

## Citizenship, Democratic Participation, and Civil Society

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*Published in:*  
Cursiv

*Publication date:*  
2015

*Document Version*  
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

*Citation for published version (APA):*  
Boje, T. P. (2015). Citizenship, Democratic Participation, and Civil Society. *Cursiv*, 15(2015), 27-44.

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**CURSIV • No. 15 • 2015**

An abstract painting with a textured, canvas-like appearance. The top half features a warm, orange and yellow sky over a dark, silhouetted horizon. Below the horizon, there are vibrant, layered colors including deep blues, greens, and reds, suggesting a landscape or a complex emotional state. The overall style is expressive and modern.

# **Voluntary Work And Youth Unemployment**

**- Contributions from the  
Conference on VERSO**

**Niels Rosendal Jensen (ed)**

**Department of Education  
Aarhus University 2015**

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Conference on VERSO**

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## **CURSIV**

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Individual issues may be published in Danish or English. Issues in Danish may also include articles in English, and vice versa. Articles in Danish include an abstract in English at the end of the articles, and articles in English include an abstract in Danish.

*CURSIV* is peer-reviewed and is classified in the Danish Ministry of Science, Innovation and Higher Education's system of bibliometric indicators as a level 1 journal.

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**Graphics and layout:** Leif Glud Holm

**Printed by:** Green Graphic ApS

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The painting on the front cover is: *L'Heure Bleue* by Mads Th. Haugsted.

ISSN: 1901-8878  
ISBN: 978-87-7684-792-0

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# Introduction: Voluntary Work, Unemployment, and the Changing Welfare State – in Search of an Alternative Solution

**By Niels Rosendal Jensen**

## **Abstract**

The aim of this introduction is to provide a space for discussing issues related to voluntary work. These issues have emerged during the three-year duration of the VERSO (Volunteers for European Employment) project. My essayistic introduction begins with a short outline of the project, followed in the second section by a broader discussion of voluntarism related to the welfare state. The third section relates to the classic welfare state, rights and obligations, while the fourth focuses on the emerging neoliberal forms of welfare provision. In the latter sections, the relationship between voluntary work and the bureaucratic field is used to illustrate the tensions between the ideals of voluntarism on the one hand and the need for funding on the other.

*Keywords:* voluntarism, labour market, welfare state, neoliberalism, bureaucratic field.

This introduction to the special issue of CURSIV on voluntary work provides a space for discussing issues related to voluntary work. These issues have emerged

during the three-year duration of the VERSO (Volunteers for European Employment) project. Some of them have been discussed on several occasions, whether at project meetings, in smaller groups, or even among partners during coffee breaks. It has been my privilege to take part in these discussions, and I should like to take this opportunity to convey my warm appreciation and gratitude to all partners.

My essayistic introduction begins with a short outline of the VERSO project, followed by a broader discussion of voluntarism. In the second section, this discussion is placed within a discussion on the welfare state. The third section relates to the classic welfare state, while the fourth focuses on emerging neoliberal forms of welfare provision. In these sections, the relationship between voluntary work and the bureaucratic field is used to illustrate the tensions between the ideals of voluntarism on the one hand and the need for funding on the other.

## **1. The VERSO project**

The overall purpose of the project has been to develop voluntarism and voluntary work related to unemployment, quality of life and mobilisation for social inclusion. The aim of the project was to identify good practices in eight countries. The project combines eight public authorities with the work of four knowledge partners. The countries involved are Bulgaria, Hungary, Greece, Spain, Germany, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Denmark. The conference in Copenhagen in October 2013 was intended to facilitate an academic discussion of voluntary work. Participants convened from the partner organisations, as well as from Arizona, USA, and Norway. The contributions of the speakers at this conference focused on important issues related to the voluntary sector, and several of these contributions are printed in this special issue of CURSIV.

The project was developed over a period of three years – 2011-2014. A catalogue of good practices has been produced, collected from the public authorities involved. Additionally, the project has been internally evaluated by the knowledge partners, while the project's political board has adopted a document with policy recommendations based on the experiences of the project. At the final conference in September 2014 in Hungary, political implementation plans were presented, discussed and finalised.

### **Voluntary work and youth unemployment**

Why is this project important? Because the most recent Eurostat data – spring 2012 – paint a concerning picture: over 50 percent youth unemployment in Spain and Greece, over 30 percent in Bulgaria, and a European average of 22 percent. The



danger of a “lost generation” is no longer just graffiti on a wall, but is becoming a worrying reality. It has become recognised that employment objectives cannot be achieved without the active involvement of actors at regional and local level. As youth unemployment is not only a result of the general labour market situation, the project also takes education and training into consideration.

Civic society and voluntarism constitute an alternative arena in which marginalised groups, as well as the unemployed workforce in general, can maintain and develop job skills and enhance their network in a non-formal educational domain. In this domain it is possible to acquire, re-acquire or re-focus job skills and develop familiarity with or tolerance to changing job market demands. Given the right organisational and political support, voluntarism is an open space for multi-lateral exchange capable of addressing unemployment issues.

In particular, voluntarism focuses on informal learning, meaning that voluntary organisations can help the unemployed back to work thanks to the use of networks – or at least help them develop their skills. Indeed, voluntary organisations can do more than that. For example, volunteers can question labour market and employment policies, or they can provide unemployed persons with new opportunities within voluntary work by creating new social spaces for them to develop their skills and general employability. Volunteers with steady jobs can deliver services to unemployed people by drawing on their knowledge of labour market dynamics and demands. Jacob Kornbeck presents sports volunteering as a social practice marked by a high level of diversity, which in turn offers spaces for young people to get involved. Furthermore, he emphasises the importance of sharing information and good practice in a field not marked by EU regulatory powers. Although sports volunteering has not been part of the VERSO project, the essence of Kornbeck’s contribution is valuable and applicable within the framework of VERSO.

The ‘great recession’ we are now facing started as problems began to emerge concerning subprime loans in the United States in the autumn of 2007. This financial crisis spilled over into the economy as a whole, including labour markets worldwide. There are some country-specific variations, but by and large, growth and employment experienced a significant downturn from the autumn of 2008. European unemployment rose sharply from 2008 to 2009 and continued to increase in 2010. The ‘great recession’ thus reflects a well-known relationship between worsening economic conditions and rising unemployment, and especially youth unemployment.

## **Involving civil society – panacea or dead end?**

As a result of these events, voluntarism has become a major political concern which has gained high priority on the political agenda. One example is the ‘*European Year of Volunteering 2011*’. The European agenda points to high ambitions and expectations, on which Anders la Cour and Holger Højlund argue in relation to social work and voluntarism:

*The expectations formulated by politicians are highly ambitious and optimistic in regard to the contributions of voluntary organizations. The underlying assumption seems to be that quality is ensured so long as care is provided by someone who is not being paid (la Cour & Højlund, 2008, p. 42).*

The question then arises: how has the balance between the public sector and voluntary work been taken into account both practically and empirically? The answer to finding the right balance seems to be a paradox between the desire “to do good” and the actual ability to meet these demands. In this respect, I represent a critical stance, because:

*considerable criticism may help to moderate the, at times somewhat naive, enthusiasm about spontaneity and self-regulation in civil society. Salamon (1987), for instance, mentioned four ‘voluntary failures’: particularism, insufficiency, amateurism, and paternalism (Dekker & Broek, 1998, p. 36).*

These challenges and contradictions are further presented and discussed by Lars Skov Henriksen in this issue.

## **A turning point**

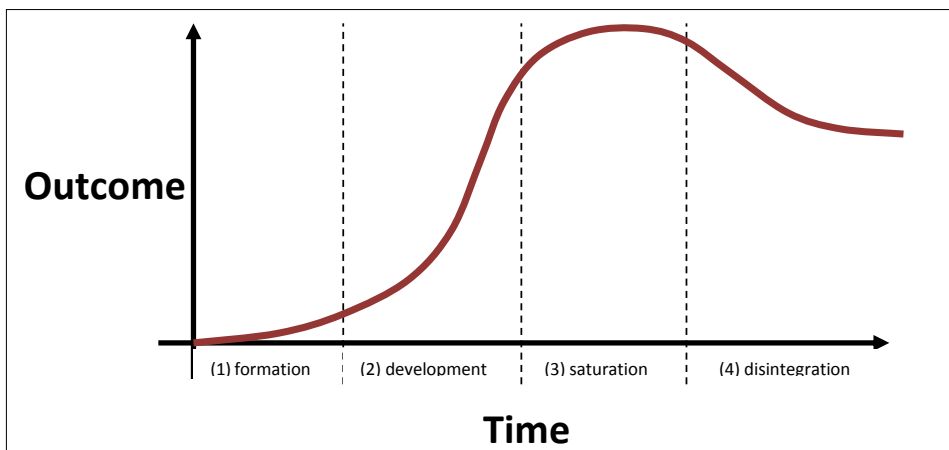
Moreover, it is important to consider whether and when civil society and voluntarism will reach their turning point. This turning point may be a stage of “saturation”, in the sense that voluntary work is inundated with public tasks. We have witnessed some examples of this phenomenon already, and it is one of the dangers threatening the future of volunteer involvement in solving societal problems.

To translate this into regimes and technological styles, we may underline some important features of voluntary work: Is a given political and economic regime capable of solving societal problems through voluntarism? It is not a matter of “either-or”, but rather “more or less”, meaning that a regime can obtain conditions of minimal or maximal capacity for solving societal challenges. Furthermore, we may distinguish between various stages of development: (1) formation, (2) development, (3) saturation and phenomena of disintegration, and

(4) disintegration. The first two stages are linked to maximal capacity, whilst the last two are linked to minimal capacity. We consider this discussion to be necessary in order to get a picture of the limits of volunteering.

When people start to get involved in voluntary work, they are usually full of energy and ambitions. They form and then develop their “sub-regime” within the field of unemployment, non-formal learning or quality of life. They work hard and enthusiastically (often in their leisure time), for instance to provide individuals with contacts or networks, plus fresh skills obtained in new social spaces. At a certain point they are not capable of doing any more, which in turn leads to saturation: there are too many unemployed people, there are no vacancies in companies, there is not enough space to recruit more volunteers, or whatever the reason. Saturation similarly implies the start of disintegration (volunteers discuss ways of limiting their tasks, for instance; they may even get upset and start thinking of abandoning these tasks altogether). Eventually this may disintegrate their network or organisation. In his contribution, Christian Chrstrup Kjeldsen points to another significant feature of the voluntary sector, drawing our attention to national differences, and varying trends and traditions.

The model above not only applies to voluntary work; it applies to nation states, too. In the following section, the problem of how to saturate social need and how to maintain maximum capacity for problem solving in the public sector is addressed.



## 2. The welfare state in transition

Having presented the overall objectives of the VERSO project, as well as basic discussions of voluntary work and its limitations, we now turn to the potential outcomes of the shift from the classic welfare state to a neoliberal welfare state.

For a number of decades, Europe has had a welfare statism tradition. This tradition has had a significant influence on the development of social services and, accordingly, social work and social pedagogy. A number of comparative researchers have identified different types of welfare regime (the Scandinavian welfare state, the 'Bismarck' countries, the Anglo-Saxon countries, and the Latin countries). In spite of this typology, Europe is regarded as having a common tradition with various institutional forms (Leibfried, 1993; Esping-Andersen, 1990).

For the VERSO project, youth unemployment constitutes the most crucial challenge. The labour market has undergone fundamental changes, and so has the welfare state. In what ways do different types of welfare states correspond to the labour market? A full discussion of this subject is not the intention here. Instead, we point to certain labour market characteristics which act as barriers to unemployed young people.

In the cases in the VERSO project, unemployed young people can at best hope to gain temporary employment within the secondary sector of the labour market. Our research additionally shows that a third market or a 'grey zone' is expanding: the black market for labour. If we are not able to create jobs in the primary and secondary sectors of the labour market, many young people will be facing the risk of getting precarious, short-time and temporary jobs in the 'grey zone' or even feel compelled to seek employment on the 'black market'.

At a time of crisis and extensive unemployment, how do we develop a coalition of professionals, volunteers and "victims"? Thomas P. Boje addresses some of these problems in his contribution, which presents a frame for understanding the potential role of civil society organisations and the importance of introducing participatory democracy by actively involving all citizens.

## 3. Welfare statism, rights and obligations

The tradition mentioned above has rested upon the significance of citizens' collective obligations for each other's welfare, through the agency of the state. T.H. Marshall presents a typical reflection of this position:

*There are some services which, with strong popular support, governments have recognised as being intrinsically suited to organisation on the welfare principle, as public, non-profit, non-commercial services, available to all at a uniform standard*

*irrespective of means. They include health, education and the personal social services. These are welfare's strongest suit and the purest expression of its identity, clearly detached from the market economy. [...] There will always be casualties to be cared for and it will be part of the welfare state's responsibility to care for them. [...] Welfare fulfils itself above all in those services which are its own in every sense – health, education, the personal social services (Marshall, 1981, pp. 134-135).*

Marshall here understands citizenship as a gift from the state in a top-down perspective. Policies from the top down are certainly important with regard to the development of social citizenship. However, bottom-up pressures and struggles have been decisive in this development, too. Nordic welfare research has argued that the labour movement has articulated the demands of the working class with respect to social security, unemployment etc. Sooner or later, these claims were acknowledged and became part of social policy, while values of the labour movement like solidarity were to become cornerstones of the Nordic welfare state (Korpi, 1983). The significance of such struggles is interesting, because these movements and their political pressures meant that they partly defined citizenship themselves. Citizenship does not mean the same thing for different social classes. Instead, we can expect social classes to be divergent or even mutually exclusive. This history shows that both perspectives appear as interdependent relations. Additionally, it points to the necessity of bottom-up activities, and this is precisely where we can reinvent the role of voluntary work.

In contrast to Marshall's understanding, welfare states are in a continuous flux. The ideal of the welfare state began to erode as this whole system came under strain. In brief, three criticisms were emphasised: (1) European welfare states were inefficient and wasteful, (2) they were provider dominated, and (3) they paid insufficient attention to the needs and wants of their users.

### **The welfare market and the bureaucratic field**

One consequence was a new emphasis on the market found in concepts such as new public management, new managerialism and market orientation. The pivotal idea was a focus on the citizen as a consumer.

This is the first challenge for the voluntary sector: voluntary work interpreted through the lens of market orientation.

The second challenge worth pinpointing concerns the bureaucratic field. Bourdieu underlined, during an interview, that the right hand of the state does not know what the left hand is doing (Bourdieu, 1998). As a tool for exploration, Bourdieu's basic point is fruitful. What he says is that technicians, bureaucrats and

policymakers have no clue – perhaps not even the slightest – about the work of those who actually implement public policy, such as teachers, social workers and social pedagogues. This means that knowledge of the tough realities is not shared with decision makers, so the decision makers do not know the specific character and specific tasks involved in professional work (cf. f.i. Duyvendak, Knijn, & Kremer, 2006, p. 7). In the following pages, I draw on Woolford and Curran (2012).

The two authors state that Bourdieu (1994) and Wacquant (2010) are useful sources for developing a framework for the discussion of nonprofit social services or voluntary work. Within the bureaucratic field, nonprofit actors seek resources such as funding or access to beneficiaries, fill gaps left vacant by the lack of welfare provisions, and embody practices that will allow them to appear competent and necessary before funders and resource gatekeepers. In brief, Woolford and Curran state that the conditions for the bureaucratic field both structure and shape social service practice. A field is interpreted as a battlefield or a contested terrain characterised by competition for the symbolic power to determine the standards of values of the field. Moreover, Woolford and Curran enfold Bourdieu's idea of competition in the bureaucratic field as occurring along two primary axes:

*Across one axis, the 'higher state nobility' - the political elite who are committed to implementing neoliberal policies – do battle with the 'lower state nobility' comprised of agents who implement and carry out these governing policies as well as other traditional governmental tasks. Across the other axis, the 'left hand' and the 'right hand' of the state struggle with one another. Whereas the 'left hand' refers to those government departments and government-sponsored social service agencies that offer social protection and support (e.g. public education, health, housing, and employment), the 'right hand' consists of institutional actors assigned with the task of disciplining subjects to the economic rigors of the neoliberal market. (Woolford and Curran, 2012, p. 3)*

Furthermore, the two authors combine Bourdieu and Wacquant because the latter extends Bourdieu's analysis of the bureaucratic field by placing police, courts and prisons on the right hand of the state. This has great significance for our understanding of the modern state. This means a stronger emphasis on the punitive or repressive side of the state, which indicates that traditional welfare services are supplemented by disciplinary workfare policies designed to convince marginalised individuals to accept low-paid and insecure employment. Wacquant pinpoints his argument by stating that the left and right hands of the state enfold a double regulation: punishment and assistance, which is a specific product of the neoliberal state. Hereby, 'prisonfare' and 'workfare' remake not only the market, but also the state itself. At the top of the social order, they offer increased market

freedoms to the elite, while at the bottom they expand and intensify their means of control (ibid., p. 48).

### **Voluntary work and the bureaucratic field**

Paraphrasing Woolford and Curran (ibid.) the challenge is that voluntary work and its services are situated within the bureaucratic field, because the activities are either directly or indirectly, partly or fully funded and facilitated by the state. They are created by the state because their impetus is to cover, supplement or complement programmes and responsibilities that might otherwise be carried out by the state. Voluntary work and nonprofit services are attuned to the conditions of this field: their survival depends on their ability to embody its rules and procedures, and thus they attach themselves to new procedures to meet the demands of the bureaucratic field.

The explanation is often found in a changing role of professionals due to the restructuring of welfare states by market orientation, managerialism and accountability.

The nonprofit social areas of paid and voluntary employment are inspired by a desire to contribute to the common or public good by ameliorating or, even better, solving pressing social problems. Therefore, we might expect practices animating nonprofit services to operate according to their 'spirit' and consequently expect voluntary actors to be focused on their beneficiaries. The main approach would also involve a spiritual or secular commitment to the cause in question.

Before jumping to hasty and wrong conclusions, it is necessary to underline that there was never a golden age of nonprofit social services. First, let us present three aspects of social services that contain some limitations:

1. The service user was a client of the state, which often meant citizen passivity.
2. The state placed its faith in the expertise of professional social workers.
3. Social workers had to carefully categorise needs (Harris, 2004, pp. 535-536).

Harris states that welfare statism might unintentionally lead to delimitations, which does not imply that everything was wrong or that nothing functioned. It simply means that public and state services may not always provide the best solutions. According to Harris, consumerism can lead to user-oriented services. He argues that the main reasons are that welfare provisions do not always meet their own ideals under all circumstances.

## 4. Neoliberalism, social problems and voluntary work

To develop this line of argument, I depict some of the central points made by Woolford and Curran (ibid., p. 46-47): Neoliberalism has witnessed the promotion of social entrepreneurialism in the 'third sector', meaning that entrepreneurial principles have been prioritised in the task of addressing social problems, including organisational and managerial strategies designed to help voluntary agencies generate income and meet the needs of their clients much more efficiently. However, the other side of the coin is propounded by a number of critical voices. Criticism has been expressed that voluntary organisations spend more of their energy on securing donations and funding than they do on their primary task. More important for the purpose of this introduction is the possible limitation of the democratic contributions of nonprofit agencies, when or if they have to focus more on revenue than on public education, civic engagement, and advocacy activities. For example, it has been noted that there are dangers in marketing voluntary organisations because this may place less emphasis on contributions to democracy and solutions for urgent social problems. At the same time, government funders expect service provision agencies to model the 'best practices' of business or economics. It is characteristic of new public management to focus on best practices, and it is further held that a social service agency must be accountable to its funders, providing 'deliverables' on 'invested' money. Much depends on the type of accountability and outcome measurement that is implemented (rule-based variety or goals-based variety). These changes have been noted in the literature, but no theoretical framework has been established for placing these changes within a broader structural context. In Linda Lundgaard Andersen's contribution, considerable importance is placed on how to develop social entrepreneurship that points in a different direction than that mentioned above. Debate and controversy are necessary elements of a further democratic discussion of the pros and cons in this specific area.

### The need for better understanding

Summing up the line of argument from Woolford and Curran (2012), restructuring the bureaucratic field combined with the idea of the right and the left hand would create two sets of criteria for success. One way of understanding welfare is the neoliberal one:

*market deregulation and a social policy platform that is almost uniformly individualistic and guided by an ideological belief in the necessity of a responsible citizenry that embraces autonomy and active employment. (Woolford & Curran, 2012, p. 8)*



Another way of understanding welfare is labelled the social neoliberal approach (e.g. Blair's 'third way'), which points by contrast to community-building. In brief, a welfare habitus contrasts with a neoliberal habitus. We (the VERSO project) have neither the resources nor the intention to proceed further in this direction, but a Canadian study based on fieldwork shows how managers and social workers plus volunteers act under these very different circumstances (ibid.).

For Harris, consumerism has its benefits. Among other things, he emphasises that consumerism is social development by means of welfare state reforms aiming at creating participation, partnership and various degrees of choice. In this way, social services become more attentive to social diversity, to direct interaction with service users, and to an understanding of beneficiaries as participants defining their needs (Harris, 2004, pp. 536-537).

These trends imply recognition of social differences – in the sense that one size does not fit all. Societies are socially differentiated and, as a consequence of this, citizenship as well as needs will also be differentiated. On the one hand this indicates a recognition of diversity and autonomy, but on the other it could similarly serve as a guise for inequality when overstating social differentiation and accepting very different levels of meeting needs. The outcome might then be to explore these ambiguities and use this exploration to establish social spaces for the empowerment of individuals, groups and movements to speak for their own interests and demands. My partly experience-based considerations point to an awareness of such changes on the side of voluntary work.

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## Dansk abstract

### Introduktion: Frivilligt arbejde, arbejdsløshed og en velfærdsstat i forandring – på udkig efter nye løsninger

Formålet med introduktionen er at diskutere spørgsmål og problemer, som er knyttet til frivilligt arbejde. Disse spørgsmål og problemer er blevet synlige i løbet af VERSO-projektets (Volunteers for European Employment) treårige levetid. Mit essay indledes med et kort afsnit om selve VERSO-projektet, fulgt af en bredere diskussion af frivillighed. I andet afsnit ses på velfærdsstaten. Det tredje afsnit indeholder en diskussion af den klassiske velfærdsstat, herunder rettigheder og pligter, mens det fjerde fokuserer på den neoliberalistiske stat og dens øgede brug af frivillige i leveringen af velfærdsydelser. Forholdet mellem frivilligt arbejde og det bureaukratiske felt benyttes i de sidste afsnit til at illustrere spændingerne mellem frivillighedens idealer på den ene side og behovet for ekstern finansiering på den anden.

*Nøgleord:* frivilligt arbejde, arbejdsmarked, velfærdsstat, neoliberalisme, bureaukratisk felt.

# Contradictions and Controversies in Danish Civil Society Discourse

By Lars Skov Henriksen

## Abstract

The article presents four critical observations that it is argued characterize the Danish welfare discourse on the role of civil society and the voluntary sector. The first observation is the tendency to ascribe only positive outcomes to the increase in mutual cooperation and partnerships between public and private welfare providers. The second observation reflects on the claim that the voluntary sector is more innovative than the public sector. The third deals with the contradictory roles of the volunteer as either democratic member of an association or cheap labor. Finally, the tendency to overlook failures within the voluntary sector and focus on government failure is discussed. The aim of the article is to raise awareness of some fundamental contradictions in the current political discussion, and hopefully place them on the research agenda for future critical and empirical scrutiny.

*Keywords:* civil society, partnership, innovation, membership model, voluntary failure.

## Introduction

In this short article, I present general reflections on some of the contradictions that I believe are inherent in the relationship between, on the one hand, public debate about civil society, and on the other hand, the empirical realities of the voluntary sector. It seems to me that, too often, the disparities are too great between these levels – levels which, for the lack of better terms, I will refer to here as the discursive level and empirical reality, leaving all questions of ontology and epistemology aside. I draw attention to this problem because I think it has consequences for the research questions we raise – and in particular those questions we all too often fail to raise.

The article is structured around four observations regarding the current Danish civil society discourse. I make no claims that these observations can be generalized to other parts of Europe, but I do think that there is at least some common ground and that these observations may therefore also enrich discussions in other countries. Looking at the current debate about civil society, volunteering etc. there is no doubt that the greater intensity of interest in this part of society is closely related to changes taking place within the public sector, the welfare state, and society in general. The voluntary sector is in this respect the dependent variable, not the independent variable; a fact which is often misunderstood.

Within the public sector and the welfare state, two parallel trends have emerged in recent years. One is of course the ideas and doctrines of New Public Management, introducing markets and market principles – that is competition, open tenders, private providers (be it for-profit or nonprofit), free choice etc. – into the public realm. This has brought the market closer to the public sector.

The other trend is an interest in social capital, social cohesion, citizenship, and social responsibility (underscoring not only citizens' rights but also their duties). This has brought civil society and the voluntary sector closer to the public sector in the form of both central and local government.

Taken together, these twin trends have created a new situation where, to put it simply, what is happening at the intersections between state, market and civil society may be more important than what is happening within each sector. Moreover, they also raise the fundamental question of what we can expect to happen when we combine elements and components from different sectors in new ways (Seibel, forthcoming). New arrangements bring new uncertainties – and these uncertainties are further amplified because we have to find new ways to balance structures and organizations that previously were more clearly separated. In the following I point out four paradoxes that hopefully can substantiate these abstract reflections and lead to greater awareness of the promises and perils of civil society and the voluntary sector within the public and political debate.

