

Matthias Freise
Thorsten Hallmann *Editors*

Modernizing Democracy

Associations and Associating in the
21st Century

 Springer

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Annette Zimmer (2012).
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Preface

The conference of the International Society for Third Sector Research (ISTR) held in July 2014 in Münster, Germany is the perfect occasion to present this anthology, a Festschrift in honor of Annette Zimmer. Annette Zimmer is not just celebrating her 60th birthday in September; she is also taking office as ISTR's president and serving as local organizer of the conference, which is attracting more than 600 researchers from all over the world in an interdisciplinary setting. This event can be considered as the peak of a research career that has been shaped by enormous academic diligence, impressive empirical performance and important contributions to a better understanding of civil society organizations in modern societies. This Festschrift picks up many aspects of Annette Zimmer's work and aims to enrich our knowledge about associations, her great passion.

Annette Zimmer has been Professor for German and European Social Policy and Comparative Politics at the University of Münster since 1996. Her work focuses on the development of civil society and its broad organizational spectrum that influences democratic societies. After finishing her doctoral studies at Heidelberg University in 1986, she was a visiting fellow at the Program on Nonprofit Organizations at Yale University for two years and there became a research associate on a project on foundations in the United States. In 1988 she moved back to Germany and held a postdoc position at Kassel University where she qualified as a professor with a study on associations from the perspective of third sector research. From 1995 to 2002, she—together with Eckhard Priller—led the German part of the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Project. The research for both the habilitation and the comparative project ventured into uncharted terrain and became important milestones towards the establishment of empirical third sector research in German social sciences in the 1990s. Along with a small group of colleagues Annette Zimmer has been a pioneer in the field.

Although her research has encompassed all forms of third sector organizations—from foundations and cooperatives, to charities, interest groups, and public benefit corporations—her favorite object of research is associations, which she has analyzed in numerous qualitative and quantitative studies. Certainly, Annette Zimmer is *the* expert on German associational life today. Her textbook "Associations—bedrocks of democracy" ("*Vereine—Basiselement der Demokratie*", first edition 1996, second edition 2007) is the authoritative book on the history and present of associations in Germany and has received broad attention.

However, Annette Zimmer's work is by no means dedicated just to gardeners, soccer players, nature lovers, and their sometimes rather peculiar behavior. During her time as a professor at University of Münster, she has continuously broadened her research focus. In addition to studies on the German third sector and public benefit organizations, Annette Zimmer has contributed to analyses of the role of civic engagement in Germany and Europe and the contribution of civil society organizations to the development of welfare provision in several policy fields. Among her most important research projects have been "Future of Civil Society", "Management of Civil Engagement", "Local Engagement Policy", "Cities as Laboratories of Innovative Governance in Europe and the USA" and most recently "Welfare Innovations at the Local Level in Favour of Cohesion (WILCO)", funded by the European Commission. Furthermore, Annette Zimmer served as a director of the research groups on "European Civil Society and Multilevel Governance" (2005–2010) and on "Negotiating Processes of the Civil Society from the nineteenth Century to the Present—Germany and the Netherlands Compared" (2006–2011), Nineteenth based at University of Münster.

Along with the textbook on associations, Annette Zimmer has so far published 11 monographs and more than 150 articles in journals and edited volumes and has edited some 25 anthologies, among them "Strategy Mix for Nonprofit Organisations" (2004, with Christina Stecker), "Future of Civil Society" (2004, with Eckhard Priller), and "Third Sector Organizations Facing Turbulent Environments" (2010, with Adalbert Evers).

A central theme of Annette Zimmer's work has always been the practical application of her findings. In 2004, together with Gisela Clausen and Michael Vilain, she founded the Center for Nonprofit Management in Münster, a consultancy that focuses on third sector organizations and that developed the first university-level course on Nonprofit Management and Governance in Germany. Through the Center and in other ways, she has contributed significantly to the professionalization of nonprofit management, especially in Germany where the sector had been characterized by a rather amateurish governance of trial and error. Above all, Annette Zimmer is also a highly committed educator. By the time this volume went to press, she had supervised 19 doctoral dissertations, among them those of the editors of this *Festschrift*.

Over the years, Annette Zimmer's professional connections have spread throughout Germany and abroad, and many of her colleagues are also bound to her in friendship. Thus, it was easy to gather an illustrious circle of contributors for this anthology. All of the chapters focus on the challenges for associations and associating in the twenty-first century and have been influenced in some way by the work of Annette Zimmer. Special thanks go to all of the contributors for their assiduous work and, for the most part, punctuality. Without them, this *Festschrift* would not have been possible. It is only their kindheartedness that has made working on a volume like this for so long so rewarding.

Furthermore, the editors of the volume would like to thank Jonas Geisel, Tarek Abdel Rahman, Teresa Krauss, and Regina List. Backed by her research expertise originating in the Johns Hopkins Project and further extended in many joint projects

together with Annette Zimmer, Regina List was much more than a language polisher for this book. Jonas Geisel did a wonderful job pulling the manuscript together. Tarek Abdel Rahman helped us smooth out the English language in several chapters. Finally, we thank Teresa Krauss from Springer Publishers who supported this book from the very beginning.

Last but not least we hope, of course, that Annette Zimmer will enjoy reading every single page of this book.

Münster, Germany, January 2014

Matthias Freise
Thorsten Hallmann

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Chapter 1

Modernizing Democracy? Associations and Associating in the Twenty-First Century

Matthias Freise and Thorsten Hallmann

Abstract According to many approaches of modern democratic theory, a vibrant associational life plays a key role, and associations are often discussed as guarantors of the democratic commonwealth since they fulfill three important functions for the political system: They contribute to the social integration of the citizens; they act as transmission belts between the individual and the political decision makers through their lobbying function; and finally, in many countries, they play an important role in the provision of services, in particular in the social sector. However, the concrete importance of these functions is disputed, and there are many challenges facing associations and the act of associating in the twenty-first century. This chapter gives an overview and introduces the concept of the anthology.

Keywords Voluntary associations • Civic engagement • Modernization • Democratic theory

Introduction

Stamp collectors, rabbit breeders, chess players, bird conservationists, and the fire fighters' music corps: Are they really the "bedrocks of democracy" as Annette Zimmer has called them in her influential textbook on associations (Zimmer 2007)? Without doubt, studying voluntary associations in social, especially political, sciences is often regarded as a bit exotic since the object of research is commonly associated with the image of political and inward-oriented leisure-time activities. Their contribution to the development of a vital democracy based on the principles of participation, deliberation, and tolerance was hardly recognized for a long time. If associations were considered at all, parties, trade unions, and other interest groups were the center of attention. This has changed in the past two decades, and certainly this is due in part to the work of Annette Zimmer, who has significantly shaped the conceptual discourse and promoted empirical research on associations and associating in modern societies.

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Today, it is noncontroversial to say that the diversity of associations is the institutionalized core of civil societies and can function as the guarantor of the democratic commonwealth. In the sense of Alexis de Tocqueville, associations are schools of democracy since they cultivate democratic citizenship, in particular on the local level where citizens have to interact with each other (Tocqueville 1985 (1835/1840); Edwards and Foley 2001). By associating, citizens can deepen their political skills like negotiating, deliberating, and bargaining, but they also socialize and generate interpersonal trust, which has been conceptualized by Robert Putnam as one of the most important ingredients of social capital (Putnam 2000). Other theorists highlight the bulwark function of associations against an omnipotent state that tries to intervene in the private sphere of its citizens (e.g., Fung 2003, p. 522). Furthermore, associations are seen as transmission belts between the individual and the political system through the articulation and aggregation of interests (e.g., Cohen and Rogers 1995). Last but not the least, associations are important partners of the state in many countries and enable different forms of democratic cogovernance and coproduction, in particular in the field of welfare provision. Many studies conclude that social innovations are often driven by associations that are much closer to the citizens than public programs ever could be (e.g., Salamon 1998; Pestoff et al. 2012). Thereby, many associations contribute to the legitimacy of the political system.

However, without doubt, not every association contributes to democracy, and as Paul Dekker rightly states in this anthology: “Tocqueville did not write about soccer clubs.” Right-wing student fraternities asking their members to prove their Aryan ancestry in Germany, radical religious clubs putting the rules of the Christian Bible before the constitution, and the American Ku Klux Klan are textbook examples of associations having destructive effects on democracy, and there are impressive historical studies showing how associations have undermined democratic institutions (for an overview, see Reichardt 2004). Hence, “even a complex associational ecology is not necessarily a democratic one” (Warren 2000, p. 220). Furthermore, many associations today are decidedly nonpolitical, and measuring their societal effects, for example, in terms of the social capital theory, seems to be a formidable methodological challenge.

Nevertheless, it is agreed that multiple associational types hold multiple democratic potentials. These potentials are explored in this anthology from a multidisciplinary perspective by focusing on the multifunctionality of associations as they have been described by Annette Zimmer (2007). The overarching question of the book is whether and to what extent associations can still function as the backbone of democracy in times of ongoing individualization, marketization, and crumbling social milieus or whether they are just overestimated bedside rugs of post-democracy.

The anthology addresses this question in three major parts. The first reflects the state of the art and identifies some current theoretical and methodological challenges of research on associations and civic engagement in Western societies, particularly in Europe but also in the USA. The second part dedicates coverage to empirical and theoretical contributions dealing with the phenomenon of associating as a specific form of democratic action. Simply said: Why do people associate today, how do they do it, and how is associating developing in different countries of the

world? Finally, the chapters of the third part analyze the changing embeddedness of associations in modern welfare societies and ask how they react to current challenges of a political *zeitgeist* that is shaped by professionalization, constraints of austerity, and more competitive market conditions.

A common thread running through these three parts is the conceptualization of associations as premodern phenomena in the sense of not being fully functionally differentiated. This means that associations fulfill different functions in a highly differentiated society. In the following sections, we introduce this concept and a brief overview of the association's historical development. Furthermore, we present the most important results of Annette Zimmer's research that has focused on all facets of associations as political and societal actors.

What are Associations and Why Shall We Study Them?

Associations are groups of individuals who voluntarily enter into an agreement to accomplish a specific purpose. In modern societies, the number of purposes is enormous and ranges from leisure activities to business and social interests to religious and ethnic concerns. Hence, a reasonable categorization of associations is essential for further analysis.

One possible distinction has been developed by Mark Warren (2000), who focuses on the thickness or thinness of associative relations. According to him, families and friendships constitute a web of primary associations, while less immediate but nonetheless close social attachments, in particular in the living environment, count as secondary associations. Finally, tertiary associations are shaped by the relative anonymity of their members who have little in common beyond the specific purpose they are pursuing (Warren 2000, p. 39). Lobbying groups, federations, and umbrella organizations are textbook examples of those tertiary associations. Sports clubs, citizen's action committees, self-help groups, and many more associations that are active particularly on the local level and build on face-to-face communication may stand for the category of secondary associations.

In this anthology, we will focus on secondary and tertiary associations and leave aside families and friendship networks, although they are, of course, of significant relevance for the functioning of the society. From the perspective of democratic theory, however, associations are particularly important for democracy since they provide the opportunity to meet away from the parochial sphere of the family or clan, which people usually cannot choose themselves. Empirical studies show, for instance, that countries with a weak culture of associating and dense family networks tend to show lower rates of interpersonal trust, which is a precondition of democracy (Sullivan and Transue 1999). Obviously, many associations are indicators for the development of a society of *citoyens* who are overcoming the narrow-mindedness of clan thinking, and actively and autonomously shaping the society in the tradition of the Enlightenment. In this context, many theorists emphasize the importance of a public sphere as a precondition for

deliberation and focus on associations that give their members the possibility of free speech (e.g., Habermas 1996).

For German native speakers, the term association is usually connected to a specific legal form (“Verein”). Most democratic countries of the world have created this corporate body for citizens who want to accomplish specific purposes. The voluntary association is the most frequently used and thus perhaps the most important legal form for organizing interests. They are usually based on the right of citizens to come together freely without interference from the state and thus to organize their affairs independently. The membership assembly is the most important governing body of the association and can be seen as the equivalent of a parliament in politics since the assembly elects and thus gives authority to the members of the board of the particular association (Freise and Pajas 2004, p. 134).

In this volume, however, we have chosen a broader perspective on associations. Instead of focusing on the legal form, we extend attention to all entities that result from the voluntary associating of citizens, be it in an organized, semiorganized, or non-organized way. In other words, associations do not necessarily need a legal form. Many social, ethnic, or gender-related movements, for instance, are examples of the group action of associating for a specific political or social issue, which often starts without legally organized structures, even if many new social movements have been followed by legally organized associations like parties and other nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) (Della Porta and Diani 1999). In this sense, a spontaneous demonstration is also a form of associating. However, most of the chapters in this anthology focus on forms with a minimum of organizational structure.

A Brief Historical Retrospect

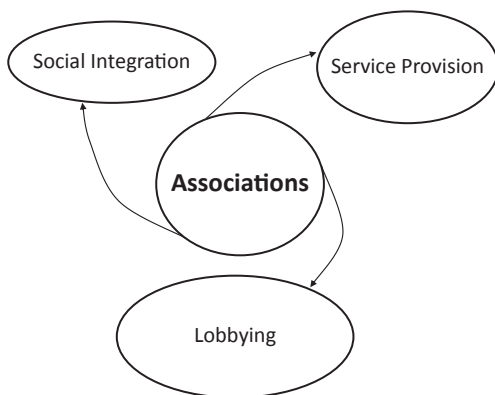
Associating has doubtlessly a long tradition. Already the reforms of the Athenian statesman and poet Solon (638–558 BC) emphasized the benefits of the so-called *Eranos* clubs, which were the early forms of burial funds (Pfeffer 1967, p. 51). Needy people associated to ensure sufficient resources for their own funerals, which played an important religious role in ancient Greece. The club members took care of arrangements for the funerals of their companions who died earlier. Translated into the terms of modern social sciences, these early clubs were good examples for trust-driven associations. In this case, people voluntarily associate when it comes to a specific form of market failure. According to Hansmann, these associations “arise in situations in which, owing either to the circumstances under which the service is purchased or consumed or to the nature of the service itself, consumers feel unable to evaluate accurately the quantity and quality of the service a firm produces for them” (Hansmann 1987, p. 29). One’s own funeral is obviously such a situation since nobody can evaluate the quality of the mortician who is following the principle of profit maximization. Instead, the advantage of the association is the signal of trustworthiness that arises from the fact that all members pursue the same ideal goal and that there are no profits distributed to the owners (Anheier 2005, p. 125).

However, not every association of the ancient world was driven by those trust relations. Kloppenborg and Wilson (1996) show that Greeks and Romans knew a wide variety of associations that were shaped by the voluntary contractual nature of membership and whose activities were social, economic, or political. The city of Rome had hundreds of conviviality societies, the chariot races at the Circus Maximus were supported by well-organized fan clubs, and the cults of the gods were organized in complex structures (see chapters in Kloppenborg and Wilson 1996). These associations are textbook examples of the social integration that is achieved by associations. People are drawn together in many associations primarily because of the experience of a collective feeling, and many studies prove that having fun is, today, one of the most important driving powers of associating (Zimmer et al. 2011, p. 349; BMFSFJ 2010, p. 26).

Another driving force is the intent to associate for political or economic purposes. The medieval guilds of craftsmen, mercantile communities, and the religious orders are classic examples of associations serving as representatives for their members by aggregating and articulating interests. Nevertheless, from the perspective of modern democratic theory, associating becomes interesting only later in history, particularly in the second half of the nineteenth century. In this period, associations in the contemporary sense appeared in North America and Europe for the first time and were an aftereffect of enlightened political thinking which redefined the relationship between the state and the individual and paved the way for two bedrocks of today's liberal democracy. Firstly, the state accepts the right to privacy from state interference, among them the rights of free associating, the freedom of opinion, religious liberty, and the freedom of the press. Secondly, the long-established estate system of society is replaced by the idea of the citizen who is active for the public weal and who is doing this outside of the ties of kinship (Zimmer 2007, p. 45). In combination with a far-reaching societal change that was underpinned by the impacts of urbanization and industrialization in many Western countries of the late nineteenth century, a middle class emerged and established the basis of a flourishing associational life.

Hence, also the legal form of the voluntary association is a creation of the historic period of the Enlightenment. It came into being when the traditional feudal state in Europe began to modernize, thus allowing its citizens from every strata of the society to come together, in what at that time were called salons, reading societies, or just associations. Referring to the USA in the nineteenth century, Alexis de Tocqueville illustrated the importance of voluntary associations for the well-being of the citizens and the functioning of democracy. His seminal book "De la Démocratie en Amérique" still today provides insights as to why voluntary associations are the bedrock of democratic societies worldwide (see the chapter by Gabriele Wilde in this volume). Up until the present, associations are a typical middle-class phenomenon, and it is also a strong middle class that is an important precondition of democratic stability. Studies on involvement in civic associations worldwide prove that particularly members of the middle class with a rather high level of education constitute the civil society in its organized form (Barro 1999).

Fig. 1.1 The multifunctionality of associations in modern societies. (Zimmer 2007, p. 87)



However, democratic theorists are not the only ones interested in the development of the associational sector. Associations became a fascinating object of research also for organizational and governance theorists due to the fact that associations are, in contrast to the logic of modernity, not fully functionally differentiated. As part of the so-called third sector between the market, state, and private sphere, associations fulfill today at least three major functions for the social system (Fig. 1.1). In addition to the already introduced functions of social integration and interest representation, associations play an important role as service providers in many countries. This particularly holds true for the social sector and also in the fields of science, education, arts, and sports. Frequently, the state and the associational sector build partnerships for public service provision and both profit from the cooperation: The state, which is shaped by bureaucracy, a relative inability to accommodate individual client needs, and standardized public programs, provides funding for the activities of associations which are close to their members, innovative and flexible (Salamon 1995). However, as several of the chapters in the third part of this anthology show, this has led sometimes to a more or less noncritical associative landscape that is not biting the hand that feeds it. Other authors like Wolfgang Seibel have identified associations as “functional dilettantes” that are compliant assistants of the state. The state funds associations to undertake activities, although the societal problems are not solved, so that in the end things stay as they are, but the state has gained legitimacy through the cooperation (Seibel 1996).

Of course, this is not the case for all associations, and the associational sector has also functionally differentiated in recent decades. There are sport clubs that look (and operate) more like professional gyms, and many nursing services originally founded as associations are hardly distinguishable from a profit-oriented social enterprise. Nevertheless, multifunctionality is still shaping the associational landscape in many countries of the world, and it has been investigated by Annette Zimmer in numerous research projects. In the following sections, we introduce some of her most important findings.

What Do We Know About Associations?

Today, we can draw on the results of broad, systematic, and comparable empirical research on the number of voluntary associations and their economic and societal importance as well as rates of associational membership and civic engagement in most parts of the world, at least in industrial and democratic societies. Twenty-five years ago, this knowledge was almost nil. A significant stimulus for the development of the discipline nowadays known as third sector, nonprofit, or civil society research was the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project, which started in 1991 with an effort to define the nonprofit sector according to the key attributes of its organizations. According to this broadly accepted definition, nonprofit organizations are

- formally constituted,
- nongovernmental in basic structure,
- self-governing,
- nonprofit distributing, and
- voluntary to some meaningful extent (Salamon and Anheier 1992, p. 1)

Obviously, this operational definition encompasses not only associations in a very narrow sense of organized citizens, but also, for example, nonprofit enterprises. However, it does not include informal forms of associating. Nevertheless, as results show, associations in the sense of “Vereine” or their equivalents in other countries constitute the core of the nonprofit sectors of many countries, at least in absolute numbers. Built on this definition, the nonprofit sector was “measured” in a growing number of countries by collecting macro data on, for example, the number of organizations, their fields of activity, and their economic importance in terms of their contribution to gross domestic product (GDP) and employment. In the case of Germany, for instance, the nonprofit sector contributed around 4% to GDP in the mid-1990s and provided about 5% of all jobs, some 70% of them in the social services and health sector (Zimmer and Priller 2004, p. 55). Similar figures could be found in many “Western” industrialized countries (Salamon and Anheier 1998). Through her participation in the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project, Annette Zimmer, along with Eckhard Priller, Helmut K. Anheier, and Wolfgang Seibel, was a pioneer of measuring the multiple functions of the third sector in Germany, showing not only its rising economic importance, but also its enormous diversity in terms of legal structure, traditions, collective identities, and fields of activity (Zimmer and Priller 2004). In the past few years, subsequent studies have been conducted, and long-term monitoring of nonprofit organizations is about to be established (Krimmer and Priemer 2013; Priller et al. 2012). These studies show a significant further growth of the nonprofit sector in Germany.

Another follow-up study initiated by Annette Zimmer focused on “Vereine”—as the most common form of nonprofit organizations so far—in Münster. In contrast to the national overviews and organizational surveys conducted within the Johns Hopkins Project, this study was able to assemble a complete inventory of registered associations (“eingetragene Vereine”) in the city and, after some efforts to eliminate

inactive ones, to nail down its overall number to approximately 1,800, in a city of 280,000 inhabitants. A survey, in which 795 of these 1,800 associations took part, resulted in a dynamic profile of associational life in Münster: While a majority of associations are sports, leisure, cultural, and similar community-oriented clubs like those mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, not all are purely inward-oriented and focused only on their members. Associations that identify themselves primarily as interest groups or service providers are the minority; indeed, a great share described their purpose as more or less multifunctional (Zimmer and Hallmann 2005). However, even those that do not primarily lobby or provide paid services to their members or the general public should not be considered as economically and politically irrelevant: Apart from the question of whether they promote democratic and civic virtues or not, they are important as networks of reciprocity in which the status of membership entitles the individual to some common good. Accordingly, the choice to associate in one organization or the other may be influenced by many factors: Cultural identity or rootedness in a specific milieu, class or affinity group, the ethical concern for an objective, to act out one's skills, or to profit from common bargaining or struggle or from common goods like sports events. The same diversity of factors applies to the question of whether and how actively engaged in the association one becomes. In an association based on reciprocity, this may also depend, however, on the expectation of some kind of return—in nonmonetary terms—for this engagement.

Since the late 1990s, the phenomena of membership in associations and active engagement have increasingly become objects of systematic monitoring. Just a few figures highlight the situation in Germany: There are some 27 million individual memberships in sports clubs, but only 2 million in political parties. About 36% of those polled in a representative survey stated that they engage voluntarily, with about half of this engagement taking place in a "Verein" (other relevant places of engagement include, for example, churches, parties, unions, and informal initiatives). These numbers were quite stable between 1999 and 2009. According to surveys, there are two main, equally important reasons to engage: to influence society at the grassroots level and to join with other people. Having fun and meeting nice people are key expectations that influence the quality of engagement; almost equally influential is helping other people and contributing to the common weal. However, longitudinal studies show that membership in traditional large-scale and milieu-specific organizations like churches, unions, and political parties is significantly on the decline, while for example sports clubs still do not suffer from this phenomenon (Alscher et al. 2009; BMFSFJ 2010). In addition, many associations in Germany also complain that it is becoming more difficult to recruit voluntary staff, especially for administrative positions. Considering the fact that in many associations bureaucratic requirements are rising—whether as a result of increasing efforts required to raise external funding and to certify its proper use, or of successful expansion of its activities—this seems to be an ongoing challenge for associations.

As pointed out earlier in the text, a major and economically prominent field of nonprofit activity in many European, especially "corporatist" or "conservative,"

welfare states is providing health care and other social services. The major nonprofit organizations in these fields are highly professionalized. However, in contrast, a large number of small associations operate based on a high degree of voluntary engagement. The emergence of new social needs and problems, paired with a limited capacity of the state or established organizations to tackle them adequately, often led to initiatives of the local population that either work on their own account, for example as a self-help group, or establish new actors in the local welfare system, for example in the form of public–private partnerships.

To study this context, Annette Zimmer became involved in the European Union (EU)-funded project “Welfare Innovations at the Local Level in Favour of Cohesion,” which ran from 2010 to 2013. Examining 20 cities in 10 European countries, this project explored the governance of local welfare systems and the innovative and problem-solving capacities of local associations and civil society. The project results point out that associations are important innovators in the local welfare system and do indeed contribute to social cohesion in the cities. However, in terms of social integration, even highly successful projects often suffer from financial insecurity, and only limited public resources are available to promote innovative concepts to tackle problems of social fragmentation, demographic change, and the negative side effects of market-oriented urban development. Cities therefore should be more open to civic initiative and be aware of voluntary associations as a resource of the welfare state. Furthermore, if there is no space for effective participation and innovative or alternative actors, a broad public consensus in local policy becomes even more endangered than it already is if cities are not able to tackle current social problems.

Considering these manifold perspectives on the importance of associations as driving forces in modern societies, which, in Annette Zimmer’s terms, produce “the cement of society” (Zimmer and Priller 2004, p. 26), a major concern in recent research has been how this can be maintained into the future: How will people associate and how can they be motivated to associate in times when long-lasting bonds in ideological or cultural milieus are on the decline, when labor markets increasingly claim spatial and temporal flexibility, when engagement perspectives become more short term and almost everything is marketable? And even more: In times when the relatively high degree of social security is threatened, in times of “post-democracy” and economic crises, when state and market failure is diagnosed regarding many services of general interest, how can the third sector present innovative solutions and realistic alternatives?

In this festschrift in honor of Annette Zimmer, these and many other questions are discussed. The volume is divided into three major parts. In the first part, the basic approaches to the nexus between the associative sphere and democracy, in particular the concepts of civil society and social capital, are explored. The contributions in the second part address the phenomenon of associating and its societal role, while the third part focuses on associations, their institutional contexts, and the diverse challenges they face.

Studying Associations and Associating in the Twenty-First Century

In recent years, a number of new approaches to and perspectives on associations and associating have enriched social science research not only in terms of questions addressed, but also regarding the methodology applied. The first part of the book presents, therefore, both the current state of the art and some challenges in research on associations and associating. The chapter by Rupert Graf Strachwitz highlights voluntary associations as a fundamental way of organizing society in general by referring to their historical roots in the ancient world, the European Middle Age, and the early modern age. Furthermore, he explores potential roles associations can play and discusses the close interaction between community building and political thrust as a specific feature of associational life. Gabriele Wilde picks up one of these features by reconstructing the meaning of democracy as understood by Alexis de Tocqueville, who is counted among the founding fathers of associational research. The chapter contributes to a better understanding of Tocqueville's approach, which places civil society and political freedom of action at the center of a democratic model.

The next four chapters of this part deal with more or less the same question: How, to what extent, and under which conditions do voluntary associations contribute to both democracy and social cohesion? Their focus seems to reflect the fact that the overwhelmingly positive conception of associations as a promoter of democratic virtues and practices within the civil society discourse and the social capital theory in the 1990s does not fully match reality.

In his chapter, Paul Dekker doubts that all kinds of associations function as schools of democracy. Instead, his chapter argues for developing a more sophisticated model for understanding nonpolitical and political voluntary activities by introducing empirical results that shed a different light on correlations and causalities in associational research. Sebastian Braun connects various social capital theories with the German discourse on "Vereine" and comes to a somewhat more optimistic conclusion than Paul Dekker regarding the capacity of even nonpolitical and identity-based associations to further civil virtues, in particular the ability to resolve conflicts in culturally heterogeneous societies.

For their part, Marta Reuter, Filip Wijkström, and Michael Meyer consider the shimmering concept of civil society and ask how associations might influence society and the political sphere. Instead of simplifying this term as a quasi-synonym of nonprofit sector as is so often done today, they try to assess the potential of associations by taking into account the early roots of the term in the Gramscian theory of hegemony and culture. In doing so, they criticize the common normative embracement of associations as a "potential beacon of (democratic) hope" and outline an in-depth understanding of the relationship between civil society and norms, values, and ideas. Christiane Frantz and Doris Fuchs are also skeptical about the generally positive connotation of the civil society concept and discuss it in the context of sustainable development. They propose that civil society should be assessed more analytically and critically, especially in terms of the interests they represent in rela-

tion to a specific policy issue, and then advise caution “against too easily attributing certain normative values to the so-called civil society actors and participation.”

Associating in Times of Flux

The second part of the anthology consists of empirical and theoretical contributions dealing with the phenomenon of associating as a specific form of democratic behavior, interest aggregation, and welfare production. One major topic that many authors pick up in this section is the recent development of volunteering as a necessary resource of associational activity. Changing societal environments as well as the state and its framing role are considered to be crucial factors influencing associational life, as evidenced in various European countries and the EU as a whole.

Lesley Hustinx introduces this field of research by presenting the results of a broad literature review. She shows that “the organizational context of volunteering has changed significantly in recent decades through the proliferation of new and hybrid settings of participation that mingle roles and rationalities of civil society, state and market.” As a consequence, she argues for more systematic research on volunteering under changing circumstances and gives hints regarding possible methodologies. Analyzing volunteering in the specific setting of the German non-profit sector, Holger Backhaus-Maul and Carsta Langner portray the peculiarity of “Freie Wohlfahrtspflege,” which describes the production of welfare in a corporatist arrangement between the state, which funds the services, and six milieu-based welfare umbrella organizations as service providers. The authors point out recent developments that have required these organizations to continually adjust the balance between the need for professional services and the still-relevant role of voluntary engagement within the associations. Adalbert Evers adds to this perspective by analyzing another external factor supposedly influencing the dispositions of individuals toward associating and volunteering: the changing realities of the labor market and personal services. He concludes with a number of practical suggestions for policy makers who are aiming to strengthen volunteering.

The chapters by Pavol Frič and Renata Siemieńska take us to two Eastern European countries and analyze empirical findings on attitudes toward volunteering and political participation. Pavol Frič provides an in-depth look at the public opinion and policy on volunteering in the Czech Republic. While the public administration has discovered volunteering as a latent resource offering compensation for governance and democratic deficits, survey respondents value the emancipatory value of volunteering more. In his conclusion, Frič points out that volunteering, in general, does contribute to social cohesion, but politicians do not adequately respond to this. A public policy on volunteering based on a simple “residual philosophy” could result in a split between voluntary activities supported by the state and those that are ignored. Renata Siemieńska highlights various aspects of participation, such as voting and individual or organization-based volunteering and protests, over the past two decades in Poland, and compares them to other European countries. She assumes

that the experiences of the 1980s might help explain why Polish people believe they are more likely to achieve their goals through individual activities or participation in protests rather than organizing in traditional NGOs. Though civic participation is still below the European average, there are hopeful signs of a vibrant civil society.

The chapters of Simone Baglioni and Sandro Cattacin focus on self-organization of demographic groups that are commonly considered as being among the underprivileged in today's European societies, the unemployed and migrants. Looking cross-nationally, they address the question of social inclusion from different perspectives. Simone Baglioni compares organizations working with or for the unemployed in seven European cities. Taking into consideration the potential benefits of associating for the societal situation of unemployed individuals, the results are quite disillusioning: Baglioni comes to the conclusion that in many cities a majority of these organizations function as service providers to the unemployed "clients" rather than as mechanisms promoting the self-help and self-organization of the jobless. Sandro Cattacin examines the changing sphere of migrants' organizations over time and develops a typology of "mobile people's" organizations. As patterns of migration have changed, the goals and strategies of migrant organizations have also diversified, and perhaps their societal role: Are they following a path of ethnic self-exclusion, are they struggling for recognition in conflict with the state, or do they seek integration and dialogue? Indeed, are societies thus facing radicalization of differences or is there a sound basis for furthering inclusion?

The second part of the volume is completed by chapters focusing on the development of associating in the EU. Taco Brandsen and Birgit Sittermann-Brandsen analyze the emergence of civil society networks in Brussels and show that associations on the European level remain institutionally weak and have difficulties linking back to the national level and below, although great advances have been made in recent years. One reason for the weakness of European associations might be the fact that up until today the member states of the EU have not agreed on a common legal form for associations. The question why there is no such status is addressed by Kristina Charrad who highlights the impressive variety of different legal forms of associations in the 28 member states of the EU.

Associations and the Challenge of Capitalist Development

Associations not only are ingredients of democracy's magic potion, but they also function in many places as important service providers in the welfare mix. In particular, personal services like child care facilities, homes for the elderly, and hospitals are operated by associations in specific legal forms. In many countries, the voluntary association (defined as an organization based on the principle of voluntary membership) is the most frequently used and thus perhaps the most important legal form for organizing nonprofit activities. In the third part of the anthology, the authors focus on a number of crucial points of the current debates on internal as well as external settings shaping the space of action of associations in times of ongoing capitalist development.

Ruth Simsa and Michael Meyer pave the way for this section by presenting the results of a quasi-Delphi-research with experts from the nonprofit sector who have been asked about their expectations regarding future challenges for their organizations and the nonprofit sector in general. The study shows five major trends: increasing managerialism as a way to gain legitimacy; changes in the relationship with the public sector due to financial crises, and neoliberal ideology; blurring boundaries between the sectors; new demands on associations; and new forms of civic engagement. The chapters that follow this contribution focus on these trends and discuss how associations try to overcome some of the challenges arising from changing conditions.

The problem of increasing managerialism is discussed in the chapter by Michael Vilain, who focuses on a field that is traditionally a stronghold of voluntary activity: youth associations in Germany. Vilain shows that many of those old, established organizations have developed their own specific management style that depends on their goals and guiding logics and that contradicts typical management tools and concepts that are currently promoted in volunteer management textbooks. The balancing act between different kinds of stakeholders in Austrian associations active in the field of international development aid is analyzed by Anja Appel and Dorothea Greiling in a qualitative case study. They illustrate the potentially conflicting interests of members and project partners that challenge the boards of these organizations. The chapter concludes that professional project management predominates often over a truly democratic membership orientation.

Quite a number of authors deal with the changing relationship between associations and the state in turbulent environments. A comparative perspective is taken by Patrick Boadu, Aman Jain, Friedrich Paulsen, and Steven Smith, who analyze the framework conditions of associations active in the field of social housing in Germany and the USA. They show that a number of path dependencies shape the cooperation between associations and the state and create different challenges for the further development of sustainable housing policies in both countries.

Jeremy Kendall examines the policy toward the nonprofit sector in England over the past sesquidecade by applying a multifaceted understanding of modernization. In doing so, he both analyzes specific programs of the English government and adapts Helen Margett's conceptual framework of the "pillars of modernization" to a perspective that reflects society as being structured not just by the logic of state and market, but also by a logic of the nonprofit sector.

While most of the chapters in the volume focus on "Western" associations, Ingo Bode focuses on an authoritarian country by analyzing the development of the Chinese third sector in the field of welfare production. He shows that many organizations in this field lack an associational underpinning like that commonly found in democracies. Instead, nonprofit organizations are invented by the government as an effective opportunity to produce welfare services following a neoliberal approach. What lessons can be learned from this example, and how will this sector develop in times of growing demands of the population and an unchanged political will to maintain authoritarian control?

The blurring boundaries between the different societal sectors are examined in the following two chapters. First, Helmut K. Anheier and Edith Archambault take

a wider perspective and focus on phenomena that are addressed under the umbrella term of social investment. Exploring this field in Germany and France, they present a number of examples of social investments, identify differences between the countries under study, and illustrate the emergence of new structures of welfare production that operate alongside the traditional welfare associations but are also very different from pure market-oriented firms. In contrast, Heike Walk and Carolin Schröder focus on a very specific type of associations: the cooperative sector in Germany and its revitalization in recent years. New fields of cooperative activities also mark a “back to the roots” trend. After a long period of centralization and concentration on cooperative banking, housing, and agricultural cooperatives, this legal form is now increasingly used for purposes that are not of purely economic but also of political and associational character, for example, renewable energy cooperatives. A trend of differentiation is also investigated by Stefan Toepler, who examines the nonprofit arts and culture field in the USA. While there is a highly professionalized infrastructure of cultural institutions, there are significant numbers of small, informal groupings and organizations at the grassroots level that are shaped by a participative associational culture and that represent the creative spirit of Americans.

The chapters by Marita Haibach and Eckhard Priller and by Stefan Nährlich focus on specific forms of civic engagement and highlight the increasing dependence of associational activities on private funds as a crucial challenge for associational activities. Haibach and Priller ask why the amount of charitable giving is stagnating in Germany recently, although the number of very rich persons has increased. They argue for an improvement of the fundraising activities of associations and recommend that associations ensure commensurate recognition of the special social value attached to giving by major donors. The improvement of the engagement concept is also the focus of Stefan Nährlich, who discusses the impact of community foundations, which are a relatively young but growing form of civic engagement in Germany. He argues that supporting this type of association may strengthen local civil societies.

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Part I
Studying Associations and Associating
in the 21st Century: Theoretical and
Methodological Considerations

Chapter 2

Social Life and Politics in Voluntary Organizations: An Historical Perspective

Rupert Graf Strachwitz

Abstract Civil society in general and voluntary organizations as its core organizational form are not a modern achievement. On the contrary, to voluntarily associate with others may be described as one fundamental way of organizing society in general, first theoretically reflected upon by Plato and Aristotle. Building on this framework, the first part of this chapter, discusses three arguments: (1) the basic definition of an association as opposed to a foundation, (2) potential role models for associations, and (3) the close interaction between community building and political thrust as specific features of associational life. In the second part, this interaction is shown as an uninterrupted history since the Middle Ages, with examples taken predominantly from Germany.

Keywords Voluntary organizations · Definition of association · Civil society · Role model for associations · Germany

To freely associate with other human beings is not peculiar to a modern, free, or open society, let alone to modern democracy. There is historical evidence both for associative life to have existed in history and in decidedly undemocratic and repressive societies and to have been suppressed as not being compatible with democracy. “Societies, clubs, membership organizations, [...] associations” (Zimmer 1996, p. 38) may well be described as the basis of human communal life. Ever since the “Axial Age,” first defined as such by Karl Jaspers (1953), when social contacts shifted from the immediate family circle to include outsiders, people have congregated either by the will of one leader or by voluntary action, and in many cases by a mixture of both. The Axial Age, as Karen Armstrong (2006) elaborated, was a global phenomenon. Everywhere, we may trace both in theory and practice a custom of people to congregate and eventually to organize the congregation in a sustainable fashion. This evolution may carry the seed of the eventual demise of an organization. As organizing, managing, and ruling overtake the purpose on the scale of priorities, the impetus to join may eventually wane.

But this is not the topic of this chapter. Rather, it will show that associative organizations are an organizational model to be found in any form of collective action,

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and may and will originate in very diverse sociopolitical conditions. Hegel's widely followed belief that associations are typical of civil society¹ (Keane 2007, p. 10) which in turn is typical of modern, i.e., post-nineteenth century society, is therefore to be refuted. Furthermore, the chapter will focus on different role models and most particularly will attempt to show with the help of some historical examples the as yet not much developed notion that a combination of community building and political deliberation provides a framework for societal development not to be underrated.

A Theory of Associations

It was Plato who attempted to reduce the final reasoning of existence to the ideas of "one" and "the indeterminate dyad"² (Flashar 2013, p. 23, 215, 236), marking the fundamental difference between the basic contrast. Although heavily criticized by Aristotle (and controversially debated as to its true meaning ever since), categorizing diverse models of organizations originated here. However, while Plato attempted to pronounce the unchanged "One" as the supreme goal of order, Aristotle (Metaphysics XIII, VI 11 3–4, 211, 1990) refused to rank the two principles. Karl Popper (1962, pp. 18–34) became one of the severest critics of Plato. Not least in evaluating the experiences of the twentieth century, he also maintained that a pluralist, change-orientated design of society is superior to one that sees change as a mark of degeneration and uniformity as an ideal to be pursued (Dürr 2004, pp. 29–37).

Aristotle, categorizing systems by whether their government was in the hands of one, a few, or many, built on his experiences in the Greek polis of his age, and was concerned with public governance. But his system of governance models can well be applied to any form of collective action. Hierarchy and heterarchy (Dreher 2013) exist under any circumstances as the two discernable models. The monarchies of old belong to the first, as the Greek poleis do to the second. Clearly, a monarchy may be aligned to the principle of "one," and the polis to the "indeterminate dyad." It is, however, equally clear that hierarchical and heterarchical types of governance may also be seen outside governmental models. In business, while privately owned and managed businesses follow the hierarchical model, joint-stock corporations are much nearer to a heterarchical form. In civil society,³ the basically heterarchical

¹ Hegel's term *Bürgerliche Gesellschaft* is traditionally translated as civil society, while civil society is usually translated to *Zivilgesellschaft*, a much more comprehensive term with a very different meaning. Here, it is used in Hegel's sense to denominate *Bürgerliche Gesellschaft*.

² "One" is the Greek *εν*. "Indeterminate Dyad" is the standard translation used for the Greek *αοριστος δυαζ*, dyad to mean "two."

³ The term is now used in its modern definition.

form of a membership organization contrasts sharply with the hierarchical form of a foundation. It would be an exaggeration to say, as some do (Hartmann and Offe 2011, p. 344), that membership organizations are the only form a civil society organization may legitimately have. I would contend that in looking at the state, the market, and the civil society as the three arenas of collective action outside the immediate family, both archetypes of organization exist in all of them.

Looking at these more closely, in practice they do not usually exist as archetypes. Indeed, Plato himself (Politikos 300E–303D) developed a system of six possible types of governance, contrasting three good ones (monarchy, aristocracy, democracy) with three bad ones (tyranny, oligarchy, unlawful democracy). Aristotle modified this system in respect to the democratic type, which he calls a polity, if good, and democracy, if bad, in this way attempting to make a divide between representing the common good and fighting for one's own interests. Oligarchical, tyrannical, and (in the Aristotelian sense) democratic elements may undermine a polity as much as a monarchy.

Again, while focusing on forms of governing a state, all these considerations are equally valid when applied to any other form of collective action. The associative form of organization in its narrower sense, as used to define a specific type of voluntary civil society organizations, therefore shares the typology and caveats applicable to forms developed in and for other arenas. Indeed, while describing the majority of organizations seen as part of civil society, associations are neither the only ones, nor can they theoretically be seen as inherently more legitimate than other forms, notably the foundation, the classical example of a hierarchical organization. Furthermore, hybrid forms exist in countless variations; in the history of individual associations, gradual evolutions towards an oligarchy may be witnessed as much as “polities” may develop into “democracies.”

It therefore needs to be understood that an overly normative approach will fail in describing the reality of associative life as much as in analyzing the full historical spread of this governance model. On the contrary, heterarchical and hierarchical models exist in many forms and nuances, under any given condition, and to a variety of ends, be they commercial, governmental, or other. It would be equally unjust to separate various types of organization by their potential longevity and sustainability, let alone by their wealth. In many Italian towns, membership organizations created in the thirteenth century to administer services to the poor, the sick, and the needy exist to this day (Grote 1972, p. 175), while the majority of foundations created around the same time have long since gone under.

Associations are not inherently more democratic either, but they do represent a consistent urge of man to participate in affairs he (or indeed she) feels are of interest, and therefore falsify any notion of a hierarchical concept of perennial order being superior to a continuing method of channeling an obvious disorder into structured collective action. In this context, voluntary action may be seen as decisive. When the French revolution, believing the nation was the sole admissible collectivity, abolished the legal framework for voluntary associations in 1791, it soon became clear that this concept did not correspond to reality, and a great number of more or less official associational organizations developed throughout the nine-

teenth century, until finally a law on foundations was enacted in 1901. “Nothing,” wrote Alexis de Tocqueville (1840), “merits as much attention as the associations created for intellectual and moral purposes.” On the other hand, the urge to create an organization that would remain subject to the creator’s will is and always has been equally strong. Thus, foundations and associations have always existed side by side and will to all probability continue to do so.

Role Models

Associations’ specific contribution to societal life therefore needs to look at a different paradigm. In 1999, the European Commission issued a “Communication from the Commission,” listing four roles that associations and foundations could fill:

- Service provision
- Advocacy
- Self-help
- Intermediary

This functional approach has proven to be extraordinarily helpful in that it avoids disregarding certain roles, depending upon a certain political viewpoint or the focus of attention. However, the commission typology has proven to be incomplete. Three more potential roles need to be added:

- Watchdog
- Community building
- Political deliberation

The service provision role, exemplified in the services provided by big welfare organizations, is very prominent in Germany, where the principle of subsidiarity accords them a special place in the structure of the welfare state, and in other European countries like France and the Netherlands through the high proportion of educational institutions operated by civil society organizations. The advocacy role, although in existence long before, has attained a high profile over the last 30 years through the voice raised by organizations like Greenpeace, Amnesty, and Transparency International. The self-help role is not only occupied by organizations like Alcoholics Anonymous, but also by sports clubs, hugely important not only because of the numbers of people who join for their own physical benefit, but also for the importance attached to sports by politicians and by the society in general. Intermediaries comprise umbrella organizations as well as grant-making institutions, foundations in particular. The watchdog role, although close to advocacy, needs to be mentioned separately. Consumer protection for one is certainly a goal that is different from fighting for a cause. Colin Crouch (2011), in describing this role as the most important task for civil society, has a broader task in mind than concentrating on one specific theme. He argues for civil society organizations to perform a task that was at one time accorded to parliaments—to watch over what governments do.

Community Building and Political Thrust

For a very long time, the community-building role has been treated with disdain, both academically and politically. Amateur choirs and theatre groups, carnival clubs, and other organized leisure activities, although recognized as a prime method of bringing people together, have been treated as private hobbies of no societal relevance. At a time when traditional geographic communities, even at the local level, fail to give members a sense of ownership and belonging, these purposes that may seem perfectly ridiculous in themselves, and induce citizens to communicate, participate, and engage, have attained an added value that should on no account be underrated. Robert Putnam (1994), in developing the theory of social capital, had these informal networks in mind in identifying the place where social capital is developed for the benefit of others. Max Weber (1924, p. 447) in his famous address to the First Congress of Sociologists, knew about this relationship. And even Tocqueville was well aware of it (Hoffmann 2003, p. 11).

Contrary to popular belief, this type of organizations pursues a goal that is inherently public and political. I would argue that it is where political deliberation in the general sense, as described by Jürgen Habermas, takes place. Contrary to advocacy organizations, this deliberation may focus on a huge variety of goals, may change its focus, and may indeed connect different goals to gain political thrust. A good historical example is an organization called “Die Meersburger 101.” Founded in 1480, it consists to this day of 101 citizens of Meersburg, a small town on Lake Constance in southwest Germany. Members are from all walks of life. They congregate in their own house, and, as a tourist guide puts it, it is there that town politics are discussed and decisions are in fact made.

Obviously, there is no clear divide between the various types and role models. Many associations are active in more than one role. A welfare organization will regularly come forward as an advocate of the needy and destitute and thus in a sense participate in political debate when it comes to welfare policy. But it is not surprising that service providers, while possibly quite powerful, are not as much a center of political activity as leisure organizations, social networks, and community-building membership organizations potentially are (Groschke et al. 2009). There can be no doubt that the relationship between these and a political, outward-looking role model is particularly strong. In the past, preconditions such as coming from a certain social background, and sharing basic political convictions or a common religious affiliation, have proven to be a strong motivation to join a voluntary organization. And it is here that we see a marked difference between a membership organization and a foundation. Joining and participating can only happen in an associative organization. Max Weber appealed to sociologists to undertake to answer some basic questions: “What is it that connects any kind of an association, [...] from a political party to—and this sounds like a paradox—a bowling club, that is to say between whatever kind of organization and what one might in its broadest sense call the basic outlook on life [*Weltanschauung*]?” (Weber 1924, p. 446). To sum up, the awareness of this close connection between community building and

civic spirit—to use a more conventional phrase for political deliberation—analyzed by Tocqueville (Hoffmann 2003, p. 11) seems to have been lost in the twentieth century. In an age where civic spirit is in high demand (Crouch 2011), it is certainly worthwhile reflecting on the history of this connection.

Community and Participation in Historical Context

Greek and Roman law in classical times had not known any legal persons other than natural ones. It was only later that “moral persons” became legal entities. The analogy between public governance and voluntary organizations is that both developed a sense of cohesion gradually, over many centuries, accompanied by many disputes over supremacy, legitimacy, etc. Under these circumstances, voluntary bodies were no less in a development phase than others. In this context, it is important to note that the original form of *confoederatio* or *coniuratio* could only bind its members, whereas the *universitas* could act towards third parties (Isenmann 2012, p. 214a–b). For the history of voluntary bodies, this is of particular interest, as not only did they develop in close interaction with political entities, but they were part of the power struggles and political debates. Even more than today, they could and would, however, only participate in politics in as far as their members developed a strong sense of cohesion and acted individually in the interest of the community.

In many towns, the Italian example was followed, and a plethora of voluntary bodies sprang up to cope with urgent common problems. The “Misericordia” in Florence (Grote 1972, p. 175) and elsewhere have survived to this day. Their names as *confraternità* resonates with their original legal status. But they were always more than service providers. “The purpose of these brotherhoods was also to celebrate Mass and pray together, to venerate the Saints together, to organize processions together, to make donations and grants, and to congregate for meals and drinking feasts” (Isenmann 2012, p. 657a). Over time, this system of associative bodies developed into the guilds and became ever more powerful, but also ever more protective of the status quo. Associative life, at least in its established variety, was so closely intertwined with politics that it was prone to stifle new thoughts.

In northern Europe, towns, some of which went back to Roman origins, underwent a long development between the ninth and fifteenth centuries. The differences in origin, government, and a number of other factors were considerable. Yet, everywhere we find that voluntarily associating with others was a fixed asset of urban life. For a long period of time, the town itself was a voluntary body, only gradually becoming a legal entity (*universitas*) (Isenmann 2012, p. 214 a), and indeed retaining its nature as a corporation rather than part of the state for much longer than that. The City of London is an example of a local community that still sees itself as corporate rather than governmental. The famous Hanse federation, in a legal dispute of 1469, made a point of stating that they were neither *societas*, nor *collegium*, nor *universitas*, but merely a *confoederatio*, lacking all elements of a more cohesive body (Isenmann 2012, pp. 934a–935b).

The Divide Between State and Civil Society

In the wake of Bodin and Hobbes, the modern concept of sovereignty was established in the seventeenth century. It made a sharp divide between states as sole sovereign entities and other organizations, which increasingly were to become subject to the monopoly of force now exercised by governments. This was a starting point for nongovernmental organizations to be seen as opposed to governmental action. Alternative membership organizations had begun to be formed quite early on. Again, it was in Italy that the first learned societies were started in the fourteenth century (Garber 2012). The idea spread all over Europe and gained a new meaning as from the seventeenth century. Growing individualism let citizens join voluntary clubs and societies rather than being active members in corporations they were forced to join by law (Hoffmann 1981, p. 123). Reading societies, free masons' lodges, political clubs, and business societies were paramount. "The strong urge for intellectual exchange, clubbing, and promoting knowledge was to be seen here. [...] The wish to participate in public affairs became the driving force" (Garber 2012).

Surprisingly, this move towards a new form of collective action was by no means restricted to those who previously had not been able to participate. The 'Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft' (The Society that Will Bring Fruit) was founded by princes in 1617, and had up to 800 members. Ruling princes also became Freemasons, undergoing the same rituals as everyone else—quite the opposite of what was practiced at court. All in all, "the departing point of bourgeois intellectualism was the private inward-looking circle. Without losing its private character, the public was to become its forum in society" (Koselleck 1959, p. 41). Soon, societies with very different aims, but with overlapping goals existed everywhere. They may be described as the prototypes of political parties (Hoffmann 1981, p. 123).

A good example of the personal and political networking involved is Jacob (de) Mauvillon, friend of Mirabeau and coauthor of some of his works. Mauvillon first joined a Society for Agriculture and Free and Decorative Arts (*Gesellschaft des Ackerbaues und der freien oder nützlichen Künste*) in Kassel; some time later, he joined the Society of Antiquities (*Gesellschaft der Alterthümer*). In both of these, the ruling prince was a member, as were most government officials. After moving to Braunschweig, Mauvillon became a member of the Grand Club (*Grosser Klub*), again an institution of the establishment, although he was well known as a "radical element" (Hoffmann 1981, p. 128). He was also a Freemason, and later joined the Order of the *Illuminati*, a rather more progressive institution. All this gave him a chance to "push through and above all disseminate his ideas" (Hoffmann 1981, p. 151), while at the same time he was eager to join "all kinds of social events of the time that aimed at nothing but amusement and drawing room games" (Hoffmann 1981, p. 151). But while this atmosphere of congregating copied French examples, there was one big difference. In Paris, it was increasingly antigovernmental, and in the end helped overthrow the government. In Germany, it helped the reforms that, however modest, prevented the revolution from happening.

When the spirit of reform joined forces with a surge of national excitement following Napoleon's conquests, a popular sentiment towards a unified German nation-state gained ground for the first time in history (Reinhard 1999, p. 443). And civic organizations were the driving force. In 1813, over 600 Women's Unions for the Good of the Fatherland (*Frauenvereine zum Wohle des Vaterlandes*) collected 450,000 Thaler to further the national cause (against Napoleon), the members donating their golden wedding rings in exchange for iron ones inscribed "Gold gab ich für Eisen" ("I gave gold for iron"). All in all, Prussians made voluntary donations amounting to 6.5 million Thaler to help fund the "Wars of Liberation" (*Befreiungskriege*) (Clark 2006, pp. 374–375). "Perhaps the quirkiest expression of the insurrectory idea was the Turnbewegung, or gymnasts' movement, founded by Friedrich Ludwig Jahn in 1811 [...] to evolve specifically civilian forms of bodily prowess and patriotic commitment. [...] The gymnasts were [...] citizen fighters whose participation [...] was entirely voluntary. [...] Gymnasts did not march, [...] because marching killed the autonomous will.... Coupled with this hostility to the hierarchical order [...] was an implicit egalitarianism" (Clark 2006, pp. 351–352). For the first time, the voluntary initiatives of civil society—and particularly of its female members—were celebrated as integral to the state's military success (Clark 2006, p. 376).

This unity of voluntarism and the state could not last. By 1817, when some 500 students assembled at the Wartburg, ostensibly to celebrate the 300th anniversary of the Reformation, frustration over the government's increasing reactionism had set in. A pamphlet published by Theodor Anton Heinrich Schmalz, Rector of the University of Berlin, in which the author attacked the patriotic secret societies and forcefully rejected the view that they had been instrumental in defeating the French, was publicly burnt (Clark 2006, p. 378). After that, reaction set in even more forcefully. Jahn's gymnastic clubs, which had a membership of around 12,000, were suppressed in 1819. Yet, commemorative associations continued, not least among students. The rise of fraternities (*Burschenschaften*) was but one expression of a sentiment that combined a cult of memory, a force of bonding, and the "quest of the inward-looking 'bourgeois self' [...] for a new kind of political community, welded together by a shared emotional commitment" (Clark 2006, p. 385).

Meeting in Karlsbad in 1819, the conservative rulers of Austria, Prussia, and Russia had decided to make it illegal to start or join a membership organization—one of many measures designed to enforce a strictly hierarchical social order. The ban was never enforced, if for the simple reason that many of the organizations that should have been banned were in fact the old order's staunchest supporters (Bösch 2002, pp. 24–25). By the end of the 1820s, discontent was paramount, but had no influence in politics, which had come under the spell of committed conservatives who believed in hierarchies as the sole proper way of organizing society. They too, however, had their voluntary bodies. The *Berliner Kritische Assoziation* (Critical Association of Berlin) was crucial in promoting Hegel's philosophy, which "before 1830 became a virtual state-philosophy in Prussia" (Watson 2010, p. 237). When Germany went to war against France in 1870, a Patriotic Women's Red Cross Society (*Vaterländischer Frauenverein vom Roten Kreuz*) took up the tradition started

in 1813 (Bösch 2002, p. 85). But until the first republican German constitution was adopted a century later, in 1919, battling for freedom of association was one of the most consistent themes of German politics (Agricola 1997). Indeed, there were associations for every taste, class, social standing, income group, and preference (Zimmer 1996, pp. 43–48). They could be decidedly conservative in outlook, supportive of the state, liberal, and radically opposed to government. The short-lived nationalist revolution of 1848 relied heavily on voluntary associations for gathering support among the citizens. After it had been crushed, it took 10 years for the first liberal society to become active again. The National Association (*Nationalverein*) became the forerunner of the liberal party.

Subcultures in Associational Life

A comprehensive history of German associative life can of course not be developed here, but two trends do need to be mentioned: the workers' associative subculture that emerged since the 1860s and the youth movement in the early 1900s. The workers in England, Switzerland, and Germany had begun to form their own clubs since the 1840s, and a national organization, called the General Fraternalization of German Workers (*Allgemeine Deutsche Arbeiterverbrüderung*), was founded in 1848 (Kocka 1987, p. 13). The workers' clubs and political associations belied Hegel's assumption that this kind of organization was a specific asset of what he called civil society.

Strangely, however, it was liberal intellectuals who first organized educational societies for the workers. Karl Liebknecht, who had been forced to emigrate to Switzerland after participating in the revolution, joined a workers' union in Geneva, and after moving to England, the Communist Association. It was only in the 1860s, when Liebknecht returned to Germany, that the workers sought to disassociate themselves from the liberals. Ferdinand Lassalle, no more a worker than Liebknecht, masterminded the formation of a German General Association of Workers (*Allgemeiner Deutscher Arbeiterverein*) in 1863, which after merging with August Bebel's Social Democratic Workers' Party (*Sozialdemokratische Arbeiterpartei*) was to become Germany's Social Democratic Party (*SPD*). Incidentally, Lassalle's initiative was decidedly hierarchical. One of the reasons why it never attracted a large membership was that members had practically no say in the governance of the organization and that Lassalle himself, particularly after his early death, was revered in a pseudo-religious way. "The background of the people who acclaimed him was the Protestant Church rather than a democratic society. Discussions over statutes were not to their liking" (Herzig 2013).

What is remarkable about the whole workers' movement is that, although very much a political organization, it also encompassed a strong component of social congregation and self-help. Dancing and celebrating, and education and solidarity were as much part of associational life as was political work. In fact, political outward-going action was hotly debated before it became part of the program at all.

Women were not permitted to join. It was only in 1904 that this legal restriction was removed. To get around this obstacle, in 1873, Pauline Staegemann founded the Berlin Workers' Wives' and Girls' Association (*Berliner Arbeiterfrauen- und Mädchenverein*). After its demise, she joined the Association for the Protection of Female Workers' Interests (*Verein zur Wahrung der Interessen von Arbeiterinnen*), founded, surprisingly, by Countess Gertrud Guillaume-Schack.

As a final example for the voluntaristic associational urge, a few remarks on the youth movement (*Jugendbewegung*) that began at the very end of the nineteenth century and became moderately influential in the 1920s: The movement came from a widespread feeling that it was time for substantial changes in the structure of society as much as in lifestyle and beliefs. Society being rigidly class orientated and seemingly immobile, many young people wished to be “naked rather than in uniform, out of doors rather than within grey city walls, simple rather than ostentatious, free rather than conformist, close to nature rather than to status” (Staas and Kemper 2013, p. 6). In October 1913, the First Free German Youth Meeting (*Erster Freideutscher Jugendtag*) was held on the Hohe Meissner, a mountain in central Germany. The German Association of Abstaining Students (*Deutscher Bund abstinenter Studenten*) and the Free German Academic Union (*Deutsche Akademische Freischar*) had sent letters to several like-minded organizations: *Wandervogel*, *Dürerbund*, *Deutscher Vortruppbund*, *Deutsche Landerziehungsheime*, *Freie Schulgemeinden*—a very mixed company (Osteroth 2013, pp. 78–79). What united them was their wish to congregate socially, to walk, dance, and sing together, very much more than to act together politically. Yet, social change was the political undercurrent. However, the ideas, some of which had been expounded theoretically, were so divergent that no political movement evolved. The political establishment succeeded in bending many of the young idealists to their will, as did a number of extremist movements, most prominently both the communist and the national socialist movements. As a political force, the *Wandervogel* movement suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of powerful dictators, and it was not until several decades later, with the possible exception of the Catholic leagues, that associations reappeared on the political stage that grew out of the strong sense of belonging and bonding that had been so formative in Germany for centuries.

Conclusion

Still, the examples show that associative life is a common and ongoing phenomenon in Germany—as in every other nation's history. It may not always result in stable institutions with legal personality, government approval, or fiscal benefits; on the contrary, some of the most shining examples of civil society power are those, where relatively unstable and unorganized forms of collective action succeeded in attracting so many followers and exerting such influence that the course of history was changed. The civil rights groups in East Germany (the German Democratic Republic) and in other central and eastern European countries in the 1980s provide good

proof for this argument. Their story also shows us again that associative life does not depend on lenient, let alone approving constitutional and legal frameworks. The fact that despite some setbacks these groups managed to stay together and develop an increasing political thrust under the watchful eyes of a deeply suspicious and indeed hostile state also supports the argument that there is a strong relationship between bonding within such an organization and its political impact. This relationship may be identified in very diverse historical circumstances and with surprising consistency.

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Chapter 3

Alexis de Tocqueville Revisited: Between the Centralization of Political Power, Civil Associations, and Gender Politics in the European Union

Gabriele Wilde

*It is, indeed, difficult to conceive how men who have entirely given up the habit of self-government should succeed in making a proper choice of those by whom they are to be governed; and no one will ever believe that a liberal, wise, and energetic government can spring from the suffrages of a subservient people. (Tocqueville; *Autorität und Freiheit. Schriften, Reden und Briefe. Ausgewählt und eingeleitet von Albert Salomon, 1965, p. 583*)*

Abstract The chapter reconstructs the understanding of democracy held by Alexis de Tocqueville, who, in addition to Charles Montesquieu and Max Weber, is considered one of the three theorists who explicitly examined the relation between the centralization of political power and democracy. However, in his different meaning of democracy as a social structure and way of life, only Tocqueville placed civil society and political freedom at the center of his democratic model.

The chapter outlines the key reasons why, for Tocqueville, the true achievement of the French Revolution lay in the centralization of political power. It further shows, using the example of European gender politics, to what extent this centralization of power is an understanding of democracy directly linked to the Enlightenment, which is still to be detected in the current European multilevel system.

Keywords Alexis de Tocqueville · Democratic theory · Centralization of political power · Associations · European gender politics

Is it an exaggeration to claim that democracy as a form of political self-government has not taken place in the European Union (EU) up to the present? After all, the European Parliament with its continuously strengthened competencies has existed since the mid-1980s, as has union citizenship. The national governments that participate in the Council of Ministers and the Council of the EU are also democratically elected. In addition, the European Court of Justice (ECJ) plays a key role in the

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multilevel system by ensuring the protection of civil rights and quasi-constitutional guarantees such as those set down in the Charter of Fundamental Rights. And, finally, since the second half of 2008 the Lisbon Treaty has existed, providing for an extensive strengthening and expansion of democratic structures in the EU. Not least, with an eye on the developing, active civil society and new forms for deliberative politics, the political multilevel system, therefore, possesses numerous democratic structures and institutions.

But still: Which is the way of life, the way of thinking and of acting known as democracy—from Plato’s polis to the civic society of Alexis de Tocqueville to Hannah Arendt’s republic—does not exist in the EU. It was, therefore, appropriate for Larry Siedentop in his book on democracy in Europe to have posed the task for the EU of “strengthening or creating a democratic form of political life within the member states” (Siedentop 2000, p. 8).

Of course, the question of whether this is even necessary is discussed heatedly in current political science debates: While some demand a democratic form for the EU after the model of nation-states’ parliamentary representative democracies, that is, they call for more competencies in decision-making processes for the European Parliament or for a different form of weighting votes, for example, others call into question the very existence of a democratic deficit in the EU (see Moravcsik 2004, 2005; Majone 2002). Both points of view, those who believe in a democratization of the *European decision-making system* as well as those who ascribe a key role to the *democratic processes in the member states*, adhere to a model of democracy which is very closely bound to the nation-state both structurally and in the history of ideas. By contrast, there is only a small group of those who doubt whether it is even possible for the understanding of democracy as found in nation-states to be transferred to the structures of the EU; these authors assume a fundamental democratic dilemma between forms of civic participation and political systems’ efficacy and ability to govern (see Dahl 1994) and reach the conclusion that the political structures of the EU need to be oriented on new or different, perhaps even older, democratic models.

Alexis de Tocqueville (1805–1859) was already looking into a similar concern when he set out for America in 1831 in order to study the foundations of democratic society. Although the French Revolution can be considered even today to be the birth of a new political order from historical-philosophical and political science perspectives, giving civil society political legitimacy and tying it to the democratic principles of equality, freedom, and participation, it was only in the form of American democracy that Tocqueville first discovered an order in which he found his political and intellectual convictions to be embodied:

A society in which all men would profess an equal attachment and respect for the laws of which they are the common authors; in which the authority of the State would be respected as necessary, though not as divine; and the loyalty of the subject to the chief magistrate would not be a passion, but a quiet and rational persuasion. Every individual being in the possession of rights which he is sure to retain, a kind of manly reliance and reciprocal courtesy would arise between all classes, alike removed from pride and meanness. (Tocqueville 1965, p. 9 f.)

He also longed for this political vision to be realized in a postrevolutionary France, where in his eyes, “the democratic revolution has been effected only in the material

parts of society, without that concomitant change in laws, ideas, customs, and manners which was necessary to render such a revolution beneficial” (Tocqueville 1965, p. 8). In this context, a further question arises which is decisive for this contribution: Is it possible that the absence of democracy as a form of life influences the EU today in a similar way as it did postrevolutionary France? If so, what insights and conclusions can be drawn from that for the democratic makeup of the EU?

To answer these questions, I will first outline the key reasons why the true achievement of the French Revolution for Tocqueville lies in the centralization of political power. In this context, I will show in which way this is a type of Enlightenment understanding of the world that can be found up to the present in the European multilevel system. In the second step, I will look at the relationship between the centralization of political power and democracy and show, in contrast to Charles de Montesquieu and Max Weber, that only Tocqueville placed civil society and political freedom at the center of his democratic model. In the third step, I will outline the democratic fault lines in the European multilevel system using the example of European gender policies.

The Enlightenment Understanding of the World: The Centralization of Political Power

Not only Tocqueville’s first work “Democracy in America” (1965) from 1831, but in particular also his publication “The Old Regime and the French Revolution” (1955) from 1856 are essential proclamations against the common belief even in his time that the upheaval of 1789 served to carve out a place for democracy and human rights in Europe. Tocqueville doubted that the introduction of rational principles into politics, that is, the linking of political power to regulated orders and generally valid legal norms, truly represented a break from all political traditions (see Herb and Hidalgo 2005, p. 105). The will of the majority may have replaced absolutist rule, but Tocqueville still maintained that the “supposed *tabula rasa* of the revolutionaries ... was nothing but an illusion” (Herb and Hidalgo 2005, p. 106). That which others praised as a revolutionary democratic development, he described it as merely a continued centralization of the administrative apparatus in whose shadows civil society had already begun to unfurl before the French Revolution. While at the beginning, he differentiated between the centralization of the government in absolutism and a centralization of the administration in the Enlightenment (see Bluhm 2004, p. 30), he believed that, in the end, the omnipotence of the French central power was the true link between absolutism and democracy and the true problem of postrevolutionary France.¹ In linking democracy with absolutism, Tocqueville saw the development of a specific form of modern authority, which was able to assert itself as a democratic form until the present. The difference between the bureaucracy

¹ The fundamental differentiation between “a central government” and “a central administration” (Tocqueville 1965, p. 69 f.) is key for Tocqueville’s understanding of democracy and is viewed as the essential element of his sociology of the state.

of the *ancien regime* and the modern democratic administrative state could be found only in the normative legitimacy effectuated by the French Revolution. From the beginning, he therefore viewed political centralization and the development of the legal and political administrative apparatus as the true achievement of the French Revolution.

Political Centralization in the Shadow of European Integration

However, political centralization did not arrive at the form in which it is found today only in the Western-style, national constitutional state. It also found its way into the general political understanding of the world. Characteristics of a central government, which in Tocqueville's understanding "acquires immense power when united to administrative centralization" (1965, p. 70), can therefore also be found within the EU.

Here, as well, the European citizens face a centralized, omnipotent instance in the concentration of political power in the Council of the EU, the Council of Ministers, and the Commission. With the reform treaty, the executive power in the three bodies has been further expanded and strengthened, which can be seen not least in the addition of two presidents (see Leinen 2007, p. 4). Another characteristic of French democracy that Tocqueville saw in the debility of the provincial administrations can also be found in the relative lack of power at the subnational level, in the municipalities and regions. Yes, there is a Committee of the Regions² through which the *Länder* and regions participate in political decision making, but their influence remains rather limited up to the present (see Mittag 2002). The establishment of civil servants who increasingly take over political functions can also be seen in the EU in the form of comitology, that is, the administration of the Commission (see Puntischer-Riekmann 1998). In the formal as well as material predominance of EU competencies, Maurizio Bach (see 1999) could already see at the end of the last millennium structures of a system of rule in which the formulation of policies takes place at the level of qualified civil servants in the Directorates-General of the Commission and therefore displays a character which is highly determined by bureaucracy (see Bach 1999, p. 13).

Further evidence for centralized political forms in the EU were named by Wolfgang Wessels (see 2008, p. 183) with his fusion thesis, according to which the Commission's possibilities for participation in intergovernmental processes are enhanced and expanded by the interlacing and fusion of responsibilities—for example, with the president of the Commission as a member of the Council of the EU, as well.

Besides this establishment of forms of bureaucratic rule and the interlacing of competencies among the three leading bodies, the ECJ also represents a

² The COR is a consultative body (Art. 4(2) TEC) which is made up of members of the local and regional authorities who are under no power of direction and through which the *Länder* can participate in political decision making at the EU level in the form of "own-initiative opinions."

centralization of political power in that the transfer of national lawmaking and jurisprudence competencies to the European level leads to a weakening of the states' monopoly on the use of force and thus their national power to act (see Wilde 2010a). It was against this process that the German Federal Constitutional Court defended itself in its decision in June 2009 on the Lisbon Treaty by pleading for stronger participation of the *Bundestag* and *Bundesrat* in European decisions.³ But in the same decision, the German court also stated its monopoly on interpretation and thus defended its strong position in the democratic model of the nation-state.

From the eyes of Tocqueville, however, the political orders that display such a centralization of government and administration are the biggest obstacle for democratic conditions. The legal and political consolidation of the central concentration of political power that has taken place since the French Revolution with the modern development of democratic orders led, in his opinion, to the triumph of equality over political freedom of action:

The centralization of administration, the laws for which are guided by administrative law, certainly is a solidly built apparatus and one can admire it when considering the relief it provides government, in the sense it can reach everywhere, steer everything and control all men and transactions. It is an admirably constructed governing machinery, however unsuited for establishing security, freedom and the usual civic virtues that determine the prosperity and greatness of the people. In particular our perpetual revolutions could develop, thanks to it; our obsequious morals; the impossibility we saw in establishing a tempered and reasonable liberty (Tocqueville 1935, p. 217, transl. GW).

The Relationship Between Political Centralization and Democracy: Democratizing Society

But what exactly was the relationship between political centralization as the pacesetter of modern political orders and democracy? Alexis de Tocqueville is the second of the three theorists who looked at the question of democratic orders that were explicitly opposed to a centralization of political power. But between the first theoretician Charles Montesquieu (1689–1755) and Max Weber (1864–1920), Tocqueville always had a unique position.

All three theorists believed the decisive element in the development of postfeudal societies was the establishment of modern nation-states and, in these, a specific form of bureaucratic despotism (see Pfetsch 2003, p. 282). For Montesquieu, both phenomena led to a more moderate form of government based on the rule of law and separation of powers. In this, he differentiated not only between the legisla-

³ In its decision on 30 June 2009, the Second Senate of the German Federal Constitutional Court stated that the reform treaty, which was signed on 19 October 2008 by the 27 EU heads of state and government in the Portuguese capital city Lisbon, went against Art. 38(1) of the German constitution in connection with Art. 23(1) of the Basic Law because it did not give the *Bundestag* and *Bundesrat* sufficient participatory rights in the framework of European lawmaking and treaty amending procedures. As a consequence, on 8 September 2009, the *Bundestag* passed the necessary changes to the law on the expansion and strengthening of the rights of the *Bundestag* and *Bundesrat* in matters of the EU with 446 of 494 submitted votes.

tive, executive, and judicial powers, but also held to a monarchical structure (see Schmidt 2008, p. 72). His concept of the “aristocratic democracy” (Pfetsch 2003, p. 281) was aimed at limiting the centralization of political power “by the rule of the laws and checks and balances by other powers” (Schäfer 2002, p. 99). In the separation of power in the political structures (see Montesquieu 1992, p. 211 ff.), he saw a reliable way of “preventing the powerful from overstepping the law and committing violence against the powerless” (Münkler 1994, p. 18).

In contrast to Montesquieu, Weber was less concerned with an institutional balance of power and rule in the form of moderated governing structures and more with the legitimacy of political rule (see Pfetsch 2003, p. 265). The culmination of the legal form of rule, which Weber saw in the monopoly of the use of physical force, was, in his opinion, brought about by two phenomena: first, by expropriating the people in all institutional spheres (see Offe 2004, p. 68 f.), which leads to a “geistigen Proletarisierung” (spiritual proletarianization) and “Entseelung der Menschen” (robbing of people’s souls) (Weber 1980, p. 850) that removes their individual responsibility and political ability to act; and second, by means of the bureaucracy, which was established in an alliance with the jurists and makes use of the “Fachmenschen ohne Geist” (skilled people without souls) and “Genussmenschen ohne Herz” (pleasure seekers without hearts) (Weber 1988, p. 204). Weber saw the deathblow that these bureaucratic forms of rule had given to politics as the ultimate catastrophe of the modern era.

In comparison to Montesquieu’s separation of powers and Weber’s plebiscitary leadership democracy, Tocqueville did not give as much attention to democratic institutions, instead focusing on the societal foundations and political consequences for democracy as “a similar social organization” (1965, p. 15). Yet, political as well as purely social coalitions determine civil society as the foundation for democracy (see Adloff 2005, p. 39 f.). While Tocqueville explicitly addresses “political associations” in his first volume, in which people affiliate in order to achieve a social or political goal through common actions, he exemplifies in his heading “on the use which the Americans make of associations in civil life” the meaning of social groups and civil society associations for American democracy:

Americans of all ages, all conditions, and all dispositions, constantly form associations. They have not only commercial and manufacturing companies, in which all take part, but associations of a thousand other kinds—religious, moral, serious, futile, extensive or restricted, enormous or diminutive. The Americans make associations to give entertainments, to found establishments for education, to build inns, to construct churches, to diffuse books, to send missionaries to the antipodes; and in this manner, they found hospitals, prisons, and schools Wherever, at the head of some new undertaking, you see the government in France, or a man of rank in England, in the United States you will be sure to find an association (Tocqueville 1965, p. 376).

In this society-centered approach (see Wilde 2010b) democracy is seen as a process of equality of conditions (Tocqueville 1965, p. 362 ff.) and the citizen’s intellectual and political freedom of action as the greatest moral principle (see Tocqueville 1965, p. 375).⁴ But in contrast to Max Weber, who was concerned with ensuring the

⁴ “But I contend that in order to combat the evils which equality may produce there is only one effectual remedy—namely, political freedom.” (Tocqueville 1965)

individual freedom of movement and who viewed freedom as an increased intensity of life activity (see Offe 2004, p. 71), Tocqueville's freedom was oriented on the ideals of a political society's moral and cognitive self-determination (Tocqueville 1965, p. 8). This "freedom-constituting sovereignty of a people" is, according to Lars Lambrecht (1990, p. 523), neither limited to elections nor the sole prerogative of the parliament or even the state.

In line with his republican understanding of freedom which is expressed in freedom vis-à-vis the state and thus turns on its head the principle of freedom from the state as found in liberal theories of democracy, Tocqueville does not view even equality as an absolute factor but instead uses it in the sense of equal opportunity. This "general equality of conditions" (Tocqueville 1965, p. 1) for political action was for him the true problem of liberal democracies, in which political power is only exercised via the traditional class-oriented representative organs and society is confronted by state institutions. Aspiring toward an equality of living conditions goes hand in hand with the democratic development of societies, whereby this aspiration to create an absolute equality will always lead to a denial of plurality and repression, and thus, in the end, be a threat to freedom. This is why his ideal was a democratic order that maintained the tension between equality and freedom without giving priority to either of the principles:

It is possible to imagine an extreme point at which freedom and equality would meet and be confounded together. Let us suppose that all the members of the community take a part in the government, and that each one of them has an equal right to take a part in it. As none is different from his fellows, none can exercise a tyrannical power: men will be perfectly free, because they will all be entirely equal; and they will all be perfectly equal, because they will be entirely free. To this ideal state democratic nations tend (Tocqueville 1965, p. 362).

In the politically active and acting citizens of America, Tocqueville saw a human utopia erected against the tyranny of the majority, which he viewed as being the greatest danger in the transition to democracy. This threat, which Tocqueville saw as a reality in France, is characteristic of his "negative understanding of democracy" (Offe 2004, p. 20). Democratization is the lack of class-based status orders, and this means that no one is born with the privilege of law-making competencies and therefore all are equally free to participate in lawmaking. With the background of his central thesis, whereby "the development toward equality of societal conditions is the actual and true progression of European history" (Volkman-Schluck 1960, p. 19, transl. GW), his key question can be understood from which he is guided in his description of democracy in America: How this equality can be so channeled that it does not become a threat to political freedom?

A proven antidote to the danger of the centralization of political power, according to Tocqueville, can be found first in the federal structure he observed to be incorporated in American democracy. Tocqueville therefore described the political system of America as a multilevel system with delineated competencies and a separated sovereignty among the American federal government, the individual states, and the administrative bodies in the form of the municipalities and regions. He viewed primarily "secondary public bodies, temporarily composed of private citizens" (Tocqueville 1965, p. 585) as an effective compromise between administrative despotism and sovereignty of the people (see Tocqueville 1965, p. 581). That

was not only because they ensured the citizens' political participation "in minor affairs" (Tocqueville 1965, p. 582) in addition to elections and parliamentarianism, but also because they took on administrative duties, for example the election of civil servants and judges. Based on the assumption that ensuring civil liberties in the "small" things was more necessary than in the big matters (see Tocqueville 1965), and "that it is especially dangerous to enslave men in the minor details of life" (Tocqueville 1965), Tocqueville views the responsibility of the citizens for everyday political and legal questions and the responsibility of civil society organizations for self-administration as the "key to a successful and stable democracy" (Enzmann 2009, p. 314, transl. GW).

The political role which Tocqueville (1965, p. 585) thought to ascribe to the secondary public bodies—in the form of "permanent associations which are established by law under the names of townships, cities, and counties" (Tocqueville 1965, p. 126)—was "not central administration" (Tocqueville 1965, p. 71). This new form of noncentralization politics included, firstly, a different understanding of self-administration, which was brought by the New England settlers. The transmission "of administrative power" (Tocqueville 1965, p. 59) to local bodies led to the establishment of civil society organizations in American society, and these founded a specific civil society constitution and culture as an effective counterbalance to the centralization of political power (Tocqueville 1965, p. 65 f.). Secondly, with the decentralized definition of politics, a different understanding of participation is formulated, which is less focused on the influence of central politics and more on social self-organizations which act independently of federal policies and the constitutional system (see Llanque 2004, p. 42). Tocqueville (1965, p. 127), therefore, defines the term "association" as "a public assent which a number of individuals give to certain doctrines, and in the engagement which the contract to promote the spread of those doctrines by their exertions." With this background, the decentralization of the political administration is thus connected to a different understanding of political power which is exercised by the civil society associations and not centrally by the sovereign state. This creates a free civic order to the extent that citizens jointly discuss, debate, decide, and are responsible for their decisions—this was the way in which the civic sense for the functioning and stability of democracy, which was so decisive for Tocqueville, could first develop.

Undemocratic Fault Lines in the European Multilevel System Using the Example of European Gender Policies

So what insights can be gained from this for democracy in the EU? "A new science of politics is indispensable to a new world"—this conviction is how Tocqueville introduces his work "Democracy in America" (1965, p. 7). Of course, the program which Tocqueville applied to his investigation of American democracy in the Jackson Era has been eclipsed by political situations and states. His relevancy, however, does not come from what remains true today but in that which is different today

because of him and must be reconsidered. This means that Tocqueville's relevance today is based on the fact that his approach can be used *firstly* to recognize and examine undemocratic fault lines of political systems; and *secondly* to continue his search for the societal foundations of democracy in the form of critical reflection on the limits and possibilities for expanding the participation of European citizens (Steinert 2005, p. 541). In comparison to Montesquieu and Weber, Tocqueville's approach leads us to look at civil society organizations as a central structural hallmark of his understanding of democracy, the lack of which could possibly be named as a reason for which democracy has only been realized to a limited extent in the EU up to the present.

