, in a broad comparative lens, in countries where social housing is provided for solely by public authorities (whether national, regional, or municipal), there tends to be a much smaller stock of social housing, when compared to countries where social housing is provided for by non-profits – Canada and Denmark reflect this broader cross-national trend (OECD, 2016; 2018). Therefore, while strong policies and subsidies administered through the national government are key to creating, securing, and sustaining robust social housing systems, central governments do not need to be involved in the direct provision of social housing – and in fact social housing sectors are generally stronger when

national governments secure policies that respond to local needs, and well-supported non-profits are responsible for direct provision (as in Denmark).

Trends in General Housing

Comparing broader housing data illustrates some of the differences in Canada and Denmark's housing markets. Although not a direct indicator, the number of dwellings per 1000 inhabitants gives an indication of housing strain and potential for overcrowding.

| Table 24: Number of Dwellings per 1000 Inhabitants, Canada and Denmark (1990-2011) | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Country** | **Year** | | | | | |
| | **1990** | **1996** | **2000** | **2001** | **2010** | **2011** |
| **Canada** | ⋮ | 370 | ⋮ | 407 | ⋮ | 428 |
| **Denmark** | 437 | ⋮ | 453 | ⋮ | 463 | ⋮ |
| ⋮ Data unavailable | | | | | | |
| Source: OECD http://www.oecd.org/social/affordable-housing-database.htm | | | | | | |

Comparing Canada and Denmark in recent years, the numbers are very similar. From 1990 to 2011, Denmark has had slightly more dwellings per 1000 inhabitants, with the small gap closing over the years; in the 1990s a difference of 67 dwellings, 46 in the early 2000s, and 35 in the 2010s. In comparison to the EU-15 member countries, Danes have, on average, more square meters per person and more rooms per person than their European neighbours (Kristensen, 2007).

In terms of the types of dwellings that people live in, Table 25 compares the housing tenure distribution in Canada and Denmark. Data shows the percentage of households that own their dwelling (either outright or with a mortgage), compared to those that rent (either through the private market or social housing).

| Table 25: Housing Tenure Distribution, % of Households, Canada and Denmark (2011, 2014) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Year** | **Country** | **Housing Tenure** | | |
| | | **Own[1]** | **Rent[2]** | **Other/Unknown** |
| **2011** | **Canada** | 69.3% | 30.7% | 0.0% |
| **2014** | **Denmark** | 53.9% | 46.0% | 0.1% |
| [1] Including outright and mortgaged ownership<br>[2] Including social and private rental – original data does not distinguish | | | | |
| Source: OECD<br>http://www.oecd.org/social/affordable-housing-database.htm | | | | |

In both Canada and Denmark, more households own their dwellings than rent. In Canada, there is a difference of 38.6% between owners and renters. In comparison, in Denmark, the percentage of owners versus renters is more even, with a difference of 7.9% between owners and renters. Typically, when more people rent, rental housing is more normalized and social housing policy has more latitude; in Canada, for example, when rental housing grew substantially among all classes, social housing grew in tandem and was not stigmatized in the way it is today. It is possible that Denmark's larger rental market, coupled with more universal social housing policies, has historically helped to support and comparatively lessen the stigmatization of the sector.

Analyzing homeownership through another indicator, Table 26 compares the share of homeownership households (either owned outright or with a mortgage) by income level, as well as the differences between each income quintile in terms of homeownership.

| Year | Country | Income Quintile | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | **Bottom** | **Second** | **Third** | **Fourth** | **Top** |
| **2011** | **Canada** | 41.1% | 62.7% | 75.6% | 83.2% | 89.7% |
| | *Difference* | 21.6% | | 12.9% | 7.6% | 6.5% |
| **2014** | **Denmark** | 33.8% | 41.5% | 57.1% | 71.5% | 81.3% |
| | *Difference* | 7.7% | | 15.6% | 14.4% | 9.8% |

**Table 26: Share of Homeownership Households, %, Differences by Income Level, Canada and Denmark (2011, 2014)**

Homeownership includes outright and mortgaged ownership

Source: OECD
http://www.oecd.org/social/affordable-housing-database.htm

In both Canada and Denmark, homeownership increases with income level. At each level, homeownership is more pronounced in Canada than in Denmark. Perhaps most telling is the differences in homeownership between the bottom and second income quintile in each country. In Canada, homeownership jumps by 21.6% between the bottom and second income quintile, while in Denmark, the increase is much more subtle at 7.7%. The more uneven versus more steady increases in Canada and Denmark respectively, could reflect the more pronounced income and wealth inequality in Canada, especially for those at the bottom of the income distribution; alternatively, more even homeownership trends among the bottom quintiles could be related to the high levels of debt in Denmark as shown in Table 27.