## **Do partnerships only have positive outcomes?**

Current welfare discourse often underscores the importance of increased mutual cooperation between public, private, and voluntary actors. This is referred to as partnership, welfare pluralism, co-production, co-creation, or similar (Evers, 2005). These are all positive terms – less discussed are the many examples where new arrangements do not create more cooperation, but more competition.

Welfare pluralism does not necessarily mean more cooperation; it can also create new and increased tension and conflicts between actors competing for market shares (Hartman, 2011; Petersen, Olsen, Brogaard, & Sieling, 2013). Hospitals, schools, and care for the elderly are prime examples.

In many cases this means that voluntary and nonprofit providers will have more of a struggle on their hands to survive than other providers (Salamon, 2002). One reason for this is that they are typically smaller and less well equipped with the necessary economic, political and administrative resources to survive in a more competitive environment. Another reason is that nonprofits are harder for governments to control because they insist on some degree of autonomy, and this lack of control can make it tempting for governments to stop funding them.

In Denmark this has been the case, for instance, with the so-called self-governing institutions (Thøgersen, 2013) where local authorities have cancelled long-standing contracts or changed the financing system so that the money follows the users, with the result that, in reality, nonprofit organizations operate on a market basis.

Another example of competition in the new mixed welfare economy is when municipalities start to operate their own volunteer initiatives; for instance mentoring schemes for the unemployed or voluntary visitors for the elderly at nursing homes or hospitals. In this case public bodies in fact compete for the same scarce volunteer resources as voluntary organizations (Lorentzen & Henriksen, 2014). At the same time, potential conflicts arise in relation to the trade unions tasked with protecting the interests of paid staff.

## **Is the voluntary sector more innovative?**

Another typical statement or claim in current welfare discourse is that new arrangements, pluralism, and partnerships create space for social innovation and creativity. The argument usually goes that third sector organizations, because of their relative autonomy, can act more freely, which fosters new solutions. This might be the case – and historically we know that new ideas and organizational solutions have indeed also, though not exclusively, come from civil society organizations (Henriksen & Bundesen, 2004). However, there is another side to

the story that is far too often hidden behind the ideological veil of creativity and innovation in the third sector.

In the literature on nonprofit and voluntary organizations, it has frequently been argued that such organizations adapt more slowly to changes in their environment because they don't experience the same competition as market organizations or the same political pressure from voters as public organizations (Seibel & Anheier, 1990). By contrast, for-profit corporations are forced to innovate because of the competition they experience in the market place. Likewise, public bodies are forced to innovate due to political pressures towards effectiveness; i.e. demonstrating value for taxpayers' money, and user satisfaction with services (a pressure which may be accentuated in the current 'audit society'; that is, a culture of evaluation and evidence-based social policies).

Voluntary organizations do not necessarily experience such pressure to change from their surrounding environment. Consequently, widely held views regarding the innately innovative qualities of third sector organizations, particularly in comparison with public bodies, likely overestimate the incentives for change within the voluntary sector while shortchanging the innovative potential of the public sector. In many cases, maintaining the status quo may be in the best interests of voluntary organizations.

## **The volunteer: cheap labor or democratic member?**

A third contradiction, or opposition, exists between, on the one hand, the primary structure and function of the voluntary sector – at least in Denmark and Scandinavia – and, on the other hand, the strategic interests in this sector from government and political parties (la Cour, 2014).

In the Scandinavian context, the backbone of civil society has always been local associations that are horizontally integrated with other local associations and vertically integrated with regional and national (umbrella) organizations. The individual is tied to this organizational model by virtue of his or her membership. Membership and collective organization of interests and activities thus create the fundamental structure of this organizational model (Selle, 2013). This has historically been the case, and the model remains important, although it faces certain challenges (Torpe, 2013).

However, governments are not interested in associations or democratic membership. Rather, their strategic interest lies in the individual volunteer who should contribute time and money to – in particular – solving or ameliorating social, health, and welfare problems (see e.g. the Danish National Civil Society Strategy,

Regeringen, 2010). Thus, the dominant welfare agenda pushes civic engagement out of the democratic context to which it historically belonged.

This is probably not something that can be hindered. However, once again, it results in tension between the classic role of civil society as a medium for the collective representation and reconciliation of particular interests on the one hand, and interest in the unpaid volunteer as a source of cheap labor on the other (Frederiksen, 2014). In simple terms, there is a growing tension between the Nordic civil society model of collective interest representation and the Anglo-Saxon model of individual philanthropy.

Traditionally one can distinguish between four ideal typical roles for third sector organizations (Salamon, Sokolowski, & Associates, 2004):

- As vehicles for activities (sport, culture, leisure, hobby)
- As vehicles for advocacy and interest representation (political, particular groups)
- As providers of welfare and care (health and social services)
- As vehicles for local integration (in churches, schools, local communities, neighborhoods etc.)

In Scandinavia the voluntary sector has been strong in relation to the first two roles, but less important as a provider of welfare and care because of the universal welfare state. Paradoxically, in the current political climate the emphasis is on the role of third sector organizations, and especially the individual volunteer, in relation to precisely welfare and care; however, in the Scandinavian context, this is not an area where we find the majority of either voluntary organizations or volunteers (Fridberg & Henriksen, 2014).

## **Government failure versus voluntary failure**

The fourth and final paradox or problem dealt with here is one which I think draws far too little attention in current political and social scientific communication: the opposition between government failure and voluntary failure. Current discourse places all the emphasis on the former, while hardly ever mentioning the latter.

According to the theory of 'government failure', public institutions face problems in providing goods and services in certain situations (Smith & Grønbjerg, 2006). One typical reason is that government primarily responds to the needs of the majority of the population, the so-called median-voter, resulting in a lack of services directed at either small minority groups or groups that have difficulties

in having their voice heard. According to this theory, government typically also finds it harder to experiment or set up services that are risky in terms of output because of the accountability and control demands that are put on public money. This means that 'wicked problems' and problems that do not have standardized solutions can be difficult to address within the public realm. In such situations voluntary and nonprofit organizations may step in because they do not face the same constraints. They can target and meet the unsatisfied needs of particular groups in certain niches, and, if they fail, they are not publicly accountable. They can even be 'permanently failing organizations' (Meyer & Zucker, 1989). In this theory of government failure, the nonprofit sector therefore constitutes a necessary supplement to government.

However, voluntary organized services also have their downsides and problems. In a seminal paper, Lester M. Salamon (1987) termed them 'voluntary failures' of which he mentions four that are typical:

The first type of failure, 'philanthropic insufficiency', covers the inability of the voluntary sector to generate enough resources to adequately meet the needs of large and diverse populations in complex (post)-industrial societies. There is not enough private money and human resources to cope with the large-scale problems we currently face.

The second failure, 'philanthropic particularism', represents the diametrical opposite of the 'median-voter' problem that government faces. Particularism is the tendency of a voluntary organization to focus on a small and narrow subgroup of the population. This is the strength of the voluntary organized services, but also their weakness. They care for a particular group or a particular interest, but in so doing they neglect others who may be just as needy. As such, a voluntary organized system treats different groups in an unequal way – indeed this is their rationale; they care for a certain sub-segment or a certain interest. Consequently, serious gaps in coverage can occur if too much is left to the voluntary sector. Another consequence may be a waste of resources resulting from a lack of coordination between services, meaning that several organizations may target the same (popular) sub-group.

'Philanthropic paternalism' is a third problem inherent in voluntary organized services, as help and support are not based on citizens' rights. Who is defined as needy and deserving is therefore not decided in a transparent democratic system, but becomes a matter of charity and private judgment. In the worst case scenario, this means that rich and powerful individuals can favor particular groups that are defined as morally deserving (Garrow & Hasenfeld, 2014). The 'altruistic aura' that frames voluntary help and support thus potentially masks the power which



is an intrinsic characteristic of the undemocratic decision-making structure of the voluntary sector.

Finally, 'philanthropic amateurism' designates the classic non-professional approach that characterizes voluntary work. Volunteers are not valued for their professional competence but for their willingness to help. The flipside, of course, is the risk that they lack the training that is needed to tackle serious human problems.

In a historical perspective, the four ideal type voluntary failures correspond more or less entirely with the dimensions where mature welfare states, perhaps particularly of the universal Scandinavian type, have been successful in establishing public institutions that are transparent and have achieved democratic legitimacy by reducing uncertainty and vulnerability for the large majority of the population and not just certain segments.

Consequently, it would be an irony if, by overestimating the positive consequences of voluntary organized help and services and forgetting or neglecting the downsides, we were to reintroduce the 'old voluntary failures' which we historically have fought to overcome. I do not have the solutions to all these dilemmas, paradoxes, and contradictions – but it is my belief that we need to place them on the research agenda. Doing so would constitute a first step in raising public and political awareness.

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## Dansk abstract

### Modsætninger og kontroverser i den danske diskussion om civilsamfundet

I denne artikel tager jeg en række påstande om det civile samfunds rolle op til kritisk overvejelse. Artiklen bygger på fire iagttagelser, som jeg mener, er karakteristisk for den måde det civile samfunds rolle bliver forstået på i den velfærdspolitiske debat. Den første iagttagelse vedrører tendensen til kun at fremhæve positive aspekter ved partnerskaber og øget samarbejde mellem stat, marked og civilsamfund. Den anden behandler forestillingen om, at det civile samfund er en særlig innovativ sektor i samfundet. Den tredje iagttagelse berører modsætningen mellem den klassiske rolle som medlem af en frivillig forening og den aktuelle betoning af frivillig hjælp og filantropi og dermed rollen som billig arbejdskraft. Endelig diskuterer jeg tendensen til at fokusere på de problematiske sider ved offentlig indsats, men overse, at frivillig indsats også har ulemper og rummer risici for svigt. Det er ikke artiklens mål empirisk at dokumentere disse modsætninger, men at rejse en debat om konsekvenserne af et ændret velfærdsmiks.

*Nøgleord:* civilsamfund, partnerskab, innovation, medlemsmodel, frivilligsvigt (voluntary failure).



# Citizenship, Democratic Participation, and Civil Society

By Thomas P. Boje

## Abstract

The interaction between organized civil society and the public sector has become stronger and received greater attention for several reasons. First, the public sector is increasingly turning to the civic organizations because of the general failure of New Public Management strategies and market-driven solutions concerning the provision of public goods. Second, the public sector is in need of information concerning marginalized groups and has problems representing these groups because of the growing diversity in most European populations. Only civil society and its organizations seem to have the capability and resources required for representing specific social groups, and the time and energy to be involved in social networks among vulnerable social groups. Third, the structure and the functions of civil society organizations and their scope of activities are strongly dependent on the structure of the welfare regime. Over the course of the last ten years, the relationship between market, state, civil society and family has undergone a restructuring process due to the financial crisis and the retrenchment of the welfare state. This article tries to establish a framework for understanding the potential role of civil society organizations and the importance of introducing participatory democracy through actively involving all citizens<sup>1</sup>.

*Keywords:* civil society, citizenship, participation, participatory democracy, social capital, welfare state, governance, inequality.

## Introduction

The involvement of citizens and stakeholders in determining the conditions for social cohesion and participation is important for society and has gained increasing importance in the globalized world. The issue of identity is crucial for political legitimacy because 'who constitutes the people' is one of the most fundamental aspects of legitimacy. Citizenship is defined as a sense of belonging, strength of social relations and shared values, and its evolution is closely related to the aspiration of shaping civil society institutions, which, on the other hand, are tied to political participation and social integration in the post-industrial welfare states (Delanty, 2000; Wright, 2003; Isin, 2009). Here the understanding of citizenship implies the right to become a full member of society, which includes active citizenship, issues of access to citizenship rights and relations of belonging. This understanding concerns two crucial dimensions – a conceptualization of what we mean by "participatory democracy" and some ideas on how to solve the crisis of "democratic welfare provision" in contemporary globalized societies.

In recent years citizens' involvement has become a key issue on the political and institutional agendas. This great interest in the concept of social and civic participation can be explained by various factors, which highlight the deficient democratic processes and legitimacy crisis of participatory democracy. An additional factor to be considered is the difficulty of realizing processes that are able to involve citizens in strategic decision-making for the community and in the identification and organization of services, with special relevance for vulnerable groups of citizens.

This paper offers an outline for conceptual clarification, rather than an attempt to provide a more concise empirical picture of the relationship between citizenship, participation, and democratic governance, or policy recommendations for a more cohesive society. The arguments and ideas presented in this paper are strongly inspired by my previous involvement in the EU Network of Excellence, "CINEFOGO: Civil Society and New Forms of Governance in Europe" (Boje & Potucek, 2011), and my present involvement in research on volunteering and civil society<sup>2</sup>. The article starts by defining the concepts of citizenship and participatory democracy. Then follows a section in which I discuss social rights and justice as conditions for equality and social integration. The role of civil society and how it has changed due to the transformation of the welfare state is discussed in the third section, followed by a section analyzing the conditions for citizenship and participation in late-modern societies. The article concludes with a discussion of how the relationship between welfare state, citizenship and civic participation might develop in the years to come.

## Citizenship and Participation

Citizenship can be seen as both the passive and active membership of individuals in a nation-state with certain universalistic rights and obligations at a specific level of equality (Janoski, 1998, p. 9). To clarify the type of citizenship we are dealing with, it is fruitful to distinguish between two different forms of citizenship. On the one hand there is received citizenship which is defined by the legally guaranteed status of civic, political and social rights. On the other hand there is achieved citizenship that is accomplished through collective self-determination and participatory democracy, and which is closely related to civic participation or volunteering in its different forms. Social rights and social solidarity are embedded in this understanding of citizenship. Active citizenship and participation in the economic, political and social activities are vital for the fabric of social entities and for the social integration of citizens. In this section I want to discuss the different forms of citizenship and their relationship to participation in general and volunteering in particular.

### Forms of Citizenship – rights, obligations, and identity

In its modern form the concept of citizenship was developed by Thomas H. Marshall in his book *Citizenship and Social Class* in 1950 (2003). He defines citizenship as the citizens' participation in and membership of a society and their rights and duties as members of this society (Marshall, 2003). This understanding of citizenship has been criticized for its strong focus on rights and the lack of emphasis on the possibilities for being an active member of society. Feminists have argued for a more inclusive citizenship, covering both rights and involvement in different types of activities, such as paid, unpaid, and care work (Lister, 1997; Fraser, 1997). Communitarians have argued for a concept of citizenship that includes informal values and social relationships that allow people to work together, and that stresses the importance of social responsibility (Etzioni, 1993).

Following Delanty (2000), citizenship defines the constitutional relationship between the individual and the state and this relationship includes at least four different dimensions - rights, obligations / responsibility, participation, and identity. Each of these dimensions covers different aspects of what membership of a political community implies (Delanty, 1997, p. 286) and represents an approach to understanding the relationship between individuals and the state. Here I shall briefly discuss different forms of citizenship and their relation to civic participation.

The rights-based approach sees the development of citizenship as constitutive for modern Western welfare states. A citizen is a person who must be protected by

the state. Citizenship thus guarantees individuals' rights as citizens in relation to the welfare state in two respects: First, it ensures that individuals are accepted in all economic, political and social contexts as full members of society, and second, it ensures that all individuals are part of a society's fundamental economic and social conditions. This position comes close to the liberal idea of individual rights protecting citizens against state interference in private life. For Marshall (2003), the rights linked to citizenship are primarily a protection from the market and from the social inequality created through market mechanisms. Citizens have the right to social protection against market failures and social transfers redistribute common goods. This position is also consistent with the social democratic ideology that perceives individual rights as related to social justice by ensuring all citizens the right to education, social security, public healthcare, etc. In many ways, the liberal and social democratic understandings of rights are similar, but they emphasize different aspects. The liberal tradition focuses on the rights of citizens and lets the market determine the allocation of resources, while the social democrats emphasize social justice and see civil rights as an instrument for redistribution of resources. However, in both cases, citizen rights are individual and formal.

The obligation / responsibility approach plays a key role in the conservative understanding of citizenship. It emphasizes the duties of citizens to the state in terms of paying taxes, completing an education and military service. Today, these duties are in line with the increased emphasis on social investments instead of social rights. The focus on social investment has expanded with a requirement that citizens are active through work or training. This has become a condition for being considered a full member of the social community and for receiving the welfare state's benefits and services. Another element of the contemporary responsibility discourse is a moral obligation to be an active citizen through civic participation. There is a strong drive to involve more citizens in the provision of services in caring institutions through volunteering, which is seen as part of their obligations as citizens. Related to this understanding is the principle of subsidiarity, which means that the individual must rely on herself and her family. Only when the family, community or civic organizations are not able to manage and solve one's economic or social problems does the welfare state enter the picture.

The participatory citizenship model focuses on the active participation of citizens in late-modern society, both locally and nationally, and on the solution of economic, social and cultural problems in relation to integration and democratic involvement. There are several reasons why this approach has received considerable attention in recent decades (Habermas, 2007; Fraser, 2005). Firstly, there are problems with the legitimacy of democratic institutions; problems related to



the difficulties faced by the representative form of democracy in capturing the heterogeneity, complexity and diversity of social and political groups in multicultural societies. Due to these problems it has become more and more difficult to get citizens involved in the strategic decision-making processes surrounding key social issues and to identify and provide the welfare services that groups of vulnerable citizens are in need of. It is, however, clear that economic, political and social rights depend heavily on active participation of citizens in all areas of daily life (Hoskins & Mascherini, 2009). Here again, the active participation of citizens is considered crucial, not only in terms of providing services and care for vulnerable social groups, but even more so for getting citizens involved in the political processes at all levels of decision making in the democratic institutions.

The final approach to citizenship is the communitarian identity-based model, which in many respects is similar to the participatory citizenship model. Both models emphasize the active dimension of citizenship and the need to involve citizens in drawing attention to and solving social and political problems. Where the participatory model focuses on an open democratic process, including citizens in decision-making, the communitarians are primarily concerned with linking the community together through cultural ties and historical roots. For communitarians, citizenship is thus related to national identity, conceptualized as a positive attitude towards patriotism, and cultural homogeneity, seen as a prerequisite for establishing lasting social networks and a strong community. In this understanding of citizenship, the civic organizations have a vital function in communicating cultural identity and thus in creating social cohesion. According to the communitarians, the civic organizations are perceived as an 'intermediate body', giving voice to different social groups in society and revitalizing public participation in the democratic institutions.

## **Citizen Rights and Integration**

Citizens active involvement in society's economic, political and social issues is a prerequisite for social integration and participation in democratic decision-making. Such involvement is thus important in ensuring the welfare state and its institutions and their legitimation. In this context, the concept of social cohesion is often used as an umbrella term to indicate that people are engaged in a common cause and that they feel they are members of the same community (Maxwell, 1996, p. 3; Chan, To, & Chan, 2006, p. 290). Such a definition also suggests an understanding of citizenship that emphasizes social equity through redistribution, participation in social and political affairs, and a common identity in terms of cultural and social issues.

Nancy Fraser (2005) deals with the same issues in her efforts to develop a theory on social justice, but in a more complex and open way. For Fraser citizenship, democracy, and welfare are not only based, on the one hand, on claims for the redistribution of resources to counter the economic inequality created in the market economy and, on the other hand, on claims for recognition which concern outlawing discrimination and eliminating differences among citizens. In addition to these claims, Fraser has argued for real representation. This is due to the restrictions on redistribution and recognition resulting from the global market and the regulatory state. Therefore Fraser argues that ...

*Establishing criteria of social belonging, and thus determining who counts as a member [of society], the political dimension of justice specifies the reach of those other dimensions: it tells us who is included in, and who excluded from, the circle of those entitled to a just distribution and reciprocal recognition. Establishing decision rules, the political dimension likewise sets the procedures for staging and resolving contests in both the economic and cultural dimensions: it tells us not only who can make claims for redistribution and recognition, but also how such claims are to be mooted and adjudicated. (2005, p. 6)*

For Fraser it is the combination of recognition, redistribution and representation which is important for ensuring the development of a society with strong social cohesion provided by citizens' participation on equal terms in decision-making about their lives. In this respect, the meaning of justice is closely related to equal access to participation – justice thus requires social arrangements that permit all citizens to participate in social life on equal terms. Therefore the enforcement of citizenship rights implies the right to become a full member of society, which includes active citizenship, access to social and political rights, and a sense of belonging. This understanding implies two crucial dimensions; namely “participatory democracy” and “participatory parity”.

How is it possible to overcome the real or perceived restrictions to citizenship rights and active participation for vulnerable social groups in work, politics, cultural affairs, and social networks? Here civil society organizations may, as mentioned above, play an important role by including less powerful social groups in the social fabric and giving them a political voice. But are these organizations able to take on this role?

## **Civil Society and Participatory Democracy**

The role of civil society within democratic institutions can be understood in a number of ways, according to different conceptions of what constitutes a

legitimate political process. Civil society is normally considered as the arena outside of the family, the state, and the market where people interact and communicate to promote common interests. Civil society is traditionally defined at the institutional level as 1) non-governmental organizations and institutions that manifest interests and represent the will of citizens or 2) individuals and organizations in a society that are independent of the government and not driven by the maximization of profit. In this context I want to use a definition of civil society covering both the institutional level of formalized organizations and the informal networks of citizens acting through ad-hoc entities or new social media. Here Edwards (2005) provides a clearer definition of civil society than most other scholars by arguing that

*Civil society is essentially collective action – in associations, across society and through the public sphere – and as such it provides an essential counterweight to individualism; as creative action, civil society provides a much-needed antidote to the cynicism that infects so much of contemporary politics; and as values-based action, civil society provides a balance to the otherwise-overbearing influence of state authority and the temptations and incentives of the market, even if those values are contested, as they often are. (Edwards, 2005, p. 29-30)*

The idea of civil society is in this context clearly linked to the moral and political concepts of democracy and social justice. The debate about civil society and its role in the welfare society has in recent years increased dramatically and there is a growing interest in the provision of welfare services through civic organizations. The sector is often seen as a panacea for solving a number of societal erosion problems that today's welfare systems fail to handle. As such, both researchers and, especially, politicians express great, often overly simplistic, enthusiasm for the various institutions located between state and market, which - depending on temperament and tradition – are referred to as the voluntary sector, non-profit institutions, NGOs, civil society or something else entirely. One view is that we are witnessing an unprecedented growth in the size and power of private and voluntary initiatives and activities; Salamon, Sokolowski & List (2003) call it a "global associational revolution" and compare the importance that they believe the civil sector is likely to gain with the importance that the nation state had in the second half of the 19th century. The sector is thus considered a potentially key strategic partner in trying to create solutions that combine private initiative and public regulation. The sector will, however, only be able to fill this role if it can maintain autonomy and participatory decision-making in its institutions.

Conservative social theorists have focused primarily on the importance of the freedom of the individual, the family and the church's role, while those with

a more socialist perspective primarily emphasized the collective - professional associations, social movements, etc. Political pressure from conservatives to make the civic organizations a key player in the provision of social services is in a European context particularly strong in the UK; first with Thatcher 's 'community care' in the 1980s, later with the 'New Labour' government's partnership ideology in the late 1990s, and finally the present liberal - conservative coalition government's 'Big Society ' program where civic organizations are expected to assume primary responsibility for service delivery to citizens in need in the community (see Ishkanian & Szreter, 2012). The development in the UK shows, however, that the boundaries of civil commitment are relatively narrow and typically require an infrastructure supported by the welfare state. Civic actions depend highly on a stable infrastructure of institutions and facilities, typically financed by economic support from the government.

Another perspective on civil society is rooted in the analysis of the late-modern society by Jürgen Habermas. According to Habermas, civil society includes the non-governmental and non-market civic organizations, and is rooted in the life world that is part of the public sphere of society. Civil society in this context represents a network of organizations and associations that institutionalizes core interests and discourses within the organized public sphere. These are organizations that ensure open and equal communication between citizens, where the ideal is that everyone is given the best possible conditions for entering into a communicative democratic dialogue (Habermas, 1996, p. 366-367). The emphasis here is on the equal communicative dialogue, but this dialogue is not possible unless the conditions for participation are present in parity. These conditions are outlined by Fraser and imply redistribution of resources, recognition of diversity, and political participation for all citizens.

Today, when we refer to organized civil society as a mediating institution between the state / market and the citizens, this involves a variety of functions. Among politicians most focus has traditionally been on its role as a provider of social services, but equally important is the role of civil society in advocating for social groups representing the interests organized around gender, ethnicity or religion. When we talk about civil society's role as an advocate, it is important to distinguish between two different forms of participation by civic organizations. On the one hand, their active role in policy-making, in dialogue with the established political system; on the other hand, their role as a watchdog outside the political decision-making process in defending the civil, political, and social rights of citizens (Keane, 2006; Janoski, 1998, 2010). On this understanding, civil society can be characterized by "intermediary institutions" such as professional associations, religious groups, labor unions, and other citizen advocacy organizations

that give voice to different groups in society and enrich public participation in the democratic institutions. Citizenship rights and civic participation of citizens have been absolutely fundamental to the legitimacy of the democratic process (Wright, 2003).