Of course, the participation of civil society in the European multilevel system is no novelty. Numerous studies show that civil society actors are integrated in the European political process via newly introduced instruments such as the Constitutional Convention, deliberative fora like the consultation procedure and citizen conferences as well as via the open method of coordination⁵ (Zimmer 2000; Rucht 2005; Steffek and Nanz 2008). In particular in European gender politics, policy networks were established very early on (Hoskyns 1996b, p. 197) and participated in political decision-making processes. These networks are made up of nonhierarchical connections between relatively autonomous groups and individuals and contribute to a vertical integration in which their activities stretch from the national level to the decision-making processes of the EU. It was thanks to the pressure from women's networks on the Commission, for example, that Article 119 on equal pay, which was already added to the European Economic Community (EEC) Treaty in 1958 was anchored by the ECJ decision in 1976 as an enforceable right in all member states of the European Community (EC) (see Ostner and Lewis 1998, p. 233).⁶ The provision according to which women and men were to receive equal pay for equal work could then be used as an instrument by the New Women's Movement and, between 1975 and 1986, led to submission of collective equal opportunity guidelines by the Commission which were then decided on by the Council of Ministers.

Still, the existence of numerous women's organizations by no means indicates that there are democratic, decentralized political decision-making structures. On the contrary, the establishment of an autonomous regime at the European level on equal opportunity demonstrates that the political powers of democratic gender relations is

⁵ The open method of coordination (OMC) is an instrument of indirect political coordination in which goals are formulated at the council level. Achieving these goals at the national level is then reciprocally monitored via usual indicator-based transnational monitoring and thus represents a possibility for participation in supranational policies for the *Länder* and regions. The OMC was developed in the context of the initiatives for the European employment strategy in the late 1990s and upheld in the Lisbon strategy. The starting point can be seen as the White Paper on Growth, Competitiveness, Employment by the European Commission in 1953.

⁶ What is meant in particular are the decisions on the unequal treatment in the area of social security (Defrenne I), wage discrimination (Defrenne II), and the financial consequences of differing retirement ages for men and women (Defrenne III). What was actually successful was only the Defrenne Decision II which spoke directly to the wage components. In the other two decisions, a legal foundation was lacking, which was why guidelines first had to be created and these then had to be implemented into national law.

centralized among the Commission, the Council, and the ECJ, and the participating women's organizations—for example the European Women's Lobby (EWL) and networks of experts such as the Helsinki Group—are selective groups which are strategically used by political elites. In this context, what is primarily criticized is the civil society understanding held by the European governing elites. In particular, the European Commission is accused of viewing civil society as the “sum of all corporatisms” (Möllers 2001) in its White Paper on European Governance and thus limiting itself almost entirely to the economic elites. This is true in particular for complex policy fields such as that of gender politics, which are almost entirely dependent on expert reports (see Abels 2008). With this background, though, nongovernmental organizations and associations—for example church organizations and women's associations—have at most a consultative function and thus continually expand the competencies of the already-strong institutions, such as the Commission and the ECJ, in the area of gender politics. Because EU and employer organizations had not yet moved into this policy field in the 1970s, the Commission was first able to shape it without the influence of the social partners (see Hoskyns 1996a, 1996b, p. 197). The Commission was not yet subject to the pressure from the union and employer organization lobbies and therefore was relatively open to include transnational civil society actors such as the EWL via the “Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Men and Women” (see Mazey 1998, p. 138). With this strategic calculation, the Commission was able to legitimize and strengthen its own work as a supranational institution vis-à-vis the Council of Ministers, which represents the member states (see Cram 1993, p. 140).

In the end, these insights lead to the conclusion that the inclusion of women's networks and civil society organizations in the magical institutional triangle of the EU⁷ represents at most a formal democratization of the European political process (see Wilde 2010b). Thus, the civil society organizations in the sense of Antonio Gramsci (1980) are an essential element of the European multilevel system and hardly follow democratic principles insofar as they serve as a transmission belt for the governments; on the contrary, their influence on national decision-making processes is dependent on how hegemonic they are, that is, to what extent they advocate policies which are compatible with the current political orientation (see Demirovic 2001). This means that, from a governmental perspective, the participation of political actors and social partners at the local, national, and supranational levels are due to governmental technologies (see Wöhl 2010, p. 56) which are primarily oriented on rational criteria instead of opening up possibilities for democratic action (see Haahr and Walters 2005). Without participation, effective public-relations function, however, civil society organizations contribute more to centralization (see Bauer and Knöll 2003) and rationalization (see Haahr 2004, p. 223) of European politics

⁷ In contrast to the term “iron triangle” with which Theodore Lowi (1979) described bureaucratic politics between Congress administration and lobbyists, Alison Woodward (2004) uses the term “velvet triangle” as a metaphor for the three most important groups of actors in European gender politics: Femocrats in the sense of feminist bureaucrats in European institutions, groups of experts, and nongovernmental organizations.

and hardly represent a democratic counterweight to the centralization of political power in the EU.

As a consequence, the importance which is given to the participation of civil society actors in the European multilevel system can only be seen to correspond in a limited way with a political understanding of civil and civic society as a discursive space for communication and action, which Tocqueville believed to be an essential condition for a democratic order. In a letter to his father in 1831, he wrote that there is nothing absolute in the theoretical value of the institutions, because its effectiveness almost always depends on the original conditions of the social situation of the people by whom they are used.⁸ From this perspective, the efficacy of European institutions and their legitimacy as a democratic order are tied to the European citizens' agreement and political freedom of action. Framing democracy as no longer an institutional but instead a societal question is the true added value of examining Tocqueville and for answering the question of how democracy can be realized in the EU as a social constitutional form instead of a state organization of rule. However, the focus must be shifted from the European institutions to the democratic forms at the regional and local levels in order to create what Tocqueville believed was absolutely essential for the democratic constitution of a political order: a common space for action and decision as the expression of a self-constituting civil society.

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⁸ Hannah Arendt (1970, p. 42) also many years later disputed the inherent value of institutions when she wrote, “all political institutions are manifestations and materializations of power; they freeze and decline as soon as the living power of the people is no longer behind them to give support.”

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Chapter 4

Tocqueville Did Not Write About Soccer Clubs: Participation in Voluntary Associations and Political Involvement

Paul Dekker

Abstract Inspired by Robert Putnam and referring to Alexis de Tocqueville, many political sociologists have in recent decades focused on expectations of positive effects of participation in voluntary associations on political involvement. However, the literature and analyses of new data sources suggest a very fragile empirical basis for these expectations: Statistical relationships are weak and the causality is disputable. Present-day leisure clubs might not be the civic organisations that Tocqueville wrote about, and present-day citizens might have other sources of drivers for political involvement.

Keywords Voluntary associations · Schools of democracy · Alexis de Tocqueville · Political involvement · Civil society

Much has been written about civil society as the basis for political democracy, and about associations as the schools of democracy, teaching people civic skills and virtues and giving them a taste for political involvement. From Almond and Verba (1989; 1963) via Olsen (1982), Putnam (1993), Verba et al. (1995) Zimmer (1996) and Van Deth (1997) and others to Putnam (2000) and the wave of empirical articles to which the latter author has given rise in recent years, the relationship between social and political participation has been an important issue in political sociology. The basic hypothesis of much research is the finding put forward by Almond and Verba (1989; 1963, p. 265) in their comparative analysis of political culture in five countries in the 1950s:

...any membership—passive membership or membership in a non-political organisation—has an impact on political competence. Membership in some association, even if the individual does not consider the membership politically relevant and even if it does not involve his active participation, does lead to a more competent citizenry.

Membership of associations of a political nature and activities as a board member or volunteer were found to provide an extra stimulus for political involvement.

A few decades later, Putnam (1993, p. 176) nicely summarized the main result in his excellent study of differences between Italian regions as ‘good government

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in Italy is a by-product of singing groups and soccer clubs'. This is not only the case that these associations create more competent individual citizens, but also because they contribute to stable relationships between the individual members, to organisational power and to institutional checks and balances.¹ In his study about social capital in the USA a few years later, Putnam again stresses the importance of voluntary association involvement for democracy (2000, p. 336 ff.) and states that 'volunteering is part of the syndrome of good citizenship and political involvement' (2000, p. 132). Other authors are less euphoric, adding caveats and specifications and noting exceptions, but overall positive relationships are reported between social and political participation (Parry et al. 1992; Verba et al. 1995; Dekker and van den Broek 1998; contributions in Van Deth 1997; Sobieraj and White 2004; Newton and Montero 2007; Howard and Gilbert 2008; Van der Meer and van Ingen 2009; Wollerbæk 2009; Schultz and Bailer 2012; Jeong 2013, to name but a few).

In the research literature, several reasons are discussed for the observation that social participation breeds political involvement. Skills are a factor: People learn to participate in a meeting, to chair a meeting, to write a letter etc. These 'civic skills' (Verba et al. 1995) are very important for political life, but they are not the only things that are taught in voluntary associations as 'schools for democracy'. People also learn to tolerate and to deal with diverging opinions; they become informed about what is happening in their neighbourhood and in the wider society; the organisation provides social contact; it might broaden the sphere of interest, etc. Apart from these processes of individual learning, organisations may directly mobilize their members for political action: They are asked to sign a petition, to support a boycott, to contact their MP, etc. Verba et al. (1995, p. 40) mention three aspects of 'politicizing experience' of participation in nonpolitical institutions:

For one thing, undertaking activities that themselves have nothing to do with politics... can develop organizational and communication skills that are transferable to politics. In addition, these non-political institutions can act as the locus of attempts of political recruitment: church and organization members make social contacts and, thus, become part of networks through which requests for participation in politics are mediated. Moreover, those who take part in religious or organizational activity are exposed to political cues and messages—as when a minister gives a sermon on a political topic or when organization members chat informally about politics in a meeting.

So much for the expectations and explanations. In the next sections, I will present some survey evidence for this relationship, starting with European data to compare countries and then digging deeper into Dutch data. All the findings are based on data from (weighted) representative samples of the general population aged 18 years and above.

¹ See, e.g. Rosenblum (1998), Warren (2001), Fung (2003) and Skocpol (2003) for fuller treatments of the ways associations are supposed to enhance democracy. In this chapter, I focus on evidence for political involvement effects of voluntary associations on individuals.

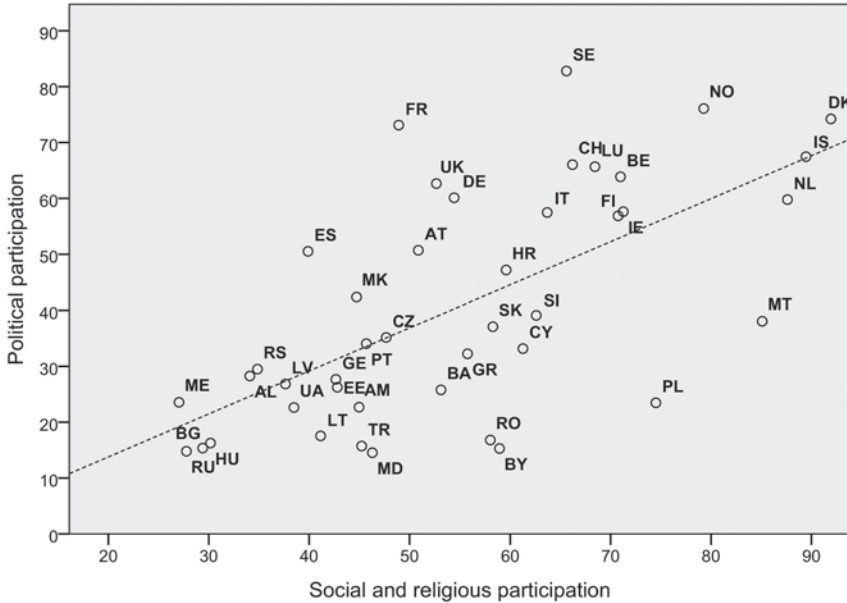


Fig. 4.1 Levels of social and political participation of 43 European countries in 2008–2009 (European Values Study 4, 2008/2009). Country codes in alphabetic order: *AL* Albania, *AM* Armenia, *AT* Austria, *BA* Bosnia Herzegovina, *BE* Belgium, *BG* Bulgaria, *BY* Belarus, *CH* Switzerland, *CY* Cyprus, *CZ* Czech Republic, *DE* Germany, *DK* Denmark, *EE* Estonia, *ES* Spain, *FI* Finland, *FR* France, *GE* Georgia, *GR* Greece, *HR* Croatia, *HU* Hungary, *IE* Ireland, *IL* Israel, *IS* Iceland, *IT* Italy, *LU* Luxemburg, *LV* Latvia, *LT* Lithuania, *MD* Moldova, *ME* Montenegro, *MK* Macedonia, *MT* Malta, *NL* Netherlands, *NO* Norway, *PL* Poland, *PT* Portugal, *RO* Romania, *RS* Serbia, *RU* Russian Federation, *SE* Sweden, *SK* Slovak R., *SL* Slovenia, *TR* Turkey, *UA* Ukraine, *UK* United Kingdom, *XX* Kosovo

The Overall European Picture

Based on different survey data, two figures present the relationship between social and political participation in Europe. The reason for using two figures is that cross-national data on voluntary associations are not very stable or reliable (Morales 2002), so evidence from more than one source is by no means a luxury.

Fig. 4.1 shows a general measurement of involvement in nonpolitical voluntary associations (membership and/or volunteering), and an overall measure of political activism for 43 countries.² The two measurements are correlated: 0.65

² Social and religious participation = attend religious services at least once a month; belonging to or currently doing unpaid voluntary work for a list of ‘voluntary organizations and activities’ including ‘other groups’, but *excluding* political parties or groups; local community action on issues like poverty, employment, housing, racial equality; third world development or human rights; conservation, the environment, ecology, animal rights; and the peace movement. Political participation = belongs to or is currently doing unpaid voluntary work for political parties or group, and/or has ever practised any of the three ‘different forms of political action that people can take’: signing a petition, joining in boycotts, and/or attending lawful demonstrations.

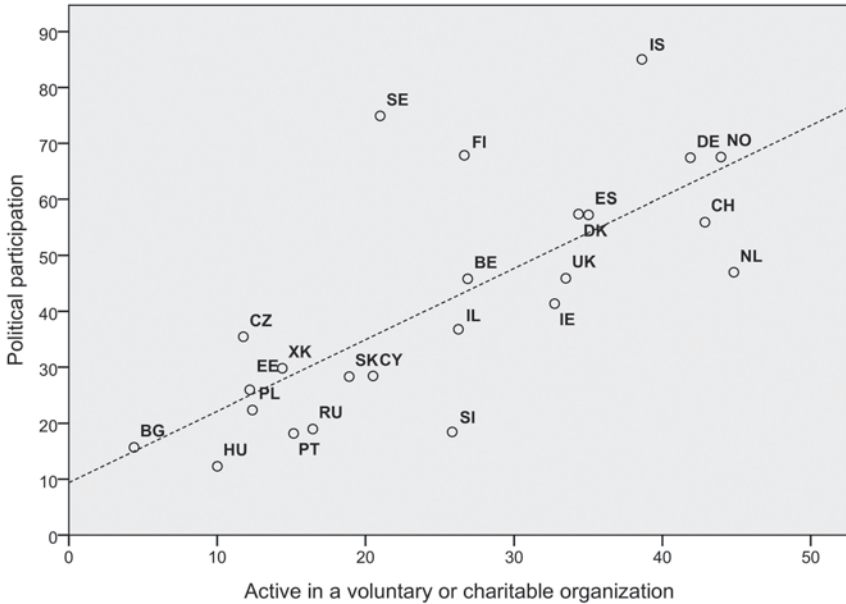


Fig. 4.2 Levels of social and political participation of 24 countries in 2012–2013 (European Social Survey 6, 2012/2013). Country codes in alphabetic order: *AL* Albania, *AM* Armenia, *AT* Austria, *BA* Bosnia Herzegovina, *BE* Belgium, *BG* Bulgaria, *BY* Belarus, *CH* Switzerland, *CY* Cyprus, *CZ* Czech Republic, *DE* Germany, *DK* Denmark, *EE* Estonia, *ES* Spain, *FI* Finland, *FR* France, *GE* Georgia, *GR* Greece, *HR* Croatia, *HU* Hungary, *IE* Ireland, *IL* Israel, *IS* Iceland, *IT* Italy, *LU* Luxemburg, *LV* Latvia, *LT* Lithuania, *MD* Moldova, *ME* Montenegro, *MK* Macedonia, *MT* Malta, *NL* Netherlands, *NO* Norway, *PL* Poland, *PT* Portugal, *RO* Romania, *RS* Serbia, *RU* Russian Federation, *SE* Sweden, *SK* Slovak R., *SL* Slovenia, *TR* Turkey, *UA* Ukraine, *UK* United Kingdom, *XK* Kosovo

($p < 0.001$), which means that 42% of the variance in national levels of political participation is statistically explained by the levels of social and religious participation. However, at the individual level, there is no positive relationship anywhere between social and political participation. Among the 43 countries shown in Fig. 4.1, the association varies from -0.04 (ns) in Poland to 0.34 ($p < 0.001$) in Albania (the average is 0.10).

Figure 4.2, which is based on a more restricted measurement of social participation and a broader indicator for political participation,³ shows the relationship for 24 European countries (including the ‘song-and-soccer’ European country, Israel).

³ Work for a voluntary or charitable organization = at least once every 6 months in the past 12 months became ‘involved in work for voluntary or charitable organisations’. Political participation = ‘Trying to improve things in (country) or help prevent things from going wrong; has in the last 12 months ... contacted a politician, government or local government (official); worked in a political party or action group; worked in another organisation or association; worn or displayed a campaign badge/sticker; signed a petition; taken part in a lawful public demonstration; and/or boycotted certain products.’

Again, the correlation between the levels is positive: 0.74 ($p < 0.001$), implying a statistical explanation of 54% of the variance in political participation by social participation. At the individual level, the correlation between participating socially and politically varies between 0.05 ($p = 0.09$) in Switzerland and 0.43 (< 0.001) in Germany.

Thus, the relationship between social and political participation operates in the right direction overall, but is not very strong. To gain a better idea of what lies behind this, we need to look at activities in some more detail.

A Closer Look at Western Europe

In Fig. 4.1, we combined membership and volunteering. However, the specific act of volunteering might be of extra value in stimulating political involvement (Almond and Verba 1989). We therefore want to distinguish between simple membership and volunteering in voluntary associations. We also want to take other characteristics of citizens into account: here, the effects of sex (gender), age and level of education. In particular, levels of education might be relevant: Well-educated people are much more involved in politics (Nie et al. 1996), and if they participate more in voluntary associations as well, this may ‘cause’ a stronger political involvement of people in voluntary associations. If voluntary association membership and volunteering have real effects, they should have statistical effects when adjusted for these demographic characteristics. We will home in on a few countries in western Europe: Sweden (SE), United Kingdom (UK), France (FR), Germany (DE) and the Netherlands (NL), all rich countries and well-developed democracies, but with different political cultures and ‘welfare-state regimes’. We return to European Values Study (EVS) to draw a distinction between membership and volunteering, and to take other factors into account to explain differences in political participation. Table 4.1 shows the results of the (logistic) regression analyses.

Compared to non-volunteering members (and corrected for the effects of the other characteristics), nonmembers are statistically significantly less involved in politics in all five countries, but volunteers are not more involved anywhere! The differences between the educational levels are more important overall than differences in involvement in voluntary associations. Sex and age are much less relevant and their effects differ between countries. Taking the ‘pseudo-explained variance’ at the bottom of the table as an indicator, the value of knowledge about social participation in forecasting political participation is quite minimal everywhere.

Digging Deeper into the Netherlands

The next step is to look at the type or content of voluntary associations. With the quote by Almond and Verba about nonpolitical associations in mind, we focus on leisure organisations. On one hand, these associations probably fulfil a number of conditions for politicizing experiences: They involve face-to-face contacts and

Table 4.1 Determinants of political participation in five countries: adjusted odds ratios. (European Values Study 4, 2008/2009)

	SE	UK	FR	DE	NL
<i>Social participation type</i> (ref. = member but not a volunteer)					
Neither member nor volunteer	0.52***	0.67**	0.54***	0.58***	0.39***
Volunteer	1.14	1.27	1.03	1.18	0.90
<i>Sex (ref. = male)</i>					
Female	0.88	0.97	1.08	1.25*	0.96
<i>Age (ref. = 40–59):</i>					
18–39	0.76	0.42***	0.87	1.01	0.82
60+	0.74	0.71*	1.04	0.94	0.72*
<i>Education level (ref. = middle level)</i>					
Lower educated	0.62*	0.67**	0.39***	0.77*	0.44***
Higher educated	1.68*	1.27	2.64***	1.78***	1.60**
Nagelkerke pseudo r^2	0.07	0.11	0.15	0.06	0.15
Ditto, without social participation types	0.04	0.09	0.13	0.03	0.12

Political participation = the indicator used in Fig. 4.1. Adjusted odds ratios have a value between 0 and 1 if political participation in the category, adjusted for all other characteristics, is lower than in the reference category; and a value above 1, if political participation is higher. Statistical significance of results: * < .05, ** < .01 and *** < .001 (two-tailed).

are related to a local community—which should make political discussions about common concerns and political mobilization easier—and are more horizontally organized—which should offer more opportunities for active involvement in board positions, etc. On the other hand, leisure organisations are less focused on political issues than interest and advocacy organisations, and members will be less easily mobilized for political action or involved in formal politics.

We use the combined general population surveys *Cultural Changes in the Netherlands* and *Life Situation Index 2012/2013*, which are representative for the Dutch population aged 18 years (voting age) and above. Dichotomous indicators have been constructed. Table 4.2 shows combinations of leisure and other types of non-political social participation with various types of civic and political involvement. The term ‘civic’ needs some explanation. In my understanding, civic participation is something between social and political participation: not purely for fun or for personal interests, and not in purely political state-related organisations and settings.⁴ In Table 4.2, I use ‘collective actions’ as indicators for civic participation and I place these indicators on both the social and political dimensions of the table.

⁴ I am aware that this is quite vague, but I prefer this vagueness to the use of ‘civic’ as simply not being political, and thus including leisure associations (making soccer clubs ‘civic’; need I say more?). My sense of ‘civic’ comes close to the definition of civic groups by Paul Lichterman (2005, p. 8): ‘...groups in which people relate to each other and to the wider society primarily as citizens or members of society, rather than as subjects of a state administration or as consumers, producers, managers, or as owners in the marketplace. They relate to each other “civically”.’

Table 4.2 Political participation and involvement among social participants and nonparticipants in the Netherlands: percentages^a. (Cultural Changes in the Netherlands and Life Situation Index, 2012/2013)

	Per cent (%)	Local civic participation ^b	General civic participation ^c	High political involvement ^d	Prone to protest ^e
All	100	37	15	16	54
Leisure organisations: no membership and not volunteering ^f	51	30	14	16	51
Leisure members, but not volunteers	28	35	15	14	55
Leisure volunteers	21	57	17	19	62
Not involved in religious organisations ^g	78	35	13	15	54
Religious participants	22	45	23	19	55
Low level of cultural consumption ^h	49	33	10	15	45
Cultural participants	51	40	18	17	62
No local civic participation ^b	63	0	10	13	47
Local civic participants	37	100	23	21	66
No general civic participation ^c	85	34	0	13	51
General civic participants	15	58	100	32	74

^a Thus 37% of all Dutch people aged 18 years and older are participating in local civic activities. The figure is 57% among the leisure volunteers, 45% among the religious participants and, of course, 100% among the local civic participants

^b Volunteering for a school, neighbourhood organisation or organized social support or being involved in a collective action for a local issue in the past 2 years

^c Volunteering for advocacy organisations (human rights, environment, etc.) or being involved in a collective action for a national or global issue in the past 2 years

^d Member or volunteer of a political organisation or 'highly interested' in politics

^e Would probably 'try to do something' if parliament were to decide to pass an unjust bill

^f Based on membership of and volunteering for a sports club, hobby club or amateur music or theatre association

^g Member or volunteer of a religious or philosophy-of-life organisation or attendance at religious services at least once a month

^h High versus low level of attendance at theatres, classical and pop concerts, museums, cinemas, etc.

The table suggests a strong relationship between active involvement in leisure organisations and local civic participation, but less so with non-localized forms of civic and political involvement. Participation in religious organisations seems to have broader civic implications. The consumptive act of cultural participation (restricting social interaction (hopefully) to whispering and breaks during performances) shows differences as well, indicating that we might be measuring something other than participation effects. Both types of civic participation correlate strongly with political participation.

To gain a better impression of possible real effects of leisure participation (and not just a correlation caused by other factors), Table 4.3 presents the results of re-

Table 4.3 Determinants of civic and political participation in the Netherlands: adjusted odds ratios. (Cultural Changes in the Netherlands and Life Situation Index 2012/2013)

	Local civic participation			Civic/political participation ^a		
	Leisure	+ Other participation	+ Socio-demographic	Leisure	+ Other participation	+ Socio-demographic
Leisure participation type (ref. = member but not a volunteer)						
Neither member nor volunteer	0.79*	0.81	0.80	0.96	1.09	1.13
Volunteer	2.38***	2.40***	2.36***	1.24	1.24	1.22
Religious participation		1.44**	1.46***		2.27***	2.33***
Cultural participation		1.30**	1.21		1.89***	1.50**
Participation in paid work or study		0.78*	0.76*		0.97	0.77
Female			1.22*			0.90
18–39 years (ref.: 40–59)			0.52***			0.93
60+ years (ref.: 40–59)			0.76			0.91
Lower educated (ref.: middle)			0.59***			0.64*
Higher educated (ref.: middle)			1.19			2.36***
Nagelkerke pseudo <i>r</i> ²	0.06	0.07	0.11	0.00	0.05	0.10

^a General civic participation from Table 4.2 and/or membership/volunteering in a political organisation (18%). Statistical significance of results: * < .05, ** < .01 and *** < .001 (two-tailed).

gression analyses for two types of civic/political participation: the local type from Table 4.2 and a nonlocal measurement of participation. We try to adjust as well as we can use the available data for the fact that people differ in their general tendency to participate and be involved in the society. We adjust for other types of participation and additionally for three social-demographic core variables.

Similar to Table 4.1 and in line with the literature, education has a relatively strong effect on both types of civic and political participation (but local civic participation is less of a typical pursuit for the highly educated than ‘higher’ forms of political participation). Women range from 40 to 59-years-old are somewhat more attracted to local civic participation than others. The same applies for people *not* participating in the labour market or in the education system.⁵ Looking at the other adjusted participation effects, we see that only religious and cultural participations have statistically significant positive effects on general civic/political involvement. Religious participation and participation as a volunteer in leisure associations have these positive effects on local civic participation. Thus, types of local participation seem to be somewhat connected, but we find hardly any evidence for the ‘any membership’ statement by Almond and Verba with which we started.

⁵ This does not contradict expectations about the positive social capital and civic effects of ‘working together’ (Estlund 2003) instead of ‘bowling together’, but the time constraints imposed by the obligations of a job or school might just be stronger than the positive effects for most people.

Why Is Participation in Voluntary Associations so Irrelevant?

In the preceding sections, I have focused on leisure organisations, mainly because of the strong claim of Almond and Verba concerning nonpolitical organisations. For other types of organizations (unions, advocacy), membership makes a difference (Dekker and van den Broek 1998; Stolle and Rochon 2001; Van der Meer and van Ingen 2009), but they come close to tautologies: ‘members of human rights groups are politically more active than non-members’. In addition to being not so obvious, a positive reason to focus on leisure associations is that most of these are still face-to-face organisations. Meeting other members is a condition, or at least an incentive, for discussions about community issues and the development of civic virtues and civic skills, i.e., to serve as ‘grandes écoles gratuites’.⁶ Why do our leisure associations not show statistical evidence of being schools for political involvement?⁷ I see two possible reasons: (1) voluntary associations are no longer what they used to be and (2) there are more important other settings for developing political involvement.

Voluntary Associations Are No Longer What They Used to Be

For De Tocqueville and Putnam, at least, associations are supposed to bring together people from different social groups as citizens in a more or less public setting. In that situation, they can develop trust, broaden their horizons and discover issues of common interest. In reality, associations nowadays are often quite homogeneous and focused on a special interest (Theiss-Morse and Hibbing 2005). Special-interest organisations may lead to a narrowing of perspectives and strengthening of group egotism. Leisure organisations may simply have no interest at all in community affairs and ‘avoid politics’⁸ for a better atmosphere. A modern consumerist sports club

⁶ Of course, I am referring here to Alexis de Tocqueville. This formulation is probably the not so-often visited source of present-day authors who write about the ‘(neo)Tocquevillian’ idea of voluntary associations as ‘schools of democracy’ in the Almond and Verba sense of nonpolitical associations being the starter for political participation. Ironically, Tocqueville writes here in exactly the opposite direction about the blessings of political associations for civil ones: ‘Political associations may therefore be considered as large free schools, where all the members of the community go to learn the general theory of association’ (Tocqueville 1990, vol 2, p. 116).

⁷ See, Van Ingen and Dekker (2012) for a study of the coexistence in all types of voluntary associations of various conditions for being a ‘school of democracy’: opportunities to exercise civic skills; meeting citizens not similar to your own group; informal talk about politics; connections with political institutions. We asked active members about all these aspects for their associations (instead of constructing virtual average organizations). Our main conclusion was that there are virtually no voluntary associations that incorporate all characteristics of a school of democracy.

⁸ This is the title of a book by Eliasoph (1998) about volunteer groups in the USA ‘working hard to keep public-spirited conversation backstage’ (Eliasoph 1998, p. 63) because politics (political divides between volunteers, relationships with dirty politicians etc.) would spoil their work for the common good. Wuthnow (1998, p. 57) observes the same, stating, ‘Setting government to the side of one’s thinking may have become the condition for believing that civic involvement matters at

is very different from the associations De Tocqueville envisaged in America in the 1830s. Those were often focused on community problems—‘building schools, hospitals, and jails’—and were naturally close to politics and government. They were much more important in people’s daily lives than modern specialist organisations that focus on a specific interest or leisure need.

Other Settings Are More Important

The time spent in voluntary associations is generally very small compared to hours spent in paid work, study, family life and informal socializing. In most Western countries, the vast majority of population learn essential civic skills in school, and even receive some civic education. Moreover, the workplace is likely to offer a greater variety of people to meet than the club. More than in the past, it is a social meeting place where people talk about news, community affairs and perhaps politics. Considerations of justice, equal rights, social responsibilities, environment etc. are probably more important in the average workplace than on the average sports field. The media, Internet etc., are probably more important sources of political information, forums for public discourse and means of mobilization. Of course, these contexts have their limits and drawbacks, but it is hard to see why voluntary associations specifically have studied so intensively about schools of democracy in recent years. As regards places where citizens meet and might associate and perhaps become a little involved in politics, there are more competitors for voluntary associations. One can think of (semi-)public facilities such as multipurpose community centres, but also of (semi-) commercial ‘third places’ such as bookstore cafés, where people who are relatively unknown to one another yet have shared interests can meet (Lewis and Bridger 2000, p. 121 ff.; cf. Schudson 2006; Dekker 2009). As regards political mobilization, boycotts and buycotts are important events, often outside the realm of associational life. Rather than engaging in voluntary associations that develop political activities, individuals are beginning (not infrequently via the Internet) to take a role as active consumers.

So Should We Forget About Voluntary Associations?

Ideas about the politicizing relevance of nonpolitical voluntary associations might still apply for some of them, for some people, in some contexts. I have shown weak and insignificant statistical effects, but what does that mean? It might mean that in

all.’ LeBlanc (1999) signals similar ideas among a group of Japanese female volunteers: ‘... the longer a woman participated in the volunteer world, the more likely she was to blame politics for social situations that she found unacceptable. Nevertheless,...she often remained committed to avoiding politics when possible’ (LeBlanc 1999, p. 112). Again, this is not about leisure associations, but about volunteers for social purposes—but all the more depressing for high expectations about the politicizing effects of social participation.

general there is no effect—and I have just given some possible reasons why that may be the case—but it is also possible that an overall correlation close to zero is the outcome of a balance between cases with a positive relationship and cases with a negative relationship. As regards the topical issue of social trust, for instance, we know of well-documented opposite relationships: There are people who are politically active because of their trust in others (Almond and Verba 1989), and there are people who are politically active because they distrust their neighbours (Crenson 1983). There are people who do nothing if they believe that others are also doing nothing, and there are people who do something precisely because no-one else is doing anything. For some people, involvement in voluntary organisations and voluntary work are stepping stones towards politics (Verba et al. 1995), while for others it offers an opportunity of doing something for the community without getting involved in politics (Eliasoph 1998). If groups with opposing logics hold each other in balance, there are no overall statistical relationships. Yet, these relationships are anything but irrelevant—because some children of alcoholics later take to substance abuse themselves, while others become teetotal, it does not follow that the alcohol use of the parents had no impact. The question then is: Under what conditions which understandable reaction occurs. The search for general axioms in human behaviour is then replaced by a search for ‘social mechanisms’, in other words understandable examples of causality or logical behaviour which cannot be predicted. Jon Elster uses this concept to reflect upon the relationship between civil associations and political activity in De Tocqueville’s *Democracy in America* and cites spillover, compensation and crowding-out effects (Elster 1993, p. 180–191). We need to investigate why some people combine social participation and political involvement and others do not, to identify groups with different logics of behaviour, and to make estimates of their proportion of the population. We have to focus more on contradictory combined modes of causation; identical conditions can lead to different outcomes and there are multiple paths to identical outcomes (Grofman 2007). This change of perspective is needed not only because of the insignificant statistical results produced by most analyses. Even a clear positive relationship between social participation and political involvement might well hide substantial segments of the population that deviate from this pattern. The usual practice in social research is to test whether one explanation/mechanism is dominant overall. It is often surprising how theoretical considerations lead to the expectation of huge differences, and some ‘zero point zero something’ regression coefficients and percentages of explained variance close to zero are then celebrated as empirical results that confirm (or more correctly, do not reject) the theory, just because they have reached a statistical criterion of significance (Taagepera 2007). On top of that is the ignorance regarding stronger effects of control variables and a lack of interest in other indicators. This leads to a stream of empirical research that is highly self-confirming. Theory: Nonpolitical membership is the key to political involvement; test: The difference between 23% politically active members and 19% politically active nonmembers is statistically significant; thus, Tocqueville/Almond and Verba/Putnam are right. Thus, we are not only self-confirming but possibly also confirming the illusions of policymakers concerning the importance

of voluntary associations—but not contributing much to a better understanding of differences in and dynamics of political involvement. We might be aware of different paths to political participation, but the usual analyses concentrate on a general net effect of involvement in voluntary associations, statistically adjusted for the average of other effects. In future research, we should focus more on the existence of groups (associations, people and contexts) with different, partially contradicting causalities.

These then are some of the methodological caveats to the possibility that the nice theory that participation in nonpolitical associations might have positive political involvement effects. However, the challenge might not be to discover the specific circumstances in which the theory applies rather than to think about the conditions we might create in order to prove the theory. What are the manipulable conditions needed to encourage people in leisure organisations to talk about community affairs, to develop civic virtues and skills and get involved in politics? These are questions about how to contribute to ‘make democracy work’ by doing things in specific ways: ‘better together’ (Putnam and Feldstein 2003). In this perspective—and while remaining in the USA—social researchers may advise that it is better to drop ‘existing federal tax policies governing non-profit organisations’ (Sobieraj and White 2004) to stimulate political debates in voluntary associations.

Conclusion

We have found no evidence for politicizing role of nonpolitical voluntary associations. This may be a consequence of an actual lack of impact, but also of a lack of the methodological refinement needed to tackle the complex relationships between social and political involvement. Whatever the truth, a simple theory of the politicizing effects of participating in nonpolitical voluntary associations is plainly not tenable. Make it realistic by focusing on the conditions under which it might work, or forget it and focus on more important settings of civic interaction between today’s citizens. And do not refer to Tocqueville too much. He did not write about soccer clubs, he wrote about ‘political society’ and other serious stuffs.

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Chapter 5

Voluntary Associations and Social Capital—Inclusive and Exclusive Dimensions

Sebastian Braun

Abstract The term “social capital” has in recent years become a fashionable, even glamorous buzzword in social science and politics. It gained popularity at the end of the 1970s, particularly through the works of Pierre Bourdieu, James Coleman, and Robert Putnam. With their varied understandings of this term, they gave inspiration to disparate discussions over the condition and future of modern societies. Based on this framework and with a special focus on the conceptual debates in Germany, this chapter raises the question how voluntary associations might contribute to democracy and welfare.

Keywords Voluntary associations · Theories of social capital · Association’s contribution to democracy · Pierre Bourdieu · James Coleman · Robert Putnam

The term “social capital” has in recent years become a fashionable, even glamorous buzzword in science and politics. It gained popularity at the end of the 1970s, particularly through the sociological and political science works of Pierre Bourdieu, James Coleman, and Robert Putnam. With their varied understandings of this term, they gave inspiration to disparate discussions over the condition and future of modern societies (see, e.g., Braun 2011; Braun and Weiß 2008; Portes 1998). In this context, Putnam (2000), with his understanding, has had by far the most lasting influence on these broad discussions about civil society and related ideas of voluntary associations with *Lebenswelt* (day-to-day) references, i.e., federations, projects, initiatives as well as other voluntary organizations, all of which are producers of social capital. Since then, Putnam’s research and his political activities have triggered a continuous interest, particularly in the social capital created by civil societies—notably in Germany, starting a variety of different discussions.

This contribution is based on an already published article (Braun 2009), which I reviewed and updated for this publication.

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In this context, social capital has become a concept open to interpretation, one associated with high expectations on the revitalization of social bonds, relationships, and networks in a dynamic civil society, which might have untapped resources for substantial contributions to democracy and welfare in Germany. Social capital denotes three key aspects: first, *social trust*—making social life more palatable by facilitating cooperation between individuals, something that is indispensable for societal coordination; second, the *norm of generalized reciprocity*—contributing to the solution of social dilemmas; and third, *voluntary associations* (i.e., *secondary or citizens' associations*)—creating social trust and maintaining generalized reciprocity norms (for further details see Braun 2001; Putnam 2000).

Therefore, in Putnam's concept of social capital, voluntary associations—especially the small local clubs, such as sports clubs, choral societies, or hobby clubs—represent the core issue. In these associations, social capital is generated and regenerated, since unlike real or physical capital it is not consumed by regular use. Instead, as a byproduct of collective action, it rather tends to increase (see Zimmer 2007).

Against the backdrop of the conceptual presumption outlined above, this chapter focuses on the question as to what makes a voluntary association so special that it be considered an institution (re)producing social capital: Which structural features does this form of organization have compared with state or private commercial organizations? Differentiating between the two meanwhile popular concepts of “bonding” and “bridging” social capital, which one of these specific forms of social capital do voluntary associations (re)produce? In the following, these questions will be discussed based on a theoretical approach describing voluntary associations as *Wahl-Gemeinschaften* (chosen communities) (Strob 1999). In this context, the chapter draws on German research on voluntary associations in order to conceptualize mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion in voluntary associations. Bourdieu's social theory (1996, 1999) provides the framework to first analyze these mechanisms and to then distinguish between “bonding” and “bridging” social capital.

Special Structural Features of Voluntary Associations

In his comparative analyses of private commercial and state organizations, Horch (1983, 1992) systematically carved out the analytic ideal type of the “democratic voluntary association” with its own specific structural features. This ideal type could be described as a freely chosen union of natural persons who jointly pursue their specific goals within the framework of a formal, i.e., planned, organizational structure. This organizational structure is oriented towards the association's goal. A major feature of voluntary associations is the membership structure, insofar as the members—being the top decision-making body—represent the sovereign who is in charge of delegating competencies and organizational constitutional decisions (see also Wex 2004).

Underlying all this are democratic, procedural, and participatory policy-forming and decision-making processes, in which the members negotiate and define their as-

sociation's goals independent of external influences. Through combining different forms of the members' voluntary participation and collaboration, these goals are converted into social practice. The lead principle of this economic system is the adaptation of goals oriented towards subsistence economy, i.e., the goal of production is fulfilling a certain demand rather than generating an income. Demands may be aligned to members or third parties, whereby services for third parties must always match the association's goals and thus correspond with the members' interests (see Braun 2003).

Hence, without expressly making it an issue, the research on social capital evidently starts from this ideal type in order to back up the specific role of voluntary associations as institutions for (re)producing social capital in modern societies. Offe and Fuchs (2001, p. 423 ff.), for example, note, "In the training of skills and social competences crucial for dealing with these features of secondary associations, we see their contribution to the formation of social capital"; since voluntary associations would lack both "the certainty of authoritatively defined goals representing the special feature of 'tertiary' formal organizations as well as the certainty of a 'given' membership which is the special feature of families." This is why voluntary associations would have a high potential to "make their members practice the use of virtues and moral conduct, allowing them to demonstrate helpfulness, ability to judge as well communication and cooperation skills beyond the circle of those immediately involved" (Offe 1999, p. 114), virtues that would have a lasting external impact.

Voluntary Associations as Chosen Communities

The central idea behind this concept, which is not further explained, is based on two assumptions that build upon one another. They can be simply summarized as follows: Due to the interactive processes taking place in the normative field of the respective social system, voluntary associations produce a particular value sphere in which the members acquire far-reaching civil competences ("acceptance of socialization"). According to the "transfer assumption" upon which it is based, voluntary associations would then transfer these competences as habitualized dispositions to other areas of life. This would then ultimately mean that voluntary associations produce a "competent citizen" (Münkler 1997), one who has relevant cognitive and moral qualities, which could be considered to be the minimum requirements for attaining a citizenship status (see Buchstein 1996).

These two core assumptions are so significant and comprehensive that their empirical plausibility can only be verified based on differentiated empirical studies of voluntary associations. However, this requires first and foremost theoretical assumptions explaining why voluntary associations are of all things the ones able to make these socialization processes possible for their members. So far, the research on social capital has not dealt with these assumptions sufficiently; on the other hand, against the background of the ideal type of the democratic voluntary association outlined earlier, different rationales could be developed that would offer clues for the special importance of such associations for the (re)production of social capital.

In this context, the notion of *Wahl-Gemeinschaft* (chosen community) used by Strob (1999) is especially helpful. He amended the structural analyses of voluntary associations conducted by Horch (1983, 1992) by adding an action theory conception, thereby reconstructing a genuine action logic of voluntary associations. Strob is doing this by taking the model of the four social sectors—state, market, third sector, and informal sphere—commonly used in third-sector research, in order to carve out the specific action logics predominant in the individual sectors. The actual innovative element in Strob’s model theory framework is his attempt to reconstruct an independent ideal-typical action logic in voluntary associations of the third sector: referring to the mutual goal-oriented benefit and the emotional, personal commitment which explains the voluntary limitation of individual benefit expectation. In Strob’s conception (1999), voluntary associations represent “chosen communities,” whose members join together out of their free will to make a joint effort to commit to the realization of their interests.

These terms denote significant and innovative elements of Strob’s model: first, referring to Weber’s (1980) action-oriented concept of collectivization, Strob develops his own and convincing definition of “chosen communities.” The term community is marked by a double commitment: on the one hand, joint goals (goal commitment), on the other, emotional, personal commitment to the community members (membership commitment). While goal commitment is a sign of that particular individual benefit expectation which causes every single individual to voluntarily join a chosen community, the membership commitment serves as a basis for all members to align their own benefit to that of the other members, thereby voluntarily limiting their own benefit: “For today’s (chosen) communities is, therefore, exactly that feature constitutive, which is considered a special criterion of the association: the free union of citizens. So the term *community* can be absolutely brought in line with how an association or a club could be described. Using the term *community* though offers the advantage to be able to come up with more precise propositions over the actions taking place in communities” (Strob 1999, p. 144).

With this, we have already addressed a second relevant element in Strob’s approach. He uses the term community as a starting point for examining services and how they are rendered in chosen communities: “joint work” in the sense of “civic engagement,” referring to goal- and purpose-oriented commitment which every single individual offers to the group. “To count as joint work, work has to fulfill the criterion of serving the common good or to be of general interest. Such an understanding of joint work does not preclude that in other respects this work can also be of personal value to the individual. The original meaning of ‘common’ in terms of ‘benefiting several persons on a rotating basis’ refers to the alternating benefit which both the community and the working individual can draw from joint work” (Strob 1999, p. 144). In contrast, the notion of joint work would fall short if limited to mutual benefit. The special emotional quality of a community as an expression of inner closeness explains, according to Strob, why an individual will participate in joint work even without the expectation of immediate benefit.

Structure-Immanent Forms of Interaction in Voluntary Associations

Ideal-typical forms of interactions essential for the formation of social capital result from the structural condition of voluntary associations and the immanent action logic in chosen communities. These forms of interaction can be subsumed under five dimensions outlined as follows, referring to fundamental works on voluntary associations by Horch (1992).

Establishing Behavioral Expectations

As convincingly presented by Horch (1983, 1992), behavioral expectations and rules in voluntary associations are established in a completely different fashion than in state organizations or commercial enterprises. According to Horch (1983), rules and behaviors in ideal-typical voluntary associations are not established through formalization, but rather through stabilizing interactions; not through specialization but personalization; not through formal, but informal control; through voting among the members instead of centralization and through influences via personal relationships. All these forms of control could be conceived of as functional equivalents of the common elements *norm*, *position* and *role* as known from the sociology of organizations.

Between Formal Organization and Informal Group

Against this background, ideal-typical voluntary associations differ from formal organizations and informal groups in that they, on the one hand, leave space for immediate diffused relationships while at the same time pursuing specific supra-individual goals. On the other hand, they may well be formally and rationally organized in order to pursue these goals, however, without entirely separating motivation from goals and structure. They unite “purpose with purposelessness, obligation with voluntariness, seriousness with exuberance, distancing with approximation, publicity with privacy” (Horch 1983, p. 146). In this respect, voluntary associations are oftentimes also described as institutions, in which sociability plays a crucial role as a “form of play of socialization” (Simmel 1999 [1908]).

Interaction, Social Trust, Social Networks

This structural condition in turn provides the basis for promoting those particular social actions in voluntary associations, with which individuals mutually orient themselves towards one another, thereby developing close social ties among them.

Based on these social relationships, there is not just a dense social network with “strong ties” (Granovetter 1973) developing among the members of an association (in everyday language, this is commonly referred to as “clubbiness” and has a negative connotation). Rather, these close relationships, which are integrated in a densely woven network and normally exist on a sustained basis, also produce social trust, which results from the fact that people are used to depending on promises being held and other members not defecting. The constant interactions between members assure that the information flow within the association’s network continuously rises, which is why the motivation to defect clearly decreases, since the costs of a breach in trust or the risk of losing one’s reputation as a trustworthy partner would otherwise increase.

Consensus Building on Conflicts

However, this constellation of the “trustable other” does not mean that a voluntary association consists of a group of like-minded people demonstrating homogenous interests and a consensus vis-a-vis heterogeneous interests and conflicts. In contrast, the existence of democratic decision-making structures requires the legitimacy and necessity of conflicts. Conflict and consensus are conceived as reciprocally interdependent processes, i.e., conflict solutions require a consensus, and the acceptable consensus in turn has evolved from conflicts (see Reinhardt and Tillmann 2002, p. 44 f.).

In voluntary associations, consensus building through conflict resolution can occur at two major levels: first, at a more formal level within the framework of periodical elections and general meetings; second, at a more informal level by having a “cracker barrel democracy” (Baur and Braun 2003). The latter is quite significant in this context, as voluntary associations tend to “shift conflicts to the informal level in order to resolve them in a sort of familial atmosphere among members by finding a compromise” (Zauner and Simsa 1999, p. 409).

Joint Actions Through the Motivation for Double Commitment

In addition to democratic decision-making processes, which Horch (1983, p. 16) refers to as “the primary control mode” and by means of which members are able to influence the association’s goals, the members’ collaboration on a free-of-charge basis represents the prime resource for generating the association’s services. At the same time, the association’s dependency on this resource forms the members’ “secondary control mode” (Horch 1983, p. 16), which also serves to control the association’s goals. Certainly, the willingness to voluntarily contribute to service production cannot be taken for granted. According to Horch (1985, p. 260), membership requirements are oftentimes so low that it is necessary to encourage members to voluntarily commit, since collective goods produced by voluntary associations also always elicit free-riding behavior.

The fact that members do not choose to act upon a potential free-riding opportunity, but instead will voluntarily opt to make a joint effort, makes sense in terms of the conception of voluntary associations as chosen communities and is founded on the twofold goal orientation and membership loyalty, based on commitment. These “expressive motivations for loyalty” imply a positive intellectual connection to the associations and its members (see Strob 1999). Yet, from these feelings of loyalty may also emerge an affective-habitual willingness to commit to the association and its members’ interests without being driven entirely by strategic cost-benefit calculation.

This is exactly what explains the unique capability for cooperation that is a trademark of chosen communities: “The reason why individuals are devoted to an association is not because they expect to gain advantages (or avoid disadvantages) based on collective decisions and actions implemented, but because the collective and/or the individuals constituting it are the way they are, i.e., they have their own quality and dignity that are ascribed them” (Kirsch 1983, p. 111).

Chosen Communities of Taste

One can, therefore, understand the active participation and voluntary commitment of members of a chosen community as a manifestation of a certain intertwined set of values and norms in a voluntary association, which at the same time contributes to maintaining and advancing this set of values and norms. This can be interpreted as an “imperative for the conservation of resources,” which exists in voluntary associations: first, for establishing the association’s product or service offerings and second, for producing and reproducing the socio-integrative services. It appears then likely that through the members’ voluntary commitment they be “on the one hand inevitably and in an objectively comprehensive manner drawn into the normative field of the social system (1), but may also have the possibility of exerting a slight yet significant influence on the shaping of the structure and functional services of the collective (2)” (Geser 1980, p. 208). These two processes will in turn contribute to supporting and strengthening the special action logic in chosen communities: the attachment of the members to their chosen community’s common goals, the attachment among the members themselves, and the attachment to the chosen community itself (see Strob 1999).

This demonstrates that voluntary associations are always “closed relationships” (Horch 1992, p. 23). These closed relationships inevitably have specific access regulations and conditions to maintain the socialized in-group character via a specific norm and value system. By awarding individuals a more or less formalized affiliation and membership status, they are included into the values and norms of this social system. Thus, with this membership status a dividing line is created between all those individuals constituting the social system, and those who do not strive for a membership status, or to whom this status is denied. By the same token, those who are not members also represent a vital aspect of the environment for the association, in order to enable the mutual integration within an association as a social

system. An individual seeking to become a member in a voluntary association must therefore always negotiate specific access regulations as well as fulfill certain access prerequisites.

This process of inclusion and exclusion refers to varied studies of social structure research, all of which demonstrate that in particular an individual's socio-structural features (i.e., sex, age, migration background, education, occupation, income) explain all of the processes of social closure with which "social collectivities seek to maximize rewards by restricting access to resources and opportunities to a limited circle of eligibles" (Parkin 2006, p. 125). These processes of social closure may be based on formal reasons, in that voluntary associations explicitly limit accessibility for certain social groups. However, research has been pointing out for some time now that even in light of the vast number of voluntary associations considered to be socially open at the formal level, social closure may nonetheless occur via more subtle mechanisms, behind the members' backs (see Zimmer 2007).

For example, Bourdieu's structuralist class theory draws attention to such subtle closure mechanisms, which occur in the process of entering voluntary associations. According to Bourdieu, *habitus* as a structuralized system makes sure that there is "a process of scanning and assessing [...] in relation to others" (Bourdieu 1996, p. 375). *Habitus* as a manifestation of the individuals' entire external and internal mindset comprises their perceptual, intellectual and action-oriented schemata, personal taste, lifestyle and everyday cultural practices as much as their mind-body relationship and the action patterns or social relationships, which the individuals prefer based on the "elective affinities of taste" (Bourdieu 1996). This is why there is a unifying principle, which, mostly subconsciously, indicates to us whether someone is our type or at least "speaks our language" (Vester et al. 2001, p. 169). Social cohesion (re) produces itself in communities of action, which result from a similar *habitus*, and manifest themselves in voluntary associations as "chosen communities of taste."

Especially in freely chosen memberships, the particularly distinctive "tendency to create homogeneous circles from heterogeneous environments" may exist (Horch 1983, p. 44). This tendency of self-attribution according to similarity can be explained by the fact that one feels more "comfortable" and "in good hands" in socio-structurally homogeneous groups rather than in heterogeneous groups, the reason being that based on a similar *habitus*, individuals are neither considered out of place by others, nor do they themselves feel this way. Such subtle selection mechanisms and associated processes of closure can be indeed labeled as unintended results of intended actions, since these mechanisms are not the actors' intended goals, but merely a byproduct of their own undertaking (see Merton 1995). This way, voluntary associations are always able to reproduce social structures that are valid far beyond the association, because membership is created through the performative production of distinctions, i.e., segregation and conformity. The research on social capital refers to this as "bonding social capital," which is something that voluntary associations generate only if they unite "similar individuals in terms of some aspects (ethnicity, age, sex, social class, etc.)" (Putnam and Goss 2001, p. 29).

Bourdieu's comprehensive analyses of France's elites, persons who enjoy informal and well-established associations like elites in no other Western nation, of-

fer an extreme example of such closed forms of collectivization. A high esprit de corps, almost identical golden paths in education, and similar, mostly bourgeois social backgrounds sustain the homogenous self-propagating elite, taking on a class character beyond political affiliation (see Braun 1999; Hartmann 1996). The social capital of such an elite does not just manifest itself in promotion and solidarity obligations, or in the coordinated exclusion of non-group members. It also contributes to lowering transaction costs in the state or commercial sector by generating trust in terms of “creditworthiness” that serves as a guarantee for loyalty, independent of the respective top position. Nevertheless, this social capital may also create mistrust outside of this favored network (see Braun 2001).

In this respect, the research on social capital also emphasizes that it is relatively simple “for densely woven and homogeneous groups to turn to ‘shady’ goals if they lack the natural restrictions resulting from the fact that members bring along their different views and intersecting connections” (Putnam and Goss 2001, p. 29). However, this “unsocial capital,” which in terms of mutual promotion and loyalty obligations serves the targeted internal information distribution and coordinated exclusion of non-group members, can also easily be found beyond groups having such “shady goals.” As an example, there are forms of solidarity of “ethnic communities,” which—due to their exclusion from the labor market—are looking for special niches with chances for specialization and organizing their economic activities via a network based on traditional relations, which may lead to significant economic advantages compared to competitors.

So for this research perspective, there is no lack of incidences in day-to-day experience and social practice. To the same effect, Weber (1924, p. 445) had already pointed out at the first German *Soziologentag* in 1910 that everyday voluntary associations are capable of producing the “good citizen” within the immediate *Lebenswelt* (literally, “lifeworld” or social environment) of the people. However, he meant this in the passive sense of the word: “‘Wo man singt, da lass dich ruhig nieder’ (Where people are singing, don’t hesitate to settle down). Great passion and strong actions are lacking there.” Against this backdrop, it seems imperative to bring up the issue of the complex correlation between goals and structures of voluntary associations as chosen communities. On the other hand, the question of emerging community relations, trust, and reciprocity norms should be made a key issue of the research on social capital, in order to take a differentiated look at the many voluntary associations’ potential for accumulating social capital.

Conclusion

Forms of collectivization are a constitutive part of voluntary associations, so that as chosen communities they are able to place their services above their members’ joint work (Strob 1999). To put it in the words of Max Weber, the basis for this is social relations, in which the members’ social actions and thus the meaningful orientation towards one another rest upon a “subjectively *felt* (affectual or traditional) *common*

bond among persons concerned" (Weber 1980, p. 21). These feelings, based upon common bonds and affinities, may easily and sustainably develop due to specific structural characteristics in voluntary associations. These structural characteristics build the core for making sure that voluntary associations are considered key institutions for (re)producing social capital in modern societies.

Yet, it also lies in the nature of voluntary associations as chosen communities that the habitus, being the sum of an individual's perceptual, intellectual and action schemata, normally selects the associations corresponding to it. Colloquially put, "birds of a feather flock together"; in his terminology Bourdieu (1996) refers to this as "elective affinities of taste." Since the social taste of the habitus and, therefore, the choice of certain lifestyles, leisure time as well as personal politics are all closely linked to a person's living conditions, the free choice of a membership is thus significantly influenced by socio-structural factors. The argument that voluntary associations could also produce "unsocial capital" through these unintended effects of social selection is therefore not quite unjustified.

To this effect, with the term "bridging social capital" the research on social capital offers quite an important research perspective that can be understood as a normative attempt to respond to this concern. Individuals of different social milieus and social groups belong to voluntary associations producing this specific form of social capital, so that they may contribute to overcoming "social cleavages." Therefore, "the external impacts of bridging groups [...] are likely to be more positive, whereas networks with bonding social capital (that restrict themselves to specific social niches) more likely carry a risk of having negative external impacts" (Putnam and Goss 2001, p. 29).

It cannot be ruled out that these cross-border forms of social affiliations in the field of voluntary associations could increasingly gain in importance. Already, the ideas of "bridging social capital" implicitly refer to the conditions discussed by Simmel (1999 [1908]) concerning the growing individualization in modern societies. According to those, people develop their individuality by mixing increasingly wider social circles, something that advances both people's individualization and society's social integration. On the one hand, individuals become more and more unique and independent; on the other hand, the individuals are less and less able to derive their identity from that of a dominant collective. Instead, the identity has to develop out of a combination of different values and interests.

Hence, more and more frequently, voluntary associations are likely to be able to represent their members only within the limits of particular interests, since they can no longer depend on their alliances in questions of essential, far-reaching life orientations. In this respect, it may be assumed that the members' interests within their respective associations will increasingly diverge, no matter whether it is a sports club, choir, or museum society, an environmental or business association or a soup-kitchen initiative. This would also mean that individuals have to learn to deal with conflicts themselves and demonstrate in public the necessary willingness to compromise. In fact, the more conflicts individuals have to resolve themselves, the more they are willing to accept other viewpoints, values, lifestyle ideals, and interests. All this gives hope for a "strong and vibrant civil society characterized

by a social infrastructure of dense networks of face-to-face relationships that cross-cut existing social cleavages such as race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, and gender that will underpin strong and responsive democratic government” (Edwards et al. 2001, p. 17).

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Chapter 6

Who Calls the Shots? The Real Normative Power of Civil Society

Marta Reuter, Filip Wijkström and Michael Meyer

Abstract What is the nature of the political agency of civil society organizations? As the research community concerned with civil society is a multidisciplinary and diverse one, it is not surprising that there is a lack of a common understanding of the concept of civil society, as well as of a common theoretical framework that would allow us to understand the place and role of civil society organisations in wider society. In mainstream political science, in particular, this situation has led to an analytical confusion, where the concept of civil society is infused with all kinds of normative meanings, while at the same time being altogether rejected as irrelevant by those scholars who are put off by that very normativity. So how can we understand the relationship between civil society and norms, values and ideas, and what does this relationship tell us about the role of this sphere in the society as such? In this conceptual chapter, we explore what we see as a useful way of understanding the political agency of civil society organizations. Inspired by the new institutionalism in organization theory, we suggest that such understanding needs to take into account the institutional logic of civil society, and to recognize this sphere as the institutional habitat of those actors who provide politics with normative and ideational content.

Keywords Normative meaning of civil society · Civil society organizations · Organization theory · New institutionalism

What are the contributions of civil society and its organizations (CSOs) to society? Which role do they play as actors or agents? Asking these questions, we enter a terrain which is contested both analytically and ideologically. Within the social sciences, the views on the societal roles of CSOs tend to vary between different disciplines, with economists as well as researchers in business administration and management tending to focus on the activity of CSOs in the welfare (market) arena, sociologists dealing with social movements and political scientists paying more

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attention to interest representation and the roles of CSOs in the processes of democratization. To this, we may also add the significant national differences regarding the mix and societal tasks assigned to, or taken up by, CSOs in different countries, which naturally also affect the perspectives, approaches and sensitivities of the scholars working in this research area.

The concept of civil society itself being as wide, ambiguous and contested as it is, this variety should not come as a surprise. Its downside is, however, that the various ideas about the role(s) of CSOs usually do not spring from any common, coherent idea about the different positions and roles of different types of organizations in the society, and thus often do not relate or connect to each other across the disciplinary borders in a meaningful way. This means that research on CSOs is probably less cumulative and comprehensive than it could be, given the advantages of its broad multidisciplinary outlook.

As Collier and Mahon (1993) remind us, stable concepts and a shared understanding of categories should function as a foundation of any research community. What we would like to contribute to this discussion, therefore, is a way of understanding CSOs that transcends the interdisciplinary boundaries and offers a view of the overarching societal role of CSOs more coherently connected to an analytical model of the organization of society itself.

In order to illustrate our point about the analytical implausibility of some of the ideas that flourish within the academia about the role or place of CSOs in society, we will in this chapter take a closer look at the popular view, widespread particularly within political science and also within the public discourses in many countries, that the importance of CSOs (and their relevance to social science research) is or should be related to their potential to contribute to the democratic governance of society. We propose here an alternative view of the relationship between CSOs and the democratic norm and, generally, of their role as political actors in wider society.

The character and ambition of the chapter is conceptual and exploratory rather than empirical. The chapter is structured as follows: We start with a short discussion of the way civil society and the actorhood of its organizations are conceptualized in contemporary political science, and explain why we find it analytically dissatisfying. Next, we briefly present our own model of the organization of society within which our view of civil society is anchored and suggest an alternative way of conceiving the wider societal role of CSOs. Subsequently, to illustrate that argument, we discuss the historical development of the worldwide norm of “good governance as democracy” and the relationship of CSOs to this norm. The chapter ends with a concluding discussion where we summarize our key points.

Civil Society and Politics: The Problem as We See It

Theorizing about civil society as an organizational realm governed by a specific organizational logic *and* as a site of political agency is today complicated by two interrelated problems. On the one hand, in political science the terms *civil society*

and *civil society organization* tend to be tainted by a normative connotation and are rarely used in positive (as opposed to normative) analyses of political actorhood. On the other hand, there is a whole range of actors in the political arena whose agency is today being analyzed in separate research fields within the discipline, but without attempts to connect the nodes and to approach these actors as belonging to a common institutional category whose particular logic is at the core of their political role. To increase the confusion even further, the lack of a clear, universally accepted definition of the *concept* of civil society and the often careless use of the *term* civil society mean that different kinds of organizations are labelled “civil society” in different academic texts, with different authors excluding different types of groups for different reasons.

At first sight, the situation in the research field should not be that complicated. Nowadays, most social scientists agree on a rough definition of civil society as the sphere between the state, the market and the family, where citizens interact with one another in order to further develop their common goals (cf. Heinrich 2002). This sphere is “public” insofar as it extends beyond the immediate context of family and friends and is a site of actions concerned with public ends, but also “private” as it stands outside state institutions (cf. Salamon et al. 2003, p. 1).

This fairly uncontroversial definition does not, however, say much about the conflation of two very different understandings of civil society that are intricately mixed within the academic discussion. The first, more organization-oriented understanding sees civil society as a societal sector comprised of actors such as non-profit, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), social movement organizations and different kinds of voluntary associations.¹ In the second understanding, civil society is conceptualized in terms of a civic ideal pertaining not only to a particular sector or sphere in society but also to certain more general values such as trust, pluralism, social capital and inclusion. While the first understanding is employed in a rather straightforward manner within such disciplines as sociology, economics, management and business administration, and the second one has its natural domain within normative political theory, in mainstream political science (as well as in the public policy debate in many countries), these two are curiously conflated, with the normative connotations of the civil society concept as developed over centuries within political philosophy “spilling over” into the more contemporary discussion on the nature of CSOs and their role in politics (see also, Reuter 2007).

What does that confusion look like in practice? Those political scientists who work with the concept of civil society do it usually from within one of the following two perspectives. The first, “neo-Tocquevillean” approach, inspired by the Anglo-Saxon liberal democratic tradition, sees the role of CSOs as representing the citizens in the face of the (potentially unresponsive, oppressive or disintegrating) state structures, cultivating civic virtues in the citizenry, and providing a necessary complement to the market and the welfare state in the social services area (see, e.g.,

¹ In this context, the problem is that many terms used to denote different kinds of CSOs in different academic disciplines and subdisciplines actually describe the same or related types of organizations (cf. the ambiguous term “NGO” and the difference between it and “third-sector organization”), further adding to the analytical confusion in the field.

Diamond 1994; Putnam et al. 1993). In the international context, CSOs are seen here as an integral part of the emerging multilayered international decision-making structures of the so-called global governance, which needs to involve both state and non-state actors in order to be effective and legitimate (Rosenau and Czempiel 1992; Colàs 2001).

The second, “neo-Gramscian” perspective, conceives instead civil society as an arena of perpetual ideological conflict, resistance, counter-hegemony and revolutionary praxis (McIlwaine 2007) rather than a set of actors comfortably embedded in the existing (liberal) system. Here, the forces that seek to challenge the neoliberal political and economic status quo are seen as clashing with those who wish to preserve it (Cox 1999). In the international context, this tradition conceptualizes an emerging “global civil society” as a possible first step towards a radical democratization of world politics within a post-Westphalian framework of new cosmopolitan governance (see, e.g., Lipschutz 1992; Wapner 1995; Falk 1995; Kaldor 2003; Thörn 2007).

Despite their different points of departure, both the liberal/neo-Tocquevillean and the radical/neo-Gramscian approaches seem to share the same implicit premise: The assumption that the relevance of civil society as a societal sphere, and the relevance of the political agency of its organizations, is related to their potential to make the world a better place, with “better” usually translating as “more democratic”. This is not to say that CSOs are always equated with democratic or progressive forces in the relevant literature. Unlike those who enthusiastically wrote on the transformative and empowering potential of civil society in the early 1990s (e.g., Lipschutz 1992; Falk 1995; Wapner 1995; Archibugi and Held 1995), today’s political analysts do not necessarily believe offhand in the democratic potential of this particular sphere and its actors. The enthusiasm of that decade has given way to a more serious examination of the claims that CSOs can provide solutions to a whole range of political, social and economic problems ailing the world. The presumption that civil society by nature is a site of democracy, empowerment, tolerance and inclusion has been at least partly replaced by a more sober reflection on the specific circumstances under which these values can flourish within the civic sphere (e.g., Eрман and Uhlin 2010).

Nevertheless, the interest in civil society within political science is still largely conditioned by the discipline’s implicit normative preoccupation with democracy. This leads to certain normative myopia, where the question of the role that civil society organizations actually play in politics tends to get overshadowed by the question about the role that they might or should play in *democratic* politics. While other political actors, such as governmental agencies, political elites, individual politicians or intergovernmental organizations, are routinely analyzed in terms of what strategies they use to attain their goals; what kinds of power they wield in society and what mechanisms make them behave the way they do—these kinds of questions tend to make themselves conspicuously absent from the discussion as soon as the terms “civil society” or “civil society organization” appear. The questions asked tend then, instead, to revolve around the democratic contributions and credentials of the studied organizations.

However, this does not mean that the political agency of the various types of CSOs does not register under the political science radar. The more normatively neutral—or “technical”—questions about the nature of the political actorhood of such groups are indeed asked vigorously in the different subfields or research areas of political science—but, importantly, only seldom with reference to “civil society” or any other similar overarching concept, and indeed with little recognition that the different types of organizations studied in these different subfields may at all belong to a common analytical category. Actors such as political parties, trade unions and employers’ associations, social movement organizations, welfare-producing non-profits and charities, developmental NGOs, international advocacy organizations and so on are all established objects of study in research areas such as comparative studies of party systems, industrial and labour relations, corporatism or welfare systems, as well as in research on development politics, peace and conflict studies and the study of international politics. Additionally, broader, more overarching and more theorized concepts such as “interest groups” or “transnational actors”—which usually include several or all of the above organization types—are often used in analyses of political systems or of international politics.

The relative absence of analytical links, exchanges and synergies between these different research fields, as well as the inability or unwillingness of the discipline as a whole to see the organizations listed above as belonging to a common, broader—but still normatively neutral—analytical category of political actors, have meant that our knowledge about what kind of political beasts CSOs are still rather sketchy and unsystematic. Those researchers in mainstream political science who are interested in how the political system works and how its different components relate to each other have never really warmed up to and integrated the concept of civil society because of its heavy normative connotations. At the same time, no other alternative concept has emerged within the discipline that would be wide enough to encompass all the organization types that in different contexts are referred to as parts of “civil society”. We have thus a rather paradoxical situation, with an under-theorized but empirically existing organizational *sphere* in need of normatively detached conceptualization and analysis, a *term* that some scholars—such as the authors of this chapter—apply to this sphere while others apply it to a whole host of other phenomena and a *concept* that sometimes overlaps with this sphere and sometimes not, depending on whom we ask.

In the following section, we will outline what we see as a more coherent, analytically plausible way of understanding this particular organizational sphere—which we thus refer to as civil society—and suggest how the primary political role of its organizations could be understood. In order to do that, we employ an analytical framework borrowed from the study of organizations within sociology and business administration, and particularly the sociologist understanding of institutions and institutional logics developed within these disciplines, inspired among others by the works of Scott and Meyer (1991), Friedland and Alford (1991), Scott (2001) and Powell (2007).

Organization of Society Model

We would like to unfold our argument by sketching out the basic understanding of the relationship between different institutional spheres in the society upon which the argument rests. In our discussion, we build on a long tradition of authors who, like Cohen and Arato (1992) or Salamon et al. (2003), use a theoretical model of (late modern) society as consisting of a number of spheres inhabited by more or less distinct sets of actors.² However, our notion differs from those mentioned above, in that it stresses more explicitly the specificity of each sphere as the institutional habitat of actors who share a common institutional and organizational logic (Wijkström and Lundström 2002; Wijkström and Einarsson 2006; Wijkström 2011). These spheres are analytically distinct from each other in the sense that their actors are driven by different rationales (Sjöstrand 1985). Thus, the state sphere is populated by governmental agencies concerned with the formal task of running the public administration. The business sphere is ideally populated by commercial firms and corporations concerned with making of economic profit. The sphere of private relations is populated by family and friendship networks concerned with the (re) production of human-to-human relationships. Finally, the sphere of civil society is populated by organizations (as well as less formal networks) of private citizens who get together in order to further their own goals, cultivate (and defend) their interests or promote their visions of society.

We regard this four-sphere model as a first step in the analytical conceptualization of the roles of CSOs in the society. At the empirical level, following Neumyer et al. (2009), we argue that CSOs should essentially be seen as multifunctional, and that their functions can be broadly summarized as falling—in various magnitudes—into the three categories of service provision, advocacy and community building. Each of these functions is backed by a CSO's distinct values.

The first, service production, can be seen as a contribution to the economy, as hereby CSOs deliver outputs that can be priced and paid for—either by the beneficiaries themselves or by some other public or private organization. These services are sometimes marketable, though often positive externalities are even more important than the service itself (meritocratic goods), or some non-marketable benefits are linked with these services (public goods such as social security or democratic participation).

The public good property is crucial for the second function, which is tied to the political system: advocacy. Through this role, CSOs participate in political decision-making and the governance of society, i.e., to make collective binding of rules. There are various ways to fulfill this function, ranging from contributions to the legislative and executive processes (for example, through formal or informal consultation), to interest representation and lobbying, as well as awareness-raising

² It is important to stress here that these spheres are ideal types, and that the analytical four-sphere model that we use is just that: an analytical and theoretical model, rather than an empirical description of reality.

campaigns on specific issues aimed at the general public. This aspect has always been of primary interest for political scientists.

The third function, community building, enhances (at least in theory) social capital by establishing and consolidating relationships between individuals. This can be the primary goal of the organization (as in groups built around common cultural activities or hobbies) or a “side effect” of an organization’s service provision or advocacy work.

These three dimensions of socioeconomic and political life serve as a useful categorization of the empirical functions performed by CSOs. An individual CSO can thus be conceptualized as having a distinct profile, where the particular mix of contributions to service delivery, advocacy and community building constitutes its unique “fingerprint”.

If we, however, lift our eyes above the empirical base, and try to find a common analytical denominator that would capture the distinct logic that lets us distinguish this sphere from those of the state, the business and the family, we will find—we argue—that the fundamental role of CSOs (from which the three above-discussed functions are derived) is to produce, articulate, disseminate and defend values, ideas and ideology with the aim of attaining normative change (or preserving the normative status quo in the face of unwanted challenges).

In some respects this is not a very new or controversial view; many accounts of the political agency of different types of CSOs point to their normative power (e.g. Keck and Sikkink 1998; Finnemore and Sikkink 1998). However, this normative agency is rarely explicitly placed at the core of civil society’s institutional logic, or conceptualized as the fundamental and constitutive element of the ideal-type CSO.

Even more importantly, the implications of ascribing this role to CSOs for the study of politics at large have so far been largely ignored. Instead, as noted in the previous section, the ideational agency of civil society actors is usually studied in relation to what today passes as “good causes” (such as human rights, women’s rights, environment protection, development etc.), placing focus more on the supposed emancipatory, progressive potential of civil society than on the way in which the ideational agency of CSOs shapes politics in general.

We would like to suggest that this one-dimensional focus on the role of CSOs as potential promoters and upholders of democratic ideas, values and norms has led the discipline to largely miss the forest for the trees. It has meant that political science research tends to overlook the complex institutionalization processes through which we (the academic community as well as the Western general public as such) have come to believe in the importance, relevance and even sanctity of these ideas, values and norms in the first place, and in this it overlooks the political agency of the actors who have set these processes off. Paradoxically thus, the tendency to see CSOs as potential vehicles of progress seems to have obscured their more fundamental role in society as the very actors, which shape our understanding of what “progress” means in the first place. It is this particular dimension of the political agency of CSOs that we would like to underscore here.

Who Framed Democracy?

We would like to illustrate our argument by briefly tracing the roots of the democratic norm established and institutionalized today in most Western societies—i.e., the very norm that CSOs are today scrutinized and evaluated against. Since World War II, in the Western public mind as well as in academia, “good governance”—i.e., the most effective, but also morally right way of administering our complex societies—has become more or less synonymous with the set of rules and practices connected to the broadly understood ideal of liberal democracy. One important dimension of this ideal has traditionally been the question of who is to enjoy democratic rights (see, e.g. Barbalet 1988); or, put differently, who is, in the eyes of society and the law, a “real individual”, or Marshall’s “full and equal member of society” (Marshall 1950).

The expansion of political citizenship, that is, the evolution of the idea of who is worthy of being included in the democratic community, is historically one of the most important elements of the process of democratization. This could be exemplified by the evolution of citizenship in North America from including white property-owning protestant men only to gradually extend to “women, the working class, Jews and Catholics, blacks and other previously excluded groups” (Kymlicka and Norman 1994). In western Europe, similarly, several countries had parliamentary governments and some form of competitive party systems by the second-half of the nineteenth century; however, their electorate was severely limited by property and/or income qualifications, which meant that only a minority of wealthy males counted as citizens. And yet, by 1918, suffrage in most western European countries had been extended to all males irrespective of their property and income status, and in the decades that followed, also to women (for the account of this process, see, e.g., Huber and Stephens 1997). Even more importantly, since then the *norm* of universal suffrage itself has become just as entrenched in the public mind as the norm of only wealthy men being capable of running state affairs had been just a few generations ago.

What happened in that relatively brief period of time to bring about this kind of institutional and normative change? In short: the labour and women’s movements. In western Europe, as Huber and Stephens (1997) describe—trade unions and social-democratic political parties, while a marginal phenomenon in 1870s—emerged at the beginning of the twentieth century as one of the major actors in the European political arena. At the onset of World War I, the labour movement had already converged on an ideology where achievement of universal male suffrage and introduction of parliamentary government played a central role. These goals were attained in most western European countries by 1918. Similarly, as Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) point out, prior to 1930 no country had granted women the right to vote without strong pressure from domestic suffrage organizations embedded in the worldwide women’s suffrage movement, and those countries that had strong domestic women’s movements were the most likely ones to adopt female suffrage.

There is no space here for a more detailed elaboration on the role of these two social movements in the development of contemporary democratic norms, but our point is that they have without doubt been the most important agents in the pro-

cess of shaping the contemporary understanding of who is worthy of being a full citizen—as in “not only wealthy men” and “not only men”. Importantly, however, this process is far from being settled. On the contrary, the norms that regulate our understanding of citizenship—as well as our understanding of who is considered to be an “individual”, from which the former have ultimately evolved—are being constantly challenged and reshaped by movements similar to, and/or derived from, those two discussed above.³ What we today understand as “an individual”, “a citizen”, or finally “democracy” are thus just snapshots or stills of what in reality is a constantly changing worldview—and it is not only possible but also highly probable that a 100 years from now, our understanding of these concepts will have evolved beyond recognition.

We may in fact get a glimpse of this development if we take a closer look at more contemporary examples of the normative struggle in this field, where the standards of citizenship and of individual personhood are being continuously and gradually expanded in terms of the subjects conceptualized as “persons” or as “citizens”. Here, the children’s rights movement and the animal rights movement (see Regan 2004; Singer 2006) are perhaps the most interesting examples of civil society actors constantly challenging and seeking to expand the boundaries of individual personhood and/or citizenship.

History Is Written by the Victors

What we want to illustrate with the example of these movements is not that CSOs as such are necessarily the champions of “good” causes but rather that they are the ones which shape our understanding of which values and causes are to be seen as “good”, important and worth supporting. These values and causes appeal to us today because certain, and not other, civil society actors happened to be remarkably successful in disseminating their particular visions of a just society. The fact that we consider the defense of rights such as universal suffrage laudable or progressive is in itself only a measure of that success.

What should thus catch our attention as students of political agency is the fact that a particular set of CSOs—those promoting the expansion of the pool of legitimate rights carriers—have managed in turning their own particular values into the *credo* of our societies, and with this have been able to shape our politics to an extraordinary extent. They managed, crucially, to persuade or force the state structures themselves to absorb and institutionalize these values, incorporate them into their own ideologies and take over the role of their guardians. This explains, for example, why various governmental agencies in the West are nowadays as fiercely intent on fighting gender discrimination (cf. the concept of “gender mainstreaming”) or class inequal-

³ For example, the particular family of social movements that have struggled against racial and ethnic exclusion from the political realm and from society in general in different parts of the world, e.g., the American civil rights movement in the 1960s or the movement against apartheid in South Africa.

ity as other agents of government were intent on preserving such discrimination and inequality only a 100 years ago. It is simply a different set of civil society actors that is setting the ideological and normative agenda for the state today.

The above points also suggest why we cannot quote here, in a meaningful way, examples of “non-progressive” civil society actors currently enjoying the same level of ideological success. Being successful in this kind of normative struggle means being automatically perceived as progressive by society, just as being a normative “loser” means being perceived as reactionary—and this regardless of the moral weight or rightness of the values and ideals that each side happens to espouse and promote. The victors are the ones writing (ideological) history. We can, on the other hand, point to civil society actors that have previously enjoyed ideological hegemony (in terms of defining “progress” and shaping the public understanding of “good” and “evil”) in the Western societies, and that are now going through the slow and painful process of losing that hegemony. The most obvious example is of course the Roman Catholic Church. We could in fact see the modernist process of secularization and of the ascendance of liberal democracy as a spectacular power shift within civil society, where the civil society actors who represent and promote the Catholic (and other religious/traditional) visions of a “good society” are gradually ceding their ideological (and thus political) primacy to another set of actors—those promoting individual rights within the secular, liberal democratic framework.

This brings us to another crucial point in our argument. If we look at the “other side of the barricade” in each of the cases of rights carriers expansion above, we will see that the chief opponents of the discussed movements in the discursive struggle for defining citizenship (or “personhood”), long before that struggle reached the stages of formal policy-making, have been and are *other civil society actors*. This is not a coincidence. The struggle for the privilege of defining “the good society” and shaping the public understanding of “progress” is the one which takes place not primarily between organizations from the other three societal spheres and civil society actors, but between different forces *within* civil society that seek normative primacy and ideological control over the other spheres, most importantly over the state apparatus which is perhaps the most effective vehicle for spreading the ideas and values of those civil society actors who control it. Therefore, while ideas and values may emerge within the other spheres, we argue that their cultivation and promotion in wider society are the prime functions of civil society actors, and constitute the core of the institutional logic of civil society. These functions, we suggest, should be the focus of the study of the political agency of CSOs, as they directly or indirectly underlie and determine all the tasks undertaken in today’s society by these actors.

Conclusion

The impact of civil society actors on widely accepted practices, policies, attitudes and norms reaches far beyond (or rather, beneath) the grand societal changes mentioned above. These actors subtly influence what is accepted as “appropriate” or amounts to “good standards” in each and every niche of our society. From policies against re-

gimes that hurt civil rights to the way we treat drug addicts, from caring for the elderly to establishing standards for sports games, we argue that there is absolutely no field of policy and public debate we can imagine where discourse is not shaped by civil society actors and by the values and preferences they provide us with. Wherever value-based standpoints emerge and contest each other in the public debate, CSOs are there and take a position. Most probably, however, only the winners will be remembered.