| Table 27: Average Household Net Adjusted Disposable Income, US Dollars/Capita (2016) in Relation to Household Debt, % of Net Disposable Income, Canada and Denmark (2015) | |
|---|---|
| **Average Household Net Adjusted Disposable Income** | |
| **Country** | |
| **Canada** | **Denmark** |
| 29,850 | 28,950 |
| **Household Debt as % of Net Disposable Income** | |
| **Country** | |
| **Canada** | **Denmark** |
| 173 | 292 |
| Source: OECD<br>https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=SOCX_AGG#<br>https://data.oecd.org/hha/household-debt.htm | |

As shown in Table 27, average household net disposable income, measured in US dollars per capita, is comparable in Canada and Denmark, at 29,850 USD in Canada in 2016, and 28,950 USD in Denmark in the same year. In Denmark, however, household debt as a percentage of net disposable income is 119% higher than in Canada. Compared to other European countries, Denmark has very high construction costs, and Danes spend a comparatively large percentage of their incomes on housing and have high levels of mortgage debt (Housing Europe, 2015; Kristensen, 2007). There is also a growing trend in Denmark for homeowners to take out second mortgages on their homes to use for general spending (Kristensen, 2007). Among the EU, Denmark ranks second place on four indicators: rates of housing overburden, average housing costs compared to disposable income, outstanding residential debt to disposable household income, and outstanding residential loans to GDP. In 2015, the ratio of outstanding residential debt compared to disposable household income was 205.7%, while the ratio of outstanding residential loans compared to GDP was 100.8% (Housing Europe, 2015). That said, Danes typically have more secure income and higher levels of assets, and there are very few people with arrears on mortgages, rents, or utility bills (Housing Europe, 2015).

This high household debt, as well as higher rates of urbanization, as shown in Table 28, could contribute to a more cohesive urban universal coalition. In Canada, there is a small population, spread over a large geography, with many rural residents and lower comparative debt. In Denmark, more people are living in urban centers with high levels of debt and therefore may have a greater shared interest in maintaining a high standard of living through government benefits.

| Table 28: National Area Distribution, % (2014) in Relation to Household Debt, % of Net Disposable Income, Canada and Denmark (2015) | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Area Type** | **National Area Distribution** | |
| | **Country** | |
| | **Canada** | **Denmark** |
| Urban | 0.6% | 4.6% |
| Intermediate | 3.3% | 23.7% |
| Rural | 96.0% | 71.7% |
| | **Household Debt as % of Net Disposable Income** | |
| | **Country** | |
| | **Canada** | **Denmark** |
| | 173 | 292 |
| Source: OECD https://data.oecd.org/popregion/national-area-distribution.htm https://data.oecd.org/hha/household-debt.htm | | |

Considering another demographic, statistics on young people illustrate tendencies in living arrangements – although shaped by many dynamics, moving out of the parents' homes and the types of arrangements that young people choose thereafter are influenced by some factors that are very relevant to this project – such as housing affordability, stable employment, and social safety net security. Table 29 shows the living arrangements for youth aged 15-29 in recent years. At age 15, we expect that the majority of youths will be living in their parents' home in both Canada and Denmark; by 29, the expectation in both countries is that young adults will be living in other types of arrangements – whether that be with a partner, roommates, or alone. Unfortunately, the data is

not further broken down by age, as the most relevant statistics for this study would be the older

youths; however the fact that the data includes the same age range for both countries helps to

mitigate the skew created by the young youths.

| Table 29: Living Arrangement for Youth Aged 15-29, %, Canada and Denmark (2011, 2014) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Year** | **Country** | **Living Arrangement** | | | |
| | | **Parents[1]** | **Partner** | **Roommates** | **Alone** |
| **2011** | **Canada** | 47.3% | 21.2% | 23.0% | 8.5% |
| **2014** | **Denmark** | 35.0% | 30.2% | 6.0% | 28.8% |
| [1] With one or two parents | | | | | |
| Source: OECD http://www.oecd.org/social/affordable-housing-database.htm | | | | | |