However, civil activities are not only undertaken through formal organizational channels, but equally through the new social media. These media have opened up new channels of communication and are increasingly active in constructing the social networks in civil society. Among the most obvious examples of how the new social media influence the development of social activities is the Arab Spring, which was originally driven by communication on social media. Elsewhere, movements like Occupy Wall Street (OWS), Spanish Indinago etc. have made effective use of social media in mobilizing protests against social cutbacks and the neo-liberal solutions to the financial crisis which began in 2008. However, it is also clear that social media have a limited influence on the organization of civil activities. They can be used to mobilize and communicate, but establishing more permanent civic institutions have to rely on prevailing social networks and already existing social organizations (Harrebye, 2012).

In this perspective, it becomes a major challenge for welfare institutions on the one hand, to create space for commitment in the public sphere – social and cultural – among the individual citizens and, on the other hand, ensure that the social community shows solidarity with vulnerable groups through the involvement of social actors – private companies, voluntary organizations and individuals – in the solution of economic and social problems. If the civic organizations are characterized by strong commitment among citizens and a high degree of civic participation, they might be able to play a key role both as a vehicle for channeling the needs and wishes of citizens for social support for the welfare institutions and as a provider of social services that are more in tune with the vulnerable citizen's needs. The civil society we are discussing here is, more precisely, the civic organizations in which relationships between individuals are democratically organized and of such a nature that they promote the greatest possible empowerment of all individuals – independent of age, class, ethnicity and cultural perception. Civil society in this form represents local social relationships and networks that have reached such a level of political consciousness and social organization that they transcend the narrow context of privacy (Cohen & Arato, 1992).

## **Civil Society, the Welfare State, and Social Capital**

The problem with much of the literature on civil society and social capital is that it has difficulties explaining the relationship between civic organizations, the

development of social capital and social networks, and social cohesion. One may agree that civic organizations play a mediating role in relation to democratic participation, social inclusion, etc., but find it difficult to clarify their relation to the state and market. On the one hand there is the liberal / communitarian standpoint, where the relation between state and civil society is seen as a zero-sum game in which a growth in the state sector means that civic organizations disappear. With the growth of state-initiated welfare benefits, it is argued that there is a crowding-out of civil society based goods. The level of government intervention in the social system is thus seen as inversely proportional to the importance of civic organizations in the community. This thinking was especially prevalent among communitarian philosophers in the 1980s and early 1990s, but has been strongly criticized over the past decade, both theoretically and empirically (Salamon, 1995; Skocpol, 1995; Portes, 1998; Pichler & Wallace, 2007). On the other hand, this criticism has led to a theory of complementarity, which claims that the relationship between the welfare state and civil society is a plus-sum game where the welfare state actively promotes a vibrant civil society. Numerous comparative studies based on European data show that societies with a well-developed public welfare sector and high levels of social equality are characterized by high levels of civil participation in political activities, including voluntary activities, and a high level of trust in other citizens and in society's key institutions (Salamon, Sokolowski, & List, 2003; Oorschot & Arts, 2005; Oorschot, Arts, & Gelissen, 2006).

*Social capital* has in this context become a central concept when talking about the density of social relations and the blossoming of associational life. Social capital can be defined in many ways, but here the definition offered by Alejandro Portes is probably the most relevant: "the ability of actors to secure benefits by virtue of membership in social networks or other social structures" (Portes, 1998, p. 6)<sup>3</sup>. Being included in social networks is the most valuable asset and condition for participating in society. Interaction and social bonds make it possible for people to build communities, to commit themselves to each other, and to knit the social fabric. Participation in social networks may offer people advantages in their social lives and increase the mutual understanding between disparate social groups in a community. In countries with a high level of social and economic inequality, the levels of civic participation and social capital are low, resulting in precarious conditions for social cohesion (Oorschot & Arts, 2005; Carnoy & Castells, 1997). Social capital has thus been a universal concept defining the level of civic participation and the type of social network within communities. It is used, on the one hand, as a broad characterization of the norms and social networks that promote social participation and community integration, and on the other hand, to explain social control and cohesion in an increasingly individualized

and differentiated post-modern society. Szreter (2002) has further developed this relationship between social capital and social cohesion and formulated a thesis that, in a democratic society with a market economy, a bridge-building and confidence building social capital will only be developed if this is done in close conjunction with the active participation of citizens in democratic decision-making, and through a trusting relationship between the citizen and the welfare state. When this dialogue does not occur and citizens have less confidence in public institutions, only a restricted and self-sufficient social capital will develop. In this respect, the conditions for developing active citizenship become important.

## **Active Citizenship and Civic Involvement**

Active citizenship refers to people getting involved with each other to pursue their goals and interests through formal as well as informal routes of public participation in the process of governance (Hoskins & Mascherini, 2009). Active citizenship comprises influence on decision-making as well as inclusion in the social practices of the community/society. Through this approach we move beyond a conceptualization of citizenship as being merely a matter of "status", towards an understanding encompassing social and political processes of learning and identity formation which, in turn, will play a formative role in the constitution of formal citizenship rights.

In recent years social and civic participation has become a key issue on the political and institutional agenda. As already mentioned, this is partly due to deficient democratic processes and the legitimacy crisis faced by the modern democratic state (Elster, 2003). An additional factor to be considered is the facilitating processes that can involve citizens in strategic decision-making for the community and in the identification and organization of services with special relevance for vulnerable groups of citizens. Active involvement in providing welfare services is thus an important dimension of the active citizenship taking place in the organized civil society, and the same concerns advocacy for vulnerable groups of citizens in cooperation with state institutions.

Active citizenship and civil society have become increasingly important due to the trends, outlined above, transforming the concept of citizenship rights from social rights to social investments or a duty to be an active contributor to society. This has had implications for the understanding of social inclusion, the provision of social services, and the role of civic involvement through volunteering because (1) inclusion in society depends more on individual resources and employability than on social rights (2) the relationship between citizens and state has become individualized / a matter of choice, and (3) volunteering and organizational work,

as well as democratic virtues, have become even more important in determining citizenship rights. Consequently, welfare policy needs to combine active citizenship, empowerment and social protection, giving the organized civil society a central role in shaping citizenship

The concept of 'democratic governance' is generally associated with a strengthening of civil society, and with institutional reforms within the public sector. Recent political theory has emphasized that democracy presupposes the existence of civil society as an autonomous sector, separate from both the administrative and the economic system, and characterized by a pluralism of actors. The functioning of civil society, in turn, requires a pluralistic public sphere in which citizens are actively involved. The understanding of democratic governance thus implies that conventional boundaries between politics, policies and administration become less significant than the question of how the whole ensemble works (or fails to work). As such, a governance-oriented approach to public policy recognizes that civic organizations and interest groups play an intermediary role, both in relation to government institutions and as advocates of minority groups (Güntner, 2011).

## **Welfare State, Citizenship, and Civic Participation – A Conclusion**

Citizenship implies the right to become a full member of society, which includes active citizenship, issues of access to citizenship and relations of belonging (Delanty, 2000). Active citizenship comprises influence on decision-making as well as inclusion in the social practices of the community. Thus, beyond the significance of the realization of democratic rights more generally, the shaping of citizenship is strongly dependent on social participation in all spheres of everyday life.

It is obvious that including marginalized / vulnerable groups such as ethnic minorities, migrants, low-skilled and handicapped in social networks or in organized civil society may prevent their social isolation and exclusion, and minimize the risk of xenophobia and prejudice. The difficulties emerge when it comes to the issue of how to include and integrate these groups in political decision-making processes and in their local communities. The multicultural composition of the population, combined with a growing diversity in relation to factors such as age, gender and class, is a tremendous challenge for the universal welfare state in Europe and demands an update of the welfare system in order to accommodate the differences in needs, beliefs and behavior of social groups. The guiding principle for the provision of welfare services has been the equal treatment of all citizens, but with the growing diversity in socio-economic background and cultural



identity of citizens, the welfare system needs to be reoriented towards the needs of this diverse and pluralistic population. This demand for a reassessment of the welfare institutions to satisfy the desire for social, economic and political equality is not only a matter of making the necessary adjustments to welfare policy, but strikes deeper, posing the question of how to define social and cultural citizenship so as to reconcile equality and diversity (Schierup, Hansen, & Castles, 2006).

Several perspectives are found in current European research on the interrelation between civil society, citizenship, and participation. Underlying the debates among researchers within the social sciences, some basic understandings are accepted. Firstly, that democracy is closely related to the evolution of organized civil society, and secondly, that a strong relationship exists between citizenship rights, economic prosperity, and the active participation of citizens in society. These two assumptions build upon the different perspectives on democracy, citizenship and participation which are discussed in this paper.

In the paper I have argued in favor of bridging the conceptual and theoretical gap in understanding volunteering and social activism. In promoting social participation through the integration of marginalized social groups into the community, the concepts of volunteering and active citizenship have to be included with their potential to create a sense of belonging, strengthening social relations and shared values. Through active citizenship and civic volunteering, citizens and civic organizations shape the specificity of the welfare system. When analyzing various levels of social involvement, we therefore have to include both informal and formal volunteering, as well as social and political activism (Janoski, 1998). This extension is important for understanding the conditions for social cohesion and for evaluating the impact of civic participation in promoting socially cohesive societies.

The possibility of civil society becoming a locus for democratic learning, political reflexivity, and governance depends, on the one hand, on its own specific institutional mechanisms, and, on the other, on the broader social and political institutional configurations of which civil society is a part. Here it is important to understand in detail the feedback mechanisms between policy agencies, organized civil society and civic action by citizens. Numerous studies of this relationship find that civil society is strongly influenced by public policies and governmental programs; but, as mentioned previously, caution should be shown concerning the increasing involvement of civil society in governance arrangements and in decision-making processes. This critique refers to the notions of accountability and representativeness of civic organizations. In short, if the involvement of civil society represents particularistic interests, and these are not counterbalanced by a universalistic approach taken by the welfare state institutions, civil society

intervention might be problematic and could lead to a reinforcement of already existing social, political and cultural cleavages within society. Further research is needed to analyze the conditions under which new forms of governance enhance democracy and are able to empower citizens.

This raises another dimension in the debate on the relationship between civil society, civic participation and citizenship, namely the issue of autonomy: Civil society theories conceptualized the practices of civil society actors primarily in terms of 'autonomy'. 'Autonomy' is here understood in a very broad sense as the organizational independence of civil society from state and market institutions. The emergence of new participatory institutions is today an established phenomenon and might illustrate the complex efforts of civil society actors in terms of both the demarcation of autonomy from state institutions, and their involvement in the implementation of public policies (Avritzer, 2002; Fung & Wright, 2003). These new participatory institutions need, on the one hand, to be differentiated from the prevailing forms of decision-making in representative democracies. On the other hand, they can also be of great importance for the renewal of representative democracy by initiating new forms of participatory democracy which, under specific circumstances, might be able to satisfy the demand for 'participation in parity'; a necessity if it is to be ensured that the relations of representation are just (Fraser, 2005).

Active citizenship, whether volunteering in civic organizations or activism in social movements, is thus an important parameter in the debate on participatory democracy and the role of organized civil society. This debate is closely related to social participation in all spheres of everyday life: from the shaping of civic, public and private institutions, to increased social cohesion, and to the realization of democratic rights in contemporary societies. In this approach to active citizenship and civic participation, we move beyond a conceptualization of citizenship as social rights and towards citizenship as an element in social and political processes of learning and identity formation (Ruzza, 2004).

Civil society has played a significant role in the processes of nation-state formation, and, in today's debate on the organized civil society, a new emphasis is related to the benefits that involvement in civil society has for the development of a more informed citizen, as well as the richness of the public dialogue. A second factor that has revived interest in civil society is dissatisfaction with the policy machinery of the state. On a global level, as Offe (1990) has pointed out, a 'crisis of politics' has translated into a 'crisis of policy' in which political representatives no longer have at their disposal sufficient legitimacy to impose policies. If policy change is to be viable, it increasingly requires the support of public opinion, and of its shapers and interpreters in civil society.

The idealization of civil society that emerged between the 1980s and the mid-1990s is now being replaced by a more pragmatic experimentation with different models of inclusion of civil society actors. Evaluation of the impact of these different models on the welfare mix, and on the provision of welfare for the population, is an important task for future research. Another fertile area for research concerns the role of active citizenship in involving citizens in the social fabric. Here the three conditions for participatory democracy set out by Fraser (2005) – redistribution, recognition, and representation – must provide the foundation for further analyses of citizens' involvement in democratic governance.

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## Notes

1. Research supported by a grant from the Danish foundation Realdania
2. The research network 'Volunteering and Civil Society' (CIFRI) carried out a national survey on volunteering in Denmark in 2012. It is a research cooperation between Aalborg University, the University of Southern Denmark, Roskilde University and The National Danish Institute for Social Research (SFI)
3. Robert Putnam, who is the leading scholar in promoting the theory of social capital, has a different definition of social capital. Putnam defines social capital as features of social organization - such as trust, norms and networks - that make it possible for individuals to act together more efficiently in the pursuit of common goals (Putnam 1993). For him social capital is a characteristic of the community or the nation itself, and high levels of social capital help to reduce crime, mistrust and corruption, and ensure the participation of citizens in political and social affairs. High social capital

contributes to a well-functioning democratic system. In this article I primarily focus on the social networks and resources available to citizens and here Portes' definition seems more relevant.

## Dansk abstract

### Medborgerskab, demokratisk deltagelse og civilsamfund

Samarbejdet mellem det organiserede civilsamfund og den offentlige sektor er blevet mere omfattende af flere grunde gennem de seneste årtier. For det første ser den offentlige sektor sig i stigende grad nødsaget til at benytte sig af de civile organisationer i fremskaffelse af social omsorg på grund af New Public Management-strategiernes og de markedsbaserede løsnings manglende effektivitet. For det andet har den offentlige sektor behov for præcise informationer om marginaliserede gruppers sociale behov, ligesom den har problemer med at repræsentere dem på grund af den voksende mangfoldighed, der præger disse grupper såvel som befolkningen i almindelighed. Kun civilsamfundet og dets organisationer synes at have den nødvendige indsigt og de ressourcer, der kræves for at kunne repræsentere specifikke samfundsgrupper, samt den tid og energi, der skal til for at sikre de udsatte sociale grupper den tilstrækkelige sociale omsorg. For det tredje er civilsamfundets organisationer og deres aktiviteter stærkt afhængige af den måde, den offentlige velfærdssektor er opbygget på. I løbet af de seneste årtier har forholdet mellem marked, stat, civilsamfund og familie været under markant forvandling på grund af både den finansielle krise og systematiske omstruktureringer af velfærdsstaten. Denne artikel forsøger at udvikle en teoretisk ramme til forståelse af den rolle, som civilsamfundets organisationer har i det moderne velfærdssamfund, og vigtigheden af at indføre et deltagende demokrati gennem aktiv inddragelse af alle borgere i beslutninger om social tryghed.

*Nøgleord:* civilsamfund, medborgerskab, deltagelse, deltagelsesdemokrati, social kapital, velfærdsstat, governance, ulighed.

# Social Entrepreneurship and Social Innovation: Human Economy, Governance, and Volunteerism Revisited

By **Linda Lundgaard Andersen**

## **Abstract**

In social entrepreneurship, social innovation and human economy coexist with democratic governance and volunteerism in the development of new initiatives and responses to wicked welfare problems. Volunteerism in social entrepreneurship takes up a prominent position, leading to the birth of new organisational hybrid formats: social enterprises. Drawing upon a single case study of 'the Bridge', a typical Danish work integration social enterprise (WISE), it is shown how social enterprises act as 'strong learning arenas', opting for a number of high-profile and 'popular' objectives: to train and empower marginal citizens, to create sustainable enterprises in a new economy, to strengthen the local community, to renew welfare services and labour strategies, and to develop social enterprise and business models. Adding to these objectives we can include democracy and participation, and positioning the voluntary sector and the volunteers as vital agents in this development. The case analysis illustrates that these many objectives are quite demanding, yet also within reach; however, sufficient financial, organisational and managerial mechanisms are paramount.

*Keywords:* social entrepreneurship, social innovation, governance, human economy, volunteerism.

## **Introduction**

Social innovation, social entrepreneurship and cross-sectoral collaboration have been placed on the agenda as necessary dimensions in the solution of social welfare problems. Innovation is a well-known concept, originally associated with development in manufacturing companies. The aim of this chapter is firstly to sketch out the conceptual features of social entrepreneurship and how social innovation, volunteerism, and human economy are intertwined. Secondly, a single case study within a typical Danish setting provides the foundation for a critical discussion of how social entrepreneurship opts for a number of objectives – correlating with the dominant welfare buzzwords - but that sufficient financial, organisational and managerial mechanisms have not yet been provided.

## **Creating social value**

Today we talk of social innovation, focusing on how innovation can have social values as its goal. In social entrepreneurship, it is important to expand the definition of social value through innovation to include an actor and process perspective. It means creating social value through innovation where there is a high degree of participatory orientation, often with the participation of civil society and often with an economic significance, where the innovations are generated across the three sectors of state, market and civil society. While social value and innovation are found in most, if not all, definitions, the other three aspects are often highlighted, but with varying emphasis. Participation and civil society are essential categories because they indicate that social entrepreneurship is not just a matter of producing social endpoints, but also of the processes and relationships that generate social values. It is an empirical fact that actors from civil society are the most sought-after partners in the majority of examples of social entrepreneurship, either in the form of voluntary organisations or as concerned and responsible groups of citizens who want to make a difference. The economic component, meanwhile, is important in order to highlight the actual entrepreneurial aspect. The innovation lies in the practical implementation; this is what sustains such innovations, which often have an economic importance, not only in economic entrepreneurship but also in social entrepreneurship. The practical dimension may relate to the entrepreneur who assumes a risk, and above all the participants and socially disadvantaged citizens for whom the innovation is intended. Finally,



it is an empirical fact that practical examples of social entrepreneurship often take place across multiple sectors. Civil society seems on the whole to be the constant part in social entrepreneurship, while its partners will vary depending on the part of the world and local institutional context of the initiative.

## **Social enterprises, social entrepreneurship and civil society**

Social enterprise forms part of the developmental history of the third sector. In the European context, the European research network EMES, which took its name from its first research project in the mid-1990s (Emergence of Social Enterprise in Europe), has conducted research on the emergence since the 1980s of a new kind of hybrid, referred to as “social enterprise”, among voluntary organisations, NGOs and other third sector organisations. These social enterprises tend to base their operations on a variety of material and immaterial resources and pursue various notable and often potentially divergent objectives, including advocacy, local activism and market-based income (Defourny & Borzaga, 2001; Nyssens, 2006). The EMES study thus showed how, from the 1980s onwards, voluntary associations and other organisations in civil society at the European level started to develop in accordance with certain dynamics that brought them closer to the market (Defourny & Borzaga, 2001; Hulgård, 2004).

According to the EMES definition, social enterprises can be identified by three criteria. Firstly, there is a set of economic criteria, which includes the production and sale of goods or services, and the organisation being run not solely by volunteers, but with some paid employment. Secondly, there is a set of social criteria, implying a strong desire to benefit the local community or the users at whom the organisation is aimed. Local citizens, users or associations will also have taken the initiative to establish the organisation. Thirdly, there is a set of governance criteria, meaning that the social enterprise both has a high degree of autonomy, thus not directly subject to public authority, and also a participatory nature that permeates the management and the choices made in the organisation with regard to work procedures, etc. (Hulgård & Andersen, 2012).

## **Public goods and coproductive services**

Elinor Ostrom has from her long lasting research documented how the public and the people are significant agents in developing another economy and has suggested the term ‘public entrepreneurship’ as opposed to the classic private entrepreneurship for such activities. Ostrom demonstrates through numerous

empirical studies "how citizens, local public entrepreneurs and public officials engage in diverse ways of providing, producing and managing public service industries and common property regimes at multiple scales" (Ostrom, 2010, p. 4). Very early (in the 70ties) Ostrom labelled these interactions as 'coproduction' and documented how local communities in many ways depended on micro-interactions and supportive between local citizens and public authorities (Ostrom, 1996). Ostrom's studies of the importance of collective action for the generation and management of goods and services also represent an alternative to the view that people always seek to maximise their individual benefit because they are usually interested in profiting individually. In this way, Ostrom's research and other collectively-oriented approaches to public and social entrepreneurship represent knowledge that may prove crucial in finding ways out of the economic and multi-dimensional crisis (Hulgård & Andersen, 2012).

### **A Danish culture of social experiments**

The growing interest in social entrepreneurship and social enterprises is historically rooted in a specific Danish culture of experiments and developmental work. The decade of experimental strategies (the 1980s) was established, soon to be followed by the decade of selective funding (1990s), all in all constituting a distinctive Danish culture of innovation. In the 1980s, more than 1 billion Danish kroner (DKK) were spent on experimental projects in cultural, social and health care areas. The money came mainly from public funds and programmes and to a lesser degree from private foundations. These experimental programmes shifted the focus to the development of local solutions. During these two decades, there was a significant evolution in the discourse on social developmental initiatives; an evolution that has fundamentally defined the Danish discourse and practice for experimental projects and innovation. Considerable resources were given to e.g. social housing, employment, initiatives for troubled children and teenagers, needy families, various groups of disabled and older people, drug abuse initiatives and initiatives to improve the conditions in psychiatric hospitals and institutions for the homeless (Hulgård & Andersen, 2009).

### **Social entrepreneurship: the creation of social value, social innovation and social capital in a hybrid format**

If we further investigate the roots and horizon of social entrepreneurship, we see that, from a humanistic perspective, the concept of innovation - as part of the definition of social entrepreneurship - originates from an external position. This

is because the concept was originally established and embedded in economic discourse and developed in the market economy. According to economic theory, all kinds of innovation, including social innovation, are forms of investment (Andersen, 2004). The entrepreneur, including the social entrepreneur, innovates in order to meet a need, solve a problem or become more efficient, more professional or more competitive (Andersen, 2004; Hulgård, 2007). This applies to both market-driven innovation and social innovation, but there the similarity ends. Within economic theory, the primary goal of innovation is economic return, i.e. what we understand as a traditional business model (Chesbrough, 2006). This has never been the main goal of social innovation. Social innovation is created in a different type of business or organisation. Key elements of social entrepreneurship are the creation of social value, social innovation and social capital - in strong and privileged cooperation with civil society (Andersen, Bager, & Hulgård, 2010; Hulgård, 2007; Fæster, 2009). The research in this field defines the purpose of social innovation as the development of ideas that are implemented to meet social needs (Borzaga & Solari, 2001; Drayton, 2006; Austin, Stevenson, & Weiskillern, 2006). Examples of organisations meeting social needs are: public and private institutions, non-profit housing associations, voluntary organisations, and examples of social entrepreneurship such as the Danish SydhavnsCompagniet (a work integration social enterprise providing various initiatives for marginalised citizens). Social innovation can thus occur in all kinds of organisations whose primary purpose is social and where any profits are reinvested in the organisation or the community (Andersen, Fæster & Rosenberg 2010).

### **What influences innovation?**

However, there are a number of factors, such as organisational conditions, resources and time, working methods, management and backing, which exert a decisive influence on the extent and quality of innovation. Innovation researchers have stressed that renewal and innovation (Fuglsang, 2010) rarely occurs spontaneously, and that organisations and communities can create spaces which both encourage and constrain innovation (Darsø, 2011). Although the concept of innovation was originally developed in the sphere of production and with a view to economic growth, it has long since been adopted and developed by other spheres, such as artistic work and areas of social, educational and public welfare - with an eye for employees, users and the care rationalities and goals that prevail in these areas (Darsø, 2011; Kristensen & Voxsted, 2009). Social enterprises thus embrace both profit and non-profit components, and are referred to as hybrid social enterprises, since they operate in hybrid areas and fields of tension where they

not only have competitive advantages but also specific challenges and difficulties. Social enterprises need to produce, compete, perform, train and educate, develop and innovate, evaluate and monitor - under very specific conditions. They do have *competitive advantages*, but social enterprises also have considerable *challenges and difficulties* to deal with, related to their specific business ideology and value orientation (Mair & Noboa, 2003). Other researchers speak of the multifaceted nature of social enterprises – including multiple stakeholders, multiple goals and multiple resources – as something which may be experienced as an asset, but also as a potential weakness since they face a precarious existence and hence often change their structure and mission over time (Evers, 2007).

## **Social entrepreneurship - a privileged collaboration with civil society**

Social innovation provides the impetus for the dynamism at the core of social entrepreneurship, thus focusing on action and the creation of new solutions to welfare problems. Social entrepreneurship is used as a generic term for welfare initiatives that are innovative, cross-cutting, of social value and often targeted at socially disadvantaged people, who become co-owners. In social entrepreneurship, one or more individuals or groups identifies an unsolved social problem and develops innovative solutions with significant social and economic value - and civil society is engaged in these processes and products. The social entrepreneur is an anchor person and a motivator who is able to create networks and co-ownership among various actors: civil, public and private. At the same time there is an emphasis on a privileged collaboration with civil society, which provides the partnerships often created in social entrepreneurship with a certain radicalism and respect and sensitivity for citizens/users.

