

ESCE

Electoral System Change in Europe since 1945



Electoral System Change in Europe since 1945: Denmark

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With thanks to:



Section 1: Overview of the Danish Electoral System Changes since 1945

Until 1915, Denmark used a system of single-member plurality (Elklit 1992: 190–91). A mixed-member proportional system was in place between 1915 and 1920 and used in the general election of 1918 (Elklit 1992: 191–95). This was, in turn, replaced with a multi-tier proportional list system in 1920. This was designed to retain a constituency link through the nomination districts and at the same time to give voters a broader choice than before (Pedersen 1966: 172). Seats were allocated in multimember districts and there was an upper tier for compensatory seats and flexible list arrangements for the attribution of seats to candidates (see below for details). The first election we have taken into consideration for this project is that of October 1945, which was held some months after the end of the German occupation in May 1945. The system in use was roughly the same one that had been employed since the 1920 electoral reform, though various further amendments had been passed, including one enacted at the start of October 1945. This basic format of this system remains in place for Danish elections today, although it has been tweaked in various ways over the years.

Section 2: Relevant Electoral System changes in Denmark since 1945

Table 1. Summary of [Country] Electoral Laws and Amendments since 1945

Law	Amendment	Date of enactment	Location	Relevant for the research
[name of the law]	[Name of the amendment]	Day Month Year	location	Yes or No
1920: Lov nr. 139 of April 11. Law on Election of Parliament		11.04.1920	RT, 1919-20, Tillæg C, 1357- 1456 Lovtidende A, 1920, 477-526	Yes
1945: Lov nr. 306 of June 29. Law on interim changes of rules of preparation of voters' register for Folketing		29.06.1945	RT, 1945, Tillæg C, 139- 42 Lovtidende A, 1945, 802-03	No

elections				
1945:	1.10.1945	RT, 1945, Tillæg C, 1017-32	Yes	
Lov nr. 471 of October 1.				
Law on amendments to the Law on Election of Parliament				
1947:	7.10.1947	RT, 1946-47, Tillæg C, 1705-06	No	
Lov nr. 422 of October 7.				
Law on amendments to the Law on Election of Parliament				
1948:	9.06.1948	RT, 1947-48, Tillæg C, 1777-1882	Yes	
Lov nr. 279 of June 9				
Law on Election of Parliament				
1953:	31.03.1953	RT, 1952-53, Tillæg C, 225-320	Yes	
Lov nr. 171 of March 31.				
Law on Election of Folketinget				
1953:	22.12.1953	FT, 1953-54, Tillæg C, 113-32	No	
Lov nr. 335 of December 22.				
Law on amendments to the local				

government electoral law and to the Law on Election of Folketinget				
1961:	16.06.1961	FT, 1960-61, Tillæg C, 261- 62	No	
Lov nr. 207 of June 16.				
Law on a change of voting age (for Folketing elections)		Lovtidende A, 1961, 505		
1961:	16.06.1961	FT, 1960-61, Tillæg C, 261- 62	No	
Lov nr. 207 of June 16.				
Law on a change of voting age (for Folketing elections)		Lovtidende A, 1961, 505		
1961:	16.06.1961	FT, 1960-61, Tillæg C, 683-4	Yes	
Lov nr. 207 of June 16				
		Lovtidende A, 1961, 505-06		
1964:	4.03.1964	FT, 1963-64, Tillæg C, 145- 56	Yes	
Lov nr. 59 of March 4.				
Law on Amendments to the Law on Election of Folketinget		Lovtidende A, 1964, 119-24		
1964:	18.12.1964	FT, 1964-65, Tillæg C, 27-28	No	
Lov nr. 364 of				
		Lovtidende A,		

December 18.		1964, 1206-07	
Law on Amendments to the Law on Election of Folketinget			
1965:	21.12.1965	FT, 1965-66, Tillæg C, 113-22	No
Lov no. 445 of December 21.			
Law on Amendments to the Law on Election of Folketinget		Lovtidende A, 1965, 1489-93	
1970:	12.06.1970	FT, 1969-70, Tillæg C, 769-90	Yes
Lov no. 283 of June 10.			
Law on Amendments to the Law on Election of Folketinget (Constituency delimitation etc.)		Lovtidende A, 1970, 719-29	
1971:	5.10.1971	FT, 1970-71, Tillæg C, 1119-20	No
Lov no. 445 of October 5.			
Law on Changes to the Voting Age in Elections to Folketinget		Lovtidende A, 1971, 1167-68	
1973:	23.05.1973	FT, 1972-73, Tillæg C, 1337-	No

			42	
	<p>Lov nr. 286 of May 23.</p> <p>Law on Amendments to the Law on local government Elections and to the Law on Election of Folketinget</p>		<p>Lovtidende A, 1973, 812-14</p>	
1977:	16.11.1977	<p>FT, 1977-78, Tillæg C, 49-54</p> <p>Lovtidende A, 1977, 1584-86</p>		No
	<p>Lov no. 567 of November 16.</p> <p>Law on Amendments to the Law on Election of Folketinget and the Law on Local Councils Elections</p>			
1978:	8.03.1978	<p>FT, 1977-78, Tillæg C, 209-10</p> <p>Lovtidende A, 1978, 307</p>		No
	<p>Lov no. 83 of March 8.</p> <p>Law on Amendments to the Law on Election of Folketinget (Electoral registers)</p>			
1978:	27..09.1978	<p>FT, 1977-78, Tillæg C, 597-98</p> <p>Lovtidende A, 1978, 1496</p>		No
	<p>Lov no. 483 of September 27.</p> <p>Law on Voting</p>			

