

**Membership and Participation in
Voluntary Associations in Scandinavia,
in a Comparative Perspective**

Jørgen Goul Andersen

1996

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Research Report

**The Democratic Citizenship in the Nordic Countries.
Project Paper # 8.**

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This working paper is a research report from the project *The Democratic Citizenship in the Nordic Countries*. The project is based on the Swedish, Norwegian and Danish Citizenship Surveys, 1987-90, and the Nordic project which has been conducted 1991-96 in association with Jens Hoff, Department of Political Science, University of Copenhagen, was funded by a grant from the Nordic Social Science Research Council (NOS-S).

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1. Introduction: The Significance of Voluntary Associations in Scandinavia

Like political parties, voluntary associations¹ have contributed significantly to the political mobilization of the citizens of democratic societies. In quasi-corporatist Scandinavia, it was not only the party systems that were "frozen" in the 1920s; so were the organization systems, and interest organizations have frequently been considered equally important as the political parties in transmitting demands and ensuring political legitimacy to the political system.² As "intermediaries" between the people and the elite, and as agencies of political education, they have always been regarded an important safeguard against threats of a "mass society" (Kornhauser 1960; Tocqueville 1835/40). Thus, participation in organizations is an important aspect of political participation.

Trade unions have been particularly important as mass mobilizing organizations. Alongside with farmers' associations, they have made a major contribution to the high level of political equality and close mass-elite level communication in Scandinavia. But towards the end of the 20th century, trade unions are frequently claimed to be subject to much the same pressures as political parties, i.e. more differentiated interests (Müller-Jentsch 1988 speaks of aggregation problems, problems of representativeness, and problems of member loyalty; see also Bild et al. 1993), as well as organizational obsolescence (Hancke 1991) and declining influence on public policy, in particular on economic policy (Hyman 1991:625-27).

Nevertheless, trade union membership in Scandinavia has continued to increase in an era when decline of unionization has nearly become an international research discipline of its own. As revealed by table 1, some 85 per cent of the wage earners in Denmark and Sweden

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1. Throughout this chapter, we use the terms "voluntary associations" or simply "organizations" rather than "interest organizations" or "interest associations" as we distinguish between "interest groups" on the one hand, and "promotional groups" on the other. Voluntary associations are distinguished from political parties by the criterion that they do not put up candidates in elections. The distinction between voluntary associations and single issue groups is somewhat blurred (Goul Andersen 1993a: Chapter 7). However, as our operational measures are concerned with participation at the individual level, we need only distinguish between *membership* of associations and single issue *action* (although this does not entirely rule out the possibility that there may be some overlap).
 2. Around 1920, strong and centralized interest organizations had been formed around roughly the same cleavages as the political parties, representing class interests as well as counter-cultural movements. In the organizations of the labour movement ("from-the-cradle-to-the-grave"), class counter-culture and class interests were merged. Besides, unusually large sections of the economy in Scandinavia were controlled by cooperative associations among farmers, workers and consumers, in particular in Denmark (Michelsen 1989). Even the most important <leisure organizations> were founded early in the 20th century (the Scandinavian countries have a strong tradition for associations for <sports and physical exercises>, e.g. <gymnastics associations>). Though unpolitical, such associations were also a part of the broad popular mobilization - politically, economically and culturally. Thus Petersson et al. (1989:106) speak of three waves of mobilization in voluntary associations: Counter-cultural, class/economic, and leisure.

are trade union members; Finland falls only a little below, and most aggregate accounts in Norway indicate that nearly 60 per cent are trade union members (although survey evidence indicates that this figure may be a little overestimated, see below). In most countries, the figure is below 50 per cent.

Table 1. Trade Union Density¹⁾ in Various Countries. Percentage of Employed Wage Earners

	gross density					net density		
	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1988/89
Denmark ²⁾	47	37	46	53	62	62	79	84
Sweden	24	32	48	59	63	68	80	85
Finland	13	7	12	36	34	51	70	71
Norway	20	19	37	50	63	51	57	57
Austria	42	44	40	56	55	60	54	46
Switzerland	26	24	26	38	35	31	31	26
Germany (W.)	53	34	...	33	37	33	37	34
Netherlands	36	30	29	42	39	37	35	25
Belgium	40	29	39	56	61	46	57	53
France	7	7	...	...	...	22	19	12
Italy	...	...	...	40	22	36	49	40
UK	48	26	33	44	44	45	51	42
Ireland	...	...	...	...	...	53	57	52
USA	17	10	20	28	29	26	23	16

- 1) Gross density is defined as all union members as proportion of the wage-earning labour force. Net density is defined as the proportion of union members among employed wage earners.
- 2) The Danish figures 1970-1990 are based on own computations as Visser's (1991) estimates is based upon an indicator of the size of the labour force which in Denmark includes most children, pupils and students who perform any sort of paid labour (e.g. in summer holidays). Subtracting these from the (formal) labour force, we achieve a more relevant indicator of the labour force which *could* be unionized (Visser wrongly seems to believe that it is the unemployed who account for the difference between gross and net union density in Denmark; however, the unemployed are equally unionized as the employed - the real explanation is the large number of union members among the retired).

S o u r c e s :
 1920-1960: Pedersen (1989:24) - gross density (union members in proportion of labour force).
 1970-1988/89: Visser (1991:101) - net density (the proportion of union members among employed wage earners. Other accounts may be found in Bain & Price 1980; Kjellberg 1983; Freeman 1989; Griffin et al. 1990; and various country studies.

The exceptional position of Scandinavian trade unionism is a relatively new phenomenon. Around 1920, only Denmark belonged to the group of highly unionized countries. But Sweden became the most unionized country in the 1930s, and since World War II, only Austria and Belgium have had rates of unionization comparable to Scandinavia. Since 1970, the gap has widened even further. For instance, Denmark and Austria had roughly the same

union density until 1970, but by 1988/89, the figure was 84 per cent for Denmark and only 46 per cent for Austria.

Thus, a major task of this report is to explore the nature, the causes and the consequences of the high unionization in Scandinavia: Who are trade union members? Why has membership continued to increase in Denmark and Sweden? Are Scandinavian trade unions subject to similar pressures as in other countries? Are trade unions still social movements - or has union membership degenerated to mere formal membership? And what explains the discrepancy between Norway and the other Nordic countries? Most studies have addressed such questions from a macro-perspective, using macro-level data, whereas others have examined correlates of unionization at the individual level. However, there are relatively few studies applying comparative individual-level data as allowed by the citizenship surveys.

Comparable data indicate that the Scandinavian countries are not only unique in terms of trade unionism but also tend to have more widespread membership of other types of voluntary associations. At this point, however, data are far less reliable. Although there are discrepancies in estimates of unionization, reasonably reliable information may be achieved both from surveys and official statistics (Visser 1991:129). When it comes to voluntary associations in general, there are few aggregate estimates, and survey estimates are extremely unreliable as they depend on the questions and show cards used (see below). Still, we may assume that identical measurement produce relatively reliable *comparisons* even if the estimates of *levels* may be seriously biased.

With this reservation, the various estimates in table 2 indicate that the Scandinavian countries have the highest rates of voluntary association membership in the world, perhaps even exceeding the American level. From the World Values Survey, we may compare Norway and Sweden with a number of other countries; from the Eurobarometer, we may compare Denmark and other European countries; and from our Scandinavian citizenship survey, we know that there are only minor differences between voluntary association membership in Denmark and Sweden (see below). Thus it emerges that Sweden has the highest ranking in the World Values Survey whereas Denmark has the highest ranking in the Eurobarometer surveys.³

3. Baumgartner & Walker (1988) report higher figures for the USA than we find in our Danish and Swedish surveys (see below), but they have counted the number of memberships rather than the number of *types* of membership. Thus it is likely that association membership is a little lower in the USA than in Denmark and Sweden. This is also indicated by aggregate accounts of associations (Baumgartner & Walker 1988:909; Petersson et al. 1989).

Table 2. *Membership of Voluntary Associations in Various Countries, according to World Values Survey (1981-1983) and Eurobarometer (1987). Percentages reporting Membership of at least one Association*

	World Values Survey				Eurobarometer
	Membership		Working Membership		
	Total ¹⁾	Excluding Unions	Total ¹⁾	Excluding Unions	
Sweden	65	39	20	18	...
Norway	60	40	21	18	...
Denmark	...	...	...	...	83
Netherlands	49	44	20	20	71
UK	44	31	16	16	61
Belgium	38	25	18	17	51
Germany	43	38	17	15	47
France	25	20	14	12	44
Italy	23	14	11	9	36
Ireland	34	26	17	16	65
USA	47	41	19	19	...

1) Excluding churches (in religiously homogeneous countries people belong to the state church whereas they have to belong to a religious association in heterogenous countries. This would introduce a bias in our material as membership of the state church is not counted in).

Sources: Curtis, Grabb & Baer 1992:139-52; Tchernia 1991:367.

However, excepting trade unions, the Netherlands, USA and Germany reveal similar rates of membership as the Scandinavian countries, according to the World Values Survey. And when it comes to "working memberships" (defined as doing unpaid work for the association), national differences seem to be small, although Norway and Sweden are still among the highest-ranking. Thus, we may take as our point of departure that membership and activity in non-union associations is high in Scandinavia but probably not unique. As will be demonstrated below, however, the questions applied in the surveys referred to above catch only a small fraction of actual memberships.



Part 1. Unionization and Trade Union Participation in Scandinavia



2. Union Strength in Scandinavia: Explanations and Consequences

2.1. Macro-Level Theories of Union Strength and Union Decline

In the literature on variations in (aggregate-level) unionization and union decline, four major types of explanations may be identified: Social structural, institutional, conjunctural and ideological/behavioural.

Social structural theories are mainly concerned with *changes in labour force composition* (Troy 1986, 1990; Green 1992; Even & Macpherson 1990; Beaumont & Harris 1991; Scheuer 1989). As demonstrated by trade union sociology, unionization has traditionally been highest among manual labourers, manufacture & construction workers, workers in large plants, male workers, full-time workers, etc. (Tössebro 1983; Scheuer 1986; Bain & Elsheikh 1979; Bain & Elias 1985; Booth 1986). With such individual-level correlations as their point of departure, social structural theories seek to demonstrate that as the relative weight of the abovementioned groups declines in post-industrial service society, decline in unionization becomes more or less "inexorable" (Towers 1989:179).

However, in the first place, the Scandinavian countries are characterized by an unusually large public sector labour force, due to their particular welfare models which assign very high priority to the provision of public services (Esping-Andersen 1990; Goul Andersen & Munk Christiansen 1991). In accordance with the findings in the international literature (Troy 1990; Freeman 1988; Reder 1988), we suggest that this reduces the effects of the growth in the service sector (Denmark and Sweden, despite their high economic development, have not only the smallest but even the smallest increase in the private service sector occupation among the industrialized countries, see Goul Andersen 1994a). Secondly, women have become integrated at the labour market and politically mobilized to a degree that should remove traditional gender differences. Thirdly, we suggest that in thoroughly organized societies, trade union membership need not depend so much on social position. In fact, some professional groups have a longer tradition of organization than the trade unions. This also means that unionization of the new middle class need not depend on any sort of "proletarianization". But in the case of the new middle class, high unionization may be achieved at the expense of traditional trade union consciousness, let alone class consciousness.

Whereas the frame of reference for social structural theories is *variations within nations*, *institutional theories* take *variations between nations* as their point of departure. Social structural theories are insufficient, at best, as there are enormous variations in unionization between otherwise similar countries, e.g. countries with roughly the same labour force composition. It is beyond the scope of this report to test, on the basis of macro-level

data, the numerous propositions concerning the effects of bargaining centralization and corporatism (Griffin et al. 1991; Western 1993), trade union structure (Visser 1990:93-191), unemployment insurance systems (Neumann et al. 1991; Pedersen 1989, 1990; Freeman 1989; Griffin et al. 1991; Western 1993), labour legislation (Troy 1986:97-99), functional equivalents in terms of works councils (Visser 1993), tax deductions, etc. although we make a few illustrations below. But we may test some corresponding micro-level hypotheses concerning effects of unemployment insurance systems.

Conjunctural theories are concerned with *variations over time*. Thus a classic proposition argues that unionization follows the business cycle - positively correlated with inflation, negatively correlated with unemployment (Ashenfelter & Pencival 1969; Bain & Elsheik 1976; Disney 1990; Jones 1992). In the early phase of unionization (until the 1930s), such a correlation was observable in most countries, including Scandinavia. Thus mass unemployment since the mid-1970s might appear a likely cause of declining unionization. However, applying an institutional perspective, most studies conclude that the effect of the business cycle is a contingent relationship: In countries where the unemployment insurance system is organized by the trade unions (according to the so-called 'Ghent model'), increasing unemployment tend to have the opposite consequence (Western 1993; Griffin et al. 1991; Neumann et al. 1991; Visser 1991). Again, we limit ourselves to analysing a few individual-level data related to the business cycle.

Finally, *ideological and behavioural theories* point at value systems (e.g. individualism, Lipset 1986), employer or government hostility (Freeman 1988; Freeman & Pelletier 1990), strength of left parties (Wallerstein 1989; Korpi 1983; Przeworski & Sprague 1986) or strikes and class struggle militancy (Griffin et al. 1990) as explanations of variations in unionization. However, apart from being independent variables, such variables may also be treated as conditional factors alongside with institutional factors. Thus, the early recognition of unions as legitimate counterparts, consensual traditions at the labour market (Galenson 1952) etc. may facilitate unionization among less class-conscious middle class groups - and may also have made unions more immune to increasing individualism in society (Gundelach & Riis 1992). At this point, we shall examine the ideological and political correlates of unionization, in particular the sense of class conflict or common interests with employers.

2.2. Institutional Differences

Among institutional factors conducive to unionism, two are particularly obvious: Trade unions' control over the unemployment insurance system, and tax deductions for membership fees of the trade unions. From the overview in table 3 it emerges that the countries with some sort of institutional inducement to trade union membership all are among the highest ranking countries. Furthermore, whereas unionization has stagnated or declined (1970-1989) in most other countries, five out of six countries with institutional inducements (except Austria) have experienced higher rates of membership. In Denmark and Finland, the two only countries having both tax deductions and trade union control over unemployment insurance, the increase in union density 1970-1989 is stronger than in any other countries.

Table 3. Trade Unions' Control over Unemployment Insurance, Tax Deductions for Membership Fees, Increase in Trade Union Density, and Trade Union Density 1989

country	control over unemployment insurance	tax deductions for membership fees	Increase in trade union density, 1970-1989	Increase in trade union density, 1980-1989	Trade Union Density, 1989
Denmark	+	+	+22	+5	84
Finland	+	+	+17	+5	71
Sweden	+	+/- ¹	+17	+5	85
Belgium	+	-	+7	-4	53
Average 4 countries			+16	+3	73
Norway	-	+ ²	+6	0	57
Austria	-	+	-14	-8	46
Average 2 countries			-4	-4	52
Ireland	-	n.a.	-1	-5	52
UK	-	(-) ³	-3	-9	42
Italy	-	-	+4	-9	40
Germany(W)	-	-	+1	-3	34
Netherlands	-	(-) ⁴	-12	-10	25
USA	-	-	-10	-7	16
France	-	-	-10	-7	12
Average 7 countries			-4	-7	32

1) Low ceiling; abolished by 1992.

2) Ceiling of 1800 NoK (1992).

3) Not for typical trade unions.

4) Normally included in standard deductions.

Source: Visser 1991; information from embassies and tax authorities in various countries.

It could be added that other institutional factors such as centralized bargaining, corporatism etc. also contribute to explain the high levels of unionization in Scandinavia. However, they cannot explain the inter-Scandinavian differences, nor can they explain why unionization in

Denmark and Sweden has been unaffected by a change towards decentralization (or "centralized decentralization") in the 1980s (Ahlen 1989 in Western; Due et al. 1993). Thus control over unemployment insurance seems to be a decisive factor, as pointed out by numerous studies. Still, individual-level data may provide a more definitive test.

2.3. Individual Motives of Union Membership

Several observations at the individual level do confirm that the unemployment insurance system is important, also in explaining inter-Scandinavian differences. In the first place, as demonstrated later, the unemployed are equally unionized as the employed in Denmark and Sweden but much less in Norway. Secondly, Danish data from the 1979 survey on political participation indicate that the rapid unionization in the 1970s was associated with the breakthrough of mass unemployment from 1974. Thus, among the respondents having experienced unemployment within the last two years, 94 per cent were union members, as compared to an average of only 80 per cent at that time. Thirdly, in the same survey, 23 per cent indicated that they would leave the union if they could obtain unemployment benefits without being union members (Goul Andersen 1984:205).⁴

Besides, unemployment insurance is the motive with the highest rank when union members are asked about their motives for membership. In a large survey carried out among Danish TUC members in 1992 ("the APL Survey"), no less than 90 per cent referred to unemployment insurance as an important motive for membership (see table 4).