### **Danish social enterprises – a profile**

Danish examples of social enterprises are Allehånde, Kulturgynge, Huset Venture and Place de Bleu, which have managed to develop sustainable jobs for immigrants, refugees, disabled and vulnerable citizens on the basis of a variety of tasks and products. Or Hus Forbi, which produces a newspaper about the life and culture of the homeless that is sold by homeless people themselves, while Bybi encourages the inhabitants of Sundholm to set up beehives on their roofs to produce and sell honey. Then there are Cafe Retro and Cafe Kaffegal, which have developed new concepts where volunteers and jobs for special groups go hand in hand. Or Baisekeli which buys and restores second-hand Danish bicycles

and sends them to Africa where locals have been trained to run bicycle repair shops, or Maternity Worldwide, a bridge between Danish health professionals, volunteers and Ethiopian mothers through local obstetric and mother and baby health services. These are social enterprises that develop their products and social economy with a high degree of influence from and participation of many partners and networks - 'schools of democracy' as these phenomena have been described. There are also organisations which must learn the difficult art of 'mixing resources', i.e. doing business on the basis of income both from a market and from various forms of public funding. And finally, there are organisations with a significant dimension of learning and change, which in the best cases manage to provide a basis for greater vitality, skills development and co-ownership. It is a challenging cocktail placing tough demands on social entrepreneurs and their activities to be both skilled businessmen and competent actors in civil society.

## **Defining social entrepreneurship**

Social entrepreneurship can thus be defined through five criteria (Hulgård & Andersen, 2012). The first two are encountered in all analyses and representations of social entrepreneurship, regardless of the academic perspectives and traditions of the observer. In this limited view, social entrepreneurship is the creation of social value through innovation (Dees, 1998; Austin, Stevenson, & Wei-Skillern 2008; Nicholls, 2008). It is "the combination of an overarching social mission and entrepreneurial creativity that marks social entrepreneurship as distinct from other public, private and civil society activity" (Nicholls, 2008:16). Both social value and innovation are broad concepts. Actors who define themselves as social entrepreneurs work both within the narrow socio-political agenda of improving the lives of socially vulnerable people, often by establishing new and more inclusive types of jobs, and in broader agendas such as climate change by creating more equitable access to scarce resources such as clean water and supporting changes in production towards more social and ecological sustainability. Innovation is the object of much discussion, both in research and among practitioners. We see a tendency among actors in social entrepreneurship to focus on all-encompassing innovation which can e.g. create a million jobs for people with autism. But alongside this trend, we find research emphasising small, everyday innovations which are generated incrementally, gradually and through a "bricolage as a mix of different means and methods" (Fuglsang, 2010:75).

## **The international horizon of social entrepreneurship**

Social entrepreneurship has a highly international breadth and a historical horizon. From Italy, we know that cooperatives with shareholding and full membership from day one give remarkable results for vulnerable and marginal citizens. These people have proven able to perform productively despite abuse and mental diagnoses - and gradually improve their effort over time (Hulgård, Andersen, Spear, & Bisballe, 2008). From Sweden, we know that 'co-production', a mix of public professionals and citizens, can develop mainstream welfare services such as nursing homes, hospitals and day care centres in joint collaborative efforts, managing to transform disgruntled citizens into quality-oriented and co-producing participants (Pestoff, 2008). From Norway we know that when social enterprises are given special market conditions, homeless citizens are able to maintain a flexible work arrangement and income, and some of them can even develop an active role in the labour market (Hulgård et al., 2008). From England we know that public welfare services developed in another welfare state can involve a wide variety of forms of provision, often involving partnerships where both private and public entities in civil society are the providers. From the USA we know that social community enterprises such as Haley House - a 'community enterprise' established initially for homeless people - have had the creative power to develop over a 30-year period and maintain co-participation, innovation and market dynamics (Hulgård, 2007).

## **Social entrepreneurship and social innovation as human economy, governance and volunteerism**

As mentioned initially, volunteerism and the collaboration with volunteers in social entrepreneurship assume a prominent position leading to the birth of new organisational hybrid formats: social enterprises. Thus, social enterprises act as 'strong learning arenas' opting for a number of high profile and 'popular' objectives: to train and empower marginal citizens, to create sustainable enterprises in a new economy, to strengthen the local community, to renew welfare services and labour strategies, to develop social enterprise and business models including democracy and participation - and to position the voluntary sector and the volunteers as vital agents in this development. As such, the social entrepreneur - as the driving force in social enterprises - differs from the commercial entrepreneur in that he or she is driven by a wish to obtain social value instead of personal or shareholder-oriented value (Austin, Stephenson, & Wei-Skillern, 2006). In international social science, an entrepreneur is a 'change agent', regardless of which social, political or economic relations are in play. Social entrepreneurs transcend

the boundaries between the 'economic man' acting for personal gain and the 'social man' acting for the common good.

### **Ambivalence and criticism**

In Denmark we often see experimental and even unpredictable approaches to social change, and these are developed within many areas of society: large parts of the private and public labour market, health care, sports, the area of social and human services, housing, leisure activities, voluntary work, etc. (for example: Andersen, Neerup, & Cauchi, 2007; Andersen, Larsen, Bisballe, & Holm 2008; Hulgård, 2007). The creative, effective and innovative processes take place both inside organisations and associations, by intrapreneurs, as well as outside, by entrepreneurs (Andersen, Bager, & Hulgård, 2012; Kristensen & Voxsted 2012). In my single case study of the 'Bridge', I shed further light on these dimensions, pointing to the ambivalence of these entities: on the one hand, a strong potential for positive outcome and co-governance, on the other hand, a potential for failure due to inadequate financial and organisational structures.

In a Danish context, the concept of social enterprise and entrepreneurship embedded in a dynamic civil society has been proclaimed to be part of the possible solution to complex and as yet unsolved problems in the welfare state. These ambitions hold great potential, but are certainly not unproblematic. Many volunteers do not see themselves as solving political issues, since only a minority of voluntary organisations and volunteers' wishes to assume the position of spokesman (Boje, Fridberg, & Ibsen, 2006). At the same time, it appears that private/public partnerships are not leaving the third sector unaffected, but can lead to changes in the composition of volunteers, in the particular organisational structures chosen, and in the activities and profiles of volunteerism (Lundstrom & Wijkstrom, 2002). In Denmark, critical analyses have identified a tendency for top-down management and an increased focus on classical professionalism; a tendency which runs contrary to traditional volunteerism, with its bottom-up structures and strong roots in popularism and independent administration (Lihme, 2000).

### **A single case analysis: The Bridge, a Danish work integration social enterprise**

I now turn to my single case study to provide a deeper understanding of not only the potentials, but also the risks of social entrepreneurship and social enterprises. The strength of single case studies is to foster in-depth knowledge of

how social enterprises in a micro process perspective handle upskilling marginal citizens, developing a quasi-market approach, developing co-participation and empowerment, and managing the organisation. This specific case study correlates with many of the above mentioned criteria: it is a hybrid organisation, resource-mixing market income and public funding with the associated advantages and disadvantages; it displays a number of social innovation strategies and practices; it situates an interpretation of 'human economy' through the use of 'monetary and non-monetary' resources, inspired from 'public entrepreneurship', but also the focal point of 'the social entrepreneur' as a change agent. Thus, the case should provide inquiry into the complicated processes of outcome and challenges voiced through the female manager describing the learning philosophy, managerial principles and financial challenges.

The Bridge was situated in south-western Denmark. It was primarily a community project aimed at providing different activities for the local community at large. The overall objective of community building was combined with goals of work integration, pursued through hiring people receiving social assistance and unemployment benefits for different work tasks within the organisation. The participants were offered different job experiences, according to their own preferences and abilities, under the supervision of staff members from the organisation. The organisation mostly operated as a way of kick-starting individual processes of development and qualification that led to an evaluation of criteria for reintegration of participants into the labour market or various educational programmes.

### **A multi-delivering social enterprise**

The Bridge was a fairly typical example of a Danish social enterprise focusing on socially marginalised citizens - and integrating a strong element of volunteerism. It combined a high degree of innovation and creativity with considerable public subvention and thus constituted a particular form of social entrepreneurship with both strengths and weaknesses. The Bridge was an innovative drop-in centre for the most socially disadvantaged groups in the local area, but it was also an organisation that appealed to the general local population.

During its most dynamic period, the Bridge consisted of a second-hand shop, a textile workshop, a rental shop, a café, several social re-training initiatives and measures for social welfare recipients and long-term disability recipients, a regular gathering point for the cultural activities of local Turks and Kurds, and finally an adult education centre offering courses to seniors and activities like a weekly dance for the local community. The project provided a large group of lonely people in the local community with a place to expand their social network.



People receiving unemployment benefits and social security were offered work experience, job training and competence development opportunities closely related to their previous experiences and actual preferences. The sale of products and services provided a small line of revenue (Andersen & Hulgård, 2010). This work integration profile (WISE – work integration social enterprise) is quite typical in Danish social enterprises – as well as international - combining public subvention with workplace integration of marginalised social groups and a minor income (Hulgård, 2007).

### **Facing complicated challenges**

The social enterprise 'the Bridge' encountered a number of complicated issues involving key organisational, managerial and pedagogical perspectives which often needed to be addressed at the same time - since the project's objectives were directed at vulnerable citizens. Social enterprises involving work integration are often established on the basis of social problems or a local need, and supported by voluntary commitment. They quite rapidly have to establish sustainable organisational structures and activities, suitable for their potential users, employees and volunteers, but also having the features of a modern organisation. They have to create opportunities for member-based democracy, giving influence and voice to different users, employees and volunteers, but they also have to run a reasonably efficient organisation. They must be able to describe and assess their activities and be capable of reflecting on their underlying theory of change. Finally, they ought to establish partnerships and long-term cooperation with public authorities, and preferably also private companies. Thus, social enterprise necessitates expertise, competences and networks – in addition to voluntary manpower.

### **Providing a stimulating starting point**

However, a social enterprise also provides a stimulating starting point for the flexible and innovative development of an organisation that is able to address users' needs and adapt to new challenges and objectives. The manager of the Bridge clearly stated that the many opportunities for business development free from the constraints of regulations or legal procedures led to a more innovative and entrepreneurial culture.

*The positive aspect of this place is related to our affiliation. If we come up with new ideas, we are free to implement them - if we have the funding. If we want to have an excursion or another new initiative, we can do it. Nobody controls us. I refer to the board and that's it. The adverse effect on the running of the Bridge is the*

*matter of the limited financial resources. Some of our ideas - for instance if we'd like to have the local people join us for a dance evening every week, we can't do it for financial reasons. Or if we'd like to give talks, then we need to be able to provide money for that too.*

However, the Bridge was seriously affected by the vague and non-supportive business and organisational environment surrounding their social activities. Over time, potential conflicts with local private enterprises, difficulties in providing a steady market position, lack of long-term commitment from the public sector, and a huge workload all drained the manager, her staff and volunteers of the necessary energy and drive.

*We have had some increase in income. We did a new activity where we did theatre make-up. We had a significant increase the first year, but the second year stagnated because we'd exhausted the market. Our rental shop has its ups and downs depending on how much PR we do. We've been somewhat cautious because we worry that someone could accuse us of distorting the market competition. The private enterprises aren't very happy with us. Many local social enterprises have had such problems. They're not very likely to help social enterprises that are aimed at getting individuals into job activation. They see us as competitors getting public funding. So the director of the local labour market administration has offered his help if such a case should arise.*

### ***A house of cards***

The manager portrayed the Bridge as a house of cards – it would not take much of an effort to make it collapse. The necessary resources that any business needs to invest in innovative development are channelled into licking the wounds after the latest struggle. The Bridge constantly experienced that when they felt on top of things, the authorities again reminded them that they were only on a trial base. A more long-term commitment of 4-6 years, including several partners, would have been a far more suitable and rational agreement.

The manager described how, at first, her (emotional) expectations for the employees and users were too high and had to be readjusted.

*In my early days in this project, I thought that we could turn it into some kind of after-school centre with an emotional sense of belonging. But I gradually learned that I got quite disappointed when people left the place or didn't accept what was offered. That was because I didn't realise that I was in fact the employer. Even though I don't personally pay their wages. I provide good working conditions, some good experiences, since I personally run these things here. Or that I'm at the front*

*of all of it. I truly don't believe that a public authority or the like would take on the tasks that I sometimes have to do. But that's a part of the way things work here. That's why I'm not only the boss; I'm just as much a social worker.*

### **Managerial profile in a social enterprise**

The managerial profile unfolded in this interview illustrates the co-existence of several management philosophies and practices. The visible and authoritative manager stands out distinctly, since the manager seemed to function through her physical, moral and personal presence. The manager appeared to be a good role model - a beacon showing the way - not least when problems arose or during crises. When the manager was absent, the teamwork and focus in different project activities immediately weakened - and this constituted a serious problem because the Bridge wanted to work with empowerment of its users. However, the manager also positioned herself as a different type of manager: a hybrid between a social worker and a manager. She had the ideal of employing a delegating and democratic management style; an ideal which faced considerable difficulties in its realisation due to the highly complex composition of the user and volunteer group and the fact that not everyone could satisfy the resulting demands. Managing a social enterprise consisting of work integration, voluntary activities, community-related activities, a café, etc. involved a fair amount of professional investment, relational work and emotional and personal interaction (Andersen, 2001 & 2005). All these components were crucial for the relatively positive outcome the Bridge was able to achieve.

### **Participatory democracy and member influence**

Social enterprises including volunteerism have a distinct focus on participatory democracy and member influence, and these features were also characteristic of the Bridge. Such enterprises therefore depend on different forms of sustainability. Social sustainability denotes the social adhesive that bonds the different agents from the voluntary organisation, the staff and the local citizens, thereby constituting the basis for reproducing and developing their future profile of activities. Local sustainability implies a continued local interest from a differentiated group of local citizen agents that have to support the social enterprise in order to secure growth. Project sustainability refers to reliable user needs for the social enterprise. In the case of the Bridge, its social, local and project sustainability were fairly well anchored, whereas the weakness was its financial sustainability (Andersen, Neerup, & Cauchi, 2007). However, the social sustainability also faced some difficulties. The manager described how the level of activity dropped the minute she

was absent. The users, employees and volunteers had difficulties developing and maintaining responsibility when the manager was not present. But the manager also described this phenomenon within a long developmental horizon, which she consistently applied to the objectives, working methods and participants of the Bridge. She spoke of the Bridge as individual and professional empowerment and developmental processes among users, employees and volunteers, stressing the necessity of developing a labour identity and daily work practice, and hereby creating an inclusive but also productive workplace. The concept of the Bridge embraced various learning and developmental practices: the development of socio-political awareness and knowledge, 'enlightenment' and 'cultivation' in the Danish learning tradition of Grundtvig, empowerment and democracy, competence development, professional training and personal growth. This complicated encounter, encompassing a multitude of users, employees and volunteers, thus accentuates a process perspective juxtaposed with a product perspective - and the manager points to the complicated matter of trying to outline performance indicators and measurement standards.

### **Governance processes**

The institutional practice also included the concept of 'public governance', where various groups of citizens, professionals, public authorities and private companies work as negotiating agents in the development and evaluation of specific political and practical arenas (Bovaird & Löffler, 2003). The Bridge was part of a series of continuous discussions and negotiations with the local administration concerning the implementation of employment opportunities and objectives for the municipality. Thus, the Bridge was engaged in governance processes, planning, negotiating and evaluating specific products of social services and was in the initial phases of developing a public-private partnership.

### **A complex group of users, volunteers and employees**

Finally, the Bridge had a broad and varied group of users, volunteers and employees. The different activities attracted both socio-economically disadvantaged and advantaged individuals and were thus able to establish an unusual learning space with a mix of different participants. The manager described it as follows:

*The Bridge is incorporated in what is known as the Danish tradition of a 'folkehus' (people's house), providing the atmosphere and group identity specific to this. So we are a 'community centre' for the local people as well. And this is an obstacle. When people join us and want to be part of the Bridge, they are immediately faced*

*with the many practical functions. For one thing, to make this café run every day... what happens is that they quickly become volunteers. In reality they are users. But the individual person feels better when being a volunteer. This means that some of the newcomers at once become part of the staff - whereas others become users when they profit from the sewing workshop to sew their clothes. Some would want to mend something; others would want to learn something. All in all around 54 people come into the house every day.*

The social enterprise applied quite a sophisticated understanding of the dynamic balance between users in passive and consuming positions versus volunteers in active and (co)creative positions. Apparently, the Bridge had composed its activities in ways that, in a logical and straightforward manner, facilitated newcomers in transcending the borderline between 'the takers and the givers'. Thus, the Bridge had provided an activating and co-creative social learning space which, in terms of its culture, overall financial plan, opportunities for activities, engagement, community and individual focus, had provided many participants with a range of opportunities for personal and professional development (Andersen & Ahrenkiel, 2003).

### **Integration linked with volunteerism**

The importance of linking work integration with volunteerism relates to the possibilities of motivating the users/staff and to the intended profile of the social enterprise.

*One thing is that it looks good on paper to have volunteers. Another thing is that it is an essential moral message to send to the clients in job activation: that some individuals actually come here of their own free will. Even though the users or staff don't present the attitude that this is forced labour, there is an element of force in it. So the fact that the users or staff see that many volunteers are slaving away - just like me, but that's different - and that the volunteers never have a day off sick! That makes an impression*

The ambitious outcome objectives also lead to further problems and challenges. A broad and diverse group of participants, including long-term benefit recipients in retraining, early retirees eager to learn, citizens with creative hobbies and citizens belonging to various ethnic minorities, necessitates a differentiated and adaptive pedagogical, collaborative and professional strategy. On the one hand, this strategy achieved a considerable degree of success. On the other hand, such an elaborate strategy and differentiated service delivery profile required a certain amount of employee stability, quality assessment and voluntary commitment, as

well as a financially viable structure. The capacity for social innovation and user participation was the Bridge's greatest asset. However, the turmoil of everyday life did not provide the necessary resources and time to further develop the innovative combination of volunteerism, work integration and service provision. So, unfortunately, this social enterprise was not able to develop its core output sufficiently to survive in the long run and it soon turned out that organisational, financial and network structures were just as important.

### **Interplay between professionals, users and volunteers**

Furthermore, it is interesting to identify the interplay between the theory of professions, the professional bodies, and the ideology, knowledge base and practices at the Bridge. Classic definitions from the theory of professions and theory of science indicate that formal knowledge acts as legitimatisation and provides access to certain job positions, privileges and wage levels. The educational system provides individuals with diplomas and certificates, and also develops a professional identity whereby individuals acquire a knowledge base for professional work activities (Hjort, 2004). This definition, however, is inadequate when defining social enterprises since these organisations, in their structural foundation and division of labour, transcend the classic professional categories and definitions. Social enterprise and social entrepreneurship is, to a much greater extent, a hybrid phenomenon encompassing different occupations, managers, autodidacts, clients, users and citizens in a patchwork of paid and unpaid positions.

The hybrid of professional and voluntary social work in a social enterprise is more adequately identified and discussed on the basis of five conditions inspired by the theory of professions: 1) the proportion of paid employees, 2) the defined methodological approaches, 3) the similarity of work performed by employees and volunteers, 4) competency development of employees and volunteers and 5) development of the organisation's own visibility in relation to users, the public and private sectors, and other voluntary associations. The Bridge had paid employees (the manager and, to some extent, also others); it was founded on the basis of several well-defined pedagogical, social and community approaches; and it was inspired by enlightenment and critical pedagogy, combined with an empowerment approach; employees and users sharing similar working and task profile, trying to create a space of critical social and vocational learning and training, leading to social and critical understanding and conduct. The most significant weakness was probably the lack of visibility in relation to a broader range of external agents; this lack of visibility had a significant effect on the Bridge's ability to survive.

## Closing remarks

In this article I have introduced and profiled social entrepreneurship, social innovation and human economy, and sketched out how social entrepreneurship - in the form of social enterprises - involves a number of promising but also challenging objectives. Social enterprises can be understood as a new form of human economy organisation, traversing the dominant capitalist economy, and focusing on public and social entrepreneurship often co-driven by - or co-supported by - ordinary citizens and local civic communities. These hybrid organisations that deliver services on the basis of diverse sources of funding combine market conditions with a number of local and state subsidies - and a human economy driven by volunteerism and non-profit activities. Due to the interweaving of volunteerism and collaboration with civil society within the DNA of social economic organisations, these entities represent a new form of collaborative platform, renewing civil society's engagement and position in the welfare state. The study of the social enterprise 'the Bridge', meanwhile, pointed to both the strengths and weaknesses of these organisations. On the one hand, we see how a differentiated range of learning arenas, such as a second-hand shop, a textile workshop, a café, weekly dances and cultural clubs, provided vocational, empowerment and citizenship training. On the other hand, we have learned that, despite good intentions and methods, such learning and competence development processes have to be facilitated by a protracted engagement that requires steady financing and reliable business organisation; something which the Danish social enterprises and the labour marked framework have not yet managed to provide.

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## Dansk abstract

### **Socialt entreprenørskab og social innovation: 'human economy', governance og frivillighed**

Socialt entreprenørskab og social innovation kobles i stigende grad til udviklingen af en ny form for økonomi: 'human economy', som fokuserer langt mere på menneskelige ressourcer frem for kun økonomi. Formålet er at udvikle demokratiske ledelsesformer, frivillighed og medborgerskab og i et større perspektiv at udvikle nye løsninger på velfærdsproblemer. Frivillighed og samarbejde med frivillige spiller en vigtig rolle i socialt entreprenørskab og har ledt til etableringen af nye hybride organisationer: sociale virksomheder. I denne artikel introducerer jeg begrebsdefinitioner af socialt entreprenørskab samt inddrager et 'single case study' af Broen - en typisk dansk social virksomhed med integration på arbejdsmarkedet som formål (en 'work integration social enterprise' eller WISE). Jeg viser, hvordan sociale virksomheder under de rette omstændigheder kan fungere som 'stærke læringsarenaer'. I et større perspektiv fokuserer sociale virksomheder på en række mål: at give borgere på kanten af samfundet kompetencer til at skabe bæredygtige virksomheder, at styrke lokalsamfundet, at forny velfærdssamfundet samt at udvikle nye virksomhedstyper og forretningsmodeller. Til disse mål kan tilføjes demokrati og medinddragelse og positionering af den frivillige sektor og frivillige som en særlig ressource - eller agenter - i denne udvikling. Case-analysen illustrerer, at målene er krævende at opnå, men kan være inden for rækkevidde, hvis de rette finansielle, organisatoriske og ledelsesmæssige forudsætninger er til stede.

*Nøgleord:* socialt entreprenørskab, social innovation, governance, menneskeøkonomi, frivillighed.

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# For Reasons Other Than ‘What’s in it for me?’ Volunteering as Citizens’ Interests

- A Perspective From the Capability Approach

**By Christian Chrstrup Kjeldsen**

## **Abstract**

From the perspective of the Capability Approach, as developed by moral philosopher Martha Nussbaum and Nobel laureate in economics Amartya Sen (Nussbaum, 2011; Nussbaum, 2006; Sen, 2009; Sen, 1999a), this mainly empirical-based paper will address the interrelationship between the concepts of unpaid volunteer work in community and social services and the dimensions of the Capability Approach as they can be analysed within the third wave of the European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS), giving a multilevel perspective on the differences between the countries participating in the pan-European project VERSO – Volunteers for European Employment. When controlling for demographic factors and modelling the issue at stake within the Capability Approach, it is apparent that a better work-life balance and improved choice and work flexibility are important resources as drivers for voluntary work. Furthermore, people with more affluent living conditions and people working within the private sector are found to have fewer aspirations to perform voluntary work. Within the dynamics of the Capability Approach, the European countries are used as the baseline for a comparison of attitudes towards voluntary work within the countries participating in the EU VERSO project.

*Keywords:* voluntary work, capability approach, work flexibility, material deprivation, liberal choice.

## **Capabilities and participation in voluntary community and social service work**

Within the VERSO (Volunteers for European Employment) project, which has been co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) within the Interregional Cooperation Programme INTERREG IVC, a number of different forms of analysis (cost-benefit, comparative, mobilization etc.) have been conducted in order to identify good volunteering practices across a number of European states. Among the project's partners are several research institutions, *Aarhus University* (Denmark (DK)), *University of Ioannina* (Greece (GR)), *Budapest Business School* (Hungary (HU)) and *Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona* (Spain (ES)), and a number of public authorities (PA), namely, *Municipality of Middelfart* (Denmark), *Region of Epirus* (Greece), *Netzwerk Lippe* (Germany (DE)), *East Riding of Yorkshire Council* (United Kingdom (UK)), *Generalitat de Catalunya* (Spain), *Municipality of Zalaegerszeg* (Hungary), *Municipality of Coevorden* (Netherlands (NL)) and *Municipality of Sofia* (Bulgaria (BG)). The aim is to promote innovations within the existing knowledge economy and address the Lisbon Agenda for combating social exclusion by focusing on good practices that meet the needs of European citizens living in disadvantaged situations. The EU VERSO project, therefore, has become an important project on a local, regional and national level to share and transfer ideas, policies and practices that have already been successfully and fruitfully implemented by other European countries and thus improve the effectiveness of policymaking by making these insights available for the collaboration between public authorities, policymakers and volunteers within civil society. The aim is to identify and spread good practices that, within the scope of VERSO, improve European citizens' quality of life by learning, sharing and transferring these good practice experiences of voluntary work. However, although such experiences of good practice within the field of unemployment exist throughout European societies, it is still a challenge to identify and transfer them from one particular national, social and cultural context to another, as, "*When it comes to volunteering, each country has different notions, definitions and traditions*" (European Commission, 2011, p. 2). This is due to a number of different factors, where the national context seems to play an important role.