Age Changes in Elections to Folketinget				
1980:	30.04.1980	FT, 1979-80 (2. samling), Tillæg C, 321-40	No	
Lov no. 145 of April 30.				
Law on Amendments to the Law on Election of Folketinget		Lovtidende A, 1980, 596-605		
1983:	2.03.1983	FT, 1982-83, Tillæg C, 231-32	No	
Lov nr. 91 of March 2.				
Law on Amendments to the Law on Election of Folketinget		Lovtidende A, 1983, 266		
1987:	13.05.1987	FT, 1986-87, Tillæg C, 525-88	Yes	
Lov no. 271 of May 13				
Law on Elections to Folketinget		Lovtidende A, 1987, 928-958		
		https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=52768		
		Version in English:		
		http://www.le		

gislationline.org/documents/action/popup/id/5736

1989:	19.04.1989	FT, 1988-89, Tillæg C, 791-92 Lovtidende A, 1989, 832	No
<p>Lov no. 245 of April 19.</p> <p>Amendments to the Law on Elections to Folketinget</p> <p>https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=52757</p>			
1994:	6.04.1994	FT, 1993-94, Tillæg C, 633-38 Lovtidende A, 1994, 985-87	No
<p>Lov no. 223 of April 6.</p> <p>Amendments to the Law on Elections to Folketinget (Changes in candidate registration requirements, advance voting etc.)</p>			
1995:	14.06.1995	FT, 1994-95, Tillæg C, 383 Lovtidende A, 1995, 1692	No
<p>Lov no. 379 of June 14.</p> <p>Amendment to the Law on Elections to</p>			

Folketinget			
1996: Lov no. 472 of June 12. Amendments to the Law on elections to Folketinget (Voting rights to unmarried co-habiting voters during temporary stays abroad)	12.06.1996	FT, 1995-96, Tillæg C, 779 Lovtidende A, 1996, 2567	No
1998: Lov no. 255 of May 4. Law on amendments to the laws on election of Folketinget, on election of local councils, and of Danish representative s to the European Parliament	4.05.1998	FT, 1997-98 (2. saml.), Tillæg C, 3-4 Lovtidende A, 1998, 1497-98	No
2001: Lov no. 215 of March 28. Law on Amendments to the Law on Election of Folketinget and Law on election of	28.03.2001	FT, 2000-01, Tillæg C, 432- 34 Lovtidende A, 2001, 1493	No

Danish representatives to the European Parliament				
2003: ¹	27.12.2003	FT, 2003-04, Tillæg C, 189-191	No	
Lov no. 1209 of December 27.		Lovtidende A, 2003, 7638-40		
Amendments to Law on Elections to Folketinget, Law on Election of Danish Representatives to the European Parliament, and Law on Local Government Elections				
2004:	9.06.2004	FT, 2003-04, Tillæg C, 791-92	No	
Lov no. 438 of June 9.		Lovtidende A, 2004, 2900-01		
Amendments to the Law on Election of Folketinget				
2005:	27.04.2005	FT, 2004-05 (2. saml.), Tillæg C, 18-19	No	
Lov no. 294 of April 27.		Lovtidende A,		
Law on				

¹ It clarifies rules on how parliamentary candidates may be present at vote counting and some technicalities concerning candidate registration for elections

<p>Amendments to the Laws on Elections to the Folketing, Election of Danish Members of the European Parliament, and Election of Local Councils</p>		<p>2005, 2393-94</p>	
<p>2006: Lov no. 536 of June 8. Law on Amendments to the Law on Election of folketinget</p>	<p>8.6.2006</p>	<p>FT, 2005-06, Tillæg C, 984-97 Lovtidende A, 2006, 3632-3645 http://www.ft.dk/samling/20051/lovforslag/L222/som_ve_dtaget.htm</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>2008: Lov no. 222 of April 8. Law on amendments to the Laws on Elections to Folketinget, Elections of Danish Members of the European Parliament, and Election of</p>	<p>8.04.2008</p>	<p>FT, 2007-08, Tillæg C, xx-yy Lovtidende A, 2008, April 9 http://www.ft.dk/samling/20072/lovforslag/L18A/som_ve_dtaget.htm</p>	<p>No</p>

<p>Local and Regional Councils (Election Board, party labels etc.)</p>	<p>2008: 19.12.2008 FT, 2008-09, Tillæg C, xx-yy Lov nr. 1347 of December 19. Lovtidende A, 2008, xx-yy Law on amendments to the Laws on Elections to Folketinget, Elections of Danish Members of the European Parliament, and Election of Local and Regional Councils http://www.ft.dk/samling/20081/lovforslag/L17/som_vedtaget.htm#dok</p>	<p>2009: 24.02.2009 FT, 2008-09, Tillæg C, xx-yy Lov nr. 135 of February 24. Lovtidende A, 2009, xx-yy Law on amendments to the Law on Elections to the Folketing (Referendum on Constitutional Amendments) https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.as?id=123599</p>	<p>No</p>
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Section 3: Details of previous electoral systems and electoral system changes.