Still, a few reservations remain against a simple, one-sided institutional explanation as we are unable to take account of possible relevant control factors. Thus it is hard to imagine that this motive has played an equally important role for Swedish wage earners as unemployment was a nearly unknown phenomenon in Sweden until around 1990. And even though the rapid unionization in Denmark in the 1970s was related to unemployment, the proportion indicating that they would leave the union if they could be insured otherwise, was only three percentage points larger among the members having entered the union 1974-1979 than among those who achieved membership prior to 1974.

4. The question is based on false premises as it has always been possible to be a member of an unemployment insurance fund without being member of a trade union. But in the minds of most people, the two memberships are connected.

Table 4. *Motives of Members of Danish Unions associated with the TUC, 1992. Percentages*

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Disagree strongly	PDI: Agree minus disagree
"Trade unions are necessary to safeguard the interests of the wage earners"	65	22	9	2	2	83
"Why are you a member of your union?"						
"Because I think you should be member of a union"	56	17	12	5	10	58
"In order to be solidaric with my job mates"	40	18	20	7	15	36
"In order to have my interests attended to"	53	21	16	4	6	64
"In order to be insured against unemployment"	78	12	4	1	4	85
"Because it is mandatory at my workplace"	48	9	14	4	25	28

Source: Jørgensen et al. 1993:239-41. (APL Survey of TUC members, 1992).

The Danish "APL survey" of union members also demonstrates that unemployment insurance is by no means the only relevant motive. Thus, 87 per cent of all union members believe that trade unions are necessary to safeguard the interests of the wage earners,⁵ and 73 per cent feel membership as a personal obligation, i.e. that they ought to be a member. A similar proportion is motivated by the wish to safeguard their own interests - an equally "legitimate" motive according to traditional trade union ideology. The keyword "solidarity", on the other hand, is referred to by only 58 per cent.

Alongside with unemployment insurance, the other major personal (selective) incentive of membership is closed shop arrangements. But this sort of negative sanctions is the least important among the examined motives. "Only" 57 per cent agree that this is a motive.

In short, even though the Ghent system of unemployment insurance bears a major responsibility for the unusually high rates of unionization in Denmark, Sweden and Finland, as compared to Norway, institutional factors does not seem to be the only explanations of high union membership in the Nordic countries. Even Norway is far above the European average, and the high rates of unionization seem also to be rooted in more ideological factors; even though the feeling that unions are necessary and that membership is an obligation may

5. This is certainly not enough to ensure the future of the unions: Even in American public opinion, unions are typically recognized as necessary to protect workers' interests (Lipset 1986a).

be a corollary of a union tradition that ultimately derives its strength from institutional factors, such ideological motives probably also play an independent role.

3. Social Profile of Trade Union Membership

But how, then, have the Scandinavian trade unions been able to meet the challenges of social change, in particular the growth of new middle class- and service occupations etc. which are commonly referred to as causes of declining unionization? Is labour force composition entirely unimportant for unionization in Scandinavia? And does the lower unionization in Norway mean that union membership in Norway is more concentrated to the traditional "core" working class, or to the supporters of the socialist parties? These questions are discussed below.

3.1. Blue Collar - White Collar Differences

To begin with the Norwegian deviance, the hypothesis that union membership may be more concentrated to "core" workers, is immediately falsified. In Scandinavia, *the gap between white collar- and blue collar-unionization has entirely disappeared*, and in Norway, it has even reversed as nonmanuals have significantly higher rates of union membership (see table 5). All that remains of the "collar gap" is a bit lower unionization rates among "high level nonmanual employees" (approximately equal to "managers" and "professionals"), but at the other end of the hierarchy, unskilled workers also have rates below average.

Table 5. Trade Union Membership, by Class and Sector. Percentages

	Percentages of union members				(N)				
	Denmark		Sweden	Norway	Denmark		Sweden	Norway	
	1979	1990	1987	1990	1979	1990	1987	1990	
Total	80	86	83	46	1120	1128	1276	1018	
Manual workers	83	88	82	39	529	435	489	361	
Nonmanual employees	77	85	84	50	591	681	787	657	
Unskilled workers	81	85	76	40	352	286	277	211	
Skilled workers	86	93	90	37	177	149	212	150	
Lower nonmanual	78	88	83	46	499	376	355	279	
Medium nonmanual		86	88	55		162	253	180	
Higher nonmanual	74	74	77	52	92	143	179	198	
Private sector	78	82	77	32	683	548	675	558	
Public sector	83	91	90	68	434	469	574	405	
Private Sector	Worker	86	90	81	33	400	254	336	245
	Nonmanual	67	74	72	32	283	287	339	313
Public Sector	Worker	73	87	84	68	129	112	141	78
	Nonmanual	87	92	92	68	305	357	433	327

Source: Scandinavian Citizenship surveys and Danish Mass Participation Survey 1979.

These data run counter to observations from most other countries as well as to previous estimates of white collar unionization in Scandinavia (Visser 1990:51-56). And it is a relatively recent trend: In Denmark, the "collar gap" was narrowed in the 1930s but widened during the prosperous 1960s. From 1970 to 1982, however, the gap virtually disappeared (Pedersen 1979; Plovsing 1973; Scheuer 1984, 1989; Danmarks Statistik 1992: table 12.8).

3.2. Sector Differences

It is not difficult to explain and specify a major cause of these changes: *The unusually high white collar unionization in Scandinavia is related to the unusually large numbers of public employees in the Scandinavian type of welfare state* (Goul Andersen & Munk Christiansen 1991:154). Like in most other countries, union membership is far more widespread among public employees (who are predominantly nonmanuals) than among the privately employed (Troy 1990; Visser 1990:49-51). In Norway, where public employees are twice as frequently organized as the employees of the private sector, this explains the entire difference between the unionization of manual and nonmanual employees: Within both sectors, unionization among manuals and nonmanuals is the same. At the same time, this means that only about one-third of the manual workers in the private sector are union members. The fact that Norway ranges in the upper-half with respect to unionization is mainly due to the fact that the public sector is larger than in most other countries

Table 6. *Unionization in Denmark 1990, by Occupation and Sector. Per cent*

	Percentages of union members			(N)		
	Manual workers	Nonman. empl.	Total	Manual Workers	Nonman. empl.	Total ¹⁾
Manufacture & constr.	95	75	89	188	84	273
Private services	78	73	74	59	198	261
Public sector	87	92	91	112	357	469

1) Including respondents with no information on occupation.

Source: Scandinavian Citizenship Surveys.

In Denmark and Sweden, the sector differences include an interaction effect: The rates of unionization exceed 90 per cent among nonmanual public employees, whereas it is lower among manual workers in the public sector. In the private sector, the traditional class difference ("collar gap") remains, in particular in Denmark. But unlike in most other countries, unionization has continuously increased among white collar workers in the private sector, and the gap between manual and nonmanual employees in the private sector is still

narrowing: Since 1979, unionization among privately employed nonmanuals in Denmark has increased from 67 to 73 percentages.

As the public sector expanded heavily until the 1980s in Scandinavia, this means that social change has largely been conducive to increased unionization. But in the future, growth is likely to become largest in the private sector, in particular in private services.⁶ Other things being equal, a projected decline of manufacture and construction in favour of an increase in private services is likely to impede unionization. The same holds for a projected change in the composition of the labour force in manufacture towards more nonmanual labour. As can be noted from table 6, manual workers in manufacture and construction are nearly 100 per cent organized in Denmark whereas among nonmanuals and/or service workers in the private sector, the level is only around three-fourths. Still, this remains an extremely high level as measured by international standards (Troy 1990), and so far, nothing indicates that the increasing unionization among such employees has reversed.

3.3. Working Class Community

Table 7 sheds some light upon two other factors sometimes associated with postindustrialization, namely declining plant size and decline of working class communities. In some studies, declining plant size is even pointed out as a major determinant of union decline (Even & Macpherson 1990; Beaumont & Harris 1991).

Like earlier Norwegian studies (Tössebro 1983), and in accordance with consistent findings from several countries (Bain & Elsheikh 1979; Visser 1990:60-61), our Norwegian data confirm that plant size is an important determinant of unionization among privately employed wage earners. As noted by Visser (1991:117-18), however, Danish trade unions have been unusually successful in small-firm unionization, and the data in table 7 are unique as they indicate that firm size has become virtually irrelevant for unionization. Only the smallest firms with 1-4 employees deviate. Thus in Denmark at least, possible changes in average firm size is unlikely to affect unionization in the future.

6. As mentioned above, Denmark and Sweden have the smallest growth rates in the private service sector among the rich OECD countries, and Denmark is furthermore the only rich OECD country where manufacture increased its share of employment in the 1980s (Goul Andersen 1994a). However, even though private services may remain an underdeveloped sector in the Scandinavian welfare states, it is likely to follow the *trend* in other developed countries in the long run.

Table 7. *Trade Union Membership, by Plant Size (Private Sector Employees only) and Contact with Colleagues in Private Life. Percentages*

	Percentages of union members			(N)		
	Denmark	Sweden	Norway	Denmark	Sweden	Norway
Plant size (private sector)						
1-4	74	. ¹⁾	14	42	.	115
5-9	90	.	24	61	.	84
10-19	81	.	26	72	.	97
20-49	87	.	42	82	.	94
50-99	82	.	35	61	.	58
100-499	80	.	56	136	.	70
500+	86	.	58	70	.	31
Contact with colleagues in spare time						
Yes	. ¹⁾	84	43	.	420	194
No	.	83	50	.	833	742

1) Question not posed.

Source: Scandinavian Citizenship Surveys.

By the same token, the Swedish and Norwegian data indicate that contact with colleagues in private life has no effect upon unionization at all. Actually, Scandinavian employees have little contact with their colleagues outside the workplace. In Sweden, only one out of three have such contacts, and in Norway, it is only one out of five. By implication, continued disintegration of working class communities is unlikely to affect unionization.

Stated more generally, changes in class structure and class structuration do not seem very important for the future of unionization in Scandinavia, at least not for the most "deviant" countries: Denmark and Sweden.

3.4. Closing the Gender Gap in Unionization

Another important change is the (nearly) full labour market participation of women. Until recently, it was an universal finding that women had lower rates of unionization than men (Visser 1991: 115-17). And increasing female labour market participation has even been proposed as a (partial) explanation of declining unionization (Moore & Newman 1988; Dickens & Leonard 1986). Conventional explanations of the gender gap are gender differences in sector distribution (Antos et al. 1980; Even & Macpherson 1992), the higher proportion of part-time labour among women (Bertl et al. 1988; Tøssebro 1983:345) or less attachment to the job role (Hirsch & Addison 1986) - although empirical support for the latter is absent.

But in Scandinavia, women have long ago ceased to count as marginal labour. Gender differences in labour market participation have almost evaporated. To some degree, this is attributable to the fact that the Scandinavian countries took the lead in providing part-time jobs for women (46 per cent of all employed women in Sweden and Denmark were part-time employed by 1979, see OECD, *Employment Outlook*, sep. 1988:149). But since 1980, women (in particular in Sweden and Denmark) are increasingly becoming full-time (or almost full-time) employed (Goul Andersen 1991a).

This is reflected in the rates of unionization: *In all three countries, women have slightly higher levels of trade union membership than men.* Although the gender gap in unionization is narrowing in all countries (Visser 1991:115-17), *it is unique for the Scandinavian countries (including Finland) that female unionization exceeds male unionization.*

Still, it follows logically from the gender differences in class position. Relatively few women occupy leading positions in the private sector, most public employees are women, and around one-half of the female labour force in Scandinavia is employed in the large public service sector (whereas domestic service occupations have nearly disappeared). Thus, if class position was the only relevant factor, we should exactly expect to find that women had higher rates of unionization than men.

However, the larger rates of part-time labour among women still pulls somewhat in the other direction. But Scandinavian unions have been very successful in organizing part-time employees during the 1970s and 1980s. As may be noted from table 8, the relatively few employees with *short working hours* (8-24 hours a week) still have somewhat lower propensity to unionize than typical *part-time employees* (working 25-32 hours). But it also emerges that the differences have narrowed considerably, and there are no longer any differences between part-time employees and full-time employees (defined as employees working 33 hours or more). As the proportion with short working hours has declined sharply, this is no longer an impediment to the unionization of women.

One might believe that the unionization of women, in particular part-timers, were an effect of the unemployment insurance system, and at least in Denmark, there are clear signs that female unionization did increase sharply in the aftermath of the 'oil chock' in 1974. In the 1979 survey on political participation it thus emerged that 42 per cent of all female union members had entered the union 1974-1979, as compared to 24 per cent of the male members (Goul Andersen 1984:205). However, the assumption that the unemployment insurance

Table 8. Trade Union Membership among Wage Earners, by Gender, Employment, Age and Education. Percentages

	Percentages of union members				(N)				
	Denmark		Sweden		Denmark		Sweden		Norway
	1979	1990	1987	1990	1979	1990	1987	1990	1990
Men	83	85	82	42	617	562	655	594	
Women	76	86	84	52	503	566	621	424	
Working hours:									
Short-time (8-24 h)		78	65	41		74	116	140	
Part-time (25-32 h)	67 ¹⁾	85	86	49	242	118	147	81	
Full-time (33 h+)	83 ¹⁾	87	85	49	793	824	979	751	
Employed		86	83	47		1017	1249	974	
Unemployed	85	81	82	18	52	111	27	44	
Basic educational attainment									
Low	84	88	84	41	614	391	615	458	
Medium	74	86	86	51	390	464	282	213	
High	79	81	79	50	107	272	379	335	
18-29 years	79	78	77	33	340	259	374	258	
30-39 years	83	91	84	49	337	356	315	292	
40-49 years	78	87	91	56	227	305	299	252	
50-59 years	82	84	86	43	171	168	205	140	
60-69 years	67	75	68	51	45	40	79	70	

1) Respondent indicated whether he/she was part-time employed or full-time employed.
Source: Scandinavian Citizenship Surveys, and Danish Mass Participation Survey 1979.

system is responsible for the closing of the gender gap is contradicted by several findings: In the first place, the gender difference is the same in Norway where unemployment insurance is unrelated to unions. And secondly, women are at least as *engaged* in trade union politics as men (see below). Thus there is no doubt that we are facing an adaptation to changing gender roles.⁷

3.5. Generational and Educational Differences

In spite of increasing unionization in Denmark and Sweden, there are no signs of generational change towards higher unionization. On the contrary, young people are less frequently organized than the middle-aged (this is a general finding from nearly all countries, see Visser 1991:60). But as unionization also declines among employees aged more than 50 years, a life-cycle interpretation of the age differences is equally plausible. The latter interpretation is also

7. This picture of adaptation (or rather: mobilization) was also confirmed in the 1979 data which indicated that the gender difference had almost disappeared among employees aged less than 40 years and among full-timers aged more than 40 years. But among female part-time employees aged 40 years or more, only 52 per cent were organized by 1979 (Goul Andersen 1984a:204).

largely consistent with a comparison with Danish 1979 data. However, it should be noted that the proportion of union members has increased in all age groups from 1979 to 1990 except among the 18-29 years old. Thus we cannot rule out the possibility that a generational change is under way.

As far as education is concerned, there are only few signs that increasing educational attainments will be an impediment to unionization: In Denmark and Sweden, the higher-educated do have slightly lower rates of unionization whereas the opposite pattern is revealed in Norway. But in all three countries, the associations are weak and not much affected by controls for other variables.

Finally, the typical finding in analyses of aggregate data that the unemployment system is important for unionization is supported also by our comparable micro-level data. The institutional hypothesis implies that there is a strong difference between the union positions of the unemployed. And this is exactly supported by the data. In Denmark and Sweden where the administration of unemployment benefits is controlled by the unions,⁸ employed and unemployed have the same rates of unionization whereas in Norway, only 18 per cent of the unemployed were trade union members.

Other things being equal, this makes unions less "insider-dominated" in Denmark and Sweden than in most other countries, and the integration of the unemployed in the unions also contributes to avoiding a political marginalisation of the unemployed (Goul Andersen 1996a). This has important implications for the future of citizenship and may indeed be described as one of the most positive side-effects of the Ghent system, as judged from a democratic point of view.

3.6. Conclusions

To a large degree, our findings contradicts generalizations in the international literature concerning variations in unionization and effects of social change. In particular, the gender gap and the "collar gap" in unionization is not a natural law but may be closed under particular institutional circumstances, as our Scandinavian data indicate. The data thus confirm the importance assigned to unemployment insurance systems; still, micro-level data

8. As mentioned, it is possible to be member of an unemployment insurance fund without being union member but in practice, the two are usually coupled, and the contributions are typically not paid separately. Thus, at least in a psychological sense, control over the unemployment insurance system provide trade unions with selective incentives to membership.

on membership and motivations warns us against seeing institutional factors as the only relevant explanations of Scandinavian 'exceptionalism' as far as unionization is concerned.

Looking ahead, there is little in our data which speaks against the proposition that there may be a future for the trade unions. But as Colin Crouch has put it: "Unions may have a long-term future, but do union *movements*?" (Crouch 1990, quoted in Hyman 1991:630). This is the leading question of the two subsequent sections.