In order to provide a firmer understanding of the dynamics within voluntary work across the EU states, this article offers a secondary analysis of existing data provided by the EU. First, the article presents the theoretical understanding of the

Capability Approach in order to fully understand these dynamics and provide a theory-driven model for the analysis. This is followed by some epistemological considerations. In the second part, the article presents the data, sample design and methodology used to infuse the Capability Approach empirically. Then, the article moves on to the concrete issue of voluntary work, in order to identify the various relevant dimensions, and presents descriptive statistics and insights related to the VERSO countries and their achievements within voluntary work. In the fourth part, the data are analysed using a multilevel logistic regression, and the results are presented. Finally, the article discusses these findings and provides recommendations for further policy making within this field of interest.

Amartya Sen, a Nobel laureate in economics, is the main innovative thinker primarily responsible for the approach applied here (Deneulin & Shahani, 2009). Sen argued that he had found a deficiency within existing concepts of equality and different understandings of welfare and wellbeing *"and thereby provided the basis of a new paradigm in economics and in the social sciences in general"* (Deneulin & Shahani, 2009, p. 30). In the late 1970s, he therefore posed the question *"Equality of what?"* in order to present a conceptualisation of equality other than that found in moral philosophy as utilitarian equality, total utility equality, and the Rawlsian idea of equality (Sen, 1979). *The critique raised against the Rawlsian understanding of justice was that "[n]either primary goods, nor resources more broadly defined, can represent the capability a person actually enjoys,"* (Sen, 1992, p. 82), which refers to their actual freedom at the level of being and doing. This is because every single individual converts these primary goods, resources or commodities, understood in terms of *liberties, opportunities, income and wealth*, differently and thereby, primary goods are not the only proxy for the lives people are, in fact, able to enjoy. The model of the Capability Approach includes a number of related concepts (Kjeldsen & Bonvin, 2012; Kjeldsen, 2014); within this article, I will address the main concepts of *capabilities, functionings, commodities, conversion factors and choice*, as where the main *"idea of capability is linked with substantive freedom, it gives a central role to a person's actual ability to do the different things that she values doing"* (Sen, 2009, p. 253). They are *"the freedoms or opportunities created by a combination of personal abilities and the political, social, and economic environment"* (Nussbaum, 2011, p. 20) and thereby, the real freedom to *choose* between our interests. Capabilities become something we could do or be – the freedom to achieve different states. This stands in relation to the actual achievements of the individual, which are cached with the concept of *functionings* and thereby provide two *"different types of information. The former [functionings] is about the things a person does and the latter [capabilities] is about the things a person is substantively free to do"* (Sen, 1999b, p. 75). In-between, we have the individual choice, which should be understood in ethical

liberal terms because *“choice in Sen’s conceptualisation is not to be confused with neo-liberal advocates of individual choice. The crucial difference is that the capability approach is ethically individualistic; neo-liberalism by contrast is ontologically individualist”* (Walker, 2005, p. 106). We become responsible for the choices we are doing, e.g. the choice of whether or not to do voluntary work for the benefit of the common good, because *“[f]reedom to choose gives us opportunity to decide what we should do, but with that opportunity comes the responsibility for what we do – to the extent that they are chosen actions”* (Sen, 2009, p. 19). The last part is important. We should be able to say something about whether the choice of doing voluntary work is a real opportunity or not for the individual. In order to have the freedom to achieve, or indeed to actually achieve, different doings and beings, the Capability Approach introduces the means to achieve into the concept of commodities. This has to be understood as a broad term (Kjeldsen, 2014), where *“[c]ommodities are goods and services. They should not necessarily be thought of as exchangeable for income or money – as this would restrict the capability approach to analyses and measurement in market-based economies, which it does not intend”* (Robeyns, 2013 [2003], p. 12). Different commodities, as means for other ends, may be converted differently by each individual, which is the reason for introducing the concept of conversion factors. For example, *“interpersonal income inequality in the market outcomes may tend to be magnified by this ‘coupling’ of low incomes with handicaps in the conversion of incomes into capabilities”* (Sen, 1999b, p. 119), and therefore, the *“relation between a good and the functionings to achieve certain beings and doings is influenced by three groups of conversion factors [...] [which] play a role in the conversion from characteristics of the good to the individual functioning”* (Robeyns, 2005, p. 99). These contingent circumstances, as Sen terms them, point to *“distinct sources of variation between our real incomes and the advantages, the wellbeing and freedom, we get out of them”* (Sen, 1999b, p. 70). These are personal, social and environmental factors of conversion (Robeyns, 2005; Sen, 1999b).

The various elements of the Capability Approach can be gathered in the following illustration that will lead the analysis between the concepts for means to achieve, freedoms to achieve and the actual achievements:

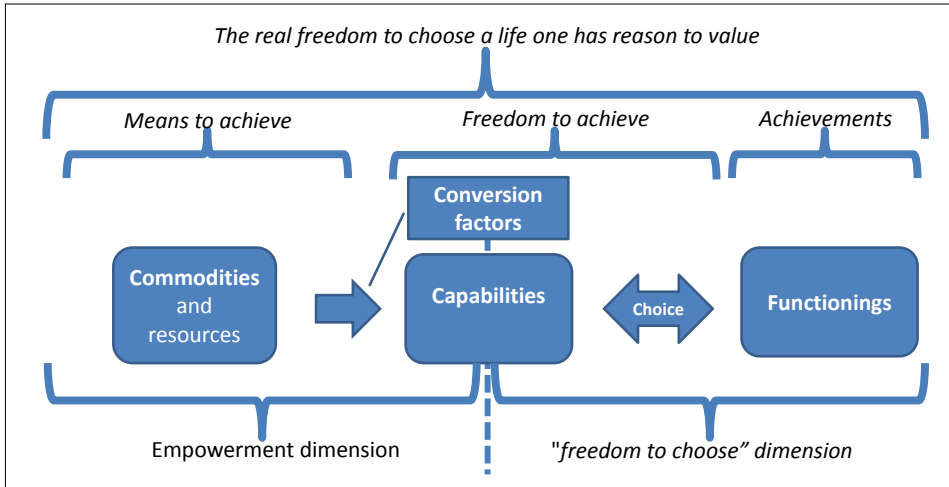


Figure 1: This is a reduced model of Kjeldsen (2014) and Kjeldsen & Bonvin (2012). A similar model may be found within the writings of Robeyns (2005)

The concepts within the above model are highly relational, and therefore, the following analysis will focus on the different parts, beginning with the achievements of doing voluntary work.

From the perspective of the Capability Approach, it is the aim to scrutinize this field of interest within a *relational epistemology* (Bachelard, 1984; Bourdieu, Chamboredon, & Passeron, 1991; Bourdieu, 1993), on the basis that these analytical objects exist, but "*Relations do not exemplify objects; objects exemplify relations*" (Bachelard, 1984, p. 143) and "*the real is relational, that what exists is relationships, something that you can't see, in contrast to individuals and groups*" (Bourdieu, Chamboredon, & Passeron, 1991, p. 253). Differences within the countries therefore have to be scrutinized in mutual relations to the overall picture and the country-wise differences. It is argued that the Capability Approach as a guiding model provides a much-needed *epistemological break* with the primary understanding of volunteering, politically fostered by late capitalist societies within a discourse of raising employability through the activation of *human capital* (Becker, 1993 [1964]), as can be found in both EU and national policies, and instead offers an understanding of voluntary work in terms of the ethical liberal understanding of *human development* (Deneulin & Shahani, 2009) as *human capabilities* (Nussbaum, 2008).

The Capability Approach thus provides the necessary normative yardstick for understanding volunteer work in social services, which is also assumed to be part of the community-level work to help disadvantaged citizens (the unemployed, early school leavers etc.). Within this approach, a person who has fewer real and *valuable* opportunities is disadvantaged compared to a person who has more, furthermore "*A person's advantage in terms of opportunities is judged to be lower than*

*that of another if she has less capability – less real opportunity – to achieve those things that she has reason to value” (Sen, 2009, p. 231).*

This conceptual understanding of advantage and disadvantage in relation to what the individual ‘has reason to value’ adds a further important distinction to the understanding of volunteer work because it relates to important issues that need to be taken into account in order to make a rupture/break - in the sense of Althusser and Bachelard (Balibar, 1978) - from the existing understanding of *interests* within volunteer work. On the basis that *interests* should not be understood as a utilitarian concept which is inscribed into the individual or agent and thereby forces the agent to practise well-informed consideration, interests become an arbitrarily constituted phenomenon (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 2002, p. 102). From the perspective of the Capability Approach, it may instead be argued that individuals may well have good *reasons to value* for choosing to use their free time to help young unemployed people to get closer to accessing the labour market, or to do other unpaid voluntary work within the community. This is an *interest* that does not originate from ‘what’s in it for me?’, but stems instead from an ethical stance of selflessness. This, however, does not emerge from the existing discourse within volunteer work, and a shift in perspective is needed also to research it empirically. Therefore, in line with the Capability Approach, I will argue for a change in the understanding of *means* and *ends* within the existing political discourse. Sen states that:

*Indeed, the widely prevalent concentration on the expansion of real income and on economic growth as the characteristics of successful development can be precisely an aspect of the mistake against which Kant had warned [...] The problem relates to the level at which this aim should be taken as a goal. Is it just an intermediate goal, the importance of which is contingent on what it ultimately contributes to human lives? Or is it the object of the entire exercise? It is in the acceptance – usually implicitly – of the latter view that the ends–means confusion becomes significant – indeed blatant. (Sen, 1989, p. 41)*

The main argument that will be advocated here is that the policies and practices of volunteer work should take into account that, for the individual, voluntary work may be a means to an end other than an increase in income. The question, meanwhile, is how the dynamics of volunteering relate to income and other forms of resources possessed by the individual doing the voluntary work, and whether people do voluntary work even though they have financial difficulties in their everyday lives etc. Having presented the theoretical framework, let me now turn to the empirical foundation as, like Pierre Bourdieu, I find no reason to accept the clear cut “*distinction between theory and methodology, conceptual analysis and empirical description*” (Bourdieu, 1996, p. 7).



The VERSO project has not sought to examine the general situation among volunteers in the EU member states beyond the countries represented by the partners in the project. Likewise, it was not an aim to provide representative survey data; instead, this article draws its empirical conclusions from the data of the third wave of European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS) (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, January 2014), which was carried out by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound). These data are used to point to further comparative differences between the contexts within which the various good practice cases identified within the pan-European VERSO project are situated. The EQLS is characterized by a high inclusion of all the European member states, as well as candidate countries (especially the first and second waves of the survey). The survey is not directly intended to provide insights into volunteering and unpaid work, but rather provides a number of very wide-ranging questions covering themes related to the topic of voluntary work in the battle against unemployment, such as employment status, income, educational level, family situation, health, life satisfaction and, not least, work-life balance, thereby making it possible to address voluntary work as a subtheme within the data. All questions have been systematically asked, the second wave of the survey in 31 countries and the third in 34. From the second wave of the EQLS survey to the third, a number of changes were made to the questionnaire, and to date, not much analysis has been conducted on this third wave dataset in relation to volunteering.

In 2011, it was stated that the *“European Year of Voluntary Activities promoting active citizenship will contribute to showing that volunteering is one of the key dimensions of active citizenship and democracy, putting European values such as solidarity and non-discrimination into action and as such contributing to the harmonious development of European societies”* (The Council of the European Union, 22.1.2010). An earlier wave of the EQLS survey (2007) was therefore used for mainly descriptive analysis focusing on voluntary work, as well as other forms of unpaid work such as taking care of relatives, children etc., which are defined as non-remunerated family- and household-related activities. This analysis highlighted how volunteer work can play a positive role in relation to the economic and social tensions arising from the post-2007 economic downturn and focused mainly on people's decisions to undertake volunteer work and other unpaid work, the time they spent performing these tasks, and their degree of satisfaction with their lives. Due to the unequal distribution of volunteering work and unpaid work between men and women, exploring the relationship between these two areas could be of relevance in the present analysis, especially in light of the Capability Approach. Nevertheless, this will not be the focus for the analysis for this article; an analysis which is carried

out on data from the third wave of the survey from 2011. Non-remunerated family- and household-related activities will therefore have to wait for now, although not without one final observation. The former EQLS study from 2007 found a number of relationships and differences among the countries. One key finding was that in 2007, more than one in five European citizens participated in some sort of voluntary work, and this participation was related to age, gender, education and religious activities. The group most likely to be engaged in voluntary work are highly educated individuals aged 45-50. Interestingly, in my interpretation, the 2007 study also finds that *“People frequently involved in unpaid caring, be it for children or elderly/disabled relatives, are less likely to participate in voluntary and charitable activities”* (McCloughan, Batt, Costine, & Scully, 2011, p. 2).

Another finding was a *“wide variation between Member States over the extent of volunteering and unpaid work. It also confirmed previous research findings that, while many people are willing – in principle – to volunteer, most do not. This has implications for future EU policy initiatives to promote volunteering and unpaid work”* (McCloughan, Batt, Costine, & Scully, 2011). This raises an important question not addressed by this, to some extent, policy-driven analysis that may be derived from the perspective of the Capability Approach; do individuals just choose not to volunteer or do they lack the capability to perform voluntary work for the common good of their fellow citizens? In the first scenario, the failure to volunteer is due to choice and, perhaps to some degree, adapted preferences within a specific cultural setting. The second scenario reflects that individuals in fact have reason to value doings or beings as volunteers, but do not hold this freedom of choice within their set of possible doings or beings. It makes a substantial difference, first and foremost in relation to the individual, whether he or she is able to choose this state of affairs but does not, or whether volunteering is not a opportunity for them and they would prefer to do so if they had the chance. In the second scenario, not only would they *“in principle”* like to participate in voluntary work but in practice do not, they would actually participate if they possessed the capability for doing so. If they had the real freedom to do so – the capability of volunteering for the common good – they would do so. Insights into this issue can influence policies. In the first scenario, it becomes a matter of information and other value-promoting activities encouraging willingness to do voluntary work, while in the second, it becomes a question of supporting the real freedom to engage in voluntary work and tearing down important barriers to this freedom, *“since volunteering can help ease economic and social tensions arising in the wake of the current economic crisis”* (McCloughan, Batt, Costine, & Scully, 2011, p.v).

## Data, sample design and methodology

The data have been analysed using the statistical environment R (R Core Team, 2014) in combination with a number of extra packages to fit with *generalized linear models*, *multiple imputations* and complex survey designs. The analysis for the article has been conducted on three reduced datasets of the original dataset provided by the EU data archive. Firstly, a subset of variables was assumed relevant for the theme of participation. Then, a subset of VERSO countries was identified. The third dataset was a subset of respondents who were in work which was filtered according to the demographic questions asked at the start of the survey. As the focus has been on relations between respondents' attributes and different countries, it is worthwhile reflecting briefly on the sample procedure. This influences the methods applied and indicates some caution should be shown regarding the generalizability of the results. The sample procedure of EQLS is built on a sample universe that "covers all people aged 18 and over whose usual place of residence is in the territory of the countries included in the survey" (UK Data Archive, 2014a, p. 3). Furthermore, it is stated that respondents to the survey "should have lived in the country for the last six months before the survey and should be able to speak the national language(s) well enough to respond to the questionnaire" (UK Data Archive, 2014a, p. 3). It is a multi-stage sample design where a "next birthday" rule has been applied in order to ensure that "[o]nly one person per household could be selected for the survey" (UK Data Archive, 2014a, p. 3). For some countries, it has been possible to draw a sample that is classified as 'Random Probability', while in other situations, when sampling frame coverage of 95% of households/persons was not available, a sampling method classified as 'Enumerated Random Route' was employed (UK Data Archive, 2014a). To use the VERSO countries as an example, only Denmark, Hungary, the Netherlands and the UK were sampled with random probabilities. Also, bias due to coverage error may be expected, e.g. in the United Kingdom where the sampling frame covered 97% of households instead of the 100% covered in Denmark and the Netherlands (UK Data Archive, 2014a, p. 3).

### **Multilevel logistic regression with varying intercepts and slopes, imputations of incomplete data and row-wise deletion**

After identifying which questions within the survey would be included in the analysis, the data were inspected for missing values in order to see the structure of item non-response (Buuren, Groothuis-Oudshoorn, Robitzsch, Vink, Doove, & Jolani, 2014; Buuren & Groothuis-Oudshoorn, 2011). Within the questionnaire and the dataset, the idea of a reduced material deprivation index of six instead of nine items, as was tried out as an EU indicator (Guio, 2009), was introduced: this

*“deprivation index runs from zero (for no item missing) to six (for all six items missing)”* (Anderson, Mikulić, Vermeulen, Lyly-Yrjanainen, & Zigante, 2009, p. 9). In relation to the number of items a household can complete, it turns out that, within the total dataset, 183 have item non-response on all six different issues (missing survey data or refused to answer). Likewise, on another battery of questions concerning whether the household had been unable to pay a number of scheduled payments during the past 12 months, 306 respondents have item non-response for all four items. Within the intersection between the two batteries of questions, there are 43 who did not answer any of these questions. As these are important dimensions within the analysis driven by the Capability Approach, the following procedure has been applied. The respondents with item non-response on all items within each of the two batteries of questions have been row-wise deleted from the dataset, which is a *“case-deletion method used by many statistical packages (omitting all incomplete cases from the analysis)”* (Schafer, 1997, p. 23). The other missing data have been imputed using imputations by chained equations (Buuren & Groothuis-Oudshoorn, 2011). For the named questions imputation (binary), a logistic regression as proposed by J.L. Schafer (1997) has been applied for each item, and as it is assumed that the number of items a person can afford and the number of arrears a household has difficulties in paying are related, the predictor variables chosen for the imputation are all ten variables before building the two indices. In this way, it is not the provided deprivation index within the dataset that has been used but rather one built with the imputed data. The main *outcome variable*<sup>1</sup> is whether people have participated in voluntary work in community and social services during the last 12 months, a new question in the survey with the possible responses: “Every week”, “Every month”, “Less often/occasionally” and “Not at all” (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2014, p. 13). This item is on an ordinal scale and has therefore been imputed using a *multinomial logit model* with other named predictor variables and first later recoded as a binary variable for the logistic regression.

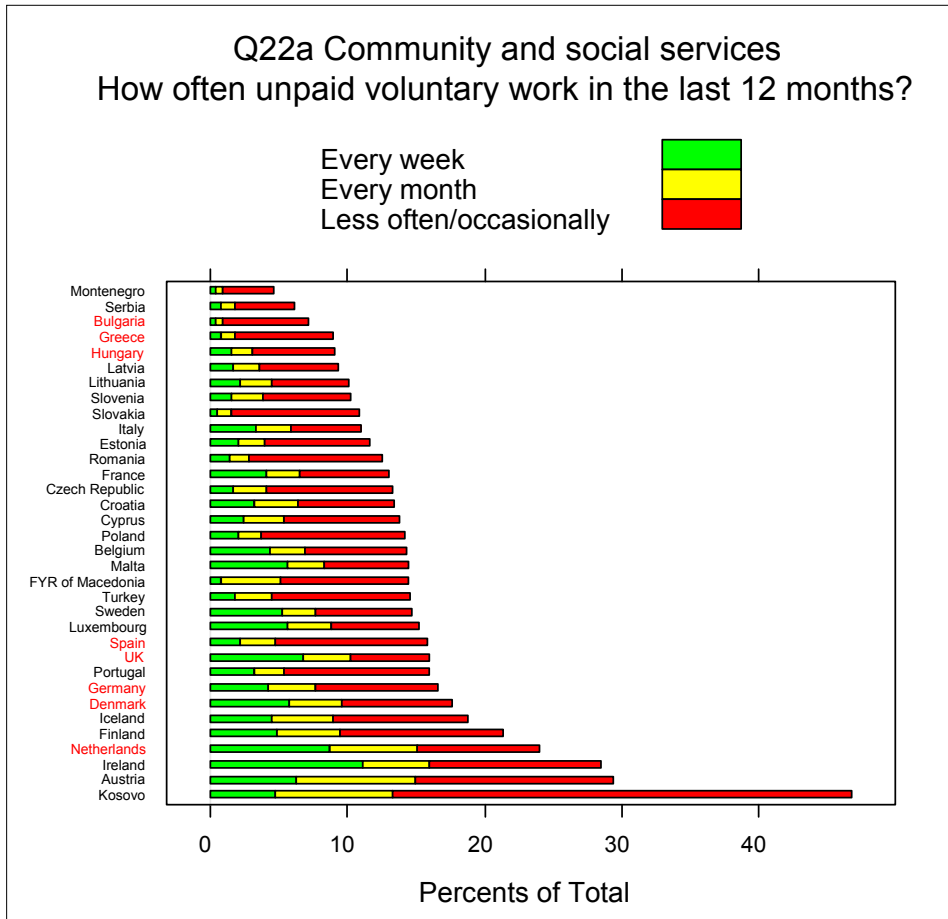
As mentioned previously, the survey was constructed using a multilevel sample design, which frequently differs between countries. It is often the case, *“[b]ecause of cost, time and efficiency considerations”* (Khan & Shaw, 2011, p. 95). This gives rise to some challenges in the *“phase of data analysis and data reporting, a nuisance which should be taken into consideration. However, these samples, while efficient for estimation of the descriptive population quantities, pose many challenges for model-based statistical inference”* (Khan & Shaw, 2011, p. 95). One may say that, even in an ordinary logistic regression, the *“[c]oefficients in logistic regression can be challenging to interpret because of the nonlinearity”* (Gelman & Hill, 2007, p. 81); in some situations, this is made even more difficult as *“odds ratios from a standard*

*logit model cannot be compared directly with odds ratios from a multilevel model since odds ratios from a multilevel model are effects on the median odds*" (Khan & Shaw, 2011, p. 99). Furthermore, Gelman and Hill argue that interpreting coefficients as odds ratios and odds "*can be somewhat difficult to understand, and odds ratios are even more obscure*" (Gelman & Hill, 2007, p. 83). This is still a very convenient way of getting an understanding of a large model. Furthermore, it may be argued that "*the regression coefficients from a logistic regression can be easily transformed to odds ratios, which can be simply interpreted for policy purposes*" (Willms, 2003, p. 36). In my interpretation, this is due to the advantage that, for this link, "[e]ffects in the logistic model refer to odds, and the estimated value at one value of  $x$  divided by the estimated odds at another value of  $x$  is an odds ratio" (Agresti, 1990, p. 86). As it is not my intention to saturate the full analysis of the data within this model, but instead to indicate some of the attributes that lead to either a higher or lower chance of participation in voluntary work, I choose in the following analysis to present the different odds rather than probabilities or logits – in fact, "*It is important to understand that probability, the odds, and the logit are three different ways of expressing exactly the same thing*" (Menard, 2009, p. 15). Having provided some insights into both the dataset used and how it is handled, let me now turn to the more interesting part; namely, the results.

## **Achievements: Being in paid employment while also engaging in volunteer work**

Let me first present some descriptive and bivariate results, as well as outlining how the survey questions may reflect relevant dimensions within the Capability Approach. I will then present the outcomes of the multilevel analysis conducted on these dimensions.

When examining the level of participation in community and social services among the different countries of Europe, it becomes clear that there are differences in the proportions. The figure below, illustrating the weighted totals, not only ranks the different countries in terms of level of participation in voluntary work, it also clearly shows that, within the VERSO project, the countries are clustered at opposite ends of the scale, with Bulgaria, Greece and Hungary at the lower end and Spain, UK, Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands at the higher. Apart from Ireland, the Netherlands is the country with the highest level of respondents doing unpaid voluntary work in community and social services on a weekly basis.



This variable is seen as the outcome variable within the analysis, and we will focus on this particular form of voluntary work within community and social service organisations as opposed to, for example, cultural, political or sporting organisations because it is considered the best match for the type of volunteer work focused on in the VERSO project. Within the EQLS dataset, there is a composite measure of volunteering; the argument for not applying this measure within the analysis is that it combines several quite distinct forms of participation in voluntary activities. As such, instead of a nomothetic understanding of participation in volunteer work, I apply a more idiographic approach. The analysis will thereby seek to model and understand which predictors can help in understanding the differences between the countries that are part of the EU VERSO project seem to cluster in the two ends of the continuum of countries: those with a high level of participation in voluntary community and social services work (Netherlands, Denmark, Germany, UK and Spain) and those at the other end of the spectrum with low levels of participation (Hungary, Greece and Bulgaria).

For a number of good practice cases identified within the VERSO project, volunteers have been recruited among people within the workforce, and thus linked to the labour market. The driving idea is that these people may serve as important gatekeepers for the job market or represent a good match as mentors for mentees, those unable to get a footing in the labour market. I will therefore now take a closer look at the situation of those citizens who are active in the labour market, either as employees, self-employed without employees, or self-employed with employees, and examine to what extent they are likely to engage in voluntary work alongside their paid work.

It is my interpretation that, within the capability framework, time may be understood as a resource and therefore as part of the means to achieve different states the individual has reason to value. In this case, taking part in voluntary activities becomes the functioning of the capability. It thereby becomes the relationship between the *means to achieve*, the *freedom to achieve*, and the *actual achievement* of volunteering. The means to achieve will be comprised, among other factors, by the time the individual spends not occupied with work. The data do not make it possible to differentiate between volunteering work undertaken as part of corporate responsibility measures, where the employee is given time within paid working hours to do volunteer work. Instead, the reciprocal proxy for the possible time for volunteer work is measured as the sum of a number of questions related to job responsibilities, workload and family/work balance. First of all, the time spent at work is captured with the questions "*How many hours do you normally work per week in your main job?*" and "*About how many hours per week did you work in this additional job?*" The EQLS survey also asks about time spent travelling, such as "*How much time (minutes) in total do you spend getting to and from work or study?*", and this is added to the total.