In Canada in 2011, 47.3% of young people lived in their parents' home, versus 52.7% that

lived in other living arrangements. In comparison, in Denmark in 2014, young people living with

their parents made up 35%, versus 65% in other living arrangements. This accounts for a difference

of 12.3% between Canada and Denmark – with more youth living with their parents in Canada

than in Denmark. For young people living with a partner, the differences are smaller, with 9%

more young people living with a partner in Denmark than in Canada. The biggest differences

between Canada and Denmark are for young people living with roommates and living alone. 17%

more young people lived with roommates in Canada as opposed to Denmark, while 20.3% more

youths lived alone in Denmark compared to Canada. This difference may be related to the fact that

living alone in Canada is simply unaffordable for many young Canadians, who in addition often

also lack well-paid employment and broad social security in comparison to their Danish peers. EU

data in 2007, showed that approximately 60% of Danes between the ages of 18-24 were living

outside of their parents' home, which was over double the EU-15 average at that time (Kristensen,

2007). Similarly, in 2013, EU data showed that young Danes left their parents' homes earliest and were most likely to live independently compared to the EU-28 countries (Housing Europe, 2015).

Discussion on Homelessness

Data on people experiencing homelessness offers valuable insights into the percentage of the population that cannot afford housing, have fallen through the cracks in the social safety net, and lack rights to city space; considering these factors together, the number of people experiencing homelessness well-reflects the social-economic urban outcomes of the welfare state and social housing policy. Unfortunately, collecting reliable data on homelessness is incredibly difficult. The most problematic issue is that there is no internationally agreed upon definition of homelessness, making cross national comparisons complicated. In terms of longitudinal comparisons, problems arise due to the fact that point-in-time counts are not consistent between countries and in some cases the definition of homelessness or the methods used to collect data have changed over time. In the case of Canada, there is no agreed upon nation-wide definition of homelessness, meaning that national estimates vary greatly, and non-comparable data is often collected at the municipal and provincial levels. Lastly, an overall comparability problem, both in data and in practice, is that definitions of homelessness used for data collection and for policy purposes often differ within countries (OECD, 2016; 2018). Outside of problems with comparability and regardless of the definition used, collecting data on people experiencing homelessness is incredibly difficult. The numbers of people living on the streets, using shelters, and living in precarious situations changes every day and the full range of people in these situations are impossible to count (Berry, 2010).

Due to these complications, statistics on homelessness typically include one or more of the following types of homelessness or precarious living situations: *people living on the streets* – also

sometimes called 'living rough' or 'absolute homelessness', these are people who do not have a shelter or living quarters and live in public spaces; *people living in emergency accommodations –* these are people who do not have a constant place of residence and frequently move between accommodations; *people living in accommodations for the homeless –* these are people who live in temporary accommodations such as homeless hostels or shelters, transitional supported accommodations, temporary refugee accommodations, or women's shelters; *people living in institutions –* these are people who are in health institutions who do not have housing available prior to discharge (often staying longer than necessary because they do not have other housing) and people in penal institutions who do not have housing available prior to release; *people living in non-conventional dwellings due to lack of housing –* also sometimes called 'relative homelessness', these are people facing a lack of housing and are therefore living in non-conventional buildings that are not their usual place of residence (such as mobile homes or other temporary structures); and lastly, *people living temporarily in conventional housing with family or friends due to lack of housing –* often colloquially referred to as 'couch surfers', these are people facing a lack of housing and are therefore living temporarily with family or friends without a rental contract (OECD, 2016; 2018). With these types of homelessness in mind, Table 30 compares the definitions used in Canada and Denmark for the estimates compiled by the OECD.

| Table 30: Comparison of Parameters Used for Estimating the Homeless Population, Canada and Denmark | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Does the Definition Include People Living…** | **Country** | |
| | **Canada** | **Denmark** |
| **On the Streets** | No | Yes |
| **In Emergency Accommodation** | Yes | Yes |
| **In Accommodation for the Homeless** | Yes | Yes |
| **In Institutions** | No | In Some Cases[1] |
| **In Non-Conventional Dwellings Due to Lack of Housing** | No | Yes |
| **Temporarily in Conventional Housing with Family or Friends Due to Lack of Housing** | No | Yes |
| [1] People living in institutions are considered in estimates if they expected to leave institutions within the following month and are without a new place to live | | |
| Source: OECD http://www.oecd.org/social/affordable-housing-database.htm | | |