Rather than infusing the concept of civil society with normative meaning and embracing it as a potential beacon of (democratic) hope, or alternatively dismissing it as a trendy but fuzzy and for analytical purposes meaningless notion, we propose to view civil society simply as the institutional habitat of a particular type of actors whose role is to provide politics with normative and ideational content. Many processes that are seen as fundamental to the game of politics—such as the production of ideology, political agitation, mobilization, lobbying and, ultimately, competition over the access to, and control over, the structures of the state—are in fact driven by civil society actors. This should not be surprising, since the institutional logics of the other three spheres—the governmental, the business and the private sphere—are centered on other things: administering the state, generating economic profit and tending to intimate relationships, respectively. On the other hand, establishing *how* these things should be done: for example, how and by whom the state should be run; how and for whom profit should be generated and what is the proper character of intimate relationships—i.e., the content of politics—is the “chosen domain” (Lindblom 2003) of civil society actors. We suggest therefore that civil society should be defined and distinguished from the other societal spheres primarily by the *normatively driven* nature of its constitutive organizations, rather than by the content of their messages—a content that in reality is as diverse as society itself.

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Chapter 7

The Impact of Civil Society on Sustainable Development

Christiane Frantz and Doris Fuchs

Abstract The labels “civil society organization” (CSO) or “civil society actor” tend to have positive connotations in much of research and political debate. This is especially the case in the context of sustainable development, where civil society participation is frequently assumed to have a positive impact on sustainability-related policy outputs. This chapter argues that the generally positive perception of CSOs in sustainable development contexts is a function of the sectoral and/or utopian logics, which underlie most conceptualizations of civil society, and highlights the limitations of these logics. It postulates that an analytical and reflective perspective on CSOs requires their classification on the basis of a reconstructive analysis of interest representation with respect to a specific policy issue and cautions against too easily attributing certain normative values to so-called civil society actors and participation. The chapter supports this claim with an illustration of CSO participation in the German debate on extending the operating lifetime of nuclear power plants.

Keywords Sustainable development · Civil society · Interest representation · Participation · Qualitative content analysis · Germany

Civil society organization (CSO), civil society actor¹— in much of research and political debate, these labels carry a positive connotation. The literature attributes substantial potential and structural aptitude for democratization and the balancing of power in complex governance arrangements to these actors (Brunnengräber et al. 2005; Frantz and Martens 2006; Heins 2008; Take 2012). Civil society actors tend to benefit from being perceived as trustworthy and morally superior, i.e., pursuing

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¹ In the following, we use these terms synonymously.

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public rather than private interests. This is especially the case when compared to public perceptions of politicians and political parties or economic actors, who are frequently supposed to be primarily interested in power and/or economic gain. When hearing CSO, we tend to think of associations of citizens. As such, CSOs receive legitimacy from the argument of societal interest aggregation and representation beyond the core parliamentary circle. This trust in moral legitimacy is an asset to civil society actors in political participation and a source of discursive power when it comes to attempts to exercise influence in and on political processes (Cashore 2002).

Such trust in CSOs' aims can especially be detected when it comes to expectations regarding their environmental and/or social sustainability impacts or to the presentation of their relevant political activities in the media (Brunnengräber 1997), for instance. In contrast, sustainability-related communications and activities by politicians, parties, and governmental institutions tend to meet much more skepticism. More precisely, if political parties, other than explicitly programmatic "green" parties, proclaim environmental policy aims, the media (and researchers) often suspects opportunistic vote catching and window-dressing aims. By contrast, the public and the media (and in many cases researchers) tend to accept environmental, programmatic statements of CSOs at face value.²

This chapter argues that the more or less generally positive perception of CSOs in sustainable development contexts is a function of the much debated, but still continuously transported sectoral and utopian logics underlying most conceptualizations of civil society and critically questions the validity of these logics (Brand 2000; Gosewinkel 2003; Kocka 2004). Furthermore, it postulates that an analytical and reflective perspective on CSOs requires their classification on the basis of a reconstructive analysis of interest representation in a given policy field and, more concretely, with respect to a specific policy issue. The chapter supports this claim with an illustration of CSO's participation in the German debate on extending the operating lifetime of nuclear power plants. With this conceptual and empirical effort, the chapter stresses that the actual impact of civil society participation on sustainable development depends on whose interests the respective civil society actors represent and what the sustainability perspectives of the corresponding interests are. Accordingly, scientific inquiry and political debate need to be much more cautious in attributing certain normative values to civil society actors and participation.

Our aim is not to delegitimize civil society participation in governance arrangements per se, or to suggest that the impact of civil society on sustainable development necessarily would be negative. There are countless examples of individuals and groups deserving our admiration and applause for investing enormous amounts of private time and energy in the pursuit of public objectives, in giving a voice to those otherwise not heard (of a human or nonhuman nature), and in fulfilling the

² Some critical studies, however, argue that the discursive legitimacy of CSOs results from their higher aptitude in political communication relative to parties and politicians rather than the attribution of positive values by the media (Frantz 2007; Heins 2008).

idea of a democratic society constituted by a system of checks and balances on the power of any individual actor or group. Rather, our aim is to highlight that certain conceptual logics of civil society can easily lead to misleading results in research and practice. Specifically, both the assumption of a positive correlation between civil society participation and the sustainability objectives of governance and the assumption that what takes place under the label of civil society participation helps the democratic legitimacy of processes by ensuring a balance of interests at the negotiating table cannot be always and noncritically upheld. Instead, politics and research always need to take a close look at whose interest specific civil society actors represent in a given political contest.

In pursuit of our objectives, we first provide some background on the concept of sustainable development. We then explore the concepts of civil society and develop our argument for the need for a reconstructive analysis of interest representation in the context of specific policy issues and debate. Subsequently, we illustrate the argument empirically by (a) identifying CSOs and the interests they represent in the German debate on extending the operating lifetime of nuclear power plants and (b) analyzing the sustainability arguments made by the various CSOs. We thereby demonstrate the need to critically assess optimistic assumptions about civil society involvement and sustainable development deriving from the sectoral and the normative-utopian perspectives on civil society and characterizing much of research and political debate.

Background: Sustainable Development as a Concept and Political Goal

The term sustainability has a relatively short tradition in the scientific debate and came to fame particularly in the context of the Brundtland Commission's report *Our Common Future* (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987). As defined in this report, sustainable development is development which "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (p. 8)." The term subsequently has witnessed a veritable discursive boom in political programs, governmental strategy concepts, communications by non-state actors as well as public debate (Tremmel 2003, p. 27).

At the most fundamental level, sustainable development is often conceptualized in two different (yet complementary) ways. First, sustainable development may be approached in terms of inter- and intragenerational justice (Tremmel 2011, p. 127). The difficulty with this approach is, of course, that the interests of future generations can hardly be exactly defined. Secondly, conceptualizations draw on the three dimensions of sustainable development suggested by the Brundtland Commission: ecology, economy, and social welfare. Within the model, the three dimensions are considered equally important, while at the same time allowing the classification of actors according to their different dimensional focus. A difficulty associated with the three-dimensional approach to sustainable development is that the three dimen-

sions rarely move in the same direction in practice. As a consequence, decisions on the relative importance of the dimensions vis-à-vis each other and on acceptable trade-offs become necessary.

Even when relying on the justice frame or the three-dimensional model of sustainable development, the concept remains vague and in need of further specification and operationalization. This vagueness has probably contributed to its popularity, but it has also invited continuous discursive contests regarding the nature of and requirements for sustainable development. In political and scientific discourse, numerous definitions exist, frequently at odds with each other. Actors use and frame the term strategically to pursue an enormous variety of interests. Not surprisingly, critical observers have sometimes argued that there is a danger that the term becomes diluted and may “be employed for anything and nothing” (Meimeth and Robertson 2011, p. 7). However, given the sustainability challenges facing humankind, it is unlikely that the term is going to disappear anytime soon. Moreover, concerns about vagueness and the potential for a strategic framing of terms apply to numerous fundamental terms and concepts in politics and social science. The solution, then, cannot be to give up on researching and pursuing sustainable development. Rather, we must take a close look at who means what when talking about sustainable development (and why?).

Civil Society as a Category and Norm

Who is (part of) civil society and what does it stand for? Many scholars define civil society by contrasting it with the state:

Civil society is that domain of associational life situated above the individual and below the state. It is made up of complex networks based on interest, ideology, family, and cultural affinity through which people pursue various aims. Churches, unions, movements, political parties, and clubs of all sorts are examples of such networks, and the host of these together constitutes civil society. (Wapner 1997, p. 65)

In such a definition, it is frequently unclear (and controversial) to what extent business actors and especially their associations are part of civil society. Other scholars limit civil society membership to those non-state, nonmarket actors who deliberately pursue political objectives in terms of exerting influence on policies, norms, and social structures (Scholte 2000, p. 175). Another group of scholars explicitly includes the economic sector, i.e. defines civil society as everything that is not the state (Keane 2005). Obviously, these different definitions of who civil society is lead to different assessments of its overall size, existence beyond the national level, and influence (Fuchs 2005, p. 171; Zimmer and Priller 2001).

One option to approach the civil society literature is to look at the logics used to differentiate this actor from other actors and at the assumptions underlying its conceptualization. Following Kocka (2004), also elaborated by Bauerkämper (2003), Gosewinkel (2003), Lauth (2003), and Rucht (2009), one can identify a broad spectrum of conceptualizations of civil society ranging from positivistic, pragmatic clas-

sifications to normative, axiomatic theoretical approaches. One dominant approach related to the definition by Wapner given above applies a pragmatic, sectoral logic. Thus, *Verbände im globalen Zeitalter* (Associations in the era of globalization) are nonprofit, legally independent, and separate from the state, based on voluntary association as well as formally and permanently organized (Zimmer 2001). This “third sector” classification does not aim to distinguish civil society on the basis of concerns about the democratic implications of participation. It does not ask who participates in CSOs (internal legitimation) and whose interests are aggregated and represented by them. From this perspective, therefore, civil society actors range from umbrella associations that may be organizationally attached to the for-profit or/and the nonprofit sector to those directly connected to citizens, especially grassroots organizations. Furthermore, it is also possible in this perspective that CSOs represent technocratic interests, “organized,” for instance, as epistemic communities (Beisheim and Fuhr 2008).

The ability to capture this broad range of actors under the label of civil society is, however, also the weakness of this conceptualization. Obviously, it is difficult if not impossible to generalize questions of political influence and impact across local grassroots initiatives, which may be based on the voluntary efforts of 2–3 people, and well-funded and professionally organized associations representing the interests of a dozen transnational corporations, for instance. The sectoral approach to civil society thus may be somewhat useful when it comes to preliminary and broad classifications of actors involved in a particular political debate. It is of limited use when it comes to asking questions about the balance of power between for-profit and nonprofit interests and the legitimacy of participatory democratic processes, however.

An alternative but equally dominant approach to civil society relies on an ascription of a normative, utopian dimension to this actor. This conceptualization derives from the enshrining of civil society as an historical development project of a society of free and equal citizens (Schmalz-Bruns 1994). A strong civil society in the context of a critical public here is an ideal to be pursued. The utopian dimension of civil society, thereby, provides a context for discussing fundamental societal norms and ideas, such as equality or the creation of a nonviolent society.³ Today, this utopian dimension is applied not only to discussing the challenges involved in civil society’s role in national political decision making in (increasingly heterogeneous) developed societies, but also to exploring questions of democratic participation in postmodern and transnational conditions. In discourses about material participation, moreover, questions of the distribution of resource consumption, participatory justice as well as chances to live a good life are discussed. Thus, issues of sustainable development fit easily into the normative-utopian dimension of civil society and are frequently discussed in studies applying this conceptualization.

While this normative-utopian perspective on civil society functions well when it comes to discussing fundamental societal values and goals and their implementation, the perspective carries the danger that the utopian dimension may too easily

³ Of course, Rucht’s understanding of the “civility” of civil society also allows for civil disobedience as signals and means of democratic protest (Kleger 1994).

be forgotten and commentators and analyses may apply the concept as a (supposedly nonnormative) analytical tool (Gosewinkel 2003). In fact, the sectoral and the utopian dimensions of civil society conceptualizations often become blurred in the sustainable development debate and literature, especially when conceptualizations of civil society are not made explicit. The results of such an undifferentiated approach, then, tend to be highly optimistic assumptions about the potential impact of civil society on prospects for sustainable development, which we can still find—only sometimes critically reflected—in the scientific literature and public debate (Lüdecke and Schulz 2011; Renn et al. 2012; von Hauf 2010; Wapner 2011).

Such an undifferentiated engagement with civil society in the sustainable development debate (especially in the political realm, but also in substantial shares of the scientific literature) is aided by understandable aspects of visibility and cognitive association. When we hear about civil society activities with respect to sustainable development, we first think of Greenpeace and neither of the Chemical Manufacturers Association nor of the Whitetail Ridge Hunt Club.⁴ In addition, surveys in Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries have reported again and again that citizens attach a high priority to environmental issues. Knowledge about the existence of a tremendous value-action gap is much more limited to experts on specific dimensions of sustainable development, however, such as the scholarly sustainable consumption community. Similarly, the notion that individuals may care about the health aspects of their immediate environment more than some distant politician, bureaucrat, or corporation is very intuitive and easily convincing. The not-in-my-backyard (NIMBY) effect of local participation and its potentially limiting impact on environmental projects such as the inclusion of sustainable energy sources in traditional energy infrastructures arrived much later on the scene and is not an immediate association individuals make when pondering over the environmental impact of civil society.⁵

As comprehensible as it is, an undifferentiated perspective on civil society in the political debate (and in research) implies major challenges to the democratic legitimacy of political processes, and we have to be aware of the limited usefulness of the sectoral and utopian concepts of civil society when assessing such questions. They say little about the actual balance of interests around the negotiating table and the existence of checks and balances on anyone's power, an inherent feature of democracy in our understanding of it. In fact, these concepts may well serve to camouflage interests and to perform rather than create democratic legitimacy.

⁴ The Whitetail Ridge Hunt Club owns some 500 acres in Tuscaloosa, Alabama and is meant to represent small and local associations with no, limited, or potentially ambivalent environmental objectives.

⁵ Moreover, a different but interesting new research strand questions to what extent civil society as consumer society is willing and capable of addressing the real sustainability challenges (Bluedorn 2011; Fuchs 2013b).

The German Debate on Extending the Operating Lifetime of Nuclear Power Plants

Here, we illustrate the need for critical investigations of the so-called civil society actors and their sustainability conceptualizations and positions in the context of specific policy issues by drawing on the German debate on the extension of the operating lifetime of nuclear power plants. We deliberately selected a conflict-prone empirical case, as it would be likely to allow the identification of a particularly broad and heterogeneous set of civil society actors, interests, and sustainable development conceptualizations. We expected that we would not only be able to observe stereotypical lines of fracture between the sectors of civil society, economy, and state, but rather that we would be able to reveal hidden lines of fracture within civil society on the basis of a reconstructive analysis of interest representations.

In our analysis, we conducted a qualitative content analysis (drawing especially on Mayring 1983; Gläser and Laudel 2006) to inductively develop a set of indicators with which we could then classify the actors' different sustainability concepts (Berger 2012, p. 39). These indicators include references to low CO₂ emissions and to a positive impact on investments in renewable energies as indicators of ecological sustainability, to the maintenance of employment as an indicator of social sustainability, and to the increase of competitiveness and economic growth as indicators of economic sustainability. Beyond these, we also identified indicators that are relevant for more than one dimension such as the security of nuclear power plants. The material analyzed consists of the corresponding Internet pages of the actors as well as relevant press releases.

In the following, we first present an exemplary selection of relevant civil society actors involved in the debate and ask which interests these actors represent. The second step, then, explores their sustainability positions.

Which CSOs Were Involved?

Participation in the debate on the part of CSOs ranged from the categories of epistemic communities and environmental grassroots organizations to company-related (umbrella) associations. To illustrate our argument, Table 7.1 lists some non-state, nonprofit (according to the sectoral perspective on civil society) actors, which had published positions on the question of the extension of the operating lifetime of nuclear power plants, and the interests they (more or less openly—i.e., by name) represent.

Which Sustainability-Related Arguments Did These Actors Promote?

As pointed out above, we can identify CSOs communicating on sustainability-related issues in the context of the German debate to extend the operating lifetime

Table 7.1 Selected civil society actors in the German debate on extending the operating lifetime of nuclear power plants (own compilation)

CSOs	Description
Bund für Umwelt- und Naturschutz Deutschland e.V. (BUND)	The BUND, with over 480,000 members, is one of the most prominent environmental CSOs in Germany. Its base consists of 2,200 local groups and initiatives addressing a broad range of environmental policy issues. According to its communications, the BUND is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, and non-confessional organization; 80% of its funding derives from private and corporate donations
Bundesverband Erneuerbare Energien (BEE)	The BEE's goal is the complete conversion of electricity production and consumption to renewable energy sources. To this end, it addresses political and legal issues and coordinates the activities of 22 related associations, thereby representing about 30,000 members and covering water, wind, biomass, solar, and geothermal energy. It is funded by the companies and associations involved
Bundesverband Solarwirtschaft (BSW)	The BSW acts as intermediary between businesses within the solar energy value chain and the political sector, aiming to foster the diffusion of solar energy in the energy system. Its funding derives from the 897 membership companies linked to the solar industry
Deutsches Atomforum (DAF)	The DAF promotes the peaceful usage of nuclear power and technologies in Germany. Its members include companies, research institutes, other institutions, and private individuals. The DAF does not publish information about its membership. Its current director works for E.ON, the largest, private, nuclear power company in Europe, as did the preceding one
Industriegewerkschaft Metall (IG Metall)	The IG Metall is the largest union in Germany (approx. 2,246,000 members), derives its membership from employees in the metal sector, and aims to promote the economic, social, and job-related interests of these members. It proclaims independence from government, public administration, companies, confessions, and political parties at all times
Naturschutzbund Deutschland e.V. (NABU)	The NABU is a large environmental NGO pursuing a wide range of sustainability issues, particularly environmental ones. Its base consists of more than 450,000 members and 30,000 active volunteers that are supported by professionals at regional offices and the national headquarter in Berlin. The NABU is financed by member fees and donations
Verband kommunaler Unternehmen (VKU)	The VKU is the association representing municipally regulated infrastructure enterprises. As a nonprofit, membership-funded organization, it proclaims to not primarily pursue private commercial objectives and to be guided by public welfare obligations
Vereinte Dienstleistungsgewerkschaft (ver.di)	Ver.di is a multiservice trade union promoting the interests of employees in over 1,000 different trades and professions in mainly service-related contexts. It has about 2,000,000 members and is one of the biggest unions in Germany. Funded by membership fees, ver.di lobbies on issues ranging from improvements in labor rights and working conditions to freedom and justice in general

of nuclear power plants that range from grassroots, environmentally focused organizations to those representing the interests of business actors. All of the actors involved offered interpretations of the sustainability-related consequences of the possible outcomes of this decision and competed for influence via the exercise of discursive power in this respect. References to sustainable development were probably perceived as necessary by all CSOs in order to gain social acceptance for their interests. Sustainable development thus functioned as an anchor term in the debate.

When looking at the sustainability-related arguments these individual actors made, we find few surprises. The arguments of those CSOs representing business interests, in particular, mirror those arguments made by the business actors themselves. Not surprisingly, given the nature of the actors involved, we do not see a clear division between business and nongovernmental organization (NGO) interests. Rather, the business side is divided between the representatives of those business interests that would benefit from an extension and those that would be hurt by it.

Overall, we can observe that the debate is highly polarized with actors using rather extreme vocabulary and painting dramatic pictures of the consequences of a decision against their interests. Rather than speaking of reductions in planning security, for instance, they argue that there would be a complete absence of any planning security. We can also see the participants in the debate not weighing arguments or attempting to move towards each other's positions in attempts to find a compromise. These characteristics of the debate are understandable in terms of what is involved. Nuclear power has always been a controversial topic in Germany, and the decision to extend the operating lifetime of nuclear power plants would imply millions in profits or losses for the business actors operating these plants as well as the renewable energy sectors, but in opposite ways. Accordingly, the decision became framed as fundamental and transformative.

It is interesting, moreover, how exactly the arguments were framed, specifically which sustainability-related aspects were being referred to, and how these aspects can be interpreted in completely opposing directions. Moreover, the breadth of sustainability-related arguments even among the business-related CSOs is noteworthy, which again reveals that sustainable development functioned as an anchor term in the debate.

Diverging interpretations of sustainable development existed in the debate especially with respect to the following aspects:

- The design of the transformation of the energy system.
- The general evaluation of economic growth as a societal objective.
- The evaluation of federal subsidies in the context of the energy system.
- The implications of extension of operating lifetime for investments in renewable energy sources.
- The evaluation of the issues of nuclear waste disposal.
- Safety issues.
- The structure of and implications for the labor market.
- The interpretation of consumer demand.
- The consequences of rising energy costs.

Table 7.2 Sustainability-related arguments for and against operating lifetime extensions (own compilation)

Sustainability dimension	Pro extension	Contra extension
<i>Economic</i>	Sustainability of supporting those who create the most output for society	Sustainability of supporting real competition
<i>Economic</i>	Greater independence from external energy sources	Complete independence from external energy sources (via renewable energies)
<i>Economic</i>	Extending the operating lifetime enables investments in renewable energy	Extending the operating lifetime creates more pressure to invest in renewable energy
<i>Ecological</i>	Support of existing bridging technologies	Planning reliability and optimization of ecological incentives for investments
<i>Ecological</i>	Nuclear power as a clean bridging technology	Minimization of nuclear waste
<i>Ecological</i>	Higher safety standards	Minimization of risk
<i>Social</i>	Preserving jobs	Creation of new jobs
<i>Social</i>	Energy security	Energy security independent of nuclear power
<i>Social</i>	Acceptable prices for consumers	Consumers and medium-sized businesses bearing the costs of an extension

Table 7.2 summarizes and compares dominant sustainability-related arguments made by the actors favoring and those opposing extending the operating lifetime of nuclear power plants in Germany.

As Table 7.2 shows, there are some interesting parallels in the sustainability-related aspects addressed. Yet, they are frequently interpreted in opposing directions. Thus, both sides argue that the decision on extending the operating lifetime of nuclear power will affect investments in renewable energy sources. However, the pronuclear power side sees an extension as the basis for allowing sufficient investments in renewable energies due to the generation of financial resources for the energy sector. Those not wanting an extension argue, in contrast, that the extension would reduce the necessary pressure for investments in renewable energy.

In other aspects, the two sides have very different starting points in the arguments. The proextension side frames nuclear power as a clean and acceptable bridging technology between the eras for fossil fuels and renewable energy sources, for instance; while the other side does not see it as a bridging technology at all. Similarly, safety concerns appear with respect to ecological, social, or economic sustainability, depending on who is evaluating them.

Another interesting point from the analysis is that the environmental NGOs do not address economic sustainability directly. Their understanding of economic sustainability appears implicit in the criticism of clientelism and the influence of the four large power suppliers in German politics and the associated absence of real competition. From that, we can venture that they implicitly argue for improvements in the competitive setting, economically and politically.

It is also fascinating how everybody claims to represent consumer's interests when it comes to social sustainability and thereby appropriates the consumer for one's own interests. In addition, the categories of consumer and citizen almost merge in the statements, as actors appeal to the economic and political character of the members of the individual households. Consumers are also very present in the unions' statements, which highlight the role of socially sustainable structural change, thereby employing a rather loaded term.

In sum, we can notice a considerable variety of sustainability-related arguments in the debate. Most fundamentally, the debate shows how all CSOs attempt to legitimate the interests they represent with respect to sustainable development as an anchor theme. In consequence, antagonistic positions do not appear antagonistic from a macro perspective on this debate. Everybody appears to be talking about the societal guiding vision of sustainable development. It is only when looking at the details of the arguments that one can recognize how the sustainability-related arguments are linked to the interests represented by the relevant CSOs.

Conclusion

The chapter has argued that "civil society" participation has an ambiguous impact on sustainable development and aimed to demonstrate this using the German debate on extending the operating lifetime of nuclear power plants as an empirical case. As shown, we cannot assume that increasing the "participatory" character of governance will necessarily improve political output with respect to sustainability due to the breadth of interests represented by "civil society actors" in a given policy debate. In fact, the a priori ascription of sustainability values to civil society actors bears the risk of camouflaging the real interests represented by CSOs in political processes. CSOs are not just associations of citizens, and associations of citizens do not necessarily pursue sustainability objectives. Thus, such a priori ascriptions of sustainability values taint evaluations of political processes by the media, citizens, and researchers. Moreover, they may seduce us to pursue strategies to improve the legitimacy and sustainability output of political processes via an increase in CSO participation, when such strategies can easily fail if the results are the antipode of what was desired.

In terms of studies of the role of CSOs in sustainable development policy and politics (and of civil society's political role in general), our argument and analysis serve to highlight the limited usefulness of the sectoral and normative approaches as analytical tools. These approaches may allow a preliminary and broad classification of actors as non-state actors as well as the discussion of fundamental normative objectives for societies and corresponding democratic ideals. They do not allow differentiated assessments of the actual democratic legitimacy of a given political process, however, and in fact carry the danger (especially if blurred) of attributing normative values to civil society and participatory democratic processes that cannot a priori be assumed. To the contrary, critical scientific analyses of the sustainability impact of civil society participation and of the participatory nature of political

processes in general must inquire into the representational basis of CSOs and their associated positions with respect to a concrete policy issue.

The dangers involved in undifferentiated uses of sectoral and/or utopian concepts of civil society become particularly visible when we turn our focus to political practice. If political actors (including the media) apply a similarly undifferentiated concept of civil society, democratic checks and balances between different interests are easily undermined. In fact, the rise in power of (especially transnational) business actors vis-à-vis civil society is partly a function of the former's strategic use of self-created civil society actors to pursue private economic interests from a discourse position endowed with moral legitimacy (Fuchs 2005, 2013a; Levy and Newell 2005). Accordingly, efforts by the European Union, for instance, to increase civil society participation and establish a more level playing field⁶ (to the extent that they are serious⁷) depend on the existence of transparency with respect to the representational basis of each CSO and selection criteria advantaging CSOs not representing market actors. Otherwise there is a risk that the integration of (further) CSOs in a given political process may not create a balance of interests, but rather strengthen an existing imbalance. Most fundamentally, then, our contribution should be read as a plea to stringently analyze the representational basis and strategic conduct of actors appearing under the heading of CSOs in political processes.

With respect to sustainable development, moreover, we have to recognize that even the participation of civil society actors not linked to for-profit interests can easily have ambivalent results. In fact, one of the challenges of the German political objectives for a transformation of the energy system towards a substantially larger reliance on renewable energy sources is to simultaneously improve the participatory nature of the process and yet stringently continue the pursuit of the substantive goal in the context of local initiatives opposing the construction of elements of the necessary infrastructure.⁸

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⁶ For an analysis of power asymmetries between economic and civil society interests at the various levels of governance, see Fuchs 2005.

⁷ For a critical evaluation of the role allowed for civil society participation in the European constitutional process, see Geiger 2005.

⁸ See the research projects LITRES and Komma-P for ongoing research on this issue: <http://www.uni-muenster.de/Fuchs/en/forschung/projekte/index.html>.

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Part II
Associating in Times of Flux

Chapter 8

Volunteering in a Hybrid Institutional and Organizational Environment: An Emerging Research Agenda

Lesley Hustinx

Abstract Traditionally, volunteers are core participants in classic voluntary associations; however, the organizational context of volunteering has changed significantly in recent decades through the proliferation of new and hybrid settings of participation that mingle roles and rationalities of civil society, state, and market. In this chapter, I examine the consequences of this organizational change for the nature and functions of volunteering by means of a literature review.

Keywords Organizational context of volunteering · Voluntary associations · Societal functions of volunteering · Hybridization

Volunteers have always been a cornerstone of associational life. Their voluntary and unpaid work, ranging from organizing activities and taking leadership positions to service and advocacy work, is crucial for the functioning and survival of any association. Traditionally, volunteers are core participants in classic voluntary associations; however, the organizational context of volunteering has changed significantly in recent decades. In this chapter, I examine the consequences of this organizational change for the nature of volunteering and for the classic societal functions of voluntary associations and volunteering.

A key observation in recent years is the proliferation of new and hybrid settings of participation that mingle roles and rationalities of civil society, state, and market (Billis 2010; Eliasoph 2009). In particular, changes in contemporary welfare regimes, and more specific new modes of governing social welfare, are an important driver (Billis 2010). The system-wide coordination by the state is interchanged with modes of governance based on volatile and heterogeneous networks and partnerships with both market and third sector (Bode 2006). The third sector is confronted with devolution of public responsibility and an increasingly competitive environment characterized by short-term contracting and demands for accountability, performance, and efficiency.

Of course, cross-national variations in institutional contexts need to be acknowledged (Bode 2010; Henriksen et al. 2012). In liberal welfare regimes, hybridization means a departure from the “pure” model of grassroots voluntary associations and

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is seen as a consequence of increasing government intrusion (Eliasoph 2009). In contrast, in continental Europe, “hybridization” means a shift in the nature of hybridity, moving from a traditionally “organized” welfare mix to a “disorganized” welfare mix (Bode 2006). A deregulation of the previously stable partnerships between government and third sector is occurring.

The impact of this increasingly hybrid welfare architecture on citizens’ voluntary engagement is an emerging topic in the academic debate (Eliasoph 2009, 2011; Hustinx 2010). However, the exact consequences of these changes for volunteering are ill understood. As yet, few empirical studies on the topic exist and no systematic research agenda has been developed. To learn about the consequences of these sector-wide changes for volunteering, in-depth research into the micro-settings of volunteering is warranted. In this chapter, I present a literature review on hybrid organizations as a present-day setting for volunteering, mainly focusing on volunteers engaged in social service delivery, which revealed three central themes: the impact of institutional and organizational hybridity on (1) the nature and experience of volunteering, (2) the interactional order in volunteer settings, and (3) the societal functions of volunteering. In the remainder of this chapter, these themes will be discussed. It is important to note that this chapter does not present an exhaustive literature review, but rather discusses a number of exemplary studies.

The Nature and Experience of Volunteering

A number of studies focus on the impact of hybrid(izing) organizational features on volunteers’ experiences and practices. Most of these studies examine the impact of key organizational transitions on volunteers’ commitment and are situated in an Anglophone context, where hybridization should be understood as a departure from the classic grassroots model of voluntary associations towards a stronger entanglement with government. While these studies may reflect a more common and natural organizational life cycle towards increasing professionalization and formalization, other studies have focused on more “entrenched hybrids” that are deliberately structured as hybrids (Billis 2010). The two perspectives are discussed separately.

Organizational Transformations

Several studies examine the consequences for volunteering of an organizational transformation from a traditional grassroots association to a more professionalized organization (Kelley et al. 2005; Lie and Baines 2007; Warburton and McDonald 2009). This organizational change is mainly caused by a changing policy environment, involving increased public funding, processes of marketization, the emergence of a more competitive environment, a new contract culture, and new demands for professionalism. According to Warburton and McDonald (2009), this results

in a split between “a declining, traditional, ‘charity’ model and a new model run on business lines and incorporating elements of social enterprise” (Warburton and McDonald 2009, pp. 825–826).

As organizational practices become more professional, volunteers are confronted with new roles and demands. In the traditional setting, volunteers often perform unskilled and charity-type work; while in the new model, they deliver professional services and their work is approached in a managerialist way, with formal job descriptions, shifts, and rosters. Stratification in the division of authority between volunteers and staff occurs. New volunteers are trained to do specific tasks, not to participate in the organization as a whole. Kelley et al. (2005), in their study of an organizational transition from an underground syringe exchange program to a legal, public sector-funded service organization in San Francisco, found that in the new setting, volunteers were mainly doing the unpaid work, while staff made the operational decisions, and volunteers were increasingly left out of information sharing and decision making. The organization is more strongly aligned with public institutions and authorities rather than its earlier commitment to the community it was serving. As a result, the organizational transformation reduced volunteers’ commitment, and in particular alienated the long-term volunteers who continued to adhere to the original goals and principles of the underground program.

Also Lie and Baines (2007) and Warburton and McDonald (2009) found disempowering effects on the long-term, and usually older volunteers that were engaged in the traditional setting. Volunteers reported having lost the spontaneity they used to enjoy and feeling stressed about having to pass tests and making mistakes (Lie and Baines 2007). Warburton and McDonald (2009) found traditional volunteers to experience confusion and tension when confronted with the managerial approach that was espoused by the central office and diffused through the local branches and new service areas.

While many older people successfully made the transition to the new institutional order, the authors noted the risk of older volunteers being excluded in the process of organizational transformation. Being accustomed to the traditional organizational culture, some older volunteers were unable to make the transition to the new entrepreneurial model and showed resistance to the top-down imposition of change on the relatively autonomous volunteers in the local branches.

Volunteering in Hybrid Settings

In their study of a family program to alleviate poverty in the USA, Bloom and Kilgore (2003) start from the observation that the US government has placed increasing emphasis on neoliberal policy strategies, as reflected in its retreat from the provision of social services, and increasing reliance on the nonprofit sector and volunteers. As a result, volunteering has taken on a new meaning and significance. Volunteers are supposed to take responsibility for the needs of vulnerable citizens and are expected “to solve serious problems” (Bloom and Kilgore 2003, p. 432).

Bloom and Kilgore examined to what extent volunteers can actually meet these expectations. The family program they studied aimed at involving middle-class volunteers to build an effective social support network for families in poverty, as a way of reducing social isolation, and to move beyond their own biases about people in poverty. Bloom and Kilgore concluded that while this unpaid work may bring meaning to the lives of the volunteers, the problems and needs of families in poverty are too complex and rooted in society-wide structural inequalities, and hence cannot be addressed by volunteers, who risk frustration and disappointment. In short, the one-to-one volunteering offered was not as promising as claimed by proponents of the US administration's neoliberal agenda.

In one of the most in-depth ethnographic studies available up to present, Eliasoph (2009, 2011) examined "hybrid" youth empowerment programs in the USA, which she described as top-down, funded civic projects operating "through a dizzy array of semi-civic, semi-private, semi-state agencies" (Eliasoph 2009, p. 293). She noted that as a result of this more hybrid constellation, volunteer management was not so much focused on the experiences of volunteers, but rather on the measurement of activities and the organization of short-term, rationally planned projects with a predictable success rate, which guaranteed good publicity toward a diversity of stakeholders and funders. Eliasoph (2009, 2011), for example, observed the introduction of various "accounting devices" within these hybrid volunteer settings. The transparency that was required for multiple funding agencies and private donors translated into "constant documenting—hours spent volunteering, number of youth volunteers, number of adult volunteers helping the projects, number of youth served" (Eliasoph 2009, p. 297). As a result, poor and minority youth volunteers, knowing that they were volunteering as members of prevention programs, started to speak publicly about themselves as members of categories and objects of crime and unemployment statistics. And during meetings, youth volunteers in community service programs ended up devoting more time to the question of how to measure the hours they had spent volunteering than to any other question. The hybrid nature of this particular volunteer setting thus substantially changed the meaning of volunteering for the participants, who seemed to approach it in a much more distanced and instrumental way.

Another example of more hybrid forms of participation is community service programs for youth, which are introduced by public authorities to boost active citizenship among young people. Simonet (2009) studied two civic service programs, in the USA and in France, exploring the role of socioeconomic factors in young people's definition of, and experiences with, the civic service. Participants in the programs received some remuneration for living expenses to allow them to commit themselves full time to their voluntary service. Simonet found that depending on their socioeconomic background, youth volunteers had very different understandings of their service and of the stipend they received. The experience of the service differed a lot between youth from privileged and underprivileged backgrounds. While the former framed their motivations and experiences more on the "volunteer side" of the service program ("do something useful for society," "give back to the community"), participants who lacked financial resources put more emphasis on the "occupational side" of the program. They were looking for a job and were referred

to the civic service by a professional worker. Participants from an underprivileged background were also more often “fired” or left the program more or less voluntarily. Simonet further observed a sharp distinction in the perception and use of the living allowance: It was “pocket money” for those youth who were supported by their parents, and “pay” or “income” for those who had no other resources to live on. She concluded that more privileged youth experienced their service commitment as “super volunteering,” while many of the less privileged youth experienced it as a “job,” a job that was poorly compensated but the only means from which they could live, and a job that they aspired to leave for a better-paid one.

Similar conclusions were drawn from a study of single mothers on welfare in Canada (Fuller et al. 2008). The authors sketch a shift in Canadian social policy, characterized by the emergence of a new type of “market citizenship” in which paid work is considered the primary ground for social inclusion, while social citizenship as an entitlement to a basic standard of living is eroding. As a result, single mothers increasingly face the societal rejection of care for their children as a legitimate alternative to full-time employment and feel pressured to demonstrate their social worthiness. Fuller and colleagues argue that in this context, “volunteer labour is a key site where income assistance recipients struggle for social inclusion and moral legitimation in the face of material deprivation and moralizing discourses about motherhood, welfare, and work” (Fuller et al. 2008, p. 159). While these single mothers used discourses of altruism and care; they also justified their volunteer activities by associating this type of work with paid employment. They considered volunteering as a way to acquire skills that could be useful in getting a paid job and as an opportunity to earn some material goods (food, some form of remuneration) necessary for survival and a minimum level of social inclusion, hence an underground income-generating activity. The authors conclude that in this new policy context, while volunteering can be seen as an act of citizenship, when conducted by vulnerable groups, volunteer activities should be considered as compulsory, driven by material needs, and a normative pressure to legitimate claims to citizen entitlements. Volunteering becomes a strategic site where single mothers can make a symbolic statement of reciprocity toward a community that provides them with income-assistance benefits.

Interactional Order

A second focus of research is the interactional order in hybrid organizational settings. It refers to the relationships that organizational participants build with each other through everyday interaction. In third-sector organizations (TSOs), the main organizational participants are volunteers and paid staff.¹ Recurring themes are role ambiguity and boundary blurring, and the potential tensions and conflict areas that may result from them.

¹ Within the limited scope of the chapter, it is not possible to include a discussion of the (changing) relationship with clients.

The Relationships Among Volunteers

The group style concept (Eliasoph and Lichterman 2003) lends itself best to study relationships within volunteer groups. Lichterman (2009) in the USA distinguished between TSOs with a “club” group style and those with a “networker or plug-in” group style. The “club style” is a traditional one and is typical for TSOs with formal membership, a strong collective identity and multiple organizational goals (e.g., the Rotary Club). In this setting, volunteers are loyal to the organization, engage long-term, and perform unspecialized “good deeds.” The main reward for volunteering is socializing with other members and associated social status.

More recently, the “networker” or “plug-in style” has become more prevalent in TSOs. This networker style can be found in informal and loosely connected alliances that are issue based. In this setting, volunteers “plug in” and engage in task-oriented volunteering. The main reward for volunteering is to feel good about one’s own self and enhance individual (career) goals. Lichterman has studied this group style in the Humane Response Alliance, a church alliance (Lichterman 2009) and in Fun Evenings, a project for youth at risk (Lichterman 2006). In the Humane Response Alliance, the social map of partner organizations (civic groups, county agencies and churches) was held vaguely, allowing the separate partner organizations to maintain their own group style (Lichterman 2009). In this network, priority was given to doing over talking, which translated into a business meeting style that focused speech on manageable tasks, leaving little space to reflect on the broader picture of community relations. The organizers of the Fun Evenings project recruited their plug-in volunteers in such a way that the potential for relationship building among volunteers, and between volunteers and the young recipients was restricted (Lichterman 2006). As a result, the opportunities to broaden volunteers’ horizons or to cultivate social capital were limited. Volunteers were found to “keep busy solo” and to be “doing alongside.”

Also, Warburton and McDonald (2009) found different types of social relations and ways of interacting depending on the particular setting—the traditional “charity model” and the new “social enterprise model” as mentioned above. In the former, “old” order, volunteers had a long-term commitment (40–50 years of service was not uncommon) and felt very comfortable in their role and in their interactions with other volunteers and clients. When they came on duty, they were welcomed warmly by other volunteers; they socialized with each other and joined each other at table for lunch. In contrast to this social, relationship-based conversational order, volunteers in the “new” settings experienced an environment that was professionalized, more distant and formal. In a hospital play scheme, for example, the coordinator emphasized the rules and regulations surrounding interactions with clients. Volunteers had to be flexible and they took their duties very seriously. At the night café, the volunteers who worked with homeless young people had to be alert to potential problems, for example, checking the toilets for drug usage regularly; and they were well aware of the risk of violence or visits by the police (Warburton and McDonald 2009).

Volunteers and Paid Staff Members

The tensions between volunteers and paid staff members and the resistance of the latter to the presence of volunteers in mixed volunteer–employee settings are an old and ongoing theme in volunteering research. These tensions are, among others, fuelled by the job threat that volunteers pose to paid staff members. This job threat grows in times of devolution of public responsibility, as the role expectations of volunteers expand (Netting et al. 2005). Tensions also derive from conflicting perceptions about organizational identity among volunteers and paid staff members. Kreutzer and Jäger (2011), in their study of six European patient organizations, identified three main conflict areas between paid staff members and volunteers: authority, whereby professionals and volunteers both claimed the authority to lead the organization; expectations about the output, where they found volunteers to expect an enormous output of paid staff members as a justification for their salaries; and motivation, with volunteers' motivation to be concerned with the organization's "soul" whereas managerial motivation mainly focused on standard procedures.

The identified areas of conflict are partly related to the diversifying position of volunteers vis-à-vis professionals. The rapid growth of paid staff and the competition for funding for TSOs have led to a growing range of functions in TSOs, performed by a mix of paid staff and volunteers. In some TSOs, volunteers are engaged to take up responsible and complex tasks (cf. Bloom and Kilgore 2003). In other TSOs a hierarchy is installed, with volunteers being excluded from decision-making roles and performing less risky or ancillary tasks, leaving the complex or more important tasks to paid staff members (cf. Kelley et al. 2005).

With the growing interest of governments to involve volunteers in the public sector—a current example of the blurring boundaries between public and nonprofit sectors—tensions between volunteers and paid staff are also particularly evident in public agencies. Dover (2010) notes that the attitudes of public sector staff have long been identified as a potential barrier to volunteer participation in public sector agencies. However, little is known about the reasons for staff resistance. In his study of the experiences of frontline staff (those who are actually charged with implementing volunteer programs) in a municipal ecology center in Canada, Dover (2010) found that while on the one hand, staff members were committed to voluntarism and community participation, on the other hand, they developed policies that placed volunteers in peripheral roles. To explain these contradictory strategies, Dover argues that staff's view of volunteering is influenced by three main institutional logics: professionalism, new public management (NPM), and community participation. From the perspective of professionalism, the profession needs to be defended and volunteer management tools are thus used in a way that volunteers without specialist knowledge can only fulfill support roles. The NPM logic brings in ideas of quality and risk taking into volunteer management. The logic of community participation approaches volunteers as active participants in shaping the organizational goals and encourages volunteer involvement. These logics coexist and create tensions for the staff as they offer competing visions for volunteer involvement. The

staff manages these tensions by finding value in each logic, but the resultant “logic blends” can lead to contradictions in its volunteering strategy.

Societal Functions

A final theme that emerges in the literature is the societal functions of hybrid volunteering. Here, the main question is whether emerging forms of hybrid organization and volunteering can perform the same functions as “classic” types of participation in voluntary associations did (or were assumed to do in a Tocquevillian sense).

Political Participation

First, from a political science perspective, political participation and public opinion formation and speech are expected outcomes. Eliasoph (2011) observed that, because of the stronger need for legitimization in front of a more diverse number of stakeholders, hybrid organizations more strongly focus on the public good, through discussing more explicitly themes such as justice, equality, and inclusion—thorny issues that classical volunteer groups rather prefer to avoid (Eliasoph 1998). Indeed, in her recent ethnographic study of empowerment projects in the USA, Eliasoph (2011) observed “public-spirited dialogue” among paid organizers. However, empowerment projects did not stimulate political talk among volunteers. Volunteers rarely talked about politics in the sense of public policy, and when they did, politics seemed close and personal. They were being taught “civic skills minus politics,” learning technical skills such as taking notes or running meetings, without learning to see or care about the bigger picture. Although empowerment projects aim to address social inequality, there is hardly any room for complex and potentially explosive discussions on the structural causes and material conditions that need to be tackled (Eliasoph 2011).

Simonet (2009) observed that privileged youth in civic service programs questioned the role that these programs should play in relation to underprivileged participants, whose material struggle continued throughout their service. However, while they were aware of it, there was neither discussion about it nor any effort to help each other in the group.

Iltcan and Basok (2004), who studied Canadian voluntary agencies concerned with social justice issues and operating in a neoliberal policy context, also found that the majority of volunteers were involved in direct service delivery. However, the voluntary agency representatives, themselves involved in public policy debate, did not encourage volunteers to become involved in advocacy work and to “grasp the bigger picture.”

Similar findings emerged from a study of middle-class volunteers in a Family Partners Program in the USA, who provided relational and instrumental social

support to families in poverty (Bloom and Kilgore 2003). Although volunteers got a better insight into the structural causes of poverty and the impact of stigmatization, most volunteers still held normative, individualized rather than structural interpretations of poverty.

Social Capital Formation

Second, from a sociological perspective, the focus is on social capital formation. Positive externalities include social integration, participation, community building, and the development of generalized social trust. Eliasoph (2009, 2011) revealed that in empowerment projects in the USA, short-term or “plug-in” volunteers developed only weak ties with other volunteers, clients, and paid staff. This could be explained by their episodic commitment and by organizations’ inability to stimulate bonding beyond social and cultural differences. While empowerment projects were expected to be inclusive (in contrast to the mostly socially homogeneous classic voluntary associations), they tended to treat ethnic differences as light and chosen rather than to display their roots and specificities (Eliasoph 2009, 2011).

Eliasoph further observed that efforts by middle-class plug-in volunteers in some cases were useless and even destructive. These volunteers, looking for a quick yet “rewarding, intimate experience” (Eliasoph 2009, p. 145), did not come into sustained contact with recipients, undermined the organization’s feeling of family-like intimacy, and avoided those recipients that are hard to help or to bond with. Recipients learned not to trust the constant stream of plug-in volunteers who promised to help them and to bond, but, for example, gave contradictory advice with regard to their school homework. Eliasoph showed that volunteers who did not interact with the youth, but took care of organizational and financial matters, were much more helpful for the beneficiaries.

Also Lichterman (2009) showed that flexible, optional, and output-oriented volunteering in loose organizational networks failed to fulfill the ideal of nurturing social capacities among participants, and circumvented the development of collective civic action. Volunteers in a family program to alleviate poverty also had difficulties in building spontaneous and natural friendships with the clients, because they had to engage within a neoliberal policy framework that emphasized professional social work and surveillance (Bloom and Kilgore 2003).

Conclusion

Changes in the institutional environment of TSOs and in their organizational structure have changed the settings for volunteering. More specifically, blurring sector boundaries have resulted in a nonprofit landscape increasingly characterized by organizations that exhibit hybrid features, that is, that combine different sector

characteristics and logics. In this chapter, I have presented a literature review to provide some initial insight into the consequences of these broader institutional and organizational changes for volunteering.

In general, the picture that arises from this review is not so rosy. Many studies discussed the erosion of a traditional “club style” or “charity” model, typical of classic voluntary associations, and the emergence of a more professional, managerial environment for volunteering, in which volunteers no longer seem to be a key stakeholder because accountability towards funding agencies is deemed more important. The organizational focus is increasingly put on successful projects, good publicity, rules and regulations.

While a greater organizational effectiveness may be reached by shifting to a business-like model, it has become clear that also the nature of volunteering is radically different in the new environment. The role of traditional, long-term, and highly committed volunteers with a strong collective identity is curtailed. Emergent is a new type of professional “plug-in” volunteer who is involved on a short-term basis and is recruited to perform very specific tasks, following clear managerial rules and regulations—thus being “stripped” from the traditional volunteer status of a full participant with ownership of the association, merely doing “unpaid work” while being excluded from central organizational activities such as information sharing and decision making.

While the traditional volunteer represented an amateurish type of do-gooder, the emergence of the new, professional volunteer is also more likely to cause tensions with paid staff. This especially occurs in a context of devolution of public responsibility, where governments increasingly involve volunteers out of an economic rationale, to reduce costs, and role expectations toward volunteers grow. This leads to role ambiguity and feelings of job threat among professionals. At the same time, research has shown that the capabilities of volunteers in the provision of social welfare should not be overestimated, and that it is risky to rely only on volunteers to solve major social problems.

An important asset of hybrid organizations would be that they are open for or accessible to a more heterogeneous population, explicitly aiming at a greater diversity of volunteers in terms of their socioeconomic and cultural background, e.g., through empowerment projects or civic service programs. Existing studies, however, point to the dual experiences of volunteers from advantaged and disadvantaged backgrounds. The latter create a greater awareness of their disadvantaged status, or consider volunteering as a form of “underemployment” through which they earn at least some pay. They feel compelled to volunteer, out of material necessity, or because of a normative pressure to earn their welfare benefits back. At the same time, little bridging social capital is built.

Finally, existing research points to the hampering effects of the new plug-in or business style of volunteering for the interaction and relationship building between volunteers. Because of the limited, focused nature of the volunteer role, there is little opportunity to build more substantial ties with other volunteers or with beneficiaries. Volunteers do not learn about the broader structural causes of the problems they are supposed to tackle, as there is little opportunity for discussion and

reflection. Short-term volunteering can also have a detrimental influence on the recipients of the service, who mainly learn not to trust volunteers.

In short, while it has already been demonstrated that classic voluntary associations have some characteristics that are not as favorable as commonly imagined (e.g., a lack of diversity and transparency, a paternalistic distance between volunteer and beneficiary, a disconnection from politics—see, Eliasoph 2009; Theiss-Morse and Hibbing 2005), the hybrid settings that are emerging do not necessarily provide a promising alternative. However, caution is needed in drawing definite conclusions. While this chapter has discussed a number of exemplary studies, more systematic research is needed on the impact of this changing organizational landscape on the nature and functions of volunteering.

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Chapter 9

Voluntary Involvement in German Welfare Organizations

Holger Backhaus-Maul and Carsta Langner

Abstract The chapter focuses on the sociocultural, political and economic foundations of a key institution of the third sector in Germany. Welfare organizations are outlined in terms of organizational sociology, and volunteer work is described as their constitutive element. Finally, recognizing traditional volunteer-work concepts and the dynamics of sociocultural changes, the authors will point out the facets and dilemmas of volunteer work as an economic resource.

Keywords Volunteering · Welfare organizations · Third sector · Sociocultural changes · Germany

Inspired by international and, in particular, US-American political science and sociology, as one of the first political scientists in Germany, Annette Zimmer, together with Helmut Anheier and Wolfgang Seibel, has placed charitable or rather non-profit organizations, as a third sector alongside state and market, to the centre of her own work and into the zone of attention of German political science (Anheier and Seibel 1990; Anheier et al. 1997; Priller and Zimmer 2001). Whereas Wolfgang Seibel showed himself to be fascinated by the irony of sociological neo-institutionalism (“successful failure”, Seibel 1992) and Helmut Anheier surveyed the third sector on a global scale (Anheier and Salomon 1997), Annette Zimmer dedicated herself to different characteristics of the relationship between non-profit organization and voluntary involvement (Zimmer and Nährlich 2001). In her research work, Annette Zimmer paid special attention to a downright essentially German organizational and cultural form—from an international point of view, mind you—namely the registered, non-profit-making association (Zimmer 1996). Within the subject area, which in the 1990s was defined as the third sector and which nowadays is labelled as civil society, associations, especially sports associations and welfare federations, hold a prominent and central position.

At a relatively early stage—particularly inspired by the work of Rolf G. Heinze and Thomas Olk (Heinze and Olk 1981)—Annette Zimmer recognized the importance of welfare federations in the third sector but at the same time shrank back from a more profound research on this internationally unique, and to political

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scientists at times peculiar and immensely complex, subject area including its social services and institutions, political federation structures and sociocultural forms of social integration. Nevertheless, *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege*¹ was considered in the quantitative studies of the characteristics of the third sector, which were jointly carried out by Annette Zimmer and Eckhard Priller (Zimmer and Priller 2004). In addition, a few years later, incorporating their association-experienced political science perspective, Annette Zimmer and her colleagues paid closer attention to *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege*; posing the classic question about the importance and development of voluntary associations' boards, she aims at the existential question of control and coordination in *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege* (Behr et al. 2008). Traditionally, the majority of board positions in federations, institutions and services of *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege* and its member organizations are mostly held by volunteers; at the same time, the population's willingness to take responsibility for voluntary leadership positions is fading. In doing this, Annette Zimmer points out a central problem of welfare federations; economically, and with regard to employment policies, they are the most important German non-profit organizations dealing with involvement and volunteers. As a result of doing so, however, she identifies only one part of the volunteer work in *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege*: Volunteers beyond the executive level and outside the committees provide a large part of the social services performed in *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege*. This act of volunteering was constitutive and formative for the self-conception of *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege*. Moreover, our current empirical study makes it clear that volunteering in *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege* is still shaped by traditional concepts and beliefs (Backhaus-Maul et al. 2014). On the one hand, the idea of the honorary post having turned gray in dignity ensures the tradition of involvement within *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege*, and on the other hand, it clouds the view of new societal conceptions regarding the involvement of citizens as well. With the aging of volunteer work or—in variation of Wolfgang Streeck's fine term (Streeck 1986)—with the “natural extinction of the aging volunteer” and the disinterest of younger and middle-aged volunteer cohorts in the activity fields of *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege*, which are occasionally perceived as unattractive, welfare federations as well as their member organizations, services and institutions are facing a serious ideological and personnel problem.

The question to be discussed in the present text, which concerns the conceptualization and importance of volunteer work in *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege*, touches upon nothing less than the sociocultural, political and economic foundations of a key institution of the third sector in Germany, which has been explored by Annette Zimmer and her colleagues.

In the following, the subject area, i.e., welfare federations as environmentally open intermediary organizations, is outlined in terms of organizational sociology, and volunteer work is described as a constitutive element of *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege*. Finally, recognizing traditional volunteer-work concepts and the dynamics of sociocultural changes, we will point out the facets and dilemmas of the current concept of volunteer work as an economic resource.

¹ Voluntary welfare work.

Welfare Federations as Intermediary Organizations

Together with its six central associations as well as numerous member organizations, residential institutions and outpatient services, *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege* in Germany constitutes one of the largest non-profit institutions worldwide, according to a survey by the Federal Organization of *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege* (*Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft der Freien Wohlfahrtspflege—BAGFW*), with 3,699,025 beds or places at their disposal as of January 1, 2008. *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege* regarded as a whole or—as it now terms itself—as “social economy” is one of the most important economic branches and one of the largest employers in Germany. According to information of the BAGFW, as of the reference date of the last self-survey (January 01, 2008), about 1,541,829 salaried employees, of which 708,523 are full-time employed, and approximately 2.5 or 3.0 million volunteers are active in *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege* (*Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft der Freien Wohlfahrtspflege* 2008; Arnold et al. 2013). It is remarkable that since the expansion of the German welfare state in the 1970s and its reinforcement by the accession of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) to the Federal Republic of Germany, *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege* has grown so strongly and continuously as well as relatively independent of economic developments and crises, despite the competition from the for-profit sector and state-enforced competitive elements. In the course of this continuous prosperity, the particular value and the concepts of volunteer work as a constitutive factor in *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege* have changed as well.

An appropriate analytical raster and corresponding instruments are required to be able to understand and survey the institutions of *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege*, in the first place. Together with her colleagues—Adalbert Evers, in particular (Evers 1990)—Annette Zimmer introduced the term third sector—customary in the international social-science debate—into the German arena in order to identify organizations and measure the organizational field between state and market.

Welfare Federations as Part of the Third Sector

According to Annette Zimmer, the organizations of the third sector are characterized “by their own logic of action, specific functions and special organizational structures” (Zimmer and Priller 2004, p. 16). The term third sector initially refers to the fact that there is a widely underestimated organizational field apart from that of the state and the market. These non-profit organizations share a specific logic and structure of governance which distinguishes them from both the state and the market (fundamentally: Kaufmann 2002; Wiesenthal 2005): Neither hierarchy nor price-mediated transactions are the main factors to control and coordinate third-sector organizations; instead, solidary-reciprocal forms of action control and coordination form the contributing factors (Zimmer 2004, p. 17). Expectations of mutuality, based on experience and trust, form the sociocultural foundations of exchange in third-sector organizations. Although the socio-geographic reach of this

reciprocity-based governance is relatively limited with regard to hierarchy and price-mediated transactions, it can definitely extend to national and international contexts as well. Above all, however, third-sector organizations—unlike state organizations and for-profit-sector enterprises, for instance—are thus capable of continuously reproducing the sociocultural foundations of the society they live on.

The term third sector raises expectations of homogeneity among the subsumed organizations hereunder. Instead, observers face an almost confusing variety and number of organizations and performed tasks. Against this background, an abstract, organizational-sociologically trained view on the subject area of the third sector proves to be insightful. Apart from the outlined governance mode, the organizations gathered in the third sector are characterized by their multifunctionality, intermediateness and environmental openness (Backhaus-Maul and Mutz 2005, p. 99; Boebenecker 2008). Thus, organizations of the third sector, while employing a variety of different key and focal aspects, mostly combine an associative function, an interest-group function as well as an operational function. This multifunctionality is clearly illustrated by the example of the central federations of *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege*, its member organizations, services and institutions (Angerhausen et al. 1998; Olk 1995):

- Citizens voluntarily—associatively—join together in associations and groups of *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege*.
- The federations of *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege* forward the interests of their personal members and corporate member organizations.
- Within the companies of *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege*, i.e., in the residential institutions and with outpatient services, members provide and distribute social services.

The outlined multifunctionality of third-sector organizations involves a relative environmental openness with regard to social systems such as state, economy and family. As a result, apart from the outlined task-specific functions, third-sector organizations fulfil a society-related—intermediary—function. Accordingly, third-sector organizations are capable of providing transaction and coordination services between social systems, as well as managing interdependencies in the cohesion of modern, functionally diversified systems (Boebenecker 2008; fundamentally Streck 1986).

Membership and involvement in third-sector organizations is, at the same time, the condition for and result of the associative function of *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege*. Thus, *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege* reproduces its own sociocultural foundations in the concrete involvement of the participants and members. In addition, the third sector and its organizations—especially when in competition with the economy and the state—play a key role in the reproduction of sociocultural foundations of modern societies (Backhaus-Maul and Mutz 2005, p. 100). At the same time, this intermediateness of third-sector organizations implies a distinctive environmental openness and adaptability. Insofar, it can be assumed that the economization of society and the dynamization of social change have a significant influence on the development of third-sector organizations such as the central associations of *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege* and its member organizations.

Welfare Federations in a Changing Environment

With the “economization of society” (Schimank and Volkmann 2008), the basic conditions for *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege* have changed as well. The economization of society “drives” the federations of *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege* into a conflict between their self-conception as federation and economic environmental requirements. In the clash of public welfare and profit orientation, *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege* is facing an existential “economization dilemma” (Liebig 2005). Unlike for-profit-sector enterprises, which are oriented towards profit maximization and private profit withdrawal, welfare federations, being multifunctional organizations, pursue several and, at the same time, diverging goals which are to be reconciled in complex negotiation processes again and again. For instance, satisfying member interests, meeting requirements by state and community funding authorities, and, above all, taking into account the dominant political–administrative competition conditions (Backhaus-Maul and Olk 1998; Schmid and Mansour 2007, p. 260; Heinze et al. 1999). Apart from corporatist negotiations between *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege* and the state, competition-induced strategies between single federations and organizations both within *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege* and for-profit-sector enterprises are constantly gaining importance in the public-service production arena (Backhaus-Maul and Olk 1994). As a result, the provision of public social services is no longer determined by distribution policies but primarily by expectations of economic efficiency and effectiveness (Evers and Heinze 2008, p. 12; Heinze et al. 1999).

The second environmental factor relevant to third sector organizations is the dynamization of social change which finds its direct expression in the volunteer work of citizens in *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege*. Basically—according to findings of the volunteer-work survey (“Freiwilligensurvey”)—in the past years, general involvement and willingness to volunteer in Germany have not experienced any erosion but relative stability (Gensicke et al. 2006). Nevertheless, in the past decades, the concepts of volunteer work and the willingness to volunteer have pluralized and individualized analogous to the social change. Terms such as structural change of the honorary post as well as honorary, voluntary and civic involvement illustrate these modifications and changes (Jakob 1993; Olk 1989; Beher et al. 2000; Enquete Kommission Zukunft des Bürgerschaftlichem Engagements des Deutschen Bundestages 2002). Today, traditional volunteer work, which is defined as a selfless action and a long-term commitment, is merely one characteristic form of volunteer work; new types have appeared which, unlike the traditional honorary post, are planned by the volunteers in a rather short-term and in a project-specific manner (Sachße 2011, p. 24). Within the third sector and especially within *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege*, social change of volunteer work finds its clear expression. The situation of volunteer work in the organizations could by all means give reason for concern—provided there is some interest and there are interested persons within *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege*: For instance, *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege*, as the location and institution for volunteer work, is losing its appeal for young people and middle-aged population groups. The aging of volunteer work adversely impacts the active involvement in social work as

well as the participatory involvement in federations' decision-making committees. Against this background, Wolfgang Streeck's observations from the 1980s regarding the extinction of permanent members in interest groups could be reformulated as "extinction of volunteers" in *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege*.

The outlined environmental changes impact the organizational self-conception of *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege* which increase positions itself as an enterprise in the ("social") economy. This change in the self-image of *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege* has consequences: as intermediary organizations, the federations, institutions and services of *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege* reproduced their sociocultural foundations and those of society—more or less behind the back of those involved—as an enterprise within the social economy. However, volunteer work is made an organizational and managerial task as well as an object in need of funding by the priorities of the management personnel. In any case, however, under economization conditions, involvement in *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege* can no longer be taken for granted socioculturally speaking—today—but instead, it marks a task and requirement—among others—for welfare federations and their member organizations.

The Importance of Volunteer Work for Welfare Federations

For welfare federations acting as voluntary associative federations of citizens that work to solve social problems, involvement is ideologically and with regard to personnel of constitutive importance: *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege* is a fundamental societal innovation in the context of social security and the welfare state in Germany which, from a historical perspective, is based on the voluntary involvement of citizens (Röbke 2013). Until the 1990s and in terms of social policy and fiscal law, the position of *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege* within voluntary involvement justified an exceptional position of welfare work in federations in the German welfare state (Sachße 1995). Meanwhile, *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege* is receiving recognition by the European Union as well which seems to have recognized the usefulness of "the implementation of specific exception areas with regard to competition law, which are performed in the interest of the community at large" (Golbeck 2012, p. 204).

By referring to the associative and socializing function of involvement, the latter gives *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege* in Germany—and beyond—a decisive, politically legitimate basis for corporatist negotiations with the social state. In dealing with the German social state, *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege* was able to permanently legitimize its involvement for decades, simply by referring to its own estimates and without any underlying empirical studies (Backhaus-Maul and Olk 1994). At the same time, parallel to the growth of the German social state in the 1970s, it experienced a strong growth spurt in its federations, institutions and services which led to an increase in salaried personnel and professionalization as well as to considerable disharmony between salaried and voluntary personnel (Sachße 2011). Since then, the value and importance of volunteer work within *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege* has become a matter

of discussion and disposition, while at the same time—particularly with regard to public-funding authorities—attempts are made to seamlessly maintain the legitimization facade of volunteer work in the political context.

Involvement and Economization

Against this background, Annette Zimmer and Thomas Rauschenbach are raising the question of whether “volunteers (are) actually capable of ensuring an efficient management and leadership of non-profit organizations under the new conditions, which are dominated by competition and performance agreements” (Rauschenbach and Zimmer 2011, p. 13). Due to the outlined multifunctionality of welfare federations, the promotion of volunteer work competes with other tasks, often described as essential. Thus, under economization conditions, welfare federations would one-dimensionally develop into companies working with salaried personnel. A process, in which *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege* is described as shifting towards a business model of organizational being (Liebig 2005; Meyer 2009) while either dismissing volunteer work as dysfunctional or discussing it in terms of an economic resource. As an economic resource, volunteer work can contribute to saving personnel costs, and as a macroeconomic resource volunteer work can reduce societal costs. However, it has to be considered “that the promotion of social involvement as a form of social-development policy always ties up resources in federations” (Steinbacher 2004, p. 201).

Against this background, the institutions and services of *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege*, for their part, attach great importance to those forms of mid-term and long-term involvement that are oriented towards the organizational routines as well as towards the requirements of the institutions and services. Consequently, from an economic perspective, the operational requirements are the focus of involvement promotion in federations, and not the interests and needs of mostly self-centred citizens willing to volunteer (Rüb 2004, p. 276). The economization of *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege* and its decentralization to company level suggest a professional involvement support in federations that is oriented towards economic efficiency, for which the federations of *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege* must provide their own funds. If welfare federations increasingly adapt to the economic requirements of their institutional environment, this will have an effect on attracting volunteers. Thus, it seems questionable whether citizens will get involved in organizations which show no fundamental difference to for-profit companies geared towards private profit disposal. In this context, Annette Zimmer takes the position that, for volunteers, the identification of interests between citizens ready to volunteer and organizations is a decisive factor in getting involved: “non-profit organizations will not attract members and active volunteers because they are efficiently managed, but because they pursue the right goals and represent the right values, i.e. values which are currently relevant for society” (Zimmer and Priller 1997, p. 263).

The Empirical Research of Involvement in Organizations

In the context of her works in which she researches associations as one of the first scientists in Germany, Annette Zimmer has pointed out the necessity of adopting a meso-sociological perspective in the research of volunteer work (Beher et al. 2008; Priller et al. 2013). With the Committee of Inquiry of the German Federal Parliament (*Enquete-Kommission des Bundestags*), research on volunteer work in Germany focused on involved citizens, those willing to volunteer and non-volunteers by carrying out three volunteer surveys (“Freiwilligensurveys”) so far (Gensicke et al. 2006). The organizational contexts and opportunities are decisive for the involvement of citizens—also according to the First Report on Volunteer Work (*Erster Engagementbericht*) of the German Federal Government (Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend 2012). Consequently, for several years, the organizational-sociological volunteer-work research has been successfully dealing with volunteer work in sports associations and clubs—led by Sebastian Braun (Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend 2012, p. 332). Whereas welfare federations, which are particularly important for the third sector in Germany, are still relatively unexplored, apart from self-studies carried out by federations, one secondary analysis and empirical partial studies (Backhaus-Maul and Speck 2005; Diakonisches Werk der Evangelischen Kirche in Deutschland 2012; Steinbacher 2004).

According to Annette Zimmer and colleagues, and in recognition of the fact that the third sector, too, maintains the legitimation facade, it is important “to abstract from myths and ideologies and to estimate the actual role and importance of the third sector as well as to understand its true nature” (Anheier et al. 1997, p. 14). With her neo-institutionally trained expertise, Annette Zimmer has revealed what lies beneath the legitimation facade of the third sector for empirical social research in Germany, although the empirical research of the institutions of *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege* (Backhaus-Maul et al. 2014), including their federations, member organizations, institutions and services which constitute the most important part of the third sector in Germany, remains to be conducted.

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Chapter 10

Changes in Work and Human Services: On the Risks and Chances They Entail for Volunteering

Adalbert Evers

Abstract Changes on labor markets as well as the changing patterns of personal and family-related services have wide-ranging effects on volunteering and associating; these effects are however very ambivalent. They may both restrict and widen opportunities for individual and joint voluntary action. This chapter discusses these challenges in an analytical and practical perspective.

Keywords Future of volunteering · Civic engagement · Associating · Changes in the world of work · Changes in the field of human services

Writing a short piece for a book with many contributions may offer an opportunity that you do not get in journals. You can unfold an argument and speculate on a broad and open question, stirring concern and fresh thinking without having to build on an accurately compiled array of research and empirical evidence. I call this an essay, and my attempt will focus on changes in material conditions of everyday living and what they mean for the future of volunteering and civic engagement, essential features of associations and cooperation. Among them I have selected two that I consider to be of special importance:

- Changes in the world of work or, to be more specific, paid labor and labor markets
- Changes in the field of human services, more specifically, personal social services, an area that has often been characterized by volunteering and where up until today a good portion of voluntary activities are to be found

My thesis is that the changes in the way most people are engaged on labor markets, as well as the changing patterns of their daily interaction with personal and family-related services, have wide-ranging effects on volunteering, effects that are, however, very ambivalent. On one hand, less standardized models of work-life balance together with an everyday life marked by increasing participation in social services create more room for pro-volunteer choices. On the other hand, labor markets that offer less security and have often a stronger grip on all aspects of our life and, by the same token, a service society that professionalizes fields of voluntary activities are threatening the motivations and opportunities for volunteering. The direction for the

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future of volunteering is not determined. It is both an active part and a kind of echo of the broader struggles on the direction of changes in work and personal services at large. That is what I will argue in the following.

The Framework for Traditional Volunteering: A Short Look Back

It is not possible to speak about changes in volunteering that may be brought about by changes in work and human services without remembering the profile “volunteering” had developed in the past. Since the big transformations prompted by markets, industrialization and democracy more than a century ago, work and volunteering have changed their profiles over and again. And this holds true as well for the kind of models or grand designs by which attempts had been made to link the two and to create a good relationship between them. I would argue that the dominant concept of volunteering was one that stretched from the bourgeois classes over to the wider population of a society of laborers. Most forms of volunteering and images of volunteers up until the end of the “*trentes glorieuses*” after the Second World War were combined with an image of people that had two characteristics: They occupied a rather settled place in working life and an acknowledged (albeit for men and women different) place within the family and the political (and religious) community.

Associational life could profit from these conditions both through the many forms of self-organizing and by the often found links with those citizens whom were engaged in local politics. The responsibilities and the securities of a well-ordered working, family, and community life as well as the limited degrees of forced territorial mobility lent the background and the foundations for being active in public life and the (local) society—in associations and various forms of political and social activities, ranging from being the spokesman of a local trade union group to being engaged in a charity for lower classes or a cultural club for raising money for a local theatre. Stable social and community integration supported voluntary engagement for one’s own class and charity and solidarity for the weaker groups. In the USA, the climate of the 1950s produced what was labeled by researchers of the political culture of that time (Almond and Verba 1963) as the “good citizen” whose reputation was based on his status in working life and his role as a good family man, as well as his merits as a good fellow in community life and local affairs.

I would argue that this model of both coordinating and separating work on the one hand and volunteering and good citizenship on the other hand has dissolved over time. As I will show later, the worlds of work and volunteering are becoming increasingly intermeshed these days; and many that engage in voluntary activities no longer have the firm position that formed the basis of so many postwar societies.

Where broad-reaching traditions used to dominate, as did a few big social and cultural camps (the bourgeois world with the classes of skilled laborers; the milieus of churches and labor movements overlapping), one finds today a different society.

It is less guided by collective traditions and adherence to a special cultural or socio-political camp with its convictions and models. We find less binding norms and a diversity of lifestyles and cultural subgroups that mostly give little or no guidance whether or not one should volunteer or enter into civic engagement. The question whether one should engage in voluntary activities and whether this should become part of one's biography is more than ever left to individual's decision. The message is: It's up to you. This corresponds to the often-observed fact that firm social ties and obligations have corroded and given way to forms of volunteering and civic engagements, where the respective people place limits on the time and reliability of their engagements. Similarly, the simple question "what do I get from this?" becomes more important.

All these epochal processes and developments have corroded to some degree from the former model of volunteering. The present changes in work and human services and their impact on the traditional paradigm of volunteering should be seen as a part of those broader societal changes.

Opportunities and Threats: On the Ambivalence of Changes that Have a Deep Impact on the Role and Status of Volunteering

When taking up the first of these two trends—changes in paid work and labor markets—two kinds of development seem for me to be central.

The first profound change is quite often described as the corroding boundaries of labor. This corrosion results from the weakening of a traditional model defining the place of paid work in people's lives and limiting the room given to paid work in their everyday's lives. This involves the place of work over the life cycle, the possibility of giving it a clear beginning and end within a working day, or the setting of limits to the orientations and values associated with the world of labor, so that they do not intrude into community life. One kind of dissolution of old boundaries of labor has to do with the fact that, across the life cycle, the clear sequence and separation of being in the phase of education and training, being engaged in paid work, and then entering retirement are becoming quite fuzzy. Another dimension concerns the trend toward replacement of working times in everyday life with unorthodox working times across 24 h/7 days a week.

Less clear and effective boundaries result as well from the fact that even more people are in contact with working life, yet this contact is taking the form of a regulated, standard full post to an ever lesser degree. The number of different forms of contact with the world of labor—from casual and part-time work to short-term employment—is increasing. Thus, the forms of linking living and working become more diverse, which holds arguably true as well for the placement of volunteering within concepts of work-life balance. Former, all-encompassing models are giving way to all sorts of group-specific and individual models.

The second big and sweeping change I want to discuss here has to do with the dynamic expansion of human services and their role in everyday life. The change is experienced in areas such as professional child care and in help and care for the increasing number of frail elderly people. It is felt as well in the areas of cultural and recreational services with commercial offers for a preplanned leisure time substituting for the various forms of do-it-yourself activities—something that can be observed in the increase of fitness and wellness clubs, operating side by side with traditional voluntary-based sport clubs. Through Putnam's metaphor of "bowling alone" (Putnam 2000), one aspect of this change in the world of human services has received widespread attention.

On the long way to the personal social services of today, there has always been an interaction of voluntary-based initiatives represented mostly by various forms of associations and state-based professional institutions. Mostly the former took the lead, pioneering the early hospitals, "kindergartens," and homes for the elderly. Gradually, these became—on a "ladder of extension" as the English intellectuals and social reformers, the Webbs, once called it—mainstreamed, i.e., supported or taken over by state institutions and professionalized. However, voluntary contributions often remained as part of the new public services, as can be observed when looking at school boards or support associations for public services such as theatres or libraries. Besides volunteering inside professional human services, one can find it as well outside the established institutions of service providers taking the form of associations that offer complementary types of care on a voluntary basis or such offers in sports and leisure. The increase of human—and more specifically—social, health, and educational services has changed the maps that indicate where professional and lay activities along with voluntary work, are prevailing.

So, once again, as in work, no clear picture follows from all these changes. While areas where voluntary work was once important are shrinking as professionalization increases, new ones are opening up. We may find today fewer volunteers in the health sector than in former times but probably more than ever in the vast landscape of services that aim for a better integration of migrants and other groups. All this, however, has not only an impact on the size of volunteering but as well as the status of volunteers and their contributions. They may be seen as something that is old-fashioned here and as a promising sign of civic renewal there.

So far I have tried to show how much the world of labor and the worlds of human services have changed their faces, our daily living and the conditions for volunteering as well. I have underlined that, first of all, there are no unidirectional and mechanical links between such changes and the readiness and possibilities for volunteering and that, secondly, they are very ambivalent. Let me, therefore, in the next steps describe where I see the potential and opportunities for giving volunteering an important status and role within concepts of a "good life." Afterward, I will offer some points that represent clear threats and risks, making forms of volunteering a part of old and new forms of domination or a mere compensation for that.

Windows of Opportunity

Let me begin by looking at opportunities that open up especially for young people because of the shifts in labor markets. Even if one has in mind all the negative aspects such as the incredibly high unemployment rates of young people in so many European countries, I would argue still that the more open and broader areas of transition from school and studying to working life can be seen as well under the aspect of opportunity. This difficult process, which in Germany, for example, is said to take up to 5 years, may allow room for various kinds of search-broadening capacities beyond professional knowledge—a space that is not already predetermined. There is a relatively recent format for voluntary activities of young people that is of special interest here. I refer to the various constructs of formalized service for volunteering and civic engagement that are addressed mainly to young people, but can be used for people of all ages. In such schemes, people are offered a 1-year (or for some other specified time period) voluntary commitment in social, ecological, and cultural service areas at home or abroad. In Germany, for example, this concept is making evermore impact, and, in many federal states, the demand for such formalized offers is much higher than the supply.

Another more widely perceived opportunity is represented by the changing image of old age and retirement in our societies, particularly the idea of active ageing. That means a new perspective for voluntary activities as well. Formats such as “senior consult” offer possibilities to use one’s professional knowledge after retirement with all kinds of nonprofit organizations. Borderlines between paid professional work and voluntary engagement give way to arrangements that allow one to go on with one’s work and to utilize one’s skills, but that are far less about cash rewards and more about giving free room to decide oneself and to negotiate the intensity, rhythm, and profile of such forms of prolonged participation. We find here a hybrid of work and volunteering. A similar observation can be made with respect to many of the apprenticeships of young people, where elements that are career related and enforced by the respective employers mix with other elements that mirror’s the quest for doing something that is seen as useful both with respect to one’s own creative ambitions and the needs of the larger community.

Due to the educational system of the welfare states, most people have had the chance to acquire a decent level of not only skills but also competencies, allowing them to be more demanding both with respect to their own creative ambitions and with respect to the quality and utility of what they are doing. The quest for “good work” becomes a topic both in working life and with respect to choosing a type of voluntary engagement that fits. While the classical example has always been the manager that finishes his career earlier in order to start a second career with a project that gives him more personal and social fulfillment, a new reality should get attention as well: Trade unions and employers that make “good work” a goal to strive for or a topic to be used in job advertisements.

Summing up, one can say that more flexible points of entry and exit, and more flexibility in the course of labor life may—despite the often-prevailing hardships—

also entail opportunities to follow ambitions in the field of voluntary activities. Changing concepts of learning as well as of old age give greater value to hybrid kinds of activities that fit neither old forms of paid work nor traditional volunteering. Finally, the longing for an activity that makes sense and gives fulfillment becomes more meaningful as well in the work sphere itself, taken up by campaigns of labor unions for good work and likewise by the way employers advertise the jobs they are offering. How to deal with volunteering falls among the type of issues that Giddens (1994) has called “lifestyle politics.”

Let us turn now to personal social services. It is here that—after the spheres of sport and recreational activities—most volunteering can be found. The biggest areas are health, education, child and elderly care, labor market services, and a variety of fields that deal with issues of group-specific concerns and exclusion.

The discussion begins with mainstream services, such as schools, kindergartens, or the various care services offered to frail elderly people. Within the respective communities of experts in these fields it has become quite obvious that, when striving for better quality and efficiency, much depends on the degree to which such institutions and their services are able to stimulate coproduction and co-responsibilities on the side of their clients, something that Toffler (1980) has described early on as a “third wave” of changes toward a postindustrial society that turns users of services into “prosumers.” When the willingness to activate prosumers meets with their own desires for participation, a critical mass for changing cultures of services builds. Besides, the traditional service culture of schools that address only their pupils and not their parents or of home care services that care only about the frail elderly person without interacting much with their support networks, concepts of services take shape that include the coproduction and cooperation of volunteers and voluntary-based associations. This occurs at meetings of the school community or of school-support associations where parents are volunteering together as well as in homes for the elderly that include offers on a voluntary basis such as mobility services and reading books. Such a perspective that makes voluntary action part of coping strategies has obviously found even firmer ground when it comes to services and networks that deal with groups at risk. In the field of urban revitalization, for example, every serious concept today will entail elements such as promoting community building, participation in the planning process etc. There is a broad field for mixing and sharing and for a new type of professionalism that knows how to activate and integrate the potentials of voluntary cooperation into arrangements of everyday life in a service society.

Finally, the search for a new type of voluntary activities is developing quite well at various points of the interfaces of private and public life. Throughout Europe, one can find, for example, mushrooming of new types of nontraditional communities in various forms of living together of elderly people. They mainly represent new forms of private living but simultaneously examples of volunteering and becoming active in the name of new aspirations. What is reflected in such forms of volunteering and association building is not so much the classical concern with social justice, but increasingly an effort to liberate one’s life concepts from the standardized models, societies have put on people.

Summing up, one can observe patterns of a new service culture that is participative and empowering not only with respect to the individual users but also when it comes to the role of associated action by groups, communities, and citizens. Building up a more stable institutional network of human services must not mean substituting self-organized, association-based services; it can also entail building something that works as an infrastructure for complementary collective and community-based forms of associations with kinds of coproduction on collective levels. Activating voluntary elements becomes herein a sign of a new professionalism rather than a relic of older times when volunteering was mainly about gap filling in areas neglected by the welfare state.

Threats to Be Confronted

We have already touched upon the modern world of work. Risks and dangers emerge here to the degree to which the present forms of dissolution of the old boundaries that defined, separated, and in some ways also restricted the world of work with respect to other spheres of life go along with processes that may be labeled by Castel (2000) as “de-securitization” (a creeping loss of securities that had been built around paid work). This label identifies processes where work can no longer become civilized to some degree as this has been experienced by the former attempts of welfare state to regulate it, creating thereby a background of material and symbolic securities.

