

Danes forced to have have referendum on UPC

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Anders Valentin (Horten)

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As readers of this blog may recall, the Danish government has for some time attempted to persuade a 5/6 majority of the Danish parliament to agree to cast the vote in favour of Danish accession to the UPC.

Two political parties represented in the Danish parliament have, however, remained staunch opponents of Denmark joining the UPC – the Danish People's Party (right wing) and the Unity List (left wing).

Both made up of outspoken EU-sceptics, they have opposed Danish accession for somewhat different – and in some cases also differing – reasons and the Danish government appears both to have tried to address the concerns raised as well as to secure the necessary 5/6 majority through negotiations with the Danish People's Party.

Reportedly, the Danish People's Party had its eye on obtaining limitations on what it refers to as "welfare tourism", i.e. EU-citizens from new member countries gaining the right to social security etc in Denmark, in exchange for voting in favour of the UPC in Parliament, but no accord was reached.

The government has therefore now conceded that a referendum must be held and the date has been set for 25 May 2014 to coincide with EP elections.

There is some concern on the part of those on favour of the UPC that general EU-scepticism may have a negative influence on the referendum and that this may be exacerbated by the coinciding EP elections to be held on that same day.