As Table 30 illustrates, the definition used to estimate the homeless population in Denmark is much wider than the definition used in Canada. This difference must be taken into account when comparing the estimates of homelessness presented in Table 31.

| Table 31: Estimated Homelessness Population, Raw Numbers and % of Total Population, Canada and Denmark (2011, 2015) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Year** | **Country** | **Number** | **Percent** |
| **2011** | **Canada** | 150,000 | 0.44% |
| **2015** | **Denmark** | 6,138 | 0.10% |
| Source: OECD http://www.oecd.org/social/affordable-housing-database.htm | | | |

In Canada, with a very narrow definition of homelessness, it is estimated that there were 150,000 people experiencing homelessness in 2011 – or 0.44% of the population. In Denmark, with a wider definition of homelessness, it is estimated that there were 6,138 people experiencing homelessness in 2015 – or 0.10% of the population (OECD, 2016; 2018). Considered as a

percentage, these shares of the population may seem quite small, but they represent a significant number of people experiencing a very real social injustice.

In both Canada and Denmark national surveys estimate that homelessness is a growing problem. Trends of increasing homelessness in both countries (and the much more pronounced number of people experiencing homelessness in Canada, both in terms of percentage and real terms) are corroborated by research on welfare state retrenchment from the 1980s onwards, historical urban renewal and gentrification, rising rental prices, falling wages, rising unemployment, and social housing policy history (Berry, 2010; Homeless Hub, 2018a ; 2018b; Suttor, 2016).

The increase in homelessness occurring in tandem with neoliberal policy shifts in Canada was well-documented by researchers, community services staff, and advocacy groups in several big cities from the 1980s to 2000s (Berry, 2010; Homeless Hub, 2018a; 2018b; Suttor, 2016). According to city-level data collected in Toronto between 1980 and 2000, the number of people using homeless shelters doubled every five years – in raw numbers, this meant about 4,000 people using homeless shelters every night in Toronto in the year 2000. In Calgary, homelessness estimates, including those living on the streets and using homeless shelters, doubled through the mid-1990s, to 1,000 people experiencing homelessness nightly. In Vancouver, advocacy groups lamented sharp increases in the demand for emergency homeless shelter, forcing people to be turned away nightly (Suttor, 2016). Today, yearly estimates attempting to use a wider definition, speculate that the number of homeless people in Canada could be as high as 300,000 at the time of writing (Homeless Hub, 2018b). Shelters in large Canadian cities have struggled to provide beds for the increasing numbers of people experiencing homelessness and governments have been unable, or perhaps more accurately unwilling, to fund long-term housing solutions (Berry, 2010).

In Denmark, it seems that the increases have been less dramatic. Although there is not comparable longitudinal data, in more recent years, from 2009 to 2015, survey data estimated an increase of 1,140 people nation-wide; that said, it seems that the number will continue to increase, as data suggests that the newly homeless are growing – about half of the people experiencing homelessness surveyed had recently become homeless, having been without a home for less than one year. There was also a significant increase in the survey data of young people, between the ages of 25 and 29, experiencing homelessness in Denmark (Benjaminsen & Lauritzen, 2015).

*Danish Experiences of Organizing and Coalition Building with People Experiencing Homelessness*

Experiencing homelessness is the result of the dramatic power imbalances and inequality in the housing market and in society. The lack of a basic necessity, and the associated lack of control and privacy, together make experiencing homelessness the most acute form of urban injustice (Allen, 2009; Berry, 2010). In addition to these barriers, people who experience homelessness typically lack power resources because they are highly transient. Coalition building with people experiencing homelessness can be very difficult for a large number of reasons and requires unique strategies. In Denmark there is a *Danish National Organization for Homeless People* that goes by the name *SAND*. For all of the aforementioned reasons, the organization is quite an interesting phenomenon. The group works to address and amend structural social exclusion, and the fundamental power differences between people who experience homelessness and the rest of society. Existence of the group is in itself unique, but perhaps more so is that fact that SAND receives state funding. State funding for SAND is not tied to any stipulations, is not coercive, and does not discourage disruptive behaviour (although SAND is not a protest

movement). Because local social services are administered by the municipalities, national funding of SAND is a proactive choice by national government to identify and solve problems occurring at the municipal level. For further reading and research, see Allen (2009) which includes a discussion of the organization, as well as some of the barriers and strategies faced by people experiencing homelessness who want to organize.