4. Active Participation in Trade Unions

4.1. The Problem

The two basic characteristics of union membership in Denmark and Sweden are its social heterogeneity and its thoroughness. Unionization in Norway shares the first but not the last mentioned of these characteristics. This may have implications for the participation and consciousness of union members. Successful organization of members does not necessarily imply that unions are successful as *movements*, or that they may at all be described as social movements anymore. If not, even union *membership* may rest on less solid grounds than it immediately appears.

There are innumerable (and irreconcilable) definitions of the concept "social movements", but as the concept is simply used heuristically here, we shall not engage in lengthy discussions about proper theoretical definitions. For our descriptive purpose, it is sufficient to include the following aspects:

- engagement and participation among the members
- identity formation: sense of belonging to the movement
- solidarity with the movement
- feeling of efficacy via participation in the movement.

If union membership becomes a narrow instrumental phenomenon, the calculation of costs and benefits for individual members might easily tip (Olson 1965), for instance by abolishing tax deductions for membership fees or (in particular) by uncoupling unions from the unemployment insurance system. Thus the most essential task for unions is probably not to provide selective incentives in order to affect the members' calculations of individual cost and benefits but rather to prevent members from reasoning in such terms. Expressed in Weber's ideal types, narrow "zweckrational" reasoning among members would disadvantage unions. Unions also need "wertrational" action - feelings of solidarity and diffuse support. The data in table 4 above indicated that members do apply this sort of "wertrational" logic. But solidarity and diffuse support may depend on the maintenance of unions as social movements, not the least the maintenance of an active involvement and sense of influence among the members.

Professionalization and bureaucratization, not to mention oligarchical leadership, harm these characteristics and may promote more narrow, "zweckrational", orientations. These characteristics may perhaps even accumulate during the "natural" lifespan of social movements (Touraine 1986). If membership can be taken for granted, union leaders

furthermore have less incentives to take account of members' wants. And if membership follows more or less automatically with the job or with unemployment insurance, unions may become so amalgamated with "the system" that they lose their identity-shaping capacities. Even though Scandinavian unions nevertheless appear to be more mobilizing and more responsive than e.g. the American unions (compare e.g. Lewin 1976 and Jørgensen et al. 1993 with Benson 1986), they always run the risk of becoming victims of their own success.

However, unions may also lose their character of social movements if pervasiveness of unionization is obtained at the expense of narrowing the goals. This relates to an important institutional characteristic of Scandinavian trade unions: The unions are not divided by religious or party political affiliations but they are certainly divided by status. By 1985, the largest confederation of unions, the LO (equivalent of the British TUC) accounted for around 70 per cent of all union members in Denmark (some 60-65 per cent if retired members are omitted), 64 per cent in Norway, and only 60 per cent in Sweden (Visser 1990:16-17).⁹ In Austria, by comparison, all unions are affiliated with the ÖGB, in the UK, the TUC accounted for 89 per cent of all members, and in Germany, 82 per cent were affiliated with the DGB. Thus large numbers of employees are members of unions which are not affiliated with the broader labour movement. And one may speculate, like Hyman (1991), if this contributes to a transformation of trade unions towards a sort of "business unions with a social conscience" (at best). Unlike the first mentioned scenario, the scenario of "business unionism" does not imply any difference between Norway and the two other countries.

Section 4.4 below examines the solidarity and attitudes of trade union members in the Nordic countries whereas participation and engagement is analysed in this section. It concentrates around two questions: Firstly, how much participation is there behind the impressive membership figures of Denmark and Sweden? Are the high figures obtained only at the expense of enthusiasm and participation? Have Norwegian unions maintained more of their character as social movements? And secondly, if membership becomes nearly a formality, are the "conventional" social variations in membership then "displaced" to variations in participation (or in union consciousness)?

9. The main difference between Denmark and Sweden is that clerks (and from 1994 low- and medium level technicians and computer programmers) are affiliated with the LO (the main confederation) in Denmark, whereas in Sweden, they typically belong to the main white collar confederation (TCO). In Norway, the borders are more fluid and there is more competition between the LO and the white collar confederations, even over some groups of manual workers. Another difference is that the formation of industrial unions is lagging behind in Denmark but this does not affect the white collar/blue collar borderline.

As participation is likely to be variable over time, depending on the incidence of industrial conflict, we have included interest in union politics as a perhaps more reliable indicator of members' engagement in the Danish survey. As far as activity is concerned, we have to concentrate on a single comparable measure: Participation in union meetings within the last year (for more detailed accounts of participation, see e.g. Lewin 1976; Johansen 1980; Jørgensen et al. 1993).

4.2. Level of Participation

In broad terms, our data confirm the assumption of low activity in Danish and Swedish trade unions but disconfirm the assumption that social variations are "displaced" to participation. Regarding the first assumption, table 9 reveals that only 26 and 21 per cent of the Swedish and Danish union members, respectively, had participated in a union meeting within the last year, as compared to 65 per cent in Norway. This reflects a general tendency among Norwegians to be more active in associations (see below) but it is particularly outspoken in unions. It even implies that in spite of low unionization, the Norwegians are the most active in trade unions: 30 per cent of *all* Norwegian employees (including non-unionized) are active as compared to only 18 per cent of the Danes and 22 per cent of the Swedes.

Table 9. *Active¹⁾ Trade Union Members, as Proportion of (a) Members and (b) all Employees in Denmark, Norway and Sweden, and Interest in Trade Union Politics²⁾ (Denmark only). Percentages*

	percentages of active members				(N)			
	Denmark		Sweden	Norway	Denmark		Sweden	Norway
	1979	1990			1979	1990		
(a) Proportion of trade union members	46	21	26	65	896	964	1060	470
(b) Proportion of all wage earners	37	18	22	30	1120	1128	1276	1018
Interest in Trade Union Politics (members only)	58	56	. ³⁾	. ³⁾	896	964		

1) Have participated in at least one meeting within the last 12 months.

2) Much or some interest in the activities of the union.

3) Question not posed.

Source: Scandinavian Citizenship Surveys and Mass Participation Survey.

In Denmark, comparable data from 1979 indicate that active participation in trade unions has halved from 1979 to 1990.¹⁰ Thus, even though a decline in unionization has been avoided, the trade unions have not been able to escape from a severe decline in participation.

Still, this conclusion should not be pushed too far: In the first place, participation has also declined in other associations in Denmark (see below), and the 1970s was a period of political mobilization in Denmark, not the least in terms of an unusual strike activity. Secondly, participation in union activities at the workplace level does not appear to have declined; rather, the pattern of participation has changed from participation in union meetings to participation in union activities at the workplace (see Hoff 1994). Thirdly, according to the Danish survey, 28.5 per cent of *all* Danish union members have had held an office position in the union (e.g. as shop stewards or the like).¹¹ And finally, interest in trade union politics has remained at a high level from 1979 to 1990. Thus, even in Denmark, trade unions have to some degree remained mobilizing associations.

4.3. *Social Patterns of Participation*

In broad terms, social patterns of participation follow patterns of membership, yet modified by individual resources. The spread of unionization to middle class labour does not contribute to lower participation. On the contrary, in all three countries, nonmanual union members are more engaged and more active than blue collar-workers. At the same time, however, this means that the unions are no longer the vehicles for increasing political equality they used to be (Goul Andersen, Buksti & Eliassen 1980). Indeed, the results from all three countries indicate that trade unions have not been able to escape the laws of resource-dependent political behaviour.

As revealed by table 10, however, this pattern is highly sector-dependent in Denmark and Norway. Among privately employed, manual workers remain not only the most well-organized; they are also a bit more active and engaged than nonmanual employees. Among public employees, on the other hand, the mobilization of nonmanual groups strongly disturbs the conventional picture. In Sweden, the sector differences are smaller, and nonmanuals are the most active, even among the privately employed.

10. This is confirmed also by other sources (Goul Andersen 1993a:61-62 compile data from various sources).

11. The survey of TUC members referred to above indicated that 22 per cent had had such a position. Apart from statistical errors and representativity problems, the deviance is probably attributable to the fact that white collar unions have fewer employees at each workplace and consequently more positions as shop stewards etc.

Table 10. Trade Union Activity, by Class and Sector. Percentages of Members

					(N)		
	Denmark		Sweden	Norway	Denmark	Sweden	Norway
	int.	part.	part.	part.			
Manual workers	53	17	19	57	382	402	141
Nonmanual employees	60	24	31	69	576	658	329
Unskilled workers	51	14	15	57	243	211	85
Skilled workers	53	22	22	59	139	191	56
Lower nonmanual	54	19	27	66	331	297	128
Medium nonmanual	73	37	34	77	139	223	99
Higher nonmanual	61	21	34	64	106	138	102
Private sector	49	16	27	57	447	519	180
Public sector	66	28	27	71	427	519	276
Private	Worker		21	60	229	274	80
Sector	Nonmanual		33	55	213	245	100
Public	Worker		13	55	97	119	53
Sector	Nonmanual		30	75	330	400	223

Source: Scandinavian Citizenship Surveys and Mass Participation Survey.

The increase in female unionization has sometimes been interpreted as a by-product of the unemployment insurance system. As mentioned, our data demonstrate this assumption to be false. On the contrary, women's interest in trade union politics has increased continuously (Goul Andersen 1984), and today, women are slightly *more interested* in trade union politics than men (see table 11). Thus, not only objectively but also subjectively, women have become thoroughly integrated at the labour market. This is perhaps one of the most important achievements of the Scandinavian trade union movement in the 1970s and 1980s. But gender differences in *participation* persist, in particular in Denmark.

With mass unemployment it also becomes an interesting question if the unemployed are integrated in the trade union movement or are passive and feel alienated. In Norway, the question is wrongly formulated as the unemployed are typically not organized. In Sweden, mass unemployment was virtually unknown until the 1990s, and the finding from 1987 that the unemployed were inactive does not necessarily generalize. Until the 1990s, Denmark was the only Scandinavian with a long record of mass unemployment and unemployed trade union members. It does turn out that the unemployed are less active than the employed but the difference is only moderate and is partly explained by the social composition (age, occupation, education) of the unemployed.

Table 11. Trade Union Activity, by Gender, Employment, Education and Age. Percentages of Members

	Denmark		Sweden	Norway	(N)		
	int.	part.	part.	part.	Denmark	Sweden	Norway
Men	56	24	28	66	479	537	251
Women	58	19	25	65	485	523	219
Employed	58	22	27	66	874	1038	462
Unemployed	52	14	(5)	(37)	90	22	8
7-9 years basic educ.	54	17	24	59	344	518	187
10 years	54	20	27	70	401	242	109
12 years or more	66	29	29	69	219	300	169
18-29 years	48	12	16	59	203	291	86
30-39 years	62	25	27	68	323	266	145
40-49 years	58	24	31	70	266	273	142
50-59 years	58	21	35	65	142	176	60
60-69 years	43	20	26	53	30	54	36

Source: Scandinavian Citizenship Surveys.

Finally, unlike in party participation, the signs of a generation effect in trade union participation are uncertain. The young are relatively passive in all three countries, and at least in Denmark, this implies a decline during the 1980s. But it may be the mobilizing 1970s that were atypical, and we are thus not able to establish with certainty that there is a generation effect towards declining trade union activity even though it does seem likely.

To conclude, member activity is low in Denmark and Sweden but social patterns of participation in all three countries roughly follow the patterns of membership, modified by individual resources. Still, social inequalities of participation in union meetings are smaller than most other forms of participation. To judge on the unions' character of social movements, it is necessary to examine also the consciousness of union members.

5. Consciousness of Union Members

The pervasiveness of unionization in Sweden and Denmark may itself be an obstacle against maintaining the trade unions as a social movement. In the first place, a *low level of militancy and class struggle consciousness* may be a precondition of pervasive unionization, in particular among white collars. Secondly, pervasive unionization may imply *politically heterogeneous* members. As union activists and leaders tend to be affiliated with Socialist parties, this also implies that the political *representativity* of leaders and activists is likely to decline with pervasive unionization. Thirdly, pervasive unionization makes unions strong. But if members are rather passive and leaders are relatively autonomous (because membership can be taken for granted),¹² members may not feel *efficacious* vis-a-vis the unions. Of course, this depends also upon the ideology and traditions of the labour movement, but these factors may be assumed constant across the Scandinavian countries. These hypotheses imply that union members in Denmark and Sweden should be relatively consensual, politically heterogeneous and feel low efficacy - and more so than the Norwegian union members.

The two first mentioned hypotheses are based on the assumption that *identity formation* declines with pervasive unionization: As union membership is achieved almost automatically, solidarity and sense of identity as part of a broader social movement declines. This assumption is also tested below. However, if unionization is related to *mobilization*, we should rather expect the opposite: Unionization is an effect of militancy, and the identity formation among union members increase. In the 1970s and 1980s, such mobilization has been evident among public employees in Denmark and Norway (Borre & Goul Andersen 1996, ch. 3).

5.1. Consensual Interests

The hypothesis that pervasive unionization is linked to low militancy and class struggle consciousness cannot be tested by country comparisons as such questions were not included in the Norwegian and the Swedish surveys. But Danish data allow us to test two implications: Firstly, that union members (in particular white collars) do not feel much antagonism towards management. And secondly, that members assign priority to immediate economic interests

12. Trade unions are formally democratic organizations and even ideologically committed to enhancing democracy in society at large, but like other associations, they also have strong potentials for developing oligarchic and more or less self-elective leadership (Michels 1912; Lewin 1976; Benson 1986). However, the traditional discussion of oligarchy refers only to the "voice" option. The "exit" option is, in principle, an equally important resource which may make leaders responsive to the demands of members. But the point is that this exit option is not a very realistic option in the Danish and Swedish case.

rather than more basic, political demands - and perhaps even to common causes rather than conflictual interests in the wage struggle.

The first assumption is confirmed by the Danish survey of TUC members (APL survey) referred to above. 57 per cent feel they have common interests with management, and only 15 per cent feel they have no interests in common. Also in accordance with predictions, the feeling of common interests increases with occupational position: Two-thirds of the (lower) white collar members of the TUC feel they have common interests with management (see table 12).

Table 12. Danish TUC Members' Evaluations of Relations to Management. 1992. Percentages

	Common Interests	Some interests in common	No interests in common
All TUC members	57	28	15
Unskilled workers	52	29	18
Skilled workers	57	32	11
White collars	65	22	13

Source: Jørgensen et al. 1993:199 (APL Survey). Total N=3390.

The hypotheses concerning the priorities assigned to various tasks of unions are also largely confirmed. Answers to roughly equivalent question batteries from the APL survey and from the Danish citizenship survey are presented in table 13.¹³ Not surprisingly, the long-term *political* goal of "economic democracy" is given lowest (or even negative) priority. A similar question battery from a nation-wide survey in 1985 also confirms that members do not endorse political goals beyond the most narrow ones. The only exception is that most members think that the unions should engage actively in environmental protection. Surprising as this might be from a postmaterialist point of view, it seems quite logical that members feel that trade unions will be superior in combining employment and environmental concerns.

13. The question format was different: In the APL survey, the respondents were asked if they agreed or disagreed that various tasks were important. In the Citizenship survey, the respondents were asked how important they believed various tasks should be for the unions. The structure of the answers in the two surveys is the same but the proportions which answer "much" or "some" importance are a bit lower than the proportions answering "agree strongly" and "agree".

Table 13. *Proper Tasks of Unions. Denmark 1985, 1990 (all Employees) and 1992 (TUC Members only). Percentages*

How much weight should your union devote to the following tasks?	1. Very much	2. Much	3. Some	4. Little	5. Don't know/-NA	(1+2) 1990	(1+2) 1985	TUC Survey 1992: Agree
Political demands								
1. Economic Democracy	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	29
2. Environmental protection	36	29	20	10	5	65	.	68
Economic demands								
1. Highest possible wages	37	34	21	5	3	71	72	87
2. More equal wages	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	74
3. More gender equality in wages	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	86
4. Fight unemployment	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	88
5. More security in job	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	89
6. Shorter working hours	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	54
7. Better work environment	39	37	15	5	3	76	.	92
8. Supplementary training	35	39	18	4	4	74	68	85
9. Employee participation	30	38	20	8	4	68	.	72
10. More interesting jobs	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	71
13. Juridical Services	21	24	25	21	9	45	.	.
14. Private Insurances	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	38
15. Leisure Time Benefits	6	12	34	41	6	18	.	37

Source: Danish Citizenship Survey 1990; Class Survey 1985, and APL Survey 1992 (quoted from Jørgensen et al. 1993:260).

But members assign highest priority to the "traditional" tasks of trade unions: Securing highest possible wages, fighting unemployment, achieving more job security etc. It is noteworthy that even the wage struggle does not have the highest priority, and shorter working hours is nearly out of the members' agenda.¹⁴ Among the "traditional" tasks, "work environment" is considered most important. It is also worth noting also that more gender equality in wages has become one of the top priorities among Danish TUC members.