3.1 The 1945 Electoral System

The system in use in 1945 was a multi-tier proportional representation system using either open or flexible lists (as explained below, parties could choose between a number of list formats). Its main features dated from the 1920 electoral reform, though various changes had subsequently been made. A wide-ranging set of amendments – Law 471 of 1945 – was passed less than a month before the election of 30 October itself but left most of the substance unchanged.

Assembly size. There were 148 seats in the Folketing (Lower House).

Districts and district magnitude. Seats were allocated at two levels. The lower tier comprised 117 seats in 23 districts (referred to here as multi-member constituencies to differentiate them from the nomination districts that they contained). The upper tier comprised 31 seats. The distribution of these seats across parties was determined nationally (see below), but the number of seats going to each of three regions was determined in the law. Following the election, the seats were allocated in turn to parties in particular multi-member constituencies (see below).

Thus, six compensatory seats were allocated to the region of Copenhagen- Frederiksberg, ten to the Islands (Øernes Amter), and fifteen to Jutland (Jyllands Amter) (Article 44 of the 1945 law).

Copenhagen-Frederiksberg was divided into three multimember constituencies (strokredse) and the rest of the country was divided into twenty multimember constituencies (amtskredse). Each multimember constituency was divided into nomination districts. The number of seats in each multimember constituency was equivalent to the number of nomination districts they contained.

Districting in the 1945 and 1947 elections is summarized in Table 2. As is apparent, no formal redistricting took place between these elections, but the distribution of compensatory seats to the multi-member constituencies changed.

Nature of votes that can be cast. Voters could cast one vote: either for a party list (or an independent), or for a single candidate on a list.

Party threshold. While there was no threshold for the lower tier, parties had to obtain at least one multimember constituency seat or as many votes as the average number of votes cast per seat nationally within one of the three electoral provinces, to qualify for the distribution of compensatory seats (Article 44 of the 1945 law).

Allocation of seats to parties at the lower tier. Votes (including both votes cast for parties and those cast for individual candidates) were summed up in each multimember constituency and the D'Hondt formula was applied. Thus, each vote total was divided by 1, 2, 3 and so on. The party or the independent candidate having the highest resulting quotient gained the first seat in the multi-member constituency. The second highest quotient gained the second seat and so on, until all constituency seats in the multi-member constituency had been distributed among the parties and the independent candidates. (Article 43).

Allocation of seats to parties at the upper tier. The votes of those parties that were eligible to compete in the compensatory tier were summed nationally and divided by the sum of the seats won by these parties in the multi-member constituencies and the total number of seats in the compensatory tier (that is, the Hare quota was calculated). The total seat entitlement of each party was then calculated using this quota and largest remainders. The seats won by each party at the constituency level were subtracted from these totals to ascertain the number of seats won by each party from the compensatory tier (Article 44).

These seats were then allocated to parties and regions using the Sainte-Laguë formula and finally to parties in multi-member constituencies using Hare quotas and largest remainders (Article 45).

Allocation of seats to candidates. Once the number of seats won by each party and independent candidate in both tiers was known, seats were allocated to parties' candidates. Parties could choose prior to the election between different forms of list organization, and these had different implications for how the allocation of seats to candidates was conducted. These forms built in different ways upon the fact that the multi-member constituencies in the Danish system were, as noted above, divided into small nomination districts. The legal texts on these matters do not always draw out the significance of the various options, so we draw in our analysis on descriptions in Elklit (1993, 2005, 2011) and Pedersen (1966).

1. Parties could opt to form a "party list", by presenting an ordered list of candidates before the election. In this case, the party's vote total in the constituency was divided by the number one greater than the number of seats (whether lower- or upper-tier seats) that the party had won in the constituency, and the resulting number was rounded up (the Droop quota). Any candidate who had obtained this quota was elected. If fewer candidates had obtained the quota than the party had won seats, the surplus votes of the successful candidates were calculated by subtracting the Droop quota from their vote totals. This number of ballot papers was taken from these candidates' vote totals and reallocated to the highest ranked candidate on the ballot paper who had not yet been elected. If this did not fill all the seats, the lowest placed candidate was eliminated and his or her votes were reallocated. This process continued until all the party's seats were filled or only as many candidates remained as there were still seats to be filled, in which case these candidates were elected even if they had not met the quota (Article 48). This was thus a flexible list form of allocation with a threshold of one Droop quota and using transfer of votes at full value.

2. Alternatively, parties could opt not to form a party list. In this case, an important distinction lay in whether they nominated one candidate per nominating district or more than one.