There are many forms of such a de-securitization. Let me give you some examples: massive difficulties young people have in coping with the passage from the educational to the labor market system; high insecurities when it comes to the transition of older employees into retirement; constant threats of becoming unemployed and falling out of the security networks combined with work; kinds of work flexibility that are one sided insofar as they reflect the need to be constantly at the disposal of the employer instead of an increasing possibility to choose working hours according to one’s own private and social needs; rising insecurities resulting from short-term labor contracts and from increasing challenges for constant mobility, creating additional stress by these add-ons to working time, and transaction costs that result from changing domiciles. A rising anxiety about the possibility to keep the job when retirement age comes nearer should be added here.

These diverse items have in common that they reduce those background securities much of the traditional volunteering of the better-off classes could build on—own income, property and a rather stable residence for some and a socially secured job for others. It may be one reason why—as many studies show—the participation of young people being stuck between education and employment is decreasing, and overall the voluntary engagement is significantly higher among the better off that are still more secure and thus also have more resources for making their own decisions.

However, the fact that so much depends on the job is not only felt by those who are lacking one but also by those who want to keep the job and turn it into a career. There are plenty of studies showing that people tend to see everything under the aspect of their career—volunteering as well. Career-centered concepts of a work–life balance may however not only restrict the readiness to volunteer but also change the motivations as well for doing so. How should we judge many of those commitments documented in diplomas that people attach nowadays in their job applications? Instrumentalizing volunteering for job concerns might add up to the danger that in our societies, as Wuthnow (1993) has remarked, volunteering is increasingly discussed under the aspect of one’s own concerns and interests, such that often the question as to what degree it is helpful for those in need seems to become secondary. With respect to this, some of the models of volunteering that have been developed by firms to attain recognition for corporate social responsibility are highly questionable. There is no doubt that spending some weekends under a bridge with homeless people is an event that makes managers of a firm think about their own lives; but to what degree is this helpful as well for the homeless people they have met and talked to? But let us take as well another example: Volunteer schemes are frequently recommended for the long-term unemployed. This may be helpful for both sides: the volunteers and those they serve. It shows, however, another aspect of the ways the worlds of labor and the worlds of volunteer engagement are intermeshed these days.

Summing up, my argument is that the present changes in the world of work may reinforce the divide in volunteering between those who are in upper and those who are in lower positions, that they may reduce the time and opportunities for volunteering and may change the motives for doing so.

Turning now to personal social services, a clear-cut threat results from the fact that the last decades have been a time of partial reprivatization of services, mostly by arrangements by which public authorities regulate and finance services run by private business. There is no tradition of volunteering in private, for-profit institutions, e.g., a hospital owned by a firm. A commercialized culture of human services is probably narrowing the field of voluntary contributions backed by public support—both in terms of individual engagement and in forms of engagement and volunteering within not-for-profit service organizations. Secondly, throughout our countries, there have been reforms in terms of a “new public management.” Here issues such as how to activate volunteers and how to create more community involvement are largely alien, since such management reforms in many respects shift the service patterns nearer to a consumerist model that promises full-service approaches, pretending that they can minimize what customers have to do themselves.

Other problems are felt, but they have not yet received much visibility and attention. Here I think of the fact that the modern professional systems of personal services, both public and private, need complementary service work by their beneficiaries as coproducers, but it is requested in ways that fall mostly on the individual users and their next of kin. The mobility of children as they go through different services along the day needs mostly mothers that drive them; extra tutoring has become a fast-growing industry. The professional service systems have created what Illich (1981) once called “shadow work.” It has little visibility, gets predefined by

the institutions that cast these shadows, and happens mostly on an individual and private basis instead of through associative forms. All the more important are collective and participative concepts, where the tasks not met by professional services get taken up by joint and collective initiatives in the community instead of being simply left to the private sphere of personal relations.

Summing up, I have argued that the threats to volunteering result from the fact that, in increasingly privatized service sectors, a culture of voluntary contributions is difficult to implant. This holds true for individual engagement and especially for associated forms of engaged action. A managerial and consumerist culture of human services is competing with the more participative and cooperative service cultures we referred to earlier on.

Conclusions: Taking Chances and Reducing Risks. On Policies that Are Friendly to a Culture of Volunteering and Civic Engagement

Obviously both scenarios—that of a flourishing civil society, where voluntary and civic engagement in various forms of associations constitute an unquestionable part of the rich portfolio of activities of each and every citizen, and the other dark scenario of a functionalist society where everything is left to specialists and individuals and where volunteering is restricted to support those who fall out—are one sided. What people experience today and what they try to live and strive for are coping strategies that entail compromises between what one aims for and what one has to take into account for, because it is a fact of life. Those who engage these days in voluntary activities look—individually or in association with others—at how to make best use of the new flexibilities of labor markets and the personal services that are being offered.

There is no space here for looking at the panorama of social utopias that promise something completely else and better—utopias such as the “Tätigkeitsgesellschaft” (the “society of activities”) and the idea to give more opportunities for volunteering to all by providing a basic income for every citizen (van Parijs 1992). I will close with six suggestions concerning where to put our emphasis when dealing with volunteering—as a policy maker, as a part of the academic community, and as a fellow citizen.

1. It makes no sense to look for ways back when considering the changing relationships of work and volunteering. The increasing intertwining of questions that concern work and profession and issues of volunteering, something that is experienced by evermore citizens, calls for looking forward. The classical notion of the secure job and family situation, allowing for volunteering and civic engagement, seems for me to be waning.
2. One should acknowledge that, for most people today, it is both unavoidable and legitimate to ask what engagement would mean under such aspects as safeguard-

ing one's job and career. This does not mean avoiding debates on the ethics of volunteering and civic engagement, but going into them with a different attitude. What kinds of intermeshing and hybrids between work and volunteering are legitimate and which ones are questionable?

3. Special emphasis should be placed on those forms of volunteering that are intertwined with strategies for coping with unemployment and exclusion. Today, one can find various interesting versions of such forms of volunteering. There are those where volunteering is used as a legitimate label for offering activities that help people to maintain contact with their working life. Perhaps even more interesting are those activities where volunteering takes the form of joint creative action of excluded people in various cultural fields. These forms of voluntary action, of connecting to others, and of participation make a clear difference toward coerced participation in workfare schemes.
4. There is an increasing need for service designs that entail a place for voluntary work and participation, a kind of service culture where voluntary contributions are a normal part of service schemes. The future range of (care) tasks in society will not be covered by professionals and paid activities alone; the shadow work of self-servicing individuals and of families caring for all the rest should not be their main and foremost complement. Therefore, it is all the more important to develop a culture of human services that entails nudges for cooperation and association with others—be it by giving leeway for innovative actions and service offerings or by making joint contributions from users and coproducers part of the service panorama.
5. In such frameworks, new forms of volunteering are already developing that are situated somehow in between a kind of volunteering that is not at all materially rewarded and activities where some material acknowledgments are part of the contract of give and take. Such new forms of “paid volunteering,” as they can be observed across European countries, deserve more attention. In order to avoid them gliding simply toward some kind of badly paid jobs, it is important to study what might be required to maintain a distinction.
6. This finally leads to the most basic concern, toward something that might be unrealistic in today's pluralistic societies. Is it possible to construct a future oriented equivalent to what once figured as the widely acknowledged emblematic figure of the good citizen? Possibly, the model of 1-year service for society, somewhere along the life course, could today figure as an equivalent to the former “good citizen.” The guiding idea would be to act at least once in life in service to others in society, giving something back for what one has received. Thus, a simple and universal framework—everyone gives some time under similar conditions once in his life—could give room for a broad diversity of all kinds of activities. Here, in fact, one size might fit all.

Altogether, concepts and policies that claim to be “engagement friendly” should cultivate and renew what is at the heart of voluntary engagement and a more civil society: to cooperate and associate with others on equal footing, to be prepared to give without receiving immediately, and to learn about a type of individualism that does not result from retreat but from richer kinds of involvement.

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Chapter 11

Residual and Emancipatory Value of Volunteering in the Czech Society

Pavol Frič

Abstract The social value of volunteering is changing in the context of its growing involvement in social problem solving in today's postindustrial societies. Using as a background Payton and Moody's various reasons for taking a philanthropic approach to social problem solving, residual and emancipatory values of volunteering are distinguished. The chapter analyzes support for these two values by the Czech general public, government, and civil society organizations.

Keywords Values of volunteering · Postcommunist societies · Ideologies · Czech Republic

Long ago, modernization theory started to distinguish changes in the social meaning and position of the civic sector and volunteering in society. The growing proportion of public services provided by volunteer organizations and the growing importance of volunteering as a space for social integration mean that the development of volunteering has become one of the principal modernization trends of our time. From a marginal activity, a mere appendix or temporary replacement of paid employment, it is becoming a characteristic trait of the world of work in a networked postindustrial (information) society. The changing role of volunteering is indispensably connected with the changing social value of volunteering in this type of societies. It is obvious that the new situation has to be followed by some societal reflection even in the central European postcommunist societies that pursue the Western modernization trajectory. The central question is how the changes in the role and social value of volunteering correspond with the activities, attitudes, and opinions of the main stakeholders of formal volunteering—i.e., the general public, government, and civil society organizations (CSOs)—in a postcommunist society such as the Czech Republic.

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The Importance of Volunteering in Contemporary Societies

Politicians and other members of the public administration are attracted to volunteering primarily because of interest in the capacity of volunteering to intervene in solving burning social problems. Social scientists studying modernization point out that the level of voluntary engagement in solving social problems is rising, and they anticipate further growth. For example, Rifkin's book, *The End of Work*, proposes to do away with the bankrupt linear notion of an ever-improving welfare state that secures people's needs better and better. Social problems are increasingly addressed through cooperation between government and volunteers. People hope volunteering will alleviate the burden of the welfare state, and this is actually increasingly the case. Therefore, Rifkin talks about growing personal and collective dependence on volunteering. In his perspective on solving social problems such as unemployment, the civic sector and volunteers represent a necessary condition for the survival of emergent information societies (Rifkin 1995).

Contemporary modernization processes bring about "de-standardization of labor" and flexibilization of the labor market and employment contracts. Room for long-term employment is shrinking rapidly, and people's occupational biographies are marked with not only frequent changes of employment but also temporary periods of unemployment (Beck 2000). Here, too, volunteering is counted on as a temporary substitute for paid employment and a way of obtaining new qualifications and preserving one's fitness to work. The upcoming era of postindustrial (knowledge, information) society places high demands on the population's functional literacy. The labor market is increasingly oriented to jobs requiring high flexibility and qualifications, including the central skill of computerized data processing. On the other hand, we have seen the formation of a large group of people who are unable and/or unwilling to work in other than simple jobs. These people do not accept the challenge of constantly revising their qualifications (Willke 2000). Their volunteer activities can fulfill the function of keeping them integrated in the world of labor and facilitating their inclusion in the emerging postindustrial society.

Life in a post-industrial society is insecure because everything finds itself in dynamic motion. The reality of this society is one of a difficult-to-grasp "fluid modernity" (Bauman 2000) where what used to be clearly separated is converging in one stream. This is also the case of volunteer and paid activities. The proliferation of hybrid organizations of the social economy, i.e., the growing engagement of the private nonprofit sector (social enterprises such as cooperatives, clubs, or associations) in the process of public service provision, is blurring the once-clear boundaries between public administration institutions, for-profit firms, and nonprofit organizations using volunteer work. "The brave new world of work" (Beck 2000) is blurring the boundary between paid and volunteer work. This is not only because volunteers often obtain some minimum remuneration for their work. It turns out that even increasing numbers of well-paid knowledge professionals are becoming volunteers. They tend to work in excess of their obligations because they enjoy it. Based on

this observation, Peter Drucker suggests that knowledge workers should be managed as volunteers (Drucker 1996). To conclude, the importance of volunteering for the labor market, service provision, or processes of social problem solving in the emerging postindustrial societies is growing and needs adequate government reflections or regulations.

Support of Volunteering by Government Administrations

Although the concept of volunteering became commonplace in Western societies long ago, it has experienced a revival over the past few decades. The revival occurred primarily because volunteer status was formally institutionalized in national legal systems,¹ and a culture of volunteering and philanthropy developed, even in for-profit firms (employee volunteering). The growing importance of volunteering in Western postindustrial societies is also evidenced by business leaders' efforts to stimulate and use volunteer work in a targeted manner. Public administration is motivated to take this strategic step in order to improve the accessibility and quality of services for different categories of citizens, increase or maintain social capital in the society, strengthen citizens' participation in local politics, and increase the quality of life of volunteers themselves.² Government administration normally perceives volunteering as a source of social capital, but more importantly as a valuable aid which makes the delivery of welfare services cheaper. According to Haski-Leventhal, Meijs, and Hustinx, political leaders and public administrators can support volunteering, *inter alia*, through tax credits for CSOs and volunteers themselves. They can help them make more time for volunteering by taking some of their work off their shoulders. Especially, governments can make clear (signal) how much it cares about volunteering and volunteers.³ For example, "by giving priority to people who volunteer in a public job, governments assure that volunteering is part of people's career plans, and not just leisure time activity" (Haski-Leventhal et al.

¹ In other words, "institutionalization of the volunteer role" (Musick and Wilson 2008, pp. 421–422).

² This is because volunteer work and the related increased level of social capital are strongly correlated with improved psychological and physical well-being (self-confidence) and overall life satisfaction (Musick and Wilson 2008, pp. 493–503).

³ This raises the "signalling value" of volunteering as an acknowledged and desirable commodity in the labor and educational markets (Hustinx et al. 2010, pp. 372–373). "Signalling theory" (Spence 2002) identifies the emergence and growth of volunteer activities in the more or less shared value of signals volunteers emit in the context of the labor market as well as the educational market. According to this theory, those who work on a volunteer basis signal to their potential employers or teachers that they are "more desirable than other candidates, such as being altruistic in nature, or broad minded, or willing to cooperate for the collective good, or inherently hard-working." This is, however, only the case insofar as employers and teachers consider volunteering as their preferred criterion for admitting candidates—or expect volunteers to be better candidates. This may differ significantly from country to country, depending on actual public policies or employer practices.

2009). By doing so, they can encourage volunteering as such, not only its different forms. In their “third-party model,” Haski-Leventhal, Meijs, and Hustinx argue that volunteering should be encouraged externally, i.e., by governments, private firms, and educational systems. Governments and public administrations should both support individuals’ willingness to become volunteers (volunteerability), e.g., by raising the reputation of volunteering in society, and strengthen CSOs’ ability to recruit and retain volunteers (recruitability), e.g., by making volunteer opportunities more accessible (Haski-Leventhal et al. 2009). Above all, governments play an important role by creating a conducive legal environment (such as the Volunteer Protection Act in the USA) by facilitating the professionalization of volunteer managers or by raising awareness about volunteering (Haski-Leventhal et al. 2009).

The importance of the voluntary/civic sector tends to be assessed in the context of two other areas of social life, namely the public and private sectors. It is normally (especially by economists) viewed as the newest and least important for the society. However, the situation is changing with growing involvement of volunteering in solving social problems. Robert Payton and Michael Moody state that contemporary societies have a wide range of approaches to solving social problems and a wide range of reasons to choose precisely the philanthropic/volunteering option. In principle, these reasons can be reduced to three categories (Payton and Moody 2008) that we have modified for our purposes as follows:

Volunteering is actually the only effective response to a given problem. Neither the state nor the market can handle it. Thus, the society perceives volunteering as a substitute of the state or the market in emergency situations. It is available as a spare solution, in order to compensate their failures.

Volunteering as one possible solution complements other solutions provided by the state or the market. The value of volunteering is collectively perceived in it being a suitable (cheap, advantageous, flexible) and sometimes even equal complement of primarily government interventions in addressing social problems.

Volunteering is the preferred and most suitable alternative for solving problems. The collective value and social importance of volunteering lie in its culturally esteemed characteristics that are irreplaceable in the context of solving social problems.

With the emergence of new modernization trends in the postindustrial society, volunteering is increasingly perceived as a special sector of society; while not a panacea for the burning social problems of our times, its approach to solving those problems is irreplaceable. An indispensable part of its approach lies in the emancipation of an altruist worldview and a positive perspective of future social development.

Value of Volunteering in the Eyes of the General Public

In order to examine whether these elements exist in the Czech Republic, we have posed the following question: How is the social importance of volunteering perceived by the Czech general public? The relevant data for the answer to that question was received from a representative survey undertaken in the second half of

Table 11.1 Factor analysis of respondents' attitudes to statements indicating the social importance of volunteering. (Frič, Pospíšilová et al. 2010)

	Factor ^a		Mean ^b
	1 Emancipatory 40%	2 Residual 14%	
(a) Volunteers offer something paid professionals cannot provide	0.641	0.116	2.01
(d) Volunteering enables people to actively participate in a democratic society	0.739	0.048	1.99
(e) Volunteers help create a better world	0.784	0.121	1.87
(g) Volunteers show the way of changing a selfish society	0.676	0.254	1.99
(b) Volunteers would not be necessary if the government fulfilled all its duties	-0.134	0.816	2.21
(c) Without volunteer work, our society could not function at all	0.465	0.512	2.36
(f) Volunteers must be engaged where the government cannot intervene	0.480	0.569	2.11
(h) Eventually, it will turn out even politics can be done better by volunteers	0.244	0.647	2.46

Extraction method: principal component analysis; rotation method: varimax with Kaiser normalization

^a Rotation converged in 3 iterations

^b Respondents scored the statements on a 4-point scale (from 1 = strongly agree to 4 = strongly disagree). Therefore, lower mean score shows higher agreement with the given statement

2009 as part of a project on “Patterns and Values of Volunteering in the Czech and Norwegian Society.”⁴ The survey sample included 3,800 citizens of the Czech Republic aged 15 or older. Respondents were asked to evaluate a battery of eight statements indicating the compensatory, complementary, and emancipatory meanings of volunteering suggested by Payton and Moody. They were able to answer by taking a positive or negative stance along a 4-point scale from 1 (strongly agree) to 4 (strongly disagree).

First, we conducted a factor analysis to check the scale's validity (Table 11.1). Respondents turned out to perceive the meaning of volunteering in a binary fashion because the factor analysis produced two factors only: one representing the emancipatory view of volunteering and the other one merging the compensatory and complementary views. We named the latter factor “residual” because it expresses the meaning of volunteering derived from the dominant role of the welfare state in the processes of solving social problems, limiting volunteering to a residual sector providing services where the welfare state cannot or does not want to. The first,

⁴ The project was implemented by HESTIA National Volunteer Centre in collaboration with the Charles University in Prague (Faculties of Humanities and Social Sciences), the NROS Foundation, and a Norwegian partner, Institute for Social Research in Oslo. A comprehensive presentation of results was published by Frič, Pospíšilová et al. (2010).

Table 11.2 Structure of the perceptions of the social meaning of volunteering. (Frič, Pospíšilová et al. 2010)

Emancipatory view	Residual view	
	High	Low
High	47	19
Low	12	22

All values are in percentages

$N=2,690$

emancipatory factor was loaded by items emphasizing the value of volunteering as an alternative to the welfare state and simultaneously a humanist alternative to predatory capitalism and a counterbalance to consumerist society. Volunteers appear as agents in the process of creating a new democracy and a positive change in the society as a whole. The second, residual factor was loaded by items expressing the meaning of volunteering as a substitute solution in case of public service failure (awareness of failures in the system) which is indispensable for the functioning of contemporary Czech society. We have also included under this factor variables expressing the compensation of the democratic and governance deficits. In this case, the collective values of volunteering were expressed in the question as a “nonprofit perspective” on volunteering.

All in all, respondents clearly sided with the emancipatory view of the meaning of volunteering. Four out of five respondents believed that volunteers help create a better world and show the way of changing a selfish society. Among statements representing the residual view of volunteering, “volunteers must be engaged where the government cannot intervene” was met with most agreement (65%). The statement “volunteers would not be necessary if the government fulfilled all its duties” ranked second (59%). Respondents’ answers indicated another essential finding, namely that the two views of the meaning of volunteering were highly correlated ($R=0.426$ on a 0.01 significance level) rather than mutually exclusive. Furthermore, the emancipatory and residual factors explain only 54% of variance in respondents’ answers, suggesting either that respondents’ opinions are highly ambiguous or that the scale’s statements have low reliability (which was ruled out, Cronbach’s $\alpha=0.767$). The ambiguous character of respondents’ opinions on the meaning of volunteering is further suggested by the overall structure of their opinions, i.e., the combination of high and low levels of the emancipatory or residual meanings, respectively. Most (69%) respondents combined either a high level of emancipatory meaning with a high level of residual meaning or a low level of emancipatory meaning with a low level of residual meaning. This substantiates the assumption that both meanings of volunteering are highly interwoven in most respondents’ perceptions (Table 11.2).

In spite of the all-penetrating consumerism and the growing cultural hegemony of the market, Western societies share a “widespread acceptance of the view that volunteers are more than just additional or less-expensive human resources but people who bring something which is qualitatively different to the contribution made by paid staff” (Rochester et al. 2010). The situation is similar in the Czech Republic, with the exception that we have not only a widely shared emancipatory view of the role of volunteering in the society, but also another widely shared view, namely the

Table 11.3 The meaning of volunteering. (Frič, Pospíšilová et al. 2010)

	Strongly/rather agree		
	2000	2004	2009
(a) Volunteers offer something paid professionals cannot provide	63	76	70
(b) Volunteers would not be necessary if the government fulfilled all its duties	70	67	59

All values are in percentages

$N=693/1,118/3,811$

Table 11.4 Volunteers offer something paid professionals cannot provide. (Norwegian data: Wollebaek et al. 2000; source of data for all other countries except the Czech Republic: Gaskin and Smith 1997, p. 56)

	Denmark	Holland	Ireland	Germany	Norway	Sweden	UK	Czech Republic
Strongly/rather agree	82	37	59	41	81	57	56	70
Strongly/rather disagree	12	46	21	28	6	23	33	22
Do not know	6	16	20	30	12	21	12	8

All values are in percentages

residual one. Comparison with data collected 10 years ago (Frič et al. 2001) reveals that the emancipatory view of the meaning of volunteering is growing and the residual one declining; however, the growth trend of the emancipatory view is not yet confirmed (Table 11.3).

The results of international comparison are somewhat surprising insofar as Czech respondents perceive the emancipatory value of volunteering to a much higher extent than, for instance, those in Germany or the UK. In this sense, the Czech Republic is closer to Nordic countries such as Norway or Denmark (Table 11.4). This comparison suggests that there is no direct relationship between a country's modernization level and perceived social value of volunteering; cultural factors and current situation in the relations between the country's civic sector and government play an important role as well.

The cultures of the emancipatory and residual meanings of volunteering advance side by side in the CSO environment, irrespective of area of activity. No statistically significant relationship has been identified between the emancipatory or residual perception of the meaning of volunteering and the area of activity the CSO respondent is member of. The culture of the emancipatory and residual meanings of volunteering advancing side by side in Czech CSOs is universal from the organizational point of view as well: Both meanings spread evenly in big and small, old and new, professionalized and nonprofessionalized CSOs alike. In short, all types of CSOs strive to promote a generally positive meaning of volunteering and do not make much difference between its emancipatory and residual dimensions.

Institutionalization and Ethos of Volunteering

But why are CSOs promoting not only the emancipatory view but also the residual view of the role of volunteering in society? As Rochester, Payne, and Howlett point out, perceptions of volunteering in society are strongly affected by a nonprofit paradigm of volunteering which largely dominates volunteering and civic sector discourses (Rochester et al. 2010). In the nonprofit paradigm, volunteering represents unpaid work and a specific resource for the public administration. Volunteers are seen instrumentally, as more-or-less effective instruments for covering (some of) citizens' demand for such public goods that cannot be delivered due to failures of public or private service providers.⁵ It is this strong economic undertone that guides the attention of civic sector representatives to CSOs' engagement in public policies. In the Czech Republic as a postcommunist country, this is accompanied by various rumors and myths reducing the meaning of volunteering in society to the residual dimension. These include, above all, two so-called relic myths associated with two polar ideological streams that have become established in the Czech political scene. The first myth arose out of the neoliberal environment and envisages the civic sector as completely economically independent from the state. Government subsidies for CSOs and any government promotion of volunteering are considered relics of the communist era. The second myth arose in the social democratic ideology, viewing the welfare state as a universal instrument for solving social problems. CSOs are considered mere residues/relics of underdeveloped traditional societies' efforts to deal with their problems. Thus, volunteering is viewed as an archaic way of tackling social problems, one which can, at maximum, fulfill a complementary function in a modern society (Angelovská et al. 2009). These myths seemingly legitimize political elites' ignorance of CSOs and the chaos which exists in civic sector-related public policy. The prestige and social value of volunteering and CSOs are too low in the eyes of most Czech politicians; or at least it can be assumed so based on the low support for volunteering Czech politicians have shown over the past 23 years.

For every value a society acknowledges and decides to protect, there should be a norm reinforcing the behavior advancing that value. So far, the Czech Republic has not legislated general support of volunteering. Act 198/2002 Coll. on Volunteer Service which came into force in 2003 addresses government support for "sending organizations" only, i.e., "agency-like organizations which mediate volunteers or large organizations with sufficient financial and institutional backing" (Tutr 2005). The conclusion Tutr made based on interviews in 36 CSOs in 2005 is still valid today. Representatives of a majority of CSOs cannot help believing that the government only acknowledges "accredited volunteers" (those deployed by "sending organizations") who constitute a small minority of the entire volunteer population (5.4% of the total number of formal volunteers, according to data obtained in our survey).

⁵ These failures may occur due to a government's inability to satisfy the diverse demands for public services (state failure), the economic inefficiency of delivering services to a critically small group of customers (market failure), or a supplier's low credibility (contract failure).

Czech society has not fully grasped the modernization trend of institutionalizing the volunteer role and legislating its status. Although the situation improved since 2000, institutionalized volunteer roles tend to be limited to organizations in the field of health care, social services, and education. In 2008, Guidelines for Integrating Volunteers in Health Care were adopted and a provision for the volunteer role was made in a 2007 amendment of the Act on Social Services. Since 2004, collaboration with volunteers or even development of volunteering have been formalized in some areas through programs and projects of the Ministry of Education and Youth (e.g., the “Program of State Support for NGOs’ Work with Children and Youth,” the European Voluntary Service, the “Keys for Life” project). Volunteer centers have been established in many health care or social care organizations (Tošner 2010). While these developments can be considered a step in the right direction, CSOs and volunteers find them insufficient.

The trend toward institutionalizing the volunteer role is significantly affected by the predominant nonprofit view of volunteering which, in turn, is related to the residual dimension of the meaning of volunteering in society. It is probably this deficit of legislative acknowledgment of volunteering which motivates CSOs to promote the residual value of volunteering. They do so in an attempt to attract the attention of politicians (legislators) and legislative lawyers who have shown no interest in the emancipatory view of volunteering. Another part of Czech CSOs’ emancipatory efforts focuses on state support, something that has become commonplace in Western democracies but has been increasingly problematized due to the emergence of a new “reflexive” style of volunteering (Hustinx and Lammertyn 2003). For example, Rochester, Payne, and Howlett openly oppose the idea that government should support volunteering because this creates a “volunteer industry” detached from the rest of the society. They point out that public institutions’ grant programs increase the levels of formalization and standardization, jeopardizing the volunteer ethos and the spontaneity of volunteer activities (Rochester et al. 2010). In principle, they note a trend of CSOs avoiding government subsidies in order to better preserve their authenticity and volunteer ethos. This tendency can also be considered part of the emancipatory view of the meaning of volunteering in society.

As we have mentioned above, states and government administrations can support volunteering in material as well as symbolic ways—morally, by promoting the volunteer ethos and bolstering the prestige of work for public benefit. In short, public administration institutions can contribute to shaping a volunteer-friendly social climate. They can support volunteers’ reputation (praise their contribution) and promote informal norms of civic responsibility which provide volunteering with undisputable legitimacy (Haddad 2007). We can get an idea of how widespread this climate is in the Czech Republic by looking at the following findings: Three out of five (61 %) respondents believe that the predominant opinion in the Czech Republic is that every person should volunteer for others at least once in their lifetime. And 71 % of respondents believe that the majority of Czech citizens consider volunteering as something one can be proud of. Apparently, a “volunteer-friendly climate” is predominant but certainly does not affect everyone. One might even say that volunteering suffers from a bad image and low legitimacy in the eyes of an impor-

tant part of the Czech population. About one fourth (24 %) of respondents consider volunteers naive persons who have no idea that somebody else is abusing them.

It is undoubtedly a difficult task to overcome the bad reputation of volunteering in the eyes of nonvolunteers and advance the volunteer ethos and emancipatory values/meaning of volunteering in the Czech society. Musick and Wilson remind us that “values do not exist in isolation but cluster in ideologies or worldviews” (Musick and Wilson 2008). These words beg the question whether or not the bad reputation and low legitimacy of volunteering in the eyes of a large part of Czech society are relics of the communist era with its memento of ideological, mandatory volunteering. People who opposed the regime considered participation in volunteer activities organized by employers or municipalities to be the result of pressure or manipulation by the regime. Could it be that the current situation is somewhat similar to the past one? Do people who oppose the current regime (and perceive it as unjust and undemocratic) view volunteering like the opponents of the former regime did? Do they consider the existence of volunteers as a manipulated proof of the current regime’s legitimacy? It seems to be the case. Supporters of the Communist Party are the only ones to show a statistically significant tendency to consider volunteers naive persons who are unable to see the fact that somebody else is manipulating them. The winning team has changed and those who used to be viewed as manipulators of volunteers are now themselves uncovering the manipulation behind volunteering. Thus, the ideological perspective on volunteering is still relevant, albeit, fortunately, to a much smaller extent than under the former regime.

Ideological barriers might seem to prevent the volunteering ethos from advancing in society which, in turn, might prevent a large part of the population from acknowledging its legitimacy. But there are barriers other than ideological ones, too. As we mentioned above, politicians and legislators show little support for volunteering, which is in stark contrast with the widespread acknowledgment of volunteers’ contribution to social cohesion. People understand volunteering as a factor of cohesion in the local community and the society as a whole, but political leaders do not respond adequately and volunteering is not acknowledged in wider society. This is evidenced by the results of our 1999 study in which only 45 % of volunteers surveyed stated that volunteer activities also brought them “respect and reputation” in society. By contrast, one third of all respondents (i.e., volunteers and nonvolunteers together) admitted that people who worked for others voluntarily and for free were laughed upon (Frič et al. 2001).

Conclusion

In his work on altruism from the mid-twentieth century, Pitirim Sorokin pointed out that volunteers actually do more than is required of an ordinary citizen. They find themselves above the society’s moral standard, but instead of public satisfaction, they often land into conflict with the majority society which may perceive them as a kind of deviant (Sorokin 1950). This paradox occurs precisely because voluntary

participation, as a value and a norm, is not generally accepted and symbolically promoted by political leaders. The minority proportion of volunteers in the Czech society and the weakness of their normative motivation suggest that the country is in a similar situation. Czech formal volunteers show high levels of satisfaction with their work, which is also why they usually volunteer on a long-term basis (Frič and Pospíšilová 2010). However, they do not receive sufficient signals that the government, the public administration, and citizens around them really care about them. They do not receive the expected symbolic rewards from the society's official authorities. They feel as if volunteering constituted a peculiar world or industry, "everything was different" beyond its boundaries, and volunteering remained undervalued in today's consumerist society.

One-sided dominance of the residual philosophy which tells us to seek government support for volunteering at the expense of the emancipatory view appears to pose the danger of creating one exclusive model of volunteering at the expense of the other, as already noted by Rochester et al. (2010). Efforts to exclude interest organizations' volunteers (in the scope of sport, culture, and recreation) from competition for government support and to focus public policy exclusively on "public benefit" CSOs (in the sphere of welfare services—education and social and health care) might split volunteer activities in the Czech Republic between canonical and apocryphal ones, or those which are acknowledged, supported, and regulated by the state versus those which are ignored and left to their own devices. This would eventually cause harm to volunteer activities as a whole—one part would gradually lose authenticity and the other one would suffer from financial malnourishment.

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Chapter 12

Two Decades of Participatory Democracy in Poland

Renata Siemieńska

Abstract Observations of Poland show that the citizens increasingly tend to exercise various forms of direct activity to challenge elites in the public sphere. Despite the relatively low level of participation in elections and nongovernmental organizations, as well as in various forms of protests, there are various groups very visible on the political stage manifesting their dissatisfaction. They can be classified as new social movements. Some of them are focused on a single, specific problem. Results of several studies show that the forms of civic involvement existing in countries with established democratic systems are playing a less significant role in shaping civic society in Poland. Perhaps the mass protests in 1980 and 1989 that led to the fall of the communist system have proven to be an effective way of exerting pressure on the highest echelons of decision makers. However, they now appear to have become a barrier, slowing down the creation of networks and activities typical for the established democracies.

Keywords Participatory democracy · Civil society organizations · Political transformation · Poland

In this study, we would like to show that the high level of mobilization in the 1980s has not been “translated,” after the transformation of the political and economic system in Poland, into intense commitment to modes of activity typical for democratic societies. Moreover, this activity has been less intense in comparison with countries with a similar history, as well as with stable democracies. We will focus on proactive attitudes and civic activities within the framework of institutions created by the democratic system, and thus participation in elections, the creation and operation of civil society organizations (CSOs) and individual civic initiatives.

Interest in Politics and Participatory Orientation

According to the widely accepted model of a democratic society, the citizens should be interested in politics, which would make them more competent as they participate in decision making associated with local and supra-local issues and initiate

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various activities in the public sphere. However, the thesis that members of societies with consolidated democratic systems always attach greater importance to politics and are more interested in it than citizens of nondemocratic countries has not yet been confirmed. Data from the early 1990s (World Values Survey 1990–1993 Inglehart et al. 2010) have shown that in, for example, South Korea, Republic of South Africa, Lithuania, Bulgaria, and Poland, more people declared that politics played a “very important” or a “rather important” role in their lives than did so in, for example, Switzerland, Austria, France, Italy, or Belgium. The political mobilization that involved about 10 million Poles in the 1980s as members of the newly established *Solidarność* (a trade union that was opposed to the communist rule) and that ultimately led to a political transformation in 1989 provides a strong confirmation of the thesis that there are some periods of time and situations when politics becomes especially important in less developed, nondemocratic countries experiencing political and economic crises. In the 1990s, the sense that some issues had been resolved, although others had not (particularly in the economic sphere), resulted in a declining importance attached to politics in Poland. Just a few decades later, the percentage of respondents who declared interest in politics (“very much” and “to some extent”) had dropped from 49% in 1990 to 34% in 2012.

In the late 1990s and at the beginning of the twenty-first century, interest in politics in the postcommunist countries of central and eastern Europe was lower in comparison with the stable democracies. Such fluctuations in levels of interest in politics are sometimes the effect of policies associated with the emerging economic and/or political situation; sometimes they are a component of a long-term development of the political culture of specific societies (Inglehart et al. 2010).

In Poland, greater interest in politics is declared by better educated respondents, men, postmaterialist-oriented individuals, and those who are older and less frequently attend church. The level of interest in politics was not related to the economic situation of the respondents’ family.

In 1980, during a deep political, moral, and economic crisis, limits to civic freedoms were reflected in the values given priority by members of the Polish society (Table 12.1). However, since the early 1990s, “protecting freedom of speech” became less and less important because it had been achieved along with the political transformation. By contrast, “giving people more say in important government decisions” has become an even higher priority due to high expectations concerning possibilities to influence the decision-making process in a democratic system.

“Fighting rising prices” is most important to persons with elementary education, who are religious, and who live in smaller towns in Poland. “Giving people more say in important government decisions” is indicated to be most important by people with university education, who are not religious, and who live in the biggest cities. The two groups’ common denominator is their stated interest in politics. In terms of all other aspects, they represent the two opposite extremes of the social spectrum. The differing importance attached to these values by members of specific social groups in Poland—as it will be demonstrated later—influences the level of their political activity and the type of activities they undertake, which they believe to be effective from the perspective of the objectives.

Table 12.1 Key aims for Poland for the next 10 years, percentage of respondents naming this item as most important goal (first choice). (World Values Surveys (EVS data for year 2008; WVS data for other years, Inglehart and Siemienińska 1988, p. 90))

	1980	1984	1989	1999	2006	2008	2012
Maintaining order in the nation	17	21	24	34	31	25	16
Giving people more say in important government decisions ^a	22	18	25	26	30	28	32
Fighting rising prices	37	38	31	30	30	41	44
Protecting freedom of speech ^a	17	13	19	10	4	5	5

In some years, the percentages do not sum up to 100, because the basis for percentage calculations was the entire sample, including the “no data available” and “difficult to tell” answers

^a Postmaterialist objectives (according to Inglehart’s theory, Inglehart 1977; Inglehart and Welzel 2005)

Forms of Participation in Politics

Elections

Voting is usually described as the most fundamental way of exerting impact on the elites and their actions (e.g., Schmitter and Karl 1991). At the same time, some authors point out that secret voting or referendums are a form of collective tyranny of the majority from the perspective of the individual. Also, some others (e.g., Pettit 1999) stress that being rational, the individuals should realize that they only vote for the pleasure of it, as their possibility of exerting impact on the result of an election involving many others is equal to zero. The ambiguous attitudes towards the role of elections and referendums are particularly evident in the new democracies where the obligation to vote as a civic behavior is not internalized, and belief in the effectiveness of one’s vote is very weak. Such an attitude in these countries stems in part from the fact that elections under the communist system played only the role of demonstrating support for the ruling party and had been manipulated by authorities.

In Poland, for example, the number of inhabitants voting in elections for the Parliament is rather low. In the election of representatives to the Sejm (lower house of parliament), the share of the population that voted in seven consecutive elections since 1991 ranged between 43.2 and 53.9%; in the last elections in 2011, 48.9%. Those who are older and better educated are more eager to vote (State Election Commission).

The lack of a well-established political stage and party system, the evolution of party agendas, the lack of clearly developed political preferences, and the society’s economic polarization cause voters to lend their votes to those who seem to understand their problems at the particular moment. Therefore, there are many shifts in individuals’ support between the parties, depending on whether they disappoint or attract the voters. In the case of those who do not vote, a question arises of whether the only reason is a lack of interest in politics, a lack of belief in elections as an effective mechanism of exerting impact on politics, or a negative attitude towards

what is being offered on the political stage. As it has been indicated by Raciborski (2011, p. 128), “We are facing a situation, in which there is less and less faith that election is the best way to choose the rulers and the strengthening conviction that elections are all for show.” It is necessary to realize, however, that recently also in stable democracies with a well-developed political stage, shifts in votes also occur due to various political and economic factors, as well as due to the fact that the citizens are no longer convinced they are able to exert impact through elections. Weakening of individual identification with political parties is commonly observed (Torcal et al. 2002).

The number of those convinced of the significance of elections is much higher than the real number of voters. According to a Eurobarometer poll of early 2013 (Flash Eurobarometer 373), a conviction that elections are an effective way of influencing political decision making through national elections is shared by 70% of the population in the entire European Union. This average hides significant differences between individual countries ranging from 89% in Denmark to 47% in Slovenia, with Poland at 56%. Lower belief in the effectiveness of national elections is clearly more frequent among the inhabitants of postcommunist countries, demonstrating some more general problem of new democracies.

Participation in Voluntary Organizations and Individual Activities

The civic society is often defined as various activities that fill the space between the activity of “state” and “economy” (e.g., Habermas 1984; Young 1999; Walzer 1995), and its existence is considered to be very important for the functioning of democratic societies. These activities are diverse in terms of their nature and function, and they differ from those typical for the other two spheres. Moreover, they are said to have the potential to contribute to the limitation of power of institutions and their actors and help enhance social justice through the identification of the social problems of certain groups, their expression, and the search for their solutions. These activities often encompass groups located at the margin of the activity of political and economic institutions. As Putnam (1993) emphasized in describing the functioning of the Italian local and regional communities, satisfaction of various needs of the members of the community depends on the existence and nature of civic culture:

Whenever it was absent or hardly present, it was more difficult to achieve the objectives. Voluntary cooperation is easier in a community that has inherited a substantial stock of social capital, in the form of norms of reciprocity and networks of civic engagement. Social capital here refers to features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks able to improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions. (Putnam 1993, p. 167)

In Poland under the communist system, a limited number of CSOs, controlled by authorities, existed. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, new (mostly illegal) organizations were established by the political opposition, including the Committee of

Defense of Workers, Free Trade Unions, and the mass movement begun in 1980 that evolved into *Solidarność*, which was registered as a trade union in a compromise with the communist government and had at its peak 9.5–10 million members. As noted above, *Solidarność* eventually played a significant role in overthrowing the communist rule in 1989, giving way for the creation of a democratic system.

After establishing the new political and economic systems in Poland, many organizations emerged in response to the earlier period of prohibition that affected most organizations existing prior to the World War II. Some of the organizations established after the political transition were simply local “responses” to the new conditions or they were initiated by government authorities. Some were created as branches of international organizations. Still others reflected the attempts to reconstruct the continuity of the prewar organizational structure (Siemienska 2005). Many people have been undertaking the activities without having any prior experience in building the organizations. Though the number of CSOs declined between 1993 and 2000, it began to grow again in the years after 2000.

In 1997, the total share of the Polish population declaring themselves active in different nongovernmental organizations, political parties, and the like was 14%, lower than in other countries of central and eastern Europe and many Western democracies (WVS—unpublished data). Two decades later, in 2013, the proportion of Poles belonging to nongovernmental organizations or associations almost doubled (25%), while the European average amounted to 43% (the highest in the Scandinavian countries at 79–80%). In other postcommunist countries, these numbers are similar or lower than in Poland (Flash Eurobarometer 373, 2013, T15). The Poles are mainly active in organizations focused on education, charitable provision of support for children, religious and church-affiliated activities, civic groups and organizations helping the sick, the elderly, and homeless people (CBOS 2011a). These types of activities are often financially supported by European funds, which likely has contributed to the fact that their number is increasing faster than others. Women’s participation rates in CSOs have increased more quickly than men’s: This trend has developed because CSO activities often correspond with the traditional tasks of women and because older, retired women are more willing to work in the organizations than men. Notably, over the last 20 years, the *Solidarność* and the OPZZ (the postcommunist National Agreement of Trade Unions) lost their positions as important actors on the political stage, and the number of their members sharply decreased. This has significantly shifted the balance among different types of civic engagement.

The lower rates of participation in CSOs in Poland correspond with the belief emerging among some of the inhabitants of the European Union that European citizens do not need organizations such as trade unions, professional associations, and special interest associations, and that they have other means of influencing political decision making (Flash Eurobarometer 373, 2013, 7). The share of respondents who reported that they did not need such organizations ranges between 23% in Estonia and 55% in Romania, with 43% in Poland. Generally, this opinion is stronger in the newer democracies.

Participation in organizations is, in fact, only a part of civic involvement. A significant role is played by activities undertaken by individuals and groups on their own (CBOS 2011b).

The 2008 financial crisis and experiences assembled over time through the implementation of different projects by CSOs and informal groups strengthened the awareness of Polish society that working together with other people facilitates solving some problems of their communities (villages, towns). Between 2002 and 2012, belief in the value of working together increased from 50 to 72%. While sharing the opinion is often not accompanied by participation in joint actions, it can be considered as a step forward in building social and cultural capital in Poland.

Frequently, joint activities start as an (informal) initiative on the part of individuals or groups, and are later transformed into formal CSOs for various reasons, for example, to be entitled to get financial support from public authorities or to have the formal status required to cooperate with public agencies. In Poland, people are more likely to participate in organizations with grassroots origins when they are initiated by individuals known within their social network. This is due to the low level of citizens' trust in all kinds of public institutions and authorities (WVS 2012), because they are suspected of protecting only their own interests and not those of the citizens in the way they imagine it should be.

An example of this phenomenon is a group of women with university education who established the MAMA foundation in 2006 to provide young mothers with an opportunity to get in touch, to engage in common activities, and to make it easier for them to go out (making the urban space friendlier by elimination of architectural barriers). They then developed a much wider range of activities, such as campaigns for employees' rights (mothers dismissed from their jobs); online help and workshops for women refugees; Mother's Time Bank, that encourages the sharing and exchange of time and support (e.g., for childcare); and support for local moms' clubs by providing workshops for mothers, local leaders, and representatives of local authorities. The activities of the MAMA foundation are financed by local authorities of the district and the public library of Targówek (a disadvantaged district of Warsaw).

In another case, a group of young lawyers started to help immigrants to "find their place" in the new environment. They later formalized their activity in the form of an organization, which allowed them to obtain funds facilitating further action.

Another example is the Congress of Women, a social movement that was initiated by a group of women that had attained visibility in business, university, and political circles. In 2009, it was transformed into an organization that continues to attract well-educated women, representing different professions and positions in the world of politics, economy, and science in the country. The objective of the congress is to establish a strong women's lobby to implement the concept of equal status of women in the public and private spheres. The congress played a crucial role in establishing the gender quota system in the parliamentary election of 2011; according to the new rule, the number of male or female candidates could not be lower than 35%. The social network among members is consolidated by annual conferences that attract several thousand people, as well as several regional conferences.

In many cases, interesting and significant programs end because financial support provided at the beginning by the European Union did not continue. In such situations, the accomplishments of the projects and the created networks are sometimes wasted, but not always. Often the trajectories, particularly of activities initiated by individuals, change course. Even after the objective that was formulated by an individual is achieved, the social networks among the participants remain and are put to use in the articulation of other goals and their realization. Examples here may be the initiative of a shop owner in Warsaw, who convinced the owners of neighboring stores to renovate the facade of the building in which their stores were located; or the idea of one of the inhabitants of Warsaw, widely presented in the media, to manage the green areas in one of the districts of the city.

Protests, Their Content and Functions

Observation of modern societies such as Poland shows that their members increasingly often tend to exercise various forms of direct activity to challenge elites in the public sphere. In the 1970s such activities were classified as unconventional (e.g., Barnes and Kaase 1979; Inglehart and Welzel 2005), in contrast with voting in elections and referendums, which have been treated as the basic mode of exerting impact on politics in democracy. Illegal strikes, occupation of buildings, signing of petitions, boycotting, street demonstrations, and the like give the citizens a sense of ability to exert direct pressure on the elites in matters important for the particular social group, in a way that is possibly more effective than elections. Increasing distrust in the political elites and public institutions is strengthening this belief (Inglehart and Welzel 2005). The younger generations, much better educated than the generation of their parents, refer more and more to various methods of protest, and these have become a component of “normal” life in Western established democracies as well as in new democracies.

Solidarność, introduced earlier in this chapter, was an excellent example of how protests concerning specific issues led to demands for overall changes (e.g., Tarrow 1996) and, ultimately, to the establishment of a democratic system in Poland in 1989. Protesting has remained one of the significant modes of exerting impact up to now, especially because the level of trust towards traditional democratic institutions has declined. Various social groups, employees of specific plants, and inhabitants either demanding investments in cities or opposing them engage in some form of protest. In recent years, the percentage of persons involved in various forms of protests or other ways of expressing their opinions in Poland did not differ significantly from the European average or, in 2013, was slightly lower. Poles signed petitions (the most popular type of protest in Poland) less frequently (29%) than the European Union on average (34%) (Flash Eurobarometer 373 2013). Differences between countries were substantial; at the high end was the UK (53% of respondents) and at the low end was Cyprus (7%).

In Poland, the share of respondents declaring having participated in various forms of protests indicates a substantial level of stability of behaviors over the last 20 years. The one exception is the share of persons who have signed any petitions in the past, which increased from 20 to 29% between 1997 and 2012. The proportion of respondents participating in boycotts, demonstrations, and strikes has remained virtually unchanged, being below 8% in the case of each form. Many persons have protested in more than one way (WVS 1997 and 2012, unpublished data).

Especially younger persons, those more interested in politics, those declaring a higher level of trust in others and a higher level of education, and men were more eager to consider the possibility of participation in different forms of protests in the future. Their share has increased over time. In 2012, there was a particularly large group of those who were ready to participate in a peaceful demonstration (50%) and in strikes (20%) (WVS unpublished data).

Despite the relatively low level of participation in nongovernmental organizations, as well as in various forms of protests, there are various groups very visible on the political stage that are manifesting their dissatisfaction. They can be classified as new social movements. Some of them are focused on a single, specific problem. An example of these can be, for instance, the movement “Rescue the Little Ones.” The originators of this initiative managed to gather one million signatures in the first half of 2013 in order to organize a referendum aimed at withdrawal of the governmental decision on initiation of school education by children aged 6 in order to restore the previous statutory age of seven. Another example of civic activity belonging to the category of new social movements is the Platform of the Outraged (*Platforma Oburzonych*), established also in the first half of 2013, following similar initiatives that started in 2011 as Occupy Wall Street in the USA and have become a significant component of political life of some European countries. So far, two fifths of the Poles have heard about the “movement of the outraged” initiated in Poland (CBOS, bs/61/2013).

Typical features of the “Outraged” and of the “Rescue the Little Ones” movement described above are spontaneity and its grassroots, mass, and temporary character. Similarities in the sphere of ideas include opposition to the existing political system (including the intentional withdrawal from membership in any political parties) and, to a great extent, the economic order. Like in many such movements, participants are building networks using the Internet and personal means of fast communication, such as mobile phones and tablets. Those who are willing to declare themselves as members of the group of “outraged” represent various social groups. The reasons for joining are both economic and political:

58% of the Poles feel the need to express their frustration due to the negatively perceived living conditions, and thus would categorize themselves as being ‘outraged’. Almost three-fifths of the respondents (59%) would like to express their dissatisfaction with the shape of political life in our country. (CBOS, bs/61/2013)

The highest level of frustration and outrage due to economic reasons has been declared by persons aged 45–64. Young people more often feel outraged by the shape of political life, and they are less influenced by the economic crisis and the financial

problems. Readiness to express dissatisfaction due to financial reasons is declared more often by less educated persons. Those who are better educated are more frequently dissatisfied due to political reasons.

The urban social movement constitutes another example of actions undertaken by different groups of people organized in various cities as a reaction to the investment “boom” in cities after 2004. The new developments (new apartment buildings, office buildings, shopping centers, freeways, etc.) are changing the spatial organization of cities, often depriving some groups of inhabitants from opportunities to use space as before. The groups of people are engaged on the type of problems mentioned above in particular localities. The modes of their organization cannot be classified as political parties or nongovernmental organizations (Mergler et al. 2013). Actually, they are creating a national network allowing partners to exchange their experiences and to build a lobby allowing citizens to influence decisions of authorities.

Can the protests be considered as compensation for a lack of access to power and the ability to have it? Research conducted in Warsaw in 2002 has shown that one half of those participating in protests would not like to get involved formally in solving problems of the city or the commune (Siemieńska 2002) or to run as candidates in a local election. On the other hand, one sixth of those protesting would “definitely” agree to become candidates. The protesting respondents were slightly more frequently eager to consider undertaking their activity in the local administration and councils than others. Although women have been engaged in protests as frequently as men, they were less eager to participate in local elections. These differences in willingness to engage in two types of activities—ad hoc and institutionalized—are usually explained by the greater interest of women in “finding a solution in a specific case,” rather than dealing with politics in general (Siemieńska 2000), which men believe to be their domain.

Conclusions

The problem of the nature of the civic society and accepted mechanisms of participatory democracy is very important, because, as Zimmer has indicated,

We have to keep in mind that civil society organizations are active on both sides of the political system. As lobbyists working on behalf of the common weal, they are engaged in advocacy at the input side of governance; simultaneously as providers of social services, they are active at the output side of governance. As activists civil society organizations contribute to processes of agenda setting and policy formulation; as nonprofit enterprises involved in service provision they are significantly involved in production of welfare in modern societies. (Zimmer 2009, p. 198)

The results presented here from several studies show that the forms of civic involvement existing in countries with established democratic systems are playing a less significant role in shaping civic society in Poland. This is not surprising. As Putman (1993) underlined, the experience collected by citizens over decades facilitates the

creation of cultural capital helping to undertake joint activities. Perhaps the mass protests in 1980 and 1989 that led to the fall of the communist system have proven to be an effective way of exerting pressure on the highest echelons of decision makers. However, they now appear to have become a barrier, slowing the creation of networks and activities typical for the “third sector,” which encompass much narrower objectives, and their implementation is based on hard everyday work with small or no expectations to achieve more fundamental decisions concerning interests of some segments of populations. The protests of the 1980s gave at the time a feeling and hope of being modes to achieve more radical changes quickly.

Perhaps the current picture of civic involvement represents a certain withdrawal in comparison with the 1980s, when the Poles successfully engaged in mass participation in activities aimed at transformation of the system. Some disappointments over the last 20 years resulting from the lack of congruence between high, unrealistic expectations connected with transformation of political and economic systems of a large part of society (Siemińska 1997) and their implementation caused a growing feeling of lack of opportunities to influence the authorities. The new nongovernmental organizations and other types of groupings are more often created by individuals feeling more comfortable in the new system and with its mechanisms. At the same time, their earlier experience of involvement in a spontaneous movement that *Solidarność* once used to be and the associated belief in effectiveness of this association, accompanied by lack of tradition of participation in nongovernmental organizations, makes participation in new social movements and individual activities more promising from the perspective of the ability to achieve one’s particular goals. Their adaptability to the present “liquid reality” (as it is defined by Bauman 2000), in the sense of changing types and forms activities as well as target groups, can be considered as ways of building new effective social capital in identifying and facilitating the fulfillment of needs of individuals and groups.

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Chapter 13

The Role of Civil Society Organizations in the Field of Unemployment: *For or by the Unemployed?*

Simone Baglioni

Abstract This chapter critically discusses the capacity of civil society organizations to keep unemployed people engaged with their social environments through a range of activities. Contrary to normative assumptions of civil society, the data presented in the chapter reveal a civil society made of professionalized organizations treating the unemployed as clients rather than as members or constituencies. The chapter is based on data collected through an organizational survey across seven European cities: Cologne, Geneva, Karlstad, Kielce, Lisbon, Lyon, and Turin as part of a larger research on youth unemployment funded by the European Union.

Keywords Civil society organizations · Youth unemployment · Employment policy · European cities

Involvement in civil society organizations (CSOs) is considered to be particularly beneficial for people at risk of marginalization. Associations, in fact, offer a range of opportunities to people facing social disadvantages, such as the unemployed, while contributing to their continued attachment to their social environments. Through joining an organization, jobless people can forge new ties and friendships, share beliefs, experience mutual support, and find a way to occupy what could be unwanted free time. All of this can help such individuals to cope with the difficulties which they encounter. This argument is a natural development of the classic Tocquevillean conceptualization of associational membership as a school for developing civic consciousness through social trust and reciprocity. According to this perspective, associations are considered to be key preconditions for social cohesion as they offer opportunities for socialization, mutual support, and exchange that function as a glue, keeping people together while socializing them to perform the functions of democratic life.

Thus, the potential benefits of associational membership apply to everyone but can be even more relevant for those at risk of social isolation or marginalization due

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to their economic or sociodemographic vulnerability, of which the unemployed are a key example. A wealth of literature has shown how unemployment is detrimental to social cohesion as it pushes jobless people towards the margins of their society: A mix of psychological and social features associated with unemployment account for this process of marginalization. The unemployed are often stigmatized and/or are conscious of being objects of stigmatization; they are generally ashamed of their status, hence instead of joining together or going out in public, they tend to refrain from opportunities for socialization or from opportunities for public exposure (Jahoda et al. 1972; Fleck 2002; Cole 2007).

Moreover, the unemployed have fewer of those resources necessary for collective action or mobilization to materialize: a certain high level of education, income, and social capital. Furthermore, because the impact of unemployment on people's lives strongly depends upon social class, those who would benefit more from the socializing effects of having a job, i.e., generally lower social classes, would likely suffer most from being deprived of it (Schnapper 1981/1994). Thus, for those who are working class and unemployed, joining an association may provide them with compensatory resources which keep their self-esteem and social life alive (Maurer 2001).

However, there is also another set of reasons for considering civil society membership to be beneficial for the unemployed. Societal organizations provide useful services aimed at improving people's employability, such as training and skills improvement opportunities, as well as guidance and support in claiming benefits (Hobbins et al. 2014; Defourny and Nyssens 2010). Often, CSOs also work as advocates for policy development in relation to employment, thus strengthening the political and civic awareness of the unemployed. Hence, there is evidence to suggest that civil society activity in the field of unemployment contributes to the self-determination of the unemployed through various actions and features (Baglioni and Giugni 2014).

Do Associations Really Make “Engaged” Citizens?

Nevertheless, such claims should be reconsidered in light of the changes which have occurred in civil society over the last three decades as a consequence of structural social transformations. As argued by several scholars, associational models have changed quite dramatically from the last decades of the twentieth century onwards (Anheier and Salamon 2006; White 2006; Evers and Zimmer 2010).

Firstly, CSOs have gone through a process of professionalization, having turned what used to be simple and lean organizations primarily relying upon volunteering, into well-organized structures devoted to specific tasks to be fulfilled by paid professionals rather than by volunteers or constituents themselves (Jordan and Maloney 1997; Skocpol 1999; Kriesi 2007). In the specific field of employment, but also more generally in the field of welfare state-related services, CSOs have been called upon to fulfill policy delivery functions (sometimes also policy design functions) having fostered the development of the professional capacity necessary to do

so (Smith and Grønbjerg 2006; Pestoff 2009). Such professionalization, inspired by public authorities and policies, has often developed to the detriment of the purely volunteering-based organizational model.

Such new types of CSOs have changed the level and types of commitment they require of their members or constituents. The new types of organizations do not need an overactive membership or a strong degree of involvement from their members and constituents as was the case with previous organizations. Instead, they prefer episodic forms of membership participation as most of their activities are directed and performed by professionals (Barnes 2006; Kriesi 2007).

Such transformations in associational characteristics have facilitated the diffusion of a “liquid” associational membership (or, to use a well-known expression in the sector, “loose connections”), a membership which limits its support to a specific organization either by “only” paying membership fees or by participating in sporadic forms of mobilization.¹

Considering such changes, it is necessary to discuss how grounded the rhetoric surrounding the usefulness of CSOs for social cohesion actually is, by focusing upon a specific observable category of vulnerable individuals, such as the unemployed. What space do CSOs preserve to enable the active engagement of their service users or members? Is the speaking done *by* the members of these organizations, in our case by the unemployed, or rather *for* them? Are there differences in the capacity to engage between organizations of different types, e.g., between associations specializing in service delivery and those more interested in the policy process? These are the questions this chapter addresses by using organizational survey data collected in a project entitled “Youth, Unemployment and Exclusion in Europe: A Multidimensional Approach to Understanding the Conditions and Prospects for Social and Political Integration of Young Unemployed” (Younex). The project, funded by the European Union (EU) 7th Framework Programme², has investigated, for 3 years, policies and practices of (youth) unemployment at three levels: local (in seven cities: Cologne, Geneva, Karlstad, Kielce, Lisbon, Lyon, and Turin), national (in France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, and Switzerland), and European. Part of the project has been devoted to study, by means of an organizational survey and additional face-to-face interviews, how civil society³ deals with unemployment issues at a local level. The chapter draws upon this part of the research.

¹ Although the focus of this chapter is on organizations and how they are capable of engaging constituencies or members (in our case unemployed people) through various activities, individuals’ participation in civil society has also been affected by changes having occurred at the individual level. As shown by various scholars (e.g., Putnam 2000; Wuthnow 1998), a combination of social and individual sociodemographic changes have modified the way people perceive and experience participation in groups and associations. In this chapter, however, I shall focus on the meso (organizational) level only and as such I will not discuss these individual level-related changes.

² YOUNEX, grant agreement n. 216122.

³ In the Younex project, and as a consequence also in this chapter, the concept of “civil society” has been used in an inclusive sense applying it to a range of societal organizations (including trade unions and political parties). The acronym CSOs is used in this chapter with reference to such a range of diverse societal organizations.

Firstly, the chapter explains how organizations have been mapped and interviewed in the Younex project. It then presents the results from the organizational survey illustrating how societal organizations involve unemployed people in their everyday activities. Finally, it discusses the implications of such findings for civil society scholarship.

Mapping Organizations

Following the methodology used by previous research on local organizations (Kriess and Baglioni 2003; Baglioni 2004; Baglioni et al. 2007; Font et al. 2007), a two-step approach was adopted in the general design of the study. Firstly, in each city we compiled an inventory of all associations active in the field of unemployment, youth unemployment, and related welfare sectors. Secondly, we carried out face-to-face interviews based on a common questionnaire with those associations that agreed to participate.

To be included in our inventory, organizations needed: (1) to not be part of a public agency and not be a branch of the local government (although we included organizations receiving grants and other types of support from public-governing bodies provided that their official (legal) status was that of a civil society actor); (2) to not be profit-oriented or have business as their core activity⁴; and (3) to be visible, that is, having a name and being active and recognized by different sources as active during the period of the research.

We have included both formal and informal organizations because the range of organizations active in our field is highly diversified. In addition to formalized and institutionalized organizations such as trade unions or religious organizations, there are also rather small and unorganized groups that play or could play a significant role. In fact, part of the literature on CSOs stresses that informal organizations are more adequate settings for people to do things collectively than formal ones (Bang and Sørensen 2001; Torpe and Ferrer-Fons 2007). Therefore, restricting our research to fully formalized groups would have resulted in a loss of important social actors. As a consequence, the absence of a formal statute, of formal headquarters, or of formalized procedures for decision making was not considered a criterion for exclusion. This decision was inspired also by the pathbreaking research of Salamon et al. (2003, pp. 7–8) which focused on organizations that: “have some structure and regularity to their operations, whether or not they are formally constituted or legally registered. This means that our definition embraces informal, i.e., nonregistered, groups as well as formally registered ones. What is important is not whether the group is legally or formally recognized but that it has some organizational permanence and regularity as reflected in regular meetings, a membership, and some

⁴ However, in some countries, such as Sweden, for-profit organizations play a crucial role in addressing unemployment issues at a local level; hence, the Swedish team’s decision to include for-profit organizations in their survey.

Table 13.1 Organizational universes and interview samples across selected cities (number of organizations). (Own compilation)

	Cologne	Geneva	Karlstad	Kielce	Lisbon	Lyon	Turin
<i>Universe</i>	50	36	13	28	30	24	50
<i>Sample</i>	28	21	13	26	30	21	35

structure of procedures for making decisions that participants recognize as legitimate” (Salamon et al. 2003, pp. 7–8).

In sum, we included organizations existing *de facto* even if they were not formally recognized or legally registered, i.e., organizations and groups arranging or taking part in meetings, rallies, marches, etc. or those publishing and disseminating leaflets and similar documents offline and online.

The mapping was carried out using different sources: (1) interviews with key informants (academics, grassroots activists, local civil servants); (2) document analysis of local authorities and umbrella organizations leaflets, newsletters, and similar information tools; and (3) detailed searches of official organizations directories, of local governmental offices and of websites.

The mapping phase allowed us to identify in each city the associations active in our field. However, we are aware that we cannot claim to have found *all* associations working on unemployment, youth unemployment, and related welfare domains. We do believe, still, that the organizations we interviewed provide a quite exhaustive picture of the organizational ecology of unemployment in our cities.

At the end of this process, mapped organizations ranged from 13 (Karlstad) to 50 (Turin) (Table 13.1 gives an overview of the different organizational universes and the number of interviewed organizations). The relatively large discrepancy between mapped organizations (universe) and interviewed organizations (sample) of some of our cases, such as Cologne, Geneva, and Turin, are due to a mixture of reasons including: organizations not existing anymore or having refused because of the lack of time available for their personnel to participate or because of “research fatigue” (often reported in Cologne where several social scientists have explored local civil society during previous research, leaving a legacy of “fatigue” among civil society activists, cfr. Grimmer and Lahusen 2009) and also, among the more radical organizations/movements, because of “lack of trust” in the overall aims of the research. Thus, although our research was comprehensively welcomed among organizations in all cities and perceived to be a useful tool to increase knowledge, to network, and to eventually gain visibility at subsequent research dissemination events, we met also with more skeptical interlocutors who preferred to not open their organizations’ doors to us.

The organizational universes of our cities differ not only in terms of numbers but also in their degree of heterogeneity. According to our sample criteria and definition, the organizational study could include CSOs *strictu sensu* that is volunteering-based organizations outside the direct influence of both the state and the market, and also social movement organizations and religious organizations. We could not, however, neglect trade unions which play a key role in unemployment issues, nor

Table 13.2 Distribution of types of organizations across selected cities (numbers). (Own compilation)

	Cologne	Geneva	Karlstad	Kielce	Lisbon	Lyon	Turin
<i>Civil society organization</i>	14	16	3	15	17	17	8
<i>Cooperative</i>	0	1	0	0	2	0	3
<i>Public institution</i>	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Political party</i>	5	3	6	4	2	2	9
<i>Trade union</i>	3	0	0	2	6	1	8
<i>Economic association</i>	1	0	4	0	0	0	0
<i>Social movement organization</i>	3	0	0	0	1	1	7
<i>Church-related organization</i>	2	0	0	5	2	0	0
<i>N</i>	28	21	13	26	30	21	35

could we exclude political parties due to their role as contributors to policy making and as key interlocutors in the field. All of these organizations worked either primarily or exclusively on (un)employment issues; accordingly, for the more generalist organizations, including political parties and religious organizations, we have focused our interviews on those branches/people working exclusively on (un)employment. Moreover, we also included other organizational types that were identified during the mapping phase as important actors in the unemployment field (social cooperatives, not-for-profit service centers, for-profit service centers) although only in specific cities where they were considered as belonging to the general residual category “other.”

Table 13.2 presents the distribution across the cities of our sample by type of actor. In most of the cities, apart from Karlstad and Turin, more than half of the sample is composed of CSOs *strictu sensu* (in Geneva and Lyon this rises to over two-third of the sample), although a range of other types of actors such as social cooperatives, social movements as well as economic associations are included, reflecting the complexity of our field.

Representatives of these organizations (usually a member of the board or the head of the organization) have been interviewed face-to-face in all of the cities using a questionnaire which included 57 questions distributed across three main sections: (a) introductory questions about the organization (e.g., date of creation, legal status, place and scope of activity; etc.); (b) mission statement, internal features (e.g., size, decision-making mechanisms) and activities; and (c) networks.

Organizations and Unemployment

Through a battery of questions, the organizational questionnaire of the Younex project facilitated the study of how CSOs keep the unemployed engaged through several associational activities. The first question we shall analyze asked organizations whether they used a range of activities including training, meetings, information stands, rallies, and sit-ins in their engagement with the unemployed. Table 13.3 presents the percentages of organizations involved in the different activities. Firstly,

Table 13.3 Involvement of unemployed in specific activities (% of organizations engaging in activity). (Own compilation)

	With unemployed (%)	N
<i>Trainings</i>	49	164
<i>Meetings</i>	48	163
<i>Info-stands</i>	41	164
<i>Rallies</i>	24	165
<i>Sit-in</i>	20	162

Table 13.4 Involvement of unemployed in specific activities (%) by city. (Own compilation)

	Cologne	Geneva	Karlstad	Kielce	Lisbon	Lyon	Turin
<i>Trainings</i>	50	52	33	65	50	52	46
<i>Meetings</i>	64	19	62	50	53	24	46
<i>Information stands</i>	64	29	15	58	45	33	23
<i>Rallies</i>	50	5	31	12	37	0	27
<i>Sit-in</i>	21	5	8	8	50	24	9
<i>N</i>	28	21	13	26	30	21	35

we note that, overall, organizations do not involve their constituencies or target groups in a very consistent manner. In fact, the most popular activity they organize with the unemployed, training, is used by less than half the sample. In addition to training, meetings are also used by almost half the sample, while more specific activities such as rallies and sit-ins, which are activities requiring a particularly high level of engagement of the unemployed, are in use in only one-fifth of the organizations. Finally, information stands, a rather simple activity to organize and one that helps organizations to promote their work, are used by 41 % of CSOs.

As Table 13.3 presents an “aggregate” view, we can now move to Table 13.4, which allows for comparisons to be made among organizations across the seven cities included in the Younex project. If we consider how such a range of activities with the unemployed is spread across the cities, we then see a more nuanced picture: In some cases, organizations show a more vibrant engaging capacity than we could grasp from Table 13.3. For example, in Cologne and Karlstad, two-third of the organizations has meetings with the unemployed; similarly, in Kielce two-third of the organizations engage with the unemployed through training. However, activities which require a more active engagement from constituencies or target groups such as rallies and sit-ins are scarce across all the cities, apart from Cologne (where half of the associations organize rallies with the unemployed) and Lisbon (where half of the organizations organize sit-ins with their jobless constituencies).

Another way to analyze how organizations engage with the unemployed is to consider whether there are differences between types of organizations. In other words, if specific types of organizations involve constituencies in a different manner. We could expect, for example, that some CSOs could be more active through a certain repertoire of actions and not through another. In Younex, following on from previous research on civil society (Lelieveldt et al. 2007), organizations have been divided into two main categories depending upon whether their first aim was to target the policy process (we have labeled these “policy-oriented organizations”)

Table 13.5 Involvement of unemployed in specific activities (% of organizations) by policy- vs. service-oriented category (own compilation)

	Policy	Service
<i>Trainings</i>	43	52
<i>Meetings</i>	48	49
<i>Information stands</i>	42	40
<i>Rallies</i>	35	18
<i>Sit-in</i>	24	17
<i>N</i>	68	106

or whether their primary aim was to provide services to the unemployed (we have labeled these “service-oriented organizations”). Both types of organizations play a useful role in keeping unemployed and precarious workers bound to their communities (Baglioni and Giugni 2014). Policy-oriented organizations are “inclusive” by fostering citizens’ participation; these organizations provide a range of opportunities for an individual’s immediate local engagement. They organize political campaigns, rallies, protest events, and other actions requiring the active involvement of their constituencies, members, or militants (Baglioni et al. 2014). On the other hand, service-oriented organizations are “inclusive” by virtue of the services they provide. Such services are usually focused upon increasing young people’s skills in order to improve their employability (Hobbins et al. 2014).

We could therefore logically expect policy- and service-oriented organizations to engage the unemployed using different approaches, and Table 13.5 allows us to identify such differences. Moreover, we can also consider whether one of the two types of organizations involves the unemployed in certain activities more than the other. The results displayed in Table 13.5 suggest that there is a functional differentiation among the two organizational categories: Policy-oriented organizations involve the unemployed much more than service-oriented ones in rallies and sit-ins, which are indeed typical actions of “political” organizations. Furthermore, policy-oriented organizations are also more capable of involving the unemployed in actions that may be less “policy” focused, such as ordinary meetings and information stands. Service-oriented organizations perform better than policy organizations in engaging with the unemployed through training, a somewhat expected result, considering that these types of organizations specialize in service delivery, with training forming part of their employment-focused services. Overall, between the two categories, those organizations which target the policy process offer a wider range of opportunities for the unemployed to get involved in associational life.

A CSO specializing in (un)employment issues can undertake other measures to engage the unemployed. For example, organizations can open their decision-making boards to the unemployed. Having unemployed people sitting on a board of an association would be a tangible sign of the organization’s capacity to not only speak *for* but also facilitate speaking *by* the subjects in whose interests it professes to work.

In the Younex organizational survey, we asked CSOs whether or not they had an unemployed person sitting on their board (if they had one). A large majority of organizations (more than 80%) had no unemployed people on their board. Moreover, almost all of them (98%) did not have a quota policy to reserve a position on the

Table 13.6 Means of unemployed people sitting on a board of the interviewed CSOs, by city. (Own compilation)

<i>Cities</i>	Unemployed
<i>Karlstad</i>	0.7
<i>Turin</i>	0.5
<i>Cologne</i>	0.4
<i>Geneva</i>	0.3
<i>Lisbon</i>	0.2
<i>Kielce</i>	0.1
<i>Lyon</i>	0.1

N=133

Table 13.7 How do organizations recruit/reach the unemployed (% of organizations). (Own compilation)

People ask for help	50
The organization seeks them out	6
The Unemployment Office sends them	6
Either by themselves or the Unemployment Office sends them	6
Either they ask or the organization seeks them out	26
Either the association seeks them out or the Unemployment Office sends them	1
Other	5
Total	100

N=174

board for an unemployed person. Clearly, the opening of decision-making boards to the unemployed was not a relevant issue among our organizations. Table 13.6 presents the mean numbers of unemployed people who had a seat on a board of the interviewed organizations across the cities: The figures reveal that this issue was deemed irrelevant in all cities and thus confirms that the unemployed are not included *de facto* in CSOs, to the point of not even allowing them a seat in the decision-making room.

From the previous tables, we have gathered information suggesting that organizations are not particularly keen to engage the unemployed through the usual activities of CSOs, nor do they adopt an inclusive approach towards the unemployed when their decision-making bodies are at stake. This attitude vis-à-vis the unemployed, who are, remember, the individuals for which such organizations exist, may be the result of the professionalization of CSOs: independent of whether their focus is on service-delivery or on targeting the policy process. In both cases, organizations conceive of their action as something which requires specific competences and capacities provided by professionals whose work is done *for* the unemployed rather than *with* them.

Another question within the organizational survey supports such a view. We asked organizations how they reached the unemployed. The aim of the question was to understand whether organizations deploy a proactive approach or rely upon service users or clients being sent to them by either public authorities or third parties. As Table 13.7 reveals, only a minority confirm that they are actively searching for the unemployed in need of help. Half of the sample declares having the unemployed

seeking out their help and approaching them, and some rely upon the unemployed being sent to them by the employment office. These modalities of recruitment demonstrate what can be a specific type of organizational behavior when confronted with clients in a sector where there is no specific need to recruit as it is still a public concern and public duty to provide the unemployed with support or programs to strengthen skills or qualifications. In fact, our survey has also revealed that more than one-third of the organizations (precisely 34%) were funded through public or governmental grants as compensation for services or project delivery, whereas less than 20% of such organizations indicated “membership fees” as their primary source of funding (Mota and Mourao 2014). Moreover, almost half of our interviewed organizations (precisely 44%) had more employees than volunteers, and actually 16% did not have any volunteers at all. Furthermore, less than one fifth of the organizations had a budget smaller than 10,000 € per year while more than half of the organizations had, in 2009, an annual budget of more than 100,000 € (Ibid.).

Concluding Discussion

When, during the Younex project, we interviewed organizations dealing with unemployment issues, across all of the cities that were studied these organizations affirmed having as a primary goal the provision of opportunities to the unemployed, as these were people exposed to a socially vulnerable situation. Whether such opportunities focused on rights and benefits or whether they focused more on service provision to strengthen people’s employability, in almost all cases organizations stated that unemployed people were at the very core of their actions and existence. However, when we analyzed the ways in which such organizations involve the unemployed through their everyday activities and functioning, we could not find a solid confirmation of those statements. Half of the interviewed organizations involved the unemployed through training and meetings, which is not per se an encouraging figure, but even fewer asked the unemployed to participate through more engaging, emotion-sharing and awareness-raising actions, such as sit-ins and rallies. Moreover, there is little or, more precisely, no unemployed voice at all in the boardrooms of these organizations. Clearly, the discourses about unemployment emanating from such organizations are spoken *for* the unemployed rather than *by* them. How far the process of professionalization of CSOs, induced by policies as well as public actors, is responsible for such a lack of voice is thus an issue deserving of further analysis.

A gap has therefore emerged between what is at least a section of academic and political rhetoric on CSOs—CSOs as being particularly useful in keeping the unemployed engaged with society through specific activities done with them rather than for them—and the reality we have captured through our Younex organizational survey. The survey focused upon very specific types of organizations, those specializing in employment issues (even for those more “general” organizations such as political parties, we have interviewed those branches/representatives working on employment issues), hence this prevents us from generalizing the results to the

broadier “civil society.” Still, if one of the key added values of CSOs compared to other organizations and institutions is to allow people at risk of marginalization to continue to feel part of society as well as enabling their views to be transposed into public debates and policies through their active participation, we cannot say that our results support such a view.

To the contrary, our data point to transformations in CSOs and the way people use and perceive such organizations. Organizations have become much more professionalized, offering services on demand (demand generated by public authorities at various levels of government), and as such relying upon paid professionals rather than on volunteers: For these organizations, the unemployed are thus “subjects” for whom work has to be done, not colleagues with whom everyday organizational activities are shared. The implications such findings have upon the lives of the unemployed therefore deserve further research.

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Chapter 14

Transnational Mobility and Associative Life

Sandro Cattacin

Abstract Transnationally, mobile people have produced a differentiated associative life in many countries. This chapter tries to understand why these people organize themselves and relate forms and logics of these autonomous associations to extrinsic and intrinsic dynamics. It concludes by underlining the pluralism of logics and the societal role of these associations.

Keywords Associations of mobile people · Associative life · Transnational mobility · Migration

An essential foundation of a democratic system is a structured and organized associative world (Rosenblum 2001), as already emphasized by Tocqueville in the nineteenth century in his analysis of the American democracy (Tocqueville 1986/1835).¹ Associations create social bonds beyond the family and produce society (Beveridge 1948; Zimmer and Evers 2010). They are also fundamental for encouraging the responsible behavior of companies (Bagnasco 1977) and politicians (Zimmer 1996; Putnam et al. 1993). Likewise, social movements—a specific form of civil society organizations—were attributed an important role in a reflexive, continuously renewing society (Cattacin et al. 1997). And last but not least, associations are linked to the production of the moral basis of our society (Etzioni 1973).

The significance of associations for societal integration—particularly democracy, economics, and a legitimate government—has also been qualified by some empirical studies. Some are worried about the possible political instrumentalization of the associative world (Seibel 1992; Mutti 2000; Battaglini et al. 2001a; Battaglini et al. 2001b) and about the creation of obstacles to innovation due to the social control on entrepreneurs that those associations could exert (Fukuyama 1995). Other studies consider that engagement in the associative world, on the one hand, could have some effect on identities by stabilizing individual self-realization and by producing social contacts, but, on the other hand, could turn into a dynamic of self-exclusion from the rest of the society and, in other words, to ghetto building (Wacquant 2006).

¹ This text is partially based on the introductory chapter of Cattacin and Domenig (2012).

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Table 14.1 The ambivalence of associations. (Own compilation)

	Favorable factors for societal reproduction	Unfavorable factors for societal reproduction
Policy implications	Associations as places of civic control of government activity (governance)	Associations as places of clientelism and at risk of being instrumentalized
Economic impact	Associations as a basis for a market economy based on competition	Associations as places of social control impeding innovation
Impact on identity	Associations as places of identity stabilization	Associations as ghettos

The research literature on associations is not only multidimensional, but also shows an ambivalent assessment of the association's impact on society (see the summary in Table 14.1). Ultimately, the extent of the social utility of associations cannot be clearly identified because there are always “the good, the bad, and the indifferent” effects of communitarian groups, as Dewey (1927, p. 71) puts it. This statement can probably equally be stated for associations of mobile people.² Hence, Baglioni (2005) and Reinprecht (2011) underline the important contribution of these associations for the social inclusion of migrants, whereas Martiniello (1997) reminds us once again of the risks of ghettoization. Dear and Flusty (2001), particularly, emphasizes the beneficial effect of these associations on the stability of identities of mobile people, while the Chicago School stresses on the reduction of social advancement opportunities in homogenous neighborhoods and in segregated migrant groups (Park 1928).

Obviously these studies contradict each other, but these contradictions could only partially be related to the associations they analyze. In fact, we assume that a differentiation in specific historical moments and territorial contexts might resolve this ambivalence and contribute to a better understanding of the role and the impact of migrant associations. In this chapter, we will follow this assumption by distinguishing the historical and territorial associations of mobile people by focusing on the development of their associative life in Europe since the 1950s. The selected timeframe corresponds to the available studies; unfortunately, we must say that the associative world of mobile people has still only a modest presence in the research literature.

Europe is still a significant area of transnational mobility, both in terms of the number of movements and in different forms of mobility. It is also a territory with a problematic history in dealing with differences, dominated in the first half of the twentieth century by an extremely destructive logic (in the countries with a totalitarian regime) or, at least, a logic of suspicion (in the colonial or democratic countries). Although the question of inclusion of differences or simply living with

² We use the terminology of “mobile people” to indicate that contemporary movements of people beyond existing frontiers can no longer be captured by the term migration, which has to include such different experiences of mobility such as asylum seekers, expats, and clandestine migration. Furthermore, the notion includes the aspiration to advance not only physically but also economically (see Cattacin and Domenig 2013).

them is still at the center of political preoccupations, in many European realities a learning process has taken place that has changed the orientations regarding differences in general and mobility-related differences in particular. Nevertheless, Europe remains a counterpoint to traditional destination countries of migration such as the USA, Australia, or Canada, which always have dealt with mobility in a more or less constructive manner, based on their own, historically, and socially well-anchored experiences with mass migration (Hollifield 1990).

Organized, Traditional Migration in Fordism

The first great wave of migration in Europe after 1945 is mainly of Italian origin, as after 1945, Italy was the only country that opened its frontiers for migration. In this period, Italy suffers from the disaster of fascism and the consequences of war, and thus becomes the starting point for an organized migration³ from the south to the north of Italy and to northern Europe (Hollifield 1992). These mobile people, initially mostly skilled artisans with the intention to work only for a short time outside Italy, meet in Switzerland and in the UK (and the USA) an intellectual diaspora of Italians who fled from fascism.