Comparable data from 1985 provide almost the same picture but indicate that since then, the less conflictual goals have achieved somewhat higher priorities vis-a-vis the wage struggle. This holds in particular for supplementary training. As the demand for qualifications

14. Wage earners' attitudes towards various work-sharing policies are presented in Goul Andersen (1996b).

increase, protecting and maintaining the value of labour power considered as a personal asset becomes more pertinent for wage labourers (in particular for white collars), and it now ranks among the most important tasks at all. At one point, but in accordance with modern management theories, the members *do* challenge the power of management: Most members want to assign high priority to employee participation in decision-making. Still, it has clearly lower priority than the other goals. The same holds for the task of securing more interesting jobs. Thus, even though members prefer an interesting job rather than high wages when explicitly asked, participation in decision-making appear secondary to wages and security.

Finally, our data confirm that provision of individual benefits for union members in terms of insurance arrangements or leisure time benefits are "panic reactions" of trade unions which find no or little resonance among the members. Similar reactions have been encountered in the USA (Troy 1986; Northrup 1991): The proper strategy for unions is rather a "back to basics"-strategy (but with the addition that wage struggle is only one aspect of the "basic" tasks, and apparently not the most important one anymore).

These preferences are virtually identical across age groups and between men and women. The main difference is that the younger and/or female members attach slightly more importance to *all* tasks than the older and/or male members. The same pattern is found with respect to differences between classes, between active and passive members, or between socialist and non-socialist members: Workers, active members and socialists assign more importance to all tasks but the priorities are nearly identical (table 14).

Class differences are surprisingly modest. But the differences are straightforward: As nonmanual employees have better market positions, they are less dependent on the trade unions. This holds in particular for the wage struggle where we find the most significant class difference (among privately employed nonmanuals, only 56 per cent think that the struggle for higher wages is important). On the other hand, nonmanuals are more dependent upon their market positions, i.e. their "qualification assets", and exactly when it comes to supplementary training, non-manuals assign more importance to this task than manual workers.

Environmental protection is considered more important among manual workers than among nonmanuals. As there are no class difference in environmental consciousness along the manual/nonmanual axis in Denmark (Goul Andersen 1990), the relationship may perhaps be explained by a greater interest in reconciling environmental and employment concerns, or by the fact that workers are more accustomed to see the unions engage in broader political questions.

In terms of priorities between tasks, active members and office holders are also quite *representative* of the passive - at least as measured by the battery above which does not include controversial political demands of the labour movement. As the task where we find

Table 14. Attitudes towards Tasks of Unions, by Occupation, Trade Union Activity, Occupation and Party Choice. Percentages assigning "much weight" to Tasks. Denmark 1990

	Occupation		Participation			Party Choice	
	Manual worker	Non-manual	Passive	Active	Office holder	Socialist	Non-socialist
1. Highest possible wages	76	68	69	76	85	78	62
2. Better Work Environment	81	74	75	79	93	83	67
3. In-service Training	72	77	73	79	94	77	72
4. Employee Participation	72	67	66	78	79	78	55
5. Environment. Protection	75	60	65	67	77	75	52
6. Juridical Services	49	43	45	47	45	49	44
7. Leisure Time Benefits	21	17	19	16	17	19	17
(N)	378	570	749	151	53	474	320

Source: Danish Citizenship Survey 1990.

the largest deviance between passive and active members is in-service training, we might also imply that the trade union leaders (and actives) are well-equipped to meet the demands of more nonmanual members in the future. Even though members may become increasingly consensual, and even though the wage struggle may become relatively less important, such changes seem to pose no immediate threats towards the unions.

5.2. Political Heterogeneity

Next, we turn to the suggestions that pervasive unionization is associated with political heterogeneity. The implications are that Norwegian union members should be the most politically homogeneous (i.e., most socialist), and that Danish and Swedish nonmembers should constitute a homogeneous, ideologically deviant minority. The last mentioned deduction rests upon the assumption that it is not union membership but rather nonmembership that involves conscious choice in the two countries.

The hypotheses concerning the party affiliations of union members are only partially confirmed. Certainly the pervasive unionization in Denmark and Sweden means that less than 60 per cent of the union members vote Socialist. But among Norwegian trade union members, the proportion was even lower, i.e. only 53 per cent (table 15).

Now, the survey was conducted at a time when support for socialist parties was unusually low in Norway, and the deviance between trade union members and the overall population average was in fact slightly higher in Norway than in the other two countries. Still, Norwegian trade union members are less politically homogeneous than expected, and in this respect, our hypothesis is falsified. The data lend more support to the assumption that nonmembers are ideologically deviant in Denmark and Sweden: In the two countries, only 33 per cent of the nonmembers were socialists, as compared to 36 per cent in (bourgeois-dominated) Norway.

As active members and office holders are more frequently affiliated with the socialist parties, it also becomes interesting to examine the political representativity of these groups. One might imagine an increasing political discrepancy between passive and active members, not to say office holders. The table reveals, however (not the least because of the weight of nonmanual employees) that even in the party political sense, the representativity problems are quite modest.

Table 15. Union Membership by Party (Wage Earners only), and Party Composition of Union Members, Actives and Office Holders (percentages voting Socialist)

Employees only				(N)		
	Denmark	Sweden	Norway	Denmark	Sweden	Norway
Membership rate by party ¹⁾ :						
Left Wing	89	95	66	208	42	103
Social Democrats	94	90	55	310	500	266
Centre Parties	79	80	46	107	295	146
Right Wing	80	73	37	255	171	228
Right Wing Populist	84	.	40	44	.	89
Per cent socialist:						
Nonmembers	33	33	36	121	160	432
Members	60	58	53	803	848	400
Passive members	56			624		
Active members	73			179		
All employees	56	54	44	913	1008	832

- 1) Denmark and Norway: Party choice in latest election; Sweden: Preferred party. In Norway and Denmark, minor socialist and green parties are classified as left wing parties whereas the Swedish Green party is classified as a centre party. Right Wing parties include the Conservative parties but in Denmark also the Liberal Party. Data are not weighted by party choice.

Source: Scandinavian Citizenship Surveys.

The fact that Norwegian union members tend to be less socialist than the members in the two other countries, makes it less hazardous to analyse attitudinal effects of union membership in the three countries: If the Norwegian trade unions have maintained more the characteristics of a social movement, this cannot be a spurious effect of party choice.

5.3. Identity and Solidarity: Affinity with the Labour Movement

The hypothesis that identity formation declines with pervasive unionization implies that we should expect a lower feeling of affinity with the labour movement among union members in Denmark and Sweden than in Norway. The only exception is public employees where there was a thorough mobilization in Denmark and Norway in the 1970s and 1980s.

Unfortunately, our question of affinity with the labour movement was not formulated identically in all three countries. In Denmark and Sweden, people were asked about their feeling of affinity ("samhørighed") with various movements, measured on a scale from 0 to 10. In Norway, the respondents were asked if they felt "much", "some" or "no" affinity ("tilhørighet") with various movements.

The difference in wording is probably unimportant. The two words "samhørighed" and "tilhørighet" are difficult to translate into English but both have the meaning of something between affinity (the term we have chosen as our translation), solidarity and identity. The problem is the question format: Which cutting points make the Danish and Swedish measures commensurable with the Norwegian?

From a *logical* point of view, one may argue that all values 0-5 (5 is the centre of the scale) express negative or neutral feelings, i.e. "no" affinity, whereas the values 9-10 express "much" affinity and the remaining (6-8) indicate "some" affinity. However, there remains a nagging question concerning the proper placement of the centre category (5). The question is if we can find any *empirical* criteria to solve the problem.

If we assume that the Nordic countries are much alike in most respects but differ in a few, we should choose the solution which, across a number of movements, minimize the difference. And it is obvious from table 16 (which omits the few "don't know"-answers) that counting 5 as "some" affinity fits most nicely with the assumption. It should be noted that this is a conservative assumption as our hypothesis in fact predicts a difference between Norway and the two other countries.

Table 16. *Affinity with Various Movements. Whole Population. Percentages expressing "some" or "much" Affinity*

	cutting point 6 ¹⁾		cutting point 5		Norway
	Denmark	Sweden	Denmark	Sweden	
1. Labour movement	34	30	45	46	46
2. Environmental Movement	48	53	58	68	68
3. Peace Movement	33	54	41	67	57
4. Women's Movement	18	30	26	46	37
5. Int. Solidarity Movement	.	42	.	61	60
6. State Church	.	22	.	38	75
7. Abstenteist Movement	.	19	.	30	19
Average 1-4	33	42	43	57	52
Average 1-7	.	36	.	51	52

1) In Denmark and Sweden measured by a scale 0-10. Cutting point 5: 0-4 No affinity; 5-8 Some affinity; 9-10 Much affinity. Cutting point 6: 0-5 No affinity; 6-8 Some affinity.

Source: Scandinavian Citizenship Surveys.

The measure indicates that among the population at large, the proportion expressing affinity with the labour movement is virtually identical in all three countries. But as table 17 demonstrates, the situation is quite different among trade union members. Only 47 per cent of the Swedish members express much or some affinity, as compared to 51 per cent of the Danish and 61 per cent of the Norwegian. This clearly confirms the hypothesis that identity formation is negatively related to pervasiveness of unionization.¹⁵

15. We might also deduce the implication that the effect of union membership upon feeling of affinity should be smaller in Denmark and Sweden than in Norway (although there may be reservations concerning the direction of causality). This implication, however, is only partly confirmed: The proportions of employees feeling affinity with the labour movement are as follows:

Proportion feeling much or some affinity	Denmark	Sweden	Norway
Members	51	47	61
Nonmembers	35	25	39
Percentage difference	16	22	22

Measured by percentage differences, the effects are the same in Sweden and Norway but smaller in Denmark. Still, if we take account of the fact that the distribution between members and nonmembers is much more skewed in Sweden than in Norway, it nevertheless follows that the total effect is larger in Norway than in the two other countries.

Table 17. *Affinity with Labour Movement. Whole Population, Employees and unionized Employees. Percentages feeling "much" or "some" Affinity*

Affinity with Labour movement	Whole population			Employees			Unionized Employees		
	Denmark	Sweden	Norway	Denmark	Sweden	Norway	Denmark	Sweden	Norway
Much	15	14	11	14	10	10	16	12	15
Some	30	32	35	35	33	39	35	35	46
None	55	54	54	51	57	51	49	53	39
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
(N)	1968	1936	1736	1128	1254	1018	964	1045	470

Source: Scandinavian Citizenship Surveys.

It is also interesting, however, to explore the country differences a bit further. In Denmark and Norway, the figures for all wage earners (union members and non-members as a whole) are nearly identical whereas the Swedish wage earners feel less affinity. The implication is that Swedes outside the workforce must feel more affinity, and this may be an indication of generational change in Sweden. Table 18 confirms this assumption. In Denmark and Norway, there are few age differences (if anything, the relationship is curvilinear, with a peak among the 30-39 years old). In Sweden, on the other hand, a considerable majority of people aged 60 or more feel affinity with the labour movement whereas among the youngest cohort, it is only one-third. In other words, younger Swedes feel far less attached to the labour movement than young people in the two other countries whereas the opposite country difference is found among the elderly. It is difficult to explain this country difference but it may have some relationship to the hegemonic position of the labour movement in Swedish politics for nearly half a century.

Table 18. *Affinity with the Labour Movement, by Age. Whole Population. Percentages feeling "much" or "some" Affinity*

Age				(N)		
	Denmark	Sweden	Norway	Denmark	Sweden	Norway
18-29 years	42	32	44	384	478	470
30-39 years	54	46	49	414	372	380
40-49 years	46	41	47	390	350	344
50-59 years	44	49	50	257	275	211
60-69 years	41	65	46	267	268	191
70 years or more	40	58	41	256	193	145

Source: Scandinavian Citizenship Surveys.

To examine the mobilization hypothesis, we must turn to the differences in social variations in the three countries. Denmark, and to a lesser degree, Norway, faced a massive mobilization of the better educated youth and of the public employees in the 1970s - linked, of course, to the youth and student rebellion and to post-materialist values as well as to increasing political controversies over the public sector. Apart from the last factor, the preconditions were nearly identical in the Scandinavian countries but processes of political mobilization always have a dynamic of their own, and in Sweden and Finland, mobilization was weak: At a time when more than one-half of the better-educated youth in Denmark voted for radical socialist parties in the late 1970s, nearly two-thirds of their Swedish counterparts preferred a non-socialist party (Goul Andersen 1993b:80).

Such differences are reflected in the social variations: Not surprisingly, nonmanual trade union members feel less affinity with the trade union movement than manual members. But in Denmark, the relationship is weaker than in Sweden (table 19). Thus it is white-collar rather

Table 19. Occupation, Education and Affinity with the Labour Movement. Members only. Percentages feeling "much" or "some" Affinity

					(N)		
		Denmark	Sweden	Norway	Denmark	Sweden	Norway
Unskilled worker		54	52	71	243	205	84
Skilled worker		61	56	77	139	190	56
Lower nonmanual		49	42	59	331	293	128
Medium nonmanual		50	51	56	139	219	99
Higher nonmanual		41	33	49	106	138	100
Manual worker		57	54	74	387	395	140
Nonmanual empl.		48	43	55	576	650	327
Private sector		49	47	59	447	514	180
Public sector		54	47	60	427	510	273
Priv. sector	Manual	59	52	75	229	271	80
	Nonman.	40	41	47	213	243	100
Public sector	Manual	57	56	69	97	116	52
	Nonman.	53	44	57	330	394	221
7-9 years educ.		53	54	71	344	509	187
10 years		52	44	50	401	239	109
12 years		47	37	54	219	397	169
Men		49	50	62	479	536	249
Women		53	44	59	485	509	218

Source: Scandinavian Citizenship Surveys.

than blue-collar affinity with the labour movement that distinguishes Danish and Swedish trade union members. But this relationship needs specification: It is mainly white collar

workers within the public sector that distinguishes between the two countries. A similar, and related, difference is found when it comes to gender and educational patterns: Women and the better-educated in Sweden feel less affinity with the labour movement.

Table 20 explores another much-debated issue: It is frequently claimed that the unemployed turn their back on the labour movement (which, it is argued, turns its back on the unemployed). However, *there is nothing in our data to confirm such assumptions of any con-*

Table 20. Employment Status, Trade Union Activity and Affinity with Labour Movement. Unionized Employees only. Percentages feeling "much" or "some" Affinity

				(N)		
	Denmark	Sweden	Norway	Denmark	Sweden	Norway
Employed	51	47	60	874	1024	459
Unemployed	49	(57)	.	89	21	8

Source: Scandinavian Citizenship Surveys.

flict between unemployed "outsiders" and an "insider-dominated" labour movement which is frequently taken for granted by economic theorists (e.g. Bleaney 1993). In Denmark and Sweden, there is no difference at all (control for age and occupation does not alter the conclusion). In Norway, the unemployed are less attached only in the sense that they are typically not trade union members (i.e., their psychological attachment cannot be measured).

6. Efficacy: Members' Feeling of Influence on Unions

Other things being equal, pervasiveness of unionization means stronger unions. But if membership can be taken for granted, it may also mean that union leadership has less incentives to be responsive to the demands of the members. Although this may, in spite of Michels' "iron law of oligarchy", be modified by the traditions and the democratic ideology of the trade union movement, we should, other things being equal, expect to find a negative relationship between pervasiveness and feeling of efficacy. As far as the three Scandinavian countries are concerned, other things *are* almost equal (including e.g. corporatist structures). Thus we should expect that Norwegian members would regard their unions as less strong than the Danish and Swedish members but on the other hand feel more efficacious vis-a-vis the unions. Analogous differences may be expected when comparing blue-collar and white-collar members although this may be modified by public employees.¹⁶

Again, the question formats are not entirely identical. This time, it is the Swedish questionnaire that deviates from the Norwegian and the Danish. From logical criteria, modified by the (conservative) assumption that Denmark and Sweden are pretty much alike, we have recoded the two Swedish 0-10 scales to four, respectively three, categories that are commensurable with the Danish and the Norwegian. The results are presented in table 21.

The most remarkable finding is that a large proportion of the union members, and in Denmark and Sweden even a large majority, feel they have little or no influence upon the unions. Next, the country difference in efficacy is as predicted: The Norwegian members are much more inclined to feel they can affect the unions than the Danes and the Swedish. Now, this could be an effect of self-selection, i.e. that people are more free to choose whether they want union membership in Norway. However, even if we include nonmembers, Norwegian employees as a whole feel more efficacious vis-à-vis the unions than the Swedes and the Danes (in Denmark, the question was posed only to union members).

The expectation that Norwegians consider unions less powerful, on the other hand, is falsified: Norwegians are also more inclined to think that the unions have much power:¹⁷ One-half of the Norwegian members consider their unions powerful, as compared to one-

16. At the aggregate level, we should thus expect a negative correlation between union power and feeling of influence on unions. This does not apply to the individual level, as positive orientations towards unions may affect both evaluations. In principle, this could be controlled for (e.g. by controlling for solidarity) but our indicators are not sufficiently valid and reliable to make such controls efficient.

17. At the individual level, there is a clear positive correlation between the feeling of influence upon the union and the feeling that the union is powerful (pearson correlations between .20 and .30).

quarter of the Swedes and the Danes. We may only speculate about the explanation; most probably, the answers do not only reflect perceptions of union power but also express overall confidence in the unions.