- a. Where parties nominated one candidate in each nominating district, then that candidate appeared at the top of the list of candidates and all the other candidates in the multi-member constituency appeared below in alphabetical order. Here, votes cast for individual candidates counted for those candidates, but votes cast for the party as a whole counted for the nominated candidate in the district (Article 40). The final order of candidates was determined entirely by voters' votes, but including the allocation of party votes to the lead candidate in the district (Article 48). This was thus again a flexible list system, though the party's influence over the final order of candidates was more limited than in the party list option.

- b. If parties nominated multiple candidates in a district (for example, if they nominated all of their candidates in the constituency in every nominating district), then votes cast for the list as a whole went to whichever candidate had won most individual votes (Article 40). Here, therefore, voters entirely determined the final list order, making this a fully open-list option.

Table 2: Allocation of seats at district level in 1945 and 1947*

Region	Constituency	Constituency seats		Compensatory seats	
		1945	1947	1945	1947
Hovedstaden (Copenhagen)	Søndre Storkreds	6	6	1	1
	Østre Storkreds	6	6	4	4
	Vestre Storkreds	6	6	1	1
	TOTAL			6	6
Øerne (The Islands)	Københavns Amtskreds	5	5	5	4
	Frederiksborg Amtskreds	4	4	1	2
	Holbæk Amtskreds	4	4	-	-
	Sorø Amtskreds	4	4	-	-
	Præstø Amtskreds	4	4	1	-
	Bornholms Amtskreds	2	2	-	-
	Maribo Amtskreds	5	5	1	1
	Odense Amtskreds	7	7	1	2
	Svendborg Amtskreds	6	6	1	1
	TOTAL			10	10
Jylland (Jutland)	Hjørring Amtskreds	5	5	2	1
	Thisted Amtskreds	3	3	1	1
	Ålborg Amtskreds	6	6	1	2
	Viborg Amtskreds	5	5	-	1
	Randers Amtskreds	6	6	1	1
	Århus Amtskreds	5	5	2	2
	Skanderborg Amtskreds	4	4	2	-
	Vejle Amtskreds	6	6	3	3
	Ringkøbing Amtskreds	6	6	1	2
	Ribe Amtskreds	5	5	2	1
	Haderslev	7	7	-	1
	TOTAL			15	15
	TOTAL		117	117	31

*Data obtained from the Lovtidende (the Official Gazette) (<https://www.lovtidende.dk>).

3.2 The 1948 Electoral Reform

This law (No. 279) was enacted on June 1948 with the aim of increasing proportionality (Elkit 1993: 49; 2002: 40–42).

Assembly size. The number of seats to be filled for the Folketinget was increased slightly. The Lower House had 151 members; two of them represented the Faroe Islands, which constituted a special electoral district (Article 17).

Districts and district magnitude. Two members of the Folketinget were elected in the Faroe Islands, which constituted a special electoral district (Art 17, subsection 9). From the 149 seats to be elected for the Lower House in the rest of the territory, 105 were constituency seats and 44 compensatory seats. The compensatory tier was thus expanded from 20.9 per cent of the total to 29.5 per cent of the total (excluding the Faroe Islands).

With the exception of the Faroe Islands, Denmark was divided into three regions: Metropolitan Copenhagen consisting of 3 multi-member constituencies, the Islands consisting of 9 county constituencies and Jutland consisting of 11 county constituencies (Art. 17).

The apportionment of seats to the different districts was to be proportional to: 1) the population of the constituency; 2) the number of voters in the constituency in the last general election; and 3) the area of the constituency in square kilometres multiplied by a factor of 25. This factor was meant to change for future elections in a way that was proportional to the variation in the population and the number of voters in the entire country (Article 17). Regular reapportionment every five years was introduced.

Party threshold. No change (Article 43).

Allocation of seats to parties at the lower tier. This reform created the only system in Danish electoral history according to which the allocation of seats at the lower level was not final. That is, parties could lose seats at latter stages of the allocation procedures if they had won more seats in the multi-member constituencies than they were entitled to nationwide (Elklit 1993: 42). This point was amended in 1953 and from then onwards allocation at the lower stages was again final. (Elklit 1993: 42).

The two seats in the Faroe Islands were filled in a two-member district using D'Hondt (Elklit and Sundberg 2011: 10). In all other respects, allocation remained unchanged.

Allocation of seats to parties at the upper tier. No change (Article 44).

Allocation of seats to candidates. No change (Article 47).

No other change

Table 3: Allocation of seats at district and regional level in 1950 and 1953 elections*

Region	Constituency	Constituency seats		Compensatory seats	
		1950	Apr-53	1950	Apr-53
Hovedstaden (Copenhagen)	Søndre Storkreds	5	5	1	1
	Østre Storkreds	8	8	5	5
	Vestre Storkreds	6	6	3	2
	TOTAL	19	19	9	8
Øerne (The Islands)	Københavns Amtskreds	7	9	5	4
	Frederiksborg Amtskreds	4	4	-	-
	Holbæk Amtskreds	3	3	-	-
	Sorø Amtskreds	3	3	1	1
	Præstø Amtskreds	3	3	1	1
	Bornholms Amtskreds	2	2	-	-
	Maribo Amtskreds	4	3	2	2
	Odense Amtskreds	6	6	2	3
	Svendborg Amtskreds	4	4	3	3