Beginning in the 1950s, the former diaspora of well-organized, anti-fascist groups experiences an important transformation after the arrival of the so-called second wave of migration from Italy. The newly arriving migrants are much less qualified and are employed in the growing industries throughout Europe. They transform the small political organizations of Italians into associations, which are similar to trade unions (Ricciardi 2013). This kind of migrant associations develops rapidly in Europe and extends their role as advocates for the Italian labor force with new activities, such as mutual aid, social assistance, help in handling administrative tasks, as well as help in emergency situations. According to Moya, their development can be explained by the fact that they filled a gap with their activities:

Again, it is hardly surprising that, historically, they have mushroomed in situations where neither traditional institutions—such as kinship groups and the parish church—nor newer ones—such as the welfare state, insurance companies and corporations—could satisfy social needs like health-care, leisure and companionship. Functionalism offers here a more insightful explanation than arguments based on the civic and political culture of the immigrants or their hosts. (Moya 2005, p 840)

From the beginning of the 1960s, mobility grows in all parts of Europe, and Italy alone can no longer meet the growing demand for labor in the expanding Fordist economy. Other countries open their doors for mass migration, such as Turkey and Greece to Germany, Algeria to France, the former British colonies towards the UK, and last but not least Franco's Spain and Salazar's Portugal to central and northern Europe.

³ We describe this migration as an organized one because it was planned and sustained by governments and companies. Company buses were sent, for example, in southern regions of Italy, to bring people willing to migrate directly to Switzerland (Cerutti 1994).

In Europe, migration flows spread through not only the whole Mediterranean area, but also to India and Pakistan, and are no longer exclusively state or economy driven, but socially determined. Family relations and friendship induce a network migration (Boyd 1989) that stabilizes flows from specific regions to specific places creating a landscape of privileged migration destinations for people from the same regional origin. However, regardless of whether unionized, left, Christian, or Muslim, the associative life of mobile people is primarily focused until the 1960s on the working conditions in the target countries.

A change of goals occurs only at the end of the 1960s, when the migrant associations realize that their members are no longer only workers, but also families. In particular, family reunifications transform the demands of the members, asking the associations to focus not only on working conditions, but also on social recognition and discrimination in the school context (Blumer 1970; Calvaruso 1973). The desire of the authorities to keep migrants as long as possible in a temporary stay situation (Hollifield 1992) and the *dream of return* of many migrants (Sayad and Fassa 1982) are unfulfilled by the new reality of family and larger community settlements. In particular, the coming of age of the children of migrants in the new living reality leads to certain disenchantment on both sides.

New topics such as assimilation or integration arrive on the political agendas (Hoffmann-Nowotny and Hondrich 1982; Hollifield 1992), behind which questions arise concerning the inclusion of children with migrant background in school, the living together in a common territory, or simply the so-called cultural differences. Another topic concerns economic stability, as economic interests lead to a change in policy that will permit the stabilization of the residence of employees.

In the same period, contrasting political positions emerge that call for establishing privileges for nationals and keeping foreigners out of the political and social arena. These political positions are a direct reaction to the augmenting *definitive* presence of people with a foreign passport (Vermeulen 1997; see also Miles and Thränhardt 1995).

The struggle for social recognition shall soon bear fruit. The suffering of disrespect, as Axel Honneth describes it (Honneth 1992), and the search for a model to deal with differences, instead of the apparently unattainable demands of assimilation, lead to a fruitful debate in the public sphere. The decision for a policy of inclusion—after having accepted the idea of a definitive stay of the majority of migrants—and the orientation of a part of the associations towards the country of residence and no more towards the country of origin have been the most important consequences of this struggle for recognition (Mahnig 1998; D’Amato 2001).

Identity Issues

The logic of access to rights—postulated by Marshall (1965) as a continuous process that needs only time to be realized—was based on a model of a uniform middle-class life. The international mobile people should also adjust, slowly but surely,

to this way of life. This model of adjustment dissolves in the 1970s in favor of a model of individuation—with the quest for uniqueness instead of uniformity—and of the search for meaning beyond material values (Inglehart 1977). The focus of migrant associations after World War II had been the search for recognition of social rights. In correspondence with the general trend towards individuation and the shift from a uniforming Fordist economy to a flexibilized economy (Boltanski and Chiapello 1999) that privileges differences, new migrant associations emerge with a strong focus on identity issues.

The increasing turn to identity associations that organize themselves in relation to religion, a place of origin, or a region of origin weakens the already existent rights-oriented associative model of mobile people (Fibbi 1983). These new associations of mobile people are, therefore, far less combative and focus mainly on activities related to the maintenance of an identitarian balance between the place of residence, the experiences related to mobility, and their origins (Duchêne-Lacroix 2006). These activities aim to produce mainly trust, ontological security,⁴ and personal esteem for their own members (Cattacin and Domenig 2013).

The traditional associations continue their activities, but their ability to prevent further decline in their membership is weak. Therefore, they are forced to seek coalitions in an increasingly pluralistic logic. The new solidarity movements born in the 1970s welcome this opening of the traditional migrant associations, as Passy (1992) has shown for Switzerland.

Thus, begins a double dynamic of transformation of the associative life that is characterized by the fact that the traditional, union type of associations have to reorient their activities to other institutions and open their range of activities to others, while the new identity-oriented associations of mobile people are more and more prone to closing, orienting their activities exclusively to their members.

Asylum and the Changing Associative World

Even if there are some common points, we think that the associations of refugees and asylum seekers have to be analyzed separately from the associations of migrants that arrived in the center and the north of Europe after the Second World War.

The first important asylum migration occurs during the Cold War period where the “good” and the “bad” have been defined following the affiliation to one ideological block or the other. While mistrust characterized the attitude regarding migrant workers, which was grounded in the suspicion of nearness to the communist ideology, the refugees from Hungary (1956) and the former Czechoslovakia (1968) receive trust and popular generosity due to their stance against communism.⁵ The benevolent reception, combined with an obvious inability to return, accelerates their

⁴ In the sense of Giddens (1991). Associations help to find an existential, non-material security, such as the acceptance of one’s identity through group affiliation.

⁵ As analyzed in relation to Switzerland by Niederberger (2004) and Gianni and Parini (2005)

social and systemic inclusion. In contrast, those refugees who migrate from countries that belonged to the anticommunist bloc are received with great distance and coldness. As a consequence, the latter establish associations primarily for their self-defense in a hostile context, such as the refugees from Chile in 1972. They very quickly turn to political associations oriented to rights and towards mutual social support (Bolzman 1996)—in contrast to the refugees from Hungary and the former Czechoslovakia but similar to the associations of the postwar working migration.

But since the 1980s, the asylum migration follows the new political, social, and economic contexts. The division into “real” and “fake” asylum seekers replaces the political orientation of the Cold War. The dissolution of the political world order also results in a much more heterogeneous asylum migration (from the point of view of the origins) and brings out all over Europe new asylum laws aiming to close the borders to irregular migration and to identify the so-called abusive asylum requests (Efionayi-Mäder et al. 2001). A new moral line arises that distinguishes between economic and therefore dishonest reasons to migrate and politically legitimate reasons to seek asylum (GCIM 2005).

Asylum seekers are not only classified politically or morally, but also from the point of view of their social and religious characteristics. The political discourse shifts from the idea of assimilation to the concept of insurmountable “cultural distance.” Difference is “essentialized” and “biologized” (Fassin 2005).

Finally, deregulation and economic globalization increase unorganized and irregular mobility and impede the stable inclusion in the labor market, creating a parallel world of precarious jobs, which is functional to the rapidly transforming economy (Tarrus 2002).

The increase in the number of persons in the field of asylum and the related clandestine mobility (Chimienti and Solomos 2011) have both led to an increasing variety of associations (in terms of activities and therefore of claims), and also to an internal diversification of the members regarding their residence status. In the world of the new mobility, it is impossible to relate an association to one kind of migration. Membership and residence status can differ and therefore it is possible to find in the same association asylum seekers, people with a regular stay permit, clandestine migrants, or people with plural citizenships.

Four different orientations can be found, which are often present in a combined, polyphonic way:

- The transnational orientation, which holds mobile people together on the basis of the idea of maintaining a connection with the country of origin (for example, the Kurdish or Sri Lankan diaspora associations; see Wahlbeck 1999 or Moret et al. 2007);
- The identitarian orientation that has the objective of adapting and stabilizing values and traditions in a pluralistic environment (for example, Latin American associations; see Bolzman 2002);
- The social and economic orientations that manifest themselves in the provision of services of a social or economic nature (typically here the Somali associations, but also the Sri Lankan associations—see Moret 2009);

- Finally, the political orientation, the aim of which is to represent political interests, often based on a national, continental, or ethnic basis (such as African antiracist associations; see Werbner and Modood 2005).

Mobile people from Kosovo are a good example for the combination of orientations and membership logics. Combining working migration before the civil war in Yugoslavia with the asylum migration after the confrontation, Kosovo associations show that transnationally mobile people and their associations can no longer be classified and typified by the place of origin.

Starting from the field of asylum, we can therefore show that the associations of mobile people are diverse. That not only affects these associations, but reflects a general social change in the direction of a pluralization of forms of association. But let us now take a closer look at the recent trends of differentiation in associative worlds.

The Pluralism of Associations of Mobile People

Even if the main challenges of mobile people's associations came up already in the post-Fordist years of the 1970s, the changes towards pluralism inside as well as outside of these associations emerged only slowly. Analyzing the contemporary situation, we can differentiate between mobile people's traditional associations from the Fordist period and associations from the post-Cold War period.

Traditional Associations of Mobile People

Inside the world of traditional associations of mobile people, formed during the post-World War II period, we can find mainly two major transformations that can be explained demographically as well as economically.

On the *demographic* level, it is important to underline the advancing age of the postwar migrants from the south. The number of people arriving from the south to the center and the north of Europe is diminishing and the south is becoming itself a target for migrants. The advanced age of the earlier migrant populations has the consequence that their associations—at least partially—have to focus their attention on issues such as aging or dignity in old age. Issues such as better facilities for people with migrant background in homes for the elderly, social security related to retirement, or the balance between returning and nomadism to keep contacts with the family in the two territories of reference are new topics addressed by these associations (Fibbi et al. 2002).⁶

⁶ A special aspect of this demographic dynamics is the role of the descendants of migrants. These “second generations” are largely emancipated from their parents and find themselves often in the role of mediators between various groups representing differences (Atabay 1998, Bolzman et al.

On the *economic* level must be mentioned the influence of the regions of origin on the association's orientation. The regions of origin use these associations as vectors for the promotion of economic activities, in particular the promotion of local products and tourism. It is not only an instrumental relation that explains this new orientation towards economic issues (Kloosterman et al. 1998), but also the will to legitimate the group's own identity outside the association through the selling of specific products and through highlighting the attraction of the region of origin for tourists.

Of course, not all traditional migrant associations promote their regions of origin. But at least this more extroverted approach of associations is a further sign that traditional migration is no longer at the center of xenophobic attacks and that people from these regions can show that they are proud of their origins (La Barba and Cattacin 2007). Xenophobia does not disappear but focuses on the new unorganized or irregular mobility.⁷

Unorganized New Mobility of the Post-Cold War Period

Since the 1980s and 1990s, mobile people are not only in the focus of xenophobic groups, but also of politics. New measures are constantly being adopted beginning in 1990, which should improve mobile people's inclusion in the new country of residence. These measures are characterized on the one hand by respect for the identity of mobile people. On the other hand, mobile people also need skills that permit a functional adaptation, such as knowing laws and rules or learning the local language in order to improve their chances on the labor market (see Brubaker 2001, who speaks about a new "assimilation" policy, and Cattacin and Chimienti 2006). An important characteristic of these measures that focus on the social, economic, and political inclusion of mobile people is their frequent development in cooperation with the affected associations. In these cases, associations are seen as intermediaries between mobile people and functional systems, and they are invited to participate in the inclusion programs through subsidized projects.

The ambivalence between the rejection of the newly arrived people on the one side, and the promoted role of associations for national, regional, and local inclusion policies on the other side creates a predicament which brings about differentiated tactics and activities on the part of mobile people's associations. We can use Hirschmann's differentiation between "exit," "voice," and "loyalty" to describe three reactive strategies to this predicament (Hirschman 1970):

2003). They usually promote a more cosmopolitan (and not national) vision of cohesion between the differences (Soysal 1994) and invest their time rarely in those associations that are organized according to the origins of their members.

⁷ The regular mobility continues to exist in the flexible and global world of highly skilled people that can move with almost no barriers from one country to another. They can also be affected by xenophobic hostility (Helbling 2011).

Table 14.2 Strategies of earlier, traditional and newer, pluralized associations of mobile people. (Own compilation)

	Traditional migrations (1945–1980)	Newer mobilities (since 1980)
Exit	Regional associations	Transnational diaspora
Voice	Trade union-type associations	Movements against discrimination and racism, for recognition of difference
Loyalty	–	Partner associations of government (local, regional, national) in inclusion (and cooperation) projects

- *Exit* or the strategy of self-exclusion: Some mobile people organize themselves exclusively within their community of origin, where most of the services necessary for everyday life are available. The *ethnic business*, which is based primarily on one's own community, providing a homogenous meeting place, is a good example of this strategy. Diaspora associations, which focus only on the place of origin, can also be attributed to this response strategy.
- *Voice* or the struggle for recognition: Another part of the new mobility is organized in associations that fight against discrimination, xenophobia, and racism and demand their recognition through lobbying activities, demonstrations, and other expressive ways addressed to the population in general as well as to policy makers. In this group, not only does one encounter very diversified collective actors, such as associations of mobile people, but also churches and political parties (see for instance Gerber 2003).
- *Loyalty* or the participation in initiatives for inclusion and international cooperation: The third reactive strategy is to initiate a dialogue with the authorities of the country of residence. These cooperative strategies allow the association to not only benefit from subsidies to implement specific measures for inclusion or co-development initiatives with the region of origin, but also position itself as a bridge between the concerns of mobile people and the inclusion and cooperation policies (see Maggi et al. 2013 for the case of Senegalese associations; see also: Ionescu 2007).

These three reactive strategies—exit, loyalty, voice⁸—can certainly also be found in traditional post-World War II associations; but the increase in the importance of the loyalty or cooperation strategy today is certainly a feature of post-Cold War, pluralized societies (Table 14.2).

Even if the complexity of associations of mobile people can hardly be summarized, Table 14.2 permits the highlighting of a strategy that is neither recognized by national politics nor by the European integration laws, namely that associations of

⁸ It would be wrong, of course, to ignore associative logics that could be called anomic, such as conspiracy or terrorist organizations. Even if this kind of association is marginal—at least from a quantitative point of view—we can still include them in our analysis as a reactive strategy (voice), which is oppressive and thus outside of the field of communication in a pluralist society and which can only result in the isolation of the members of this kind of association.

mobile people can be partners in the development of policies in different fields. In a pluralistic society, it is impossible to demand assimilation and the surrender of one's own identity; instead mobile people should at least be functionally included in the destination country through support in understanding the organization (tax system, social security, etc.) of the new society and its legal system and in learning the local language. These skills can be taught more easily by people that know the mobility reality. That is why associations of mobile people are fundamental inclusion mechanisms: they have the credibility and legitimacy to act for the benefit of mobile people in an ambivalent context. As did the preventive impact of associations of homosexuals in the fight against HIV/AIDS in the 1980s, associations of mobile people have the potential to become key actors for inclusion policies.

This change in the political orientation—from distrust to trust between groups and groups and institutions—probably is among the biggest challenges in building a pluralistic society that seeks to be characterized by a low potential of destructive conflict.

Concluding Remarks

A preliminary evaluation of associations of mobile people is almost impossible, because they not only transformed themselves in response to societal changes but—in parallel—they also differentiated their logic of action.⁹ To distinguish these contexts and configurations, two dimensions can be used, namely:

- On the one hand, the temporal dimension, which shows the change in society from Fordism to Flexibilism, from the Cold War to the globalized dynamic of interdependence, and from the uniform model of inclusion to the paradigm of diversity (Faist 2009);
- On the other hand, the organizational dimension describing the configuration of openness or closedness of the associations towards their environment—an openness or closedness, which over time may also change.

The associations of the diaspora type seem to be the only case of a contextual and configurational constant. For all other association forms of mobile people, we can observe continuous change, such as, for example, in the traditional Italian migrant associations that shifted from mutual support in the struggle for social rights and recognition to identitarian stabilization and ultimately to transnational economic exchange. A characteristic of the recent, mostly project-oriented associations is their short life span. With the end of the project, the association dissolves to a characteristic which they happen to share with other associations in the destination country (Cattacin 2006).

⁹ As shown in some studies on the local context: Waldrauch and Sohler (2004); Taboada-Leonetti (1989); Mutlu (1995).

In summary, we notice that the pluralization of associations has led to new forms of organization, which may be regarded as strong support for inclusion into the destination society. In the triple transformation of our societies, namely the economic flexibility, the need for cooperation between governments and associations and the dynamics of individualization and individuation, associations can potentially play a central role in contributing to the inclusion of mobile people. In order to make the most of this potential, associations have to open themselves and turn their activities and interests towards the destination society as well.

In order to mitigate the risks of a radicalization of differences (which are mostly based on the notion of so-called incompatible cultures¹⁰), the current inclusion policies should be guided mainly by the idea of respecting all kinds of differences. Such a policy should consist of a combination of both antidiscrimination laws, which are the basis for an open society and the prerequisite to enable social advancement, and an occasional but regular exchange between all relevant collective actors.

However, this policy cannot occur in a vacuum, dictated by an authority; rather, it should emerge from the confrontation with collective actors and debates in the public sphere. Only through the joint and networked elaboration of a policy that defines pluralism as a resource¹¹ can individual well-being and reciprocal respect be produced, which could be of a great use for economics as well as for politics. This short historical outline had the intention to point out that associations play an essential role not only in stabilizing and supporting the identity self-assurance of mobile people, but also in the production of social links, which are the basis for the constructive reproduction of societies.

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¹⁰ A dynamic that was highlighted by Baillet for France (Baillet 2000).

¹¹ In terms of networks of mutual reciprocity and mutual trust (see Mutti 1998 and Bagnasco 1999); for the context of migration: Weiss and Thränhardt 2005; Reinprecht 2011.

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Chapter 15

Associating at the European Level: Civil Society Networks in Brussels

Taco Brandsen and Birgit Sittermann

Abstract This chapter examines the position of the third sector at the European level, where it has slowly been building a presence. Although great advances have been made, especially from the 1990s onwards, and the sector's European networks are much stronger than before, it remains institutionally weak and has difficulties linking back to the national level and below. Vertical linkages between the European and national levels are often weak, which means that socially and politically they often constitute different worlds.

Keywords Third sector at the European level · European Union · Multi-level governance · Civil society networks

There has been a small but growing body of literature on the role of associations, and more generally the third sector, at the European level. The third sector, like the state, operates at different levels: locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. The bulk of the sector's activities are ultimately local, so the significance of a multi-level analysis should not be exaggerated. Nevertheless, a presence at different levels is necessary for associations and other organizations within the third sector to be effectively involved in public policy processes. This leads us into a complicated and sometimes bewildering world, into which this chapter will try to take a glimpse. The principal issue that emerges is the gap between associating at the local level and associating at the European level. They are different worlds, both with respect to their organizational dynamics and to the issues they centre around.

This description rests partly on the outcomes of the Third Sector European Policy project, in which Annette Zimmer and the authors were jointly involved.¹

¹ This text draws strongly upon Berg and Brandsen (2007), Brandsen (2013) and the contributions to Kendall et al. (2009).

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The Third Sector and Multi-Level Governance

Before discussing the position of the third sector in multi-level governance systems, it is necessary first to clarify the meaning of ‘multi-level governance’. This is not the place for an elaborate discussion of this difficult concept, but it needs basic clarification.

‘Governance’ is one of the most used and abused term in the social sciences and in public administration in recent decades. Its meaning cannot be defined singularly, but must be interpreted according to the tradition within which it is used. In public administration literature, which is one of its prime sources, it reflects the move from a conception of the public sector as a central controlling state to one that is more pluralistic, with a multitude of actors operating in complex and shifting networks. Within that understanding of governance, for example, one would discuss how the third sector is changing and becoming more hybrid through its interactions with state and market.

‘Multi-level governance’ also carries with it this sense of fragmentation, but it tends to refer primarily to the relations between actors at different levels of society. These levels are usually defined with reference to levels of government: local, regional, national and international. It has been an especially popular concept in literature on Europeanization within political science and public administration research. Originally, developments within the European Union (EU) tended to be explained in terms of intergovernmental relations between states, but by the 1990s it was clear that this type of theoretical approach was no longer adequate to explain the complex network of relationships that were evolving (Hooghe and Marks 2001). Not only was actual decision-making spread over different governmental levels, but it also included a broader range of actors, not necessarily dependent on the state for inclusion in decision-making (representing the ‘multi-level’ and ‘governance’ aspects, respectively). A broad definition by Schmitter suggests that it must be interpreted as ‘an arrangement for making binding decisions that engages a multiplicity of politically independent but otherwise interdependent actors—private and public—at different levels of territorial aggregation [...], and that does not assign exclusive policy competence or assert a stable hierarchy of political authority to any of these levels’ (Schmitter 2004, p. 49). But even this definition may not capture the full complexity of what we are speaking of. For instance, in what sense can a decision be considered binding? Is it only about decisions or also about, for example, shaping the policy agenda?

Theory building on multi-level governance is still evolving rapidly and represents a serious academic challenge. In this volume, the purpose is mainly descriptive, so multi-level governance will be primarily used as a heuristic device, as a method for acquiring a preliminary understanding of a highly complex and broad phenomenon. Specifically, the description will address the following questions: (1) How is the third sector itself organized at different levels; (2) how does it relate to governments at the different levels?

It should be noted that this is a relatively new field of study, on which evidence is still scattered. In the early days of non-profit research, when scholars were very much concerned with putting the sector on the map, they counted up the number of organizations (defined by legal categories such as associations, foundations and charities) and came up with statistics of the size of non-profit sectors in different countries. Great rows erupted over whether certain categories of organizations (e.g. co-operatives) should be included or not. Following this crude but useful work, researchers started looking for theoretical explanations to differences in the patterns found in quantitative-mapping exercises. Examples of this are attempts to define the non-profit sector in terms of the so-called regimes. This was inspired by the 'welfare regimes' based on the work of Titmuss (1974) and later popularized by Esping-Andersen (1990). These were usefully identified clusters of countries with similar patterns in social stratification and levels of (de)commodification, institutionalized in welfare systems and were relatively constant over time. Likewise, scholars have also attempted to identify clusters of third-sector regimes. To some extent, this has been a useful exercise, because the national position of the third sector has often been partly shaped by the same political and institutional choices that conditioned the shape and growth of the welfare state. However, such an analysis can be misleading. Using countries as units of analysis should not be taken to imply that the comparison can be restricted to the national level or that the national level is the most important. Crudely put, the problems are both vertical and horizontal.

Vertically, the national state is steadily losing influence. Increasingly, the tasks and powers of European states are shifting upwards to the international level, most notably to the EU. This has also made it imperative for the third sector to be represented at the European level, an issue which will be discussed later in this chapter. At the same time, national powers have also sunk downwards over time. Countries such as Belgium, Italy, Spain and the UK have seen large-scale devolution to the regions, to the point where most of the business of government is run and decided below the national level (Pollitt and Bouckaert 2004). Another, even more widespread trend is the rising economic and political significance of cities. In economic and social terms, large cities often have more similarities to large cities in other countries than to smaller cities nearby. They have a large share of autonomy and are often politically and financially more important to organizations in the third sector than the government at the national level.

Horizontally, the position of the third sector differs strongly between policy fields and it is somewhat misleading to suggest general, cross-cutting identities. If national regimes have been successfully defined, it is generally because they restricted themselves to a specific field. Esping-Andersen's welfare regimes were defined on the basis of income transfer, e.g. social security or pensions. He ignored important service areas like health care, housing and education. An analysis based on services would not only have resulted in different clusters, but would also have undermined the notion of national regimes. This is because generally services tend to be more organized and financed at lower levels of government, especially services of a social nature; and the third sector is especially present in the area of social services.

So while one can identify different national traditions of government–third sector relationships, one must incorporate other dimensions and developments, notably dynamics of (de)centralization within countries, the drift of national powers to the European level and the institutional differences between policy fields. It limits what can be realistically said about multi-level governance in a chapter like this, given the immense diversity. We must apologise beforehand to what is inevitably a broadbrush analysis that does insufficient justice to the complexities of multi-level governance systems and which can only be systematic in a limited way. Also, the available empirical material tends to lean towards formal institutions (as compared to informal connections) and towards western European countries, which are unfortunate limitations. Nevertheless, the overview will clarify basic differences within Europe and perhaps encourage readers to explore specific countries and fields in more detail.

The Third Sector at the European Level

As the third sector is so broad, an assessment of its involvement on the European scene necessarily varies depending on where one looks. Again, one must take care not to overstate the importance of formal institutions as compared to informal networks. The third sector presence is stronger than an inventory of formal representations would suggest. However, that of course also makes it difficult to study. Fortunately, the speedy growth of the literature on Europeanization has also included some work on the third sector, e.g. Smismans (2006), Kendall et al. (2009) and Wierckx (2011). This has given us a first good impression of its role at the European level. As with the description of country situations, some qualifications are necessary. The first is, again, that the idea of a third sector as a collective identity is much less important than its identity within specific policy fields. Those who want to understand the dynamics of the third sector's interactions with other European actors really need to focus upon specific policy fields. Also, again, the third sector's position is in flux and changes over time. In fact, this is much more the case than at the national level, because the institutionalization of its position is far less advanced.

Historically, the involvement of the third sector at the European level starts with the trade unions in European decision-making and informal lobbying activities by large nongovernmental organizations. These certainly date back long before any form of institutionalization took place. However, it was only by the late 1980s that its role started to receive systematic consideration, as a means both of strengthening the union's democratic legitimacy and of finding partners in the fight against social exclusion. In describing these developments, it is necessary to make a distinction between the so-called social dialogue and civil dialogue, which is artificial but important (cf. Bleijenbergh and Brandsen 2007). As has happened at the national level in most countries, the associations representing employees (trade unions) and employers have had privileged access to political decision-making, which at the European level is referred to as the 'social dialogue'. The term 'civil dialogue' was

coined much later and basically refers to dealings between the commission and all organizations other than social partners (although, confusingly, trade unions are often included as well).

The social dialogue started fairly early in the history of the union (although the term is of more recent origin) and by the 1990s reached the point where, albeit in a limited range of policies, social partners have acquired an institutionalized role in policy formulation (Bleijenbergh 2004). Following from discussions in the 1980s, the Social Protocol appended to the Treaty of Maastricht (1991) allowed social partners the right of self-regulation in the field of social policy (Falkner 1998). If the commission intends to take action within a certain area, employers and trade unions are allowed 9 months to reach a prior agreement. If they do, it is adopted and converted to a binding directive by the council. In this arrangement, employers are represented through the Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederations of Europe (UNICE) and the European Centre of Enterprises with Public Participation (CEEP), while the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) speaks on behalf of employees. This resulted in directives on parental leave and part-time work, which led the council to incorporate the procedure in the Treaty of Amsterdam (Bleijenbergh et al. 2004).

The civil dialogue is far less established and only acquired some kind of institutional form in the course of the 1990s (for a better and more complete description of the process, see Kendall et al. 2009). Policy documents and events that symbolically marked this development were the Communication 'The Role of Associations and Foundations in Europe' (1997), the White Paper on Governance (2001) and the Dialogue meetings organized at the time of the European Convention. There have been a number of different initiatives to strengthen the third sector's position within national and European policy-making processes. To begin with, it has resulted in the creation of formal platforms that unite representatives of the third sector and provide a point of access to the commission. An example is the Civil Society Contact Group, which brings together organizations from the areas of human rights, development and social policy, with members meeting several times a year. Another important development has been the financial support that third-sector umbrellas have increasingly been receiving, especially in the fields of environmental issues, human development and social policy. Equally significant was the initial recognition of the specific nature of the services that the third sector provides, although it remains to be seen what institutional form this recognition will ultimately take. Finally, a significant step was the inclusion of participatory mechanisms in new methods of policy-making such as the open method of coordination (OMC). This collection of procedural instruments included the requirement to encourage the participation of actors beyond national state bodies. Taken together, these developments have offered third-sector organizations and networks potential access to decision-making procedures.

It must be noted immediately, though, that the results of these initiatives have been mixed. Efforts to promote the third sector have surged and sunk with the political tide and with reorganizations within the commission. The commissions under Jacques Delors and Romano Prodi in the 1990s were favourable to the third sector,

but it has fared less well under liberal commissions such as the one headed by José Manuel Barroso. The fora established for third sector consultation have usually been incidental and often fragile. The Civil Society Contact Group was established in 1998, but went into a sleepy phase until it was reinvigorated in the context of the European Convention. Also, while the third sector is now habitually referred to in official documents, it is not always clear what this means. Terms used in European documents are often ill defined, with the result that they have taken on a variety of meanings at the national level. For instance, the term ‘civil society’ has often been taken to include all non-state actors, including commercial businesses, which is a major departure from the conventional academic use of the term. Available empirical evidence questions whether the participatory procedures contained within the OMC can break through established patterns of policy-making. For instance, an analysis of the mobilization of the third sector in the process of setting up National Actions Plans on Social Inclusion showed that the new procedures had little impact on traditional methods of participation and only led to significant change in those countries where there were no traditional methods (Brandsen et al. 2009).

On the whole, one must conclude that the involvement of the third sector at the European level is more than rhetoric, but that it has so far not been institutionalized consistently and systematically, even if its position has been boosted by efforts to strengthen the commission’s democratic legitimacy and by the budding developments of European social policy. Trade unions stand out, in that they have acquired a formal role in decision-making procedures, even if it only concerns a minor part of their area of expertise. The role of other third-sector organizations in European policy-making largely retains its informal and ad hoc nature. However, we must stress again that this does not imply any judgement of its actual influence, which is certainly far greater than it seems on paper.

It should also be noted that there are many in the third sector who are suspicious of attempts to institutionalize their role, for various reasons. They fear they may be co-opted and lose their critical role in relation to policy-making; they fear that efforts to channel the input of various organizations will lead to weak compromise and/or the dominance of a handful; they believe that their influence is greater when it is not pinned down in a formal arrangement; and/or they believe that participation in formal procedures will come at the loss of internal democracy (an issue we will come back to in the following paragraphs). Illustrative in this respect is the role of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), an advisory body dating back to the early days of the Economic and Employment Council (EEC) and traditionally composed of trade unions and employers. Van Schendelen (2002) succinctly described its position as one of ‘influence without power’. At the time of the European Convention, EESC organized a number of dialogue sessions with third-sector representatives, and tried to position itself as ‘the gateway to civil society’. But other than some members from consumer organizations, the social partners continue to dominate, and many in the third sector question whether the committee can adequately represent them as long as this is the case. Some fear that their positions would be filtered if they allowed themselves to be represented, although others argue that it simply provides an additional point of access. As it stands, there

is no single and undisputed way in which third-sector organizations can ‘connect’ to Europe, which leaves room for diverse interpretations of how the interests of the organizations and the public are best served.

Links Between the European and the National Level

Research shows that third-sector organizations do engage with ‘Europe’, but only to a limited degree. Although some organizations attempt to integrate a European dimension within their mainstream activities, in many other activities with a European focus tend to remain restricted to a couple of specialists. Their European federations are often vital sources of information as well as initiators of common strategies. That means that the European dimension of third-sector activities is realized within fairly small circles (Kendall et al. 2009).

One reason for the failure to connect is the (perceived) gap between national and European policy issues. The third sector has been praised especially for its ability to engage with citizens and local communities. But to the extent that it does, this may actually discourage engagement with ‘Europe’ when there is no obvious connection between European and national/local issues, and consequently no incentive for the organizations to look beyond their traditional habitat. What is hotly debated at the European level may have little immediate relevance within national debates, in which case it is unlikely to penetrate the organization beyond the specialists. Alternatively, the relevance of issues may remain unrecognized. This problem is strengthened by the use of different languages. Some European terms are simply unknown within national debates, and translations tend to be subtly (or less subtly) different. An illustration is the European debate on services of general interest, which concerns, among other things, to what extent European competition regulation should or should not apply to locally provided services. Whereas it was of clear relevance to service-providing third-sector organizations in several countries and might have been of strategic advantage in national debates, third-sector organizations in few countries seem to have engaged with this European debate—presumably because they failed to see the connection between the debate and their own concerns (Kendall et al. 2009).

In addition, many third-sector organizations suffer from inadequate financial and human resources. They simply do not have the means to keep track of European debates, especially when these are not of urgent and immediate interest. This is why, the European federations often take the lead in formulating common policy positions and strategies. Another reason is that effective participation in the European policy process usually demands fairly quick action, especially at the agenda-setting phase. This is at odds with a lengthy internal consultation procedure. The European networks differ strongly in how they deal with this: While some regard internal democracy as the bedrock of their external legitimacy, others move ahead of their base in order to be more effective.

The extent of the connections differs between countries. This relates both to the national position of the third sector at large and to how the third sector is organized within specific policy fields. For instance, French third-sector networks have had a strong desire to achieve recognition through European law (e.g. through the adoption of European legal formats) which reflects both their national emphasis on legal solutions and the position of the third sector in France. In the Netherlands, with its liberal legal provisions regarding associations and foundations, the third sector has seen little need to go European on this issue. Where the third sector is larger and best established, its potential to be active on the European scene may be greater, but there is less incentive to do so. Also, given that a strong position is often connected to a strong focus on national issues, third-sector organizations are less likely to be engaged by European discussions which differ conceptually. Finally, the third sector tends to be most strongly represented in those areas where (so far) the EU has had the least influence, such as local social services.

In addition, European-national links are strongly influenced by the types of organizations that operate within specific policy fields. European networks often have to deal with a very diverse constituency. This can be nicely illustrated with the example of consumer organizations. Members of the European consumer federation Bureau Européen des Unions de Consommateurs (BEUC) include membership-based associations (Germany, Netherlands, Belgium), state agencies (Scandinavia) and activist organizations on a syndicalist or co-operative basis (southern Europe). Such variety deepens the difficulty of reaching consensus on a common strategy. For instance, while some members would be in favour of further co-operation with the commission, others are inclined to adopt a more adversarial role. It makes internal consultations slow.

All in all, while there may be formal links between national third-sector organizations and networks at the European level, it has proven difficult to establish a deeper connection in which national and European debates would be more intimately linked. Of course, given the third sector's diversity, one must qualify such a statement. The 'issue gap' applies less to the organizations dealing with issues that have a clear international angle (e.g. the environment, human rights). Some organizations do have sufficient funds and people to play an active role on the European scene. Some networks such as the ETUC appear to have a fairly coherent internal structure with well-functioning lines of communication. On the whole, though, the obstacles described above have stood in the way of a firmer connection between the national third sector and the European level.

The question is whether these are temporary or inherent obstacles. Should we expect the links to grow stronger over time or stay as they are? Of course, if the EU continues to grow in importance, and present indications are that it will, European issues are likely to generate more interest. Then again, it may be unrealistic to expect the gap between European and national issues to diminish to any significant degree in the short term. It is hard enough for national policymakers to connect their debates to the concerns of ordinary citizens, and European issues are even further removed. By implication, organizations that are firmly rooted in national or local debates may be less interested in European policy than governments. It may to

some extent be inevitable that, even if European issues are relevant to citizens, they are simply lost in translation, or remain the territory of specialists. This will only change if it can be successfully demonstrated within national organizations how engaging in European discussions can be directly useful in terms of concrete effects. Europe as an abstraction is unlikely to strike a chord. What are therefore desperately needed are good translators, not just of language, but of politics. If the third sector can be more effectively mobilized, the third sector may be able to make a stronger mark on the European scene.

Conclusion

Associations and other organizations in the third sector have been slowly building a presence at the European level. Although great advances have been made, especially from the 1990s onwards, and associations' European networks are much stronger than before, the third sector's presence remains institutionally weak and has difficulties linking back to the national level and below. Vertical linkages between the European and national (let alone the regional and local) levels are often weak, which means that socially and politically they constitute different worlds. A persistent difficulty in linking levels is that significant issues at one level often do not easily 'translate' to another level, because of conceptual and terminological differences, as well as different institutional and political conditions. Organizations at the local level are concerned with very different matters than the professional networks in Brussels, even if they are all formal associations. Finally, it must be kept in mind that the bulk of the third sector's activities are and probably always will be local, so the importance of its national and international presence must not be overstated.

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Chapter 16

Why Is There No Statute for a European Association?

Kristina Charrad

Abstract In this chapter, the author takes a look at associations from the European Union’s (EU) perspective. There is a huge variety of association forms and regulations applicable to them in the member states of the EU. On the EU level, however, there is no uniform legal basis for associations, although work on such a basic form has been underway for some 20 years. Specifically, this chapter gives an overview of the existing types of associations in the EU and discusses the difficulties arising on the way to the statute for a European Association.

Keywords European Union · European association · Free movement · Legal framework · Participative democracy

In every country of the European Union (EU), we find plenty of associations. Indeed, freedom of association is one of the democratic values enshrined in the constitutions or main laws of all these countries. Further, associations play an important role in every country and also in the EU. Over the last decade, civil society—and also with its associations—became a focal point of the EU, first of all in the context of the Lisbon Treaty as a counter-argument to the claim that a democracy deficit existed and later on also in the context of discussions on the single market and social economy, especially after the situation of the EU economy worsened (Kohler-Koch 2013).

Yet, if we take a look at the associational world from the EU’s perspective, we will see a variety of associational forms, legal frameworks, and tax rules in the 27 member states—and no uniform European legal base. Indeed, there is no clear common denominator. The EU launched efforts to find such a common denominator and to create a uniform legal base—a statute for a European Association, but these efforts remain fruitless. In this chapter, the chronology of this long-lasting discussion is presented, focusing on the diversity of the associations in the EU member states and trying to find out what hinders the adoption of a common legal base.

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Legal Framework is on the Way: European Statute Discussion for Over 20 Years

In 1984, the European Parliament adopted a resolution asking the European Commission to propose a regulation regarding a Statute for a European Association. It took 8 years until the Commission presented the Proposal for a Council Regulation on the Statute for a European Association (COM (91) 273 final) in 1992, but this proposal got stuck in the legislative pipeline. In 2001, the statute for a European Company was adopted and in 2002 the statute for a European Cooperative; yet, no progress has been made on the statute for a European Association since 1993. In fact, work on it was suspended in 2003 and 2 years later, in 2005, the European statute proposal was withdrawn from the Commission's work plan in the course of administrative simplification of its work program. After a long period of silence, it was very much expected that progress would be made on such an association statute during the European Year of Volunteering in 2011, but this did not take place.

The adoption of the proposal for a Council Regulation on the Statute for a European Foundation left associations as the only sector of the social economy without a uniform European legal basis. The symbolic character of the 2013 European Year of Citizens could make for a good opportunity to finally achieve the goal after more than 20 years of discussion on the Statute for a European Association. Nevertheless, it seems that such a statute would not command the majority backing in the council since associations have different functions and carry out different tasks in every member state, and they are governed in different ways and must adhere to different regulations. All these are hurdles to be overcome on the way to the European Statute for a European Association.

In order to promote mobility and facilitate the work of associations on cross-border and transnational projects, a uniform European legal base would be useful. Such a statute would not replace the national legal frameworks for associations; it would be only complementary to the national ones. Though the long drawn-out discussions on it indicate that the resistance to a European statute is still too strong, the necessity to have a European legal framework grows, since associations are becoming more and more important in different fields of the internal market (e.g., in the field of social services provision, in the sport and leisure field). Furthermore, since the borders in the EU are less and less important due to the free movement of goods, people, and services, more and more citizens wish to engage in cross-border projects. For the time being, it is not possible to establish a European association, for example, if a group of German and Belgian musicians wish to organize a single entity, active in both countries.¹ They would have to create two associations following the same aims—one in Germany and one in Belgium—and to register it in the respective countries according to applicable regulations. This is too complex for such a simple aim, i.e., to develop music projects together.

¹ The example taken from <http://www.eu-info.de/leben-wohnen-eu/wohnen-europa/5682/>, consulted on September 25, 2013.

Why European Action is Needed: Variety of Associations in Europe

In every EU member state, associations are subject to different regulations. If we compare only some basic facts, for example, types of associations and number of founding members, we will already see differences.

If we take a look at the EU-15 (old member states), we do not see uniformity regarding types of associations and minimum number of founders (see Table 16.1). An association in one country might not follow the same concept as in another one. For example, in Belgium, there are four different types of associations and in France three; in both the countries, most types of association require at least two founders. In Germany, the minimum number of founders is also two, but there must be at least seven members when the statutes are registered and legal personality is requested. To found an association in Greece, at least 20 founders are needed; in Ireland, seven. While in most countries usually two or three founders are required, the law does not even specify the number of founders in other countries (e.g., Spain and Sweden). Finally, in Austria only one person can establish an association, but it must have at least three members.

When we look at the new member states and then at the EU-10 and EU-2 countries (Table 16.2), we can find a new legal form of associations, namely public benefit companies or organizations. These organizations are not based on membership like traditional associations, or on capital like foundations, but they must be dedicated to public benefit purposes and activities (Freise and Pajas 2004; Rutzen et al. 2009); mostly, they are active in service provision. The basic requirements to found an association are not only similar to those in EU-15, but also different in every country in this group of countries. Usually, a minimum of two (Estonia, Latvia) or three (Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Czech Republic as well as Malta) founding members are required by the law. But in Hungary and Slovenia 10 founders are needed. In Bulgaria, the minimum requirement for the number of founders differs according to the benefit status that it has. If the association is established as an organization for mutual benefit, the founders must be at least three entities (physical and/or legal entities). If the association is established for public benefit, the founders must be at least three legal entities or at least seven physical persons (Article 19 of the Bulgarian Non-profit Legal Entities Act, according to Bulgarian Center for Not-for-profit law, see <http://www.bcni.org/en/nav/95-basic-information.html>). Polish law distinguishes between two forms of associations: association and simple association. An association has to have 15 founders, but three are enough for a simple association. Regarding legal entities, there are also clear differences: Legal entities may found an association in Bulgaria and Romania, but in Slovenia they may not (cf. Rutzen et al. 2009). In most Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries, foreigners may found an association, but in the Czech Republic they may not; in Slovakia, it is possible only if other founders are locals (cf. Rutzen et al. 2009). The highest minimum number of founders is required in Cyprus, namely 20 persons (Table 16.2).

Table 16.1 Associations in the EU-15 (own table according to data from COM (1997) 241 final, Annex III: Legal and Fiscal Framework for Voluntary Organizations and Foundations).

Country	Types of associations	Minimum founders	Foreigners may found or just join?
Austria	Nonprofit association (<i>ideeller Verein</i>)	1, but at least 3 members	Just join
	Associations set up with profit in mind		
Belgium	De facto association (without legal personality)		
	ASBL (Associations Sans But Lucratif)	3	Three-fifths must be Belgians,
	IA (International Association under Belgian law) (limited to associations with philanthropic, religious, scientific, artistic, or educational objectives)	2	at least one administrator of Belgian nationality
	International association under foreign law (entitles association with its head office, abroad, to open an office in Belgium)	2	
Denmark	Association	Not stipulated	Permanent residents
Finland	Nonprofit association	3	The chairman and at least half of the members of the board must be residents of Finland
	Economic association		
	Association subject to permission (provided by the Associations Act)		
	Associations organized by a legal act/statute (e.g., Advocates Association)		
	Non-registered association (without legal capacity)		
France	Non-recognized association	2	Yes
	Recognized association		
Germany	Association recognized as public utility	2, but at least 7 members when the statutes are registered	Yes
	Nonprofit association (Idealverein)		
	Commercial association (wirtschaftlicher Verein)		
Greece	Common law association	20	Yes
	Special association		
Ireland	Union of persons		
	Unincorporated body	–	Yes
Italy	A company limited by guarantee	7	
	Industrial and provident society	7	
	Recognized association	–	Yes
	Nonrecognized association		
	Committees		
Luxembourg	Nonprofit association	3	Yes
	De facto association		
Netherlands	Association under private seal	2	Yes
	Association by notarized act		
	Stateless association (international associations recognized by law)		
Portugal	Private association under the general scheme	–	Only join
	Private association under a special scheme		
	Association without legal personality		

Table 16.1 (continued)

Country	Types of associations	Minimum founders	Foreigners may found or just join?
Spain	Association governed by the Law of 24 December 1964	Not stated, but practically required 3	Yes
	Association governed by special statutes		
	Associations with social, educational, cultural, or sporting objects may be recognized as public utilities		
Sweden	Association (ideell förening)	–	Yes
United Kingdom	Unincorporated association	2	Majority of trustees resident in England and Wales
	Trust		
	Company limited by guarantee		
	Industrial and provident society		
	Incorporated by Royal Charter		
	Incorporated by Act of Parliament		

In Croatia, which joined the EU in 2013, the situation regarding associations is similar as elsewhere in CEE: an association can be founded by three persons, and foreigners may found associations and join them (Table 16.3).

Due to these differences in legal requirements in the EU member states, the work on cross-border projects or cooperation among associations from different European countries might be difficult. That is why, the struggle for a voluntary, uniform European legal framework is understandable.

But what should a European association look like? From which national model should it take inspiration? The proposal for a Council Regulation on the statute for a European Association, presented by the Commission in 1992, stipulates that European associations may be formed by two or more legal entities, having their registered office and central administration in at least two member states, or at least by 21 natural persons, being nationals of at least two member states (COM (91) 273 final, Article 3). As noted above, a Europe-wide legal form is not intended to replace the national legal frameworks for associations, it would rather complement them. Such a general framework would help associations overcome national restrictions encountered when operating across the EU and would foster, more generally, the mobility of associations. In any case, it would prevent legal uncertainty and promote the development of the social economy sector.

European Association in the Context of Participative Democracy and Social Economy

In recent years, associations have increasingly drawn the attention of the EU as it realized that they could foster the active involvement of citizens in the European project through the organized civil society. Processes of participative democracy

Table 16.2 Associations in the EU-10 and EU-2 (own table according to data from Rutzen et al. (2009), data on Cyprus are taken from Cyprus NGO Support Center (<http://www.ngo-sc.org>, consulted on 14.06.2013), and data on Malta are taken from Study of Volunteering in the European Union. Country Report Malta (http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national_report_mt_en.pdf, consulted on 14.06.2013)).

Country	Types of associations	Minimum founders	Foreigners may found or just join?
Bulgaria	Mutual benefit association	3	Yes
	Chitalishta (traditional community centers)	7 natural or 3 legal persons as members	
	Public benefit association		
Czech Republic	Civil association	3	Join only
	Interest association of legal entities		
	Public institution		
	Public benefit company		
Cyprus	Charitable establishment		
	Association	20	Yes
Estonia	Club		
	Nonprofit company		
Hungary	Nonprofit association	2	Yes
	Nonprofit partnership		
Latvia	Association/social organization	10	Yes
	Nonprofit company		
	Public society		
Lithuania	Association	2	Yes
	Nonprofit organization		
Lithuania	Association	3	Yes
	Public institution		
Malta	Association	3	Yes
Poland	Association	15	Yes
	Simple association	3	
	Public benefit company		
Romania	Association	3	Yes
Slovakia	Civil association	3	Found
	Nonprofit organization that provides public services		together with local
Slovenia	Association	10	Yes

Table 16.3 Associations in Croatia. (Own table according to data from Rutzen et al. 2009)

Country	Types of associations	Minimum founders	Foreigners may found or just join?
Croatia	Association	3	Yes
	Private Institution		

gained momentum, and civil society participation was even enshrined in the primary law (Lisbon Treaty, article 11). It can be said that the associations and their activities are one expression of European citizenship. This is the major thrust of one strand of the discussion on associations.

A second strand is set in the context of the single market and the social economy. Along with mutual associations and foundations, associations constitute a part of a very diverse social economy sector, which is very important nowadays in the EU. Indeed, in 2009, the European Parliament issued a resolution on the social economy, in which it stated that

the social economy plays an essential role in the European economy, by combining profitability with solidarity, creating high-quality jobs, strengthening social, economic, and regional cohesion, generating social capital, promoting active citizenship, solidarity, and a type of economy with democratic values which puts people first, in addition to supporting sustainable development and social, environmental, and technological innovation (European Parliament 2009, point 1).

Strengthening the social economy might be one of the remedies to calm the pain of the recent economic and financial crises and might contribute to achieve the ambitious aims of the Europe 2020 Strategy. The European Parliament stressed in its 2009 resolution that

the social economy helps to rectify three major labor market imbalances: unemployment, job instability, and the social and labor-market exclusion of unemployed people; it furthermore noted that the social economy plays a role in improving employability and creates jobs that do not normally delocalize (...) (European Parliament 2009, point 20).

This shows that associations are important social economy actors and that, in the context of the contemporary challenges facing the EU, their obstacle-free activity across Europe is to be fostered. Recognizing that the development of all forms of social economy is important for its future; the EU has in recent years given much attention to this sector and put significant efforts into achieving a uniform legal framework for most of the sector's actors, particularly in foundations, cooperatives, and mutual societies, and fostering their development. Only associations have been left a bit aside, since no statute of association has been adopted.

Conclusion and Perspectives

Although free movement is one of the EU's overall achievements, the free movement of associations in the EU is still difficult, because there is no single legal framework for them. Associations in Europe not only have different names, they are indeed different. If they decide to carry out cross-border projects, the lack of common base might be an obstacle. Of course, it is difficult to find a common denominator and an appropriate single model for a European association, it still requires efforts on the part of the EU. Many challenges the EU is facing (i.e., youth unemployment, climate change, problems with integration of Roma, and other minorities, etc.) are of a transnational nature, and the responses to them by all possible actors of the society, including associations, presumably should also not be limited by borders and national regulations.

It has to be noted that associations fulfill a huge range of functions: organize leisure activities or provide services, take care of the environment, and also lobby for their members, raise funds, engage in advocacy, just to name only some of the mostly known functions. Of course, there are associations which are not interested in creating a European associational form and would not be in the near future. However, there are also associations that are interested in cross-border projects and capable of carrying out such projects. Even if a lot of associations pursue their activities or provide services only on the local level and are not interested in moving to other countries or start international activities, the statute might be useful for them if they eventually decide to engage in cross-border projects. Since in recent years, the whole social economy sector has come into the EU's spotlight as a possible remedy to numerous problems in its economy, it is likely that associations, as one of the actors of the social economy sector, also will attract more attention.

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Part III
Associations and the Challenge
of Capitalist Development

Chapter 17

Developments in the Third Sector: The Last Decade and a Cautious View into the Future

Michael Meyer and Ruth Simsa

Abstract The chapter discusses major challenges for the third sector and its associations and assesses them on the basis of literature and a quasi-Delphi research with 37 experts. Five trends are identified as the most important: increasing managerialism as a way to gain legitimacy, changes in the relationship with the public sector due to financial crises and neoliberal ideology, blurring boundaries between the sectors, new demands on associations, and new forms of civic engagement.

Keywords Challenges for the third sector · Managerialism · Relationship between state and the third sector · Civic engagement

“Prediction is very difficult, especially about the future.”¹ Nevertheless, Zimmer and Priller assessed the “Future of Civil Society” (2004). The identification of trends and developments not only meets the general need for orientation (Foucault 1974), but also is a basis for managerial strategies, even if it is only howling into the dark to banish fear.

Are associations an outdated model or will they continue to be an essential part of civil societies? A first step to answer these questions is to assess developments affecting the third sector. Associations have always been an important part of the third sector as the most important legal form for nonprofit organizations (NPOs) in most European countries. Thus, we asked experts which trends challenged and changed the nonprofit sector and its associations over the last decade and which changes are to be expected for the coming years.

In addition to findings from literature, the following is based on a quasi-Delphi process in two turns. We asked experts from research and consulting two questions:

1. Which developments significantly influenced the nonprofit sector over the last 10 years?
2. What will be the most important developments in the next 10 years?

¹ Among others, this saying is accredited to Niels Bohr, Karl Valentin, Mark Twain, and Winston Churchill.

The Delphi method is a qualitative approach to forecasting, based on a systematic, multistage inquiry. First, experts are asked in a standardized way for their estimations of the respective trends. From the second turn on, the respondents are confronted with the anonymized estimations of the other experts to adapt their own view if appropriate (e.g., Häder 2002; Okoli and Pawlowski 2004).

In contrast to the classical method, we used open questions in the first turn to ask for past and future trends. In the second turn, we gave feedback about answers and frequencies and asked our respondents in standardized form for their estimations of the trends. Altogether 37 experts responded, 17 academics from all over Europe, and 20 Austrian nonprofit researchers, consultants, and managers. Five topics have been identified.

Managerialism: Legitimacy Through Management Logics

Today's nonprofits apply business-like methods (see Hammack and Young 1993; Dart 2004). While many scholars and practitioners welcome this, others fear that the adoption of a business-like organizational form may entail a drift toward business-like substance, and NPOs will lose their nonprofit spirit.

On the one hand, it is the basic assumption of nonprofit management scholarship that management methods will help NPOs to fulfill their philanthropic missions better. On the other hand, critical research names two threats: First, the concern about commercialization: The central argument was developed by Weisbrod (1998a). If NPOs engaged in the production of private goods in return for fees, economic considerations would override mission considerations (Young and Salamon 2003). Guo (2006) finds that commercialization does not have a positive effect on mission achievement. Backman and Smith (2000) outline potentially negative effects of commercialization on NPOs' contribution to social capital.

Second, the concern about business-like organizational forms: Bush (1992) argues that business-like methods instill a spirit of competition and conflict into the nonprofit sector, thereby threatening its values of philanthropy, charity, and voluntarism. Similarly, Billis (1993, p. 336) cautions that by mindlessly aping businesses, NPOs may diminish the place of stakeholders, notably of volunteer workers and board members. A number of empirical studies reveal that business-like methods may conflict with voluntarism, member orientation, and community participation (Alexander and Weiner 1998; Brainard and Siplon 2004; Kelley et al. 2005; Leonard et al. 2004; Skocpol 2003).

In Europe, Zimmer was among the first who addressed this issue. Together with Nährlich, she not only provided an introduction into management for NPOs for practitioners (Nährlich and Zimmer 2000), but also critically discussed the opportunities and threats of implementing management tools in NPOs (Zimmer and Nährlich 1993, 1997). A tendency toward convergence of sectors and systems is also facilitated by the use of new public management ideas and techniques for "re-inventing government" by adopting market solutions to public problems (Henriksen

et al. 2012), which forces nonprofits to act with similar logics (in the sense of coercive isomorphism, see DiMaggio and Powell 1983).

Managerialism in NPOs is sometimes confused with professionalization (e.g., by Hwang and Powell 2009). Hereby, it is often neglected that there are mainly economic and political pressures which foster managerialism and repress classical professions (Evetts 2003). This retreat of classical professions goes hand in hand with the inflationary use of the normative “being professional,” which is used by NPOs to gain legitimacy: they refer to efficiency and effectiveness, to stakeholders’ needs and innovation (Meyer et al. 2013). Framed like this, being “professional” has little in common with the traditional notion of professionalism, which is coined as a third logic beyond market and bureaucracy and encompasses “occupational control of the work” through professional associations (Freidson 2001). In managerialist NPOs, this control is widely executed by management boards. Thus, “professional bureaucracies” become managed organizations (Mintzberg 1983).

Since the 1990s, NPOs have increasingly applied management methods and hired management staff (Clarke et al. 2000; Manville 2006; Roberts et al. 2005; Symonds and Kelly 1998; Weisbrod (1998b)). Meanwhile both practitioners and academics have begun to discuss which benefits can be drawn from managerialism and which alternatives are available (Hailey and James 2003, p. 4). A first phase of naïve adoption has been followed by more tailor-made methods and a more selective application (Young 1997), and the dissemination of management methods and ideologies has been well explained (Nelson 1997; Ruef and Scott 1998; Suchman 1995): Legitimacy plays a crucial role.

Two of the main drivers toward normative isomorphism (DiMaggio and Powell 1983) are educational institutions and management consultants which increasingly specialize in NPOs. In the last 20 years, there was an explosion of educational programs for nonprofit management, and the same seems to be true for consultants. In the German-speaking countries, more than 100 programs in nonprofit management have been established (Fröse 2009, p. 226). Management approaches become more and more tailored to NPOs and are now applied to volunteers, fundraising, public relations, etc.

Finally, it is the pressure toward accountability which boosts managerialism (Christensen and Ebrahim 2006; Ebrahim 2005, 2009; Hittleman 2007). NPOs are not only expected to act in accordance with accounting standards and management control, but they are also more and more forced to prove their impact (Edwards 2011; Moxham and Boaden 2007; Olsen and Galimidi 2009). Philanthropy is no longer based solely on trust and compliance with an NPOs’ mission; it has been increasingly presented as social investment or impact investment (Nicholls 2008). Philanthropists apply Social Return on Investment (SROI) as their major rationale (Lingane and Olsen 2004), thus forcing NPOs more and more to apply corresponding managerialist methods.

Opportunities and threats of managerialism are widely obvious: On one hand, NPOs can strengthen their efficiency, effectiveness, and legitimacy by wisely applying management methods and approaches, thus helping them to reach their targets even in times of scarce resources. On the other hand, managerialized NPOs

have to be permanently aware of the danger of mission drift (e.g., Jones 2007). Advocacy and community building, in particular, might take a back seat to service provision which fits much better into managerialist logics.

Nonprofits and the Government—More Work for Less?

In many European countries, the public sector has traditionally been the most important partner for nonprofits; most probably this will not change in the near future. Especially in corporatist nonprofit regimes, e.g., in the German-speaking countries, the public sector is the most important funder for nonprofits (Zimmer et al. 2013). Thus, developments of the public sector are directly affecting the nonprofit sector. Two trends are crucial: First, concepts of public management that focus on service contracts instead of subsidies; second, empty coffers, which is especially true for the regional and the municipal level in Germany and Austria (e.g., Biwald et al. 2010; Dahlke 2010). Zimmer often emphasized the ambivalent relationship of many nonprofits with public authorities (Frantz and Zimmer 2002) especially in the context of economization (Nährlich and Zimmer 2000), increasing public debt and fiscal constraints (Henriksen et al. 2012). One of her conclusions is that nonprofits must decide whether to continue to act in the spirit of corporatism and semipublic service provision or define a new role (Zimmer 1999).

Service Contracts Instead of Subsidies

In the public sector, contracting out has been one of the megatrends during the last decades. This has led to a delegation of formerly public services to private organizations on the basis of target agreements and service contracts. Compared to the former regime of subsidies, this not only brings specific challenges for management, but has also political effects, coupling nonprofits tighter to targets of public authorities than to needs of clients and members (Smith and Lipsky 1993).

Nonprofits will also adapt to the culture and structure of public organizations, as they have to comply with processes of public authorities, e.g., in budgeting or accounting (Smith and Lipsky 1993, p. 88). Target agreements lead to more administrative work and consequently to NPOs expanding to handle the additional workload. Furthermore, contracting out often leads to crowding out of volunteers, as bureaucratic processes become more demanding, legal or moral responsibilities more severe, and the tasks cannot be accomplished by volunteers any more—a paradox, as government often aims at saving money by employing more unpaid staff. In tenders, nonprofits may suffer from public organizations' deficient capabilities to determine the best value (Alexander et al. 1999).

Nonprofits are more and more seen as agents of government. Especially in situations with diverging goals, this is problematic for nonprofits' strategic position (van Slyke and Roch 2004). We assume that competition will be implemented even more

radically: Social services are increasingly financed by grants given to clients instead of organizations. Given the inadequate sovereignty of many clients, this competition must be supplemented by general rules to guarantee clients' interests (Epple and Romano 1998; Levin 1998). Also, developments of the European competition law might lead to further liberalization and increased competition between for profit and nonprofit organizations and thus might have even more severe effects on the sector (Herzig 2006).

Effects of the Financial Crisis

Financial shortages have been challenging the nonprofit sector for the last decade, and we expect that the situation will worsen in the future. Respondents regard public austerity as the crucial bottleneck for the development and viability of NPOs. The trend over the last years was evident: A rising demand for the services of nonprofits was accompanied by invariant or even decreasing public funding. Moreover, arrangements have become more short term and therefore less reliable. Thus, the tradition of corporatist cooperation between welfare states and nonprofits has been shaken (Rauschenbach and Zimmer 2011, p. 21). This is also due to the deregulation and privatization of social tasks, the "worldwide shift toward market solutions for solving public problems" (Wijkström and Zimmer 2011, p. 10). Due to the financial crises, public expenditures have been rather directed to subsidize the financial sector than to social policies (Fellner and Grisold 2010). Consequently, the GDP share of social expenditures was stable or even reduced in Germany, Austria, and many other countries (OECD 2010). Generally, welfare security and solidarity has lost importance in favor of individual responsibility (Penz 2010).

So far there are no reliable macro-data on financial cuts, but different findings all point in the same direction. In the UK, parts of the nonprofit sector suffered severe cuts in public sector sourcing that led to a drastic downsizing of the sector (Taylor et al. 2012). Evidence from Austria reveals that nonprofits are affected very differently, depending on size, region, field, and relationship to public authorities. In Germany, public support has also declined during the last decade in the fields of public infrastructure, services for the general public, social security, and welfare (Jirku 2011). Rauschenbach and Zimmer (2011) trace this development for the fields of social services, culture, and sports. Despite a lack of reliable data, we may state that public funding for nonprofits does not meet the increasing public demand for nonprofits' services any more. The share of public money which goes into the funding of pension systems and health care has increased dramatically due to demographic changes and technological advances. If overall public expenditure into social welfare remains stable, the share that remains for nonprofits in other fields (e.g., for the unemployed, the homeless, the handicapped) will shrink.

In this situation, the role of nonprofits as actors of civil society, as advocates of minorities, and somewhat as a utopian *counter draft* is endangered (Simsa 2013; Zimmer and Priller 2004, p. 11). Quite contrary to political rhetoric which still

praises civil engagement in its soapbox oratory, civil society is in danger of losing its political, critical, and innovative character and instead might become an agent for inexpensive service provision (Leif 2011).

Blurring Boundaries: The End of the Third Sector as We Know It?

Do the boundaries between the public, the nonprofit, and the business sectors really blur (Park 2008)? Questions like this, e.g., those addressing hybrid organizations (Brandsen et al. 2005; Cooney 2006; Evers 2005; Evers and Laville 2004), have become quite prominent within third-sector research. The third sector has always been characterized by fragmentation, fuzziness, and constant change. Meanwhile, the boundaries of community, market, and state are even more difficult to define. The fringes of the traditional sectors attract more interest than the core and are assumed to be the hatcheries and testing fields of social innovation: Social entrepreneurship, social businesses, venture philanthropy, and public–private partnerships (Zimmer 1997). These “hybrid” actors conceive their activities as investments in society that have to yield a financial and a social return on investment (Nicholls 2008; Dees 2001).

There are developments in all sectors which point toward convergence: First, NPOs are becoming more and more managerialized as discussed above. Second, public authorities are applying methods of new public management, e.g., tendering and management buyout (MBO), thus replacing political and bureaucratic governance through market-like processes. Third, business organizations are finding themselves under pressure of expanded accountability and are challenged by the so-called triple bottom line. Investors and customers not only look at their economic performance and at the benefits of their products and services, but also appreciate social and ecological impact. Corporate social responsibility and sustainable development have become issues for organizations in all sectors (Wadham 2009), and business companies have not only increased their donations to NPOs (Webb 1996), but are also engaged as venture philanthropists, though their impact on civil society still must not be overestimated (Edwards 2008, 2011).

Furthermore, competition between NPOs and business organizations accelerates. Even in Europe, deregulation efforts have reached the social welfare field, thus encouraging more and more forprofits to offer social services. For the USA, Dees and Battle Anderson (2003) have described this phenomenon much earlier: On small and large scales, in local communities and across the country, forprofits and nonprofits move into new territories and explore uncharted waters. While this kind of sector bending is not entirely new, it is certainly growing in importance. Nonprofits and forprofits increasingly act as competitors, as forprofits are playing a greater role in arenas formerly dominated by nonprofit and public-sector organizations. They cooperate as contractors, when forprofits are contracting with nonprofits for both

“nonprofit-like” goods and services as well as goods and services that were traditionally provided by other businesses (e.g., universities and business companies in research, insurance companies with nonprofits to provide elderly care). They act as collaborators, when nonprofits and forprofits are entering into strategic partnerships and joint ventures that aim to be mutually beneficial to both parties.

Not only do the boundaries between sectors blur, but also the distinction between welfare and nonprofit regimes (Esping-Andersen 1990; Gallie and Paugam 2000; Neumayr et al. 2009) vanishes gradually. Henriksen et al. (2012) argue that this trend toward convergence is facilitated by the widespread use of new public management ideas and by adopting market solutions to public problems. In a recent study of social services and health care systems in Denmark, the USA and Germany, they show that trends of convergence can be identified across the three cases.

Boundaries are also blurring in discourse. There is a “global expansion of moral communication” (Weber 2011, p. 369), as the value-driven discourse of social responsibility which has been monopolized by the public and the nonprofit sector for a long time is subsequently conquered by business. Stehr (2007) claims that morality and ethics have entered markets, as business organizations have to deal with consumers which are eco-conscious and socially minded.

New Demands

In recent years, many policy fields in which nonprofits are substantially engaged have gained importance, e.g., sustainability, ageing and care, migration, health, social inequality, youth, and education. Demographic changes will further accelerate these developments (European Commission 2012).

Generally, these trends probably will lead to further specialization and decentralization of nonprofits. Big organizations that offer many different services might not be competitive with smaller and more specialized NPOs, which react more flexibly to new demands. It remains open, whether multifunctional organizations comprising service, advocacy and community building will be viable in the future.

Two general trends are evident: First, in the field of social services, demands of clients for quality will further increase (Simsa et al. 2004). Clients and their relatives expect professional services, tailored to their needs. Second, as a consequence of growing social inequality and structural unemployment as well as reduced public infrastructure, new demands will arise (Maaser 2009, p. 216). In any case, nonprofits will not run out of work.

Expansion of nonprofits’ tasks will also result from further internationalization. Within the European Union (EU), the extension of NPOs’ activities across national borders is an appropriate answer to the demands of multilevel governance (e.g., Eising 2004): The formation of European umbrella organizations and various collaborative efforts of nonprofits within projects initiated by the European Commission are only two aspects of this development (see Brandsen and Sittermann in this volume).

Civic Engagement: More Diversity, but Less Stability and Loyalty

Civic engagement has become multifaceted. Traditional forms comprise volunteering, donating money, membership, and various forms of political engagement (voting, signing petitions, demonstrating, etc.). This spectrum has been enriched in at least three dimensions:

- Completely new forms of engagement, e.g., political consumerism (Strømsnes 2009) or the widespread participation in creating knowledge bases like Wikipedia (Gears 2012) or weblogs;
- modifications of traditional behaviors, e.g., project-based volunteering and volunteering during specific biographical periods (Hustinx 2010);
- the strong impact of Web 2.0, e.g., on the emergence and growth of social movements like the Occupy Movement and Arab Spring (Berkhout and Jansen 2012; Kan 2012), and also on the acquisition of new supporters (e.g., Fine 2009) and even on the success in elections (Graff 2009).

The respondents in our study assume that Web 2.0 and social networks in the Web will even increase their impact on the third sector, especially for younger cohorts. Practitioners already make use of Web 2.0's various applications like social networks, Twitter, weblogs, podcasts, and platforms for discussions and consultations. They can be applied for online fundraising (crowd funding; Ordanini et al. 2011), maintaining relations with volunteers and supporters, mobilizing supporters, or generally for knowledge and information exchange (Matschk et al. 2012). These tools fit well with the culture of many nonprofits—openness, democracy, and innovation—facilitate network building, and strengthen social capital. Beyond this, two fundamental changes in civic engagement will affect nonprofits: First are quantitative shifts, mainly due to urbanization and the lower engagement rates in cities compared to rural areas (e.g., for Austria, Rameder and More-Hollerweger 2009). Second is a basic shift in individuals' motivation to volunteer which is *ante portas*. Civic engagement and volunteering has become more project oriented and increasingly linked to individual goals and values. Organizational commitment and loyalty decline, and now forms of episodic volunteering become more important (Hustinx 2010, p. 236).

Conclusion

At the beginning of this century, Priller and Zimmer (2001, p. 11) argued that fundamental changes in society would lead to a new role for NPOs, thus entailing the chance of becoming more active in creating their relevant contexts. As one indicator for this assessment they saw the increase of both grassroots initiatives and international NGOs. A decade later the situation is even more open, if not less optimistic. Nonprofits have become a widely acknowledged part of society, yet the challenges ahead are significant.

On one hand, we have seen a significant increase of management capacity in the sector. NPOs and their managers are working professionally, in terms of business methods as well as social competence, the design of organizational structures, the management of diversity, contradictions, flexibility, and external relationships. Commercialization and business management have arrived in the sector. As a consequence, balancing between mission and money seems to have changed: While some decades ago, management competencies were claimed to increase nonprofits' efficiency and impact, it is now the specific values culture and the mission of civil society organizations that are jeopardized. Maybe a shift of balance between "doing the right things" and "doing things right" has taken place in the last decade.

On the other hand, the third sector seems to be at a turning point. The economic crisis has shown that the dominance of market values is not even rational economically. Increasing social and economic disparity might lead to political radicalization. Thus, today's civil society might actually be facing a situation comparable to the aftermath of the first industrial revolution in the nineteenth century. At this time, tremendous social problems led to the formation of the first innovative NPOs. Today, such a turning point could be characterized for the whole sector as a crossroads of two alternate futures: One, nonprofits will be further functionalized in accordance with neoliberal economic and social politics. In this understanding, their core function is to supply services which are not supplied by market or government. Then, fewer resources will be available for advocacy and community building. In this case, associations as a specific form of social action participation and integration will indeed lose efficacy and attractiveness. Two, this turning point could lead to a reinvention of civil society as a courageous and innovative force. At the moment, losers of the crisis tend toward extremist and populist parties or to political passivity, but the situation could also be taken as impetus for reinventing civil society as an advocate for social development and an attractor for disappointed citizens. Thus, by the way of strong and forward-thinking cooperation for solidarity, sustainability, and social justice the third sector could contribute significantly to the development of society by proving that economic and social rationalities need not be contradictory. In this case, associations and their organizational descendants will gain importance for active citizenship, constructive criticism, and the elaboration of visions.

Annette Zimmer argued at the end of the last century, that "there is a vital need for a new role and more specifically for a new identity for the nonprofit sector" and that the sector "must define a new role of nonprofit activism that is rooted in the tradition of social movements and societal change" (Zimmer 1999, p. 47). Today, this plea is even more striking than 14 years ago.

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Chapter 18

Patterns in Volunteer Management of German Youth Organizations

Michael Vilain

Abstract Successful youth organizations have developed specific forms of volunteer management that are not in line with many management concepts currently found in literature and consultant practice. One problem with these concepts seems to be the transfer of for-profit management rationality to non-profit organizations without adapting or even discussing the underlying assumptions. This chapter shows some results of a 2-year study that the IZGS jointly carried out with Bertelsmann Foundation thereby discovering different logics of management different to that of a corporation. Next to other factors of influence these on the one hand result from the characteristics of an organization's goals (goal logic), on the other hand, there is considerable influence on management resulting from decision-making, namely from the question of who is exercising power in which way and how decisions are taken (steering logic). As a result volunteer management might be seen from a new angle allowing predictions as to which management concepts, tools or instrument might match a youth organizations needs and which might not.

Keywords Non-profit management • Volunteering • Youth organizations • Germany

For some time now, there has been a dilemma with both theoretical analysis as well as practical management of non-profit organizations (NPOs). On the one hand, the need for management expertise in NPOs has risen enormously due to the increasing necessity for professionalism, on the other hand, there is—at least in Germany—a considerable deficit in terms of knowledge and research with respect to management tools as well as their effects (Zimmer and Vilain 2005, pp. 120 f., 128 ff.). Consequently, there is an abundance of study courses, scientific publications and consultants which focus on the management of, e.g. social organizations, sports clubs or environmental associations. If one were to take a closer look at them, however, the basis is almost always formed by business tools used in for-profit organizations that frequently are transferred uncritically or simply relabelled to correspond

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to the new work fields in question. This often leads to a schematic understanding of management on the basis of normative recommendations.¹ Underlying assumptions are mostly not mentioned.

Approvingly or unconsciously, this suggests that NPOs work analogously to corporations.

However, conditions differ considerably. In corporations, power structures clearly defined through ownership dominantly create centralist management models. These allow for management to choose and implement tools in a top-down manner. Staffs usually consist of full or part-time employees which are predominantly seen as subordinates on an operative level. The dominating paradigm as reflected in quality management, marketing and finance is that of a customer–producer relationship.

On the opposite side the majority of German NPOs have democratic, federal and subsidiary structures which limit or preclude centralist models. Most boards and executives still are being elected and many of them are volunteers. On closer inspection even the customer paradigm seems absurd facing the complex stakeholder configurations of nonprofits, the exertion of responsibilities of public administration and their responsibility for wards, victims or purchasers of highly subsidised services. Through the Johns Hopkins study we learned that German NPOs are neither predominantly financed via the sale of goods and services on a “market” nor from donations, but instead through government funding which is subjected to a rather political rationality of action (Salamon and Anheier 1992a, b; moreover, especially for Germany: Priller and Zimmer 1997).

However, focussing on the differences between corporations and NPOs does not constitute a positive definition nor does it promote the development of non-profit management. This would in fact require more empirical research on management, which is able to link the typical and unique structure of NPO to its concepts and operational methods of management.² This type of research forms an important pillar of the Institut für Zukunftsfragen in der Gesundheits-und Sozialwirtschaft (IZGS) (The Institute for Future Studies in Health and Social Management) at the Protestant University of Applied Sciences Darmstadt. Within the last years, the IZGS conducted various empirical studies addressing management issues in German NPOs also evaluating management methods and tools—one of which is a research project jointly carried out with the Bertelsmann Foundation from 2011 to 2013. The main issue was the identification of different practices in volunteer management in well-performing youth organizations, allowing conclusions with regard to their prevailing understanding of management.³ Some of the results will be presented below for the first time.

¹ The critique of the normative direction of large components of management instruction is of course not new and not limited to non-profit management. Cf., for example, Mintzberg (2005).

² Cf. The demand for more extensive research Zimmer and Vilain (2005, p. 130).

³ The results are to be published in the following publications: Vilain (2014) and Vilain and Meyer (2014).

Volunteer Management in Youth Organizations: The Study Approach

Volunteer work is an essential and exclusive field of non-profit management (Zimmer and Eckhard 2004, p. 87 f.). Here, as well as in many other fields of non-profit management, a massive professionalisation has been called for in recent years.⁴ As a result, new management tools and concepts, many originating from the UK and the USA and bearing typical elements of for-profit management rationality, found their way to associations in Germany (For example McCurley and Lynch 1998; Biedermann 1999; Akademie für Ehrenamtlichkeit Germany 2008). In line with this, they as an example comprise rational decision-making, cybernetic feedback control systems (e.g. a cycle consisting from target setting, planning, implementation, control) as well as a centralistic, top-down decision structure. These concepts referred to as “volunteer management” are exceptionally normative and were therefore criticised as “managerialism” (for example Hansen 2011; Bode et al. 2009, p. 133 ff.) and as being far away from reality in NPOs in general and in youth organizations in particular (Sturzenhecker 2009). In order for the investigation not to be determined by the choice of one of these mind-sets at the outset, a series of provisions were met. We deliberately chose the term “Jugendorganisation” (“youth organization”) as it is broad and not frequently used in the current German scientific debate.⁵ Thus, the analysis was not hindered by prejudices that resonate with terms used more frequently such as association, syndicate, NPO, social enterprise, etc. On the other hand, we narrowed the angle by explicitly excluding initiatives and projects which had no formal organizational structure.⁶ With regard to “management” we, moreover, consciously chose a very open definition.⁷ In the scope of a multilevel

⁴ Most recently in the Ministry for Family Affairs’ report on social work. Cf. Federal Ministry for Families, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (2013, p. 36).

⁵ Youth organisations are thus modelled after the criteria from the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project. Organisations with a minimum of formal organisation which are private, that is, non-government organisations which prohibit the distribution of any surplus to members or owners, which have a minimum of self-administration and decision-making autonomy, and which have a high volunteer component. Furthermore, they are identified by the following criteria specific to the study: the activities of a youth organisation take place on the basis of the German constitution and children and young people (5–27) are the target group of the organisation. Cf. (Vilain and Meyer 2014).

⁶ The focus on formally organised structures is justified with reference to the findings of the last volunteer survey which continued to award an outstanding role to organisationally arranged youth work, in contrast to projects and initiatives and thus made the 1980s and 1990s suspected shift from these traditional structures to informalising volunteer work appear questionable. Cf. Picot (2012, p. 132 ff.).

⁷ According to this, volunteer management was present if target-oriented organisation and management in the practices of the organisations studied was detected with respect to volunteer work. This means: it can also be defined as volunteer management if no theoretical, established, formalised management concept is available. In this way, the perspective of youth organisations is opened up to a rich diversity of types of management, operational methods, and types and cultures of volunteer management.

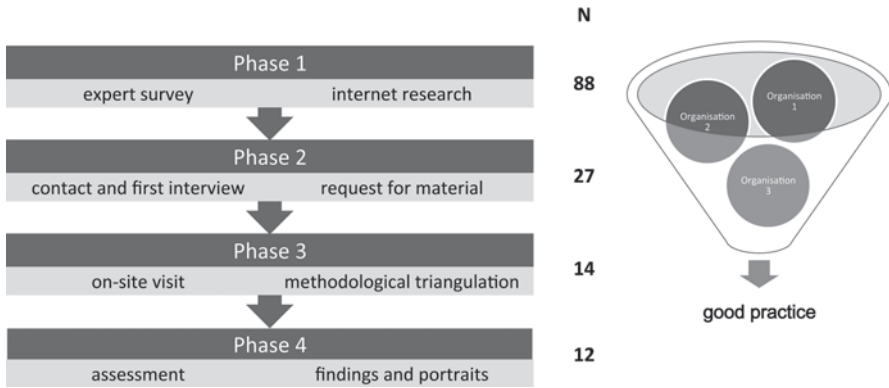


Fig. 18.1 Structure of the “volunteer management in youth organizations” study. (Own compilation)

procedure,⁸ criteria were gained to record and analyse management and at the same time to identify the organizations to be studied (see Fig. 18.1).

First, more than 600 experts including scientists, ministry representatives, youth welfare officials, officials from “Landesjugendringen” and “Bundesjugendring”, authors, educators, practitioners from youth organizations, volunteer agencies, etc. were surveyed with regard to their understanding of volunteer management. Finally, they were asked to name exceptional youth organizations. The response rate to this survey was slightly higher than 15% with around 100 surveys and led to a suggestion of 88 organizations.⁹ Out of these recommendations, 12 good examples were chosen through a four-phased selection process on the basis of Internet and media research, material analysis and telephone interviews. They included the following youth organizations (the respective field in square brackets): BUNDjugend Berlin (environment), Cactus Junges Theater (culture), DLRG-Jugend Hessen (aid organization), Gemeindejugendwerk (GJW) (church), Greenpeace Youth (environment), Internationale Jugendgemeinschaftsdienste Hildesheim (ijgd) (international, peace organization), JFV Burghaun (sports), Jugendfeuerwehr Hamburg (aid organization/fire department), Jugendrotkreuz Landesverband Niedersachsen (JRK) (aid organization/red cross), Royal Rangers (scouts), Servicestelle Jugendbeteiligung (politics/youth work) and Sozialistische Jugend Deutschlands–Die Falken

⁸ The study began with a comprehensive survey of experts which served the development of the design of the study as well as gaining possible suggestions for good practices in youth organisations. Following this a criteria-led selection of the suggested organizations was undertaken step by step building intensive Internet research and evaluating freely available materials as well as external support. The remaining youth organizations underwent intensive screening, including an analysis of their environment, media research, and an on-site visit before they were then profiled.

⁹ The comparative low response can particularly be traced back to the low answer rate of volunteer agencies that have almost completely received the survey. It emerged from individual responses that they did not see themselves in the position to name good, local youth organisations, nor provide information on questions of volunteer management.

(politics). Two scientists from the IZGS then spent 1–2 days at each youth organization and interviewed both those in charge as well as the young people who volunteered there. The characteristics of volunteer youth work in every organization were studied on the basis of a set of analysis criteria focussing on general conditions, mission, culture and working practices. Each organization was then profiled as a single case study, allowing for comparison through an identical structure of the portraits (Vilain 2014).