Table 21. *Perceived Trade Union Power at Workplace and Influence upon Trade Unions. All Employees, and Trade Union Members only. Percentages*

	All employees			Trade Union Members		
	Denmark ¹⁾	Sweden	Norway	Denmark	Sweden	Norway
A. Trade Union Power at Workplace						
Much	(28)	24	40	28	26	49
Little	(55)	52	39	55	56	46
None	(13)	13	5	13	10	3
Don't Know ²⁾	(4)	11	16	4	8	2
N (= 100 %)	930	1276	971	939	1060	461
PDI: Much minus none ³⁾	(15)	11	35	15	16	46
B. Influence on Trade Union						
Much	(5)	4	4	5	4	7
Some	(29)	27	30	29	31	44
Little	(38)	36	30	38	39	37
No influence at all	(21)	21	13	21	16	8
Don't know	(7)	12	23	7	10	4
N (= 100 %)	930	1276	1276	939	1060	461
PDI: Much/some minus little or none	-25	-26	-9	-25	-20	+6

1) Trade Union Members only (the Danish question were only posed to trade union members).

2) Including "Not relevant". 19 per cent of all employees give this answer but only 1 per cent of trade union members.

3) Percentage difference index: Difference between the indicated proportions (in percentage points).

Source: Scandinavian Citizenship Surveys.

As far as social differences are concerned, our data confirm that manual workers consider unions more powerful but at the same time feel more powerless vis-a-vis the unions than nonmanual employees. Even in Norway, a relative majority of working-class members feel they have little chance to influence the unions (table 22).

One might assume that public employees would consider their unions more powerful and (due to recent mobilization) feel more efficacious than privately employed. But both assumptions are disconfirmed as there are no aggregate sector differences. However, when we control for manual vs. nonmanual labour, we find an interesting interaction effect. In all three countries, publicly employed manual workers consider their unions somewhat less powerful and feel much less efficacious vis-a-vis their unions than privately employed workers. Among nonmanuals, we observe the very opposite pattern. Whereas the Norwegian

figures generally indicate much more positive evaluations than the Danish and the Swedish, it appears that publicly employed workers in Norway feel equally powerless as their Danish and Swedish colleagues. The Danish and Swedish pattern which is generally coincidental, also deviate at this point: Privately employed nonmanuals in Denmark feel much more powerless and also attribute less power to their unions than their Swedish counterparts.

Table 22. *Union Power at Workplace and Influence upon Trade Unions. Trade Union Members only. PDI's*

	Influence on Union			Union Power			(n)		
	Denmark	Sweden	Norway	Denmark	Sweden	Norway	Denmark	Sweden	Norway
Unskilled Worker	-34	-39	-21	25	13	44	236	211	80
Skilled Worker	-17	-26	-9	20	26	64	137	191	55
Lower Nonman.	-27	-31	-2	11	11	47	323	297	128
Med. Nonman.	-23	-4	36	12	16	42	137	223	97
Higher Nonman.	-10	14	20	-4	15	45	101	138	101
Manual, total	-27	-33	-16	23	19	52	373	402	135
Nonman., total	-23	-12	16	9	13	45	561	658	326
Private sector	-33	-21	5	11	16	44	432	519	180
Public sector	-18	-19	11	18	15	49	422	519	275
Private, manual	-28	-31	0	27	20	59	225	274	80
Private, nonman.	-37	-9	9	-7	13	33	203	245	100
Public, manual	-32	-39	-39	16	19	42	95	119	53
Public, nonman.	-14	-16	19	18	14	51	327	400	222
7-9 years educ.	-31	-31	-2	14	18	53	329	518	182
10 years	-26	-17	0	14	16	43	394	242	109
12 years+	-13	-3	24	16	10	43	216	300	165
Men	-22	-9	5	14	19	49	470	537	245
Women	-27	-31	8	14	12	44	469	523	216
18-29 years	-25	-35	8	16	12	61	198	291	85
30-39 years	-23	-13	22	16	15	44	316	266	139
40-49 years	-20	-12	10	16	18	43	258	273	141
50-59 years	-34	-19	-3	4	17	50	137	176	60
60-69 years	-30	-17	-40	7	22	40	30	54	35
Employed	-26	-21		14	16	xx	854	1038	xx
Unemployed	-15			17			84	22 ¹⁾	
Left Wing	-9	-25	16	15	18	30	183	40	67
Social Dem.	-25	-17	17	19	20	55	290	449	141
Centre P.	-23	-22	17	13	14	44	80	236	66
Cons./rw.lib	-30	-19	-5	8	12	40	195	124	84
Right w.pop.	-41		-34	35		54	34		35
manual workers, private sector:									
1-49 employed	-34			17		-25	103		40
50 empl. +	-25			38		26	117		38

PDI Influence on union: "Much" or "some" minus "little" or "none".

PDI Union power: "Much" minus "none".

1) Most of the unemployed in Sweden have not answered the question.

Source: Scandinavian Citizenship Surveys.

One might speculate if this was rooted in different gender variations in the two countries. And indeed, we do find such differences. But the deviance goes in the very opposite direction of what could be expected from the data above: In Sweden, women feel much more powerless towards the unions than men. In Denmark, no such relation is found. This means that whereas Swedish women feel marginally less efficacious than the Danish, Swedish men feel more efficacious. The last mentioned difference can be specified: It is especially among male nonmanual employees in the private sector we find a significant country difference. Among the other groups, we find no significant differences (table 23). We have no immediate explanation of this deviation among privately employed nonmanuals.

Table 23. *Influence upon Trade Unions. Male Union Members in Denmark and Sweden.*

PDI

	Manual Worker		Nonmanual Empl.		(N)			
	private	public	private	public	private	public	private	public
Denmark	-21	-33	-34	-14	175	33	101	124
Sweden	-25	-20	11	-3	207	133	136	133
Difference Denmark-Sweden	6	-50	-45	-8				

Source: Scandinavian Citizenship Surveys.

Not surprisingly, firm size is strongly related to evaluation of union power (this is nearly a test of the validity of the question). What is less self-evident is that workers in large plants in Denmark also feel they have better opportunities to influence the union.

As mentioned above, (insider-dominated) unions are frequently accused of safeguarding the interests of the employed at the expense of the interests of the unemployed. However, such statements are only true (at best) if an objective concept of interest is applied. The unemployed do not themselves experience the situation this way. On the contrary, the *unemployed are more inclined to believe they can influence the union than the employed*. Taking regard of the fact that the unemployed are furthermore overwhelmingly manual and less-educated, this is a very significant finding. Thus, in an observable or behavioural sense, *it is simply misleading to view Danish unions as insider dominated*. And it indicates that unions, according to the judgements of the unemployed themselves, still take their task of solidarity with the unemployed seriously.

Also somewhat surprisingly from public debates as well as from the indications of low activity above, there are no clear and systematic signs of age or generational differences in feeling of efficacy. It appears that for whatever reason older employees feel somewhat more

alienated from their unions than the younger in Denmark and Norway whereas young Swedish members are little inclined to think they can influence their unions.

Table 24. Trade Union Activity, Evaluation of Union Power at Workplace and Feeling of Influence upon Trade Unions. Trade Union Members only. PDI's

		Influence on Unions			Union Power			(N)		
		Denmark	Sweden	Norway	Denmark	Sweden	Norway	Denmark	Sweden	Norway
Passive member		-33	-34	-17	12	11	38	792	782	158
Active memb., total		5	20	19	23	29	52	200	278	303
Particip. meetings		-1	-18		15	26		147	119	
Office holder		25	48		45	31		53	159	
manual worker	Passive	-34	-42	-32	23	16	42	308	327	56
	Active	6	7	-5	23	35	57	65	75	79
Non-manual empl.	Passive	-31	-29	-8	4	7	34	427	455	102
	Active	5	24	27	23	27	50	134	83	224

Source: Scandinavian Citizenship Surveys.

Turning to the question of representativity, it comes at no surprise that those who are active in union politics, are more inclined to feel efficacious and to feel that the union is powerful. Table 24 reveals, however, that the difference is rather small. Even among the active members in Denmark, only around one-half (PDI=4) think that they can influence the union, and the difference between participants in meetings and office holders is largely explained by the fact that there are more office holders in white-collar unions. However, the active Danish members deviate from their Nordic counterparts. The active Danish members could be expected to constitute a sort of "trade unionist elite" (as they are so few). But it turns out that they are in all respects more pessimistic as far as the influence upon unions and union power is concerned. The difference between Swedes and the Norwegians, on the other hand, is narrowed considerably when controlled for participation. The passive Norwegians remain more optimistic than the passive Swedes, even though the former constitute a minority. But among the active, the Norwegians deviate from the Swedes only in their judgement of union power where the Norwegians, contrary to our expectations, are most inclined to assign much power to the unions. Probably this reflect a larger underlying confidence in unions in Norway.

7. Scandinavian Unions: Conclusions

To sum up the national differences, the rate of unionization in Norway is only little more than half the level in Sweden and Denmark. But as a social movement, the Norwegian trade unions appears by far the most healthy. The Norwegians are much more active, even to the degree that active union members constitute a larger proportion of *all* employees than in the two other countries. In spite of measurement problems, we have no reservation in concluding also that the sense of identity and solidarity is more widespread in Norway, and that members feel much more efficacious than in the two other countries. Sweden appear to have the largest problems in terms of identity and solidarity (this may look as a generational problem) whereas the Danes are the least inclined to think that they can influence the union.

Still, it is an exaggeration to conclude that the Danish and Swedish trade unions are hit by a sort of "sclerosis". As the Danish unions seem, all by all, to be in the "worst" position, we may draw some more general conclusions from the Danish evidence. In the first place, interest in union politics is quite high and has not followed the decline in union participation.

Secondly, the low and declining participation in union meetings is balanced by a much higher participation in trade union activities at the workplace level (Hoff 1994). And a large number of people (between one-fourth and one-third of all employees) hold an office within the union or at the workplace during the course of their occupational career. No other interest associations reveal such high levels of activity and commitment.


Thirdly, most changes in social structure until now have strengthened rather than undermined the unions. In the first place, the major increase in nonmanual employment so far, i.e. the increased employment in the public sector, had clearly strengthened the unions in almost any respect. Next, Scandinavian unions, in particular the Danish, have experienced a *unique success* among the hundreds of thousands of hitherto non-unionized women who entered the labour market from the 1960s. Indeed, the gender gap in unionization and union consciousness is about to be reversed in the Scandinavian countries, in accordance with the gender differences in class positions. Even more surprisingly, the unions have also been able to maintain the solidarity of the unemployed and to avoid the feelings of powerlessness which could easily emerge within this group.

However, the largest challenge in the future is probably the growth in the numbers of privately employed nonmanuals. Here, Danish and Swedish unions have so far been quite successful as measured by increasing rates of unionization. But clearly, this is a group with smaller activity and solidarity than other union members, and in Denmark, they feel quite alienated vis-a-vis the unions, in particular the male members. Among this group which is

more career-oriented and relatively more dependent upon market position than upon collective wage struggle, the unions have not so much to offer on traditional questions like wages and working hours. But this group has a strong and perceived interest in maintaining their market position through supplementary training and this is exactly the union activity given highest priority among the office holders of the trade union movement.

Finally, it should be recalled that even in Denmark, union membership has been installed in the consciousness of most employees, as a sort of obligation, and the findings on motives for membership above indicates that even though unemployment insurance is important, union membership also seems to rest upon strong and basic feelings of solidarity, if not with the labour movement at large, then at least with colleagues and other wage earners. Thus, the unions may have to redefine their tasks (even further), they may have to give in (even further) on traditional collectivistic arrangements, and they may have to decentralize and make the unions more democratic. But so far, there are few indications that they are about to be undermined by the social changes and (in the long run) follow the widespread tendency towards lower private sector-unionization found in many countries.

Important as this may be, however, it still remains to ask whether unions are at all important any more as channels of popular mobilization and communication with the elite. And it remains to be asked whether the significantly lower rates of unionization in Norway have any further effects on the functioning of democracy in Norway. In short: How important are unions, as judged from a citizenship perspective? This question is treated in the final report from this research project, see Goul Andersen & Hoff (forthcoming), as well as by a recent study by Gundelach & Torpe (1996). Before making such judgements, however, it is relevant to take into account the popular participation in other types of voluntary associations.



**Part 2. Membership and Participation
in Other Types of Voluntary Associations**



8. A Typology of Voluntary Associations

Before analysing participation in other types of voluntary associations, it is necessary to discuss criteria of classifications. This is also more or less a prerequisite of adequate measurement. Departing from the more inductive classifications of many participation studies (e.g. Verba & Nie 1972; Barnes, Kaase et al. 1979), we have developed a typology based on a few, simple criteria (see figure 4.1).¹⁸

Like much of the literature on associations, we distinguish between *interest groups* (organized around a particular interest) and *promotional groups* (organized around a particular cause). As pointed out by Rasmussen (1971), the basic operational criterion of this distinction is membership rather than purpose: Promotional groups are open to everybody sharing a particular cause whereas interest groups organize people sharing a particular characteristic.¹⁹

Among *interest groups*, a major distinction may be drawn between organizations representing *basic interests of income maintenance* ("*primary economic associations*") among wage earners, self-employed or publicly supported, and on the other hand *associations representing other roles*.

The primary economic associations are by far the most important, not only in terms of membership, professional staff and influence, but also from a perspective of political equality: Are the interests of the major social classes or categories equally well-organized? Associations of wage earners (i.e., *trade unions*) and associations of self-employed (*business, farmers' and employers' associations*) together constitute what may be labelled *class organizations*. The equivalent associations among publicly supported groups are labelled *client organizations*.

More inductively, "*other role associations*" may be subdivided into associations concerned with neighbourhood or dwelling, associations of welfare state users, and other role associations (mainly carowners' and shareowners' associations).

Among *promotional groups*, we distinguish between *political associations* (dealing with controversial issues), *humanitarian associations* (dealing with uncontroversial, humanitarian

18. The basic classifications were developed in the Norwegian and Danish "Power Projects" in the 1970s (Goul Andersen 1981). The Danish questionnaire was derived from an archive of all country-wide associations in Denmark (Buksti & Nørby Johansen 1978). The questionnaire in 1990 was further refined to match the survey of the Swedish project (Petersson et al. 1989).

19. In general, it is easy to distinguish. But there are, of course, problems in deciding on the operational boundaries. Thus, we have classified housewives' associations as interest groups and womens' groups as promotional groups (which, strictly speaking, violates the openness-of membership criterion). By the same token, we have classified carowners' associations as interest groups but bicyclists' associations as promotional groups (this is, however, more in accordance with the openness-criterion as anyone owns a bicycle but not a car).

purposes)²⁰ and *leisure or cultural associations* (where people are typically members in order to participate in some sort of leisure activity). Inductively, the political associations may be further subdivided into environmental associations, religious associations and others (e.g. associations dealing with international issues).

Finally, *consumers' cooperations* constitute a separate group. They are not easily grouped into any of the categories above, and membership is so immense that it would give an entirely biased picture to collapse this type of organizations with any other category.

Of course, some of these groups are politically unimportant, and it may seem misleading to count membership of, say, a sports association, as an act of political participation. The main motive for membership in such associations is far from political but rather to pursue some leisure time interest. Nevertheless, leisure and cultural associations frequently receive public support and may be highly active in securing public contributions or affecting public regulations, not only in recreational and cultural areas but also environmental and others.²¹

Likewise, a main motive of membership of humanitarian groups is to make a personal contribution to humanitarian purposes. But at the same time, the groups fight to enhance these purposes. Although their goals are uncontroversial (by definition), they are clearly political, especially in the competition for public support. Indeed, contributions to humanitarian associations have frequently ended up being only symbolic supplements to public funding. By the same token, humanitarian associations may not only cooperate with public agencies but even be in charge of public programmes themselves (as the Red Cross). In short, most types of associations sometimes act as interest associations (articulating interests and influencing public policies) - or even as para-governmental agencies, responsible for public programmes.

20. Some of the humanitarian associations are "altruistic" charity organizations. Others are more on the borderline to interest groups as they not only raise funds to fight particular diseases but also more or less represent the interests of patients with such diseases. Associations for fighting heart diseases or cancer lean toward the altruistic pole whereas some associations are at the same time a sort of interest associations for chronically disabled (e.g. muscular atrophy associations etc.). Our Danish and Swedish data are sufficiently detailed to permit a distinction but for the present purpose it has been left out.

21. Our surveys do not include e.g. a question concerning members' awareness of the interest-articulating activities of the associations (an American study indicates that between one-fifth and one-third of the members of cultural, local, fraternal and charity associations are aware of such activities, see Baumgartner & Walker 1988:922).

Figure 4.1. *A Typology of Interest Associations*¹⁾

1. Interest groups			
1.1. Primary Economic Associations			
		1.1.1. Class Organizations	
		1.1.1.1. Trade Unions	
		1.1.1.2. Business, farmers', employers' associations	
		1.1.2. Client associations	
1.2. Other Role Associations			
		1.2.1. Neighbourhood & Dwelling Associations	
		1.2.2. Users of Public Services	
		1.2.3. Others (e.g. carowners' associations)	
2. Promotional groups			
2.1. Political Associations			
		2.1.1. Environmental Associations	
		2.1.2. Religious Associations	
		2.1.3. Other (e.g. international) associations	
2.2. Humanitarian Associations			
2.3. Leisure and Cultural Associations			
3. Consumers' Cooperation			
4. Other associations (not specified)			

- 1) A technical paper containing the classification of the original questionnaire categories is available from the author.