	TOTAL	36	37	14	14
Jylland (Jutland)	Hjørring Amtskreds	5	4	2	2
	Thisted Amtskreds	3	3	1	1
	Ålborg Amtskreds	6	6	2	2
	Viborg Amtskreds	4	4	1	2
	Randers Amtskreds	4	4	-	2
	Århus Amtskreds	4	4	5	5
	Skanderborg Amtskreds	3	3	1	1
	Vejle Amtskreds	5	5	3	2
	Ringkøbing Amtskreds	6	6	2	2
	Ribe Amtskreds	4	4	3	1
	Haderslev	6	6	1	2
	TOTAL	50	49	21	22
TOTAL		105	105	44	44

*Data obtained from the Lovtidende (the Official Gazette) (<https://www.lovtidende.dk>).

3.3 The 1953 Electoral Reform.

This new electoral law was enacted, on 31 March 1953, after constitutional amendments that led to the abolition of the Landstinget (Upper House).

Assembly size. The Assembly size increased. A total of 179 members were elected to the Folketing, of which two were elected in the Faroe Islands and two in Greenland. Both Greenland and the Faroe Islands constituted special electoral provinces. (Article 17)

Districts and district magnitude. Except for the Faroe Islands and Greenland, the country was divided into three electoral provinces, namely the Capital province, consisting of three multi-member constituencies; the province of the islands, consisting of nine multi-member constituencies; and the Jutland province, consisting of eleven multi-member constituencies. Every multi-member constituency was divided into nomination districts.

Of the 175 seats to be elected in the territory not comprising the Faroe Islands and Greenland, 135 were multi-member constituency seats and 40 were compensatory seats (the proportion of compensatory seats was therefore reduced to 22.9 per cent).

The rules of apportionment were not changed, except in respect of the Bornholm multi-member constituency. If the apportionment did not allocate at least two seats to Bornholm, Bornholm received one seat in advance, after which the remaining 134 multi-member constituency seats were allocated following the usual method.

Party threshold. The threshold for taking part in the allocation of compensatory seats was raised. Parties needed to obtain at least one constituency seat; or at least 60,000 of the valid votes cast in the whole of Denmark; or, within each of the three regions, at least a number of votes equivalent to

the average number of valid votes per constituency seat in that region (Article 43). Elklit (2002: 45–46) notes that the effect of this change was in practice more than to double the threshold.

Allocation of seats to parties at the lower tier. The electoral formula to allocate seats to parties at the lower tier was changed from D’Hondt to modified Saint Laguë. Thus, the votes cast for each party and each independent candidate in each multi-member constituency were summed up. Each vote total was divided by the divisor series 1.4, 3, 5, 7 and so on. The party or the independent candidate with the highest resulting quotient gained the first seat in the multi-member constituency. The second highest quotient secured the second seat and so on, until all constituency seats had been distributed among the parties and the independent candidates (Article 42). According to the Ministry of the Interior and Health (2010: 5):

“Changing to the modified Sainte-Laguë formula in 1953 served the purpose of ensuring that the increase in the number of constituency seats (from 105 to 135) and the reduction in the number of compensatory seats (from 44 to 40) introduced at the same time, did not have the effect that a party could obtain more constituency seats than its total votes made it qualify for. The modified Sainte-Laguë formula, which to a greater extent than the d’Hondt formula benefits minor parties, was for this reason considered the better option.”

D’Hondt was retained, however, for the two seats elected from the Faroe Islands. The two new seats representing Greenland were filled by plurality in single-member districts until 1974, when D’Hondt in one two-member district was introduced there too (Elklit and Sundberg 2011: 10).

The finality of seat allocation at the lower tier was reintroduced (Elklit 2005: 456).

Allocation of seats to parties at the upper tier. Only the mechanism for allocating upper tier seats from the regional level to the level of the multi-member constituencies changed: the mechanisms for determining the number of seats won by each party overall remained as they were. Seats were now allocated within parties to multi-member constituencies using the divisor series 1, 4, 7, 10... (Article 44). As the Ministry of the Interior and Health puts it, this divisor series was intended “to make it more difficult for multimember constituencies that have already obtained a constituency seat to share in the compensatory seats, thus ensuring a larger spread of compensatory seats among the multimember constituencies than the previous formula would entail” (Ministry of the Interior and Health 2010: 5).

