

The key question is what discourages descendants from turning out on election day. In his research, Jeppe Fuglsang Larsen has focused on speaking to people in the group of descendants, who do well with respect to income and education. "In short, they have followed the path laid out for them by the Danish system. In spite of this, they have repeated experiences of not being considered Danes by society at large. They constantly feel behind and that they are not included", says Jeppe Fuglsang Larsen. "When even successful descendants feel that they are not considered Danish, those who are less successful will feel part of the community to an even lesser extent. This means that not voting may be a form of protest", says Jeppe Fuglsang Larsen. However, in explaining the low turnout rate, society is not solely at fault. In certain immigrant communities, a camp mentality is prevalent in which voting is not appreciated or is actively obstructed. "In some minority communities, you will feel that you are betraying your own if you become too Danish, and young people consider the word integration a term of abuse. For instance, some of the young people, I have spoken to, have been told by their peers that completing an education means selling out. In my opinion, the low turnout rate is caused by many finding it hard to be recognized by society, but also by the fact that voting may be considered a traitorous act, says Jeppe Fuglsang Larsen. Yosef Bhatti agrees that part of the explanation for the falling turnout rate is to be found in immigrant communities in which democratic traditions are not as widespread as in the Danish majority culture. However, an equally important factor may be found in the development in recent decades where the national policies and the political debate have become increasingly hostile towards immigrants.

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Source: Sven Johannesen. "Immigrants' and descendants' turnout at elections is falling and falling." Information, July 4, 2016. Extracts.