Still, from a political perspective, the most important promotional groups remain the political associations²² which may to some degree be viewed as "functional equivalents" of political parties - typically dealing with value cleavages or other issues that are not completely covered by the (predominantly class-based) cleavages of the party systems.²³

The question if participation in voluntary associations serves an "educational" function is outside the scope of this report.

-
22. Clearly, the members and contributors of political associations are aware of the political activities (Baumgartner & Walker 1988:922).
23. The distinction between such associations and single-issue groups or grass-root movements is somewhat blurred but basically, it is a matter of organization (hierarchical structure vs. "flat", network structure).

9. Membership and Activity in Voluntary Associations: An Overview

9.1. Problems of Measurement

Measuring membership of voluntary associations by survey techniques is an extremely difficult task. First and foremost, people tend to forget their memberships unless they are explicitly reminded by presenting a showcard or by reading the detailed coding categories. Secondly, the coding categories must be sufficiently concrete to ensure that people are reminded - and sufficiently disaggregated to avoid too many multiple memberships of associations belonging to the same category.

In much of the international literature, these criteria are hardly met, and some of the most widely applied standard questions are flawed as they lead to serious underestimations of membership (Baumgartner & Walker 1988). In Scandinavia, there has been a tradition of using detailed show cards and coding, derived from archive lists of nation-wide associations (Buksti & Nørby Johansen 1978; Hernes & Martinussen 1980; Goul Andersen, Buksti & Eliassen 1980). In the Swedish and Danish citizenship surveys, some 30 and 45 types, respectively, was presented on show cards (including several examples within each type). Whereas the Danish and the Swedish data are nearly perfectly comparable, the Norwegian survey used only 15 types and relatively few examples. Besides, some major types of associations were entirely omitted in the Norwegian survey.

Thus the Norwegian data on membership are comparable only at some points such as trade union membership where answers are usually reliable (Baumgartner & Walker 1988). However, when it comes to *active* membership, reliability problems are smaller, as people are more likely to remember memberships that are salient to them. Furthermore, we may isolate some types of organizations where comparability is large, even regarding membership.

9.2. Extent of Voluntary Association Membership and Active Participation

The data from various surveys in the introductory section of this report indicated that voluntary association membership is more widespread in Scandinavia than in most other countries. Our detailed questions confirm this picture and demonstrates that it is much more widespread than standard questions indicate. Table 25 shows the extent of voluntary association membership and participation according to the three citizenship surveys.

Table 25. Membership and Activity in Voluntary Associations in Denmark, Norway and Sweden. Number of Memberships, Activities and Office Positions among 18-80 years old¹⁾

Number of Organizations ²⁾	Membership			Active Participation			Office Position		
	Denmark	Sweden	Norway ³⁾	Denmark	Sweden	Norway	Denmark	Sweden	Norway ⁴⁾
0	6.7	5.7	29.6	57.6	42.3	47.2	87.2	64.9	
1	17.3	15.0	29.8	24.1	27.8	31.5	9.9	24.1	
2	20.5	20.2	22.3	10.6	15.3	15.0	2.1	7.1	
3	20.2	20.0	10.0	4.0	7.8	3.9	0.6	2.4	
4	13.8	14.6	5.5	2.3	4.0	1.8	0.2	1.0	
5	8.7	10.9	1.7	0.7	1.5	0.3	0.1	0.3	
6	5.2	5.8	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.1	.	0.2	
7	2.9	3.6	0.5	0.1	0.2	0.1	.	0.1	
8 or more	4.7	4.2	0.2	0.1	0.5	.	.	0.1	
Mean	3.14	3.27	1.43	0.74	1.15	0.83	0.17	0.52	
standard deviation	2.24	2.16	1.41	1.14	1.42	1.01	0.50	0.90	
(N)	1890	1987	1773	1890	1987	1773	1890	1987	
Dk. 1979/1990: 18-70 years old									
At least 1979	91			64			22		
one assoc. 1990	94			44			14		
Mean 1979	2.9			1.3			0.3		
1990	3.2			0.8			0.2		
(N) 1979	1858			1858			1858		
1990	1712			1712			1712		

- 1) The Danish figures are calculated as simple average of 18-99 years old and 18-74 years old.
- 2) Strictly speaking, the figures refer to number of *types* of associations. As the questionnaire and showcard was very detailed, multiple memberships/activities is a relatively limited problem, at least in Denmark and Sweden.
- 3) The Norwegian questionnaire was more aggregated and omitted some important categories, e.g. neighbourhood & dwelling, and consumers' cooperation.
- 4) Norwegian data are omitted as they include *former* office.

Source: Scandinavian Citizenship Surveys and Mass Participation Survey 1979.

The Danish and Swedish figures are nearly identical, and it turns out that, on average, Danes and Swedes hold membership in just above three associations, and only 7, respectively 6 per cent, are not member of any association. As more than three quarters of the population are members of two associations or more, the variation can furthermore be described as relatively small: Only few are very active or very passive. The Swedish figures are a little above the Danish, yet as can be seen from the distribution as well as from the standard deviations, a bit more equally distributed. As we shall see below, this does not mean that membership is more *socially* equal distributed, however.

Strictly speaking, we have not measured number of association memberships but rather number of *types* of association memberships. Although the questionnaire is so disaggregated that double membership is limited, the figures nevertheless indicate lower limits.²⁴

As the Danish questionnaire was the most detailed, even the difference between Sweden and Denmark may occasionally be a bit underestimated, in particular with respect to neighbourhood & dwelling associations. At these points, there are larger risks of double membership in Sweden than in Denmark. In short, there is no doubt that membership of voluntary associations in Sweden is more widespread than in Denmark.

The Norwegians appear to be members of much fewer associations but to a very large degree, this reflects the less detailed questioning. People were reminded of fewer concrete associations at the showcard, some of the categories were substantially more aggregated, and some types of associations were completely omitted. Even though the category "other associations" was more frequently mentioned by the Norwegian respondents, it has probably caught only a few of the potential answers.

At least at one important point, however, the difference is real: There are much fewer trade union members in Norway. And there are quite strong indications that membership may also be less widespread in other areas. In table 26, we have aggregated the Danish and Swedish data for the types of associations where comparability is largest, i.e. on

- trade unions,
- business, farmers' and employers' associations,
- client associations,
- environmental associations,
- religious or abstenteism associations,
- humanitarian associations,
- leisure, sports & cultural associations, and
- other associations.

24. A Swedish report, "Folkrörelsesutredningen" (Ju mer vi är tillsammans, SOU 1987:33) estimated that the total membership in all local associations which were attached to some country-wide association was above 31 million. If this estimation, based upon informations from the associations, is correct, our survey estimates are too low (underestimated by approximately one-third). Even though the report included political parties among the associations and children among the members, this does not explain the entire discrepancy. There are three possible explanations: (1) Multiple memberships: Even though our lists of types of association are very detailed, they do not rule out the possibility that people are member of more than one association within each category; (2) Unreliable respondents: Even though the lists are detailed, people may not recall all their memberships. and (3) Unreliable associations: The official records of the associations may be exaggerated (see also Petersson et al. 1989:122-23).

At these points, the respondents were presented to nearly the same stimuli. If the questionnaire and show cards were in some respects a bit more detailed in Denmark and Sweden, this is balanced by more frequent use of the category "other associations" in Norway.

There seems to be little doubt that the Norwegians really are members of fewer associations than the Danes and the Swedes. On average, Norwegians are members of 1.31 of these (selected and aggregated) association types. In Denmark, the figure is 1.90, and in Sweden, it is 1.82. Even if we omit the trade unions, Norwegians clearly hold fewer memberships.

Table 26. Membership and Activity in Voluntary Associations in Denmark, Norway and Sweden. Selected, aggregated Types. Number of Memberships and Active Memberships¹⁾

Number of Organizations ²⁾	Membership			Active Participation		
	Denmark	Sweden	Norway	Denmark	Sweden	Norway ³⁾
0	11.2	11.1	30.2	63.1	46.9	48.2
1	28.7	29.8	31.5	26.9	35.2	32.4
2	32.7	35.8	23.6	8.0	13.2	14.9
3	17.2	15.6	9.2	1.6	3.5	3.2
4 or more	10.2	7.6	5.5	0.4	1.2	1.3
Mean	1.90	1.82	1.31	0.49	0.77	0.77
standard deviation	1.23	1.15	1.22	0.75	0.91	0.91
Mean excluding unions	1.27	1.20	0.99			

- 1) The Danish figures are calculated as simple average of 18-99 years old and 18-74 years old.
- 2) Number of *types* of associations. The types were: trade unions, trade & employer associations, client associations, environmental associations, religious or abstentism associations, humanitarian associations, leisure, sports & cultural associations, and other associations.
- 3) Percentage of population (N's as in table 25).

Source: Scandinavian Citizenship Surveys.

The data on *activity* in table 25 and 26 provide a quite different picture. In terms of activity, Denmark has the least flourishing association life. Only 42 per cent of the Danes have participated actively (i.e. attended at least a meeting) in *any* association during the last 12 months. And whereas the Swedes report an average of 1.15 active memberships, the Danish figure is only 0.74. In Norway, the average is 0.83 active memberships, but this figure is undoubtedly underestimated. Table 26 indicates that in this respect, the difference between Norway and Sweden may be an artificial product of the instrument of measurement: When we concentrate on the comparable categories, the activity among Norwegians and Swedes appear to be nearly identical.

To conclude, the Norwegians hold fewer association membership but compensate by being much more active. The Danes hold many memberships but are not very active, whereas the Swedes combine high membership figures with high participation.

In Denmark, the description above reflect a dramatic change during the 1980s. By 1979, the Danes were as active in associations as the Swedes 10 years later (see table 25). But since 1979, activity has declined in nearly all Danish associations, in spite of higher rates of membership. This of cause raises the suspicion that there might be some measurement problems involved. And although the question wording, the format, the showcard and the instruction of interviewers was almost identical, it may be that a minor part of the recorded decline reflect measurement problems rather than substantial change. However, various tests indicate that the recorded decline is largely reliable.^{25 26}

Whether the apparent decline in active participation in associations in Denmark reflects an economic and political conjuncture characterized by resignation (Petersen 1996; Goul Andersen 1994b) or signifies a more long-term trend where associations loose in the competition for the citizens' attention and (limited) time, remains to be seen.

25. The only relevant differences between the 1979 and 1990 surveys was that the 1990 survey mentioned participation in the general assembly as an example of active participation (this might, unintendedly, give more narrow associations), and that the 1990 survey was conducted by another bureau (the Danish Gallup Institute vs. the Danish Institute of Social Research).

The suspicion that there may be measurement problems involved is to some degree confirmed by the surprising observation that the number of persons holding an office within associations has declined at nearly the same rate as the number of active members. This excludes the possibility that mentioning general assembly participation plays any role (in this case the deviance should be specific to the activity question). Thus we are left with the possibility that less careful probing by another corps of interviewers may explain some of the deviance. However, similar problems are not encountered elsewhere in the questionnaire. Furthermore, the fact that social variations have generally narrowed from 1979 to 1990 also casts doubt on this explanation as less careful probing should be expected to have the largest effect on people with small socioeconomic resources.

Whatever the reason may be, there remains some doubt if the entire decline in participation is genuine. Turning to other studies, Fridberg (1994) reports a stagnation in the number of officeholders in leisure associations but no decline, as compared to 1987. This is also the type of association where we encounter the smallest decline. When other surveys on participation in trade unions are compiled, on the other hand (they were conducted by different researchers or institutions, and with somewhat different methods), they revealed a decline in participation roughly equivalent to the figures reported here (Goul Andersen 1993b:62). This increases our confidence in the data substantially but nevertheless leaves us with the conclusion that a share of the decline in active participation is most likely attributable to measurement problems, and that the 1990 figures for Denmark may be slightly underestimated.

26. No comparable time series from the other two countries are immediately at hand. But it does seem that Swedish trade unions have experienced a similar, although less dramatic, decline: In his study of the Swedish LO (TUC) members, Lewin (1976:134) found that 39 per cent had attended a union meeting within the last year, as compared to 25 per cent in the Swedish citizenship survey. But it should be added that the questions are not perfectly comparable.

10. Membership and Participation in Various Types of Voluntary Associations

10.1. Interest Associations

From a political perspective, all interest associations are of course not equally relevant. A particular important question is to which degree the basic economic interests of the people are organized - including not only labour and business interests but also the interests of the part of the population that are dependent on social security payments from the public sector. Thus we have to look upon various types of associations. Table 27 examines membership in the three countries and compare with older Danish data from 1979. As the Danish 1979 survey was limited to the 18-70 years old, we present a separate calculation of membership for this age group in 1990.²⁷

27. In table 4.27 and the following tables, we have maintained the lower limit of 18 years for all three countries but unless explicitly indicated, we have not modified the Danish data to take account of the problem that the Danish survey included people aged more than 80 years.

Table 27. Membership of Various Associations. Percentages of whole Population

	Denmark:18-70 years old		Whole Population 1987/90		
	1979	1990	Denmark ¹⁾	Sweden	Norway
1. Trade Unions		66.5	61.9	62.0	32.0
2. Employers'/Trade Ass.		8.9	8.7	12.0	7.0
3. Class Org. (1+2)	62.2	71.8	67.3	68.5	37.7
4. Client Associations	9.1	11.2	13.4	10.5	8.7
5. Primary Econ. Ass.(3+4)	66.7	77.1	74.8	74.3	42.8
6. Neighbourh. & dwelling	37.1	44.0	43.0	30.1	.
7. User publ. services	5.6	5.9	5.4	10.1	.
8. Others (e.g. carowners)	12.1	10.5	10.2	20.8	(4.2)
9. Other role, total (6+7+8)	46.9	51.0	49.7	48.0	.
10. Interest groups, total(5+9)					
11. Environmental	5.8	21.5	20.6	8.1	6.6
12. Religion, abstenteism	3.9	3.1	3.1	11.6	7.4
13. Other political ass.		10.1	10.1	4.1	4.2
14. Political, total (11-13)	19.0	30.1	29.3	20.7	16.0
15. Humanitarian	15.8	19.5	19.8	9.6	13.4
16. Leisure & Culture	49.9	50.9	48.1	55.9	35.9
17. Consumers' Cooperative	31.1	25.5	24.8	43.2	.
18. Other associations	.	4.5	4.6	7.8	15.5
Average number of assoc. (N)	2.90	3.24	3.14	3.27	1.43
	1858	1712	1968	1987	1773

1) 18-99 years old.

Source: Scandinavian Citizenship Surveys and Mass Participation Survey 1979.

Basic economic interests are unusually well organized in Denmark and Sweden. Nearly 75 per cent of the entire adult population are members of an association defending these basic interests. In Denmark, this represents an increase of some 10 percentage points during the 1980s - because of higher unionization, and because of rapid organizing of pensioners.

It is, however, dangerous to infer too strong conclusions from such aggregate data. Therefore we have calculated the organization of various target populations. As a crude measure, we may look upon the proportions that are members of a "primary economic interest association", that is, a trade union, a business, farmers' or employers' association, or a client association. The results are presented in table 28 below.

The thoroughness of organization and the similarity between Denmark and Sweden is impressive. As far as wage earners are concerned, the results are of course almost identical to the previously presented data. The group which is most badly organized is pensioners. Only around one-half of old-age pensioners and the disabled (operationalized as pensioners aged less than 60 years) are organized whereas the proportion is higher among the 60-66

years old "early retired" (in particular in Denmark where early retirement is typically linked to the unemployment insurance system). However, the organizing of pensioners is increasing rapidly in the 1990s and is likely to approach the organization rates of other population groups within few years.

Alongside with the elderly, the young are also badly organized. This holds in particular for students. This tells little about political poverty, however, as they may to a large degree identify with their future positions in society.

The most likely candidate group for arguments about political poverty is, of course, the unemployed. However, as we have seen already, the unemployed are generally well-organized in trade unions and furthermore feel quite satisfied with their influence. In Norway where the unemployed are typically not organized, however, this poses a potential problem (which is softened, however, by the fact that unemployment is much less widespread in Norway than in most other industrialized countries).

The higher organization levels of farmers (and fishermen) in Denmark reflects an important historical fact, namely that the farmers' movement was stronger in Denmark than in the two other countries. However, as the farming population has become small, and as agriculture has lost economic importance, this country difference has increasingly lost importance.