No other change

Table 4: Allocation of seats at district and regional level in 1953, 1957 and 1960 elections*

Region	Constituency	Constituency seats			Compensatory seats		
		Sep 1953	1957	1960	Sep 1953	1957	1960
Hovedstaden (Copenhagen)	Søndre Storkreds	6	6	6	1	1	1
	Østre Storkreds	11	11	11	3	3	5
	Vestre Storkreds	8	8	8	3	3	1
	TOTAL				7	7	7
Øerne (The Islands)	Københavns Amtskreds	11	11	11	3	4	7
	Frederiksborg Amtskreds	5	5	5	1	2	-
	Holbæk Amtskreds	4	4	4	1	-	1
	Sorø Amtskreds	4	4	4	1	1	-
	Præstø Amtskreds	4	4	4	2	1	-
	Bornholms Amtskreds	2	2	2	-	-	-
	Maribo Amtskreds	4	4	4	2	2	2

	Odense Amtskreds	7	7	7	3	3	3
	Svendborg Amtskreds	5	5	5	1	1	1
	TOTAL				14	14	14
Jylland (Jutland)	Hjørring Amtskreds	6	6	6	1	1	-
	Thisted Amtskreds	3	3	3	1	1	1
	Ålborg Amtskreds	7	7	7	3	3	1
	Viborg Amtskreds	5	5	5	1	1	2
	Randers Amtskreds	6	6	6	1	-	1
	Århus Amtskreds	6	6	6	3	4	3
	Skanderborg Amtskreds	4	4	4	2	2	2
	Vejle Amtskreds	7	7	7	3	2	3
	Ringkøbing Amtskreds	7	7	7	1	1	2
	Ribe Amtskreds	6	6	6	1	2	2
	Haderslev	7	7	7	2	2	2
	TOTAL				19	19	19
TOTAL		135	135	135	40	40	40

*Data obtained from the Lovtidende (the Official Gazette) (<https://www.lovtidende.dk>).

3.4 The 1961 Electoral Reform

This law changed the thresholds for inclusion in the compensatory tier. It was enacted on 16 June 1961 (Law No. 207).

Party threshold. The threshold was lowered. In order to participate in the distribution of compensatory seats, parties had to win either

1. at least one seat in a multi-member constituency (as before);
2. within at least two of the three electoral provinces (rather than, as previously, all three), at least as many votes as the average number of valid votes cast per constituency seat in the region; or
3. at least 2 per cent of the valid votes cast nationwide.

Elklit (2002: 46) notes that the change from 60,000 votes to 2 per cent of votes amounted to a reduction of 23 per cent.

No other change

3.5 The 1964 Electoral Reform

Minor details were changed with this law, enacted on 4th March 1964. Among other technicalities, it included several changes in constituency delimitation and some improvements to the procedures of access to voter registration.

Districts and district magnitude. No change, except for the introduction of a clause assuring that Bornholm's multi-member constituency had two seats in advance in the apportionment procedure instead of one seat, as had been the case under the 1953 law.

No other change

Table 5: Allocation of seats at district [and provincial] level in 1964, 1966 and 1968 elections*

Region	Constituency	Constituency seats			Compensatory seats		
		1964	1966	1968	1964	1966	1968
Hovedstaden (Copenhagen)	Søndre Storkreds	5	5	5	1	1	2
	Østre Storkreds	10	10	10	4	4	4
	Vestre Storkreds	7	7	7	2	2	1
	TOTAL				7	7	7
Øerne (The Islands)	Københavns Amtskreds	15	15	15	6	7	5
	Frederiksborg Amtskreds	5	5	5	1	2	3
	Holbæk Amtskreds	4	4	4	2	1	1
	Sorø Amtskreds	4	4	4	-	1	1
	Præstø Amtskreds	4	4	4	-	-	1
	Bornholms Amtskreds	2	2	2	-	-	-
	Maribo Amtskreds	4	4	4	1	-	1
	Odense Amtskreds	7	7	7	3	2	2
	Svendborg Amtskreds	5	5	5	1	1	-
TOTAL				14	14	14	
Jylland (Jutland)	Hjørring Amtskreds	6	6	6	-	-	1
	Thisted Amtskreds	3	3	3	-	-	1
	Ålborg Amtskreds	7	7	7	3	3	4
	Viborg Amtskreds	5	5	5	2	1	1
	Randers Amtskreds	5	5	5	1	2	2
	Århus Amtskreds	6	6	6	3	5	5
	Skanderborg Amtskreds	4	4	4	1	2	1
	Vejle Amtskreds	7	7	7	3	3	3
	Ringkøbing Amtskreds	7	7	7	2	-	-
	Ribe Amtskreds	6	6	6	2	2	-
	Haderslev	7	7	7	2	1	1
	TOTAL				19	19	19
TOTAL		135	135	135	40	40	40

*Data obtained from the Lovtidende (the Official Gazette) (<https://www.lovtidende.dk>).

3.6 The 1970 Electoral Reform

This law introduced changes to the delimitation of multi-member constituencies as a consequence of the local government reform (Elklit 2005: 456). It was enacted on 10 June 1970.

Districts and district magnitude. The law retained the three electoral regions but reduced the number of multi-member constituencies from 23 to 17. Mean district magnitude at the lower tier thus rose from 5.9 to 7.9. The Capital region still contained three multi-member constituencies, but the Islands region now had seven multi-member constituencies and the Jutland region also seven (Article 1).

Allocation of seats to candidates. There was no substantial change, but a party that had nominated multiple candidates in each nominating district could designate one of these as the candidate to be listed first. This has the effect of giving this candidate added prominence, but nothing more.