As discussed previously, within the section on the Capability Approach, the notion of conversion factors must be considered. Resources are converted into possible doings or beings which differ according to the individual. I will argue that this is the case with the amount of time available for doing volunteer work as it relates to the flexibility each individual has in their job to find the necessary time during the day/week. This may be seen as a social conversion factor as it first of all relates to "*societal hierarchies [and] power relations*" (Robeyns, 2005, p. 99). In order to control for this form of conversion factor in the logistic regression model, an index of the following dimensions is constructed. The variables in the survey are: "*I can vary my start and finish times*", "*I can accumulate hours for time off*" and "*I can take a day off at short notice when I need to*". An index score is made ranging from 0 to 3. The result shows there is a straightforward significant relation between individuals who have a high degree of flexibility within this index and those

who find it easier to make ends meet, whereby the social hierarchies in terms of income follow a slope where those who have fewer economic problems are also those with advantages regarding greater flexibility at work.

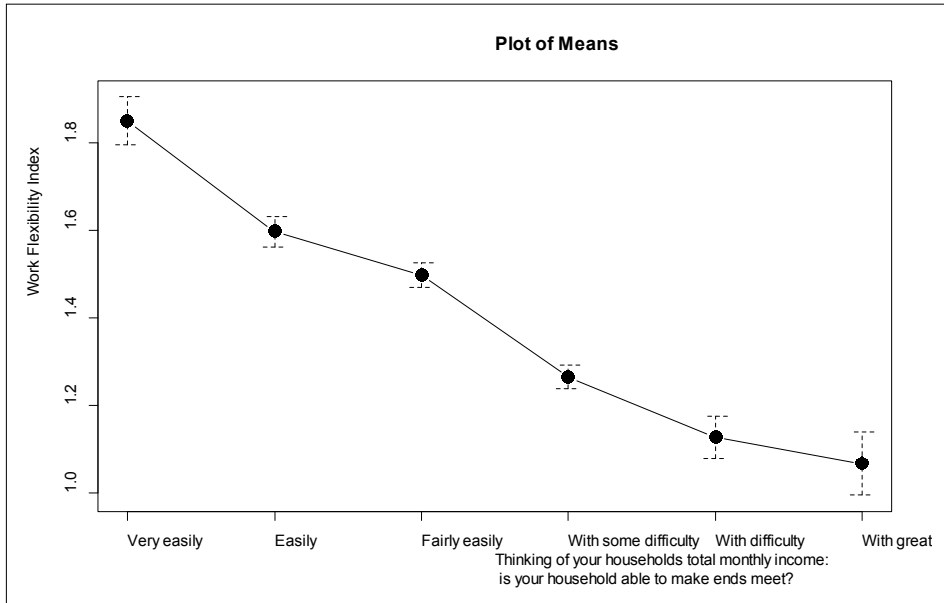


Figure 2: EQLS 2011 aggregated to persons within work, without sample weights and with row-wise deletion. 95% error bars. Anova returns significant result ( $Pr(>F) < 2e-16$  \*\*\*)

Another conversion factor to be taken into account is the situation where the individual feels that their paid work is so exhausting that when they finally arrive home, they no longer have any energy; for example, “It has been difficult for me to fulfil my family responsibilities because of the amount of time I spend on the job” or “I have come home from work too tired to do some of the household jobs which need to be done”. Ranking the VERSO countries according to the numbers responding to these questions with ‘several times a week’, it is clear that there is some correspondence with the incidence of voluntary work. Spain seems to be an outlier, which is a further argument for the multilevel analysis, but importantly, the ranking of the outcome variable was based on all the weighted respondents in the survey, whereas this figure reflects only respondents who are in work.



	NL	DK	DE	HU	UK	BG	GR	ES
Several times a week	12,1	13,1	16,1	25,9	31,6	34,8	39,2	41,4
Several times a month	24,6	28,7	30,6	33,4	27,9	30,8	33,5	27,4
Several times a year	13,7	14,3	15,4	10,3	9,0	8,8	10	6,7
Less often/rarely	28,3	26,6	25,2	22,9	15,9	18,2	12	14,3
Never	21,4	17,3	12,8	7,6	15,6	7,3	5,3	10,2
Total	100,1	100	100,1	100,1	100	99,9	100	100

Figure 3: Weighted count data in %. Country by “I have come home from work too tired to do some of the household jobs which need to be done” on the reduced dataset with respondents in work.

	DK	DE	NL	UK	HU	ES	BG	GR
Several times a week	3,5	5,6	6,5	13,1	14,3	15,8	18,5	22,1
Several times a month	13,3	18,5	11,9	15,3	25,1	25,3	20,6	25,8
Several times a year	8,5	15	17,2	12,1	13,1	12,4	12,6	17,1
Less often/rarely	32,8	28,1	30,5	25,9	27,4	22,1	20,6	17,3
Never	41,9	32,8	33,9	33,7	20,2	24,3	27,7	17,7
Total	100	100	100	100	100,1	99,9	100	100

Figure 4: Weighted count data in %. Country by “It has been difficult for me to fulfil my family responsibilities because of the amount of time I spend on the job.”

On the achievement side, which is conceptualized as the functionings within the Capability Approach, the logistic model collapses the imputed variable “*Community and social services / How often did you do unpaid voluntary work in the last 12 months?*” and recodes it as a dummy variable (“Less often/occasionally”, “Every week”, “Every month”)= 1; “Not at all”= 0). The percentages of people in the VERSO countries who are in work and doing voluntary work in community or social services are ranked as follows:

NL	UK	DE	ES	DK	GR	HU	BG
25,2	17,0	16,7	15,9	15,3	10,3	9,3	8,7

The last figure is a proxy in terms of capabilities of the *functionings* of doing voluntary work for the common good. This is of relevance, but within the framework of capabilities, we seek to understand whether the individual could have chosen to do this or that, even if they are not doing it. The issue is that at a “*theoretical level, these aspects represent points of strength within the capability approach. However, they can also generate methodological and technical matters that are not easily resolved*” (Martinetti, 2006, p. 93). These methodological concerns relate to the opportunity to measure capabilities instead of functionings (Chiappero-Martinetti & Roche, 2009; Comim, 2008) and therefore, “*It is natural to wonder whether, and how, capabilities can be measured*” (Nussbaum, 2011, p. 60). In order to grasp the counterfactual that if they had had the opportunity, they would have done more voluntary work, the question “*Voluntary work / Do you spend as much time as you would like?*” is brought into the analysis. Reasoning and logic, though, make it clear that this situation is only a subset of the opportunity. There is also the situation where the individual actually has the opportunity but chooses not to seek voluntary work and therefore spends as much time as they actually have reason to value doing voluntary work. Therefore, this question is brought into the model as a negative counterfactual, only indicating the barriers of volunteering. This question has been brought into the multilevel model as a group-level predictor with groups divided into countries (Gelman & Hill, 2007). This question may even be trickier due to cultural values and, not least, the great political focus on increasing the share of voluntary work within each country. Overreporting may therefore occur due to *social desirability bias* (Heeringa, West, & Berglund, 2010).

As mentioned in the introduction, the interpretation as above is built on the notion of a relational epistemology. Therefore, a logistic regression model is analysed accordingly, and the different multilevel regression slopes etc. are presented in their mutual relations. First, however, I will present the derived model with its

significant coefficient estimates (leaving out the non-significant estimates, which are represented by three dots).

$$\Pr(y_i = 1) = \text{logit}^{-1} (\alpha_{j[i]} + \beta^{\text{female}} \cdot \text{female}_i + \beta^{\text{age}} \cdot \text{age}_i + \beta^{\text{employment sector.private}} \cdot \text{employment sector.private}_i + \dots + \beta^{\text{hours ow}} \cdot \text{hours of work}_i + \beta^{\text{workplace flexibility}} \cdot \text{workplace flexibility}_i + \dots + \beta^{\text{work life balance.not very well}} \cdot \text{work life balance.not very well}_i + \dots + \beta^{\text{work life balance.not at all well}} \cdot \text{work life balance.not at all well}_i + \beta^{\text{workload tiredness.less often.rarely}} \cdot \text{workload tiredness.less often.rarely}_i + \dots + \beta^{\text{worktime vs.family balance.less often.rarely}} \cdot \text{worktime vs.family balance.less often.rarely}_i + \dots + \beta^{\text{worktime vs.family balance.never}} \cdot \text{worktime vs.family balance.never}_i + \beta^{\text{commodities deprivation}} \cdot \text{commodity deprivation}_i + \beta^{\text{arrears deprivation}} \cdot \text{arrears deprivation}_i + \dots + \beta^{\text{income meets ends.with great difficulty}} \cdot \text{income meets ends.with great difficulty}_i), \text{ for } i = 1, \dots, n$$

$$\alpha_j \sim N(\mu_\alpha, \sigma_{\text{Country}}^2), \text{ for } j = 1, \dots, 34$$

The different chosen predictor variables, as well as their factor orderings, may be derived from the table provided in the appendix. Instead, I will interpret and present the different parts.

## Means to achieve and the capability of doing voluntary work

Within the model, there are two types of means to achieve – income and time. The first is straightforward and is related to the commodities the household could afford, which is the reworked material deprivation index consisting of the following items: “Keeping your home adequately warm”, “Paying for a week’s annual holiday away from home”, “Replacing any worn-out furniture”, “A meal with meat, chicken, fish every second day if you wanted it”, “Buying new, rather than second-hand, clothes”, “Having friends or family for a drink or meal at least once a month”. The question is well suited for an analysis within the Capability Approach as these questions focus not only on the actual state of affairs (functionings), but also on counterfactuals, by asking “Could the household afford it if you wanted it?” It becomes quite interesting, because it turns out that for each item on the list of commodities, the individual can make the effort if they want to (still keeping in mind that it is the subset of respondents who are part of the working population), where the odds for becoming a volunteer decrease by 4.0%. In other words, for people who have all the freedoms - to keep themselves warm, go on holiday, buy new furniture and clothes, and invite friends for a drink - the odds of being a volunteer are 21.7% lower. This is very

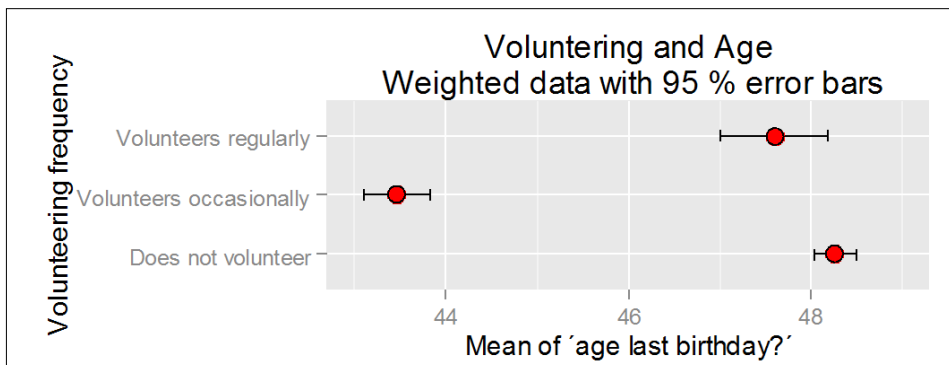
much in line with the other form of deprivation index that is brought into the model. The respondents were asked if their household had been in arrears at any time during the past 12 months; that is, unable to pay as scheduled any of the following items: “*Rent or mortgage payments for accommodation*”, “*Utility bills, such as electricity, water, gas*”, “*Payments related to consumer loans, including credit card overdrafts (to buy electrical appliances, a car, furniture, etc.)*” or “*Payments related to informal loans from friends or relatives not living in your household*”. Here, it is found that for each item that individuals have had experienced problems paying, the odds for doing unpaid work within social services or the community increased by 9.5%. If comparing people who have no problems paying their accommodation, bills, loans or their friends with people who experience these obstacles, the odds for the worst off doing voluntary work are 43.6% higher. In other words, people who experience commodity deprivation and who have problems making ends meet, while still being in work, and who therefore can be assumed, to some degree, to belong to the category of working poor in an everyday understanding of the term, are more likely to do unpaid voluntary work for the common good. This is somewhat contradicted by the finding that individuals who experience great difficulty making their household’s total monthly income cover all their expenses have lower odds of doing voluntary work in these settings (of 30.6%); however the subset of this group comprising people in work generally have on average better material status compared to the whole population. Therefore, adding this question to the model makes it clear that the higher likelihood of participation among those who in material terms are worse off is found only up to a limit, and if the individual exceeds this limit, the situation is reversed. This may also be the result of what Amartya Sen points to as the main argument for understanding deprivation at the individual level as a conversion factor, as, in the household, *distribution within the family* may be related to gender, age or needs, and this makes a difference (Sen, 1999b, p. 71). It is therefore found that people in work but coping with precarious and vulnerable living conditions have higher odds of converting the capability of doing common good as voluntary work in their community into functionings. Let us now turn to the other issue of resources; namely, the time left for voluntary work and other family responsibilities when the individual has completed their time at work.

The following questions within the survey have been brought together in a composite measure of time used in relation to work activities. These are 1) hours work per week in main job, 2) hours of work in additional job and 3) time spent travelling to and from work. It turns out that those who spend many hours at work also have slightly higher odds of doing voluntary work. For some, it is possible to manage a life with a huge workload and still do volunteer work as well. In

order to understand this, let us consider the different conversion factors, starting with the personal conversion factor in relation to workload.

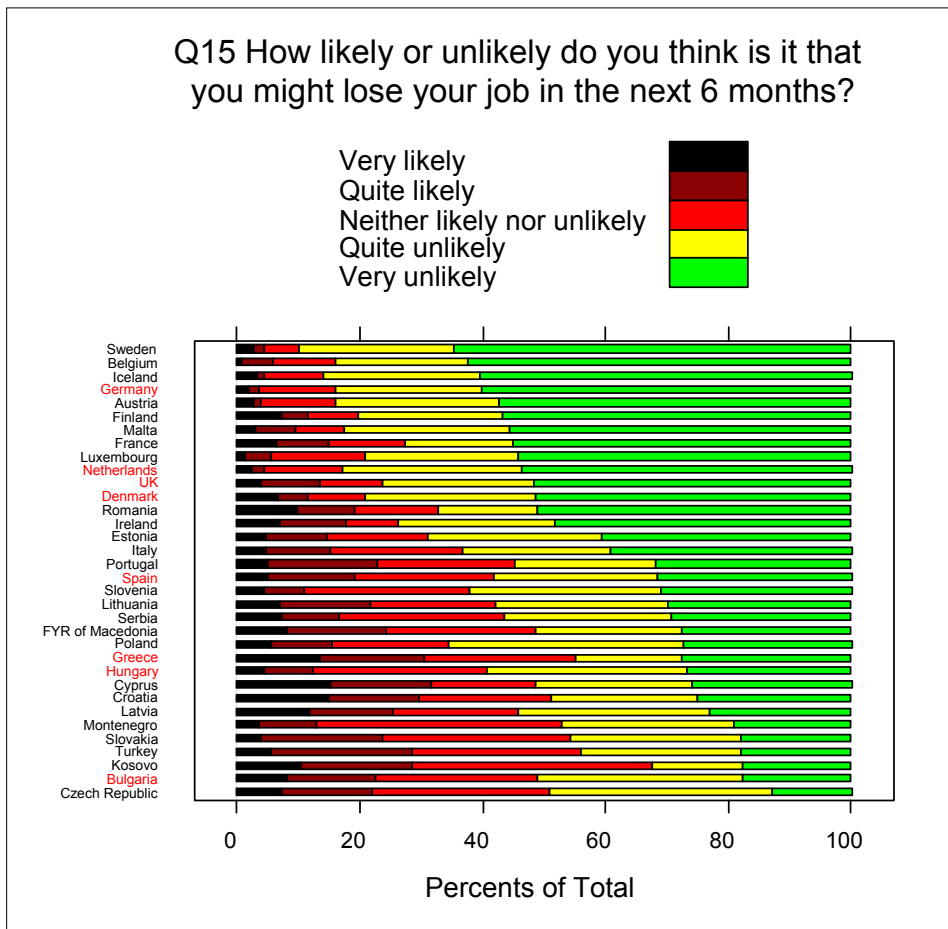
## Conversion factors related to voluntary work

The respondents were asked if their working hours fit in with their family or social commitments outside of work. The results show that individuals in the survey who answered either "Not very well" or "Not at all well" have higher odds (24.3% and 38.3% respectively) of not doing voluntary work compared to individuals who report that their work and family life is "very well" balanced. This is further supported by the people who report that they "less often/rarely" come home from work too tired to do some of the household jobs which need to be done. Respondents in this group have 23.7% higher odds of doing voluntary work than people who experience this several times a week. When looking at whether the individual has difficulties in fulfilling family responsibilities due to the amount of time spent at their job, those who "never" or "less often/rarely" experience this have at the same time lower odds (23.3% and 25.2% respectively) of volunteering within community and social services. Further analysis is required to identify the reasons for this, but it may be explained if further dimensions are brought into the analysis, such as controlling for family type and number of children. As mentioned already, in earlier studies, there is a relation between age and participation in voluntary work. Focusing on the mean age in relation to the composite variable provided shows clearly that the mean age of people volunteering has some curvilinearity which is not solved within this form of the model (e.g. transformation).



Also, gender plays a role and, within the capability framework, may be interpreted as a personal conversion factor; for example, when controlling for the other issues, there are higher odds (17.2%) for going into this form of voluntary work if you are female, which, at least on the surface, contradicts the earlier

findings where males had a higher probability of doing voluntary work. Still, as the subpopulation for analysis is respondents in work, it may be of interest to see if job insecurity and job sector have some influence on the probability of doing voluntary work. Within the survey, there is a question that addresses this dimension. The respondents are asked: “How likely or unlikely do you think is it that you might lose your job in the next 6 months?” This predictor variable did not provide a large main effect within the model and was far from being significant on the different factor levels of the question (e.g. the answer “Quite likely” returned  $\Pr(>|z|) = 0.315289$  or “Very unlikely”  $\Pr(>|z|) = 0.856543$ ). Still, the descriptive relation to the question ranked from countries where the experience of high job security (“very unlikely” to lose the job within six months), with an emphasis on the VERSO countries, indicates that VERSO countries with a high participation in community and social services voluntary work are also the countries where the respondents feel the greatest job security.



This leads to another dimension, which the overall data indicate is an important predictor for doing voluntary work. Rotolo and Wilson (2006) found that for the United States population, the likelihood of volunteering across a number of different types of work is related to the sector in which people are employed. They found that public sector employees have more “*prosocial values than private-sector workers*” (Rotolo & Wilson, 2006, p. 21), and this is not associated with occupation or education. They showed that nonprofit-sector employees are the most likely to volunteer, followed by public-sector employees (Rotolo & Wilson, 2006). Turning to the European situation, within the EQLS data on the statistical level of 0.05, there is a significant relationship between sector and whether the individual does voluntary work in the community and social services (weighed with the provided trimmed weights (UK Data Archive, 2014b)). Weighted cross tabulation with Pearson and Rao & Scott’s adjustments for survey sample design (Rao & Scott, 1984) returns a value of  $p\text{-value} < 2.2e\text{-}16$ . This high significance could be caused by the high sample size, even with a small difference within the table (Agresti, 1990; Agresti & Finley, 2009), but with a high difference between the private sector regarding whether or not they do voluntary work; compared to the other sectors named, it is more likely (at least 7.3% more) for employees within the private sector not to do voluntary work at all. In addition, in the multilevel analysis, it is a well-chosen predictor.

	“Q22a Community and social services / How often have you done unpaid voluntary work in the last 12 months?” as percentage				
Q6 “Do you work in the...?”	Every week	Every month	Less often/ occasionally	Not at all	Total
Central, regional or local government administration	5.2	4.1	11.6	79.1	100
Other public sector	4.3	4.9	12.2	78.6	100
Private sector	2.3	2.6	8.7	86.4	100
Other	3.5	5.1	12.8	78.6	100

Table 1: Weight adjusted (trimmed and adjusted  $w_4$ ) contingency table of volunteering in community and social services crossed with employment sector for the total pooling of EQLS.

When controlling for the other predictors, looking at the logistic regression coefficients for those who work in the private sector, it turns out that this predictor accounts for 46.1% odds of not participating in voluntary work. Having the category of “Central, regional or local government administration” as the baseline for this

question, the model can be interpreted using other words; it is more probable to find a volunteer among people who work in the same or nearby sector of the community and social services, and this finding supports the differences between sectors and the willingness to do work for others.

## **Freedom to achieve: Choice of the capability of doing voluntary work**

For the above analysis, only the intercept between countries varied. Within one standard deviation, there is approximately +/- 15% of difference between the countries in their overall predicted participation in this form of voluntary work (Kosovo being an outlier). The multilevel regression model is fitted to all the countries within the dataset, and therefore, all countries within the survey serve as data, but only the VERSO countries will be compared for now within this paper. So, let me now turn to the differences between the countries. The question applied for this understanding is: *"I am going to read out some areas of daily life in which you can spend your time. Could you tell me if you spend as much time as you would like to in each area, or if you wish you could spend 'less time' or 'more time' in that activity?"* coded with the possible answers: *"Spend less time", "As much as I currently do"* and *"Spend more time"*. As indicated earlier, this question, which should give insight on the freedom to choose dimension within the Capability Approach, does not fully function as a proxy for the choice and capability of doing volunteering work. Still, the main strength of combining the Capability Approach within a multi regression model is that, for now, we have controlled for all the factors that are assumed to influence the real freedom to participate in voluntary work for all the participating countries, and now, this group predictor will be allowed to vary in the coefficients among the countries. In other words, we will now examine the country-wise differences in relation to whether voluntary work is valued when controlling for age, gender, material deprivation etc. Again, applying a relational epistemology, this question is placed as a country-wise predictor with varying slopes. With the relational epistemology in mind, I will compare the countries and describe the differences through discovering the objective structures that are manifest through relations, such as more, less, over, under etc. (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 6; Bourdieu, 1999, p. 124). When focusing only on the share of people within the binary relationship of either doing or not doing voluntary work in each country compared to the average, the VERSO countries cluster in two distinct groups. As with the descriptive statistics, which did not control for the dimensions introduced by the insights of the Capability Approach, also here we find that Greece, Hungary and Bulgaria are in the category of having a below average proportion



of the population participating in this form of voluntary work. Interestingly, this also applies to Denmark when controlling for the predictor variables. In the other group, we find the Netherlands, the UK, Germany and Spain.

If focusing only on those people within work and the answer to the question, the following weighted percentages can be found.

	Not doing voluntary work in community and social service	Doing voluntary work in community and social service
Spend less time	12,5	12
As much as I currently do	63,2	59,4
Spend more time	24,3	28,5
Total	100	99,9

If not taking the country-wise differences into account, it is clear that those who achieved the functionings of the capability of voluntary work within community and social services place greater value on spending more time in general on voluntary work. People already doing voluntary work in this field would, to a greater degree, spend more time on it. If focusing only on the country-wise differences and whether voluntary work in general is valued, the following table gives the data for the VERSO countries:

	GR	HU	DE	BG	NL	DK	ES	UK
Spend less time	20	7,2	10,7	10,7	6,7	4,1	6,9	7
As much as I currently do	64	75,5	71,4	70	67,3	67,7	59,9	56,4
Spend more time	16	17,4	17,9	19,3	26	28,3	33,2	36,7
Total	100	100,1	100	100	100	100,1	100	100,1

This is interesting because, within the freedom of choice dimension, Germany clusters with Greece, Hungary and Bulgaria, which are countries where the working population to a lesser degree would do more voluntary work and to a greater degree would do less voluntary work if compared with the other VERSO countries. If these countries instead are related within the multilevel linear model,

and thereby the other predictor variables are controlled for, the country-wise differences in probability for actually doing voluntary work and the wish to choose to do either less, the same, or more is related differently among the countries. Within Hungary, Greece and Denmark, the probability of doing voluntary work within this specific part of the “labour market” of unpaid work is higher for those who would like to spend more time on voluntary work in general. For the other countries, the probability is lower. In the first case, we find that those who do voluntary work within this domain would like to do more, whereas in the other case, it is those who do not do voluntary work that to a greater degree would like to do more. This is particularly true for the UK, as well as Germany, Bulgaria, Spain and the Netherlands. In this last group, Bulgaria is of particular interest as they are now placed differently in the overall ranking. The interpretation is therefore that, even though they do not have a high degree of voluntarism, those who are not doing voluntary work in fact value spending more time doing so. So, to sum up, when controlling for the predictor variables, Denmark has a lower participation than average, but the probability of participating is higher for those who would like to spend more time doing voluntary work. This is also the case for Greece and Hungary. The Netherlands are above average, but the probability for volunteering is lower for respondents reporting that they want to spend more time. This is also the case for Germany, the UK and Spain. Bulgaria is the only country where they do less on average and the probability is lower for people who want to spend more time. This points to a problem of actually having the real freedom to do voluntary work. In the case of Bulgaria, what the analysis reveals is a capability problem rather than simply a question of choice.