Table 28. *The Organization of Target Populations. Percentages of various Groups who are Members of Primary Economic Organization (Class or Client Organization). Percentages*

	Member of primary economic organization			(N)		
	Denmark	Sweden	Norway	Denmark	Sweden	Norway
Unskilled worker	85	78	45	224	281	211
Skilled worker	93	90	43	179	220	150
Lower Nonmanual	89	85	51	547	362	279
Med. Nonmanual		90	61		265	180
Higher Nonmanual	80	84	59	155	183	198
Farmer, fisherman	88	71	54	48	41	54
Other self-employed	63	66	32	91	111	108
Student, apprentice	53	45 ¹⁾	15	146	65	100
Housewife	21	21	13	38	42	94
Assisting spouse ²⁾	76	.	.	37	.	.
Disabled ³⁾	42	58	41	66	33	78
Early Retired ³⁾	70	61		119	94	6
Old Age Pensioner ³⁾	51	49	40	318	266	175
All Pensioners	54	52	40	502	393	262
Out of labour force	52	51	29	664	556	536
Unemployed	84	82	24	102	27	29
Private Sector	81	78	40	724	828	709
Public Sector	92	91	70	478	573	414
Basic educ. 7-9	71	71	38	905	1089	885
10 years	80	81	50	662	385	330
12 years	72	77	46	400	512	532
Men	79	75	44	954	1033	934
Women	69	73	42	1014	954	839
18-29 years	68	72	27	384	492	483
30-39 years	88	83	49	414	377	383
40-49 years	81	88	54	390	359	349
50-59 years	77	82	50	257	279	212
60-69 years	67	62	46	267	274	195
70 years +	52	47	39	256	206	151

change Norwegian data.

- 1) In Sweden: Students only.
- 2) Specified only in Denmark.
- 3) The pensions & retirement systems are different in the three countries. Only the Norwegian survey distinguishes between different types of pensioners. For Sweden and Denmark, the categories are approximated by distinguishing between pensioners aged less than 60 years (disabled), pensioners aged 60-66 years (early retired) and pensioners aged 67 years or more (old age pensioners). These categories fit reasonably well with the Danish system but not with the Swedish. However, in order to secure maximum *equivalence*, the distinction is probably even more valid than what would be obtained from more detailed questions.

Source: Scandinavian Citizenship Surveys.

More surprising is the country difference in the gender gap: In Denmark, this gap is quite considerable whereas it has nearly been closed in the two other countries. As there are nearly

no housewives left, and as there is no gender difference in unionization in Denmark, the deviance is attributable mainly to a weaker organization of women outside the labour force. However this should be explained, it remains that at the aggregate level, there is a significant gender gap in Denmark but not in the two other countries.

In Norway, all groups are far less organized than in Sweden and Denmark, and at this point, the difference must be interpreted as genuine. However, one group is deviant in the Norwegian context: Public employees is the only group in Norwegian society that can be described as well-organized. At the same time it is worth noting that exactly *public employees is the most thoroughly organized social group in all the Scandinavian countries*. As we shall see below, this characteristic can be extended also to other forms of political participation.

Alongside with primary economic associations, some 50 per cent of the Danes and Swedes hold membership in other role associations (see table 27) defending group interests of homeowners, tenants, community inhabitants, users of public services, carowners, shareowners, etc. This means that 83 per cent of the Danes and 22 per cent of the Swedes are members of *some* interest association (in the Norwegian questionnaire, these other role associations were largely omitted).

10.2. Promotional Groups

Around two-thirds of the adult population in Denmark and Sweden is member of some sort of promotional group - political, humanitarian or cultural. The last mentioned group (including leisure organizations) count among its members around one-half of the Danes and Swedes, and some 36 per cent in Norway. Membership of humanitarian associations is also widespread: Some 20 per cent of the Danes and 10 per cent of the Swedes hold membership in such associations, the Norwegian falling in between.

From a political participation perspective, political associations (not including political parties, of course) are nevertheless the most interesting. They tend to articulate interests more or less beyond the scope of routine politics and the traditionally dominant cleavages of the Scandinavian societies: Environmental, religious and moral, or various other purposes stretching from consumer's interests to international solidarity. This type of association has most members in Denmark, in particular because of effective membership campaigns of the major environmental movement. In Norway and Sweden, on the other hand, religious and moral associations are considerably stronger than in Denmark.

Finally, the consumers' cooperative movement has always been strong in Scandinavia, and 25 per cent of the Danes and 43 per cent of the Swedes hold membership in this association. In Norway, it was not included in the questionnaire.²⁸

10.3. Participation in Various Associations

The proportion of actives among the members of various types of associations is shown in table 29. As mentioned, Norwegian associations have fewer members but they are much more active. In Norway, around 60 per cent of the members in typical associations are active participants, as compared to only some 25 per cent or less in Denmark. At the same time, this means that one should probably be careful not to over-interpret the difference in union participation discussed earlier in this report: At least it must be acknowledged that high participation is not limited to trade unions in Norway but is found among almost all associations.²⁹ The only major type of associations where national differences are few, are leisure and cultural associations. At the same time, this is (alongside with the minor religious associations and associations for users of public services) the only type of promotional groups where active participation is widespread.

28. The Scandinavian countries, and in particular Denmark, have had their own version of popular capitalism: Cooperative movements of farmers, controlling most of the production of food as well as large sections of wholesale trade related to agriculture; the consumers' cooperative movement controlling a large section of retail trade, and the credit associations which were formally democratic, non-profit institutions financing most long-term loans in the country. Increasingly, however, all these institutions have lost their character of popular movements and have turned into "normal" capitalist companies - de facto or even de jure as joint-stock companies.

29. Like in Denmark, there may be problems of measurement with the Norwegian data. If the Norwegian questionnaire is somewhat insufficient in the sense that it does not remind the respondents of all their passive memberships but achieve a reliable registration of active memberships (which people remember as they are more salient to them), it automatically produce a biased impression of the activity level within associations. However, the fact that the higher participation rates are found for nearly all types of associations (even where the Norwegian questionnaire and showcard was nearly identical to the Danish and Swedish) indicates that the country differences are reliable. This pattern of fewer membership and more participation is furthermore confirmed by other sources as well (see table 4.2).

Table 29. Activity Level in various Associations: Active Participants as Percentage of Members¹⁾

	Active participants as percentage of members			(N)		
	Denmark	Sweden	Norway	Denmark	Sweden	Norway
1. Trade Unions	20	25	60	1178	1232	568
2. Employers' & Trade Ass.	27	30	53	168	239	124
3. Class Organizations (1+2)	22	27	60	1283	1362	668
4. Client Associations	30	43	62	283	209	154
5. Primary Econ. Ass. (3+4)	24	30	63	1453	1477	759
6. Neighbourh. & dwelling	22	30	.	835	598	.
7. User publ. services	59	44	.	101	201	.
8. Others (e.g. carowners)	12	37	(80)	195	414	(75)
9. Other role, total (6+7+8)	26	40	.	965	953	.
11. Environmental	5	13	39	396	160	117
12. Religion, abstenteism	64	65	89	59	230	131
13. Other pol. ass.	12	48	28	195	81	75
14. Political, total (11-13)	12	47	61	566	411	283
15. Humanitarian	9	35	38	388	190	237
16. Leisure & Culture	48	65	67	919	1111	636
17. Consumers' cooperative	11	14	.	477	859	.
18. Other associations	32	45	58	88	155	275

1) Persons with at least one act of participation (e.g. in meeting) in some association within respective types of association divided by number of persons with at least one membership within respective association types. The higher the level of aggregation, the more the figures above may deviate from (i.e. exaggerate) the level of participation within individual associations.

Source: Scandinavian Citizenship Surveys.

Table 30 shows active participation in voluntary associations, measured as percentage of the population (that is, membership ratio times activity level, or what Petersson et al. (1989:112-13) calls "degree of mobilization"). As judged by this criterion, not only trade unions but primary economic associations at large are stronger in Norway than in the two other countries, in particular Denmark. When it comes to promotional groups, Norway and Sweden have roughly the same level of participation, which is much higher than in Denmark. In particular, it is remarkable that whereas more than 20 per cent of the Danish population are members of an environmental association (in public debates frequently contrasted with the meagre membership figures of political parties), only 1 per cent are active members (that is, less than one-quarter of the number of active party members).

In the Danish case, however, the figures represent a dramatic decline since 1979. In fact, the Danish 1979 figures are generally *higher* than the Swedish and Norwegian figures

from 1987/1990. As mentioned, we cannot entirely rule out the possibility that there may be problems of measurement involved. But it is beyond doubt that participation in associations has declined. And in the light of the fact that membership in political parties also began to decline much earlier in Denmark than in the two other countries, it becomes an interesting question whether we are facing the beginning of a long-term trend or merely a conjunctural decline in participation in associations.

Table 30. Active Participation in Various Associations. Percentages of whole Population

	Denmark: 18-70 years old		Whole Population 1987/90		
	1979	1990	Denmark ¹⁾	Sweden	Norway
1. Trade Unions		13.2	12.3	15.4	19.3
2. Employers'/Trade Ass.		2.5	2.3	3.6	3.7
3. Class Org. (1+2)	30.1	15.4	14.5	18.2	22.6
4. Client Associations	4.3	3.3	3.9	4.5	5.4
5. Primary Econ. Ass.(3+4)	33.3	18.1	17.9	21.9	27.0
6. Neighbourh. & dwelling	18.9	9.8	9.7	9.1	.
7. User publ. services	5.0	3.5	3.2	4.5	.
8. Others (e.g. carowners)		1.2	1.2	7.7	(3.4)
9. Other role, total (6+7+8)	25.6	13.1	12.8	19.0	.
10. Interest groups, total (5+9)		26.3	25.6		
11. Environmental	1.3	1.0	1.0	1.1	2.5
12. Religion, abstenteism	3.2	2.0	2.0	7.5	6.6
13. Other political ass.		1.3	1.2	2.0	1.2
14. Political, total (11-13)	7.5	4.1	3.9	9.8	9.8
15. Humanitarian	15.8	1.8	1.8	9.6	13.4
16. Leisure & Culture	33.2	25.0	23.4	36.3	24.2
17. Consumers' Cooperative	7.2	2.9	2.9	6.0	.
18. Other associations	.	1.4	1.5	3.6	9.0
19. Promotional groups (14+15+16+18)		28.7	26.3		
Average number of assoc. (N)	1858	1712	1968	1987	1773

1) Average of 18-99 years old and 18-74 years old.

Source: Scandinavian Citizenship Surveys and Mass Participation Survey 1979.

11. Participation in Voluntary Associations: A Power Analysis

11.1. Social Variations in Participation in Voluntary Associations

Unlike trade unions which have historically been linked to the mobilization of the working class, other voluntary associations may generally be assumed to attract most members among the population groups with the highest political resources. Below, we examine the social inequality in participation from two different angles.

Firstly, from a sociological resource perspective, we use number of memberships as an indicator of voluntary association activity and examine the social variations in participation. Secondly, from a power perspective, we examine who controls the voluntary association system, i.e. the composition of members, actives and office holders, compared with the population at large. Here, the focus is on positions rather than individuals.

As demonstrated by table 31, the social variations largely go in the same direction in the three countries. But they are not equally strong: Although it emerged above that Sweden had the smallest variation in association membership, the country nevertheless has the strongest *social* variations in association membership. In Sweden, the social factors, taken together, explain 17.7 per cent of the variance, as compared to only 11.8 per cent in Denmark and 13.2 per cent in Norway.

To a large degree, this is explained by a stronger age effect in Sweden. But it turns out that *in spite of half a century of Social Democratic hegemony, Sweden also has the strongest class variations in association membership*, and it is remarkable that whereas participation of skilled workers does not deviate significantly from the population mean in Denmark and Norway, it actually does in Sweden. Besides, *Sweden is the only Scandinavian country where gender has a significant direct effect* (significant at the 1 per cent level) upon association membership.³⁰ Finally, Sweden is also the country where the unemployed are most deviating but here it must be acknowledged that Sweden had nearly full employment until the 1990s. Thus it is not so surprising that the very small minority of unemployed was deviant by 1987; the situation is likely to be different in the 1990s when unemployment has also become a widespread phenomenon in Sweden. What is perhaps more surprising is that *the effect of unemployment is so moderate* in the two other countries. Thus, in Denmark, a citizen is less "handicapped" by being unemployed than by being an unskilled worker or being between 18 and 29 years old, at least as far as participation in associations is concerned.

30. In Sweden, the effect is suppressed by the other variables (including class) but emerges when these variables are controlled for.

Table 31. *Social Variations in Voluntary Association Membership. Multiple Classification Analysis. Deviations from Means, Eta and Beta Coefficients. Labour Force only*¹⁾

A. All associations	Unadjusted deviations from mean; eta-coefficients			Adjusted deviations from mean; beta-coefficients		
	Denmark	Sweden	Norway	Denmark	Sweden	Norway
Grand mean	3.47	3.51	1.61	3.47	3.51	1.61
Unskilled worker	-.69	-.78	-.41	-.43	-.51	-.21
Skilled worker	-.35	-.76	-.43	-.01	-.42	-.13
Lower nonmanual	.07	-.13	-.08	.00	-.10	-.11
Medium nonmanual	.75	.71	.53	.27	.41	.26
Higher nonmanual	.76	1.21	.44	.36	.70	.15
Farmer, fisherman	.06	.27	.07	.49	.50	.31
Other self-employed	-.13	.15	-.18	-.02	.14	-.02
Eta/Beta	.23	.32	.25	.12	.20	.12
Unemployed	-.87	-1.29	-.65	-.47	-.82	-.43
Privately Employed	-.26	-.30	-.25	-.24	-.23	-.20
Public Employees	.57	.49	.46	.45	.37	.37
Eta/Beta	.21	.20	.24	.16	.15	.19
18-29 years	-.69	-.83	-.48	-.60	-.62	-.35
30-39 years	.14	.30	.14	.08	.18	.07
40-49 years	.20	.63	.23	.18	.47	.19
50-59 years	.31	.14	.16	.36	.17	.16
60-69 years	.12	-.21	.08	.10	-.12	.02
70 years or more ²⁾	(-1.22)	-.79	(-1.03)	(-1.22)	-1.01	(-.78)
Eta/Beta	.17	.26	.20	.15	.20	.15
Men	.03	.08	-.02	.10	.18	.06
Women	-.03	-.09	.02	-.10	-.21	-.09
Eta/Beta	.01	.04	.01	.04	.09	.05
7-9 years basic education	-.44	-.47	-.33	-.34	-.27	-.19
10 years	.05	.06	.16	.08	.16	.02
12 years	.61	.73	.36	.41	.34	.26
Eta/beta	.18	.24	.22	.13	.13	.14
Explained variance (R2)				.105	.177	.132
B. Excl. Class Organi- zations				<u>Beta Coefficients</u>		
Occupation				.20	.19	.13
Sector				.14	.12	.10
Age				.13	.18	.13
Gender				.01	.09	.04
Education				.13	.14	.15
Explained variance (R2)				.126	.166	.098

1) Interactions (e.g. occupation - sector) are ignored.

2) Only few respondents in this category as only the labour force is included.

Source: Scandinavian Citizenship Surveys.

In the absence of comparable data from other countries it is impossible to determine whether the social variations above should be characterized as large, moderate or small. As the largest social distance amounts to 1.43 membership (the difference between the adjusted effects of

unskilled worker and higher nonmanual in Denmark), as compared to a mean of 3.49, it does seem reasonable to characterize the social differences as very moderate or even small.

Historically, the relatively small social variations in participation in Scandinavia are related to the class mobilization of farmers and workers from the 19th century onwards. The question is whether this mobilization is still important for equality in political participation. Of course, this cannot be answered by survey data alone. And what follows, is far from an adequate operationalization.³¹ But it is interesting to examine whether the social variations in participation really does become much larger if we exclude the class organizations from our analysis. This is done in the section B of table 31. And the result is quite surprising: In Denmark, exclusion of class organizations does increase the class effect from $\beta = .18$ to $\beta = .20$, and the overall effect of social background variables from $R^2 = .118$ to $.126$, thus confirming the conventional wisdom. But in Sweden and Norway, we obtain the very opposite results: In Sweden, the effect of occupation is *reduced* when omitting class organizations (from $\beta = .20$ to $\beta = .19$, and overall from $R^2 = .177$ to $R^2 = .166$). And in Norway, the overall effect is *strongly reduced*: From $R^2 = .132$ to $R^2 = .098$ (although it should be admitted that the effect of occupation increases from $\beta = .12$ to $\beta = .13$).

This indicates that the mobilization of class interests does not any longer play any significant role for the maintenance of political equality. Of course, we should not draw too far-reaching macro-level conclusions from this observation but it is nevertheless an intriguing starting point for further analyses of the role of class-based associations in contemporary society.

Finally, it is also "disturbing", from a class mobilization point of view that Norway which has the weakest trade unions (in terms of membership, at least) is at the same time the country with the smallest class variations in participation and (if we omit class organizations) the weakest overall social variations in participation among the three countries. Even though these data do not permit any strong conclusions, they do shake a little bit the conventional assumption that strong trade unions, even today, is an important prerequisite of social equality in participation.

31. A more traditional approach would be to examine how union membership or union participation may compensate for small social resources of participation. However, in individual-level analyses this always entails a question of cause and effect.