Discussion on Urban Segregation

Urban segregation has been a prominent issue in both Canada and Denmark, and indeed across most of the advanced industrial states, for many years (Zuberi, 2010; Berry, 2010; Therborn, 2017). In every urban center, there is a tendency for residents to cluster geographically based on their class position. These divisions are known, either formally or informally, by the people who live in the city. In cities with higher levels of inequality, this clustering creates clear divisions between upper- and lower-income residential areas. In this way, inequality is manifested in the city space through urban segregation (Berry, 2010; Therborn, 2017). Urban segregation can have a dramatic effect on life outcomes and can perpetuate inequality intergenerationally. Wealth gaps are reproduced and grow when elites pass on assets, such as real estate, and class privileges to their children. This mechanism for ensuring the intergenerational reproduction of class status is not captured through income-related statistics and is exceptionally important in regard to housing and urban inequality, where inheritances can cement a legacy of wealth protection for the elite, and urban segregation, exploitation, and exclusion for the poor. At the neighbourhood-level, the quality of schools, community centers, recreational facilities, public spaces, amenities, and local services vary based on neighbourhood income levels, with poorer neighbourhoods often facing additional burdens such as aging buildings and infrastructure, poor proximity to jobs, and increased instances

of pollution and crime. In this way, housing and location are clearly mechanisms for ordering power and enforcing stratification systems (Berry, 2010; Zuberi, 2010).

Global political economic changes, rising neoliberalization, welfare state retrenchments, growing income inequality, and suburban flight have all contributed to a dramatic increase in urban segregation around the world (Zuberi, 2010). Although empirical measurements are difficult, there is a clear tendency towards variation in urban segregation based on welfare state robustness, with more segregation in liberal Canada and less in social democratic Denmark (Therborn, 2017). In Canada, urban segregation has been increasing alarmingly, both based on income and ethnicity (Berry, 2010). As inequality grows in Canada, homeownership in the large urban centers is increasingly only achievable through elite inheritances, further entrenching persistent intergenerational wealth gaps (Zuberi, 2010). Although urban segregation is a serious issue, in Denmark, as discussed, many communities and individual units are well maintained, and residents are not interested in moving. It can be argued that the emphasis on targeting urban segregation in Denmark is at least partially a disguise for political tactics mobilizing racism, which have resulted in attempts to disrupt and displace communities of immigrants, refugees, and their descendants. In general, in the Nordic countries there are clear internal class distinctions between either private or social renting (associated with low-income people), owning a freehold flat (associated with the aspiring middle class), and homeownership (associated with the arrived middle- and upper-classes). That said, areas affected by urban segregation, such as state-targeted social housing estates, cannot be compared to deprived neighbourhoods (or ghettos), as understood in a North American context (Stokes-DuPass, 2015; Therborn, 2017). Overall, the quality of social housing is typically much higher in Denmark than it is in Canada, meaning that more people are living in adequate housing regardless of class or ethnicity.

*Housing, Capitalism, Colonialism, and Racism*

Housing, capitalism, colonialism, and racism are intricately intertwined. The concerted process of forcefully separating people from their resources and land, and thereby voiding them of the ability to survive outside of the wage-labour capitalist system, has been a deliberate tactic throughout the period of capitalism. This includes the process of displacing people, undermining alternative methods of survival (for example, Indigenous methods), commodifying land and resources, abolishing common and collective property rights, and enforcing private property rights. Rights to urban space have been intricately tied to capitalism since its beginnings and continue to manifest in city spaces through neoliberal urban governance, increasing privatization, and displacement through demolitions and gentrification, which consistently target the poor and racialized (Harvey, 2003:137-182).

Canada, and the other European colonial nations, are defined by colonial legacy. In Canada, brutal colonization was achieved through anti-nomadic attacks on the Indigenous population and forced relocations to reserves (Smith, 2005). Children were involuntarily seized and forced to live apart from their parents at residential schools (Milloy, 2017). These abuses used housing and spatial relations to achieve colonial goals, and the legacy and ongoing use of these practices are highly relevant. Throughout history, colonial processes have shaped the urban geography of Canada and have kept land costs comparatively low. Attempts at reconciliation, claims to land, and self governance remain serious issues in the Canadian context. Today, many reserve communities are located at far distances from main cities, services, and amenities, and there are nation-wide problems with highly-inadequate housing on reserves, where housing and social housing policies often differ from the rest of the country (Miller, 2000; Suttor, 2016).