## Discussion

To sum up the main findings of this first analysis to a multilevel understanding of voluntary work within community and social services and based on the third wave European Quality of Life Survey, where data are brought into the framework of the Capability Approach, we find a dynamic relationship between the means to achieve being a volunteer as understood in terms of material deprivation and time (commodities), factors that influence the odds for doing voluntary work, and then the actual functionings, which is the “fail/success” outcome variable. Often, comparisons are done only on the level of functionings - which countries rank higher than others in the amount of voluntary work etc. But, if controlling for main factors such as gender, age, material deprivation etc., and also controlling for the countries’ differences with the predictor of willingness to do more or less voluntary work, a more complex picture comes to light. It is revealed that in

relation to the resource side of the Capability Approach, we find that those who have less are more likely to give more in terms of their unpaid work, but only up to a certain limit, because when considered in relation to time as a resource, it transpires that it is not a question of how many hours in total an individual is occupied with work. Voluntary work that should meet the needs of European citizens living in disadvantaged situations is more likely performed by people living in similarly disadvantaged situations. This is in line with the understanding of *interests* not enforced by rational choice thinking. Instead, the degree of flexibility and the workload demonstrate influence in terms of being and doings (functionings) of the capability for voluntary work.

If the aim is to raise the total level of voluntary work done, the model indicates that the following policy issues are worth taking into account. The policy recommendations which aim to raise the odds of voluntary work being done are as follows:

1. promote policies that foster better work life balance, so the individual has sufficient energy remaining after working hours (means to achieve).
2. promote more choice and work flexibility within all levels of the societal hierarchy; e.g. the ability to choose to take a day off at short notice, accumulate hours for time off, vary start and finish times (conversion factors).
3. focus on recruiting people that live in better off conditions (freedom of choice).
4. focus on recruiting people within the private sector (freedom of choice).

The model may be further developed in a number of ways, and I hope the reader will acknowledge that it needs to be a *"work which is not done once and for all at the beginning, but in every moment of a research, through a multitude of small corrections"* (Bourdieu, Chamboredon, & Passeron, 1991, p. 253). First of all, the dimensions of the model could be considered. From the perspective of other results, it would have been interesting to bring in the dimension related to immigrants. As a recent report conducted for the Danish National Centre for Social Research (SFI) by Torben Fridberg and Lars Skov Henriksen indicates, immigrants do not participate in voluntary work to the same extent as the general population, and thereby do not benefit in terms of finding work based on experience gained from volunteering and from the informal and non-formal learning this may provide (Fridberg & Henriksen, 2014). Still, I consider this dimension difficult to investigate within the EQLS dataset due to the definition of the population (universe) sampled, where respondents *"should have lived in the country for the last six months before the survey and should be able to speak the national language(s) well enough to respond to the*

*questionnaire*” (UK Data Archive, 2014a, p. 3). This is further complicated because the questions in relation to immigration in the questionnaire are related to the respondents’ citizenship, and thus it becomes problematic to aggregate on this dimension (e.g. second generation immigrants with country citizenship would not be captured by the dataset).

Further ideas for dimensions for analysis have been identified, but it is likely that they will increase the already high complexity of the multilevel model. The analysed data are from the third wave. A further development could be conducting a time series analysis over the three waves; however, this would require the model to be slightly adjusted as not all questions from the survey were in the questionnaire for all three waves. An attempt has been made to control for the expected interaction between the predictors on commodities possessed and the different arrears the individuals are not able to pay, and it is my approximate interpretation that the correlation matrix does not give any reason to control for further interactions among the predictor variables. The error estimates within the model could be further developed by applying the method of multiple imputations of mixed data and conducting an analysis on five iterations of the imputation (Schafer, 1997) and performing simulations for the complex errors of the group predictors (Gelman & Hill, 2007). Once again, these would increase the complexity and would not necessarily provide any further important insights.

## Note

1. As argued by Gelman & Hill (2007, p. 37), instead of using the terms dependent and independent variables I will refer to the  $y$  as the outcome variable and the others as predictor variables (Gelman & Hill, 2007).

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## Appendix

Coefficient name in model (renamed for transparency)	Dataset Variable	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(> z )	Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1
	(Intercept)	-1,099	0,217	-5,067	4,05E-07	***
<i>Female</i>	<b>y11_hh2a</b> factor level: "Female"	0,159	0,049	3,23	0,001236	**
<i>Age</i>	<b>y11_hh2b_zscores_country</b>	0,288	0,073	3,921	8,82E-05	***
<i>Employment sector. Other public sector</i>	<b>y11_q6</b> factor level: "Other public sector"	-0,102	0,076	-1,351	0,176845	
<i>Employment sector. Private</i>	<b>y11_q6</b> factor level: "Private sector"	-0,619	0,063	-9,748	1,89E-22	***
<i>Employment sector. Other</i>	<b>y11_q6</b> factor level: "Other"	0,068	0,123	0,552	0,580833	
<i>Working time. Hours</i>	time_work_total total of	0,006	0,002	3,036	0,002397	**



<i>Workplace flexibility</i>	work_ flex_in- dex sum of vari- ables:	0,073	0,023	3,176	0,001492	**
<i>Work life bal- ance. Fairly well</i>	<b>y11_q11</b> factor level: "Fairly well"	-0,007	0,056	-0,129	0,897657	
<i>Work life bal- ance. Not very well</i>	<b>y11_q11</b> factor level: "Not very well"	-0,278	0,082	-3,379	0,000727	***
<i>Work life balance. Not at all well</i>	<b>y11_q11</b> factor level: "Not at all well"	-0,482	0,13	-3,697	0,000218	***
<i>Workload tired- ness. Several times a month</i>	<b>y11_ q12a</b> factor level: "Several times a month"	0,033	0,07	0,472	0,637081	
<i>Workload tired- ness. Several times a year</i>	<b>y11_ q12a</b> factor level: "Several times a year"	0,048	0,088	0,545	0,58578	
<i>Workload tired- ness. Less often/ rarely</i>	<b>y11_ q12a</b> factor level: "Less often/ rarely"	0,212	0,084	2,532	0,011345	*

<i>Workload tiredness. Never</i>	<b>y11_q12a</b> factor level: "Never"	-0,01	0,1	-0,099	0,921	
<i>Work time vs. family balance. Several times a month</i>	<b>y11_q12b</b> factor level "Several times a month"	-0,028	0,091	-0,31	0,756757	
<i>Work time vs. family balance. Several times a year</i>	<b>y11_q12b</b> Several times a year	-0,056	0,103	-0,547	0,584565	
<i>Work time vs. family balance. Less often/rarely</i>	<b>y11_q12b</b> Less often/rarely	-0,267	0,099	-2,706	0,006819	**
<i>Work time vs. family balance. Never</i>	<b>y11_q12b</b> Never	-0,29	0,102	-2,83	0,004656	**
<i>Commodity deprivation</i>	commodities_index	-0,041	0,02	-2,07	0,038428	*
<i>Arrears deprivation</i>	arrears_index	0,091	0,025	3,603	0,000315	***
<i>Income meets ends. Easily</i>	<b>y11_q58</b> Easily	0,02	0,094	0,214	0,830878	
<i>Income meets ends. Fairly easily</i>	<b>y11_q58</b> Fairly easily	-0,085	0,091	-0,938	0,348222	
<i>Income meets ends. With some difficulty</i>	<b>y11_q58</b> With some difficulty	-0,131	0,098	-1,336	0,18164	

<i>Income meets ends. With difficulty</i>	<b>y11_q58</b> With difficulty	-0,152	0,126	-1,204	0,228619	
<i>Income meets ends. With great difficulty</i>	<b>y11_q58</b> With great difficulty	-0,366	0,162	-2,26	0,02381	*

## Dansk abstract

### Af andre grunde end "Hvad får jeg til gengæld?"

#### Samfundsborgerens interesse i frivilligt arbejde: Set fra perspektivet af Capability Approach

Denne, primært empirisk baserede artikel, er et bud på det indbyrdes forhold mellem ulønnet frivilligt arbejde og dimensionerne inden for capability approach, sådan som de er blevet udviklet af moralfilosof Martha Nussbaum og nobelpristager i økonomi Amartya Sen (Nussbaum, 2011; Nussbaum, 2006; Sen, 2009; Sen, 1999a). Analyseret på baggrund af den tredje bølge af den europæiske undersøgelse af livskvalitet (EQLS) gives et komparativt perspektiv på deltagelse i frivilligt arbejde i de lande, der deltager i det pan-europæiske projekt *VERSO – Volunteers for European Employment*. Derved findes, at balancen mellem arbejde og privatliv og forbedret fleksibilitet i arbejdslivet er vigtige ressourcer i forhold til deltagelse i frivilligt arbejde. Endvidere konstateres det, at mennesker, som har gode økonomiske kår, og mennesker beskæftiget inden for den private sektor har lavere odds for at deltage i frivilligt socialt arbejde, når der kontrolleres for en række baggrundsforhold.

*Nøgleord:* frivilligt arbejde, kapabilitetstilgangen, fleksibelt arbejde, materiel fattigdom, liberale valg.



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# The Diversity of Sports Volunteering in the European Union

- Sharing information and good practice to provide EU added value in a field without EU regulatory powers

**By Jacob Kornbeck<sup>1</sup>**

*The following article is based upon a presentation by Policy Officer, Jacob Kornbeck, European Commission (Sport Unit). The presentation was originally intended for the VERSO conference in Copenhagen.*

*The European Commission's position on a number of issues is represented, thereby providing a clear institutional perspective.*

*Whilst the author is a civil servant of the European Union, the opinions expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not represent official Commission or EU positions.*

*The article was not approved as a scientific text during the review process which all articles published in CURSIV (including this one) are subjected to.*

## **Abstract**

Sports volunteering is a social practice marked by a high level of diversity within the European Union. Participation levels vary greatly as do the relevant incentives

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1. Policy Officer, Sport Unit, European Commission, Brussels, Belgium (2001-14). The institutional character of the initial text is reflected in the current one, which is grounded in institutional sources more than in research literature, although the latter has been drawn upon on an exemplary basis.

and disincentives. This diversity is of particular interest because sport is an area where the EU holds no regulatory powers. In the absence of regulatory powers, it is suggested that EU added value can be provided by supporting the sharing of information and good practice among member states. This paper explores an institutional perspective on the potential of such a supportive role for the EU in relation to sports volunteering.

*Keywords:* European Union (EU), competence, Lisbon Treaty, sport policy, sport movement, autonomy, volunteering, good practice.

## 1. Introduction

“We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.” Although this purported Churchill quotation is considered apocryphal by Churchill scholars (Winston Churchill, n.d.)<sup>2</sup>, its popularity must be due to the fact that it neatly encapsulates what is valuable about volunteering: while we need to make a living to survive, we need a life to be fulfilled, and volunteering can be the cornerstone of a successful strategy in this regard. Moreover, individual benefits are matched by benefits to the community. Sports volunteering (SV) falls within this category and is therefore of interest to the European Union (EU).

Throughout the EU, SV is a recurrent feature involving numerous, diverse roles for citizens who give some of their time, without remuneration, to help keep sports going. Yet despite being recurrent throughout the EU, SV is marked by diversity among member states (MS), reflecting differences between national contexts in terms of culture, history and structures: particularly with regard to the relationship between sport and state. The EU is not in a position to recast these national (and sometimes even subnational, including regional and local) sports policy arrangements, as Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) specifically and explicitly rules out the adoption of harmonisation and indeed any other legally binding measures at EU level. At the same time, the EU Institutions are aware of the importance of volunteering (European Commission, 2011b, 2012, 2013).

This paper discusses how, against the backdrop of such diversity and given its lack of regulatory power in this field, the EU may nevertheless provide so-called ‘EU added value’ in relation to SV. When sport finally was added to the TFEU as introduced by the Treaty of Lisbon, this was achieved by adding a second sentence to Article 165 (1) (extended to cover education, vocational training, youth and sport jointly):

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2. Source: [http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Winston\\_Churchill](http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Winston_Churchill), Winston Churchill, accessed 19 May 2014.

*The Union shall contribute to the promotion of European sporting issues, while taking account of the specific nature of sport, its structures based on voluntary activity and its social and educational function. (Article 165 (1) TFEU)*

Interestingly, this is the only article in the entire Treaty which mentions volunteering. Yet Article 165 (4), meanwhile, explicitly forbids the adoption of ‘any harmonisation of the laws and regulations’ of MS and limits the joint policy initiatives of the Council and the European Parliament to ‘incentive measures’ (which is shorthand for funding). Crucially, this clause would not have been necessary in itself, since Article 165 is *already* mentioned as an area within which ‘the Union shall have competence to carry out actions to support, coordinate or supplement’ MS actions in Article 6 TFEU: the clause makes it very clear that MS did not wish the new sport policy competence to curb any of their existing powers. Article 165 (4) separately grants the Council the right to adopt recommendations, thereby reserving a special policy-driving role for the Council (where MS are represented, as opposed to the Parliament): this has already led to numerous Council texts (Council of the European Union, 2011a, 2011b, 2013), including one on SV (Council of the European Union, 2011a).

As the focus is upon the legal and political framework, this paper is primarily grounded in official EU sources rather than academic literature on volunteering. The challenges identified here could be examined empirically by drawing on the knowledge found within the latter; however, this paper instead develops a conceptual argument regarding the potential of the EU’s role as a clearinghouse for SV information and good practice.

## **2. The importance of SV in the EU**

SV has a special quality to it because the sport sector is more dependent upon volunteering than many other sectors; this crucial role has been alluded to previously (Angermann & Sittermann, 2010; Eurostratégies, Amnyos, CDES, & DSHS, 2011; EZUS & EOSE, 2004; GHK, 2010). It does not seem coincidental that the first ever study on volunteering covering the entire EU (GHK, 2010) should include a case study dedicated to SV, nor that the study should conclude:

*that volunteering in sport represents a significant share of the adult population in Finland (16%), Ireland (15%), the Netherlands (12-14%), Denmark (11%), Germany (10.9%) and Malta (9.2%). Conversely, in Estonia (1.1%), Greece (0.5%), Lithuania (0.1%), Latvia and Romania (less than 0.1%) volunteering in sport does not appear to be a common practice. These differences can partly be explained by the different traditions of volunteering in the sport sector. In countries where*

*authoritarian or communist rule have given a negative meaning to the practice of volunteering, the number of volunteers remains particularly low (e.g. Romania); whereas in countries where the tradition of volunteering in sport is particularly strong, the share is much higher. (GHK, 2010, p. 176)*

While SV is marked by differences in prevalence, trends, incentives and disincentives from one MS to another, it is nevertheless true that some features and trends are common and need to be understood in a transnational framework for decision makers to be able to tackle the challenges appropriately. It is equally true that a field marked by high levels of intra-EU diversity can be particularly interesting in isolating factors facilitating or inhibiting the attainment of outcomes which have been identified as political priorities. What has been observed in connection with Health-Enhancing Physical Activity (HEPA, the WHO-sponsored concept of physical activity including but not limited to sport: see Kornbeck, 2013) applies to SV as well: when intra-EU diversity is particularly pronounced in relation to an issue otherwise dependent on factors which are common to all humans (physical activity needs, engagement in a human community, etc.), an appropriate analysis can help to sift historical, cultural and other factors pertaining specifically to national contexts from more universal trends and factors.

Indeed, while EU citizens belong to culturally and otherwise determined national contexts, into which they are embedded and with which they interact, they are also subjected to many factors which they share with other human beings. In relation to HEPA, the need to be physically active in order to burn calories and stay fit coincides with factors stemming from the local culture, geography, labour market system, transport infrastructure, etc. In relation to SV, the need to be part of a human community, build social capital, be useful to others while also acquiring skills (which may sometimes be useful on the labour market) coincides with cultural perceptions of volunteering, ideas of what sport and HEPA should be, the structures organising sport, etc. The factors facilitating or hampering synergies between SV and professional employment in the sport sector and connected sectors have been mapped a decade ago (EZUS & EOSE, 2004) and similarly (if not more) complex frameworks can be expected to be at work between SV and society more generally: they need to be better known for decision makers to be able to take the right decisions.

Important resources have been allocated, in recent years, towards using the Eurobarometer survey (an established and trusted survey tool based, crucially, on large numbers of face-to-face kitchen-table interviews) to understand sport and HEPA better, including incentives for and barriers to participation (TNS Opinion & Social, 2003, 2004, 2010, 2014): a similar level of understanding would



be welcome in relation to SV. Indeed many trends seem to be shared across the EU, unsurprisingly including demographic change:

*these will impact the sport sector as a result of the changes on age structures (hence on the type of sport disciplines that people will want to practice), and possible changes in the availability of voluntary work: in many Member States, the work of volunteers presently constitutes a key resource for the sport associations; potential changes in the availability of volunteers will therefore have a major influence on the sector's financial sustainability. (Eurostratégies et al., 2011, p. 10)*

Citizens' perceptions confirm this snapshot (whereby demoscopic evidence has a significance of its own in democratic societies):

*Asked about the main resources which sport clubs can rely upon,, a consensus emerges from the e-consultation, which is that voluntary work is an important resource for grassroots clubs. Close to 90% of the respondents consider volunteer work to be either "important" or "essential". This is confirmed by the survey of grassroots clubs undertaken during Phase 3, and presented in Part II of this report. (Eurostratégies et al., 2011, p. 40)*

Whether or not these perceptions are entirely correct in any objective sense, they usually include concerns regarding future SV recruitment:

*The future trend in voluntary work is a source of preoccupation for some clubs; some of the volunteers working today may not easily be replaced in the next 10 years. (Eurostratégies et al., 2011, p. 44)*

Against this backdrop, it seems fair to argue that the diversity found in SV within the EU needs to be known, in particular as SV has featured in a range of EU policy documents adopted by the Commission (Commission of the European Communities, 1986; European Commission, 2007, 2012) or the Council (Council of the European Union, 2011a).

### **3. The diversity of SV in the EU: a case for providing EU added value?**

While the importance of SV to the sector is obvious (see above), the role of the EU warrants explicit justification, in particular from the 'added value' perspective: just because an activity is important to a sector, it does not *per se* follow cogently that the EU can or should make a contribution. While a wide range of EU policy documents adopted by the Council, the European Parliament and/or the Commission, including the European Year of Volunteering (EYV) 2011, testify to the

interest of MS and MEPs in having some degree of political cooperation around volunteering at EU level, the exact nature of this cooperation can still be debated. The EYV objectives, for example, were defined as follows:

- *To work towards an enabling environment for volunteering in the EU in order to anchor volunteering as part of promoting civic participation;*
- *To empower organisers of voluntary activities to improve the quality of voluntary activities;*
- *To recognise voluntary activities;*
- *To raise awareness of the value and importance of volunteering.* (European Commission, 2012, p. 3)

A cursory analysis of these objectives, comparing them with the regulatory powers of the EU and MS as defined in the Treaty, will show that none of these objectives can be achieved through mandatory EU initiatives. While the second, third and fourth bullet represent issues which can be usefully dealt with through EU funding programmes (in particular the new unified education programme Erasmus+ (2014-20) which now includes a specific sport funding stream: Erasmus+ Sport), the first bullet addresses a regulatory issue which the EU cannot tackle. Cross-border movements of volunteers may be hampered by national regulations (such as police checks); EU law can be invoked by workers in support of their right to free movement, but not by volunteers; the Commission can act in its role as guardian of the Treaties in relation to workers, but not when it comes to volunteers. It therefore seems probable that some EYV objectives have yet to be fulfilled by MS, and probably never will be, because no binding mechanism for ensuring compliance with EYV goals is foreseen (nor would it be legal under the current Treaty), so that MS could still do more on their own initiative. On the other hand, since questions and concerns endure regarding the application of some single market rules to volunteering in general and SV in particular (especially related to taxation, VAT and state aid) (see e.g. European Lotteries, 2013), it could also be argued that the absence of a binding mechanism at EU level to avoid undermining volunteering and SV can be felt. In both cases, however, the deficit perceived by some is the logical consequence of a legal and political reality which MS prefer to possible alternatives, since every new Treaty is prepared by an intergovernmental conference.

According to the most central argument of the paper, the absence of a scope for EU regulatory action in conjunction with a marked diversity between MS in relation to how the area in question is organised points to an opportunity to use the EU framework to advance mutual learning and peer-to-peer policy development on a voluntary basis. For even when there is no obligation for MS to follow

EU-wide recommendations, the option to actually do so is still being kept open: they can do so as sovereign states, thereby avoiding the impression of an EU diktat (which might give governments problems in the domestic policy arena). In relation to SV, the first thing to note is that the sport sector is organised very differently in MS, with regards to the relationship between sport and state, the autonomy of sport, funding, training, etc. (Tokarski, Petry, Groll, & Mittag, 2009). This diversity has implications for SV for a variety of reasons.

The EU has used four editions of its trusted Eurobarometer survey tool (a costly yet reliable household survey based on large samples of face-to-face kitchen-table interviews) to learn more about citizens' expectations and practices with regard to sport and physical activity (TNS Opinion & Social, 2003, 2004, 2010, 2014). While the two earlier editions (2003, 2004) still retained a rather narrow scope on competitive sport, the two more recent ones (2010, 2014) went on to embrace a more holistic vision of sport and physical activity, including questions about regular practice, drivers, barriers, etc. According to these surveys, levels of sport participation vary strongly between MS, with scores generally being higher in northern and lower in southern MS (see the map in *Figure 1, in the appendix*).

Though there is not a 1:1 correlation between sport participation and SV engagement, the latter also displays considerable intra-EU differences, although here the pattern seems even more subtle (*Figure 2, in the appendix*). Though eastern MS may have relatively high sport participation rates, their SV participation is markedly lower than what might be expected on the basis of their sport participation levels. This pattern is generally attributed to the split between MS with and without a past with state socialism (GHK, 2010, pp. 52, 235) on account of the often involuntary nature of top-down organised volunteering activities in those countries until 1990.

Volunteering and SV thus reveal themselves as culturally constructed, carrying different meanings: voluntary work might be interpreted as a laudable service to one's community in one context, or as the work of 'drudges' in another (see O'Brien, 2011). If read in conjunction with other data sources, the Eurobarometer map of SV will also reveal that levels are often higher in MS without an explicit, centrally determined volunteering policy or strategy (although many policies related to taxation, VAT, social security, pension regimes, etc. may support and foster volunteering in the absence of explicit policies or strategies). Indeed, MS with high volunteering levels are often MS with high per capita income and low unemployment, so that volunteering cannot be understood as absorbing the energies of people without paid work. In this way, volunteering confirms some trends observed in relation to senior labour market participation (*Figure 3, in the appendix*).

Intriguingly, while the map from a survey of volunteering in Germany (Figure 4, in the appendix) confirms the east-west split with overwhelming clarity (displaying a clear illustration of the state socialism argument), it also highlights differences between the country's north-west and south-west: though the states of Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg enjoy near-to-full employment, these are precisely the states where most people find time for voluntary work. This prompts the question whether a certain social capital actually may be a prerequisite to be accepted as a volunteer (irrespective of the sector): translated into SV, could it not be that a family father with full-time employment and an already strong social network would be preferred as a voluntary youth coach to the detriment of an unemployed, single man in need of a social network? Could it be that those who could profit the most from SV (in terms of building networks and skills) might be the least readily accepted? Or could it be, conversely, that the national or regional context is a greater determinant than individual features: would an employed, single man in need of a social network still fare better in Bavaria than in Berlin?

This analysis leaves most questions unanswered, for whereas diversity is a chance for mutual learning in a sector where the EU cannot legislate, political cooperation and exchange of information may not in themselves lead to clear-cut recommendations, nor indeed may EU-wide recommendations be uniformly implementable across the EU, where they would have to interact with diverse local contexts. This is especially true if the focus of EU action takes sport policy as its (conceptual and/or institutional) point of departure:

*In some Member States sport is very high on the political agenda, something which is in most cases correlated to the existence of a sport/health policy.*

*However, this does not necessarily mean that significant focus is placed on volunteering in this sector or that specific policies exist to promote and support volunteering.*

*In about ten Member States, volunteering in sport can be considered to be medium to high on the political agenda whereas in other Member States it does not feature on political agenda. On the other hand, in three Member States, there seems to be a recent growing attention to volunteering in sport at the political level.*

*In several Member States, specific reference is made in recent policy papers, or in their national strategy for sport, to volunteering in this sector. However, the vast majority of Member States does not have a separate national strategy or framework for volunteering in sport. (GHK, 2010, p. 195)*

To be able to make recommendations, it is necessary to understand the roles of volunteers better. While some surveys indicate that most volunteers are not

involved in actual sporting activities (such as coaching) but rather in other activities (such as office tasks) (*Figure 5, in the appendix*), sources of bias at the data collection stage need to be identified and addressed: could it not be, for instance, that unpaid coaches (who are believed to be plentiful) would rather proudly call themselves ‘coach’ than ‘volunteer’? Also, the financial circuits surrounding and permitting the voluntary structures of sport are still insufficiently known. While the impact of EU law on state gambling monopolies and the move towards liberalisation in this field are often portrayed as a major threat to SV and to sports organisations as charitable organisations, one study has suggested that the financial circuits are hyper-complex (Eurostratégies, Amnyos, CDES, & DSHS, 2011, p. 46) (*Figure 6, in the appendix*) and that revenue generated from state gambling monopolies may actually not account for as big a part of total revenue as has often been assumed (*ibid.*, p. 80) (*Figure 7, in the appendix*). According to this survey, in the case of non-profit sporting structures and activities, households’ own money may actually account for most of the revenue. While the umbrella organisation European Lotteries (2013) claims to redistribute €2bn annually to sport,<sup>i</sup> a more detailed breakdown analysis might perhaps reveal that this type of revenue often benefits semi-commercial activities, or unpaid elite sport activities which are not open to the general population. At any rate, the financial circuits need to be far better understood than is presently the case.