11.2. Power in Voluntary Associations

As mentioned, the question of inequality of participation may also be addressed from another angle which is more of a power perspective: Who (if anybody) controls the system of voluntary associations? Who occupy the *positions* - as members, as active members, and as trustees - and to which degree do the occupants of these positions deviate from the population at large?

From a *resource perspective*, one would imagine that the social distribution becomes increasingly biased in favour of the better-off groups as we move from members to office holders, i.e. from the lowest to the higher levels of power within the associations. From what might be labelled a "*Scandinavian democracy model*", one would expect that the lower classes were able to maintain considerable control over power positions within the associations. Furthermore, we would expect that the political parties were able to maintain control over power positions within the associations. Finally, it would also be interesting to examine whether particular parties or party groups had more power than others in the system of interest associations.

One may distinguish between four or five patterns:

- The pattern of *solid power*: The representation of the group in question increases monotonously with influence or power in positions.
- The pattern of *powerlessness*: The representation of the group in question decreases monotonously with influence or power in positions.
- The pattern of *power maintenance*: The group in question is able to maintain disproportionate control over the most powerful positions.
- The pattern of *quest for power*: The group in question is very active, as reflected in proportions of members and active members but it is (as yet?) unable to seize control over trusted positions.
- Finally, there is the pattern of *equal power*, i.e. the possibility that control is evenly distributed, i.e. that there is only insignificant deviations between the distribution at various levels.

As mentioned, the focus is on positions rather than individuals. This means that our unit of analysis is not individuals but positions - e.g. who among the 4 million adult Danes occupy the 10-15 million positions as members of interest associations? Technically, we have chosen the simple solution to weight individuals by their number of memberships, number of active memberships and number of trusted positions, respectively.

The Danish data are presented in table 32. As far as gender is concerned, it turns out that *men have maintained solid power over the interest association system in Denmark*. The proportion of men increases from 48.5 per cent in the population (or rather: the survey) at large, to 50.8 per cent of membership positions, 56.5 per cent of active membership positions, and finally to 64.4 per cent, that is, nearly two thirds of all office positions. In Sweden, we observe exactly the same tendency but in a weaker version: Whereas the proportion of men in Denmark increases by 16 percentage points from the population level to the trustee positions level, the increase in Sweden is only 11 percentage points (see table 33). *Only in Norway have women managed to break masculine control*: Here we find a pattern of nearly equal power as the proportion of women increases with only 3 percentage points.

Not surprisingly, we find a *pattern of solid power among the middle-aged, in particular the 40-49 years old* (although the over-representation is moderate). In Denmark, however, the same pattern is much more outspoken among the 30-39 years old: Their share increases monotonously from 21.0 per cent in the population at large to 32.2 per cent among office positions.

In Denmark, we find the very opposite *pattern of powerlessness among the elderly* (aged 70 years or more) as their share decreases monotonously from 13.0 per cent to 5.9 per cent. It should be noted, however, that there was no upper age limit in the Danish survey, and the widespread apathy among people aged more than 80 years have certainly affected the results. Thus, with the same age categories as in Sweden, it is likely that the Danish data for the elderly would have followed the Swedish pattern which is more moderate. In *Norway*, however, the elderly are *nearly proportionally represented* at all levels.

Although the interest associations do have a relatively young leadership profile in all countries (40 per cent of the office positions are inhabited by people aged less than 40 years), we do catch a glimpse of the power maintenance pattern among the 50-59 years old (in Denmark among the 60-69 years old), although it is weak. The young, on the other hand (i.e. the 18-29 years old), are strongly under-represented at the leadership level in all three countries. The pattern for the young in Denmark to some degree follows a quest for power pattern: Although there are relatively few members (in accordance with the powerlessness pattern), they tend to be relatively active but achieve few positions of power. The Swedish and Norwegian patterns leans more towards the powerlessness pattern.

Not surprisingly, education enhances membership and participation in all three countries. But the association is weaker than it might perhaps be expected, and higher

education does not promote access to leadership of associations. On the contrary, in all three countries, the better-educated are a bit better represented at the active participant level than at the leadership level. Thus one may speak of a quest for power-effect which is matched by a power maintenance effect among the less educated. This confirms that there is still something left of the class-mobilized "Scandinavian model".

The economically inactive part of the population may clearly be described as powerless as far as the voluntary association system is concerned, i.e., their share is monotonously declining with increasing influence. In Denmark and Sweden the proportion of inactives declines with about 10 percentage points or more. This effect is mainly concentrated to pensioners, in particular young pensioners ("disabled") and old-age pensioners. Early retired, on the other hand, seem to manage better in terms of political participation.

In Norway, however, these effects are nearly absent, i.e. pensioners are nearly proportionally represented, even at the leadership level. In Norway, housewives and students/apprentices are the main responsible for the declining proportion of inactives at higher influence levels. This pattern is also found in Sweden but nearly absent in Denmark.

What is equally surprising is that *the unemployed largely follow an equal power pattern in Denmark* where mass unemployment was far most widespread at the time of interviewing. Thus we find little influence of the alleged resourcelessness or of the "two thirds-society" in the Danish data. In Sweden and Norway, on the other hand, the unemployed clearly follow the pattern of powerlessness in political participation. From a political participation point of view one almost feel tempted to conclude that mass unemployment is a lesser problem than a more moderate unemployment as the unemployed (*on average!*) are less marginalized.

In all three countries, public employees are far more active than the population at large, but they have clearly been most successful in Norway where their share is monotonously increasing with level of positions, amounting to some 10 percentage points from the general population to the social composition of trustees. In Denmark we rather observe a *quest for power-pattern among public employees* as they are very active but do not manage to maintain its share at the leadership level in associations. Among privately employed in Denmark, we rather observe the opposite pattern of power maintenance whereas the curve is nearly flat in Sweden and even marginally declining in Norway. Thus in particular in Denmark, public employees are less powerful than one might imagine from their high level of active participation.³²

32. In Denmark, the over-representation of public employees in politics is a much-debated phenomenon. It turns out, however, that "intellectuals" - from school teachers to journalists, priests, and other academics

Table 32. *Distribution of Population and Positions in voluntary Associations. Denmark. Per cent*

Denmark	Whole Population (N=1968)	Composition of positions (weighted)		
		Members (N=6053)	Actives (1432)	Office holders (N=320)
Men	49	51	57	64
Women	51	49	43	36
18-29 years	19	17	19	12
30-39	21	24	28	32
40-49	20	23	22	24
50-59	13	15	12	12
60-69	14	13	12	14
70+	13	8	7	6
7-9 years Basic education	46	39	34	35
10 years	34	36	36	37
12 years	20	25	30	28
Not gainfully employed	34	26	24	22
Presently unemployed	5	4	5	5
Employed in private sector	37	38	38	44
Employed in public sector	24	32	33	29
Percentages of entire sample:				
Students, pupils, apprentices ¹⁾	7	6	7	6
Housewives, assisting wives ²⁾	4	3	3	3
Pensioners, total	26	19	17	16
- pensioners 18-59 years old	4	2	2	2
- pensioners 60-66 years old	6	6	5	5
- old-age pensioners	16	11	10	9
Gainfully employed only:	(N=1235)	(N=4311)	(N=1034)	(N=239)
Unskilled Worker	18	13	11	12
Skilled Worker	14	13	14	11
Lower Nonmanual	44	46	46	41
Higher Nonmanual	13	17	18	22
Farmer	4	4	4	4
Self-Employed	7	7	7	10
Active party member	6	8	11	15
Passive party member	4	5	4	5
Not party member	90	87	85	80
Party choice (unweighted)	(N=1601)	(N=5178)	(N=1222)	(N=282)
Left Wing	18	20	21	18
Social Dem.	33	29	30	32
Centre	11	12	10	11
Conservatives, Liberals	32	34	35	36
Progress Party	6	5	4	3

1) Including gainfully employed apprentices.

2) Assisting wives are gainfully employed.

Source: Danish Citizenship Survey.

account for much of the phenomenon. In Danish parliament, for instance, self-employed are far more over-represented than "ordinary" public employees (Goul Andersen 1993c:198).

Table 33. *Distribution of Population and Positions in voluntary Associations. Sweden. Per cent*

Sweden	Whole Population (N=1987)	Composition of positions (weighted)		
		Members (N=6491)	Actives (2280)	Office h. (N=1041)
Men	52	54	57	63
Women	48	46	43	37
18-29 years	25	20	20	17
30-39	19	22	20	23
40-49	18	23	24	24
50-59	14	15	16	17
60-69	14	13	13	13
70+	10	7	7	6
7-9 years Basic education	55	46	44	43
10 years	19	21	21	23
12 years	26	33	35	34
Not gainfully employed	28	22	21	18
Presently unemployed	1	1	1	1
Employed in private sector	42	41	42	44
Employed in public sector	29	36	36	37
Percentages of entire sample:				
Students, pupils ¹⁾	3	3	2	1
Housewives ²⁾	1	1	0	0
Pensioners, total	20	15	16	14
- pensioners 18-59 years old	2	1	1	1
- pensioners 60-66 years old	5	4	5	5
- old-age pensioners	13	10	10	8
Gainfully employed only:	(N=1425)	(N=5008)	(N=1774)	(N=846)
Unskilled Worker	19	15	13	11
Skilled Worker	15	12	11	11
Lower Nonmanual	25	24	23	21
Medium Nonmanual	18	21	24	27
Higher Nonmanual	12	17	17	17
Farmer	3	3	4	4
Self-Employed	8	8	8	9
Active party member	10	15	20	21
Passive party member	5	5	3	4
Not party member	85	80	77	75
Party choice (unweighted)	(N=1549)	(N=5286)	(N=1876)	(N=867)
Left Wing	4	4	5	4
Social Dem.	48	45	45	46
Centre	31	33	32	31
Conservatives	17	18	18	19

1) Not including gainfully employed apprentices.

2) Not including assisting wives.

Source: Swedish Citizenship Survey.

Table 34. *Distribution of Population and Positions in voluntary Associations. Norway. Per cent*

Norway	Whole Sample (N=1773)	Composition of positions (weighted)		
		Members (N=2541)	Actives (N=1479)	Office h. (N=1105)
Men	53	54	54	56
Women	47	46	46	44
18-29 years	27	21	21	16
30-39	22	24	24	25
40-49	20	23	25	25
50-59	12	14	13	15
60-69	11	11	10	11
70+	8	7	7	8
7-9 years Basic education	51	40	40	38
10 years	19	21	23	24
12 years	30	39	37	38
Not gainfully employed/NA	32	25	26	24
Presently unemployed	3	1	1	1
Employed in private sector	41	40	39	41
Employed in public sector	24	34	34	34
Percentages of entire sample:				
Students, pupils ¹⁾	6	5	5	3
Housewives ²⁾	5	3	3	3
Pensioners, total	15	12	12	13
- pensioners < 66 years old	5	4	4	4
- old-age pensioners	10	8	8	9
Gainfully employed only:				
Unskilled Worker	18	13	13	9
Skilled Worker	13	9	9	9
Lower Nonmanual	23	23	23	25
Medium Nonmanual	16	21	20	19
Higher Nonmanual	17	21	22	23
Farmer	5	4	5	6
Self-Employed	9	8	8	9
Party member	13	19	20	23
Not party member	87	81	80	77
Party choice (unweighted)				
Left Wing	12	14	13	13
Social Dem.	32	30	29	30
Centre	20	24	25	26
Conservatives	26	26	27	25
Progress Party	10	6	6	6

1) Not including gainfully employed apprentices.

2) Not including assisting wives.

Source: Norwegian Citizenship Survey.

The class pattern in Scandinavia may broadly be described as: (Moderate) powerlessness among workers, solid power among higher level white collars, equal power among self-employed and lower- or medium level white collars. But there are nuances: Self-employed

manage better in Denmark and Sweden than in Norway. And, perhaps contrary to conventional wisdom,³³ workers manage better in Denmark than in Sweden, with Norway falling in between. Thus workers' share in Sweden declines from 34.3 per cent at the population level to 22.2 per cent at the association leadership level. In Denmark, it declines from 32.4 per cent to 23.4 per cent. Of course, the difference between the countries is limited but it is surprising in the light of conventional discussions and assumptions about the Social Democratic hegemony in Sweden.

Finally, the *political* composition of voluntary associations at all levels is almost the same as in the population at large. In particular, there are no significant deviations from the overall balance between socialist and non-socialist parties. The only significant difference is a decline in support for the Progress Parties in Denmark and Norway as we move from the population at large towards the leadership level of interest associations - and a concomitant increase in support for other non-socialist parties. In this sense, the Progress Parties are clearly "outsider"-parties (confirming the picture of "the people" against the elites).

Of course, the analysis above give far from an adequate description of the distribution of power(resources) within the interest association system. Above, all associations are weighted equally, and furthermore, all power positions (from chairmanship of nation-wide unions to membership of the board of local clubs) are weighted equally. Nevertheless, the analysis may give an indication of one aspect of the "popular power positions" or "power of participation" in the corporate channel, concerning representativity.

The question is then, whether the data confirm the "resource model" or "the Scandinavian model". To some degree, they confirm both. The observation that better-educated are less over-represented than might be expected, in particular at the leadership level, is rather surprising and may be seen as a confirmation of the Scandinavian model. Furthermore, although there are obvious inequalities of representation, it must be described as relatively moderate. The most surprising in this respect is perhaps the significant under-representation of women in the system, in particular in Denmark and, to a lesser degree, in Sweden.

33. Sweden is nearly always presented as the ideal-typical representative of the "Scandinavian model" and Social Democratic triumph. However, in a number of respects, Denmark or Norway may in fact be more ideal-typical.

12. Conclusions

Voluntary associations have played a larger role in the Scandinavian countries than in almost any other country. It took an early beginning with counter-cultural movements, in particular in Norway and Sweden; then followed the class mobilization of the labour movement and the movements of the farmers; and finally followed an unusually strong movement of leisure associations, not the least associations for sports, physical exercises, etc. This has left a legacy where Scandinavian citizens hold more association memberships than anywhere else in the world, even as compared to the USA. The Swedes seem to take the lead as far as association membership is concerned, the Norwegians seem to be the most active in associations.

However, not all associations are equally important politically. Although virtually all associations engage in political activities from time to time, some are more relevant than other. Among *interest associations*, the most important are of course those associations which are organised around people's basic source of income ("primary economic associations"). It is remarkable that some 75 per cent of *all* citizens (including those who are not economically active) are members of such an association in Sweden and Denmark; in Norway, the figure is only 43 per cent.

Among the primary economic associations, it is of course the trade unions that are the most relevant, and Sweden and Denmark clearly stands out as the world's two leading countries as far as unionization is concerned: Some 85 per cent of all wage earners are members of a trade union; in Norway, union density is 57 per cent, according to estimates (but somewhat lower, according to the citizenship survey). It is also noteworthy that the Scandinavian countries have experienced a significant increase in trade unions membership, in particular Denmark, Sweden and Finland. There is no doubt that the succes of trade unionism in the three lastmentioned countries derives mainly from the Ghent system of unemployment insurance which gives the trade unions effective control over the unemployment insurance funds. This also means that Scandinavian trade unions are unaffected by virtually all forces which may allegedly lead to declining unionization. Besides, all social divisions in unionization have nearly disappeared; a very important side effect is the unionization of the unemployed and of part-time employed women who might otherwise be left in a more marginal position at the labour market - and as far as the unemployed are concerned: In society at large. It even emerges that in Denmark, the unemployed are more satisfied with their influence upon unions than the employed.

But there is a back side of the medal: Although there are no signs of a decline in consciousness about the importance of unionization, Swedish and Danish trade union members have developed rather cynical attitudes to the unions, and participation is very low, as compared to Norway. This may in the long run make unions more vulnerable than they immediately seem; members tend to view unions both as unresponsive to their members and as inefficient in defending their interests. Comparisons with Norway where attitudes are very much different indicate that although the low level of participation and the changing attitudes towards unions may be related to social change, they are certainly also related to institutional factors, i.e. to the fact that trade unions are less "*voluntary*" associations in Denmark and Sweden than in Norway.

This is not the place to make prognosis about the future but it does not seem very likely, however, that unions are heading directly towards a serious legitimacy crisis but they may have to adopt strategies of downsizing and of concentrating on "core business".

As far as *promotional groups* are concerned, special interest is of course directed towards those groups which deal with controversial political issues such as environmental associations etc. Although these associations have been growing dramatically in membership - especially in Denmark - they are, however, far less important in terms of participation. There is any reason to believe that membership in such associations may continue to increase in the future, but it is mainly a question of passive support membership.

Finally, we have also examined the social and political representativity of voluntary association members, of actives, and of office holders. Not surprisingly, we find most of the conventional socioeconomic and demographic biases here. But generally speaking, they are not very strong, and somewhat surprisingly, there are clear signs that participatory equality has been increasing. Among the significant differences between the Scandinavian countries, we find that the Norwegians have gone far towards closing the gender gap in participation and representation in voluntary associations, a fact that stands in sharp contrast to Denmark where it seems that little has changed, in particular at the level of office holders. Another interesting finding - this time common to all three countries - is the absence of any significant political biases in the voluntary association system: The political distribution of citizens, members, actives and office holders is nearly identical in all three countries.

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