Having largely dealt with its colonial past, in Denmark new tensions are arising as racism is growing in line with new waves of refugees and immigrants of colour. Poor and racialized people have been consistently targeted through a history of squat clearances, urban renewal, and social housing ('ghetto') fear-mongering. Eradicating these urban areas and creating space for elite commercial space, cultural institutions, and housing can be viewed as a type of internal conquest or imperialism (Walker, 2005). With rising far-right power in government, the divide between white-ethnic Danes and people of colour has deepened. Policies aimed at attacking the rights of racialized people are arguably the biggest threat to social housing and the Danish welfare state in general as they undermine universalism and fuel the breakdown of broad-based solidarity.

With a methodological and theoretical emphasis on large-scale, class-based comparisons, the interplay between these factors is not a main focus of the project. The connections between urban space, colonialism, and racism are, however, crucial aspect of housing history and worthy topics of future research, as will be discussed further in the conclusion.

**Chapter VI: Conclusions • Final Comparisons, Future Research, and Extensions of Theory**

**Urban Power, Politics, and Welfare State Comparisons**

Cities are political spaces. Neoliberal urban governance is evident in the city; changes in political and economic power are visible in the reconfiguration of cities and the resulting commodification and conflict over space. Power shapes cities and urban social relations by structuring space through connections versus divisions, centers versus peripheries, equality versus hierarchy, opportunities versus adversity, and comfort versus misery. Inequality is manifest in the urban space; this is where poverty is most visible (Lund Hansen, 2011; Therborn, 2017). Not everyone has equal spatial rights; throughout the capitalist period, the right to the city has been predicated on property rights. However, urban policies have the capacity to structure civic, political, and social rights in and to the spatial environment, in order to manage and mitigate urban inequality (Jørgensen, 2010; Lund Hansen, 2011; Suttor, 2016).

It is well understood that affordable and adequate housing is central to wellbeing (Carter & Polevychok, 2004; Cooper, 2018; Shapcott, et al., 2010). Building on this, the argument here is that it should be included as a universal social citizenship right. As the comparative histories illustrate, understanding social housing as a part of the welfare state is key to analyzing social housing history, advocating for robust policy, and arguing a state responsibility and social right for housing. Throughout the social housing histories, broader welfare state trends and changes have influenced social housing policies and scale. Where power resources are lacking, as in Canada, these trends and changes have been more decisive than the demands of the working class, poor, and marginalized, who have not been able to create or sustain the clout necessary to challenge capitalist, sovereign actors. Although some cities in the liberal welfare states, such as Canada, have

had center-left or progressive municipal governments, liberal welfare state cities have never had the level of working class power resources needed to foster the municipal socialism seen in European cities, such as in social democratic Copenhagen (Therborn, 2017). Federally, social housing has never been considered a main component in welfare state building in Canada. Institutionally weak, market-tied housing policies in Canada have led to a negligible social housing sector susceptible to swift dismantling.

While Denmark is struggling with serious far-right resurgence and racism, institutionalized housing policies conceptualized as a welfare state component have nonetheless led to a robust social housing sector, with broad-based support, and resiliency to dismantling. In general, institutionally entrenched policies and programs tend to be more difficult to retract and are likely to affect subsequent policymaking. Overall, well established, robust welfare states and policies are more likely to endure (Brooks & Manza, 2007; Esping-Andersen, 1990; Korpi, 2003; Suttor, 2016). It is clear from the histories, however, that welfare state, policy, and program resiliency is not simply the outcome of path dependency, but rather the result of concerted resistance in the face of retrenchment and neoliberal attacks. When power resources are strong and can push for social housing to be considered an integral part of the welfare state, social housing is to a greater extent institutionalized as a public good, such as education or healthcare.