It may be, rather, that EU-funded networks with a bottom-up structure represent the approach most likely to succeed for the EU in terms of nurturing mutual learning and policy development. During EYV 2011, four such network projects were co-financed, all of which had a focus on the skills needed for SV and the training offered to people engaging in it. The skills aspect is one where the EU can make a major contribution through formal, yet legally non-binding mechanisms rooted in the Treaty: the European Qualification Framework (EQF) and the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET). For it is typical of the sport sector that, while it has developed training structures and qualifications more elaborate than most other civil society sectors, these are often strikingly dissimilar across the EU, so that comparing and validating qualifications can pose serious problems. In relation to non-formal and informal learning and their validation, the challenges are therefore even more pronounced:

*The EQF can support individuals with extensive work experience such as a professional sport career or voluntary work in sport by facilitating validation of non-formal and informal learning. This could legitimize the existence of adapted courses for, for example elite athletes, to become a coach in the future. The focus on learning outcomes will make it easier to assess whether outcomes achieved in these settings are equivalent in [EQF] // content and relevance to formal qualifications.*

*It is expected that the role of validation and assessment will be more than crucial in the future. (Ooijen, 2013, pp. 78-79)*

The example of investing in skills for volunteers shows that formal EU structures (such as those of the EQF and ECVET) may be used to further SV. Similarly, funding programmes such as Erasmus+ and Erasmus+ Sport in particular may provide crucial support to policy development, just as sport activities have recently become explicitly eligible for support from the European Voluntary Service (EVS) (EUSA, 2014), a structure not unlike the US Peace Corps. Yet once again, a solid evidence base is needed to make the right decisions: hence, information sharing is a natural and often even necessary component of any useful EU action related to SV.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The paper has shown the constraints placed on EU action targeting SV, including the traditional focus on the economic and regulatory aspects of sport as a business and on sport employment in terms of workers' rights, as well as the need to respect MS' sport policy prerogatives and the autonomy of the sport movement. Acceptance of new roles for the EU is contingent upon demonstrated utility for MS and the sport sector, granting the required legitimacy to initiatives launched by a new political actor in a field where MS have been managing their own sport policies for decades, while civil society (often in close cooperation with the business community) has been running its own semi-regulatory or quasi-regulatory systems for decades or even for centuries (e.g. cricket in England).

SV may be in a particularly delicate situation because it seems to embody the (perceived) idealistic nature of the sport sector, as claimed since the 19<sup>th</sup> century and as recognised in some blanket exemptions from tax and VAT rules currently in place in some national contexts. The timing of the emergence of modern sport must be taken into account in this connection, since volunteering and sport took off (in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century) when the role of faith started diminishing: of the 'twin gospels of Christianity and sport' (Huggins, 2004, p. 221), the latter often proved the more successful, with SV a major component, even when professional sport and sport business thrived too. Though today's sport sector is different from that of Victorian Britain, respect for the heritage of SV needs to be shown to ensure acceptance of new measures – even if citizens' patterns of sport and HEPA participation may have changed to the extent of implicitly questioning the system and ideology of SV.

The paper has also shown that SV is marked by a high degree of intra-EU diversity, and that this implies special opportunities for mutual learning between

and across MS. For these reasons, and given the lack of regulatory power, the EU may nevertheless provide so-called 'EU added value' in relation to SV. Demonstrating such 'added value' is of particular importance if new EU initiatives are to be accepted by MS and the established organisations of the sport movement. The evidence-based nature of many EU sport policy initiatives (e.g. European Commission (2011a, 2011b)) contrasts favourably (for the EU) with MS' often almost purely emotional approaches to sport policy (see e.g. the discussion on Olympic legacies). This evidence-based approach seems to be more akin to the generally observable 'trust in abstract systems' found in (post-)modern societies (Giddens, 1990, pp. 83-88) and the resulting reliance on technical expertise (*ibid.*, p. 88).

While it seems unlikely that the EU can address SV without somehow changing its orientation and direction, it is equally true that SV has already changed considerably over time. But just how should governments use such evidence to promote SV? As mentioned above, the maps from the Eurobarometer surveys show that SV levels are often higher in MS without an explicit, centrally determined SV strategy. MS' Sport Ministers agreed as early as 2002, under the Danish Presidency, that, 'as a basic principle, general public support should not challenge the principle of autonomy of voluntary sport,' while also calling for governments to 'continue supporting and implementing joint initiatives between the public sector and voluntary sports clubs and should, where appropriate, target resources to help voluntary sports clubs develop specific activities' (Danish Presidency of the European Union, 2002, sec. 14). Even more oxymoronically, the 'right of sport organisations to set and prioritise their own missions and sporting rules within the frame of public law should therefore be respected, and the public sector should seek to facilitate voluntary work by limiting administrative procedures where appropriate,' (*ibid.*, sec. 13) as stated by Sport Ministers in the same so-called Aarhus Declaration.

This seems like squaring the circle and it raises the issue of whether central government action is really helpful if the objective is to foster bottom-up rather than top-down processes. However there seems to be scope for action if indirect means of support (including fields such as VAT or social security) are included as part of the equation. At any rate, the exchange of information and good practice, in line with what has been demonstrated in this paper in an illustrative fashion, is needed if any meaningful debate about the issues at stake is to be had at EU level. In supporting this evolution, information exchange can allow the EU to play a relatively neutral role as an information clearinghouse; its relative neutrality stemming from the fact that the EU cannot host international sporting events and does not have a national team.

## Endnotes

- i. On 27 February 2014, a short message on the EL website (<https://www.european-lotteries.org>) opening page even mentioned the figure €2.5bn, but this message cannot be quoted as it kept changing and did not have its own hyperlink.
- ii. All websites in this section were accessed 18 June 2014. 'COM' and 'SEC' numbers refer to Commission documents while the abbreviation 'OJ' refers to the Official Journal of the European Union. Documents published in the Official Journal of the European Union are marked 'OJ'. They can be accessed online in HTML or PDF format: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/oj/direct-access.html>
- iii. All websites in this section were accessed 18 June 2014.

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## Abbreviations used<sup>iii</sup>

- ECVET:** European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training, [http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/vocational-policy/ecvet\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/vocational-policy/ecvet_en.htm)
- EQF:** European Qualification Framework, [http://ec.europa.eu/eqf/home\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/eqf/home_en.htm)
- EU:** European Union, [http://europa.eu/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/index_en.htm)

- EYV:** European Year of Volunteering 2011, [http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/european-year-of-volunteering/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/european-year-of-volunteering/index_en.htm)
- HEPA:** Health-Enhancing Physical Activity, <http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/disease-prevention/physical-activity/activities/hepa-europe>
- MS:** Member States [of the European Union], [http://europa.eu/about-eu/countries/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/about-eu/countries/index_en.htm)
- OJ:** Official Journal of the European Union, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/oj/direct-access.html>
- SV:** Sports Volunteering
- TFEU:** Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. OJ C 326, 26.10.2012, 47-390, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:12012E/TXT&from=EN>
- VAT:** Value Added Tax, [http://ec.europa.eu/taxation\\_customs/taxation/vat/how\\_vat\\_works/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/vat/how_vat_works/index_en.htm)

## Dansk abstract

Frivilligt arbejde inden for idrætten kendetegnes som social praksis af et højt niveau af mangfoldighed indbyrdes mellem landene inden for den Europæiske Union. Såvel deltagelsesniveauet som de faktorer, der betinger deltagelsen i positiv eller negativ retning, varierer i udpræget grad. Denne mangfoldighed er af særlig interesse i kraft af, at idrætten er et felt, hvor EU ikke har regulerende beføjelser. I mangel af regulerende beføjelser kan EU medvirke til at fremme idrætten ved at understøtte udveksling af oplysninger og god praksis mellem medlemslandene. Denne artikel anlægger et institutionelt perspektiv på potentialet ved at lade EU indtage en sådan understøttende rolle i forhold til frivilligt arbejde inden for idrætten.

*Nøgleord:* Den Europæiske Union (EU), kompetence (beføjelse), Lissabon-traktaten, idrætspolitik, idrætsbevægelsen, autonomi, frivilligt arbejde (frivillighed), god praksis.

## Appendix

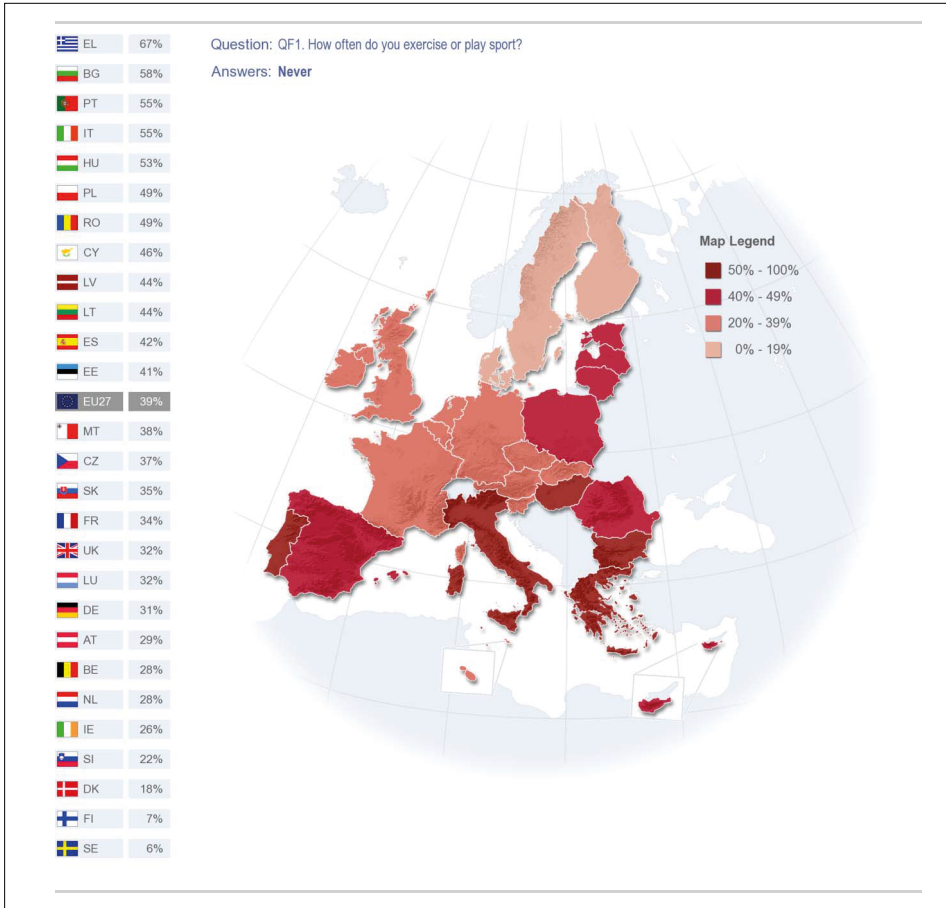


Figure 1: Eurobarometer 2010: Share of population not engaged in sport regularly (self-reported). (TNS Opinion & Social, 2010, p. 11)

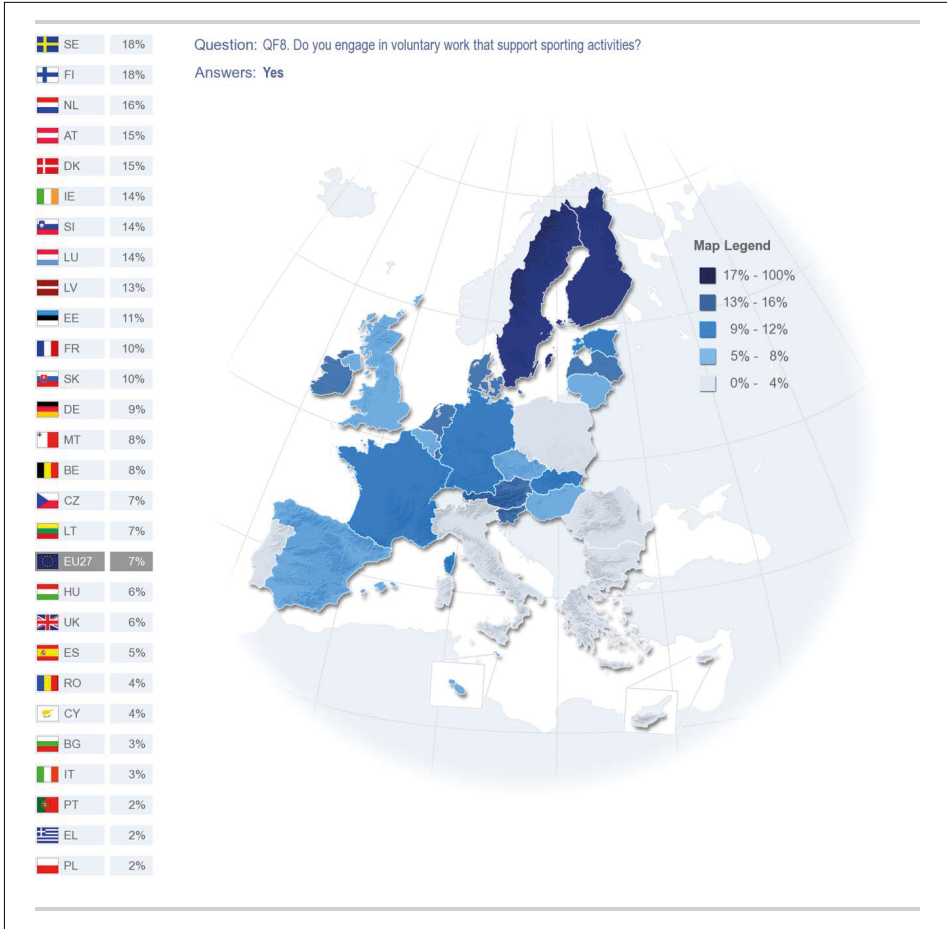


Figure 2: Eurobarometer 2010: Share of population engaged in sports volunteering (self-reported). (TNS Opinion & Social, 2010, p. 58)

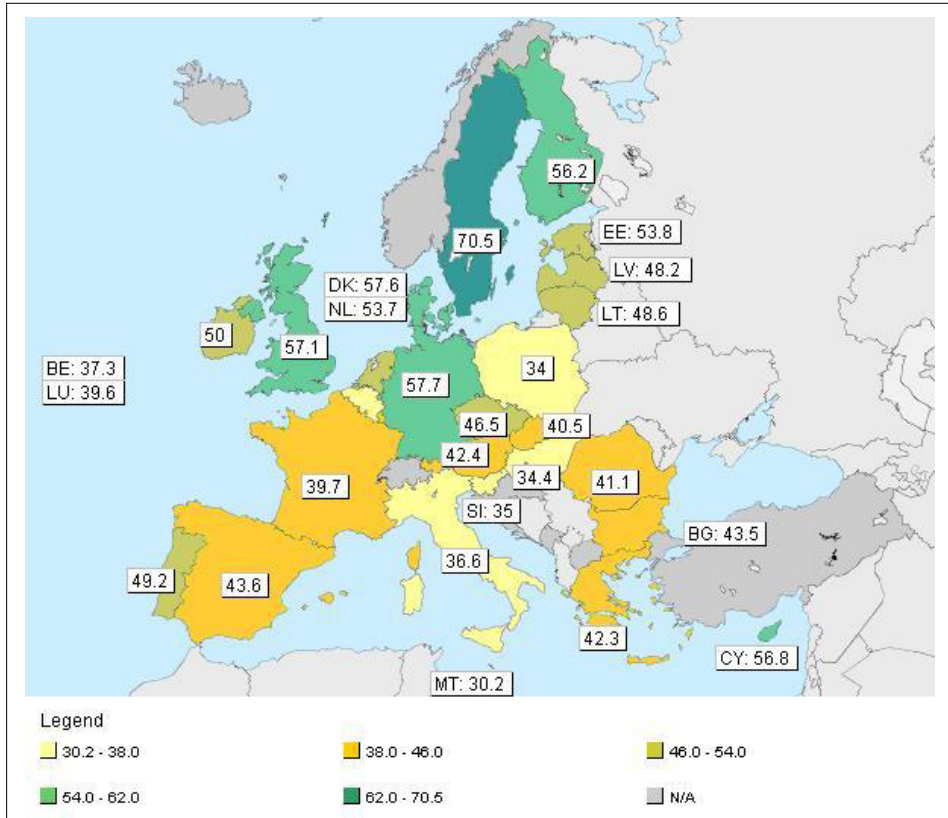


Figure 3: Active ageing and senior employment: employment rates of older workers (55-64) in the EU Member States in 2010. (European Commission, 2011c, p. 8)

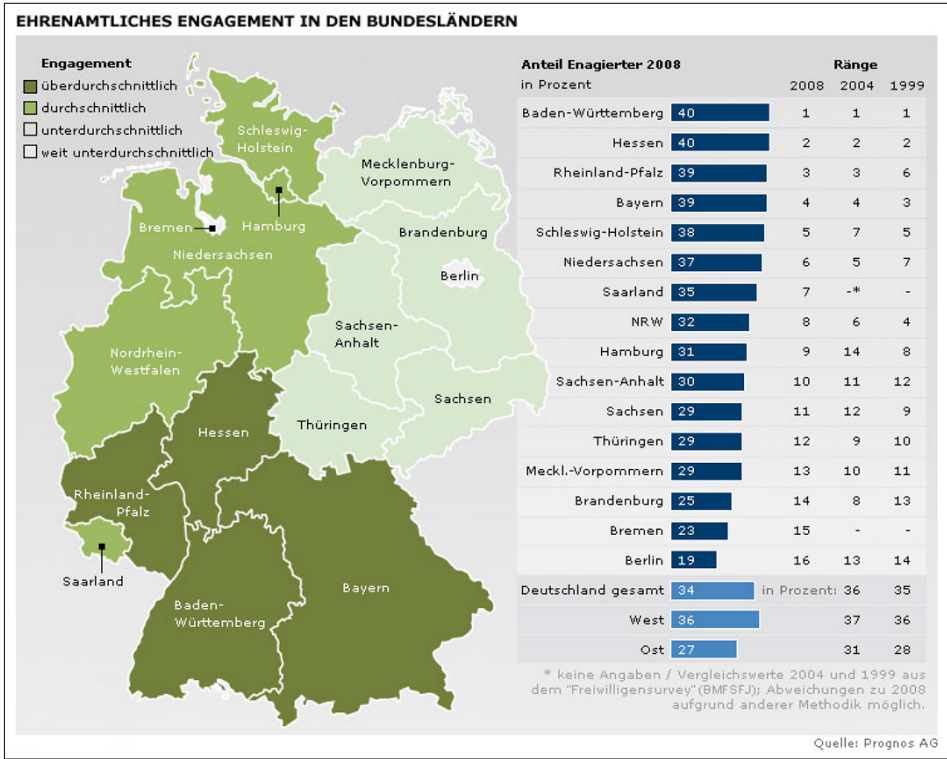


Figure 4: Germany: East and West, two decades after reunification.  
 (Source/Copyright: Prognos AG / Der Spiegel, reprinted by permission)  
 (See Kornbeck, 2012, p. 66)

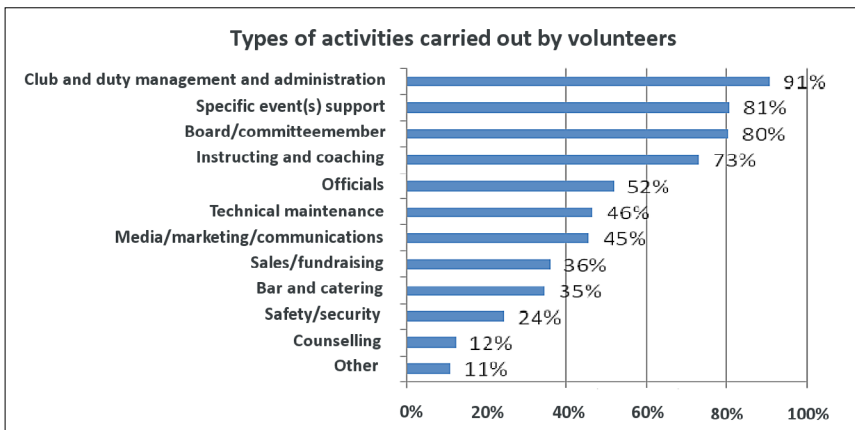


Figure 5: What tasks are carried out by volunteers (GHK, 2010)?  
 (GHK, 2010, p. 190)

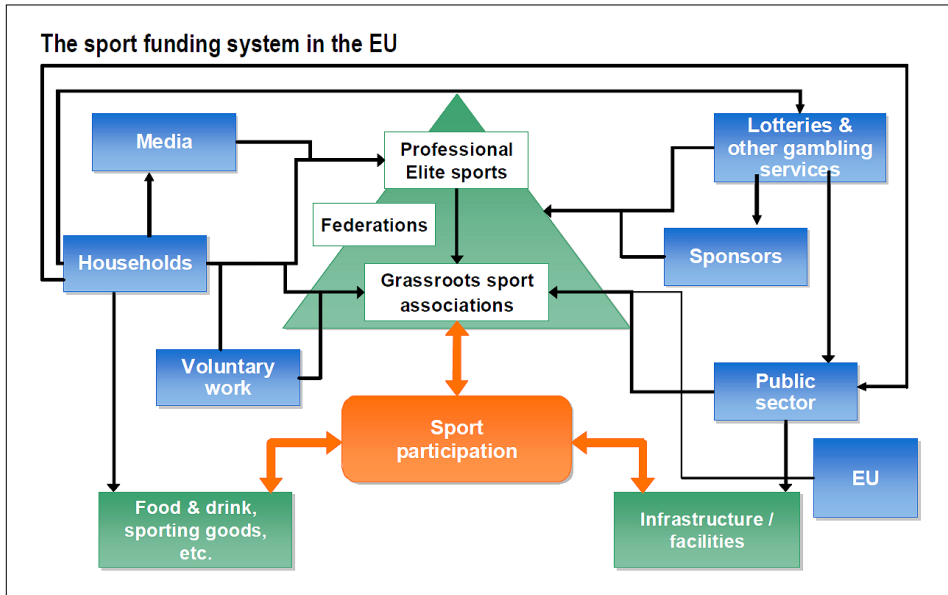


Figure 6: Financial circuits in and around sports organisations. (Eurostratégies, Amnyos, CDES, & DSHS, 2011, p. 47)

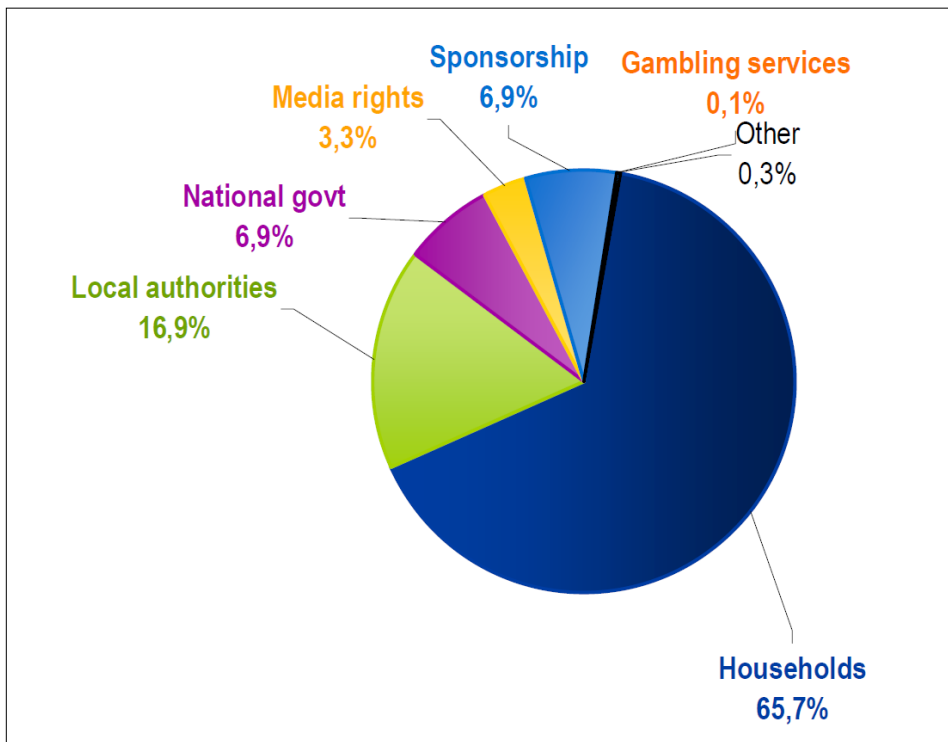
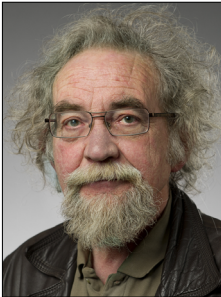


Figure 7: The structure of revenue going to the sport sector at EU level (2008). (Eurostratégies, Amnyos, CDES & DSHS, 2011, p. 80)



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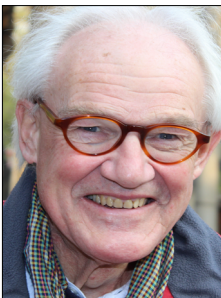
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ISSN: 1901-8878  
ISBN: 978-87-7684-792-0