No other change

Table 6: Allocation of seats at district and regional level from 1971 elections to 1984 elections*

Region	Constituency	Constituency seats							Compensatory seats						
		1971	1973	1975	1977	1979	1981	1984	1971	1973	1975	1977	1979	1981	1984
Hovedstaden (Copenhagen)	Søndre Storkreds	6	5	5	5	5	4	4	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
	Østre Storkreds	8	8	8	8	8	6	6	3	4	4	5	4	4	4
	Vestre Storkreds	6	6	6	6	6	5	5	3	1	1	-	-	-	-
	TOTAL								6	5	5	5	5	4	4
Øerne (The Islands)	Københavns Amtskreds	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	4	6	5	3	4	6	6
	Frederiksborg Amtskreds	6	7	7	7	7	8	8	2	2	5	4	3	2	2
	Roskilde Amtskreds	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	1	2	1	1	-	1	1
	Vestsjællands Amtskreds	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	3	-	1	2	2	2	1
	Storstrøms Amtskreds	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	2	1	1	1	1	2	2
	Bornholms Amtskreds	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Fyns Amtskreds	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	3	5	3	5	6	4	5
	TOTAL								15	16	16	16	16	17	17
Jylland (Jutland)	Sønderjyllands Amtskreds	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	2	1	3	1	-	2	2
	Ribe Amtskreds	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	2	1	-	-	-	1	1
	Vejle Amtskreds	8	8	8	8	8	9	9	5	4	3	3	4	2	2
	Ringkøbing Amtskreds	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	2	3	1	2	2	3	3
	Århus Amtskreds	14	14	14	14	14	15	15	5	5	5	5	5	4	4
	Viborg Amtskreds	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	1	1	1	3	2	3	3
	Nordjyllands Amtskreds	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	2	4	6	5	6	4	4
	TOTAL								19	19	19	19	19	19	19
TOTAL		135	135	135	135	135	135	135	40	40	40	40	40	40	40

*Data obtained from the Lovtidende (the Official Gazette) (<https://www.lovtidende.dk>).

3.7 The 1987 Electoral Reform.

This law constitutes a general modernization of the legal text, but it included only limited changes. One of the main modifications concerned the system for allocating seats to candidates where parties had presented a so-called “party list” in a multi-member constituency.

Assembly size. No change (Article 7).

Districts and district magnitude. The division between lower-tier and upper-tier seats and the number of districts at each tier remained unaltered (Articles 8 and 10), but the formula for apportioning seats among the lower-tier multi-member constituencies was changed slightly. Specifically, the weight attached to the geographical area of the constituency was reduced: whereas the area in square kilometres was previously multiplied by 25 before being added to the population and the number of voters at the last election, now it would be multiplied by only 20 (Article 10).

Allocation of seats to parties at the lower tier. No change (Article 76).

Allocation of seats to parties at the upper tier. No change (Article 77).

Allocation of seats to candidates. The various ways in which parties can present their candidates and the implications of these alternatives are set out somewhat differently from in the previous law, but their practical implications are largely the same. The most substantial change relates to the “party list” option. Even here, however, while the procedure is much simplified (cf. Elklit 1993: 55, n. 2), the effect is largely unchanged.

The law distinguishes two forms of candidature: standing by district and standing in parallel (Article 38). Each of these, in turn, has two variants, producing four possible structures in total (cf. Elklit 2011):

1. Standing by district without party lists. Here, the party nominates one candidate per nomination district within the multi-member constituency. As before, the candidate whom the party has nominated in the district appears first. All the party’s other candidates from other districts in the multi-member constituency are listed below this candidate in alphabetical order. Voters can vote for the party or for an individual candidate. Candidates receive all the votes cast for them. Party votes are allotted to the nominated candidate in each district. Candidates are elected in order of these vote totals (Articles 39, 73(5), 80, and 81). This thus remains a flexible list system in which the votes cast are the dominant factor in determining who is elected.
2. Standing by district with party lists. Here again, the party nominates one candidate per nomination district, but this time the party also submits an ordered list of all its candidates across the multi-member constituency. Within each district, the nominated candidate appears top and others follow in their order on the list (Articles 39 and 41). In this case, as before, the first step in determining the order in which the candidates are elected is to calculate the Droop quota for each party in each multi-member constituency by dividing its vote total by the number one greater than the number of seats it has won and then raising the number obtained to the next integer. Candidates whose vote totals (after party votes have been assigned to the candidate nominated in each district) reach or exceed this quota are elected. If more than one candidate achieves this, they are elected in their order on the party list. Whereas previously any remaining seats were filled through a laborious process of vote transfers, now they are simply filled in the order in which the candidates appear on the party list (Article 82). This thus remains a flexible list system in which the party’s original list order generally prevails.
3. Standing in parallel. In this case, the party nominates multiple candidates in the nomination district. These candidates appear in alphabetical order on the ballot paper and are followed by any

other candidates running for the party in the multi-member constituency but not nominated in this district. As usual, voters can vote for a party or for an individual candidate. This time, the party votes are distributed among all the candidates nominated in the district in proportion to the number of personal votes they have won. The final vote totals for the candidates are the sums of their personal votes and these distributed party votes, and candidates are elected in order of these vote totals (Articles 40, 80, and 81). Thus, this is a fully open list system.