**Canada and Future Critical Comparative Studies**

Conducting critical cross-national case studies is useful to broaden the horizons in the search for alternatives to neoliberalization and to dismantle neoliberal hegemony. In the late 1970s, although there was little resistance to the notion that the government deficit should be reduced, different strategies arose in terms of how to proceed; while the right-wing argued for austerity

measures, the left-wing forwarded the need for structural changes such as job creation and tax reform. As the history illustrates, Canada decisively followed the global political economic trend of neoliberalization. As the idea that 'there is no alternative' strengthened in the 1980s, the connection between Canada and the anglosphere solidified; today, comparisons between Canada and its powerful neighbour to the south are frequently invoked. Often, comparisons to other countries, for example the Scandinavian social democratic countries such as Denmark, are dismissed, due to neoliberal hegemony, as unable to achieve success in a 'North American context' (Baker, 1997; Olsen, 2002; 2011). As the history illustrates, welfare state building in Canada faces many challenges; however universal programs have been successful in Canada's history and continue to function in the present day.[52] Critical comparisons with more robust welfare states are useful in identifying strengths and weaknesses and, overall, in remembering that there *is* an alternative.

In general, whether it announces itself as critical or 'objective', all research has moral, value, and political implications (Denzin, 2000; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). Research and theory will either support (either wittingly or unwittingly) oppression through power structures and relations or refute it. With the state of current world affairs, it is crucial to take full advantage of the opportunity to use research as a platform to engage in hard conversations about the failings of society and to connect research to action – whether that be in regards to inequalities between classes, genders, or races, or questions of democracy, freedom, community, globalization, or environmental destruction, to name a few (Denzin, 2000; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; 2008; Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000). The goal is to engage "a reader who is coparticipant in a public

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[52] Although it has not been immune to retrenchment, healthcare, Canada's pride and joy, remains rooted in universal social citizenship.

project that demands democratic solutions to personal and public problems" (Charity, 1995:146). Research building on this project should continue to question assumptions and seek transformative praxis in the face of injustice and oppression (Denzin, 2000; Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000).

**Canada, Social Housing, and Coalition Building**

As the project illustrates, social housing policies are most robust when they are considered part of broader welfare state infrastructure, secured by broad legislation that collaborates effectively with local needs, financially well-supported, and upheld by broad-based coalitions. These trends are identifiable throughout the Danish social housing history and during the relative height of Canadian social housing, when social housing policies enjoyed broad support. During the relative height of Canadian social housing, minor fiscal and political challenges did not disrupt the system. Later, the strong trends of retrenchment and neoliberalization of the 1990s unfortunately put a decisive end to the period of Canadian social housing realization (Suttor, 2016).

In Canada, prioritizing social housing in the future would necessitate a national social housing policy, emphasizing universalism, and supporting provincial and municipal goals. At the broad level, increasing left-wing leadership and pushing for electoral reform are politically important to achieving more robust policy. At the community level, identifying successful local case studies, working to organize broad urban coalitions, utilizing community resources, and lobbying to maintain and expand social housing are key efforts. Unfortunately, largescale housing access issues, such as those faced by Canada, are complex and mitigating these problems under the current political climate may require lengthy timescales (Edgar, et al., 2002). The groundwork of this project, as well as the more concrete policy work undertaken in a Canadian context, are useful starting points for future research wishing to focus on organizing and policy

recommendations in Canada.[53] Future comparative studies aimed at organizing and policy recommendations could focus on how federal housing policies and political economic factors have impacted local initiatives in Canada and between countries. In Denmark, cities and towns are dealing with different urban issues. The decentralization of social housing decisions in Denmark affords the ability to compare the approaches of municipalities. How have larger, and typically more left-leaning, cities approached social housing in comparison to rural areas? As the timeline illustrates, in Canada, there are many substantial provincial and municipal social housing differences that could be further explored.

People across the world, threatened by neoliberalization, are working to disrupt capitalism. Urban social change can not be discounted; growing power resources through coalitions and disruption can achieve progressive objectives. Urban protest movements are continuing and are often focused on housing affordability and access; viability of disruption is strongest when it commands the city space (Allen, 2009; Therborn, 2017). In Canada, and elsewhere, it is crucial to foster broad coalitions, united spatially, that are able to divide elites to, at the least, protect, and aim to expand universal programs.