With respect to qualitative German volunteer management research, this study therefore bridges an important gap between numerous individual case studies with little ability to generalise on the one hand and theoretical considerations with a low empirical basis on the other (Behr et al. 2002, p. 175).

The Results: Diverse and Exceptionally Successful—Management in Youth Organizations

Over the course of the study, it quickly became clear that the practice of volunteer work in youth organizations could barely be recorded in a sensible manner with most volunteer management concepts known from theory and management consulting. While there are valuable suggestions and tips for creating a volunteer management, they are far away from being universally valid. The results show that youth organizations develop clear goal-oriented forms of youth work which vary according to their missions and surroundings and, therefore, produce an individual culture and steering logic. These are not necessarily compatible with the implicit assumptions of those common management concepts mentioned above. Yet, which factors account for differences in volunteer management? Already the organizational framework seems to provide an important explanatory contribution to the understanding of different forms of volunteer management found in the study. These include:

- The legal form (a dependent part of the related adult organization¹⁰ or an independent one, e.g. as an association, a limited liability corporation, or a foundation)
- The stakeholder configuration (i.e. concentrated, diffuse, a network-like structure)
- The financial structure (i.e. a narrow or broad mix, high or low dependency on a single resource provider)
- The vertical organizational structure (i.e. the number of organizational levels and their relationship, e.g. centralised, decentralised, federal, subsidiary) and
- The horizontal organizational structure (i.e. the degree of specialisation, division of labour and task structure on each level)

¹⁰ We used the term “adult organization” to indicate the relationship between an organization predominantly run by adults and a dependent part of such an organization run by young people (“youth organization”). For example the Red Cross Youth is legally dependent but organizationally predominantly independent of the Red Cross.

However, the organizational framework only forms the setting for volunteer management. It clearly influences the management but does not singularly account for diversity of the management observed in the youth organizations. Within the 2 years of research additional “logics of action” could be determined that initially appeared to be less tangible and did not occur until an intensive analysis of the material as well as interviews and observations were carried out. On the one hand, it involves influences on management that result from the characteristics of an organizations goals (goal logic), on the other hand, there is considerable influence on management resulting from decision-making, namely from the question of who is exercising power in which way and how decisions are taken (steering logic). In retrospect, both dimensions appear to be obvious. What an organization strives for and how it tries to achieve it are of course central questions. They determine volunteer management in youth organizations to a high degree and can help to understand why there cannot be “one” correct volunteer management concept. Contemporaneously, they supply information on a different understanding of management in NPOs and starting points for the development of a management style suitable for an organization.

Goal Logic: Task-Based, Value-Based and Issue-Based Youth Organizations

Organizations in general can be described as goal-oriented socio-technical systems.¹¹ This therefore also applies to NPOs in general and youth organizations in particular. The goals of a youth organization are mostly comprised of values, issues and tasks.¹² However, every organization prioritises these differently. During the comparative phase of our study, it became clear that it is the difference in these prioritisations that contribute to explaining similarities and differences in volunteer management. As all three aspects are always in effect simultaneously, we cannot speak of three independent goal dimensions. In fact, we are always dealing with a mix, with one dimension being more prominent than the others. Many aid organizations, for example, focus on certain pragmatic tasks. As such, these tasks dominate their management. Though they are also built on values and accompanied by certain issues these rather serve to develop, concretise or limit the main tasks (task based). For many religious and political organizations on the other hand, the promotion of values is clearly the central focus. All issues and tasks are subjected to this objective (value based). In addition, political and environmental youth organizations—for example—centre on certain issues (e.g. children’s rights, anti-fascism or climate

¹¹ Cf. the relationships between mission, target reference, strategy and management (Vilain 2001).

¹² The goal dimensions found show similarities to a classification suggested by Dux. She distinguishes between subject- or task-related associations and ideological oriented associations, as well as associations with a “specific core activity (primarily related to a special purpose or thing)”, and associations with multiple changing activities (referring to the whole of man). Cf. Dux (2000, p. 102 f.).

protection). Though these are usually based on specific values as well, the issues shape the characteristics of the work within the organization. The tasks that are derived from the requirements of the issues on the basis of concrete values and ultimately serve to achieve the goals defined in this context (issue based). The three identified orientations can be described as follows:

Task Orientation

An essential function of NPOs consists of fulfilling concrete social, athletic, cultural or political tasks. These can include: lifesaving (e.g. DRK or DLRG), organising of protests (e.g. Greenpeace) or public performances such as cultural or athletic events (e.g. a theatre or a sports club). The priority here is always on implementing concrete measures as to fulfil the assigned tasks. Moreover, despite these usually being derived from a vision coupled with the goals of the youth organization, the organization at its core is not primarily about conveying values or achieving certain targeted goals on an issue. Along with this task orientation goes a clear sense of pragmatism and efficiency. As tasks usually stay the same over time and are recurring, the organization benefits from formalising and standardising them. There is a distinct feeling for the necessity of process controls and steering instruments that result in an increased acceptance of corresponding management concepts. Full-time employees and volunteers are usually experts in their field and trained to fit the tasks in question. This is achieved by gradual training systems, allowing for extensive “volunteer careers” in bigger organizations. Furthermore, in the event that accomplishing the tasks requires a team effort, the ideals of the organization are shaped in the direction of reliability and camaraderie. The Red Cross Youth, the DLRG-Jugend, the Royal Rangers and the Hamburg Youth Fire Fighters were rather task based in this study.

Value Orientation

Convincing people of one’s own beliefs and values or at least familiarising others with them has always been an important driving force for NPOs. In order for this to be successful, all operations have to be reflective of these values. In line with this, they need to be internalised and must take expression in the activities of the organization. Therefore, socialisation and development of young people is accorded a high degree of importance. Many value-oriented organizations are based on specific milieus. They then easily attract young people socialised in these milieus (e.g. a religious community). Thus, without such ties to a specific milieu the recruiting process for volunteers is more difficult and the socialisation process with regard to the core values has then to be provided by the organization itself. This, furthermore, affects the training systems to a large extent. Many of the training

provisions give space to self-experience as well as personal development and offer possibilities for exchanging ideas and discussion. Managers are moral role models and are therefore expected to embody such moral concepts in their own lives. For this reason, conformance of values can be of higher significance than professional qualifications for a career in these organizations. Working procedures do not only aim at professional accomplishment of tasks but have to be reflected and created according to the organizations values. Issues and tasks are subjects of discussion: What are we doing? Why are we doing it? How are we doing it? Everything has to be justifiable in view of the underlying value concepts. Many activities are not measured by their obvious results. It seems more important that they are carried out in the right way and thus offer the opportunity to promote the organizations values. Accordingly, the language of these organizations is closely related to its moral basis and origins (e.g. Socialist philosophy, Koran or Bible). Thus, for example, in Christian youth organizations suitable Bible passages are often given as evidence for the meaningfulness of specific issues and tasks. With respect to volunteer management, formalistic procedures or management concepts are treated with care as they may embody a philosophy that conflicts with their values. Consequently, a socialist youth organization does not want to use certain capitalist management methods. Moreover, many forms of recognition beyond personal encouragement are often viewed critically because volunteering in value-based organizations is understood as an expression of lived conviction. Ultimately, people should not be working to receive a reward but rather for any sort of justified idealism. There is also an extensive tendency to see structural problems of an organization through an educational or theological lens. The atmosphere tends to be appreciative and reflective. In particular the Gemeindejugendwerk der evangelischen Freikirchen, the Sozialistische Jugend Deutschlands—die Falken and also the Royal Rangers and the BUNDjugend were strongly value-based organizations.¹³

Issue Orientation

The main starting points of issue-based organizations are grievances or deficits in society or politics which trigger a desire for change. Youth organizations can only deal with one issue or multiple ones with latter hampering a clear positioning. Though all issues can certainly be seen from a particular world view and have underlying values, issue-based organizations are mainly not concerned with convincing other people of their values. Instead, they try to realise certain targets promoting the issue at hand. The core issues of the organization, therefore, have to be translated into activities which are frequently organized as campaigns. Young people are quite free in doing so and can work in different areas here. Usually,

¹³ The goal dimensions occur rarely in pure form in the organisations studied. Duplicate results are therefore characteristic for the proposed model of the target method given the flowing transitions between the three dimensions.

they are organized into loose working groups or small teams. Participation is made up of individual activities within campaigns with a high commitment but little required obligation. While some of the youth organizations predefine their issues to a large extent (e.g. Greenpeace Youth) others allow their young volunteers to choose and organize them on their own (e.g. BUNDjugend). Thus, there are—as is the case with Greenpeace for example—a few internationally defined issues and campaigns (e.g. protecting the oceans) which then have to be implemented in national campaigns. The volunteer “Jaggies” can take part in organizing these campaigns in their region. Alternatively, they can develop their own ideas for awareness-raising activities within the scope of given issues. Typical forms of coordinating activities are discussion forums and different kinds of events. The training system of these youth organizations predominantly focuses on young peoples’ communication skills, either to provide young activists with the necessary expert knowledge or to improve their personal skills via rhetoric and debate classes, theatre training or writing classes. They also frequently learn about different forms of protest and tools of public relations. Volunteer management is characterised by discursivity and discussion as well as by the widespread absence of hierarchies.¹⁴ Additionally, seeing as these organizations do not work with concepts of order and obedience, other people must be continuously convinced of ideas or concepts. Thus, those individuals who can be convincing and motivating have influence. Furthermore, formalised management procedures are sometimes experienced as limiting freedom of thought and as a “discourse prison”, and thus are often rejected. In contrast, instruments related to media work and public relations as well as group moderation and interest aggregation are commonly implemented and further developed. Core management procedures (e.g. finance, accounting, legal transactions and personnel management) are frequently sourced out to adults and full-time employees to the exclusion of young people. Greenpeace Jugend, die Falken and BUNDjugend are organizations with a clear issue orientation.

All three dimensions thus affect the management of NPOs (see Table 18.1). Therefore, they do not exclude one another. In contrast, they simultaneously span three vectors of a multidimensional space within which the goal logic of an organization and the resulting consequences for the volunteer management is derived.

For example the comparison between Greenpeace Youth and BUNDjugend displays a great many differences in volunteer management despite the fact that both work in the environmental field and have similar target groups. A considerable amount of self-organization is characteristic for both organizations. However, Greenpeace defines its issues more narrowly and tries to reach its targets as efficiently as possible, whereas the BUNDjugend allows its youths to address issues of their own and wants them to learn about environmental sustainability in general and specifically reflect on their own consumer behaviour. Greenpeace Youth is an exciting example of a combination of issue and task orientation according to this interpretation. Thus, for example, the campaign skills, thematic competence and

¹⁴ This at least is true for the youth organizations, whereas the related adult organizations sometimes do have clear hierarchies.

Table 18.1 Manifestations of goal logic in youth organizations. (Own compilation)

	Task-oriented	Issue-oriented	Value-oriented
Target criteria	Effectiveness and efficiency of completing tasks	Promoting issues and issue-related goals (effectiveness)	Create the “right” attitude (effectiveness hardly determinable)
Target structure	High degree of concretisation	Medium degree of concretisation	Medium to low degree of concretisation
Target group definition	Broad willingness to complete tasks	Narrow willingness to identification with issues	Narrow willingness and ability to live shared values
Requirements for volunteers	Assigned to the logic of the task/ small degree of self-determination	Ability to discuss and debate and work autonomously/ high degree of self-determination	Assigned to a value consensus/self-determined within the given value framework
Training system	Mainly professional and task related	Mainly related to communication and social skills, but also content	Personal development on basis of values
Group experience	Team spirit/ camaraderie	Functional/interest group	Community of values/ milieu

discursivity of an issue-based organization are combined with the efficiency and determination of a task-based organization. In contrast, the BUNDjugend ties its issues more strongly to a set of values and thus has a more open-management concept that moderates and enables the development of issues. The goal is not so much a certain medial effect with respect to a predefined issue but rather to bring young people into contact with the values of the organization. The issues that are addressed stay open and can be continuously renegotiated by the young people.

Steering Logic: Person-Oriented, Structure-Oriented and Culture-Oriented Youth Organizations

Nevertheless, youth organizations do not only differ with respect to their goal logic. In line with this, we are able to observe that forms and structures of decision-making vary to some degree. With “decision-making” we refer to preferred types of the inner-organizational interest aggregation, to the decision-making process and also to patterns of justifying and defending decisions once taken. All together, they shape the “how” of the work in youth organizations to a considerable degree. Three different models were determined:

- a. Person orientation
- b. Structure orientation
- c. Culture orientation

In principle, every youth organization includes all three dimensions. An organizational culture thus always exists independent of whether or not it is reflected or created consciously. Just as personality is a main feature of socio-technical systems, so is structure in one form or another. The difference comes when one of these dimensions takes on a dominant position in the decision process, as is the case with goal logic.

Person-Oriented Management in Youth Organizations

An organization is person oriented when a single person or a group of people possess a dominating level of influence on everything within the organization. Even more so, the organization would be impaired or not even exist without their effect. This might be an individual person (e.g. the founder of an organization) or a group of enthusiastic and charismatic people, whether they are young people or adults, who are often linked to one another by friendship. Typical indicators for this are a lack of decision-making bodies or their insignificance coupled with a rather low level of formalisation. The culture of the organization is clearly shaped by the person or people in charge and the reference point for the behaviour of the young people is the anticipated or experienced reaction of them: “Would he or she find that right/good/appropriate?”

Though our study only included one youth organization of this type (Jugendtheater Cactus), the research carried out prior indicated there were many more. They are often found in religious contexts in which individuals demand a prerogative of interpretation or have a particularly charismatic manner—e.g. religious congregations and sects, and also in Mosque associations and in some Islamic youth organizations or in certain political and cultural organizations. However, this steering logic appears to only have a limited range as clear references can be seen to the size and the phases in the life cycle of an organization. Thus, it appears to occur in small and/or new organizations. The Jugendtheater Cactus displays this sort of person-oriented steering logic with mainly one woman at its head, who oversees and takes care of nearly everything: stakeholder management, strategy, financing, decisions about plays, their content as well as aesthetics all intersect at this point. Although there are plenty of discussions and possibilities of participation for the young actors, the final decisions are always in the hand of mainly one person. In addition, there is not much in terms of formalised structure such as committees or electoral procedures. As such, the quality of the management depends on the abilities and skills of the person in charge. Consequently, this sort of organization can be highly flexible and integrative. However, over the long term, it may also be susceptible to instability. Problems occur easily: decision-makers are overworked, there are transition problems when the central figures leave or conflicts with groups within or outside of the organization arise due to a lack of formal regulation mechanisms. Volunteer management often occurs intuitively. The high authenticity and ability to be receptive to individuals is very appealing to young people. However, this always depends

on the individual circumstances and qualities of the people in managing positions. As we have seen with Jugendtheater Cactus, person-oriented organizations have a high potential to reach young people with a low level of education or difficult family backgrounds as well as young migrants. The lack of formal rules and standardised systems is especially attractive to young people who reject them or are in a tense situation with rules and procedures (e.g. at school or at home). However, this in no way means that such organizations have no rules. They merely tend to be defined and interpreted by the persons in charge to a larger extent. In the end here, too, considerable potential for conflict with young people can arise. Acknowledgement of volunteer commitment is given via personal communication rather than via formalised acknowledgements such as medals, badges or coupons. These are seen as problematic as they can be experienced as devaluation or impairment of the personal relationship between young people and the leading persons. In contrast, seriously minded compliments or individually chosen gifts provide the opportunity for praise and acknowledgement as long as they are recognized as being authentic.

Structure-Oriented Management in Youth Organizations

Contrastingly, the structure-oriented youth organization appears to be the exact opposite. Indicators of these organizations are often extensive formal systems: guidelines, decision-making and supervisory bodies, delegate systems, written role and operational instructions, statutes and rules, etc. Decisions are rarely made by one person alone. The reference point for decisions and procedures is the anticipated or experienced reaction of the whole system: “what do the statutes and precedential decisions say and how would this or that committee react?” In addition, even if important individuals leave the organization, structurally oriented organizations are generally not destabilised. Furthermore, central values and standards can be successful due to the comprehensive committee work and “codifying” to comprehensively integrate stakeholders (e.g. GJW). The young people themselves are usually part of the structures. They are given the opportunity to try out and help create democratic decision-making in committees and decision-making processes. Moreover, this contributes to the stability of the organization as well. However, at the same time they also tend to ossify. Adjustment processes take long and tend to be tenacious. If the environmental conditions change, these organizations react slowly and are easily overstrained. Additionally, they tend to have a homogenous membership, even more so if they are linked to a certain milieu.

In our study, this type of organization was often found in rather traditional associations in which the youth organization is closely linked to an adult organization. Examples are JF, JRK and DLRG-Jugend Hessen. These structures tend to attract young people from safety-oriented and protective middle-class families with a medium to high level of education. They can easily find their voice in the committees

and discussions and take part in developing abstract concepts and theoretical deliberations. To a certain extent, however, they also require the ability to be subordinate to the existing structures and hierarchies. Young people who do not have this ability can therefore find it difficult to volunteer in these associations. Acknowledgement occurs commonly formalised and in accordance with certain rules: badges of honour for long-term membership, gifts at a defined amount for special services, birthdays, passing exams and insignia for advanced “volunteer careers.” Personal acknowledgements are of some importance as well. However, they usually do not replace formal procedures.

Culture-Oriented Management in Youth Organizations

Set apart from these two management methods, is a culture oriented type of organization. Despite the fact that a formal structure with bodies and committees may be found in such organization, they are often weak and supplemented with highly informal structures. Decisions are almost always made in groups which do not necessarily have to be defined formally. Formal structures as such are therefore often at best circumstantial for decision-making. The reference point for decisions and standards are collectively shared values. Though “do’s and don’ts” clearly exist they are mostly not codified. They are continually being re-established and balanced, including through conflicts, as part of discussions and are often passed down orally from earlier generations. The decision-making is thus partially informal and discursive and runs along certain convictions which are seen as a measure for the right way to operate (e.g. “what is Greenpeace like?”). Formalised management systems only refer to areas which are perceived as pivotal, such as financial or legal issues or personnel matters, for example. Young people in culture-oriented youth organizations often come from families with a good educational background and higher income. Self-realisation and post-materialistic value settings thus play an important role. Normative concepts and formalistic structures are frequently rejected. The peer group is an important point of reference. In this respect, work is usually distributed in many decentralised and often independently operating groups or work circles. Full-time employees and adults seldom intervene, and if they do, then argumentatively and educationally with reference to central values, issues and manners. Formal acknowledgement procedures are felt to be out of place. The focus is usually not the volunteer, but rather his contribution to a common goal. Thus, acknowledgement is given implicitly through commendation for successful activities, good concepts as well as creative ideas (e.g. Greenpeace Youth, BUNDjugend, Die Falken, etc.).

The three management logics as well as some characteristics are summarised in Table 18.2:

Table 18.2 Management dimensions in youth organizations. (Own compilation)

	Person-oriented	Structure-oriented	Culture-oriented
Dominant influence	Person or group	Committees, statutes, rules	Organization culture, "group feeling"
Organizational structure	Slightly differentiated	Strongly differentiated	Moderately differentiated
Significance of informal processes	Very high	Average	High
Decision-making	Personnel	Formal, regular	Discursive
Reference point and values	Central person(s)	Concepts, statutes	Group feeling, peer group and shared values
Dependency on concrete individuals	Very high	Low	Low
Size of organization	Small–medium	Small–large	Small–large
Target group	Broad: All social environments and many education levels	Narrower: Medium to high level of education, medium to high social class	Narrow: High education, upper class, alternative, post-material oriented social environments
Examples	Cactus Jugendtheater	DLRG-Jugend Hessen, JRK Niedersachsen, Royal Rangers, GJW	Greenpeace Youth, BUNDjugend Berlin, Die Falken Berlin

Rethinking Volunteer Management in Youth Organizations

Looking at the results of the study we can summarise: There are distinctive types of youth organizations that work with volunteers exceptionally successful. All of them consciously gear their volunteer work towards their organizational targets thereby following certain logics in addition to utilising a more or less defined set of tools. Considering these characteristics, we can clearly label their work as “management”. Nevertheless, the management concepts we found differ substantially from those currently promoted in scientific literature and textbooks. Even more, the analysis suggests that the thoughtless introduction of any management concept may easily result in conflicts with the existing logic thereby causing damage to the organization.

However, we must keep in mind, here, that due to the research design the study could only record a limited section from the huge field of youth organizations. Furthermore, as a consequence of the multilevel selection process they cannot be regarded as representative but in view of their success rather as (over-average) good practice. The goal and steering logic we identified will have to be combined to form a typology of management in youth organizations which can undergo empirical verification. However, the findings can already provide valuable information about volunteer management or help to identify and adapt the appropriate tools for the organization. Thus, it can be presumed, for example, that the predominantly propagated approaches for volunteer management might be appropriate for task-based youth

organizations with a structure-oriented management. We can also presume that they verge on their limits with issue-based organizations combined with a culture-oriented steering logic. Furthermore, we can presume that the “acknowledgment culture” that is frequently demanded must differ considerably between task-based organizations on the one hand and issue or value-based organizations on the other. Thus, material incentives can even have a counterproductive effect such as diminishing the value of volunteer work or destroying motivation wherever volunteer work is about being authentic or living a conviction.

The findings furthermore allow a deeper insight into the diversity and complexity of the management of NPOs and illustrate the necessity for additional research and explanations in this field of research. More specifically, there is a considerable lack of empirical research as to the relevancy and effects of different management concepts. Hopefully, our findings and future research will aid in raising awareness for the implicit assumptions in normative and universalistic management concepts that transfer concepts and tools from for-profit corporations to nonprofit associations with little or no adaption.

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Chapter 19

Governance Logics in NGDO Boards Between Political and Economic Challenges: Empirical Results from Austria

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Abstract Boards of nongovernmental development organizations (NGDOs) are facing difficult times: They find themselves caught between their goal to achieve professionalism and their obligation towards their members and beneficiaries. This chapter presents empirical results based on a qualitative research design. The study explores the governance understandings of boards in four different Austrian NGDOs. Furthermore it investigates which significance accountability reports to donors have for directing and monitoring the organizations.

Keywords Nongovernmental Development Organizations · Governance logics · Boards · Legitimacy · Austria

Nongovernmental development organizations (NGDOs) as associations are playing an important role in today's world. In the past decades, their function as global actors has increased, so that they are now important players aiming at influencing policy and legislative processes. By tradition, in Austria they are member-based organizations and the membership basis contributes to their legitimacy. Members can be regarded as one important stakeholder group of NGDOs among several. Their legitimate interests are sometimes in conflict with the interests of other crucial stakeholder groups. At the same time, like many other associations, the NGDOs are under pressure to professionalize, especially on the part of external funders who often expect a highly professional management structure to handle the projects approved. For the NGDOs, this might create tensions as they have to balance the often diverging goals of being professional project partners and serving the interests of their institutional and individual members. Frequently, such a balancing role rests with the governing boards of NGDOs. This balancing between professionalism and membership orientation only adds to organizational complexity.

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NGDOs act in a political domain. Development policies and cooperation have been under pressure to justify themselves for decades. In addition to the reduced willingness on the part of governmental donors to fund projects, there have been questions with regard to the fundamental sense, the political legitimacy, the accountability, and the effectiveness of development cooperation since the 1990s. These debates also affect NGDOs, which are subject to frequent criticism as they are important players in the political area. As they are a special form of associations which are often founded by activists for political motives, NGDOs are under continuous observation by the political and scientific communities. They constantly have to prove their high political legitimacy in their approaches and activities and the self-image they cultivate. NGDOs themselves (mostly) represent the interests of disadvantaged people in the countries of the Global South. On the one hand, they try to support people directly by financing projects in southern countries. On the other hand, they try to sensitize the home country population and to influence policy making through development education, collecting donations and political advocacy. As NGDOs function as the interface between different actors in politics, this chapter seeks to examine the governance understandings of boards in NGDOs as main management body. Furthermore, the chapter explores which role performance evaluations play in safeguarding the political and organizational tasks.

Structural Characteristics of NGDOs

NGOs in general are a fundamental part of a democratic society and as an organized part of civil society tend to have a political mandate per definition (see Zimmer 2001, p. 358). While the term “NGOs” typically refers to international political and advocacy organizations, mainly in the environmental and international development sector, “nonprofit” or “not-for-profit” organizations work in the state welfare and social sector and frequently offer services. The subcategory of NGDOs is characterized by a particular structure resulting from its field of activity (Edwards and Fowler 2002):

1. NGDOs work in areas of state influence such as poverty, human rights, exploitation of resources, but do not have authority of law.
2. Power and influence of NGDOs are based on active citizenship and potential for social mobilization, not on a political mandate.
3. Their output cannot be a measure for their internal or political goals since these goals are beyond their sphere of influence.

Increasing contradictions between expectations of and structural challenges for NGDOs have long been visible. These expectations run between the two central profiles of NGDOs: *operational profile* (specific project work) and *public policy profile* (influencing political decisions) (see Appel 2009, Appel 2012; Brunnengräber and Walk 2001; Debiel and Sticht 2005). It seems that the basic conflict “raising money vs. raising awareness” as pointed out by Billis and MacKeith (1997)

is confirmed time and again. Eszlinger (2004), for example, sees the focus in project work shifting towards funding and advocacy, which also means, among others, that more and more resources have to be allocated to writing project proposals. There is a tendency towards professionalism in the field, in particular in the interaction between volunteers and professionals (see Appel 2009; Hunziker 2011).

Challenges for NGDO Governance

In the central European two-tier governance system, unlike the Anglo–Saxon system, governance is shared by two separate bodies: a supervisory board and a management board. The supervisory board, which takes its mandate from the organization's membership in the form of the general assembly, is responsible for general organizational governance rather than operational management. The board's responsibilities include external representation, accountability to members, monitoring the management (team), as well as securing that mission and objectives match (see Anheier 2005; Fuechtmann 2011). Developing the future strategic direction is also a supervisory board's task (see Tandon 1996). Its quality depends on its members because its work depends on their expertise, strategic view and political contacts and influence (see Metelsky 2011). Therefore, selecting board members is particularly important. Board members need to have professional expertise and sufficient free time and, among them, the qualifications and knowledge to cover all areas from financial to strategic management (see Conger 2004).

There are a number of recommendations in the literature with regard to type of cooperation, size, and structure of boards (see Abzug 2011; Conger 2004; Metelsky 2011), depending primarily on the organization's mission and remit. Important aspects for Conger (2004), for instance, are that the number of board members allows for a substantive, high-quality discussion that organizations which delegate members to the board can still leave their mark and that the decision-making process is not too complex. Performance and decision making should be evaluated on a regular basis (see Lutz and Gmür 2011). It seems that another essential criterion for board effectiveness is sufficient time for thematic discussion so that the board can develop its skills and have input. The cooperation between full-time staff and volunteer board members is a key to the success of an organization. While this cooperation is essential, it also seems significant for board members to remain independent, particularly if management is much more knowledgeable and can influence board decisions (see Anheier 2005, p. 236; Lutz and Gmür 2011). It cannot be taken for granted that the objectives and vision of the board and the staff are identical (see Scribner 2004). According to Scribner (2004), board members should not hesitate to look at documents and information or request external help, particularly if they depend on the input of full-time employees. The form of organization in NGDOs, similarly to other NGOs, differs widely from an association with members consisting of grassroots organizations across the country to expert NGOs with a small membership.

The above-mentioned tensions within the structural characteristics of the NGOs also have consequences for the board's primary orientation. There are two conflicting role models: on the one side the highly professional, strategy-focused board with a high operational capacity, and on the other side the more traditional board with a high degree of voluntary involvement and a strong focus on preserving the organization's mission and traditions.

NGOs in Austria

The Austrian NGO scene is characterized by a great variety of working methods, organizational structures and self-conceptions of NGOs. Its composition ranges from church organizations to specialized organizations working solely with professional staff. Alone the Austrian Catholic NGOs supported 3,638 projects amounting to a total of about US\$ 108.5 million back in 2011. Financing and with it the working methods (either related to financing projects or, for instance, on the basis of donations and therefore less restricted working method) also differ widely: ranging from different initiatives in parishes, local one-world bazaars or shops, Austrian collections, and political campaigns, emergency aid as well as different forms of project support (from local sponsorships to professionally supported development programs of relief organizations). All of them are under constant pressure to prove their legitimacy and to sharpen their profiles. They seek to achieve these by expertise in content and recognition as well as by the support of citizens who volunteer or donate. Actors have to prove their technical skills as well as their professionalism. The extent of the opportunities to influence causes of action must be as large, positive, and sustainable as possible.

The Republic of Austria's official development assistance (ODA) of 769 million € or 0.27% of the gross domestic product (GDP) in 2011, is relatively insignificant and well below the European Union (EU) average of 0.42% of the GDP and the EU aim to spend 0.7% of the GDP on ODA in 2015. The state development agency, Austrian Development Agency (ADA), works with NGOs by supporting them through cofinancing EU projects or through funding specific projects in their domestic and international work.

Research Questions and Methodology

Given the background outlined above, the rest of this chapter focuses on the following research questions:

- What do Austrian NGOs see as their guiding profile?
- How does the board understand its role in governance and how are tasks allocated between the board and the managing team?
- What is the role of voluntarism?
- Which role do accountability reports (on projects, programs etc.) play for the board's decision-making process?

Research question one aims at addressing how NGDOs balance different logics. On one side there are demands that the NGDOs are high performing, professional service organizations which guarantee an efficient and effective use of funds (managerial role model). On the other side, as organizations with a political profile, NGDOs are important actors within the civil society. Therefore, they engage themselves in the field of political advocacy and awareness building for the needs of the Global South. So far only a few, mostly Anglo–American, academic publications have tried to link organizational questions in management with questions of political functionality for the specific group of development NGOs (see e.g., Appel 2009; Edwards and Fowler 2002; Lewis 2001; Sheehan 1998).

The second set of research questions focuses on the division of labor between the board and the management (team). This relates also to the board's self-perception and understanding of governance. The managerial role model brings along a governance understanding which favors a separation of "steering" and "rowing." While the managers should manage operations, i.e., "rowing," the board should concentrate on strategic decision making and monitoring, i.e., "steering."

Also, in line with the managerial role model is a growing demand that the NGDO boards should professionalize. Indeed, board members should have some management experience in particular fields. Against this background research question three addresses the issue which role voluntarism still plays at the board level.

Another aspect of the changes within the NGDOs has been a stronger emphasis on program and project accountability. NGDOs have to demonstrate to central stakeholders how they perform and how they meet the ex ante-defined outcome and impact expectations. There is a feeling that reporting obligations have increased tremendously over the past decades. In an inspection and audit society (Power 1999), an imbalance exists between reporting and managing. Therefore, research question four focuses on how accountability reports to funders are used within the board's decision-making process.

Taking into account that the issue at hand is highly under-researched and that we lack first-hand empirical insight, a qualitative research design was chosen. This research approach was also selected because it is more suitable for a more in-depth insight in the board's understanding of governance. Between November 2012 and January 2013, we conducted 13 interviews with board members and the managing directors of four major Austrian NGDOs.

Sample Structure and Findings

The basic characteristics of the Austrian NGDOs included in our study are listed in Table 19.1.

Research question one was addressed by asking questions about the *main tasks* of the NGDOs, the balance between these tasks and the expectations for their future development. We assumed that there should be a difference depending on the degree to which an NGDO sees itself as a professional service provider or as a civil society actor.

Table 19.1 Characteristics of the NGDOs included in the research. (Own compilation)

	Organization A	Organization B	Organization C	Organization D
Foundation and membership basis	1993; many Catholic organizations, trade union members and one-world shops as founding members; 26 institutional members (2013)	1982 by feminist activists; individual member based	2008 as an umbrella organization; inherited the agenda of two other umbrella NGDOs; 41 institutional members	2001 as a merger of three organizations; seven institutional members
Mandate	Promotion of partnership and fair-trade with producers from developing countries	Information, education and public awareness building for women in Africa, Asia, and Latin America as well as the relationship between North and South in a feminist perspective; main concerns are the enforcement of women's rights and a world free of sexism and racism	National and international development cooperation; representation of the interest of Austrian NGOs working in the areas of development cooperation, development politics, humanitarian aid, and environmental development	Improving access to public funding on the national as well as supranational levels; commissioned by seven Catholic member organizations for carrying out project work and sending experts to the Global South
Annual budget	Just under 1.5 million € (2012)	Just under 300,000 € (2010)	Just over 200,000 € (2012)	Just under 13 million € (2011)
Main income sources	License fees, membership contributions, and donations; to a small extent (about 7%) government funding (ADA funds, federal states)	Mixed funding structure: public funding (ADA funds, EU projects), magazine subscriptions and funding from other NGOs	Membership fees, government funds from ADA and EU (23% of the budget)	Co-funding through national and European funds
Board structure	6–13 people either delegated from member organizations or recruited from the membership	Minimum six persons (at least three meetings per year)	Up to 12 members	Six representatives of membership organizations; at least four board meetings per year

Table 19.1 (continued)

	Organization A	Organization B	Organization C	Organization D
Other aspects	Consultative role of the management director at the board's meetings. National chapter of an international organization	Role of a managing director with a consultative role in board meetings is fairly new or was created in 11/2011	Managing director has the right to speak and to submit motions in board meetings	Budget limit of 100,000 € for the managing director without an ex ante consultation of the board

The interviews showed that all NGDOs linked their main task to the mandate of their organizations. In NGDO A the main focus is on political lobbying, education, public awareness building and project work with a notable exception of one interview partner who put the business activities of NGDO first. The answers of NGDO B were the most concrete ones. They covered the areas of educational work, public awareness building and project work. Fundraising was also mentioned, but more as a burden than a task that is the interviewees' priority. NGDO C stressed that the role as an umbrella organization entails that the second most important focus is on services to its members. Political lobbying, however, was prioritized most highly. Raising money for carrying out projects in the Global South was high on the agenda in NGDO D, followed by sending experts to the Global South. This is not surprising as the fundraising part is an explicit mandate of NGDO D. Within each NGDO the prioritization of the main tasks varies.

With respect to the *development over time* all NGDOs operated in a relatively stable environment and did not expect fundamental changes to their main areas of activities in the next decade. Some interview partners mentioned that climate change will become an even hotter topic (NGDO D), the organizational capacities of organizations in the Global South are expected to rise (NGDO C), or that funding from governmental sources will decrease even further (NGDO A). Interview partners from NGDO B found it somehow difficult to plan 10 years ahead and mentioned that small organizations are always fragile.

Moving on to the *governance understanding* here is a clear perception that the board should be focused on strategic decision making and a supervisory role. While in NGDO D the focus is a bit more on the strategic role, the balance between the strategic and supervisory roles seems to be equal in NGDOs A and C. NGDO B also subscribes to these two major tasks but stresses that the NGDO has a long-standing basic democratic tradition with a board that is very active also in operations. Only recently the position of a paid managing director was created. Therefore, the organization is still in a transformation process and the division of labor between the board and the management team still needs to be fine-tuned.

The execution of operational tasks should rest with the management team. In NGDO A and B the interviewees also stressed that the board serves as forum for reflection and therefore monitors if the NGDO acts in line with the general mission and strategy.

Although all NGDOs share the understanding that the board should not be involved in operations directly, the organizational reality is a different one. In NGDO A, the board members are sometimes consulted as experts in their field. In NGDO B, the board gets involved in its role as employer in conflicts within the staff. Given the limited resources within NGDO C board members sometimes even get involved in some operative tasks. Furthermore, they are politically active in representing the NGDO at meetings of a representative and political nature. The interviewees of NGDO D stressed the role of the general assembly as the highest decision-making body. As the managing director prepares motions for important strategic decisions by the board, a discretionary space arises to influence the board's strategic decision-making process. Thus, although there is a clear commitment towards a strategic understanding, the board still sometimes becomes involved in more operative tasks.

Balancing the expectations of the home organizations of the board members with the function of a board member seems, in three NGDOs (B, C, and D) unproblematic. Sometimes it is stressed that becoming a board member is in line with the strategic direction of the board member's home organizations, and often board members refer back to their top management position within their home organizations. The different organizational and professional backgrounds of the board members are seen as a benefit. Only the interview partners of organization A reported occasional unproductive tensions, not because of the concrete expectations of the board members' home organizations, but due to the heterogeneity of expectations NGDO A has to meet. This has to do with the diverse working areas, the differences in size and the tension between the business part of NGDO A and the political objectives of the membership organizations. Its members sometimes find the pragmatic approach of NGDO A towards cooperation partners or business activities problematic.

Regarding the *role of voluntarism* a heterogeneous picture emerges. In two organizations voluntarism plays a negligible role (C and D) at the board level. The board members carry out their duties at least to some extent during their working hours. All board members hold senior management positions in other organizations. As voluntarism does not play a role in board membership, no conflicts arise between the expectations of volunteers and paid staff.

The other two NGDOs stress that the board members are volunteers. The interview partners in NGDO A report that there is a positive interplay between the voluntary board members and the paid staff. That the board members are volunteers is seen as a strength and somehow as a positive counterbalance to the business activities of NGDO A. Unlike in the other NGDOs, the interview partners of NGDO A stressed the importance of being a civil society actor. In NGDO B, voluntarism at the board level has a strong tradition. It is reported that the staff is so committed that they sometimes also act as volunteers. Therefore, the lines between the paid and volunteer activities are blurred in some areas. As organization B and C have nearly the same annual budget, the expectation that the size of the organizational budget would be a discriminative factor was not borne out.

With respect to *the role of accountability reports* within the board's decision-making process we have to report that this research question presented the most difficult area for our interview partners. In all four NGDOs the board members are

normally not involved in the detail of preparing reports to funding agencies. Sometimes a brief summary is presented to the board members. Sometimes board members of NGDO D become familiar with the full reports because they are funders of a particular project. In NGDO A and B reports to the ADA were singled out as particularly relevant. Especially in NGDO C reporting was regarded as too time-consuming. The greatest relevance was attached to the financial reports.

By contrast, NGDOs A, B, and C stressed the role the reports play for organizational development and strategy improvement. Formal and informal reporting was also seen as a chance for sound reflection or for evaluating where the NGDO stands. Interview partners of NGDO A added that such reports also help demonstrate the organization's value added to the partners in the Global South and promote their product. All interviewees found it difficult to evaluate how much of the management teams' time was used for reporting. The answers ranged from "few days for each report" to "much too much" to estimations of up to a third of the management team's time. Here the answers of the board members and the management directors differed. The board members assumed that the management team spent more time on project and program reports. The management directors stressed that some parts of the reports to funders could be routinized.

We found clear indications that size matters for influencing the reporting format. NGDO D reported that in most cases the reporting format was negotiated and that they could influence it *ex ante* via the terms of references for the particular programs. NGDO A stressed that they are participating in a benchmarking process with international sister organizations. The interview partners of the two smaller NGDOs were convinced that they had no influence and one interview partner of NGDO B regarded the trend to standardize reports as a way of streamlining NGDOs.

Discussion of Results

As expected a somehow heterogeneous picture emerges. All four NGDOs define themselves via their political mandate and did not position themselves primarily as service providers. Therefore, all NGDOs put their mandate and mission as a source of legitimacy first. This understanding is shared by board members and managing directors. Professionalism—but not managerialism—plays an important role within the NGDOs. The smaller the NGDO was, the more operative were the tasks which were assigned to the supervisory board. In NGDO A and C, political lobbying was most highly prioritized. More generally all four NGDOs placed more emphasis on their political profile than the goal to be run like a business.

Quite unexpected were the answers regarding the extent to which the board members felt bound by their home organizations. We expected that they would articulate some tensions or at least more clearly their loyalty to their home organizations. Surprisingly, that was not a topic for our interview partners who distinguished quite clearly between the role they play in their home organization and their role as board members in one of the four NGDOs. Therefore, their

role perception is quite clearly linked to the professional model. As experienced and professional actors they are not the mouthpiece of their home organizations. Such a professional role perception does not recognize the democratic potential of stakeholder governance.

All interview partners are unanimous in the understanding that the board role should be not an operative one. A clear understanding exists that the board should limit itself to strategic decision making and supervisory tasks. In practice, though, the separation of the strategic decision making and operations is not an easy endeavor. The boards are struggling to a varying extent to get involved in the more operational tasks. The reasons are plentiful, ranging from the organization's basic democratic tradition towards a consultative role of the single board member or the role of the board as employer. Therefore, it seems to be a constant struggle not to get too much involved in the daily routines. Although a relatively clear understanding of governance exists in NGOs, the fine-tuning of the actual division of labor presents a challenge. To a much lesser extent than assumed, expectations of the home organizations of the board members limited the decision-making space of the board members. In general, the different organizational backgrounds are seen as a benefit and are something which often contributes to the quality of the decision-making process. The diversity of background and experiences provided an add-on for positioning the NGOs as professional organizations.

With respect to voluntarism we found two contrasting models. While in two organizations voluntarism did not play a role at all, it was relevant in the other two organizations with respect to board activities and resource mobilization for the NGOs. Although not conflict-free, there was no indication of a disruptive tension between volunteers and staff members. There is a common interest in securing the NGO's existence in the long run. The high on relevance both sides (board and staff) might also contribute to this. Some of the answers showed that with the growing expectations of professionalism, volunteer engagement plays a reduced role in carrying out the main activities. Traditional voluntarism may be the outgoing model or at least one which is sometimes revitalized in the context of civil engagement.

As expected, program and project reporting was regarded as a sometimes (too) time-consuming effort, especially by the smaller NGOs. On the positive side, most interview partners stressed the role such reports can play on strategy formulation, strategy and organizational development. Board members are usually not interested in getting very involved in the details of the reports to funders. With the notable exception of NGO D there seems to be no systematic feedback process where funding reports are used on a regular basis within the organizational development process. Therefore, the potential these reports may offer for organizational learning seems to some extent still to be unleashed.

Summary and Conclusions

With respect to research question one, all four NGDOs define themselves predominantly via their mandate and their mission. Although differences existed between the NGDOs, none of the interview partners neglected the political advocacy part.

The dominating understanding of governance is that the board members should not get involved in the daily business routine. In theory, the board sees itself in a steering and supervisory role. In practices, involvement in daily operations cannot always be avoided, though there was agreement that this should be rather limited. The professional experiences of board members were seen as a benefit, adding to the NGDO's organizational capacity. Quite surprisingly the board members' loyalty to their home organizations did not create tensions. Here the interview partners stressed their professional role.

Voluntarism played a role in only two organizations. There it was seen as a value-added endeavor. Only one NGDO stressed explicitly that they see themselves as actors within and of the civil society. Therefore, the power the NGDOs have as civil society actors is mostly something which is not explicitly referred to. Together with the board members' role perception, we got the impression that there are signs of decoupling from the voluntary members of the home organizations.

Program and project accountability reports can add organizational value, and also entail the danger of being too much of a bureaucratic burden. The use of the reports in three out of four organizations seems unsystematic, as the time which is spent on discussing these reports within the board meetings is rather limited. As expected, there seems to be the danger that reporting adds no value within the organization.

The anticipated tension between professional and member expectations did not present a problem for our interview partners who clearly stressed the virtues of professionalism. This might result from our sample structure, as three out of four NGDOs have other NGOs as members. Nevertheless, one might ask from a democratic perspective whether this role perception is sufficient. In the short term, such an orientation might be necessary for getting access to (public) funding and for a good positioning as civil society actors aiming at contributing to global good governance. In the long term, such a role perception might undermine the democratic nature of the NGDOs due to an elitist bias and the danger of neglecting the potential associations have as part of a participatory model of democracy (Zimmer 2010). The way NGDOs give their members a voice in the intraorganizational governance structures might be a critical success factor for securing their legitimacy. Advocating for a more participatory world may become, to some extent, unconvincing if professionalism turns into managerialism where efficient project management predominates over a truly democratic membership orientation.

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Chapter 20

Associating for Affordable Housing: Nonprofit Social Housing in Germany and the USA

Patrick Boadu, Aman Jain, Friedrich Paulsen and Steven Rathgeb Smith

Abstract Welfare policies in Germany and the USA have recently undergone significant changes. In particular, relationships between governments and nonprofits have experienced restructuring, particularly in those areas where nonprofits always had a decisive role in producing welfare-related services. Keeping that in mind, this chapter focuses on social housing policies in the two nations of Germany and the USA. In each country, social housing policy emerges as a policy developed since industrialization through different historic steps with shifting policy objectives, financing, and delivery modes. Across the two countries, marked differences and commonalities exist.

Keywords Social housing policies · Nonprofit sector · Government–nonprofit relationship · United States of America · Germany

Nonprofits always had a decisive role in producing welfare-related services in Germany and the USA. Recently, welfare policies in both countries have undergone significant changes that have affected and transformed the relationships between governments and nonprofits. This chapter focuses on social housing policies in the two nations of Germany and the USA. Since industrialization, social housing policy has become a key area in meeting people's needs in growing urban contexts. Due to different historic steps with shifting policy objectives, financing, and delivery modes, differences and commonalities exist between the two countries. Here we focus on social housing, i.e., nonprofit housing for disadvantaged populations including low-income people and people with disabilities. It should be noted, however, that in Germany, social housing is also provided by cooperatives, which are also categorized there as nonprofit (or third sector) organizations (Evers and Laville 2004).

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Existing theories of the welfare state would suggest that these two countries would take very different paths in terms of their approach to social housing. In particular, Esping-Andersen's (1993) work on the welfare state would suggest that Germany, as a conservative welfare state regime, would have social housing policies shaped by an extensive supply of housing for mainly dependent employees and their families, organized by public-private partnerships between the state and the nonprofit organizations implementing affordable housing. Regarding the USA, one would expect social housing as an area subjected to liberal markets and private, individual responsibility; nonprofits would only provide housing for those in great need, financed by philanthropists. At the same time, leading theories of the nonprofit sector in different countries, including that of Salamon and Anheier (1998), recognize the significance of nonprofits in welfare production in both countries. According to Salamon and Anheier, one would expect German nonprofits in the housing sector to act as extensions of the state, receiving public sector payments and outright grants from governmental agencies to fulfill their tasks. Focusing on the USA, one would expect social housing nonprofits to be financed by private charitable giving, individual fees, and market income.

Our chapter is organized in the following sections. After this introduction, we discuss the historical development of housing in each nation, followed by a section on the financing and the importance of nonprofits in providing housing services. The next section is an analysis of the lessons learned for theory, policy, and practice of this comparative analysis of social housing in Germany and the USA. Overall, a comparative analysis of commonalities and differences offers a more complex picture of the German and American welfare states. Further, we address the question of the extent to which welfare states are converging due to similar economic and social trends, such as debt and fiscal crises and an aging population. We conclude the chapter with a discussion of the future challenges of housing policies in the advanced economies of Germany and the USA. Importantly, housing gains new attention as an important tool to realize social justice and economic well-being, especially in gentrifying urban areas.

Nonprofit Social Housing in Germany: The History

The year 1847 can be seen as the landmark year to start the rich tradition of German nonprofit housing with the foundation of the first association for public benefit—with the purpose of creating affordable housing units for low-income families in Berlin. It was a philanthropic reaction to the terrible conditions of workers' families living in the overcrowded *Mietskasernen* in the recently industrialized and overpopulated German cities. By 1901, the Prussian government issued a decree that established the long-lasting tradition of public benefit housing construction in Germany. Under the decree, municipalities were advised to support housing associations by all means possible to address the underprovision of housing. This specific division of labor and privileged partnership between nonprofits and local government became typical for German welfare production (Drupp 1987).

The end of the First World War saw two major developments in social housing that still influence the country today. Firstly, the welfare state principle was introduced by the Social Democrats in the early 1920s to establish quality improvement programs in cities (Aner and Hammerschmidt 2010, p. 85f.). In addition, chronic capital shortages hindered the private sector from supplying sufficient housing and thus forced the state to actively pursue the construction of smaller and middle-sized housing units. By 1932, public funding reached 8.1 billion Reichsmark (financed through a tax on landlords)—or 46% of all investments in the housing sector (Drupp 1987). The subsidies reached nearly 80% of all constructed tenements, which were erected at an annual rate of about 300,000 (Schulte-Eckel 2009).

The second major development was the sharp increase in *eingetragene Genossenschaft* (e.G.) (registered cooperatives), a self-help concept first appeared in Hamburg in 1862. After playing a minor role in *Kaiserreich*, self-organized and (subsidized) self-supplied cooperatives built nearly 50% of housing units in German cities between 1918 and 1930—with the number increasing from 1430 to 4390 (Faust 1997, p. 522). While smaller cooperatives settled on creating tenements, larger ones aimed at modeling whole new urban experiences for industrial workers and their families in large compounds with community-inclusive designs and community facilities. The cooperative movement came to an abrupt end in 1935 when the Nazi government nationalized and centralized all cooperatives in one federation and forced many to merge, leading to the destruction of inclusive membership structures and their sociocultural milieus (Häußermann and Siebel 2000).

The aspired path of a third way between socialism and capitalism—a privileged public–private partnership of state support for nonprofit bodies building affordable flats, which fulfilled specific quality criteria for ordinary people—was sustained and revitalized after the Second World War (Häußermann 2008, p. 63). As in other areas of social policy, the German government trusted a specific division of labor in providing services for people: It subsidized specific companies and cooperatives instead of providing a sector of public housing on its own (Zimmer and Toepler 2000, p. 46).

As a consequence of the destruction caused by the war and the influx of refugees, German cities again faced serious housing problems: more than 2 million social flats were constructed with state's support between 1950 and 1956 in Germany (Heineberg 1989, p. 81). To gain access to the privileges defined by the Public-Benefit Housing Act (*Wohngemeinnützigkeitsgesetz*), the companies and cooperatives needed to be separated from the construction industry, to limit dividends to a maximum of 4%, to charge rents only according to a cost-recovery rate, and to admit long-term usage rights to the renters (cf. Kofner 2004). In return, the privileged partners could expect noninterest-bearing loans from the state and received significant tax advantages (Kofner 2004). The privileged partnership of public benefit housing continued into the 1980s, with ca. 3.4 million (1 million with cooperatives) flats in the ownership of 1,800 public benefit providers (two-thirds of them cooperatives). Public benefit providers controlled 20% of the whole rental housing market and 58% of the low-income housing sector (Stimpel 1990). One of the biggest suppliers of flats in Europe at that time was the trade union-owned public benefit corporation *Neue Heimat*, holding more than 400,000 dwellings (Häußermann and Siebel

2000, p. 165). However, *Neue Heimat* became part of a huge corruption scandal and discredited the communal economic movement as a whole. After ongoing political debates, the *Wohnungsgemeinnützigkeitsgesetz* was abolished in 1989 by the free market-oriented conservative government under Helmut Kohl (Häußermann and Siebel 2000, p. 153). Following this change, the holdings of communal economic cooperation were mostly introduced to the free market economy; in particular, formerly public benefit companies recalibrated their rents to the market level. As a result, nearly 1 million flats were sold to for-profit companies.

Nonprofit Social Housing in Germany: The Current Picture

Due to the scandals and the resultant policy decisions, public benefit companies lost their importance and gradually withdrew from the German housing sector. Today, only special projects of housing for the elderly requiring nursing care or flat-sharing communities of people with disabilities are organized as nonprofit, private limited companies (*gGmbH*), e.g., under the umbrellas of the big welfare carriers *Caritas* or *Diakonie*. However, small communal corporations, church-based organizations, and mostly smaller cooperatives continued to apply the cost-recovery only principle, even after they became entirely subjected to taxation after 1989 (Häußermann and Siebel 2000, p. 158). So, the cooperative housing sector remains important in specific market niches, even after the decline of the legal privileges of public benefit housing corporations after 1989.

At the end of the 2000s, cooperatives still supplied 2.1–2.2 million dwellings, or about 6–7% of all flats in Germany and about 10% of all rental flats (Hain 2008, p. 90; Freitag 2006, p. 256). They constitute the majority of the current stock of German nonprofit housing. Particularly the organizational structure of cooperatives protected them from the shift toward commercialization like an oyster in its shell—the wide spread of their members share complicate decisions on structural adjustments or mergers and takeovers (Hain 2008, p. 90). Approximately 6% of the German population is living in housing cooperative-supplied dwellings accumulating to about 5 million people. The investment volume of all organized cooperatives in the housing field amounts to 2.4 billion € per year. Today there are about 2,000 housing cooperatives with a relatively larger presence in the less-populated East Germany (800) than in the more populous West (1,200). While fewer in number than in the West, East German cooperatives tend to be larger, with 75% of them owning more than 7,500 housing units; West German organizations in contrast are usually smaller, with two-thirds having less than 1,000 units (GdW 2012). The variety of cooperatives ranges from the smallest with less than 10 flats and the largest with about 17,000 flats. The largest in terms of membership has about 25,000 members (Freitag 2006, p. 256).

Housing cooperatives act on the principle of self-administration, and their members address and pursue their own interests independently. All cooperatives follow

the democratic logic of “one-member-one-vote.” Today, the amount of liability is limited to set minimal interest each member devoted to the cooperative (Kißling 1992, p. 578/§ 119 of the cooperative regulation). The common liability creates incentives to control the success of the cooperative and creates a feeling of unity (Beuthien 1989, p. 18). They are organizations of social integration, self-help, solidarity, *and* an entrepreneurial orientation. However, the involvement of individuals in cooperatives is contrary to a trend that affects the housing cooperatives, as they are often large membership-based organizations. They are consequently in some cases having trouble attracting new and most notably younger members. This seems particularly odd, considering the huge lack of affordable rental homes within German urban surroundings. But the trend is in line with a general critical tendency toward formal organization within the younger German generation and affects nearly all membership organizations nationwide. People are less willing to tie themselves definitely to a place, a house, or even a community.

At the same time, cooperative organization today opens up fields for experiments to react to ecologic challenges and the demographic change toward an aging society. Indeed, small groups of individuals (5–20) use the form of *eingetragene Genossenschaft* as a means to create common housing space on a small scale with their own governance. This form of civic engagement is especially popular within the ecologically progressive field and is often used with the clear goal in mind to build more sustainable and environment-friendly housing options as a collective (Schröder 2011). Another area in which cooperatives are forming is the field of projects to construct or modernize homes for the needs of elderly citizens (Kaduri and Wendorf 2011).

In terms of financing, the practices of housing cooperatives do not vary much from regular corporations in the German housing market (Beetz 2008). Cooperatives’ credit ratings for loans and grants from any kind of financing institutions rank very high, as they hold a number of advantages when compared to corporations or individuals. That they are motivated by their members’ self-interest with regard to *their* houses leads cooperatives to demonstrate better results when it comes to the collection of rents, the care and maintenance of buildings, and the absence of conflicts and juvenile delinquency than, for example, public housing projects (Wendorf 2006). If a cooperative is holding dwellings that are considered purely rental, they become eligible for corporate tax relief. This is the case for 40% of the German cooperative housing stock. But housing cooperatives can finance projects sometimes through public funding, for example, the object-oriented *Sozialer Wohnungsbau* (Social Housing Construction) or other recently established funds dedicated to more ecological or demographic projects (e.g., *Mehrgenerationenhaus* (multi-generational house)).

State subsidies for rented social housing (*Sozialer Mietwohnungsbau*) are the financial pillars of policies for affordable housing in Germany. Rather than providing financial support to the suppliers of socially oriented housing, object promotion (*Objektförderung*), which was introduced in 1950, directly subsidized the construction of dwellings itself. Any actor, not only nonprofits, willing to construct smaller housing units for lower or middle income households, while heeding certain quality

criteria and regionally adjusted rent limits (in the short term), could receive the funding (Mändle 2000). The building subsidy binds the supplier to a specific low level of socially acceptable rents. In Germany, the term “social housing,” therefore, describes a method of financing housing together with a set of regulations and responsibilities about allocation of tenancies, rent levels and standards, rather than to a physical stock of dwellings. Flats which were at one time rented as social housing can, once the subsidized loans with which they were built have been paid off, be let as nonsocial private rented housing (Busch-Gertseema 2000, p. 8). In 1993, 35% of object promotion subsidies was transferred to for-profit housing corporations, 23% to communal corporations and 18% to housing cooperatives (Kirchner 2006, p. 138). Through the 2007 reform of German federalism, social housing promotion was transferred from central government to the German *Länder*. 2013 was the year of the final withdrawal of federal funding in this sector.

The US Nonprofit Social Housing Sector: An Introduction

The US social housing sector largely comprises three types of entities: local public housing authorities, nonprofit social housing organizations, and for-profit developers (Bratt 2012). In this section of the chapter, we focus on the nonprofit social housing sector in the USA, starting with a brief historical overview.

Nonprofit social housing is relatively young in the USA. The first major affordable housing initiative of the USA—the public housing program—was authorized by the US Congress in 1937. However, public housing authorities were quasi-governmental organizations regulated by the federal government but managed by authorities at the local level. The next major social housing initiative was in 1959, in the form of the federal Section 202 program. Aimed at developing subsidized housing for the elderly and handicapped, the Section 202 program invited participation by a diverse array of for-profit and nonprofit organizations including religious, fraternal, trade, or civic associations. Nonetheless, participation by nonprofits in this program was quite limited. In the 1960s, there were three sets of federal housing initiatives that included roles for nonprofits. With the creation of the Section 221(d)(3) and 236 below market-interest rate programs, nonprofit sponsors were given prominent, although not exclusive, roles as development sponsors. By 1970, only about 28% of all units built under these two programs had been developed by nonprofits (Keyes 1971).

The most significant federal initiative of the 1960s that was aimed at nonprofits came in the form of the 1966 Special Impact Amendment to the Economic Opportunity Act. The nonprofits that were created through this program comprised the first generation of community development corporations (CDCs). Eight years later, Title VII of the Community Services Act authorized significant additional funding for these groups. In the 15 years span, 1966–1981, more than US\$ 500 million in federal funds were allocated to 63 CDCs through these two programs. While more than 10% of this original group of CDCs was never able to move beyond the planning

stages, some groups are still operating today and have produced hundreds of housing units, jobs, and business ventures (NCEA 1982, p. 25, 27, 49).

With CDCs gaining new popularity, and with some groups receiving federal funds from the 1966 or 1974 legislative initiatives, scores of organizations were created, often in response to bank redlining, arson, urban renewal, or abandoned properties. In 1986, the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program was created, signaling a complete move away from direct federal appropriations for housing and an increased reliance on indirect subsidies provided through the income tax system. Established by the Tax Reform Act of 1986, the LIHTC provides investors with a dollar-for-dollar reduction in their federal income taxes. Investors purchase interests, usually as limited partners, in qualified low-income housing developments and are entitled to claim a tax credit for 10 consecutive years. The amount of the tax credit depends on the total development costs, the use of other subsidies, the extent to which the property is occupied by low-income households, and the location of the property. Projects involving construction or substantial rehabilitation are entitled to a 9% annual credit; projects financed with tax-exempt bonds or that involve acquisition only or minor amounts of renovation receive a credit of about 4% (Schwartz 2011).

LIHTC is dependent on private financing that, in turn, has pushed nonprofits to ever greater degrees of hybridity. Although the nonprofit sector is allocated a certain percentage of tax credits, the fact that nonprofits must compete both with each other and with for-profit developers for tax credit allocations makes it essential that these groups have a high level of sophistication, with a professional understanding of market conditions. More than 25 years of experience with this program, which has largely been positive with about 2.2 million units produced through 2009 (US, Department of Housing and Urban Development 2012).

LIHTC requires that at least 10% of each state's annual tax credit allocation be earmarked for projects that are at least partially owned by a qualified nonprofit organization. However, the LIHTC allocation to nonprofits has been significantly higher than this amount. Between 1987 (the start of the tax credit program) and 2002, nearly 22% of all LIHTC projects were sponsored by nonprofits (HUD 2004). The all-time peak was reached in 1998 with nonprofits sponsoring 36.6% of all LIHTC properties. However, since then, there has been a decline in nonprofit sponsorship of these properties, with the rate falling to 25%, but still far above the 10% minimum threshold (Climaco et al. 2006, p. 23).

The Contemporary Landscape of Nonprofit Social Housing in the USA

The largest group of nonprofit housing developers in the USA is composed of CDCs. CDCs, generally formed by residents, small business owners, congregations and other local stakeholders, are primarily focused on "places," they are typically committed to revitalizing an economically depressed and often physically deteriorated

area, and usually have community-based leadership. While housing development is the most prominent activity of these groups, they often focus on job creation and other economic development *activities*, as well as various types of social services, including programs for the elderly, non-English speakers and children. The most recent survey providing an estimate of the number of CDCs concluded that about 4,600 CDCs existed in 2005 (NCCED 2005). Although the primary activity of most CDCs is housing development, they do not typically produce high volumes. As of 2005, more than one-half of CDCs (56%) had produced less than 100 units over the life of the organization and only 20% produced more than 25 units per year between 2001 and 2005 (NCCED 2005). The reasons for the relatively small production is due in part to the structural and management challenges faced by CDCs including: the need to assemble several funding sources; the difficulty of maintaining a stable, competent work force in the face of low salaries and long hours; and the need to constantly raise money to cover core operating expenses (Bratt 2009).

Another important group of nonprofit developers is Community Land Trusts (CLTs), which are noteworthy even though they do not develop a large number of units because their overriding mission is to provide affordable housing over the long term. CLTs are entities where the ownership of the land is held by the nonprofit that leases it for a small fee to owners of the buildings on the land. Although each CLT home is owned by the household leasing the land, the home cannot appreciate at the same rate as comparable private market homes. Instead, equity appreciation is based on improvements to the home and to a fixed inflation index. In this way, the CLT model enables low- and moderate-income families to build a modest amount of equity, while also preserving the affordability of these homes in perpetuity for future income-eligible households.

The final category of nonprofits includes diverse groups that are focused on “people”—committed to meet the housing needs of a specific subpopulation (e.g., the homeless, veterans, women who have left abusive relationships, or people with HIV-AIDS). In addition, some nonprofits have formed specifically to produce housing for their members, including unions and religious congregations. There are also religious organizations that build housing for people who are not necessarily members of these organizations. A prime example of such an organization is Habitat for Humanity, which since its inception in 1976 has helped to build or repair over 600,000 houses in the USA and other countries around the world (Habitat for Humanity 2013). Also within this, general categories are tenant cooperatives and mutual housing associations, formed by residents of subsidized developments.

Overall, CDCs and other large nonprofit housing organizations are major producers of housing for low-income households in the USA, even if they do not produce a high volume. The primary mission for the majority of these enterprises is to develop or maintain dwelling units that are affordable for a specific group of residents and which can be a resource for a community’s long-term use. These organizations are typically closely connected to the community and provide local residents opportunities for participating in decisions related to specific developments and to the general operations of the organization. As noted above, beyond the provision of affordable housing, most such organizations are engaged with other activities aimed at enhancing the lives of individuals and revitalizing neighborhoods.

Table 20.1 Estimated social housing in the USA (National Congress for Community Economic Development 2005; Stone 2006; Sard and Fisher 2008; Housing Partnership Network 2011; Habitat for Humanity 2011)

	Number of units	Percent
<i>Public housing</i>		
Federal (family and elderly)	1,160,000	23.0
Department of defense (for military households)	400,000	8.0
Other programs (state and local)	700,000	14.0
<i>Subtotal public housing</i>	<i>2,260,000</i>	<i>45.0</i>
<i>Nonprofit housing</i>		
Community development corporations	1,252,000 ^a	25.0
Housing partnership network members	231,000	4.5
Community land trusts	5,000	0.1
Limited equity cooperatives	425,000	8.5
Federally subsidized housing for the elderly	200,000	4.0
Habitat for humanity	30,000	0.6
Mutual housing and other nonprofit organizations	240,000	5.0
<i>Subtotal nonprofit housing</i>	<i>2,383,000</i>	<i>48.0 (rounded)</i>
Estimated additional production, since data collected on which above figures are based	357,000	7.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>5,000,000</i>	<i>100.0</i>

^a According to a report released by the National Alliance of Community Economic Development Associations, as of June 2010, the production by community development corporations (CDCs) and large nonprofit housing producers totaled 1,614,000 units. The report also notes that the survey information (on which the CDCs number in the above table is based) also counted the large housing producers. Therefore, there may be some double counting in the number of units listed for CDCs and for Housing Partnership Network members. This is one reason why the above figures should be viewed as approximations. Table originally prepared for Bratt (2012)

Over the past 50 years, the nonprofit housing sector in the USA and the entities that support their work have become more professional, and in many respects have matured into a sector unto itself. “Nevertheless, with only about 5% of USA housing owned by public or nonprofit entities, the size of the USA ‘social housing’ stock is far smaller than that of many European countries” (Bratt 2012). Furthermore, there is no single source of information regarding the number of nonprofit housing organizations and the number of units owned by these groups. It is widely believed that the total production by these nonprofits has now surpassed more than 25% of the current number of federally subsidized public housing units, which stands at about 1.2 million. According to Bratt (2012), Table 20.1 gives the most current estimate of the size of the USA social housing sector. The approximate figure of nearly 2.4 million nonprofit social housing units includes units developed by CDCs, Housing Partnership Network members, community land trusts (CLTs), limited equity cooperatives, federally subsidized housing for the elderly, Habitat for Humanity, mutual housing organizations, and other nonprofits.

Bratt (2012) explains further the reason for what is included and not included in the estimations provided in Table 20.1:

Approximately 2 million units are subsidized through the Housing Choice Voucher program (previously known as the Section 8 certificate/voucher program) but are not considered part of the social housing stock, since the subsidy is linked to the household, not the unit, and there are no long-term guarantees about how long the subsidy will be available to a given household. (Bratt 2012, p. 441)

Moreover, units that have been produced by private for-profit developers and have been federally subsidized are also not considered social housing, since they must remain affordable only for a limited period of time. Units produced by private for-profit developers through the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program are also not viewed as part of the social housing sector since affordability is required only for 30 years. In contrast, LIHTC units produced by nonprofits are included as part of the social housing sector.

Nonprofit housing developers, due to their access to private philanthropic resources, are typically able to serve a more disadvantaged population than for-profit developers. Nonprofits also benefit from other types of subsidies that are unavailable to for profits. For instance, nonprofits may receive donations of land from nonprofit, for profit, or public entities. They also are often eligible for low-interest loans and tax incentives.

Nonprofits are also typically praised for their commitment to produce housing that is affordable to lower income people over the long term. However, despite their good intentions to maintain these units in perpetuity, some nonprofits may already be finding it impossible to maintain all their units as affordable to low-income households, either due to difficulty in doing development deals as opportunities becomes scarcer in gentrifying areas or because some buildings may require more resources than the nonprofit can access. Nonprofit housing organizations have been criticized for the small scale of their activities and the perception that, despite their good efforts, nonprofit-produced units are woefully insufficient to meet the demand for affordable housing units.

For for-profit developers, the unassisted private housing market does not tend to provide adequate profit to build or maintain decent quality housing that is affordable to lower income households, without specific concessions from the government. In comparison with for profits involved with subsidized housing, nonprofits typically focus on more distressed areas and their developments are typically targeted to harder-to-house populations.

Assessing the Nonprofit Social Housing Sector in the USA

Nonprofit housing organizations in the USA possess some important strengths as providers of social housing. First, nonprofits are not “owned” by an individual or a group of individuals and face constraints on the use of any organizational surplus; thus, they are in an ideal position to fully dedicate the support from federal and state agencies and private donors toward the mission of their organizations to assist low-income households in accessing affordable housing. Second, many

low-income nonprofit housing organizations combine different objectives such as job skills training, civic education, community development programs, and other such activities along with providing low-income housing. This allows recipients to get a multitude of services through one organization rather than going to many different organizations. Third, nonprofits like Habitat for Humanity are effective in garnering support from the larger society through corporate partnerships, donations and volunteer time, which gives the entire sector of nonprofit low-income housing positive visibility. This is particularly important as at times such housing projects can be seen as factors that bring down the property values in a neighborhood and centers of criminal activities. Lastly, given the relative paucity of low-income affordable housing units in the USA, nonprofit organizations have often seized on the market opportunities present to build affordable housing.

The nonprofit housing sector in the USA is challenged, however, by a number of important factors. First, most low-income housing providers are dependent upon public subsidies which are in decline, given the current polarized political situation in the USA. The exceptions are organizations like Habitat for Humanity which depends primarily upon private philanthropy, but this reliance on private donors also limits their ability to build a substantial number of housing units. Second, many nonprofit community housing organizations are relatively small, with small boards and a narrow revenue base. Consequently, these organizations struggle with financing and sustainability. Third, the structure of many nonprofit housing organizations is quite complicated with various affiliated entities and partnerships. Consequently, it can be difficult to discern the full operation of these agencies; citizens interested in understanding the programs of these agencies may find it especially challenging (Smith 2010). And finally, social housing has benefited from the Low Income Housing Tax Credit program, but the complexity of the program requires the utilization of consultants, lawyers, and highly skilled professionals. Thus, the program tends to encourage professionalization although the many different players involved in the LIHTC have also contributed to the long-term political support for the program.

The Future of Nonprofit Social Housing in Germany and the USA

A comparison of nonprofit social housing in the USA and Germany, summarized in Table 20.2, reveals some predictable patterns based upon the existing welfare state literature. Germany developed extensive public funding of social housing in the build-up of the German welfare state in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This social housing was also characterized by long-term relationships between the state and nonprofit organizations, including cooperatives. This arrangement is exactly what the work of Esping-Anderson (1993) and Salamon and Anheier (1998) might predict. The USA fit the pattern of a liberal welfare state regime: The state essentially provided no public funding at all for social housing until the New Deal, when a host of government programs were created in the wake

Table 20.2 Comparative analysis of social nonprofit housing in Germany and the USA (own compilation)

	Germany	USA
History	Early historical decision (1920s) on a specific division of labor: The state finances and nonprofit companies build and operate social housing in favor of affordable rental flats	The sector exists since the 1930s (Great Depression) and was extended in the 1960s (War on Poverty) and consists mostly of quasi-governmental housing; after the 1980s the orientation was stronger on tax reduction (LIHTC)
Relevance/size	High importance in a far-reaching commodified market before 1989; today about 10% of all rental flats are owned by cooperatives	Relatively small sector: 5% of all housing units are owned by public and/or nonprofit bodies
Funding	Orientation on object promotion Tax privileges of public benefit companies before 1989 Public subsidies for companies operating within the market	Orientation on people (vouchers) and distressed areas (CDCs) Tax credits (LIHTC) Promotion of organizations operating outside the market
Structure and organization	The sector mostly consists of housing cooperatives as membership-based organizations Object promotion subsidies for rented social housing could be received by any organization that keeps rents under a specific level	Mission-based organizations focused on helping disadvantaged people (e.g., Habitat for Humanity) Place-oriented and community-based organizations (e.g., CDCs and CLTs)
Future	Opportunity of regaining importance after 1989 as a demand for affordable housing in growing cities creates pressure Distrust against huge formal organizations (like cooperatives), but at the same time willingness to conduct policy experiments, e.g., concerning housing for the elderly in the nonprofit field	Strong professionalization and increased market orientation Need for increased transparency and accountability

of the Depression. But the new public housing was often of poor quality and relied upon local government authorities to manage these properties; in comparison to Germany, social housing for poor people and disadvantaged individuals was quite meager (the USA did begin in the 1930s and thereafter an extensive sets of tax benefits for middle and upper class citizens to purchase homes; these tax benefits remain a centerpiece of the American welfare state).

The distinctive differences in the two countries began to diminish in the 1980s and thereafter. The USA developed a more robust nonprofit social housing industry, fueled in part by the LIHTC and other public and philanthropic support. At the same time, the German nonprofit social housing industry encountered problems and essentially has declined into irrelevance due to scandals and changes in public policies. For-profit firms and cooperatives have risen in prominence and now dominate the for-profit housing sector, using direct and indirect state subsidies. In the USA,

many CDCs and low-income housing organizations have had to become more commercial and market oriented due to declines in public subsidies; this mixed, hybrid model of housing has in turn created opportunities for funding but also risks diminishing the nonprofit norms and values that have historically guided these housing agencies. Moreover, the US Congress is now debating the merits of continuing to support the LIHTC, threatening the very survival of many CDCs and other nonprofit housing agencies. By contrast, the German state continues its public subsidies of affordable rental flats, albeit through cooperatives and for-profit firms. However, the federal level rejected its responsibility and transferred the policy to the level of the *Länder* and their budgets. Despite their highly differing economic and financial capacities, the *Länder* will need to continue to fund social housing. Particularly growing urban areas reflect a rising demand for affordable units and even the creation of new measures and models, e.g., reacting to an aging society.

Overall, the welfare states of the two countries, as illustrated in the policy field of social housing, remain quite distinct and to an extent conform to prevailing models. In the USA, nonprofit housing has grown substantially in the last 30 years. Some well-known nonprofit social housing organizations in the USA such as Habitat for Humanity are almost entirely dependent upon private philanthropy. The newer models of nonprofits housing such as CDCs rely upon tax credits that engage private investors, rather than the public sector directly, in supporting low-income housing. Increasingly, government relies upon tax incentives to for-profit developers to build “affordable” housing units. This public/private mix would to an extent be predicted by prevailing welfare state models (see, Esping-Andersen 1990; Salamon and Anheier 1998). Likewise, in Germany, public subsidies for social housing are extensive, although these subsidies are often inadequate to meet the demand in many areas, especially the high-cost urban areas.

Yet, the recent histories of social housing in these countries have also diverged from the predicted paths. In the USA, public subsidies, albeit through tax credits, have risen sharply in recent years. Moreover, government has substantially invested in the renovation of public housing, although this additional investment has not kept pace with the increased demand for social housing. In Germany, the longstanding partnership between the state and private nonprofit organizations in social housing has essentially dissolved and has been replaced with a reliance on for-profit firms using public subsidies to build and maintain social housing.

Thus, convergence between these two welfare states appears to be occurring on the mode of delivery with much greater reliance on for-profit firms, and more generally, social housing has become more “market oriented” in both countries. But the policies of public support have remained persistently divergent, despite the growth of public subsidies in the USA in recent years (Henriksen et al. 2012).

In the coming years affordable housing of all types in Germany and the USA will likely face unprecedented funding threats. Changing demographics, the squeeze on public budgets, and the shifting landscape of economic development are forcing state and local governments to partner with for-profit developers to build affordable units. Nonprofit social housing organizations will need to tap new sources of funding and partnerships, if they are to continue to be a vital and important sector to address the urgent housing needs of the populace.

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Chapter 21

From Mainstreaming to Modernization? New Labour and the Third Sector in England

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Abstract The chapter considers the relevance and applicability of three ‘pillars of modernization’—economic efficiency/incentives, the development of specialism/expertise, and integration—in relation to recent policy efforts to shape the British third sector. The approach is used to analyze reform patterns in England, where it is argued that consensual pillar balancing, constrained pillar crystallization and conflictual pillar balancing have all been in evidence in recent years.

Keywords Third sector · New labour · Modernization · England

Agenda and Concepts

A widely recognized account of how third-sector policy development has unfolded in England over a decade and a half up to 2010 describes a pattern of ‘mainstreaming’, whereby organizations between the market and the state have experienced levels of political and policy recognition not witnessed since the consolidation of the welfare state in the middle of the twentieth century (Kendall 2003). Many markers of this recognition can be highlighted: the adoption of a Compact to embed shared ‘partnership’ aspirations; sustained reform to inherited policy institutions, including charity law and tax treatment; and the injection of significant amounts of funding by central government to develop the sector’s ‘capacity’ and better position it to respond to social needs and demands.

This much is incontrovertible. But taken together, can we claim to have witnessed ‘modernization’ of policy? And—anticipating somewhat the mixed and uneven picture we will be painting below—to the extent modernization has proven challenging, problematic and contentious, what contributory factors have generated this state of affairs? This chapter will attempt to develop a first response to these questions in relation to the New Labour administration (1997–2010) drawing on two heretofore unconnected conceptual literatures, public policy studies and third-sector studies, and show the relevance of these issues using a small-scale empirical enquiry conducted in 2010–2011.

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I.	Economic efficiency/incentives
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Emphasis on individuals and self-orientation, rather than ... communities, and collective orientation as the basic unit of society...modernization accounts both observe and promote the primacy of economic incentives as a key driver of political organization and social change”
II.	Specialism/expertise
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Emphases emerging from greater control over the environment.... From expansion of...knowledge...and institutional adaptation to the unprecedented increase in knowledge...involves greater use of inanimate sources of power and tools ”
III.	Integration
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “From a fragmented society based on association with place and clan, towards a more integrated and inter-connected...social integration results from higher density population that results from industrialization ...economic integration from two way flow of goods and services...[including standardization to achieve economies of scale] political integration emerges from high degree of specialization associated with modernized societies”

Fig. 21.1 Margett’s (2010) ‘pillars of modernization’.

Pillars of Modernization

The conceptual framing of the chapter in understanding ‘modernization’ is derived from the British generic public policy literature, but because that essentially presupposes a two-sector model, attempts to nuance this to account for the three-sector policy case. It focusses on horizontal (that is, cross-cutting, sector wide) policy development (rather than vertical fields of policy). Kendall (2012) surveys a number of the key models addressing the topic developed in British policy analysis. It is argued there that Margett’s ‘three pillars’ provides the most helpful starting point, but needs modification to render it appropriate to this particular domain. She conceptualizes modernization as involving three ‘pillars...(involving) clusters of characteristics that might be hypothesized to define modernization reform’ (Margett 2010, p. 26). Figure 21.1 summarizes what Margett means by each of these pillars. Margett suggests that ‘to be successful reform must be distributed across more than one of these pillars’.

While more helpful than the available alternatives, this formulation is still implicitly oriented towards only two sectors, the market and the state. So can it be applied readily to the third sector? At least, in the English case, there are several reasons to doubt it. Based on an earlier study of the nature of the British voluntary sector, including its policy environment, and the beliefs of those who are deeply involved in its organization (Kendall 2003), we can see that this approach is implicitly only attentive to two sectors because of the premises and assumptions upon which it relies.

First, allowance must be made for the existence of principled resistance to the notion that individualistic incentives are necessarily an appropriate route for

modern policy development. Relatedly, there is also a widely held view that in many of the subfields of policy in which the third sector operates, the ‘technology’ of ‘production’ (how resource inputs are converted into outputs and outcomes) is such that, as the scale of activity increases, *diseconomies* as well as *economies* may often emerge. Also, there is a shared belief that not all policy-relevant behaviors can be ‘bought’: voluntarism (engaging in social action without financial reward) can be a badge of honour, for many a defining ingredient in this sphere. This can be important even if confined modestly to relatively few functions or strategic layers of governance, as with trusteeship (Kendall and Knapp 1996).

Second, the formulation is too overbearing in asserting that directive control over the environment—policy, and organizational, as well as natural—can be assumed to be progressive. Resistance to *dirigisme* or coercion from above and respect for the importance of autonomy and independence in actors’ motivation is ubiquitous. ‘Softer’ approaches for shifting policy—either through ‘nudging’ actors in certain directions or through the evocation of more explicit deliberative processes involving argument, dialogue, debate and reflection—are then seen as appropriate when developing modern policy in a three-sector model.

Third and relatedly, the formulation seems too accepting of the benefits of ‘standardization’ of policy, especially where it goes together with greater central control and ‘upscaling’. As already noted, this may relate to production diseconomies of scale, but transaction cost considerations are relevant too (the costs of ‘running the system’, which are highly significant in such complex environments). This may go hand in hand with the belief that an emphasis on standardization can be associated with the loss of valued diversity (‘a thousand flower blooming...’), and that specialization in some contexts can be problematic to the extent that it may threaten valuable ‘joined up’ and holistic policies and practices.

The next step is then to directly adapt Margett’s ‘pillars’ formulation to respond to these considerations, staking out the territory. Figure 21.2 provides such an alternative formulation.

A key feature of such a model is its attempt to accommodate plurality. We must acknowledge that because of voluntarism, the ambiguities of economic scale effects in this domain and the weight attached by actors to protect diversity and variety in activities and outputs, would-be ‘policy modernizers’ in this domain facing a much more challenging calibration process than that implied by Margett’s initial formulation.