4. Standing in parallel with nomination of top district candidates. Finally, parties have the option of nominating multiple candidates in each district but designating one of them to appear at the top of the ballot paper. In other respects, this option is identical to the previous one (Articles 40, 80, and 81). Though voters are given a hint as to the party's preferred candidate, the final order of candidates is still determined solely by the personal votes cast by voters. This therefore counts again as a fully open list system.

Elklit reports that, of the 90 party slates in the 2007 elections (nine parties in ten multi-member constituencies), the first form of candidature (which is sometimes referred to as the traditional form) was used in one case, the second, party list form in twelve, the third in none, and the final form in 77 (Elklit 2011: 2–5). This contrasts with the 1960s, when standing by district without party lists was the commonest form (Pedersen 1966: 169).

No other change

Table 7: Allocation of seats at district and regional level from 1987 elections to 2005 elections

Region	Constituency	Constituency seats							Compensatory seats						
		1987	1988	1990	1994	1998	2001	2005	1987	1988	1990	1994	1998	2001	2005
Hovedstaden (Copenhagen)	Søndre Storkreds	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
	Østre Storkreds	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	4	4	4	3	4	2	2
	Vestre Storkreds	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	-	-	-	-	1	2	2
	TOTAL								4	4	4	4	5	4	4
Øerne (The Islands)	Københavns Amtskreds	15	15	15	15	14	14	14	6	3	4	3	6	5	6
	Frederiksborg Amtskreds	8	8	8	8	9	9	9	4	4	4	5	3	2	2
	Roskilde Amtskreds	5	5	5	5	6	5	5	2	3	3	1	2	2	3
	Vestsjællands Amtskreds	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	-	1	2	3	1	2	2
	Storstrøms Amtskreds	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	-	1	-	1	1	1	1
	Bornholms Amtskreds	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Fyns Amtskreds	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	4	4	3	3	3	4	2
	TOTAL								16	16	16	16	16	16	16
Jylland (Jutland)	Sønderjyllands Amtskreds	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	1	1	1	1	1	2	1
	Ribe Amtskreds	6	6	6	9	6	6	6	1	1	1	-	-	-	-
	Vejle Amtskreds	9	9	9	6	9	9	9	4	2	4	5	3	3	3
	Ringkøbing Amtskreds	7	7	8	8	8	7	7	4	3	3	1	2	3	3
	Århus Amtskreds	15	15	15	15	16	16	16	4	6	6	8	6	7	6
	Viborg Amtskreds	7	7	6	6	6	6	6	1	2	1	1	2	1	2
	Nordjyllands Amtskreds	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	5	5	4	4	5	4	5
	TOTAL								20	20	20	20	19	20	20
TOTAL		135	135	135	135	135	135	135	40	40	40	40	40	40	40

*Data obtained from the Lovtidende (the Official Gazette) (<https://www.lovtidende.dk>).



3.8 The 2006 Electoral Reform

This law, enacted on 8 June 2006, introduced two significant changes to the electoral system. First, it modified the structure of the districts to reflect the local government reforms implemented on 1 January 2007. Second, it reintroduced the D'Hondt seat allocation method for seats in the multi-member constituencies. It has been in use since 1 January 2007 and only minor changes have been made between then and the time of writing this summary (May 2012).

Districts and district magnitude. In order to reflect local government reorganization, the number of multi-member constituencies was reduced from seventeen to ten, with the consequence that mean district magnitude in the lower tier was increased from 7.9 to 13.5. There are still three upper-tier regions, though these different in geographical scope from before. The Capital region contains four constituencies, while the Sealand-South Denmark region and the Middle and North Jutland region contain three each.

Allocation of seats to parties at the lower tier. The only change is that the allocation formula is amended from modified Sainte-Laguë to D'Hondt (Article 17). According to the Ministry of the Interior and Health (2010: 5), this change was intended to compensate for the larger district magnitudes implied by the reduction in the number of districts, such that the ease with which it was possible to win a seat would remain unaltered.

No other change

Table 8: Allocation of seats at district and regional level in 2007 and 2011 elections*

Region	Constituency	Constituency seats		Compensatory seats	
		2007	2011	2007	2011
Landsdel				11	10
Hovedstaden (Metropolitan Copenhagen)	Københavns Storkreds	15	15	2	4
	Københavns Omegns Storkreds	11	12	4	3
	Nordsjællands Storkreds	10	10	5	3
	Bornholms Storkreds	2	2	-	-
Landsdel Sjælland- Syddanmark (Sealand- Southern Denmark)				15	16
	Sjællands Storkreds	21	20	7	6
	Fyns Storkreds	12	12	2	5
	Syddjyllands Storkreds	18	18	6	5
Landsdel Midtjylland- Nordjylland (Northern and Central Jutland)				14	14
	Østjyllands Storkreds	17	18	7	7
	Vestjyllands Storkreds	14	13	2	3
	Nordjyllands Storkreds	15	15	5	4
TOTAL		135	135	40	40

*Data obtained from the Lovtidende (the Official Gazette) (<https://www.lovtidende.dk>).



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