Coalition building, of the scale needed to enact change, faces many challenges in today's world. People living in poverty can suffer from social isolation, feelings of powerlessness, and a lack of resources, which can undermine long-term thinking and organization capacity. Identity politics, which have been used by many recent protest movements, are not a useful tactic when there is no unifying identity to celebrate; the poor are united mainly through their shared socioeconomic deprivation. Furthermore, poverty, and many of the related issues, such as

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[53] See for example Carter & Polevychok, 2004, or Cooper, 2018 (includes a further focus on Manitoba).

unemployment and experiencing homelessness, are 'identities' that are (or should be) temporary; they are conditions that people are trying to exit, not sustain nor celebrate (Allen, 2009). Related movements such as union- and class-based organizing have largely been undermined by neoliberalization. In welfare states where citizens are struggling to oppose policy and program dismantling, recipients of specific benefits are often successful in uniting and resisting retrenchment, as seen in Denmark among people receiving housing benefits or living in social housing (Korpi, 2003). For general urban social change, the strongest coalitions have emerged based on solidarity anchored spatially, around, for example, deprived neighbourhoods (Allen, 2009).

## Power Resources Theory, Urban Political Economic Theory, and Future Extensions of Theory

Extending Power Resources and Urban Political Economic Theory to account for urban conflicts and coalitions, and social housing policy, can help to explain distinctive class geographic structures and political economic niches, created through historical class and race relations, and the impacts these have on social housing coalitions, policy, and outcomes. Future research could incorporate a more thorough analysis of historical race relations. In Canada, internal settler-colonialism has cheapened work and assets, of particular relevance land and housing, in both the domestic and global markets (Moore, 2015). With comparatively less debt and lower costs, there is far less of a universal coalition demand for social goods, such as social housing, in Canada than in Denmark. Denmark has developed politically and economically out of a legacy of intensive class struggle and internal colonialism. In Denmark, cost of living and assets, particularly land and housing, are much higher. With more class relation through debt incentives (Graeber, 2011;

Hudson, 2018), there is more motivation in Denmark to form universalist coalitions to obtain social goods, such as social housing. Future research could explore asset price structures, particularly of land and housing costs, in relation to disposable incomes, to understand the social wage as it extends to social housing and the impacts of colonialism, historical class and race struggles, and ongoing class inequality. What are the relationships between colonization, racialization, class, and asset prices? How do these relationships affect incentives for commodified housing versus social housing initiatives?

It follows from the project and this further theorization that social housing is, by nature, a decommodified good that has been incentivized by past domestic anti-capitalist organization. Therefore, even if sovereign agents mutilate social housing goals away from social good – for example, if social housing coalitions are not motivated by social justice, if capitalist stakeholders try to steer social housing initiatives towards market interest, or if social housing is created out of ulterior market motives – the intentions are not determinative, since historical legacies of struggle have influenced future freedom in process and in determining outcomes. Drawing from the histories presented, social housing cannot be separated from its anti-capitalist roots.

Within a political economic framework, there is room to understand how policy initiatives shift around jurisdictional levels over time. These changes are influenced by uneven power distributions. Considering these uneven power distributions in the capitalist, neoliberal world economy, removing the state is not a viable solution, since power is overwhelmingly possessed by the capitalist class. Power resources allow working class and urban coalitions to influence state policy in their favour, which can mitigate capitalist power and secure social goods. While there is struggle due to embedded capitalist power and interests, concrete welfare state and policy changes,

and resilience have been historically possible, as evident in the case of Denmark's social housing legacy, largely created and secured by broad based citizen support.

For future coalition building, the theoretical extension of Power Resources and Political Economic Urban Theory maintains organization, disruption, and protest as a key factor in explaining policy outcome divergence. Past Power Resources Theory studies have explained welfare state robustness and policy outcomes throughout the working class history. Political Economic Urban Theory builds on the extensive history of working class organizing and re-emphasizes the ongoing role of coalition building, based geographically, to maintain social goods in the face of deteriorating working class power resources. Synthesizing Power Resources Theory and Political Economic Urban Theory in future research could focus on understanding the capitalist relations governing housing in countries where assets are costly (such as Denmark) and the extent to which ongoing coalition organization is influencing policy and resiliency of welfare state social goods, such as social housing. Further researching the extent to which coalitions are able to transcend protest and impact jurisdictional levels would greatly advance understanding.

Through the project, I have advanced sociological knowledge through the thorough comparative history of social housing policies and through the theoretical innovation, which has linked welfare state and urban studies research. I have filled a gap in the literature on social housing policies and their connection to the welfare state and constellations of power in society. By connecting the welfare state, social housing, and coalition building, I have created a framework for academics and communities to argue for a state responsibility to provide adequate and affordable housing.

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