This framework can be related to the actual existing English third-sector agenda during the noughties. Symbolically, the extensive, resource-intensive efforts by New Labour and third-sector partners to establish the idea of a third-sector policy as an appropriate focus for mainstream policy development can be seen as an effort to make ‘feasible policy space’ for these pillars, inclusive of the third sector, at a discursive and ideational level. The Compact (see Fig. 21.3), although later to be heavily criticized for ineffectiveness and implementation failures (see below) can be read in this context as providing a crucial symbolic rallying point, differentiating modern three-sector ‘policy activism’ in this domain from the fatalistic ‘do nothing’ (or at least, ‘do little’) approach associated with the past. Also, the emphasis in the

- I. **Economic efficiency & individual incentivization** are potentially both *problematic and progressive*. Modern policy seeks to account for both the advantages and downsides of applying these criteria and mechanisms to third sector contexts, and considers how to balance them with other values and tools
- II. **Expertise/specialism development** widens opportunities for, *but does not necessitate*, more expansive and direct control over policy actors and their environments. Appropriate policy involves knowledgeable policy actors responding to claims over organizational, territorial & ideational *autonomy*, as well as the extension of control
- III. **Integration** involves heightened inter-connectivity *in relation to both traditional and emerging communities of policy, place and interest*. Appropriate commitment to trust-enhancing communication and deliberation amongst and between such co-existing policy community actors follows from this imperative

Fig. 21.2 ‘Pillars’ sensitized to a third-sector context (own compilation)

- Voluntary action is an essential component of a democratic society.
 - An independent and diverse voluntary and community sector is fundamental to the well-being of society.
 - In the development and delivery of public policy and services, the Government and the voluntary and community sector have distinct but complementary roles.
 - There is added value in working in partnership towards common aims and objectives. Meaningful consultation builds relationships, improves policy development and enhances the design and delivery of services and programs.
 - The Government and the VCS have different forms of accountability and are answerable to a different range of stakeholders, but common to both is the need for integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.
 - VCS organizations are entitled to campaign within the law in order to advance their aims.
 - The Government plays a significant role, among other things, as a funder of some VCS organizations. Funding can be an important element of the relationship between the Government and the VCS.
 - Both Government and VCS acknowledge the importance of promoting equality of opportunity for all people regardless of race, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation or religion and or belief.
- The national Compact was ‘refreshed’ in 2009, a process which sought to respect its founding principles, but to streamline its functioning. Between 2007 and 2010 it was supported by a national Compact Commissioner and local Compacts (covering almost all local government-third sector areas in England; see Zimmeck et al, 2011)

Fig. 21.3 Key ‘Compact’ principles in England (own compilation)

policy community on the need for third sector independence and its distinctiveness from government fit with the modified expertise/specialism pillar; the stress on campaigning in the face of unmet need, consultation and openness of opportunity for diverse communities tie in with the modification of the integration pillar; while the commitment to foster roles in the ‘development and delivery of public policy and services’ clearly resonates with aspects of the modified efficiency/incentives pillar.

Third-Sector Modernization: Elements of Contestation

Construing modernization policy-making as a shared striving for the consolidation of these adapted pillars could be a helpful starting point—at least for those who are not fatalistic, and believe active and explicit policy-making in this domain is worthwhile. But it is certainly not sufficient. This is because it does not attend to the contentious side of third-sector policy modernization: the extent to which priority setting can be expected to involve conflict over political values and the allocation of scarce economic resources.

One key consideration is the relationship between the specialist third-sector policy community and other policy actors. It is all very well if the national third-sector horizontal policy community agrees internally on the relevance of these adapted pillars. But it must shape the approach taken *outside* itself by power holders across the broader landscape of policy if it is to not just be ‘talking to itself’. Impacts must be made on beliefs and behaviours in the many vertical policy fields and at the local level. Yet, it is likely to be very demanding to follow through implementation on these sites (where unadapted two-sector models, modern or ‘premodern’ may tend to dominate).

And even if the relevance of the three-sector model is demonstrated, setting it in place is not just a matter of technocratic implementation. The policy process *always* involves battles over ideas and conflict between divergent agendas and interests, and these differences are at play in the third-sector case. Drawing on earlier mappings of ideological and value positions vis-à-vis the third sector, I have suggested these tensions can be captured schematically. I proposed that the consumerist model, the civil order renewal model and democratic life revival model are likely to be in evidence in modernization debates just as they are in other aspects of the policy discourse, coexisting, mixing and competing with one another, now involving contrasting prioritization in terms of the modernization pillars. In particular, the *consumerist* model will tend to attach the greatest weight to the efficiency and incentives pillar; a *civil order renewal* model will tend to stress the expertise pillar as the most critical, while a *democratic life revival* model will tend to place a premium on the pursuit of the integration pillar (Kendall 2012: Appendix 1).

We can now try to draw together the threads of the foregoing discussion by representing the relationship between the different aspects of third-sector modernization discussed. Modernization in this sphere will tend to involve both elements of consensus building (decontestation) and aspects of contention (when political values

and ideological predispositions collide). If a spectrum from consensual to conflictual aspects of this phenomenon is recognized as a useful stylized simplification, then at the most consensual end we have modernization as involving a relatively smooth, uncontested transition from the unadapted understanding specified in Fig. 21.1 to that shown in Fig. 21.2. We can refer to this as *consensual pillar adaptation (CPA)*.

At the most conflictual end, we have both internal and external contentions over how to frame and prioritize the adapted three pillars. This is especially fraught because it involves differences of value within the third-sector policy community as well as tensions with the agendas of policy actors outside this community, and is a scenario we can refer to as *conflictual pillar balancing (CPB)*. Finally, a mixed or intermediate situation arises when, although a consensus over how to adapt the three pillars can seem to be in place internally *within* the specialist policy community; it is not effectively transmitted in external policy circles wherein two-sector models partially or wholly persist. This can be referred to as involving *constrained pillar crystallization (CPC)*, because decontestation has been achieved, but is only partial and incomplete.

Empirical Evidence: Policy Community Perspectives

In this section, we provide evidence of aspects of third-sector policy development which appears to epitomize and embody each of the three scenarios. We look at the cases beginning with the most consensual, and ending with the most contentious.¹

¹ The empirical study drawn upon here focussed on the understandings of modernization held in 2010 by leading English third-sector horizontal policy community members. Prior to fieldwork, a picture of the context for the range of perspectives anticipated was developed by reviewing earlier work on third-sector policy, key policy documents, speeches, statements and evaluation reports to establish the programs and priorities which could conceptually be linked to the modernization process as approached in this study. Interestingly, the term ‘modernization’ itself seemed to be less evident in this domain than others, and generic policies appeared not to see the world through a ‘sector’ perspective. It was suggested by interviewees that this lack of usage could be because there was a sometimes certain distaste for, or even hostility to, this vocabulary in some parts of the sector on the grounds that it was too abstract and open ended in terms of meaning. In this situation, parameters for the subject matter when executing fieldwork—15 one and a half hour in-depth interviews being undertaken with key policy actors located in key positions in the policy community—were derived in three ways. First, the development of policy institutions and instruments which did explicitly evoke modernization was considered in scope. Second, the sorts of connections made between the conceptual framework and the third-sector literature reviewed earlier could be used as a catalyst to prompt the discussion of issues at the level of themes (without recourse to the academic language to keep the discussions intuitive and natural). Finally, interviewees were given an informal, open-ended ‘free rein’ at the beginning and end of the more structured discussion to reflect upon and elaborate on the meanings of ‘modernization,’ they felt to be salient and appropriate.

Consensual Pillar Adaptation (CPA)

One of the areas where the term ‘modernization’ has routinely been used by third-sector policy actors themselves has been in relation to the development of the Charity Commission in its regulatory role. Such legislation with the *Charities Act 2006* as the most important single legal expression, was widely supported, notwithstanding some qualms about the operationalization of the ‘public benefit’ rule (how the requirement that charities demonstrably operate in the public benefit should be implemented).

There are several reasons why this consensual situation emerged. First, a good deal of care was taken in preparing, processing and beginning to implement the legislation and associated regulations. There was the internal expertise of the Charity Commission itself, while appropriate professional and sympathetic support in this endeavour was readily available, for example, as represented with the Charity Law Association (CLA). Second, we can infer that the modernizing reforms demonstrably involved account taking of the range of appropriately adapted pillars’ values and priorities we set out earlier (Fig. 21.2). The charity law reform sought to render the regulatory process more efficiently (Pillar I), but was sensitive to diversity: It demonstrably tried to do so in a way sympathetic to the range of organizational types. For example, different requirements and expectations were specified according to the size of organizations. So, the reforms could not be construed as *narrowly* economic in character. Rather, they were developed without losing sight of the fact that the basic goals of charities could range across a wide range of noneconomic and social goals, including those which could be related to fostering integration (III). At the same time, the principle of respect for organizational autonomy, so important for the sector’s identity, was something whose place in the legal framework continued to be guaranteed, fitting well with the adapted expertise pillar (II). Third, not only the principles but also the practice of reform was relatively uncontentious in part because it was an ‘internal’ matter not reliant on other sectors without the requisite knowledge. The follow through into implementation was made possible by the investment of public funds, especially in the Charity Commissions’ capacity.²

Two other examples of measures encouraged by policy-makers and others which can be seen as relatively consensual modernization efforts to invest in information technology (IT) and the sharing of ‘back room’ functions. Addressing these needs through advice and support were important priorities of a ‘modernization fund’ designed to foster efficiency in the challenging fiscal context prevailing from 2008 onwards (HM Government, 2009; GrantThornton 2010). This may readily be understood in pillar terms. IT adoption could be construed as enhancing efficiency (reducing costs without losing output through easier and quicker sharing

² It is worth noting that at the time of writing this chapter, under the Coalition government, the Charity Commissions are suffering badly from an ongoing program of official austerity, experiencing deep budgetary cuts and a loss of expert personnel. However, this chapter is referring to the New Labour administration, when budgetary arrangements were more generous and human resources were being enhanced.

of mission-relevant information) as well as allowing better flows of knowledge and communication, and potentially inclusively applicable across the full range of social organizations. The sharing of administrative functions was also apparently understood as a ‘win–win’ in this sense—and as such may be contrasted with sharing *front-line* client services through joint working. (The latter is a much more contentious issue, because it may involve losses in efficiency in terms of meeting the needs of particular constituencies, which could adversely affect other pillars if they narrow integrative capability and the ability to develop niche, specialist expertise.)

Constrained Pillar Crystallization (CPC)

The aforementioned Compact exemplifies the intermediate CPC situation. The principles of the English compact model were specified in 1998 (see, Fig. 21.3), very soon after New Labour began its first term of office. These principles were viewed in the horizontal policy community at the time as being of real political value, and a ‘step change’ in policy terms (Kendall 2003). For our purposes here, it is not difficult to see that they can readily be understood as implicitly combining elements of the adapted modernization pillars. The commitments to efficient and effective partnerships, the investment of economic and political resources in ‘infrastructure’ to institutionalize sector-specific know-how, the emphasis on the value of independence and the aspirations for community inclusivity in terms of types of voluntary sector group demonstrably connect to important pillar priorities.

Yet despite this, efforts to put such principles into practice have been troubled, and contrast markedly with the charity law, IT and backroom modernization examples. As Zimmeck et al. (2011; see also, Rochester 2013) have convincingly argued, looking back over the first decade of its functioning, a deeply disappointing set of experiences emerged from a third-sector perspective. They paint a vivid picture of insufficient continuity and failure to stabilize institutional infrastructure; ambiguity of purpose and failure to translate principles into operational policies and clear policy roles; and delayed and under-resourced implementation infrastructure at the national and especially subnational level. (While the agency within the third sector charged with implementing this policy nationally, *Compact Voice*, has challenged their analysis as too negative, a close reading of the text suggests it does strike a fair balance—and certainly remains the most credible and exhaustive account available to date.)

Our modernization framework may help us interpret this difficult trajectory. Although the Compact’s *principles* indeed embodied an internal consensual approach, at least inside the established policy community³, when it came to *policy*

³ Outside the Horizontal Third Sector Policy Community, however, even its aspirations and goals have been criticized. From the world of practice, the National Coalition for Independent Action, set up to oppose this policy community’s role as inherently supplicant to the state in the contemporary capitalist status quo, regards the compact and its supporting institutions as an ‘industry’ acting as a ‘fig leaf for unequal power relationships’, although even they acknowledge it could

follow-through—in our terms, converting the rhetoric of policy reform into reality—the Compact quickly floundered. The institutional barriers behind these difficulties may partly reflect internal design weaknesses, but given the magnitude of the task at hand, the resources for ‘external translation’ were woefully inadequate, and not provided on a sufficiently stable basis. So, it is unhelpful to situate the problem primarily at the door of the specialist state and the third-sector bodies involved: It was much more ‘external’. The difficulties of external translation referred to here can, in our terms, be understood here as linked to three points of contention.

First, the clash of ‘modern’ with ‘traditional’ approaches. In some circumstances, the Compact implementation efforts will have come up against actors in the state who have not even recognized modernization as a helpful or relevant formulation at all. It should be recalled that many of the fields of policy in which the third sector is prominent as a provider are highly specialized niche services, often operating at the periphery of mainstream local provision. The relevant actors and institutions were at an enormous geographical, organizational and political distance from those promoting ‘modernization’ and ‘the third sector’ at the center of the New Labour administration.

Second, a gap between different understandings of ‘modern’ would be anticipated using our model because of a potential clash between the unadapted modernization pillars and the adapted modernization pillars. A faith in competitive markets and market contestability—as the default assumption to deal with inefficiencies on the part of the unadapted efficiency pillar—is the obvious example here. According to Zimmeck et al. (2011), a ‘withering on the vine’ scenario could emerge. In this situation, the Compact may not have been *actively* attacked by the proponents of contestability. But it could be effectively side lined or marginalized over time through a failure to commit proportionate resources. Implicitly, the policies and practices of powerful state actors beyond the third-sector policy community—where implementation should be biting—could tend to default to an unadapted, two-sector model.

Finally, the Compact’s character as a ‘soft’ policy instrument, with no high powered compliance incentives, and very indirect modest sanction availability meant the demanding activity of sustained argument and persuasion were necessarily the main tools to achieve meaningful application of the policy. And even if a meeting of minds in terms of adapted pillar recognition could be achieved, a different weighting of these priorities as between external and internal actors could stymie progress as well. For example, some of the materials collated by Zimmeck et al. (2011) seem to suggest the existence of a clash between greater weighting on nurturing the expertise pillar inside the third sector, while external state actors may have tended to be more focused on strengthening their own efficiency priorities.

have ‘tactical use by a few plucky activists’ (NCIA 2009). In the academic sphere, writers working with Foucauldian and governmentality approaches have similarly construed these developments as necessarily involving ‘incorporation’ with the compact said to as a ‘device’ of manipulation and control.

Conflictual Pillar Balancing (CPB)

In CPC above, we have suggested a range of obstacles to appropriately balance third-sector modernization located *outside* the specialist third-sector community, leading to problems of follow-through and implementation (despite extensive agreement within the third sector on principles). In the CPB scenario, to be explored now, by contrast, we also encounter contention *within* the third-sector policy community itself concerning how modernization should be construed and put into practice.

In moving to consider programmes involving more obvious internal fractures and fault lines, it becomes useful to focus on the so-called *Builders* programmes. During its period in office, the New Labour administration invested several hundred million pounds of public expenditure in grants and loans in support of such initiatives to increase the ‘capacity’ of the third sector in various respects. Existing accounts report a mixed picture. In a nutshell, the dominant accounts (framed by technocratic auditing processes and presented for parliamentary review) suggest the problems have included shortcomings of policy clarity, with insufficient thought given to specify programme goals; delays in consolidating institutional delivery structures; and failure to embed suitable procedures and practices, meaning that the supportive cultures were not established.

In what follows, we will try to examine how aspects of the development might also be understood in a more socially and politically analytical way using the adapted ‘pillars of modernization’ framework. We look at the most expansive of the ‘builders’ schemes, namely *Futurebuilders* (see, Fig. 21.4). Our assumption is that the processes were not simply technocratic, but more deeply political. It is held that contrasting political values, beliefs, linked to prevailing ideologies, were always relevant (Thompson et al. 1990; see, Kendall and Taylor 2009), and tensions therein became more evident over time, especially around a focusing event in 2008 when the institutional arrangements for running the programme were revamped.

Initially the programme had evolved in a relatively harmonious way and seemed to reflect a high degree of consensus from a modernization perspective (see, Kendall 2012, pp. 30–32). By the end of its lifetime, however, it had demonstrably become a highly contentious project. It is true that some of the difficulties were technocratic, to do with the personal positions taken by individual politicians and leaders, or reflected lower-level interdepartmental and inter-sectoral rivalries. But we will try to show now that other problems reflected more fundamental differences in how our pillars were construed and weighted, both externally and internally.

The basic differences can be captured by comparing the two ‘models’ deployed to implement the programme (Table 21.1): a ‘Futurebuilders Mark I’ running consensually from 2004–2008, and a ‘Futurebuilders Mark II’ operating from 2008 until the end of the New Labour administration (2010) which was much more controversial. Using our framework, it might initially appear as if Mark II simply involved a reversion to an unadapted two-pillar approach. Research respondents certainly believed that the shift to a new regime involved the new incumbents having to defer more to external control, and less trust in third-sector autonomous governance,

- Futurebuilders was an experimental £215 million government investment fund seeking to enable third sector investees to ‘expand and improve’ their delivery of public services which ran between 2004 and 2010. It invested directly in the capacity of third sector organizations considered to be viable investments, but without access to commercial sources of finance. It was based on the assumption these organizations were ‘undercapitalised’ and would tend to lack the skills required to bid for and manage public sector contracts, or need to acquire premises or equipment to deliver public services.
- Investment was meant to make the organizations ‘more effective’ and more likely to win contracts, with the income from the contracts intended to repay the investments with interest. Funding awards could include a combination of loans and equity-type instruments, as well as non-repayable capital and revenue grants
- It was hoped that the resulting track record of delivery would further enhance the organization’s reputation and expertise and increase their ability to work with the public sector. [It was assumed that] this reinforcement would also have other resource benefits too
- The fund was initially managed by Futurebuilders England limited, a consortium of long established ‘voluntary sector’ and co-operative umbrellas and funders: the National Council of Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), CharityBank, Unity Trust Bank and the Northern Rock Foundation. After a controversial competitive tender process, in 2008 (see text) the first consortium lost the contract to the Adventure Capital Management fund (ACF), chaired by the chief executive of the Association for Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations (ACEVO) ACF had originally been launched in 2002 as a Government funded demonstration program, seeking to foster social enterprise amongst ‘medium sized’ organizations (defined as groups already large enough to employ staff and with ‘long term commitments to their communities’). By late 2009 the *Futurebuilders* contract was running alongside other programmes an trading under a new name, ‘The Social Investment Business’

Fig. 21.4 Futurebuilders. (National Audit Office 2009; Social Investment Business 2009; field-work interviews)

while involving at the same time greater use of market-style management language and techniques. Also, in line with an apparent strengthening of market values, some of the leading figures were associated with organizations only relatively recently established in the sector under the banners of ‘leadership’ and ‘social enterprise’. They seemed not to have the same longstanding third-sector roots, or experiential credentials of those who ran the programme in its first phase. Those involved had backgrounds outside the sector in commerce and for-profit marketing, and close links to financial institutions were strongly in evidence.

However, none of our interviewees appear to have felt that the shift to Futurebuilders’ Mark II involved the complete abandonment of a three-sector approach. Instead, it was seen as a new ‘version’ of what was still considered to be the ‘third-sector policy’: This was so because the key rationale for the programme was still about responding to market failures in terms of undercapitalization, recognizing implicitly that a pure market approach to efficiency was insufficient for reform, and that the third sector should be a player. As with Mark I, only non-profit providers were eligible for ‘building’ loans and funds. As such, the third sector per se was still the focus of the initiative. At least some of the sympathetic learning developed

Table 21.1 From Futurebuilders, Mark I to Mark II. (fieldwork; National Audit Office 2009, pp. 29–31)

Aspect of programme	Futurebuilders Mark I: Futurebuilders England Limited 2004–2008	Futurebuilders Mark II: Adventure Capital Fund Management Limited (social investment business) 2008–2010
Favored inputs: funding mix priorities for supporting investees	Ample grants offered as well as loans; funding diversification a key driver; high tolerance of investee decisions not to take on loans as solution to perceived ‘under capacity’	Grants strictly circumscribed (always as intermediate step towards loans); strong a priori preference for loans over grants, marked encouragement to see loans as primary solution to ‘under capacity’
Processing arrangements: governance and funding flows	Tri-partite structure tilted towards third sector (two actors in third sector, one in state) Default assumption: third sector as main locus of control for funding flows	Bilateral structure combining third sector and state Default assumption: state sector as main locus of control for funding flows
Outputs and outcomes: performance measurement and targets	Target defined in terms of the number of investments made; also extensive and complex suite of accompanying indicators developed by third sector including audit of the number of investments and ‘fair shares’ between different types of third-sector investee	Minimal and simple targets, jointly discussed but prioritized externally focusing only on: number of contracts won; value of investments drawn down within 2 years of award; level of ‘customer (investee) satisfaction’
Outputs and outcomes: remuneration of operator	Lump sum payment to operator only: no financial link between ‘performance’ as measured through targets and indicators	‘Fixed fee’ to operator, plus financial incentive via ‘performance related bonus’ if the operator ‘achieves against KPIs’

under *Futurebuilders* Mark I was carried over into the Mark II version of the programme. And while high-profile Mark II actors might more obviously have city and financial connections in terms of the backgrounds of stakeholders, and appear to be more aligned with the (social) entrepreneurial aspect of the third-sector agenda, these were shifts of emphasis rather than entirely new departures.

Yet, as Table 21.1 shows, the design and implementation style of *Futurebuilders* clearly did change in significant respects as a result of the tendering process: External pressures had generated a new context, and the identity and style of the provision changed. Moreover, the balance of the adapted pillars had changed. This change was viewed as being for the better by the new organization, and those sympathetic to their modus operandi—but as a step backwards by the founding organization as well as those sympathetic towards it. Guided by the features highlighted in Table 21.1, we will finish this section by trying to draw out differences in terms of aspects of the regime’s design which changed, so that conflicts in pillar emphasis as between the models become clearer.

Those who on balance endorsed the shift from Mark I to Mark II included, but were not limited to, the Social Investment Business itself and its associates. In pillar balance and values terms, we can refer to this positive reading as involving market-making evangelism (MME). This way of thinking seems to have an affinity to the more general ideology of ‘consumerism’ which we identified earlier as one of the ingredients in the third-sector ideological mix. On this account, the new arrangements were, quite rightly, predicated on efficiency imperatives, boldly sweeping away unwieldy and burdensome bureaucratic structures and processes—as we have seen, designed by the third sector itself—and ‘getting funds to where they were needed’ with minimal distraction (for more detailed discussion see, Kendall 2012). Other pillars were not completely abandoned. The use of expertise from the ‘social’ sector to inform loan decisions was recognized as appropriate by the new operator, and committee structures reflecting this were retained, so that space was in principle retained for noncommercial criteria to play a role in decision-making. And gains in integration could be expected to follow most effectively from fostering third-sector market shares. Assuming that the third sector tended to be geared more towards meeting the needs of relatively vulnerable groups than other sectors, increasing their role in service delivery would inevitably strengthen the overall position of these constituencies. However, it was nevertheless clear that associated with this approach was the dominance of market-oriented efficiency—with the important priority being to ‘get the money out the door’, and increase the volume of third-sector-held contracts in quasi-market situations as rapidly as possible.

How does this set of beliefs compare to Mark I in value terms? The latter had been a relatively broad church, and could perhaps be referred to as involving incremental latitudinarian pragmatism (ILP). This did involve elements of consumerism and the attachment of weight to efficiency. But by contrast with MME, it also involved values more readily associated with civic order renewal and democratic life revival, and with no single ideology or pillar priority tending to eclipse the others: Expertise and integration were much more prominent.

As Table 21.1 underlines, this approach was associated, then, with the actors involved in the Futurebuilders England Limited consortium who controlled the programme until 2008. *Futurebuilders*, in this line of thought, was an important piece in the policy architecture: a new piece in the jigsaw of third-sector institutional consolidation. Several contrasts can be drawn out: This perspective was much more sanguine than the MME perspective about the generalizability of the claimed advantages to quasi-market processes, and less willing to assume that efficiency gains would necessarily tend to lead to a strengthening of the other two modernization pillars.

On this ILP view, *Futurebuilders* should have continued to purposefully foster integration and expertise through nonmarket means, incorporating both steering from the centre, and learning to be responsive to feedback from below. For example, the former belief was implicit in the breadth of performance indicators designed under the old regime by the first group of third-sector incumbents. These kept systematically in focus the situation of smaller community groups, groups in rural areas, and black and minority ethnic groups. Also, implicit in the choice to use

scarce resources to collect this data in the mark I approach had been the view that simply leaving the fortunes of often relatively fragile third-sector groups like these to the playing out of quasi-market processes and forces would be unlikely to lead to gains in service access and voice.

Under the ILP view, it was seen as quite reasonable that significant numbers of groups initially supported by the scheme would eschew market-led values: They could, sensibly choose not to go down the borrowing- and lending-fuelled expansion route, because this could be out of kilter with their missions; out of line with their perceptions of appropriate risk; and undesirable or unfeasible for other reasons. Why? Most obviously, if organizations got swept away in market-like contracting and procurement processes, they could end up in situations in which their traditional stakeholders were alienated (because they were associated with the organization to shelter from, or avoid excessive market pressures), and find their ability to meet the needs of high-cost, complex or demanding beneficiaries severely compromised by the need to be 'competitive' on cost. Also, in line with critiques of market and state action long fostered in this sphere, it was self-evident on this view that third-sector concerns about the agendas, competence and predictability of market-oriented state bodies in their commissioning approaches and practices should be articulated and debated.

The ILP approach, moreover, not only differed in its understanding of integration and expertise from MME. It also involved concerns that too much pro-market zeal could be counterproductive in efficiency terms. From an ILP perspective, there were two primary practical concerns voiced about threats to efficiency posed by the Mark II approach. First, the probability of 'default' would increase, with investees on average less able to pay back their loans, because insufficient time and evaluative knowledge had backed decisions. Second, the view that at least some of the Mark II lending was inappropriate because it was supporting third-sector activity which could have been funded by commercial or other (non-state funded) third-sector lenders. Over-hasty public investment was therefore has been matched properly to need, but was displacing potential private investments.

Concluding Remark

Policy modernization has been construed here as involving the search for efficiency, integration and expertise. But in the third-sector case, we have seen that understanding how these three 'pillars' apply and link to priorities and values needs adaptation and nuancing and is a multi-faceted phenomenon. In particular, the chapter has acknowledged the possibility that under some conditions harmonious and smooth policy change to these ends may be in evidence. But has also tried to explore why in other situations the process is much more fraught, complex and contentious than it initially appears.

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Chapter 22

Towards a Neoliberal Third Sector?

International Lessons from Recent Developments in China

Ingo Bode

Abstract This article, drawing on exploratory data from a recent consultancy project, illuminates development in the Chinese third sector through the lens of what is currently underway in more advanced Western societies. Scrutinizing the set-up of the sector with respect to social service-providing nonprofits, it argues that worldwide trends towards a neoliberal approach take centre stage here. The result is selective social performance and poor associational underpinnings. However, the analysis also hints at ambiguities in the overall evolution.

Keywords People's Republic of China · Third sector · Social service provision · Neoliberalization

Internationally, the “third sector” has long been defined as something “in between” the state and the market. Associational dynamics within and around nonprofits have been understood as its major backbone, especially regarding the interface between services provided by these agencies and the translation of civic initiative in the design of the wider infrastructure of the modern welfare state. In wider parts of Europe, indeed, the performance of the sector was widely based on “Tocquevillean” associational democracy meeting public action in favour of social citizenship (Marshall 1992). Moreover, the sector was deemed to provide smart solutions to social problems typical of the late twentieth century (e.g. xenophobic tendencies, the exclusion of disadvantaged groups, etc.), given that Western welfare states were showing limitations regarding the protection of citizens against ever more unleashed market forces. Nonprofits, endorsed by members, volunteers and sponsors, now became understood as a “last resort” in the resistance against social disintegration.

However, the role and potentials of this “third power” turn out to be less straightforward with recent transformations pervading the world of nonprofits. This holds particularly true for areas in which the sector is supposed to contribute to social integration *in material terms*, i.e. through delivering services to disadvantaged citizens and combining this with political advocacy and self-organization. A major observation here has been the movement towards commercialization and mission drift (Hendriksen et al. 2012).

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Against this background, the following explores how the third sector has recently taken shape in a country from which most occidental institutions have long been absent, i.e. the People's Republic of China. The overarching question is about how this sector is evolving against the background of this nation adopting major economic institutions from the Western world and developing a special form of modern capitalism (White et al. 1996; Lin 2010; So and Chu 2012). Passing over the aforementioned associational dimension of the third sector, China's state administration has indeed become interested in the latter's contribution to social wellbeing, given both growing social disruptions and evolving welfare needs (Boychuck 2007).

Drawing on evidence gathered during a recent consultancy project—for which the author of this chapter was recruited together with Annette Zimmer and a number of other experts—the subsequent analysis provides a thought experiment by which developments far outside the Western world are studied with an eye on how they correspond to evolutions “at home”. It will be shown that recent developments in mainland China exemplify in a fairly untainted way an international tendency towards a “neoliberal third sector”, although this movement exhibits considerable ambiguity. The chapter starts by depicting developments of typical Chinese nonprofits, illustrated by brief case portrayals. Thereafter, it discusses the evidence against the backdrop of current Western trends and concepts with regard to the future profile of the third sector. Returning to the case of China, the final section shows that despite the overarching trend, unlikely to let emerge the above-mentioned “Tocqueville/Marshall blend”, much remains open concerning further evolutions.

China Inventing a Service-Delivering Third Sector: Examples from the Ground

This chapter is based on a scientific consultancy project, labelled “Government Procurement of Public Services from Social Groups”, led by both the Beijing office of the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) and the National Ministry of Civil Affairs, one of the two ministries concerned with the regulation of service-providing nonprofits in China. The overarching aim of the project consisted of initiating a Sino-German dialogue about experience with the evolving relationships between the state and nonprofits, as an impulse to Chinese academics and practitioners.

The involvement in the project was an opportunity for explorative “participant observation” addressing both political stakeholders and typical not-for-profit organizations. Major data sources were workshops and symposia assembling Chinese colleagues and practitioners (government officials and representatives of nongovernmental organizations), on the one hand, and field visits of a delegation composed of academics and practitioners (in Guangzhou, Yinchuan, Shanghai and Nanjing), on the other. During September 2012 and April 2013, the delegation visited ten organizations; in each agency, interviews were conducted with managers and other key actors. In what follows, three (apparently) typical organizations are

portrayed with an eye on basic structures and the way they are embedded in their wider environment, particularly their statutory “partners” (Communist Party; local authorities). The sketches have to be very brief here and can only illuminate the most salient patterns. Subsequently, the evidence is discussed by relating it to insights from the wider literature.

Case 1: Nursing Home in Yinchuan

This is a residential care organization with 130 beds and 20 carers, located in one of the poorer western provinces. Eldercare is a field of considerable importance for not-for-profit service provision in contemporary China (Wong and Jun 2006). Run by a “social entrepreneur”, the nursing home was created with the help of the regional government which provided consultancy, facilities (refurbishment, amenities, etc.) and funding. The founder of the care home previously worked as a manager in the construction business. Motivated by a concern for old people lacking family support and with the intention “to pay back to society” what life has given to her, she invested her own assets to establish the organization.

Public sector support currently comprises both subsidies paid “per bed” and procurement-based grants for the delivery of services to users with low income and dementia. The contract contains targets to be met by the grant holder. Other users have to pay fees to have access to the services. Overall, the care home looks well equipped. As its boss acknowledges, however, the organization has to cope with permanent complaints from relatives and with poor skills of the personnel. Volunteers are absent. Local purchasing bodies are solicited to award additional resources to allow for better training. The care home is involved in a close collaboration with a private hospital nearby which is referring self-paying patients. A similar organization located in the neighbourhood has decided to out-contract elderly care services to the undertaking.

In a workshop organized by the provincial department for civil affairs (which is responsible for the social service procurement), public officials explain that, although endorsing the national government’s agenda of purchasing services from nonprofits, they are still in the state of developing tools to do this appropriately. Their agenda includes investments in the respective skills in order to foster “nonprofit enterprises”. In particular, they want to make these undertakings responsible and develop “self-discipline”.

Case 2: Emergency Hotline and Technical Support Devices for Elderly Citizens in Pudong (Shanghai)

This is an organization running support services for elderly citizens in need, mainly by providing telephone advice and (occasionally) a helping hand in their homes; it also sells technical devices to these people in order to facilitate their daily lives

(easy-to-manage phones with GPS function, electronically processed household items, smoke detectors, etc.). The undertaking is managed by an entrepreneur holding an MBA and having invested personal funds to establish the business. It is modeled on a concept promoted by the British Young Foundation and embraces a call centre with 300 agents responding to queries from elderly people from the entire Pudong area. Users pay fees for the service. Sometimes, the organization sends agents to the homes of frail senior citizens, mainly to get technical problems fixed. Activities like the latter are publicly co-funded under a procurement regime, with seven contracts having been awarded to the enterprise at the time of the visit. The manager says there are also some volunteers involved in the organization (on the day of the visit, only paid agents are on site); he also explains that his agency collaborates with a number of psychologists and lawyers.

During a roundtable with officials representing the Shanghai Bureau of Social Organizations and related district agencies, local representatives refer to the undertaking as a showcase of how the regional government wants to develop a service-delivering third sector. In this context, they evoke the mantra of “small government, big society” propagated by the central state administration (what obviously draws on the current UK government’s mantra). Again, a major intention is “encouraging self-discipline” within the partnering organizations. The regional government intends to spearhead the national strategy and has set up a tender scheme embracing pre-project, mid-term and final assessments (only if everything is fine, the full rate of the subsidy is awarded). Bidders are evaluated by checking “societal reputation”, with purchasers selecting “the most competitive one”. Tenders are organized on a yearly basis, to check whether providers once selected are “still the best”. The purchasing bodies run an IT platform meant to ensure transparency over the entire process. The procurement is said to be based on the identification of needs together with “social groups” from the local community.

Case 3: School for Autistic Children (Nanjing)

This organization is teaching autistic children in the Nanjing region; it offers ordinary full-day schooling from Monday to Friday. Services for the disabled are a further key area for nonprofit agencies in contemporary China, given that public institutions are hardly prepared for this (Fisher et al. 2012). The undertaking in Nanjing was set up by a former pre-school teacher unsatisfied with the then-existing options for the target group; she explains that, in her former job as an educator, she had become aware of unmet needs through a narrow contact with one autistic child. As explained to the visiting delegation, essential support for the creation of the school came from a doctor who had fallen in love with a mother of another disabled child. His personal commitment, together with that of the director and of a co-manager, appears to be the driving force of the project. The Red Cross provided some seed money.

The leading figures of the school all exhibit a “Western-style” mind-set and use mainstream Anglo-Saxon charity language. Major references are international; the management has invited delegations from Japan and maintains connections with peers in Hong Kong and Macao. Conceptually, the school intends to embark on co-

education (involving children not affected by autism; this is stage-managed during the field visit...). The governance structure resembles that of a cooperative firm as representatives of workers are also part of the board. From time to time, the team is complemented by volunteers, including employees from Starbucks. This enterprise also offers employment opportunities for autistic adolescents leaving the school. Teachers have gone through ordinary university training but appear to earn much less than in the public sector. Parents are heavily involved since children are accompanied by one relative on a permanent basis.

Government subsidies, awarded through a procurement system, cover part of the expenses. The school, welcoming public tendering as the latter motivates them to improve quality, has submitted bids over a number of years; no bid has yet failed. While the school offers services to upper-middle class parents able to pay high fees, the director expounds she is lobbying for extending the service to poorer citizens. Her long-term vision is to provide it free-of-charge for all children in need.

In Nanjing, the local government organizes a “nonprofit fair” in which organizations such as the afore-sketched school present their projects at booths, using “Western-style” communication tools (films, folders, giveaways, etc.). The fair suggests there are numerous charitable groups working in the region. While displaying their activities to invited visitors, the attendant organizations participate in a public tendering procedure, which is “put on stage” at this occasion: On the scene, three tables are assembled, one for five experts, one for a moderator and one with seats for representatives of the bidders. Bidders are invited to present their project in a few minutes, whereas the experts (seemingly) take decisions on the basis of the information provided.

Making Sense of the Evidence

Arguably, the third-sector organizations presented to the delegation embody entrepreneurial agencies exposed to a rigorously organized quasi-market (procurement) regime. This observation is consistent with studies stressing the *neoliberal character* of the current Chinese welfare state (Horsfall and Chai 2013). The borderline between private business and not-for-profit agency appears to be blurred in two of the three cases, since items or services are sold to users and/or partner organizations (e.g. care beds, technical aids) under the control of individual owners. While there is a public service element in their activity, the business logic appears prominent. What is more, the professed strategy of public officials seems to be strongly influenced by a new public management approach to third-sector partnerships as known from Anglo-Saxon countries in particular.

According to discourses at both central and local levels, the use of tenders followed by a selection process and assessments entailing positive and negative sanctions is a deliberate choice. As the two examples from Pudong and Nanjing illustrate, much energy flows into a sophisticated planning system and efforts to put this process on stage symbolically. The overall policy is geared towards making the provision of public services cheaper than under alternative institutional arrangements.

Importantly, it is not only the business logic which is shining through this configuration. A strong emphasis is placed on “self-discipline” and on the organizations’ capacity to cope with formal challenges of contracted-out public service provision. Hence, the arrangements carry elements of what has become referred to as a “governmentality regime” (Dean 2010), also with respect to nonprofits and volunteering (Pick et al. 2011). The associational dimension of the third sector is deeply affected by this. Thus, the officials and representatives met during the field visits refer to volunteers only in the sense of an additional workforce for the various activities. Note that in China, volunteering is often organized in a quite authoritarian way, for instance, in universities sending students to commonweal organizations.

Altogether, the elements as exposed thus far are indicative of what can be labelled a *neoliberal third sector*. The use of market forces to organize nonprofit service provision, together with the involvement of entrepreneurs who “make money” with commonweal activities is highly consonant with the social enterprise idea proliferating among Western politicians and (some) academics interested in the sector (see below). The instrumental use of volunteers adds to this.

What is more, the neoliberal flavour of the governance approach outlined above materializes in a certain priority structure, with an impact on the social performance of the involved nonprofits. Several dynamics are relevant here. To begin with, the emphasis on (measurable) short-term outputs, typical of competitive tendering, suggests a preference for (alleged) cost efficiency rather than effectiveness in human service delivery. Buying services on the basis of mere output data (number of hours delivered, of people served, of incidences reported, etc.) does often impede proper service provision (Aiken and Bode 2009). As a matter of fact, under these conditions, a regulator’s interest in third-sector agencies meeting more complex social needs is limited, given that in education, social and health care, and any area in which the wider circumstances of organizational performance are widely unknown, external assessors (or users) prove unable to assess the quality of service and to “sanction” providers appropriately through the application of rough output measures.

In addition, the procurement technique has a “sustainability deficit”. When organizations lose in the bidding process, they may be affected by internal strain and resource bottlenecks placing them in a bad position regarding the subsequent tender. From the perspective of third-sector agencies, bidding presupposes resources available for developing projects; while such resources may occasionally come from private business or committed sponsors, access to them is insecure as a matter of principle. Poor bidders are compelled to exploit their workforce and to reduce quality in services they already provide.

Once nonprofits depend on a tender scheme, they are urged constantly to invest in impression management, particularly when contracts are short-termed. The respective efforts eat into their operating budget and human resource base. Continuous competition between nonprofits eager to win bids also engenders rivalry and instrumentalist behaviour, which undermines collaborative partnership required to develop a coherent system of public service provision (Milbourne and Cushman 2013). Sharing ideas, common experience and perceived problems—all critical to the development of good practice in human service provision—is unlikely to occur

under these conditions. Overall, then, a neoliberal regulatory approach implies strong fluctuations in service delivery and problems with the building of capacity and sustainable infrastructure—with selective social performance as a result.

Does China Ring a Bell in Europe?

The recent developments in China appear to exemplify in a prototypical way tendencies that flourish in the Western world as well. Over the last years, the third sector in Europe (and Northern America) has come under severe strain (Bode 2010; Hendriksen et al. 2012). Many contemporary nonprofits are involved in competitive fundraising and quasi-markets while secure external support is on the retreat. Some respond to this by exploiting niche markets, by investing in public campaigns, or by developing episodic, “post-modern” volunteering. Others deliberately resort to commercial means in order to tap new resources. Success is varied and uneven overall (Bode 2013).

In the core of the service-providing third sector, organizational structures known from for-profit undertakings (competitive benchmarking, pay-for-performance, instrumentalist collaboration, etc.) have taken shape while democratic deliberation and associational agency have moved to the organizations’ margins (Evers and Zimmer 2010). Concomitantly, there have been public policies (e.g. New Public Management) which have altered the very conditions under which third-sector organizations are interlinked with their most important backbone throughout the twentieth century, i.e. the modern welfare state (Zimmer 2010). Those nonprofits that throughout the post-war period had been “pampered” by public authorities are now facing much less benevolent statutory stakeholders.

The epistemic community sympathetic with the third sector and the above-mentioned ideas about its distinctive performance has not remained silent regarding this development. While there are some critical voices (e.g. Powell 2007 or Milbourne and Cushman 2013), an influential alliance composed of academics, political actors and some social entrepreneurs defends a new conception of what the third sector will or ought to be in the near future. It is not possible here to discuss details and the many varieties of this approach (see e.g. Hackenberg and Empter 2011 or Kerlin 2013); yet to put it bluntly, the new thinking carries two basic elements:

- A “small is beautiful” philosophy according to which there is a future to voluntary agencies based on mere donations and volunteering as well as on *some* associational agency, but with a limited *material* impact throughout the wider society (especially regarding the delivery of services which has long been the major building block of the third sector in Western welfare states)
- An (*allegedly*) *innovative movement* of “social enterprises” oriented towards “market means and welfare ends”, with these organizations (a) operating under the control of risk-taking entrepreneurs without much interference from associational stakeholders and (b) being exposed to market environments, in which

public authorities operate as purchasing bodies or where foundations and private sponsors select fixed-term projects, in each case via a bidding procedure.

This concept is understood by the aforementioned community as a future-oriented approach to both social innovation and cost-efficient agency in which benevolent compassion overlaps with individual utilitarianism (Anheier 2013). To some extent, it is reminiscent of the history of “Anglo-Saxon” good old charity and of traditional corporate philanthropy as, besides strong volunteerism, the sponsorship of well-intended and wealthy citizens is crucial here. Granted, the social enterprise mantra proves novel insofar as a strategic, deliberately arranged “double bottom-line” approach in which a strong market orientation connecting with social objectives has not been a major pattern of the early liberal era. Moreover, in some quarters defending the new approach, the contracting out of services to nonprofits is meant to be predicated on bottom-up consultation with the local community, providing a minimum of democratic legitimacy. Nevertheless, conceptualizing the world of nonprofits as a place for market-oriented entrepreneurialism and formalized competition is indicative of a neoliberal spirit pervading the conceptualization of the third sector in contemporary Europe.

It is unclear thus far to what extent this conceptualization matches reality, though. Indeed, the current hype with social enterprises may be just another variety of the romantic vision of merging “good will” and personal advantage without much state interference. At least in the field of human service provision, the pure model of social enterprise has hitherto remained an exception, at least in mainland Europe. And should the third sector as we know it from the twentieth century fade away, this may not lead us into a world of compassionate heroes fostering societal integration through charitable entrepreneurialism. Rather, the social impact of the sector may turn out to be weaker overall, with nonprofits operating in market environments becoming themselves a source of “market failure” (see Garrow and Hasenfeld 2012). Be it as it may, against the backdrop of strong marketisation, top-down governance and efforts to enforce self-discipline, the situation in China seems to resonate with the neoliberal spirit spreading across in the Western world – a spirit that affects both the current reorganization of the Third sector and changing ideas of what should drive the sector’s development in the future. Is China anticipating the future of the third sector in Europe?

Returning to China: Ambiguity in the Process of Neoliberalization

Upon closer inspection, the situation in China exhibits considerable ambiguity. First of all, formal rules deviate considerably from actual arrangements for the third sector. Thus, the public endorsement of the sector goes far beyond the formal technique of a procurement-based funding (Wong and Jun 2006). Although rarely acknowledged, the input of public seed money, ambitious facility investment, an enduring

flow of subsidies per case (bed or person), and “gentlemen’s” arrangements between entrepreneurs and political stakeholders seem to be the basic cornerstones of the Chinese third sector as far as service-providing nonprofits are concerned. The afore-sketched field visits have provided ample evidence of this.

Thus, those government officials expressing their thoughts in the consultancy project have stressed their interest in that it is the not-for-profit rather than the private sector they want to entrust with public service provision—competition between the two types of providers does not seem the prospect here (which is in stark contrast to many contemporary Western welfare states). Also, there is a general commitment to make nonprofits *stable* partners of government which sits uneasily with a short-term exchange of service providers under contract. The political game in which third-sector entrepreneurs and (local) public authorities participate actually proves very complex. During the field visits, it often appeared that partnerships between the former and the latter were deeply entrenched. Most nonprofits held several contracts in a row and seemed to be rather self-confident as their managers were sometimes arguing fiercely with their public partner (bemoaning, e.g. overtaxation or a lack of technical support). Furthermore, those public officials organizing our field visits were keen to include intermediary organizations from a given nonprofit industry, e.g. in the health care sector. Important regulatory functions are devolved upon these organizations, for instance, quality inspection.

All this is indicative of a *quasi-corporatist interface* between the state and the third sector in contemporary China (Zhang et al. 2011). While the former has the power to refuse the admission of a given organization to the sector, it is seen as a caring “mother-in-law” once this admission has taken place. The undertakings are then referred to as *minban* organizations. As one can learn from the wider literature, nonprofits are often an “outlet for déclassé state functionaries” (Boychuk 2007, p. 209). More generally, few economic transactions in China remain unaffected by what is coined the *Guanxi* system, i.e. network-based interlinkages in which patronage, corruption, but also a culture of long-term agreement is thriving. All these arrangements are to ensure state dominance over society (Zhang et al. 2011, p. 26) and seem to be based on those “fuzzy relationships” (Lin 2010, p. 80) typical of the interface between the state and the wider economy.

Finally, it appears that the (local) political establishment in China tolerates at least *some* autonomous civic action. It obviously concedes space for such citizens joining up with both fellows and public officials for the sake of social innovation. This especially holds true for the emerging middle classes which appeared as major stakeholders of those organizations included in our field visits. Here, public support provides a “safety valve for channelling discontent with public services among citizens” (Boychuk 2007, p. 212). True, thus far, human service provision in China is highly dependent on users being able to pay fees. While this implies that a social minority is closing its ranks in order to access human service provision, it cannot be excluded that opportunities for service consumption will trickle down to poorer sections of the population, either by the action of more social-minded activists (such as those met in the school for autistic children), or by an expansive welfare state

awarding subsidies to those that take these sections on board, like this was to some extent the case of the care home presented earlier.

Lessons to be Drawn from a European Perspective

As of the mid-1990s, China has officially adopted the idea that there may be something beyond state and market, and that it may be useful to have it embark on activities which previously would have been viewed as a state responsibility (Heberer and Sausmikát 2005; Lu 2008; Zhang et al. 2011). The current configuration seems to exemplify what Western proponents of a social-enterprise-based third sector have in mind when talking about the sector's future. Indeed, contemporary China appears as a showcase of a neoliberal third-sector model:

- *Markets* are viewed as an effective mode of coordination where they have long been absent (in public service provision including where nonprofits are involved).
- There is a strong influence of entrepreneurial action linked to *private* revenue in the human service industry.
- The *formal* role of the state is that of a top-down governor defining remits and selecting nonprofit “business partners” after benchmarking their performance.

Obviously, the Chinese way is “not easily reconciled with the highly romanticized grassroots image of Tocquevillean civil society” (Boyчук 2007, p. 209). At least, the tradition of democracy as we know it from the Western world is widely absent here. Hence, the conditions for the emergence of the “Tocqueville/Marshall blend” referred to at the outset are not met. Overall, there are clear limits to the social performance of the third sector.

However, upon closer inspection, the current dynamics are multifaceted. The emerging middle classes may not accept too much of top-down governance in the long term. As of today, besides those “nonprofit enterprises” involved in public service provision, there is a growing field of “social organizations” (up to 500,000) in which small-scale, self-administered local activities flourish (Heberer and Sausmikát 2005, p. 230f; Pesqué-Cela et al. 2009; Lin 2010, p. 91). In this universe, groups of citizens develop in a state of “dependent autonomy” (Lu 2008)—although advocacy-oriented organizations are facing “unfavorable institutional and resource environments” (Zhang et al. 2011, p. 24). Furthermore, the political establishment may be unable to stay in power if it does not achieve progress in creating a “harmonious society” and a welfare state “giving people a share of the growing wealth and a sense of social security” (Lin 2010, p. 84)—which sits uneasily with a third sector serving only some and being geared towards generating private revenue on volatile (social) markets. At least, the ideological commitment of the Chinese state administration to establish a robust welfare state is very strong (Horsfall and Chai 2013, p. 141).

Finally, it is hitherto unknown what will happen to those powerful semi-statutory groups which have grown as mass organizations of the Communist Party (the so-called *Guanban* organizations). The current government tends to move them out of the service-providing nonprofit sector but they still prove a strong political factor (e.g. the national associations for disabled people and of women) and may, with ongoing social modernization, evolve towards Western-type mass organizations in which “welfare ends” have usually been given priority over “market means”.

Given this complex configuration, the Chinese third sector, though formally exposed to a strong neoliberal agenda, may in the future adopt characteristics of a “post-corporatist” model in which a market-oriented mode of governance coexists nervously with volatile associational dynamics as well as shaky public-nonprofit partnerships (Bode 2011). The sector would then look much more continental European than Anglo-Saxon. It would become a terrain of “contested spaces” (Unger 2008) in which nonprofits are facing the challenge of a permanent “muddling through” (Bode 2013)—like in many other parts of the Western world.

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Chapter 23

Social Investment: Franco–German Experiences

Helmut K. Anheier and Edith Archambault

Abstract With the global financial and economic crisis as a backdrop, we argue that social investment presents an innovative option with considerable potential. Social investment approaches break conventional boundaries that limit investment either to the world of business or, as public investments, to governments. Rather, social investments turn out to be a third option for policy makers, as they combine the economic and the social, the private and the public. Introducing the key models and tools of social investment, the chapter offers examples of social investments in France and Germany. It finds major deficiencies in how such investments are seen and encouraged, and laments the lack of an enabling framework. In conclusion, the chapter makes a plea for international social investment markets, especially at the European level.

Keywords Social investment · Public benefit · Social enterprises · Germany · France

The ramifications of the global financial and economic crisis have not only put severe strains on the welfare systems in most European countries but have also raised questions about the future of the European social model more generally. Policy makers are scrambling to remedy the worst social impacts of the “Second Great Recession” (Reinhart and Rogoff 2009), as the European Commission’s President José Manuel Barroso attests: “The fact is that we are doing all we can and [...] we are giving social matters a higher profile because there is currently an emergency situation from a social point of view” (European Parliament 2009). Yet most initiatives in this regard follow a “business as usual” model in which national as well as supranational agencies deliver social services—either directly or via civil society organizations—to those in need of assistance. We wonder how long it will take until policy makers are going to recognize that they have at their disposal more than the standard models of state-funded social service delivery or the reliance on philanthropic endeavors.

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It is useful to think about social investments as private contributions to public benefit. This seemingly innocent statement breaks conventional boundaries (as innovations generally do) that for long have equated private investments with the world of business, and public investments with government. That a third option could exist was outside the typical focus of many policy makers. It was also outside the main concern of academics in mainstream economics or public finance as well as nonprofit or third sector researchers, including sociologists interested in civil society.

In profound ways, the term social investment is about how economics, sociology, and policy studies are reengaging, and about how policy makers in public finance and economic and social development have to find new ways of developing collaborative policies. While the former has made significant progress, the latter still lags behind. This is our conclusion from the observation of social investment ventures in France and Germany. While we look at the incremental steps in both countries further below, we will first elaborate on the concept of social investment.

The Concept of Social Investment

The statement that social investments are private contributions to public benefit makes the implicit distinction that these contributions are investments rather than current expenditures intended for consumptive purposes. In this respect, the notion of social investment is identical to what investments are in the conventional economic sense: they are expenditures for the purchase by an investor or the provision by a donor of a financial product or other item of value with an expectation of favorable future returns; or they are expenditures for the purchase by a producer or the provision by a donor of a physical good, service, or resource and with a use value beyond that current fiscal year.

The statement also emphasizes the social aspect of such investments: first, in the sense that such private actions benefit a wider community, however defined, and of which the investor may or may not be a part; and second, in the sense that not only monetary but also contributions in-kind count as investments. The latter would include voluntary work (e.g., investing time and knowledge to teach students, transferring skills), civic engagement (investing time, land, materials, and skills for developing a community park), even generating social capital (investing time and existing social relations for building advocacy networks or citizen action groups). Thus, the major difference between social and conventional investments is that investments are to yield intended returns beyond those benefitting the investor or donor, and that both investments and expected yields involve more than monetary transactions and transfers as well as pecuniary expectations generally.

Social investment can be understood in both a narrow and a more comprehensive sense.¹ The narrow understanding corresponds to the provision and management of

¹ For a detailed discussion of various conceptualizations and approaches to social investment see Anheier et al. (2012).

capital assets to social enterprises, i.e., businesses such as cooperatives, mutuals, and some employee-owned firms that seek to combine social and economic returns. While they are profit oriented, they either produce significant positive communal externalities or have a communal-distribution requirement written into their articles of incorporation. In some European countries, this notion of social investment is close to cooperative economics and the notions of *économie sociale* (France, Belgium, and Spain) or *Gemeinwirtschaft* (Germany, Austria, and Switzerland). These approaches, historically linked to the cooperative movement and mutualism, emphasize the behavior and contributions of producers or consumers in market-like situations who engage in collective action to improve their market position, typically in terms of forward and backward integration.

The narrow term also refers to the activities of grant-making foundations and nonprofit organizations. For example, the Charity Commission in the UK offers a definition that puts social investments close to financial activities that are focused on, or part of, a particular program carried out by a charity. Accordingly, social investments are described as investments which may generate a financial return, but the charity's main objective in making them is to help its beneficiaries ... Social investment is not "investment" in the conventional sense of a financial investment. Conventional investments involve the acquisition of an asset with the sole aim of financial return which will be applied to the charity's objects. Social investments, by contrast, are made directly in pursuit of the organization's charitable purposes. Although they can generate some financial return, the primary motivation for making them is not financial but the actual furtherance of the charity's objectives (Charity Commission 2013).

Social investment implies therefore a double return: a financial return on the invested capital on one hand, which differentiates it from a donation or a subsidy, and on the other hand, a social return or a social impact. This generates a problem for (potential) investors. They can easily measure financial returns on investment but face far greater difficulty in estimating any social return whose indicators do not correspond to their usual working tools. It also generates difficulty for social or philanthropic enterprises. They not only have to get acquainted with the language and the requirements of the investor but also need to modify their skill sets in order to generate fruitful cooperation.

Therefore, social investments refer to the changing relation between market-driven investments and investments for public benefit. Examples are public benefit contributions based on concessionary interest rates or return on investment below market expectations and actual performance. Rather than thinking in categories of "investment" in market situations and "gifts" in public benefit contexts, this thinking suggests looking into the gradual transformation of the one into the other, as is the case in the fields of microfinance and microinsurance (Urgeghe 2011). Both started initially as philanthropic endeavors in response to market failures but are now beginning to draw market capital.²

² Emerson (2003) makes a similar point for grant-making foundations: Their purpose is to invest in the creation of social value, i.e., a value other than monetary gains and redistribution.

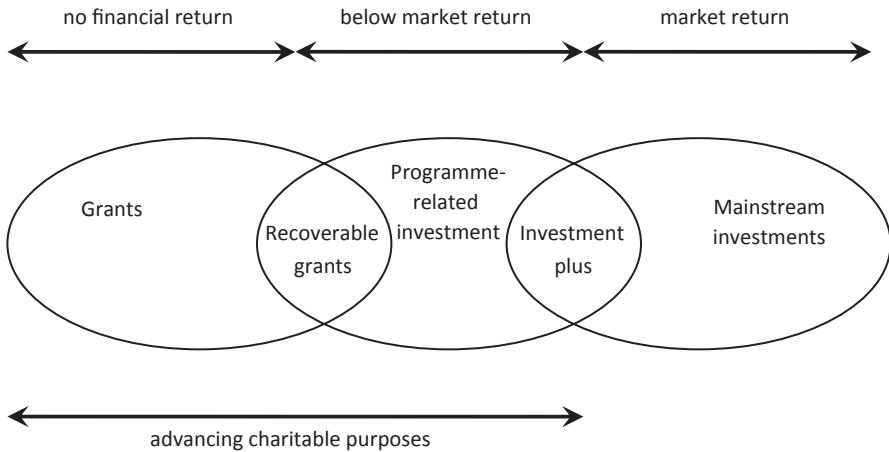


Fig. 23.1 Investment typology. (Esmee Fairbairn Foundation 2005)

Social Investment Instruments

Foundations and nonprofit organizations have at their disposal a wide range of financial investment options whose applicability and potential depends on national tax laws and financial regulations. The Esmee Fairbairn Foundation (2005) suggests a classification scheme for investment options (Fig. 23.1) that ranges from mainstream investments intended to yield some desired external effects other than shareholder returns to program-related investments (PRIs) such as grants. Recoverable grants and “investment plus” are the two investment forms in between:

- Recoverable grants involve some financial return to the donor, albeit below market rate; an example would be a grant to a nonprofit housing agency given with the expectation that 20% of the grant would be paid back over time.
- “Investment Plus” refers to investments located between program-related and conventional investments. It allows for market-rate returns on investment and advances the charitable purpose of the organization. An example of this kind of financial investment would be capital advanced at market rate to a nonprofit organization managing old growth forests on a sustainable basis and selling harvested wood at market prices. Loans would be repaid from the surplus achieved through the sale of wood.

The key distinction between PRI and “investment plus” is the motivation for the investment as such: was it primarily made to advance the purposes of the foundation and to generate revenue secondarily; or was it made primarily to generate revenue for the foundation, and to support the public benefit purpose second? Based on this thinking, Bolton (2005) has offered the most refined classification and differentiates between:

- PRIs. These are investments that can originate either from income (sales, fees, charges, interests earned) or capital (either internal or externally financed), with the primary aim of advancing the foundation’s or nonprofit organization’s purpose. PRIs are typically below market rates, and vary greatly in interest levels (i.e., how close to market rates or the extent to which concessionary loan elements lower rates) and treatment (i.e., length of loan period, possibility of moratoriums, early repay option, ranking of the loan relative to other creditors and lenders, etc.).
- Socially responsible investments (SRI) or investments plus. These are capital investments made with the primary aim of producing revenue. This sets SRI apart from PRI; and what separates SRI from conventional investments are the positive or negative screens investors use to help select appropriate investment opportunities and vehicles.
- Negative screening is to avoid socially harmful ways of achieving market or above market returns on investment; for example, a foundation would decide not to invest in corporations that engage in corrupt practices overseas to maintain plants with unsafe working conditions.
- Positive screening is to identify investment opportunities that support socially beneficial ways of market or above market rates of investment; for example, a foundation can buy stocks in corporations that have sound environmental policies or carry out extensive social responsibility programs.
- SRI also includes shareholder action to encourage more responsible business practice. In this case, the foundation itself could try to influence corporate boards accordingly. Bolton (2005) notes that this form of SRI is sometimes referred to as “Investment Plus2” or mission-related investment.
- Grants as a form of investment rather than specific programmatic activities include a range of options and instruments: they can build up reserves for nonprofit organizations; they can also provide core funding to help organizations secure additional resources for variable costs; they can ease external borrowing and help reduce interest rates by enhancing the organization’s financial rating; they can insure against high risk but potentially high social return ventures; they can help explore new methods of raising funds and revenue generation, etc.³

Proactive social investment or PSI (see Kramer and Cooch 2006) is a related but distinct instrument. Such investment activities provide direct financing to create or expand enterprises that deliver social or environmental benefits in furtherance of the investor’s programmatic goals.

In economically distressed regions, any enterprise that creates jobs, increases income and wealth, or improves the standard of living can be considered socially beneficial. In mature markets, this category is typically limited to new products or services with specific social or environmental benefits, such as workforce development or solar energy installations. (ibid, p. 12)

³ Cooch and Kramer (2007) offer a similar typology and differentiate between conventional investments, based on financial objectives exclusively, and grants, based on charitable objectives. Program-related investments are located in between these two extremes. The latter are grouped into two subtypes: market-rate mission investments and below-market rate mission investments.

Therefore, PSI goes beyond both SRI and PRI in that it is essentially a policy-driven approach to supporting social enterprises devised by a diverse group of investors that can include venture philanthropists, foundations, individual donors, local government, and conventional investors as well.⁴ There is an ongoing debate among experts and fund managers as to the degree to which financial value must be generated from the types of investments that fall under PSI. Some argue for a discount to the market in order to allow for greater consideration of social and environmental value, while others favor market rates of return irrespective of the extent to which social value has been generated.

Social Investment: Franco–German Experiences

France, primarily, and Germany, to a considerable extent, are beacons of state-centric welfare systems. It is therefore hardly surprising that instances of social investments are relatively rare—especially compared to Anglo-Saxon countries. And despite recent attempts to disseminate more forms of social investment by, for example, the *Mouvement des Entrepreneurs Sociaux (MOUVES)*, cultural inertia and isomorphic pressures provide varied disincentives to engage in novel forms of social service financing.

This is not to say that no inroads have been made. In France, social investment consists primarily of *Investissement Socialement Responsable* (socially responsible investment, or SRI as used above). The driving force behind French SRIs are first the acknowledgement that environmental and social factors impact a company's performance and, second, the increased importance that institutional investors, be they the public *Caisse des Dépôts* or private insurance companies, ascribe to “ethical” investment (portfolios). Institutional investors increasingly select shares in corporations not purely based on their published financial performance but also based on their social and environmental impact. *Investissement Socialement Responsable* thus includes both negative and positive screening.

Solidarity-based saving (*Épargne solidaire*) is a form of SRI and PSI (Épargne Solidaire 2013). Solidarity-based saving is collected by:

⁴ Kramer and Cooch (2006, p. 16) suggest four PSI categories:

- Private equity and venture capital that can support start-up organizations (either for profit or nonprofit) through debt or equity investments.
- Loans and mezzanine capital that offer loans to nonprofit organizations, loans with or without equity participation to privately held for-profit companies, and (typically) microfinance loans to individuals; mezzanine forms of capital combine external capital without voting rights with own assets.
- Loan guarantees that secure loans or bond issues and lower the cost of capital to be borrowed by either for-profit or nonprofit corporations; they can also increase access to capital markets.
- Bonds and deposits, including mortgage-backed securities, community development bond offerings, and (in the USA) certificates of deposit at community development financial institutions.

- companies on mandatory employees' saving, if the employee decides to devote a percentage of this saving to a solidarity purpose;
- banks, if the saver asks for such an investment in dedicated securities; and
- directly, by a share in specialized financial intermediaries that match savers and social enterprises.

These savings are then invested in enterprises with an explicit social utility. Some social enterprises aim to enhance social cohesion or sustainable development; others fight poverty and exclusion (at home and abroad). Solidary Finance (*Finance solidaire*), which relies on a positive screening, is an integral part of solidarity-based saving (SBS). The combined value of French SBS, held by ca. 700,000 individuals, has reached € 3.148 billion in 2010. And even though the growth seems impressive in absolute numbers (especially compared to the combined value in 2004: € 613 million), this amounts only to one thousandth (0.1%) of all French savings. The main bulk of SBS rests in cooperative banks, in particular *Natixis* and *Crédit Coopératif*, which constitute a main part of *économie sociale*. *Crédit Coopératif* held € 681 million in SBS in 2010 and specializes in solidarity-based finance working closely with the main specialized financial intermediaries such as *Habitat et Humanisme* (Housing for the Homeless), *France Active* and *Association pour le Droit à l'Initiative* (ADIE) as well as *Solidarité Internationale pour le Développement et l'Investissement* (SIDI).⁵

Grameen Danone Foods and Elektrizitätswerke Schönau (EWS) are more “clear-cut” examples of SRIs in France and Germany, respectively. Grameen Danone Foods was launched as a business enterprise by the French food-producer Group Danone. It has been established to provide children with yogurts containing key *nutrients* that are typically missing from their diet in rural *Bangladesh*. The yogurts, sold at a few cents per cup, are distributed in rural areas through a network of women who often diversify the products they sell. These women are regularly self-employed due to microloans from the Grameen Bank. Initially, Grameen Danone agreed to create a small, annual dividend of one percent to shareholders. However, in 2009, the board of Grameen Danone agreed to operate on “no loss, no dividend” basis and to invest any monetary return into health and education projects in rural *Bangladesh* (Grameen Danone Ltd 2013).

Elektrizitätswerke Schönau (EWS) is an energy provider that delivers electricity to 135,000 customers in Germany's Black Forest. EWS is organized as a cooperative, which took ownership of the local electricity network in 1999 and explicitly ensures “democratic” and sustainable energy production through renewable energies (Elektrizitätswerke Schönau 2013). EWS's work has been—and still is—strongly characterized by sociopolitical activities that increase both the provider's

⁵ *France Active* and the *Association pour le Droit à l'Initiative* (ADIE) are nonprofits that help direct unemployed individuals in France with microfinance loans and advice into self-employment (see <http://www.franceactive.org> and <http://www.adie.org>). The *Solidarité Internationale pour le Développement et l'Investissement* (International Solidarity for Development and Investment, or SIDI) specializes in financial and technical support for microfinance institutions in developing countries (see <http://www.sidi.fr>).

public visibility and cohesion among existing customers, which in turn serve as significant pulls in attracting new clients.

Another example is *Dialog im Dunkeln* (Dialogue in the Dark, DiD), one of the most prominent social enterprises in Germany. DiD received substantial investment from public agencies in its start-up and consolidation phase (ca. 7 years in total) to build a center that aims to improve understanding between blind and regularly sighted while providing the former with an opportunity for employment. An innovative exhibition model that is the enterprise's core—the exhibition rooms are completely dark—turns the physical handicap into a required skill. The enterprise has become financially self-sufficient, especially by widening its portfolio of activities. The enterprise has complemented its exhibition model with seminars building on the distinct atmosphere that the element of darkness creates, company leadership and team-building trainings performed by blind coaches, and the innovative “Diners in the Dark” concept (Dialog im Dunkeln 2013). Due to the success of the offered services, the organization has been able to spread its exhibition model across several cities in Germany and internationally.

Typical for the German cases above is that their start-up phase has been either self-funded (*Elektrizitäts Werke Schönau*) or that social investment came directly from state agencies (*Dialog im Dunkeln*) rather than from private actors. It is fair to say that social investment in Germany is at an infantile stage, despite prominent examples to the contrary such as the social investment fund BonVenture (Bonventure 2013). Another example is the nonprofit Ashoka Deutschland which grants investments to promising social enterprises in the start-up phase (Ashoka Deutschland 2013).

The Missing Link: An International Social Investment Market

Much remains to be done in both France and Germany with regard to social investment. We are currently severely under-utilizing immense resources with enormous potential. French solidarity-based saving, for example, has been responsible for creating 34,000 jobs in 2010, and Ashoka Deutschland has been able to help 46 social enterprises in Germany get off the ground.

The call for policy makers is clear: policy makers have to take social investment as a serious alternative to state-sponsored welfare distribution. This implies the recognition that social investment is *not* a convenient label for welfare policies but a new instrument, financial as well as nonfinancial, to enhance private contributions to public benefit. It also implies a shift from an emphasis on fiscal expenditures and revenues to asset creation, societal problem-solving capacity and, ultimately,

sustainability.⁶ However, this is only a necessary, yet not sufficient condition for social investment to flourish in both countries.

So far, social investment instruments are still largely seen in a domestic context. This is most curious, for while investments and capital markets, both public and private, have internationalized to a considerable extent, social investment markets have not. The many local initiatives, while useful in themselves, remain too local and therefore too small for offering the full potential that internationalized markets could. We therefore need a concerted effort in Europe to create an international social investment market whose benefits extend beyond France and Germany.

Such structural change requires cognitive change—a significant rethinking and reorientation by decision-makers in the European Union (EU) and the wider policy community. Yet those who seek policy guidance by the EU will be disappointed, as we observe not only an absence of adequate policies and programs, but also a lack of full consideration of social investment instruments as presented above.

The European Social Fund (ESF) provides an illustrative example (European Social Fund 2013). Set up to reduce differences in prosperity and living standards across member states and regions, the ESF is devoted to promoting employment in the EU. In short, it helps to equip Europe’s workforce and companies to face new, global challenges. Yet it is a conventional redistribution vehicle characteristic of welfare state policies, and not one of social investment:

- Funding is spread across the member states and regions, in particular where economic development is less advanced.
- It is a key element of the EU’s strategy for growth and jobs targeted at improving the lives of EU citizens by giving them better skills and better job prospects.
- Over the period 2007–2013 some € 75 billion will be distributed to the EU member states and regions to achieve its goals.

What we need, however, are new policy frameworks for the emergence of a Europe-wide social investment market—and not old wine in new bottles. The European Sustainable Investment Forum could play a major role here (European Sustainable Investment Forum 2013).

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⁶ For example, in public policy, educational expenditures are typically classified as current costs or expense in annual budget but not as investments; similarly, allocation for the restoration of the environmentally degraded areas are seen as expenditures rather than investments.

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Chapter 24

Opportunities and Limits of Cooperatives in Times of Socio-Ecological Transformation

Heike Walk and Carolin Schröder

Abstract Cooperatives offer promising conditions for an economically, ecologically, and socially sustainable future, even more so as several recent societal trends favor a stabilization and even a boom in collective approaches with long(er)-term outcomes. Based on recent research results on German cooperatives, and with a focus on practical approaches to local climate protection, this chapter analyzes actual and potential roles of cooperatives in transition processes towards more sustainable societies.

Keywords Cooperatives · Local climate protection · Socio-ecological transformation · Germany

It was not only the 2012 Year of Cooperatives that led to a boom in cooperative topics, but also the need for a new perspective on current challenges. These challenges include the financial and economic crisis, yet also climate protection. While talk of energy transition and socio-ecological transformation are on everyone's lips, it is also obvious that these problems cannot be solved at the political level alone. Moreover, the population's trust in the existing economic system is dwindling as a result of its disproportionate focus on the promotion of individual interests. Individual interests, of course, rarely coincide with the public good. The responsible type of entrepreneur of the 1950s and 1960s has increasingly vanished. Instead, businesses geared towards short-term interests prevail. Within only a few years, their casino capitalism has swept clean several business sectors throughout Europe. The cooperative organization represents an alternative in this scenario.

Cooperatives offer promising conditions for an economically, ecologically, and socially sustainable future—after all, members not only promote their own interests and goals, but also contribute actively to the shaping of their (local) environment. In addition, the fact that the cooperative movement still boasts a comparatively large number of supporters, who explicitly appreciate its sustainable and democratic potential, suggests an even greater potential: cooperative, i.e., collective, self-responsible action may be the result of an inspiration to become involved (which

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may initially and primarily be focused inward) and of mutual support among the members, but it can in fact also have an effect that goes beyond the cooperative, e.g., when cooperative principles are applied to neighborhoods and districts, in the form of civic engagement.¹

In the following, cooperatives are being conceived as a specific form of collective organization that is based on a set of principles valuing self-help, collective responsibility, democracy, and solidarity. In addition, cooperatives promote voluntary, self-determined and equal membership (one member: one vote) in order to achieve shared goals.

This chapter refers to climate-protection activities in Germany to discuss in what way cooperatives can contribute to a socio-ecological transformation.² The chapter claims that cooperatives—along with providing specific services—contribute to the transformation of society (to a socio-ecological transformation in this case) in a special way and transport new lifeworld logics to systems such as the state and the market. This is of even greater interest since, so far, cooperative research has not systematically tied in with new research fields (e.g., sustainability research or socio-ecological research). It is also striking that some of the terms and topics that are (historically) closely linked with the cooperative idea—such as solidarity and participation—have hardly been examined in case studies. The present chapter seeks to close some of these gaps and discuss the opportunities and limits of cooperatives against the background of various sociological focus areas with regard to socio-ecological transformation, especially in the context of community climate protection. The chapter claims that cooperative organizations in particular hold this additional potential for climate-protection activities.

The New (and Old) Attractiveness of Cooperatives

Cooperatives are not a new business form, history teaches us. On the contrary, cooperatives underwent numerous highs and lows over the past decades and centuries, and, interestingly, flourished at times of sociopolitical crises or during transformation phases (e.g., Röpke 1992; Sundhaussen 1993). In the late nineteenth century, for example, skilled workers hit by hardship founded cooperatives to provide their businesses with mutual support; a lack of housing made others create housing cooperatives.³ So in those times, the cooperative movement was closely linked with

¹ Cf. (BMVBW 2004, p. 383).

² The term “socio-ecological transformation” comprises a variety of strategies that are aimed specifically at socio-political shaping in order to manage financial and economic crises and climate and demographic change. The adjective socio-ecological is used to show that the transformation implies a different relation to geological and bio-physical resources. On the other hand, the shaping approach is based on democratic, fair, and solidarity-oriented restructuring towards a sustainable way of production and way of life (WBGU 2012).

³ Earlier forms of the cooperative model date back even further.

the fight for humane working and living conditions. From then on, cooperatives developed differently in different countries: Unlike in England and France, where early socialists such as Richard Owen and Charles Fourier were instrumental in the development of the cooperative sector (cf. Weise 2013; UK study), the cooperative movement in Germany increasingly grew apart from the worker's movement (Vogt 2011). According to Hardtwig (2009), the most important spokesmen in Germany were neither peasants nor workers, but members of the educated classes. Friedrich Wilhelm Raiffeisen and Hermann Schulze-Delitzsch are the main pioneers in this context. Raiffeisen, who was active in the poverty-stricken Eifel region as a young mayor and founded the rural cooperative, acted according to a Christian-conservative notion of caring. Schulze-Delitzsch in turn was a left-liberal politician and co-founder of the "Deutsche Fortschrittspartei" (Hardtwig 2009).

The range of different cooperative activities has by now grown to an extent that makes it difficult to generalize this business form even at the national level. In very basic terms, cooperatives are defined as self-help organizations, with members managing their matters self-responsibly yet also in joint responsibility (economic and social sustainability). The academic literature on cooperatives includes various approaches that attempt to do justice to this great variety: It differentiates between the kind of performance relationship (cf. Dülfer 1995) or type of market commitment, for instance (procurement/purchasing cooperatives and sales/marketing cooperatives) (Atmaca 2007) and between cooperatives in the legal sense and cooperatives in an economic sense. German-speaking countries differentiate between production cooperatives (*Produktivgenossenschaften*) (members are natural persons, employees are also co-entrepreneurs; cf. Atmaca 2007) and development cooperatives (*Fördergenossenschaften*) (members are legal persons; cooperative fulfills certain tasks for those members; cf. Atmaca 2007) or based on business sector (cf. Table 24.1). These are mostly divided into established sectors such as credit cooperatives, agricultural or rural cooperatives, industrial cooperatives, consumer's cooperatives, and housing cooperatives. More recent fields of activity and sectors, such as energy, IT, and creative professions, have so far scarcely been mentioned separately in the literature.

Three Current Trends

German cooperatives are currently both on the decrease and on the increase. On the one hand, there have been constant merging and consolidation processes, especially in the credit sector, which have reduced the number of cooperatives from initially 27,000 to 7,619 today (DZ Bank Research 2012; cf. Table. 24.1). On the other hand, there have been a growing number of newly founded cooperatives especially in the fields of housing, energy, and social issues. There are three reasons for this:

Firstly, in times of various economic and social transformations, the image of the cooperative form of organization is gaining in significance all over the world due to

Table 24.1 Total numbers. (slightly modified representation, DZ Research 2012, p. 40)

	1980	1990	2000	2010	2011
I. Number of businesses	11,681	8,769	9,094	7,618	7,842
1. Cooperative banks	4,267	3,055	1,813	1,156	1,139
a) Credit cooperatives	4,246	3,037	1,794	1,138	1,121
b) Cooperative central banks	10	4	4	2	2
c) Special affiliated cooperatives	11	14	15	16	16
2. Rural cooperatives	5,228	3,725	3,815	2,480	2,41
a) Primary cooperatives ^{a, b}	5,168	3,672	3,780	2,474	2,407
b) Head offices ^c	60	53	35	6	6
3. Industrial cooperatives ^a	875	787	1,422	2,018	2,338
a) Primary cooperatives	856	772	1,410	2,009	2,329
b) Head offices	19	15	12	9	9
4. Consumer's cooperatives	94	30	53	33	31
a) Primary cooperatives	55	28	51	32	30
b) Head offices	39	2	2	1	1
5. Housing cooperatives	1,217	1,172	1,991	1,931	1,921
a) Primary cooperatives	1,217	1,172	1,991	1,931	1,921
b) Head offices	–	–	–	–	–
II. Members in thousands	13,275	15,207	20,074	20,744	21,155
a) Credit cooperatives	9,105	11,421	15,039	16,689	17,002
b) Rural cooperatives ^{a, b}	1,555	1,205	922	563	550
c) Industrial cooperatives ^a	337	257	255	315	407
d) Consumer's cooperatives	665	600	825	355	350
e) Housing cooperatives	1,613	1,724	3,033	2,822	2,846

Up to 1990 only old Laender and currency in DM

^a Water, electricity, and refrigerated glass house cooperatives listed as rural cooperatives until 2008 have been listed as industrial cooperatives since 2009. The bioenergy, forestry and timber cooperatives that were in part listed as industrial cooperatives until 2008 have been listed as rural cooperatives since 2009

^b Excluding credit cooperatives with transactions in commodities. Including agricultural cooperatives

^c Since 2006 only main cooperatives

the values ascribed to it (economic and social sustainability). Eisen (2002) speaks of a traditional model with a future (*Traditionsmodell mit Zukunft*). Owing to their sound business model, cooperatives have proved to be more resistant in times of financial and economic crises, and therefore more sustainable than other legal forms. Insolvencies and crashes are extremely rare compared to other forms of organization: the wide distribution of risk across the members and the additional commitment of many active cooperative members are key factors in this. Widespread discussions about access to resources, quality of life, and the constitution of society play a part here as well. Examples of such discourses are the solidarity economy or “post-growth society” (Elsen 2013), which point to the requirements of far-reaching eco-social transformation processes and imply fundamentally changed ideas of life, of the relations between civic society, the economy and politics and of social action. The cooperative boom, especially in the social, health, energy, water, and housing sector as well as local/regional supply may be interpreted as a first reaction to this.

These changes have affected some of the legislation. To what extent the 2006 and 2013 amendments to the German Cooperative Act—which resulted in easier founding procedures for new cooperatives—have contributed or will contribute to this, is disputed among experts, and will surely differ from sector to sector (cf. e.g. DZ Bank Research 2011).

A second impulse that boosted the growth of cooperatives at approximately the same time was triggered by the energy transition. In recent years, more than 500 energy cooperatives with some 80,000 members were founded, who in so-called citizens' plants (*Bürgeranlagen*) have so far invested a total of around 800 million € into renewable energy (Keßler and Klemisch 2013). Along with associations and private partnerships (GBR), it was primarily the cooperatives that demonstrated the feasibility of a different business model in this sector, e.g., by taking over electricity grids, creating systems of community self-sufficiency and bio-energy villages.

And thirdly, the United Nations International Year of Cooperatives 2012 and the current decade of cooperatives (2011–2020) have significantly added to the publicity of cooperatives worldwide. The boom reflects both in an increasing number of scholarly articles and media reports as well as in the above-outlined growth developments in various sectors (cf. Table 24.1). It is, however, striking that most of the data available on cooperatives are found in the field of economics. The social sciences have so far largely neglected cooperatives. There are hardly any qualitative studies concerned with cooperatives or their activities, specifically the solidarity-oriented and participative structures of this form of organization. Publications by Zimmer (2009) and Münkner and Ringle (2010), analyzing cooperatives as actors of civic society, are the only exceptions.

Community Climate Protection as an Example of Socio-Ecological Transformation

The special qualities of cooperatives as described above, in particular their economic and social sustainability, also prompt us to consider their possible ecological sustainability: Empowerment to self-help and problem solving based on self-responsibility and shared responsibility can trigger considerable bursts of motivation, specifically with regard to climate protection. This is significant in view of the climate crisis we are facing in addition to the economic and financial crisis (Bals et al. 2008). It is obvious that global climate change is progressing much more rapidly than assumed until a few years ago. The need for action is therefore all the more urgent, not only at the political level. We need to identify additional potential at all levels. This chapter claims that an additional potential for climate protection activities can be found precisely in cooperatives.

In Germany, community climate protection activities have soared in recent years. There are hardly any communities or towns that have not committed themselves to this issue. However, we are still observing a strong east–west and north–south divide, with the degree of commitment being much higher in the south and in the

west. While in the 1990s community climate policies concentrated exclusively on climate protection,⁴ attention in the last decade was increasingly also paid to adaptation⁵—after the effects of climate change had become evident in Germany as well. The main effects of climate change in cities include catastrophes resulting from extreme weather conditions, especially floods as a result of heavy rain, but also heat waves and droughts. Adaptation activities include avoiding building development in areas that are susceptible to floods and designing the sewage systems accordingly. Community climate policy is usually categorized according to fields of action on the one hand, and the respective role the town plays on the other (consumer and role model, planning body and regulating body, supplier and disposer, consultant and promoter) and/or according to the types of governance (self-governing, governing by authority, governing by provision, governing through enabling).

