

EPF Fact Sheet n°4

FOLKEMØDET



Folkemødet or **the People's Political Festival**, which takes place in the Baltic Sea island of Bornholm, Denmark, was established in 2011, inspired by the Swedish Almendalsveck. For 4 days, more than 25.000 people engage in discussions with 600 Danish politicians from national, regional and local levels. More than 90% of Danish MPs and all party leaders take part in the People's Political Festival.

The festival aims at **strengthening dialogue between the population and the politicians**. The political discussions, social day and night get-together with the politicians in the large festival allow all the participants to have fruitful discussions in a informal context. An [independent evaluation](#) shows that the politicians participating in the event feel inspired by it and have in several occasions adjusted their policies after the debates. Other participants report having had very interesting discussions that can potentially impact Danish policy frameworks.

The festival hosts more than 3000 events. Most of them are panels with politicians and civil society representatives, while others are organised in the form of debates within CSOs.

The themes discussed during the festival vary significantly depending on the organizing institutions and include **climate, social services, international development aid, security** and the **EU**.

The participants are divided into:

- ▶ 600 politicians
- ▶ Lobbyists, who use the easy day and night access to politicians
- ▶ politically interested people
- ▶ members from the CSOs

All Danish media outlets send large crews to the festival and several hours of live television, radio and print reflect the political discussion on the festival.

Compared to the Swedish Almendalsveck, organisations and political parties invited in Bornholm not only have to provide their members with transportation and accomodation, but they also must pay rent space or tent for their debates. The costs of participation has become the only serious cloud shadowing over the festival. However, the annual festival is seen as a game changer for the entire island. Before the festival started in 2011, Bornholm had had a decreasing population, high unemployment, lots of houses for sale and a stagnating tourism. Five years later, the population is growing, there is hardly any unemployment, the prices of houses are raketng and the number of tourists outside the festival is growing.

For more info on the festival, check its [website!](#)