Although climate protection is still voluntary, most communities have presented more or less comprehensive climate protection concepts. Most of them are CO₂ reduction schemes,⁶ and some include measures for the reduction of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), yet comparatively little attention is paid to the other gases of the Kyoto basket.⁷ Hence, the key activities are in the field of energy: saving energy, expanding renewables, reducing motorized traffic, and shifting towards environmentally friendly vehicles (Alber 2013).

However, for socio-ecological transformation to occur, we need to turn our attention above all to the social dimensions. The social dimensions, comprising factors such as income, gender roles, age and health have only recently been considered, yet they determine a person's options and opportunities for escaping the effects of climate change, dealing with these effects spontaneously or preparing to adapt to them in the medium and long run. This, in turn, depends on the extent to which people are given the possibility of participating in shaping climate policies, the strategies and actions they prefer and accept, their own potential (real or perceived), and the extent to which they are affected by climate policies.

So what will a process of socio-ecological transformation be like in reality? And what part could cooperatives play in this? Theories of socio-ecological transformation in this context point to three features:

Firstly, socio-ecological transformation will not occur in the form of disruption, but as a gradual process, similar to major cycles of capitalist evolution. At the same time it will not be the result of policies or administrative measures, nor will it be implemented according to a certain model. On the contrary, the process implies extensive searching, inventing, and experimenting at grass roots level. This, in turn, requires pioneering actors and their networks in the broadest sense (economic, political, social entrepreneurs). Secondly, socio-

⁴ Climate protection = mitigation = reduction of greenhouse gas emissions as well as preservation and expansion of CO₂ sinks.

⁵ Adaptation = adaptation to expected climate changes.

⁶ CO₂ is one of the most important greenhouse gases, along with methane which is emitted primarily from waste management activities.

⁷ The greenhouse gases specified in the Kyoto Protocol are carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs) and sulphur hexafluoride (SF₆).

ecological transformation will only succeed if capitalist (accumulation) dynamics, state regulation and civil society initiative, support and control intermesh, and if novel democratic standards of participation and solidarity are applied. The third conviction is that the energy sector can adopt a leading role in this transformation process. However, this also requires a new capital logic that decouples growth and natural consumption and guarantees multi-dimensional sustainability of (re)production. While it is true that sectoral and local/regional potentials and innovative economic development projects are an essential aspect, they will remain marginal(ized) without new, nationally guaranteed regulation methods and social embeddedness. (Noelting et. al. 2011, p. 235)

Cooperatives as Local Pioneering Actors

Cooperatives indeed have the potential to be pioneering actors in a socio-ecological transformation process. Local embeddedness is one of their main advantages in this context: "...as medium-sized businesses, they traditionally have strong local roots" (Greve 2000, p. 7). Greve attributes this partly to the fact that the basic principle of "business activities controlled by the members" (including active involvement in the cooperative, exercising voting rights) makes it likely for the "circle of members and with them the geographic expanse of a cooperative to be manageable in size." The aspect of member promotion, too, used to be (more so earlier than now) implementable primarily via short routes in that the members would meet, exchange ideas, and find solutions together. This comparatively traditional form of organization is no longer restricted to such an extent thanks to modern communication technologies (telephone, internet, etc.). Greve identifies another reason in the fact that "cooperatives...frequently deal with tasks...that benefit from local embeddedness." He assumes that the goals and interests of people living in a confined space resemble each other and that cooperatives can draw competitive advantages from their detailed knowledge of the situation at hand (customer needs, problems, etc.) (Greve 2000, p. 7 f.; cf. Birkhölzer 2000, p. 11).⁸

On the one hand, this is what allows the individual to identify with the respective cooperative and its goals in the first place, and on the other, local roots enable members to develop local or regional solutions that make sense in the medium and long run as well. The variety of new, small cooperatives that have developed reflects a great interest in experimenting and implementing those ideas. In rural areas with a weak infrastructure, for example, small consumer's cooperatives in the form of food stores were able to revive villages or create local value chains through producer/consumer cooperatives. Here farmers got together with consumers, for example, or—as was more often the case in cities—multi-stakeholder cooperatives, where corporate bodies and natural persons deal with certain tasks together.

⁸ The latter can, however, turn out to be problematic in times of globalization, according to Greve: "Because of their regional action radius, cooperative banks do not have the same possibilities of making profits abroad as do internationally active major banks. Big banks ensure that their profits are generated/accrue in affiliated companies that are based in countries with low business taxation." (Greve 2000, p. 8).

Cooperatives as Democratic and Participatory Businesses

The participatory rights of cooperative members differ fundamentally from the influential power held by the shareholders of other business forms. The democratic principle underlying cooperatives provides that every member shall have a vote in the annual assembly, irrespective of the amount they invested (Beuthien et al. 1997). This principle, which sets cooperatives apart from corporations, is derived from the fact that cooperatives are first and foremost associations of individuals. Furthermore, the principle not only defines that decisions are taken democratically, i.e., transparently and based on equal rights, but that the management performed by the board of directors and the supervisory functions of the supervisory board are legitimized by the members as well—similar to the principle of all power emanating from the people in democratic states.

Therefore and in principle, these office-holders need to be members of the cooperative, too.⁹ Accordingly, at the General Assembly, members decide about general management matters, prepare the annual statement and decide on how to use the profits. The participatory rights granted in cooperatives are appreciated by most members, despite these rights almost always being restricted to participation in the General Assembly or election of representatives for the latter. In fact, often only a minority of the members exercise their democratic rights. Paradoxically, members approve of the principle of participation and regard it as the cooperative's great advantage, but then fail to participate. Lack of time is what prevents members from participating in most cases (von Blanckenburg 2013).

So in reality, will-formation and decision making, the two core elements of participation, are frequently concentrated in the board of directors. Here, too, it is the technical expertise and the time available to each individual member of the board that is decisive. So far, issues such as climate protection and the implementation of climate protection measures have been introduced to the cooperatives by the boards (cf. von Blanckenburg 2013). This is somewhat different with cooperatives that are committed explicitly to climate protection (because it is defined in the rules or in the guiding principles). In that case a large number of members are assumed to have dealt with the issue of climate protection and discuss it comparatively often.

Many cooperatives involve their members in opinion making to an extent that goes beyond the mandatory General Assembly of larger cooperatives, e.g., by setting up working groups on particular topics or offering workshops, or members forming such working groups themselves. Such groups and workshops pool a great deal of expertise, hence saving the board of directors and the supervisory board from doing the preparatory work for decision making and introducing new ideas, such as climate protection. These ideas and concepts find their way into the cooperative via the board of directors.

⁹ Members control the management of the board by appointing a supervisory board (§ 36 ff. GenG), occupy bodies from within their own rows (§ 9 II GenG) and have the highest decision-making body with the General Assembly (§ 48 I GenG).

As in other organizations, too, there is also an informal level of exerting influence in cooperatives. Since the power is often concentrated in the board of directors—especially in larger cooperatives—proximity to the board of directors is an important prerequisite for exerting influence. Influence is usually exerted by particularly committed members or groups of committed members. Frequently founding members are among this particularly active and influential group. On the other hand, boards seek consultants within, but increasingly also outside of the cooperative—and hence outside of the participative structures of cooperatives. This is why the power of working groups is often regarded as being ineffective (cf. von Blanckenburg 2013).

Overall, however, the prospects for integrating ecological, economic, and social dimensions in climate change—as demanded by the “three pillars of sustainable development”—are excellent in cooperatives that commit themselves to climate protection. This is remarkable since sustainability policies have expanded the possibilities of participation mainly in the field of civil society activities, and the sustainability discourse made it a basic prerequisite for the implementation of sustainability goals—while the lack of economic aspects are usually criticized in this.

Cooperatives as Organizations Based on the Notion of Solidarity

The literature on cooperatives still mentions solidarity as one of their central values—for one thing because the principle of solidarity is regarded as a stabilizing element within the cooperative (Vogt 2011, p. 30 f.), but also because—at least in the early years of the cooperative movement—solidarity among members implied a considerable potential to make up for certain deficits (Bonus 1994, p. 45/46; cf. Vogt 2011, p. 22). In this, the focus is on self-help among members, so solidarity in cooperatives is primarily based on the members’ interests.

However, there are only few studies that examine the notion, goals, and meaning of the term solidarity in the cooperative context. This may be due to the general difficulty of capturing the subject matter of solidarity in the form of a concept. In the 1990s, a number of studies were carried out which identified trust as a key prerequisite for cooperative solidarity: Gherardi and Masiero (1990, p. 554) describe solidarity in cooperatives as a relational pattern, as a form of collective action or network activity that builds on trust and can therefore also be understood as a competitive factor that makes cooperatives stand out from the private economy (ibid).

In this sense, solidarity-based climate protection activities can be promoted through the organizational form of cooperatives, especially if the cooperative as a whole is committed to climate protection, as in the field of green building, for example. And to take it further, yet, the cooperative framework can also be an option for providing people with low income access to a higher ecological, i.e., climate-protecting, standard of living. Conversely, it has also been suggested that “this community-forming feature [of cooperative solidarity] ... [could be] promoted ...

by climate protection measures.” At the same time we proceed on the assumption that joint, solidarity-based actions produce larger effects in the field of climate protection, both in smaller, but especially in, and larger cooperatives, since more people generally achieve more than individuals, and because many people will probably find it easier to tackle the issue of climate protection jointly (Schröder 2013).

Strategic Embedding of Cooperatives

For a greater commitment to climate protection beyond the respective sectors’ own potential, cooperatives also need to network with actors from the world of politics, the economy, and the civil society. In this context, the influence of community politics on cooperatives must not be underestimated, all the more so since cooperatives also depend on community politics precisely because of their community orientation. While many larger housing cooperatives are already working closely with community governments (this is more often the case in the eastern federal states of Germany), the potential for strategically embedding other cooperatives in community climate protection and community development programs appears not to be fully tapped yet; there is scope for improvement with regard to consulting, financing, qualification, networking and support (cf. BMVBS 2010, p. 67 f.).

So far the open-mindedness of local government units towards cooperatives has been rather limited (cf. Alber 2013). Personal contacts with members of these government units or excellent public relations are indispensable. Indeed, ministries and administrative units at the national and local level have (re)discovered by now the concept of cooperatives and have prepared various studies, especially for the housing and energy sectors. These, so far, do not tie in systematically with new fields of research (e.g., sustainability research or socio-ecological research). The federal and Laender promotion program “Urban restructuring in the new federal states” (*Stadtumbau Ost*) is an exception. It strategically embeds housing cooperatives in urban development concepts (ibid). Also, cooperatives are currently receiving more publicity as a result of broader discussions about de-privatizing power or water utilities.

The trade unions, too, are not really taking notice of the cooperative movement at present: While the early phase of the labor movement was influenced by the trio of party, trade union, and cooperative, Vogt (2011) points to the fact that trade unions in Germany are now hardly offering any support for cooperative forms of organization. Vogt believes that more cooperation between trade unions and cooperatives would create a great opportunity for advancing a different, i.e., more democratic, form of doing business in times of financial and economic crises.

Cooperatives as Key Actors in Socio-Ecological Transformation

The social aspects of climate protection were neglected for a long time. They have been addressed only recently, especially in debates about the socio-ecological transformation. Not only have poorer sections of the population been shown to be affected by climate change more often, it is also obvious that social aspects and business activities in the sense of day-to-day routines are highly relevant in climate issues, particularly at the community level. Hence, individuals and their way of doing business or producing goods should be taken into account when formulating a climate policy. Cooperatives play an important part in this, since they represent collective key actors in socio-ecological transformation and sustainable development processes (Jäger-Erben and Walk 2013).

Cooperatives view business activities not only in the light of economic growth, but attach importance to alternative indicators: The socio-ecological perspective includes considerations concerning the consumption rate of resources and common ecological property and emissions (including rebound effects) in the overall profitability assessment.

Results of interdisciplinary and socio-ecological research indicate that cooperatives are capable of complementing and supporting the climate activities of municipalities in various ways. The specific participatory structures in particular open up possibilities for climate-protection activities that stand out from those of other business forms: Provided the members agree, cooperatives could, in fact, invest in climate protection, even if this lowered the company's profits. The cooperative could, for example, emphasize the benefit this has for the cooperative business itself (climate protection as a competitive strategy, potential savings, etc.). They could also use the cooperative's values as arguments, stating that solidarity is not only a cooperative principle, but also an ethical guideline for action that goes beyond the cooperative framework and in this function provides impulses for CO₂ reduction. The orientation of cooperatives that links up with the values of civil society (von Blanckenburg 2012) develops its effects thanks to the participatory structures. Correspondingly, if the board of directors were interested, climate protection could be collectively embedded in cooperatives to an extent that is not imaginable in other business forms.

Cooperatives with a board of directors not interested in climate protection, but focusing mainly on profitability and restricting participation to the statutory minimum of the annual General Assembly make it hard for members to raise the issue of climate protection. Yet unlike in the other business forms, where the "customer" has no possibility of influencing the business policy, cooperative members can try to raise issues via the supervisory board or have it placed on the General Assembly agenda themselves. This requires practical suggestions, a convincing manner, and possibly even economic expertise, which not every cooperative member has. Despite the fact that conditions may not be easy in reality, we would still like to emphasize that every cooperative member has the opportunity to raise issues. Within

the framework of the cooperative's participatory organization, it is possible to discuss climate protection, agree on activities, and implement measures in a way that clearly go beyond that which is possible in other business forms.

This circumstance—along with others mentioned in this article—makes cooperatives attractive as actors in a socio-ecological transformation. And this applies not only to the entire management policy, but also to the attitude towards climate protection. Compared to other countries such as, for example, Italy and Japan, the German cooperative sector was quite reluctant to emphasize and implement the values and principles specific to the international cooperative movement (self-help, collective responsibility, democracy, solidarity as well as voluntary, self-determination and equal membership)—especially during the 1980s and 1990s. But this seems to be changing in the context of socio-ecological transformation as many new cooperatives promote creative and alternative ways to combine economic, social, and environmental aspects and might thus inspire civil society actors in other countries.

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Chapter 25

Nonprofit Arts and Culture in the USA: Roles, Audiences and Participation

Stefan Toepler

Abstract The nonprofit arts and cultural sector in the USA is bifurcated between a large and highly professionalized infrastructure of cultural institutions, on the one hand, and significant numbers of small, informal groupings and organizations at the grassroots, on the other. The cultural policy debate of the past has near exclusively focused on the former, whereas the latter capture America's associational spirit more truly. This contribution reviews the role of the nonprofit arts in the larger cultural economy as well as its revenue structure, and focuses on participation in both professional and grassroots endeavors as a gauge of how Americans associate in arts and culture.

Keywords Nonprofits arts and culture · United States · Associations · Cultural infrastructure

“Americans of all ages, all conditions, and dispositions,” goes Alexis de Tocqueville's (1969, p. 513) much quoted observation, “constantly form associations... religious, moral, serious, futile, general or restricted, enormous or diminutive. [But] Americans make associations to give entertainments” as well, which can be understood as a reference to the arts and cultural life in early nineteenth century America. Some 200 years later, the associational aspects of cultural life have decidedly taken a backseat. The cultural infrastructure is large and highly professionalized, pushing the issues of cost and funding to the fore at the expense of greater interest in the more democratizing associational forms of the arts. As a result, the arts have largely become instrumentalized, referring to a subordination of the arts to other, larger policy concerns such as economic development in particular. Accordingly, arts advocates have increasingly been pushing economic impact studies to justify subsidies for the large, professional nonprofit arts institutions.

Recognizing that the economy rather than democracy has been the driving force behind US cultural policy in recent years, this contribution will provide a brief overview of the current state of the nonprofit arts and culture sector in the USA. Associating in the US arts context is typically captured under the banner of public partici-

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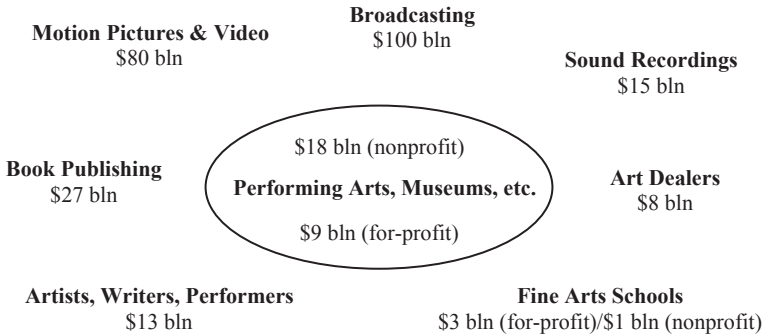


Fig. 25.1 The nonprofit arts in the context of the broader cultural economy (selected industries). (Dollar figures from the 2007 Economic Census)

participation in the arts. Participation in turn can be passive or active. Passive participation—arts audiences attending cultural events—is the primary concern of the professionalized arts infrastructure and has largely dominated the arts policy discourse. Active participation—the population engaged in making and creating art—is where associating in arts and culture still takes place in the twenty-first century. I will first recount the relative role of the nonprofit arts in the larger cultural economy as well as its revenue structure, but then focus on participation issues by exploring key trends in arts audience development as well as more active participation in the arts.

Economic Role and Financing of the Nonprofit Arts

With few exceptions of public nonprofit organizations, such as the Smithsonian Institution or the National Gallery of Art, US arts institutions of national and international renown are typically nonprofit in nature. This applies to the visual arts as well as the performing arts, including music and opera or modern dance. Focusing on “high culture,” however, somewhat masks the fact that nonprofit arts and cultural organizations are niche players in the broader cultural marketplace. Nevertheless, the nonprofit “niche” is relatively well defined and not particularly small.

Using data as reported in the 2007 Economic Census,¹ Fig. 25.1 positions the nonprofit arts within the framework of selected industries of the broader cultural economy. Nonprofits are predominantly found in the performing arts and the broadly defined museum field, where they coexist with a minority commercial presence. A nonprofit presence can also be identified elsewhere, such as fine arts schools (including dance schools), where nonprofits capture about one quarter of revenues. The performing arts and museum field revenues combine to about US\$ 27 billion, with nonprofits accounting for two thirds, which is the equivalent of the book publishing industry. The nonprofit arts generate higher revenues than art sales (US\$ 8 billion),

¹ As of this writing, the 2012 Economic Census data were not available yet.

Table 25.1 Nonprofit versus for profit in major arts and culture sub-fields, 2007. (2007 Economic Census; Sector 71: EC077111: Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation: Industry Series: Preliminary Summary Statistics)

		Establishments	Revenues (1,000s)
Theater		3,599	US\$ 7,050,781
	Nonprofit (%)	57.5%	44.1%
	For profit (%)	42.5%	55.9%
Dance		564	\$ 624,162
	Nonprofit (%)	75.2%	85.3%
	For profit (%)	24.8%	14.7%
Music		4,454	US\$ 5,084,567
	Nonprofit (%)	32.6%	38.5%
	For profit (%)	67.4%	61.5%
Other performing arts		456	US\$ 993,178
	Nonprofit (%)	15.4%	5.1%
	For profit (%)	84.6%	94.9%
All performing arts		9,073	US\$ 13,752,688
	Nonprofit (%)	44.3%	41.1%
Museums and art galleries		4,598	US\$ 8,902,673
	Nonprofit (%)	90.6%	93.7%
	For profit (%)	9.4%	6.3%
Historical sites		1,234	US\$ 793,105
	Nonprofit (%)	95.1%	95.1%
	For profit (%)	4.9%	4.9%

the sound recording industry (US\$ 15 billion), or independent artists, writers, and performers (US\$ 13 billion). On the other hand, the nonprofit arts do not nearly reach the economic scale of the movie industry (US\$ 80 billion) or broadcasting (US\$ 100 billion).

Within their main niche, the role of nonprofits, and the mix of nonprofit and commercial provision, differs significantly between the performing arts, on the one hand, and museums and similar institutions, on the other. As shown in Table 25.1, nonprofit auspices clearly dominate the museum field. Overall, nonprofit museums and galleries account for nine out of ten establishments and 94% of all revenues. With 95%, the nonprofit share among historical sites is even higher. In the performing arts, the respective roles of nonprofits and for profits are much more varied. In contrast to museums and similar institutions, the majority of the performing arts field is commercial, with for-profits accounting for 56% of establishments and 59% of revenues (Table 25.1). What is more, the three main components (theater, dance, and music) show greatly divergent patterns. The relatively small field of dance is the one where the overall nonprofit presence is the most pronounced. Nonprofits account for three quarters of establishments and 85% of field revenues. Ballet and modern dance forms are an uncontested nonprofit domain, and nonprofits also have a strong presence in folk and other ethnic dance ensembles.

In theater, the majority of establishments are nonprofit (57.5% vs. 42.5% for for profits), but the situation is reversed with regard to revenues. Commercial theaters account for 56% of revenues and nonprofits for 44%. Other than dinner theaters, the

main enclave of commercial theater encompasses Broadway shows and traveling productions frequently spun off those. Off-Broadway and Off-Off-Broadway have also strong for-profit components but become increasingly nonprofit as the distance to Broadway increases. Resident theater companies across the rest of the country are nearly exclusively nonprofit as are community theater troupes (nine out of ten). Similarly, four out of five children's theaters are noncommercial (DiMaggio 2006).

In music, the for-profit presence is even more pronounced. For-profits account for two thirds of establishments and more than 60% of revenues (Table 25.1). However, within the music field, nonprofits occupy distinct "high cultural" niches: opera companies, symphony orchestras, and chamber music organizations are more or less exclusive nonprofit domains, although classical musicians often form smaller ensembles to generate additional earnings (e.g., providing musical entertainment at events). Choral groups are likewise predominantly nonprofit. Nevertheless, the nonprofit presence in jazz is small and almost nonexistent when it comes to dance and stage bands; live music performance, outside the classical music field, is essentially a commercial operation. Other performing arts (i.e., not classified under theater, dance, or music) show a similar pattern with for-profits accounting for 85% of establishments and 95% of revenues. As such, arts and culture represents a heterogeneous field that is marked by a pronounced commercial vitality (particularly within the performing arts) as well as firm enclaves of nonprofit dominance.

As of the mid-2000s, the nonprofit arts and culture field reported annual revenues in excess of \$ 27 billion to the Internal Revenue Service, representing about 2.4% of total nonprofit revenues (Wing et al. 2008). Revenue structures vary considerably among various artistic disciplines, as, for example, theater companies are much more dependent on box office receipts than art museums are on admissions income. With this proviso, government support for the arts and culture field at large amounts to about 12%, whereas private gifts and grants from individuals, foundations, and corporations amounted to close to 41%. As such, arts and culture revenues are marked by relatively low levels of government support and a relatively high share of private philanthropy. Nearly half of arts and cultural organization revenues (46.7%) are derived from various forms of earned income. This comprises private payments (ticket sales, admission fees, tuition charges, and similar fees for service) accounting for 31% of total revenues and other earned income (such as endowment and investment income, fundraising events, and business ventures) for another 15% (Wing et al. 2008).

Pressures to increase earned income in particular have mounted in recent years, resulting in more emphasis on marketing, entrepreneurial activities, and audience development. Often this new entrepreneurship focused on ancillary activities such as restaurants or gift shops. Other times it involved a technologically driven strategy to digitize and, it was hoped, capitalize on an organization's intellectual property. Although the latter hope fizzled out even before the bust of the dot-com boom, cultural institutions heeded the call to seek greater financial independence through the box office or the admission booth. The reopening of New York's Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in 2004, for example, was accompanied by raising the general admission fees by "an eye-opening 67%, to US\$ 20, making MoMA the most

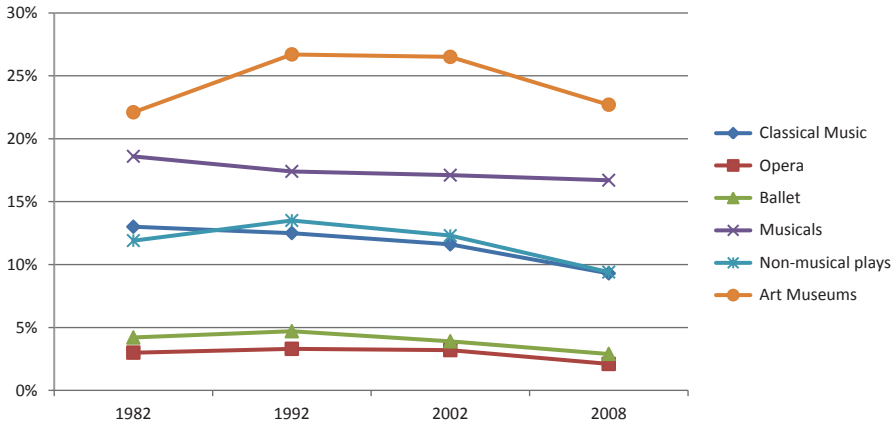


Fig. 25.2 Adult population arts attendance trends. (NEA 2009)

expensive major art museum in the United States” (Leonhardt 2004). Less than a decade later, admission fees of this magnitude have more or less become the norm. In addition, those cultural organizations that could also sought to build or bolster endowments—both as a hedge against shifting funding patterns and as a strategy for organizational autonomy in the face of demands from virtually all institutional funders for greater accountability and demonstrable community outcomes.

Arts, Audiences, and Participation

With 46 million adults visiting, plays, musicals and nonmusical theater constitute the second-largest type of arts participation. Except for a one and a half percentage growth in nonmusical theater audiences during the 1980s, the trend in theater visits has been downward for the past two decades even before the economic problems of the late 2000s. As shown in Fig. 25.2, (nonmusical) theater-goers declined from 13.5% of the adult population in 1992 to 9.4% in 2008, whereas musical visits remained more or less stagnant around 17% over the period. Ballet and dance attendance (16 million) shows a pattern similar to nonmusical theater: some growth during the 1980s and a moderate decline since then. Although only reaching a relatively small section of the population with some 5 million, opera companies managed to grow and hold on to their audience from the 1980s into the 2000s before suffering a decline in 2008 as well. While the relative vitality of opera over the past two decades has been a ray of hope for classical music advocates, classical music in general (e.g., symphony and chamber music concerts) is the one major arts discipline that has seen a consistent long-term erosion of its audience. While 13% of the adult population had attended classical concerts in 1982, the share had shrunk to 11.6% in 2002 and further down to 9.3% by 2008 (Fig. 25.2).

What is more, arts audiences have become older over the past two to three decades, suggesting a declining appeal of many art forms to younger generations and concomitant concerns about the implications for future audience growth or lack thereof. While the median age of the adult population grew by 6 years, from 39 years in 1982 to 45 in 2008, the median of most arts audiences grew at a faster rate over this period (NEA 2009). The “graying” of the audiences was most pronounced in classical music, where the median age of concertgoers increased from 40 to 49; in ballet (from 37 to 46); and in nonmusical theater, where the median attendee was 47 years old in 2008 as compared to 39 years in 1982. The median age of musical audiences remained on par with the general population (39–45) and grew slightly faster for art museum visitors (36–43). Opera was the only art form where the median age (43–48) grew more slowly than the general population.

Museums and opera companies thus managed best to attract younger audiences. For museums, this was in part due to a greater focus on offering family programs or family friendly activities in conjunction with regular art exhibitions, thus making museums attractive destinations for younger adults with children. But museums also engaged in targeted efforts to reach and cultivate new generations of patrons by offering opportunities to socialize and network for young professionals (cf. Kirchberg 2007). “Singles Night” or similar evening events with cash bar and music intended for young adults became an art museum staple in many metropolitan areas. Similarly, opera experienced exceptional growth among audiences in the 18–24-year-old age group over the past two decades. Many opera companies have aggressively marketed to young audiences by designing subscription programs that combine attendance at opera performances with social interaction. Although opera is still the least commonly attended of the “high” arts, creative marketing efforts did succeed in appealing to younger and relatively well-to-do professionals. Nevertheless, opera, like all arts disciplines except for art museums in 2008, also saw a drop in young adult participation below the early 1980s levels (NEA 2009).

While audience development trends affect larger and professionalized arts venues, there is also a traditionally significant degree of active, voluntary participation in grassroots arts and culture in the USA. Arts and cultural organizations provide a wide range of opportunities for volunteers to participate in governance, and to provide administrative and program support. However, the nation’s voluntary spirit in the arts is principally embodied in a pervasive range of avocational activities, in which Americans come together to actively make art and enjoy cultural expressions. In fact, significant parts of the population are involved in such activities. For example, 15% of the adult population enjoy photography as a hobby; 13% weave or sew; 9% paint or draw; 7% write creatively; 6% engage in pottery making. Among the performing arts, 5% of the adult population sings in choirs or choruses; 3% perform classical music; 2% dance and almost 2% act in musical and nonmusical plays (NEA 2009).

While some of this activity takes place individually, much of it happens in small, informal or semiformal groups that connect people with similar avocational interests. Hobby photographers gather in photography or camera clubs to share, exhibit, and judge each other’s works. Sewing is done in the great communal tradition of

the quilting club. Creative writers present and discuss their work in writer's clubs or circles. Amateur actors produce plays in community theaters, schools, or church basements. Musical dilettantes perform chamber music in Hausmusic settings; and singers not only participate in church choirs, but may also form barbershop quartets and similar small ensembles.

Unfortunately, it remains largely unknown how this grassroots, avocational activity compares to the more professional cultural infrastructure. For better or worse, the traditional focus on larger, professional nonprofit cultural institutions has pushed this widespread grassroots activity to the sidelines and left it largely unexplored. Still, it is likely fairly substantial. In a suburban context, for example, one study found that grassroots cultural activities outnumbered larger and more formal organizations by a factor of two, drew more than one third of all volunteer efforts in the arts and attracted 13% of all arts and culture attendance (Toepler 2003).

However, hard to quantify, informal, cultural activities perform important functions in the community context, and the social impacts of cultural activity are of particular importance in the context of urban neighborhoods (Stern and Seifert 2007; Rosenstein 2009). In this regard it is disconcerting that there has been a marked decline across all forms of active participation over the past two decades. For example, acting in plays dropped by more than 3.5% points between 1992 and 2008; dance by six; and weaving and sewing by 12% points. Only photography saw an increase over the period, as the advent of digital technology increased the possibilities while reducing the costs of engaging in this art form (NEA 2009). Nevertheless, this observable decline may be as much as reflection of dwindling participation as a reflection of changing patterns of arts participation, particularly among ethnic and racial minorities, that are not well captured by traditional categories (Rosenstein 2005).

Changing immigration patterns have recently drawn particular attention to cultural heritage activities that provide expression and help preserve community identity within immigrant and other low-income communities by organizing festivals and providing space to showcase and maintain cultural expression and language, musical, culinary, and other traditions. The pace of immigration increased over the last two decades, but unlike the early modern immigration pattern that disproportionately affected America's industrial regions in the Northeast and Midwest, as well as California, the contemporary wave of immigrants marks a truly national phenomenon. Smaller cities have directly attracted new settlement from abroad and have grown in population because of immigration.

Immigration arguably also suggests profound changes in cultural sensibilities and diversity over the coming years (Moriarty 2004; Stern et al. 2008). Newly arriving immigrant communities—whether Asian, African, or Latin American—increasingly settle in the decentralized suburbs of major immigration gateways. In contrast to the earlier waves of mostly European immigration, the new immigration is less likely to cluster around faith institutions or other community centers. Rather much of the civic and social life is organized around more or less informal cultural activity. At the same time, these activities are organized without the immigrant communities being willing or able to tap into the existing cultural policy and support infrastructure.

For example, dance performances or concerts by foreign or immigrant artists are frequently organized by loose networks of individuals and take place in the living rooms or basements of private homes—fully bypassing official grant cycles, establishing facilities and mainstream dissemination, and distributing channels. This poses a significant problem for local policy makers and funders alike, as these increasingly vital forms of cultural diversity remain largely under the radar screen and it is difficult to find ways to provide support—whether financial or in the form of appropriate facilities and outlets—to emergent organizations and artists. Gaining a better understanding of cultural diversity and support needs in immigrant communities is important for enriching the nation's cultural life, fostering cultural democracy and pluralism, and generating spillover effects for mainstream cultural organizations in terms of both developing new audiences and increasing internal diversity.

Conclusion

Although some arts institutions are very sizable, they rarely approach the size of hospitals or colleges and universities that, respectively, give the nonprofit health and education fields in the USA their economic weight. And likewise, although nonprofit arts organizations can be found nearly everywhere, they do not aggregate to the numbers of agencies that the social services field boasts. Nevertheless, the arts tend to be firmly woven into the fabric of communities. Arts institutions are sources of civic pride and symbols of community identity; they can help center economic development efforts and are an invaluable provider of arts education; and they can serve as both a means of integration of, as well as a means of expression for, diverse parts of local communities.

Funded in almost equal measure by private philanthropy and various forms of earned income with only a small involvement of government, the professional cultural infrastructure in the USA is economically fairly robust. The economic crisis of the early, and the financial crisis of the late 2000s caused only minor damage, and the arts field emerged largely unscathed. Yet, given current audience development trends, concerns about how well the high arts will be able to engage the American population in the future are not without merit. On the other hand, changing demographics continue to fuel a lively informal, voluntaristic, grassroots scene through which America expresses its creative spirit.

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Chapter 26

Major Giving in Germany: Facts and Opportunities

Marita Haibach and Eckhard Priller

Abstract The German population is one of the wealthiest in the world. But though its overall wealth and the number of wealthy individuals is steadily expanding, the amount of charitable giving has stagnated. Changes are needed in order to increase revenue from donations and expand the ranks of the major donors. Germany must foster the willingness of the wealthy to give, must improve fund-raising by non-profit organizations, and must ensure commensurate recognition of the special social value attached to the giving by major donors.

Keywords Major giving · Philanthropy · Fundraising · Germany

Germany is one of the world's richest countries. Equity is growing, and the number of its wealthy persons is steadily climbing. Private donations, by contrast, have more or less stagnated for years in Germany, with nearly two thirds of the people who make charitable contributions giving less than 100 €. Donations of 1 million € or more are a rarity in that country. This context has given rise to fundraising as an occupational field since the early 1990s, meaning in practice that donations are now frequently solicited by professional methods. Unlike the results in the USA and elsewhere, however, Germany's donation pie has not been increasing. Charitable giving accounted for 3.4% of the financing in the nonprofit sector in the 1990s.¹ This share varied widely from one sphere to another, reaching 40.9% in organizations operating internationally, 15.6% in the sphere of environmental protection, and the preservation of natural beauty and wild-life, and 13.4% in the field of culture and recreation (Zimmer et al. 2007, pp. 62–63).

¹ More recent data is not available.

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Raising the level of revenue from donations in Germany is not an end in itself. Nonprofit organizations today face enormous challenges. Not only is the scope of their missions and fields of activity growing, so is the pressure on them to economize and to cope with cuts in government funding. Why, then, do many wealthy people in Germany give less than they can, and how can they be moved to give more? Augmenting the percentage of funding that nonprofits receive from donations can help close the gaps that are opening. These organizations can thereby take on new tasks and reduce their dependence on government money.

Growing Wealth

Monetary wealth in Germany more than tripled from 1990 to 2012, soaring from 1.5 to 4.7 trillion € (Richter-Publizistik 2013). According to figures and trends published in the annual *World Wealth Report* compiled by Capgemini and the Royal Bank of Canada in 2013, Germany has 1,015,000 high net worth individuals (HNWI),² As in past years, Germany thus ranks third after the USA (3,436,000) and Japan (1,902,000) and ahead of China (643,000), Great Britain (465,000), and France (430,000) (Capgemini and RBC Wealth Management 2013, p. 6). Germany also has one of the world's largest numbers of billionaires, with 58 listed in March 2013, fourth after the USA (425), Russia (96), and China (95) (List of countries 2013; Billionaire's list 2013). The journal *manager magazin* lists 120 persons or families with assets of 1 billion € or more (500 reichsten Deutschen 2013, pp. 22–71).

The rankings of the rich may have inaccuracies, but all figures clearly point in the same direction: Germany is very high up in international standings as far as the number of wealthy people is concerned. A significant factor of the increase in wealth has been the immense volumes of inheritance since the early 1990s, suggesting that the generation of Germany's economic miracle is bequeathing the fruits of its labor to posterity. Reliable figures on the exact sum of wealth being passed on through inheritance are not available. It is estimated that the amount will be 4.6 trillion € in the years from 2011 through 2025, almost double the sum from 2001 through 2010. By 2020, 3 trillion € will be inherited in real estate, financial assets, and consumer durables alone. The sum that will be inherited in 2020 is forecast to be more than 360 billion €, as compared to only around 105 billion € annually in the mid-1990s. Financial assets constitute the largest type of wealth (BBE Retail Experts 2009; Sieweck 2011). The average amount inherited in each case has risen steadily since the 1990s, from the equivalent of 120,000 € in 1995 to approximately 248,000 € in the decade from 2001 to 2010. An average of 305,000 € is anticipated from 2011 to 2020. Much of the amount inherited is often relatively small, however, for 30% of the total volume is accounted for by a mere 2% of all inheritances (Braun et al. 2011).

² This term used in private banking refers to persons whose individual net worth is at least US 1 million \$ (not counting the value of their primary residence and the consumer goods they own).

Stagnating Level of Donations

The potential for increased philanthropy through private giving and foundations therefore not only exists in Germany but continues to expand. Yet, the levels of private giving have remained essentially the same for years. The different methods used to study donations and the level of a person's giving in Germany have led to vast divergence between the reported results. Depending on the survey, the figures on annual levels of donations by persons in Germany lie between 4.5 and 6 billion €. Nevertheless, use of the same method does yield a relatively stable result.

One of the most important indicators of the scope of giving by a country's population is the donor rate, or the percentage of its inhabitants who have made a donation in the previous 12 months. Some studies even show that the donor rate is regressive in Germany. The *Deutscher Spendenmonitor* lists the donor rate in 2011 at 35% as opposed to 41% when this index was introduced in 1995. For years, the rate remained around 40% (TNS Infratest 2011). Similar results are reported by the Gesellschaft für Konsumforschung (GfK, Germany's largest market research institute), whose accounting of philanthropy is conducted in cooperation with the German Spendenrat, an umbrella association of organizations that collect charitable donations. In 2012, the share of donors in the German population was approximately 33% (GfK and Deutscher Spendenrat 2013). A similar pattern emerges from official income tax statistics. About 33% of all persons taxable in Germany claim donations and membership dues in their tax declarations (Sommerfeld and Sommerfeld 2010, p. 29). In 1999 and 2004 the *Freiwilligensurveys*—representative voluntary surveys funded by the German Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women, and Youth—reported a much higher donor rate, 63%, and 59% in 2009 (ibid, p. 27). Divergence between survey results stem primarily from the variable timing of the surveys, the different methods that were used to collect data (telephone survey), and the substantive context of the overall data collection (Priller and Sommerfeld 2010, p. 175). The voluntary surveys, for example, included an especially high percentage of persons whose time was highly committed on the whole. A high donor rate is expected from that group.

Nonetheless, the average annual sum donated is on the rise, although the number of donors has declined. According to the *Deutscher Spendenmonitor*, the average level of giving in Germany from the mid-1990s to 2000 was around 80 € per donor, rising since then to about 100 €. In 2005 it hit 108 €, and reached an unprecedented high of 128 € in 2011 (TNS Infratest 2011).

Giving by Region, Gender, Age, and Education

Most surveys focus on recording the activities and level of giving. Little, if any, attention goes to the socio-structural characteristics of the donors, virtually precluding any statements about the donors and their structure. By integrating items on donations into the long-term study known as the Socioeconomic Panel (SOEP) (see Priller and Schupp 2011), researchers have been able to gather and analyze such in-

Table 26.1 Donations and average level of giving in Germany, 2010 (in previous 12 months). (Socioeconomic Panel V27 2010)

	Donors (in percent of the population)	Level of annual giving (in €)
National total	40	201
Region		
Western Germany	41	213
Eastern Germany	32	136
Gender		
Men	38	245
Women	41	162
Nationality		
German	40	202
Non-Germans	28	179
Age cohort		
18–34 year olds	25	98
35–49 year olds	39	197
50–64 year olds	42	194
65–79 year olds	52	255
80 year olds and older	51	266
Educational level		
No degree or completion of 10th grade	34	144
Other degree	36	146
Abitur (university-entry credential in Germany)	42	161
University or polytechnic school	58	347
Employment status		
Full time	38	215
Part time, hours insufficient to qualify the worker for social insurance benefits	43	144
Not gainfully employed	43	219
Unemployed	16	85
Monetary donation in 2009	100	201

formation specifically. When the subject of giving is treated by means of the SOEP data, the salient thing is not necessarily the absolute and percentage values provided by the survey but rather the identified relations between the individual social groups.

The SOEP, too, found that a considerable share of Germany's population made donations in the course of a year. Approximately 41% of the Germans living in the western part of the country donated an average of 213 € in 2009, but only 33% of the Germans in the eastern part did so, and the average donation there was much lower: 136 €. There were recognizable differences between the giving by men and that of women. The SOEP showed that the percentage of women who reported having made donations in Germany (41%) was slightly greater than that of men (38%). The gender difference in the donor rates is often blamed on women's longer average life expectancy, for older persons make donations more frequently than younger ones (Table 26.1).

Both the donor rate and the level of giving increased with age. People between 18 and 34 years of age are especially rare among donors in Germany. Only one of four people in this age group makes donations, and the average level of giving, a

little less than 100 €, is quite low. Many people apparently begin their giving when they reach middle age, with such willingness exceeding 50% among people more than 65 years old.

Researchers have not yet explored the reasons for the clear influence that age exerts on giving. The assumption underlying explanatory approaches in generational research is that people of the same age tend to exhibit similar behavior because they have had the same or similar experience in their childhood (e.g., war or mutual support in emergencies and catastrophes). The greater willingness of older persons to give often tends to be traced to their higher income and, hence, overall to a solid economic situation and to satisfaction with their own income.

Another major variable is education. Donation frequency increases with the level of education. The most forthcoming people are those with a professional or university degree. Nearly 60% of the respondents in this group make donations. The corresponding figure for persons with a modest level of education or no degree at all is only slightly more than half that much, ranging around 33%. Employment status, too, affects the willingness to make donations. The unemployed give much less often (16%) than people in gainful employment do. People not on the labor market, especially those in retirement, have not only the highest donor rate but also the highest level of giving, 219 € on average.

As expected, income has a sustained effect on giving. In 2009, 33% of donations came from the earners in the highest income decile. The greater the level of prosperity, the larger the share of income and wealth that one can pass to other people or projects without the donor personally having to cut back or face economic difficulty. Recipients of high incomes thus find it easier than others to fund charitable purposes. As such willingness to make donations is enhanced by a superior economic position. Moreover, Germany's tax progression increases the incentives to make donations as income rises. The percentage of donors therefore goes up with income, as confirmed by all available empirical surveys. The SOEP figures, for instance, show that persons in the lower income groups donate a smaller percentage of their income than do those in the upper income groups (Table 26.2).

Empirical studies from the USA document a U-shaped curve in the relation between income and the level of giving. As income rises, the percentage of income used for donations falls and does not increase again until income reaches a relatively high point. The relation is different in Germany where, according to SOEP data for 2010, individuals in the lowest income decile donated a smaller proportion of their annual income (0.13%) than those in the other deciles. The percentage of annual income donated by individuals in the second lowest income decile was slightly higher, namely, 0.2%. After continuing to rise in both of the following income deciles, the percentage of annual income donated by individuals declined in the fifth and sixth income deciles but rose again in the seventh. People in the highest income decile had a substantial lead in the percentage of annual income that they gave away—approximately 2 billion €, or around 33% of all revenue from donations in 2009. For methodological reasons, however, these figures scarcely reflect the people on which this article focuses—the wealthy. These surveys therefore do not provide statistically robust data on that group. The statement that rich people are able to donate more because of their growing wealth calls for special examination.

Table 26.2 Monetary giving according to level of income, 2010. (Socioeconomic Panel V27 2010)

Deciles of equivalence-weighted monthly net household income	Donor rate in the population (%)	Amount of donation ^a (€)	Volume of giving in 2009 (millions of €)	Giving as a percentage of annual income
Highest decile	61	456	1,940	0.57
90	50	211	731	0.35
80	47	197	616	0.36
70	45	152	453	0.31
60	43	112	307	0.23
50	38	135	332	0.28
40	33	188	402	0.38
30	32	117	233	0.25
20	26	101	159	0.20
Lowest decile	20	71	94	0.13
Total	40	201	5,265	0.36

^a Average level of monetary giving in the previous 12 months

Why do Wealthy People Give Below Their Means?

There are multiple and complex reasons why many well-to-do people in Germany give less than their means permit, but four areas play a particular role:

- Public displays of wealth and income are taboo to a certain extent.
- Philanthropy is seen as a private virtue. Many donors do not wish to speak about their involvement.
- There is no straightforward way to show appreciation for the social value of wealthy people's giving.
- Active solicitation of major donations is still new for many nonprofit organizations in Germany, although they have long experience with fundraising.

The Taboo on Wealth

Well-to-do people, hereafter referred to as the rich, live pretty much in seclusion in Germany. Aside from the jet set of the high nobility, film and TV stars whose glamorous lives are publicly spotlighted by the media in every detail, little is known about rich people. It was almost like breaking a taboo when *manager magazin* published the first ranking of the 100 richest Germans in 2001. The list, now updated and published each year, has been expanded to encompass the 500 richest Germans. It is not customary in Germany to talk about how much one earns and owns. What are the reasons?

The rich try to protect themselves from attack, envy, and greediness by remaining silent about their wealth. This finding was documented by the interviews conducted

as part of a study on rich heiresses (Haibach 2001). Most of these women had not revealed their wealth to their friends, acquaintances, and work colleagues. The interviews showed that they found it difficult to talk to other people about the problems that came from being rich. They met with bewilderment because the general opinion is that the rich ought to be glad they need not worry about their livelihood. The heiresses also feared that they were liked and treated with deference only because of their money.

Another reason why wealth receives little mention in Germany is society's negative image of the rich, who are often the target of harsh criticism and reproach. Talk in the bars and living rooms repeatedly feeds the stereotype of the evil person who has come to wealth unfairly or without personal effort. No one likes being attacked like that, so wealth tends to be kept secret from the public.

Silence about wealth is certainly not confined to the public space; it envelops families as well. In the ancestral families of the interviewed heiresses, money was seldom, if ever, a topic of communication. Many husbands do not speak with their spouses about the level of their income. Children do not know how much their fathers or mothers earn. Several respondents had been utterly surprised at the size of their inheritance. They had not learned that they were rich until after the death of their father or mother. Among the parents who had not informed their children about these assets, the wealth has in most cases only recently been created by that generation. Some families whose wealth had existed for several generations generally handled questions about it more openly. Yet another aspect is the concern about personal safety. In Germany there is an inglorious, decades-long tradition of kidnapping rich heirs and heiresses. Well-known examples have been the cases of Richard Oetker, the son of an industrialist; Lars and Meike Schlecker, the children of Anton Schlecker, who used to own a chain of drugstores; and Jan Philipp Reemtsma, the grandson of Hamburg cigarette manufacturer Bernhard Reemtsma.

Philanthropy—A Private Virtue

Wealthy people rarely claim the public limelight with their philanthropic engagement in Germany, especially when it involves announcing details of it. Even in the private sphere, speaking about one's own charitable giving is unusual. For historical reasons, Germany clearly differs from the USA in this respect. The polity of the British colonies in the New World and, later, in the young USA was organized on a voluntary basis. The government did not enter the scene until much later, and by tradition only closed gaps left by philanthropy. Charitable giving is still a public virtue in the USA. Philanthropic involvement follows economic success and leads, as the culmination of one's life work, to the top of the social ladder.

In the USA, the role of the successful entrepreneur includes activity as a philanthropist. Such a person is expected to engage actively in society alongside his or her business affairs, particularly as a donor and a founder. If successful entrepreneurs in the USA do not meet their social obligation of philanthropic engagement, then

they are subjected to public criticism. For example, when it became known that the founder of Microsoft, Bill Gates, had acquired a vast fortune, the media became concerned and constantly asked the critical question about why he donated so little. Meanwhile, Bill Gates and his wife Melinda have taken the lead among the most generous donors in the USA. In Germany and the rest of Europe, by contrast, philanthropy is a private virtue. Seen historically as well, it comes to bear only where government responsibility ends. Social recognition does not depend on whether or not someone is a generous donor.

Shortcomings in the Recognition of Engagement by the Rich

Germany lacks a culture of straightforwardly appreciating the social value of private philanthropy by wealthy people. Granted, in many places and in different contexts there are now plaques listing donors, and even buildings and universities are named after them. Their names appear on the Internet, in other media sources, and in annual reports of organizations and institutions. But many people who donate substantial sums shun public attention. As stated by a major donor interviewed in one study, “I do not wish my donation to be publicly recognized. When someone in the United States reports that he earns a million, he is admired for it. But in Germany it makes many envious and triggers the thought that the person has not earned it” (Haibach 2010, p. 57).

In 2010 Bill Gates and investor Warren Buffet initiated *The Giving Pledge*, a public promise made by the US billionaires to donate at least half of their wealth to charitable purposes. This declaration, too, met with disapproval in Germany, with comments such as “obscene alms” and “sale of indulgences” circulating (Kaufmann 2010). If this reaction is anything to go by, billionaires in Germany who would join the Buffet–Gates philanthropic initiative ought to expect critical attention and prepare themselves for questions about the origins of their wealth. Such censure has also come from the ranks of the rich. Hamburg shipping magnate and multimillionaire Peter Krämer disparaged *The Giving Pledge* as a “bad shift from state authority to billionaire’s zeal” and argued, as did others, for raising the tax on wealth (Spiegel Online 2010). The criticism cast the billionaires behind the initiative as being primarily intent on a showy public-relations exercise. Not until early 2013 did a German billionaire, SAP founder Hasso Plattner, side with Gates and Buffet and take up their call.

Lack of recognition of the social value attached to the contribution made by private donors is illustrated by the experience of Helmut and Hannelore Greve, a real-estate business couple who donated DM 70 million (today nearly 36 million €) for construction of the wings of Hamburg University’s main building. For many years, some students vociferously protested this alleged marketing and privatization of education. For example, the appearance of the Greves at the unveiling of the sculpture they had donated to the university campus was greeted with a hail of paint

balloons. The German weekly *Die Zeit* scrutinized the couple's engagement, and one of the editors wrote that Helmut and Hannelore Greve's offers to give money are repeatedly declined. He found that people feel beset and patronized by their donations and object that the couple gives under the motto "do good so that you can tell about it" (Rauterberg 2003).

It goes without saying that the behavior of major donors should not be regarded uncritically. A number of them want to use their financial support to exert influence on organizations and society. A familiar example is the case of Jürgen Wagentrotz, the more or less justifiably disillusioned donor of the foundation Menschen für Menschen (People for People), to which he had been giving 1,000,000 € annually since 2005. He publicly accused the management of following intransparent business practices, window-dressing the accounts, engaging in unfair competition, wasting donated funds, and other serious lapses. Although most of these charges seized upon by the media were not confirmed, the episode brought about by the donor is likely to have hurt the organization. Not all major donors content themselves with the role of the unobtrusive financial backer. Distrust of organizations that receive donations and attempt to intervene with a "guiding hand" can hinder their operations and jeopardize their existence. Organizations must be able to forego a donation that would take them off course.

Fundraising by Actively Addressing Major Donors Is Still New Territory

As these examples show, significant donations are indeed repeatedly received in Germany, too. They are frequently unexpected because they had not been actively sought after—perhaps because fundraising campaigns aimed especially at major donors are the exception in Germany.

Fundraisers from the USA are generally amazed by the minimal staffing typical in Germany at organizations that gather donations, and they are impressed by the nevertheless relatively large sums that are given. The great majority of the organizations in Germany focus their fundraising on mail campaigns, advertisement at stands and, recently, on Internet presence. The outsourcing of numerous attendant activities is a main reason why many organizations have been able to operate thus far with comparatively few fundraising specialists. As the US experience has shown, fundraising from large donors is very personnel intensive. The target group of donors has to be "cultivated" with individually tailored approaches. Development offices in the USA and Canada therefore often have large staffs for this purpose. A single fundraiser can personally handle only a limited number of persons. Many organizations in the USA set targets for their fundraisers in terms of the number of major or potential major donors for whom a particular specialist is to be responsible and how many donation commitments he or she is expected to generate.

Fundraising oriented especially to major donors has only recently begun to gain a foothold in Germany. A few organizations and institutions such as the Technical

Hochschule Munich have been actively recruiting major donors for a long time, but whether the gift will be sizeable is usually left up to chance. Some large organizations such as Greenpeace, the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), and Kinder-nothilfe (Children's Emergency Relief) began in the 1990s to tailor some of their fundraising activities expressly to major donors. In most organizations, however, mass fundraising still has priority over personal requests for donations.

Signs that active fundraising for major donations pays off in the long term have become noticeable in Germany recently. The approaches customarily used in the USA, Canada, and the UK to activate major donors are beginning to take hold in the German-speaking countries as well when they are adapted to that context. A few organizations are expanding staff in the area of major donations, albeit often after protracted internal disputes. In many cases, it initially means adding only a single new position.

Changes and Ways to Increase Philanthropy in Germany

There is still a long way to go before philanthropy becomes second nature in Germany as it is in the USA. Nonetheless, a reassessment of private engagement is discernible. Moreover, some wealthy people are becoming aware of their responsibility as public role models.

When the late entrepreneur Klaus J. Jacobs announced at a press conference on November 1, 2006, that the Jacobs Foundation, which he had created, would provide a total of 200 million € for the International University of Bremen by 2011, the public responded enthusiastically. It is unusual in Germany for private persons to donate vast sums to research and teaching. By doing so, Klaus J. Jacobs consciously wanted to make a difference. Wealthy individuals had given millions to German universities before, but Jacobs's megadonation marked the beginning of an epochal change in Germany. It is substantiated by the cumulative donations of up to 200 million € from Hasso Plattner, a cofounder of SAP, to the Hasso Plattner Institute of Software Systems Engineering at the University of Potsdam, and 200 million € from another SAP cofounder, Hans-Werner Hector, to the University of Karlsruhe.

The discussion of inheritance has also changed somewhat in Germany in recent years. Some heirs and heiresses, such as the Bosch heiress Ise Bosch and the shipping magnate Peter Krämer, have spoken publicly in interviews about inheritance and the ensuing responsibility, partly to set an encouraging example for others to do likewise in the same situation. Changes are necessary in several directions to expand philanthropy among the wealthy in Germany.

Increase the Willingness to Give

Philanthropy should become a public virtue in Germany. In the age of global communication and the resulting transparency—about wealthy people as well—“silent”

patronage is outmoded. Public models of giving motivate others to follow suit. Regular publication of the rankings of donations by wealthy persons can promote this response. Both the joy of giving and the size of the donation pie grow if the activities involved are ones that people talk about and reflect on. Enhanced public transparency reduces reservations about drawing on personal networks for fundraising.

Improve the Fundraising of Nonprofit Organizations

Full financial disclosure by nonprofit organizations instills trust in potential and already active donors. Transparency in Germany must not remain a matter of an organization's discretion; it must become mandatory. In the USA disclosure of key information on nonprofit organizations is axiomatic. In Germany, the concepts of tax secrecy and voluntary transparency still serve as pretexts for nondisclosure. Fundraisers bear great responsibility for establishing and preserving authenticity and credibility.

Actively seeking major donations should become an essential part of the fundraiser's repertoire. It is worth investing in developing this aspect of the task. In addition, to adequate staffing, the formulation of a case for support that persuasively explains the uniqueness of the organization in a commonly understandable manner is required. Projects must be designed with the need for major donations in mind. Major donors have to be "discovered," a process that requires active steps and procedures. Organizations must envisage the opportunities of focused analysis based on their own data bank of donors and must lift the taboo on using personal networks. Honorary members of management boards could play a role in this regard. Major donors must be specifically asked to increase their giving. The use of customized strategies for cultivating and approaching such contacts must become second nature. The frequency of well-prepared, personal appeals for donations must intensify. Special mailings make sense for large donors in the "intermediate" range. Attractive, intelligently conceived events for major donors can do much to communicate their special significance and role for the organization.

Giving personal attention to major donors is an indispensable component of successful fundraising. These individuals often respond positively to a fundraiser's empathic cultivation of personal contact with them and appreciate the continuing interest and care invested in their relationship. The result is often an increase in the donor's giving. Individual information on administrative costs and appropriate acknowledgement of donations are also effective.

Change Society's Perspective on the Value of Major Donors and Fundraising

Not only do organizations need to sharpen their awareness, society as a whole must improve the culture of recognizing the special value of the contribution made by

private giving. The issue of social justice and the growing gap between rich and poor remain on the agenda. The times of either–or, of either more government or more philanthropy, are gone. There is a need for public acknowledgement of fundraising’s positive effect on the promotion of philanthropy. The usually negative image of fundraising in Germany is not conducive to fostering the willingness to give. Fundraisers have a key role in efforts to secure funding for the work of nonprofit organizations and the public weal. The costs of fundraising, if they remain within reasonable limits, should not be frowned upon. They are resources used for leveraging greater revenues.

Where the Matter Stands

An increase in charitable giving is achievable in Germany if the number and size of the major donations grow. Activities encouraging the expansion of philanthropy, specifically the engagement of individuals, should be initiated and supported. The economic potential for enhancing the size of donations by individuals exists in Germany, a country with approximately one million inhabitants with net assets of at least US 1 million \$. If these people alone were to donate just 1 % of their income, it could more than double the amount donated in Germany, providing an additional sum of around 7 billion €. Bringing about that shift requires the preconditions for charitable donations as well as changes in society’s attitude toward such giving. The focus must be on intensifying the willingness to donate, improving the fundraising of nonprofit organizations and, last but not least, promoting society’s recognition of the special value attached to those activities.

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Chapter 27

Aktive Bürgerschaft: Innovations for Civil Society in Germany

Stefan Nährlich

Abstract “Aktive Bürgerschaft: Do good things even better! We make innovative engagement concepts work in practice and implement them together with partners on the national or regional level.” In line with its mission statement, Aktive Bürgerschaft (Active Citizenship) gives a fresh impetus to the further development of civil society. The promotion of community foundations is one example of this. With the foundation of the association Aktive Bürgerschaft, Germany entered new ground: a nonprofit association that promotes civic engagement on the national level and is supported by a group of banks. With its roots in third sector research, Aktive Bürgerschaft developed in the mid-1990s as part of an innovative beginning to promote civic engagement with a new approach. Annette Zimmer’s work paved the way for this development.

Keywords Community foundations · Civil society · Civic engagement · Germany

Over the past two decades, civic engagement in Germany has continuously gained attention and significance. Changes in society as well as changes in voluntary action and giving, foundations and associations converted the image of “someone who only thinks about his club” to an “active citizen” who shapes society. But the focus is not only on committed citizens but also on nonprofit organizations that give this engagement a lasting influence and on structures that support and strengthen the engagement of individuals. In this context, experts often speak of an infrastructure that promotes engagement.

In this regard, community foundations have gained great respect. For the first time in contemporary German history, an idea and a concept have established themselves on a nationwide level despite the fact that they did not stem from political will, were not dependent on subsidies from exemplary—or sometimes non-exemplary—federal programs, and are almost free from state assistance and interference. Based on private initiative, community foundations help build up the capital of civil

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Table 27.1 Development of community foundations in Germany. (Aktive Bürgerschaft 2013b)

Year	Newly founded	Overall number
1996	1	1
1997	1	2
1998	4	6
1999	7	13
2000	11	24
2001	8	32
2002	18	50
2003	19	69
2004	32	101
2005	40	141
2006	56	197
2007	44	241
2008	35	276
2009	22	298
2010	24	322
2011	15	337
2012	8	345
2013 (until June 30, 2013)	3	348

society and promote local civic engagement. This special type of foundation that is based on the Anglo-Saxon community foundation model is considered to be a very suitable and modern form to organize civic engagement in a lasting way and with a local focus (Aktive Bürgerschaft 2013a; Nährlich et al. 2005).

Since the establishment of the first community foundation in 1914 by Frederick Goff, more than 700 community foundations have been created in the USA. As of 2013, they had accumulated foundation assets amounting to about US\$ 50 billion. In addition, the concept of a community foundation has turned into a global export hit. The first community foundation outside the USA was established in Canada in 1921, and the first in Europe was the one in England in 1976. Since the mid-1990s, the concept of a community foundation has spread worldwide. Today, there are more than 1,680 community foundations in more than 50 countries in the world (WINGS 2010). Since 1996, when the first community foundation was established in Germany, this concept has witnessed very dynamic growth (see Table 27.1).

In the meantime, more than 348 community foundations in Germany have accumulated assets amounting to 235 million €, which most of them invest in projects and for the promotion of training and education. More than 12,000 people work on an honorary basis in projects, secretariats, and bodies (Aktive Bürgerschaft 2013b). It is true that most of the community foundations have not yet accumulated enough capital to be sustainable, but in the foreseeable future, the number of community foundations with a capital of more than 1 million € will be larger than the number of traditional foundations.

The term community foundation is not just a modern marketing label in the context of civic engagement and civil society but describes a certain type of foundation. The community foundations that cooperate in the working group of community foundations in the *Bundesverband Deutscher Stiftungen* (Federation of German

Foundations) have formulated “Ten Characteristics of Community Foundations” (Bundesverband Deutscher Stiftungen 2002) to distinguish them from other foundations and to offer orientation. Compared to traditional foundations, community foundations are independent foundations that are not dominated by individuals or organizations. They are active at the local or regional level, and they increase and build up their foundation capital over the long term. Many founders raise the foundation’s capital, and the proceeds can then be invested in a broad number of projects. Founders are also allowed to set up endowment funds and trusteeship foundations under the umbrella of community foundations, thus realizing their individual charitable aims on a lasting basis. Community foundations are characterized by giving founders and donors certain participatory rights concerning the use of funds and the funding policy.

Community foundations are also interesting because they are an institutional innovation in the organizational landscape of civil society in Germany. Under German law, every foundation is considered to be responsible for its assets and differs from an association, in that it has to meet the will of the founder that was laid down when the foundation came into existence; it is also not subject to a permanent, democratic decision-making process of its members. It was the community foundation that, for the first time, systematically and conceptually added associative elements. Its implementation in the form of an institution is the founders’ meeting and the founders committee, the friends of the foundation and the board of trustees. The definition of a community foundation as a “foundation of citizens for citizens” expresses this self-administration approach very well and clearly distinguishes it from other foundations. Compared to the other so-called engagement-promoting infrastructure facilities such as agencies for senior citizens, volunteer centers, and local offices for civic engagement, community foundations have a few comparative advantages, as described below.

Self-Initiated and Self-Organized Engagement on the Spot

Community foundations develop from private initiatives and are independent foundations under public law. They have their own bylaws when it comes to determining their internal structure. To join in and to co-decide, these are the characteristics of functioning community foundations. The opportunity to shape and to decide is considered to be the essential motivation for engagement in community foundations. The founders and future donors participate in the decision-making process in the corresponding bodies or through certain rules. Such decisions could refer to the future focus of projects or on the specific use of proceeds from the foundation’s assets. In this respect, the legislation gives community foundation sufficient latitude, but we must keep in mind that the range of tasks of a founders’ group is different from that of a general assembly of an association. As a principle, community foundations are active only at the local or regional level.

Sustainability and Independence by Building Civil Society Capital

Community foundations are like all foundations, financing themselves through proceeds from the foundation's assets, which remain untouched. Community foundations as well as foundations, more generally, last forever. In the long run, the foundation's capital makes the foundation independent from the economic situation, political majorities, and the people's variable willingness to donate money. In contrast to associations, a foundation is not required to use its funds in a timely fashion, but can work with them on a long-term basis. A retrospective increase in the foundation's assets, so-called endowment contributions can be included in the foundation's assets or can be administered as funds that carry the name of the donor and whose proceeds only serve a certain purpose. Since the foundation's assets will be increased through many endowment contributions, everyone can afford to become a founder. It is also possible and usual to make donations (monetary and in-kind) to foundations.

Diverse, Lasting, and Nevertheless, Flexible Engagement Possibilities

Due to their diverse functions, community foundations allow for long-term, institutionalized engagements but also various forms of limited, temporary engagements as well as spontaneous and unique opportunities. Ideally, community foundations perform four tasks. First, as fundraisers, community foundations have the task to continuously monitor the accumulation of broadly-based assets for the foundation and to raise donations. Second, as service providers, community foundations support donors and founders when it comes to allocating funds, help manage financial resources, acquire new resources, or assist with public relations efforts. Third, as grant-makers, they should react to newly developing and changing needs and support innovative developments in the education and environment sectors, in cultural affairs, as well as in the social sector. But many community foundations are also operational, and often carry out projects together with other institutions. Finally, as an advocacy group for the common good, community foundations can also be a catalyst for the local communities and make possible new partnerships between state, trade and industry, and society.

Broad Engagement for a Culture of Civil Society

Community foundations support cultural, social, educational, and other nonprofit projects. Due to their local orientation and their broad goals, community foundations are able to react in a flexible way to future social challenges. At the same

time, they offer many forms of and possibilities for cooperation among founders, associations, companies, church parishes, and municipal governments. That is why a community foundation generally does not compete with the existing local associations and foundations, but rather creates an often necessary pooling of forces. In addition, this approach contributes to softening the classical segmentation of voluntary services in Germany into sport, culture, social affairs, the environment, etc. and placing greater emphasis on civic engagement as a value for society. In many places, community foundations are becoming the first point of contact for civic engagement.

Become a Founder! With Money, Time, and Ideas

Since 2002, Aktive Bürgerschaft has supported the development of community foundations across Germany. At the beginning, it primarily supported the initiatives that aimed at creating community foundations, but for a few years now, the focus has shifted to offering assistance in management and in projects and to attracting new founders and active members. For this purpose, Aktive Bürgerschaft has developed various guides and practical toolkits, and offers advice, training courses, and opportunities for a regional exchange of opinions among the community foundations themselves (Heilmann and Grabsch 2014). With the annual “Aktive Bürgerschaft” incentive award and the campaign “mitStiften + mitGewinnen” (Donate and Win with Us), Aktive Bürgerschaft contributes to generating greater public attention for community foundations. Prominent personalities from society, trade and industry, media, and politics up to the chancellor and the president are supporting these efforts (Wannow 2014). With the “Länderspiegel Bürgerstiftungen, Fakten und Trends” (Community Foundations in the German States, Facts, and Trends), the Aktive Bürgerschaft has presented an annual overview on the developments of community foundations in all federal states since 2006. With the community foundation finder, the association also developed the German Internet equivalent to the Anglo-Saxon community foundation finder in the same year. It offers an interested public a central and informative entry into all German community foundations.

Origins

The programmatic orientation of Aktive Bürgerschaft and its technical self-understanding are based in principle on third sector research and Annette Zimmer’s work. I met her for the first time during my fourth semester of university studies. In 1989, she came from Yale University where she had worked with the Program on Non-profit Organizations (PONPO) to Kassel University, which at that time was a so-called comprehensive university (Gesamthochschule Kassel - GhK). At Kassel, she placed a new issue on the agenda of the economics department: nonprofit organizations (Zimmer 1996). The result was seminars on nonprofit management and third

sector theories, case studies on cultural institutions and charities, and empirical projects on the organizational, and financing structures of local associations. These seminars took students on field visits and allowed them to engage in discussions with officials from nonprofit organizations.

At that time, the GhK was the nucleus of fledgling third sector research in Germany. Wolfgang Seibel (1992) pursued his habilitation with his *Theory of Functional Dilettantism*; conferences in Kassel (Reese 1987) and Bad Honnef (Anheier and Seibel 1990) brought together German and international researchers, thus promoting third sector research in Germany. There was also a steady exchange of information with adjacent departments and disciplines such as that of Christoph Sachße (1994). In his social policy colloquia, social policy experts and management consultants, pedagogues and economists discussed the opportunities and the risks of the beginning economization of social welfare organizations and the relationship between civic engagement, market, and state.

Third sector research linked sociologically oriented research, for instance, on voluntary action, with political and administrative policy research and with economic studies that considered nonprofit organizations primarily to be social service providers. Internationally discussed questions built on approaches developed in the German-speaking countries. They focused, for instance, on social science research on associations, legal analyses of foundations, and examination of the practice of managing sociocultural centers and workers' self-directed enterprises. This was very convenient for interdisciplinary studies in economic sciences with all its business administration and national economy segments and with all its political and legal components.

The new component of this third sector approach for research as well as for practice was the emphasis on common characteristics of nonprofit organizations despite the various fields of their activities. Sports clubs used to speak with other sports clubs about sponsoring and donations, social institutions spoke with other charities about voluntary action. The notion that, despite different goals, a soccer club could face the same problems regarding new sponsors, the coordination of the work of volunteers or public relations as, for instance, a hospice was not widespread; nor was the assumption that both sides could learn from each other. The same is true for the idea of a special and independent social role that nonprofit organizations and civic engagement could play. The image of "someone who only thinks about his club" and "functional dilettante" only slowly changed and turned into the image of an "active citizen" and a bearer of hope for the modernization of society (Zimmer and Priller 2005).

Following the lectures and my job as student assistant for projects, I wrote two diploma theses according to the so-called "Kassel Model," and a doctoral thesis on the German Red Cross in the Modernization Process (Nährlich 1998) with Annette Zimmer's guidance. Shortly thereafter, I became the first employee of the association *Aktive Bürgerschaft*, which had just been founded in Münster.

Change

Aktive Bürgerschaft's founding in 1997 happened at a time when the international Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project also made a considerable contribution of bringing the third sector to the fore and played an important role in the systematic study of civic engagement as a potential source of societal renewal. At issue was a new relationship between state, trade and industry, and society in which civic engagement was supposed to play a crucial role, as the Bundestag's fact-finding committee on the "Future of Civic engagement," set up in December 1999, said in its final report (Enquete-Kommission Zukunft des Bürgerschaftlichen Engagements 2002).

Wolfgang Seibel and Helmut Anheier as well as Eckhard Priller and Annette Zimmer led the two stages of the Johns Hopkins project in Germany from 1990–2000 (Anheier et al. 1997; Priller and Zimmer 2001). This research project had a great influence on the spread of the issue in the social sciences. The nonprofit researchers from Germany, Austria, and Switzerland met for the first time for a scientific exchange of views in 1994, which has since been organized on a biannual basis as a nonprofit organization research colloquium (Schauer et al. 1995). Post-graduate students from half a dozen universities founded the working group "Non-Profit Organizations" 3 years later (Arbeitskreis Nonprofit-Organisationen 2008) to offer young academics a forum to discuss their work. The German Advisory Board of the Johns Hopkins project was very helpful in establishing connections between research and practice but also beyond the various areas of practice.

At the same time, it was a period of the development of new approaches to promote civic engagement. With private support, the former Minister for Family Affairs, Claudia Nolte, set up the foundation Citizens for Citizens in Berlin in 1997. It was her goal to encourage networking and offer support for the newly developing volunteer centers. Rupert Strachwitz founded the Maecenata Institute in the same year to serve as a research and documentation center with the aim of improving knowledge about philanthropy and foundations. In Hanover and Gütersloh, the first community foundations became operational in 1996 and 1997. The Ministry for Family Affairs and for Senior Citizens (today the BMFSF) launched a model program for the promotion of senior citizen offices, and in Baden-Württemberg, people worked on senior citizen cooperatives and local city offices. Based on this, the Land of Baden Württemberg launched an initiative and founded the first regional civic engagement network. Today, a great number of different local organizations exist to promote civic engagement, but often they are in a weak financial situation and have different potential and perspectives (Wolf and Zimmer 2012).

Two new organizations made clear which issues moved nonprofit organizations in Germany the most. In 1993, the umbrella organization *Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Sozialmarketing* (National Working Group on Social Marketing), the predecessor organization of the German Fundraising Association was founded and the *Förderverein für Jugend und Sozialarbeit* (Friends of Youth and Social Work) and

its Volunteering Academy offered the first classes on volunteer management in Germany. Christiane Biedermann (2000) made an important contribution to the training program; she later joined *Aktive Bürgerschaft* and is today the head of its Press and Communication Department.

After the end of socialism, the Robert Bosch Foundation supported the development of civic engagement in eastern Germany with the program “Citizens’ Initiatives in the New Länder.” The foundation *Mitarbeit* (Foundation for Participation) based in Bonn offered such start-up assistance for initiatives and projects not only in the East. It is a pioneer of the grassroots democracy movement, and since the 1960s it has supported civic engagement in Germany.

In the early 1990s, awards and prizes for engaged citizens and nonprofit organizations were rare. However, since 1965, the Theodor Heuss Foundation has awarded the Theodor Heuss medal, while the Social Democratic Party (SPD) bestowed the Gustav Heinemann Citizen Award in 1977. Beginning in 1995, the Alfred-Toepfer Foundation has rewarded civil engagement in the new Länder with the Freiherr-von-Stein Prize. In addition, sports clubs that were organized in sports associations (Deutscher Fußball-Bund, DFB) awarded their DFB Voluntary Engagement Prize for the first time in 1997. Today, we have about 150 national and regional prizes for civic engagement in Germany. In many cases, they were inspired by the International Year of Volunteers 2001 or the European Year of Volunteering 2011.

Aktive Bürgerschaft

On August 20, 1997, the association *Aktive Bürgerschaft* was formally founded when it was entered in the Register of Associations in Münster, and in November 1997, its secretariat began its work. Its goal—laid down in the association’s articles—is “the revival and the spread of volunteer work in the sense that it strengthens the co-responsibility for others.” This follows the founders’ conviction that a committed citizenship creates a sustainable social modernization path “from the bottom,” that the citizens would be competent enough to identify the problems in their neighborhood and cooperate to find solutions and that they also are willing to bear a co-responsibility to resolve them. The association *Aktive Bürgerschaft* seeks to help mobilize these resources. The board of trustees is made up of officials from politics, science, the media, and cooperative banks. Five members of the management board are responsible for operations, and three staff members in the head office coordinate projects and activities.

When we started, *Aktive Bürgerschaft* occupied a few office rooms in the building of the R+V Insurance company at the Aa Lake in Münster. The rooms were freshly renovated and were empty apart from the computers and telephones we had. Hermann Janssen, the driving force behind the association’s foundation, who worked previously as the executive for cultural affairs in the city of Münster and who was open to modernization (Klenke 2008, p. 115), brought along his two Leitz ring binders with the documents necessary for founding the association, while

I brought along a few books on third sector research and the crisis of the welfare state. Together we built up the mailing list: Hermann Janssen had the contacts with politicians from the various parties and local administrations, and I had the contacts with a network of universities and nonprofit organizations. The decentralized structure of the cooperative banking group gave us access to local and regional networks throughout the country.

The outline of a strategy Annette Zimmer and I had been commissioned to work out in the run-up to the association's establishment was slowly filled with projects and programs. Over the past 15 years, Aktive Bürgerschaft was frequently the trailblazer for new programs or actively supported other new developments. With the "Aktive Bürgerschaft" incentive prize, we created one of the first nationwide awards for civic engagement. This prize was not awarded on recommendations from third parties but on applications and on the view of experts sitting on an independent jury. It is an award that is not confined to a ceremony but which considers the award winners to be partners for further cooperation, first of all in the Reform Network of Innovative Associations (dRiVe), and later through cooperation among many community foundations.

By publishing the series "Civic engagement and the Non-Profit Sector" (today, it is called "Civil Society and Democracy"), Annette Zimmer together with Aktive Bürgerschaft established the issue in great broadness and depth in a widely acclaimed academic series for dissertations, conference proceedings, and monographs. The news service "bürgerAktiv-Nachrichtendienst Bürgergesellschaft" (Civil Society) developed from the quarterly newsletter "Aktive Bürgerschaft." It is the only news service which, based on its journalistic duty of diligence, reports on a monthly basis on the most important national events and developments regarding civic engagement in Germany. With the memorandum "Bürgergesellschaft" (Civil Society) (Backhaus-Maul et al. 2012), Aktive Bürgerschaft has for the first time presented ideas for a regulatory framework and put them up for discussion. In the meantime, recommendations such as a legally binding obligation of transparency have met with broad support. In order to promote the impact of the work of nonprofit organizations, Aktive Bürgerschaft became a founding shareholder of the Phineo gAG a few years ago.

The work of Aktive Bürgerschaft also became so successful because the association has always considered itself to be a social platform. It has done so not only with its full-time team but also with active and former trustees and board members such as Holger Backhaus-Maul, Kurt Biedenkopf, Warnfried Dettling, Jürgen Kocka, Paul Nolte, Heribert Prantl, and Annette Zimmer, who, as opinion makers and visionaries for change in a social welfare state, have provided important stimuli to democracy and civil society. With jury members such as Stephan-Andreas Casdorff, Heinz Janning, Dieter Jütting, Adrian Reinert, Rupert Graf Strachwitz, and Michael Vilain, colleagues from other important institutions have been actively engaged in the work of Aktive Bürgerschaft, and they have also contributed to the association's broad recognition and its high level of expertise. The same is true for Gisela Jakob and Rudolf Speth's commentaries in the "Bürgergesellschaft" news service.

The cooperative banks play a special role in Aktive Bürgerschaft (BVR 2013a, b). They are not only the financial sponsors of the association, but

the activities of *Aktive Bürgerschaft* also orient themselves to cooperative values such as self-help, self-responsibility, and self-administration. The members of the board, ranging not only from Robert Baresel and Dieter Pahlen to Rolf Kiefer and Peter Hanker, but also the chairman of the board of trustees ranging from Eberhard Heinke to Christopher Pleister to Werner Böhnke have always stood up for the independent and autonomous work of *Aktive Bürgerschaft*, thus laying the foundation for its excellent reputation.

While companies and advisors emphasize in general the “business case” in the German debate about corporate citizenship, i.e., the benefits for companies and only then the contribution corporate citizenship makes to society, the cooperative group of banks is of the opinion that this alone is not enough as the sole standard for successful engagement. On the contrary, the “business case” presupposes the “social case,” i.e., the benefits to society. Each kind of engagement for society gets its legitimacy, acceptance, and acknowledgment through the contribution it makes to the common good, but not because the one who makes this contribution benefits from it (Nährlich and Polterauer 2008; Nährlich 2010).

This controversy over societal benefits goes beyond the formal aspect of the non-profit status and raises the question of civil society’s concerns and the contribution it can make to solve these social problems. This also creates challenges for cooperative banks in the search for their contemporary role in the society. The historical development of the cooperative banks, which developed in the nineteenth century as an answer to the social problems of the industrial revolution, facilitates the understanding of social questions. In addition to pragmatic reasons, this development also offers one explanation why the cooperative banks have dealt so early and in such an innovative way with this issue.

Outlook

By promoting community foundations in Germany, *Aktive Bürgerschaft* has helped to establish a lasting, growing, and effective engagement structure at the local level. In addition to community foundations, another important field of work for *Aktive Bürgerschaft* emerged in 2009 with the promotion of civic engagement in schools. Service learning is considered to be a way to deepen learning from experience and improve the students’ learning motivation. Civic engagement not only makes an important contribution to education, but also an engagement that began during youth has a positive impact for the willingness to engage in the future. While in the USA, service learning has been part of the students’ everyday school life since the 1980s, this approach is not so common among German schools and universities (Schröten 2011; Backhaus-Maul and Roth 2013). With support from the WGZ cooperative bank, *Aktive Bürgerschaft* is carrying out the service learning initiative “sozialgenial–Students Get Involved” and is helping schools in North Rhine-Westphalia to develop and implement engagement projects. Due to a parallel impact study that

follows this development, we have for the first time representative research results on service learning at German schools (Speck et al. 2013; Bauer and Drucks 2013). In an ideal case, service learning not only is beneficial for individual educational opportunities, but also helps civil virtues and civil engagement reproduce themselves as a habit and allows students to reflect upon their actions, thus strengthening democracy and civic engagement.

Service learning, community foundations, and corporate citizenship address private contributions to the common good and raise the question of the relationship between citizen and state. Aktive Bürgerschaft is primarily interested in strengthening individual freedom and social participation. This creates a conflict of interest with the state's engagement policies that have a tendency to primarily consider civic engagement as a wise tactic to activate inactive resources at a time of tight public budgets. Aktive Bürgerschaft criticized this in general and especially regarding the Federal Volunteering Service (Backhaus-Maul et al. 2011, 2012).

In this sense, Aktive Bürgerschaft orients itself to the claim that Annette Zimmer formulated when the association was founded:

The citizen as member of the community and civil society is becoming the focus of forward-looking concepts and considerations in politics and science. The initiative Aktive Bürgerschaft of cooperative organizations in North Rhine-Westphalia is located exactly at this interface to the current visions for a future social policy. With its program of action that supports the active participation of citizens, the initiative will have a sustainable impact to renew society from the bottom (Aktive Bürgerschaft 1999, p. 36).

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