



Parties and Interest Associations Report

Intra-party Decision-Making, Association Competence (Employers & Unions), Association Competence (Others)

Sustainable Governance Indicators 2022

©vege - stock.adobe.com

Indicator

Intra-party Decision-Making

Question

How inclusive and open are the major parties in their internal decision-making processes?

41 OECD and EU countries are sorted according to their performance on a scale from 10 (best) to 1 (lowest). This scale is tied to four qualitative evaluation levels.

- 10-9 = The party allows all party members and supporters to participate in its decisions on the most important personnel and issues. Lists of candidates and agendas of issues are open.
- 8-6 = The party restricts decision-making to party members. In most cases, all party members have the opportunity to participate in decisions on the most important personnel and issues. Lists of candidates and issue agendas are rather open.
- 5-3 = The party restricts decision-making to party members. In most cases, a number of elected delegates participate in decisions on the most important personnel and issues. Lists of candidates and issue agendas are largely controlled by the party leadership.
- 2-1 = A number of party leaders participate in decisions on the most important personnel and issues. Lists of candidates and issue agendas are fully controlled and drafted by the party leadership.

Denmark

Score 8

The political parties have a membership structure and are democratic organizations. Parties have annual meetings where policies are determined and leaders elected. These meetings are open to the press and covered widely.

Four of the political parties represented in the Danish parliament – the Liberal Party, the Social Democratic Party, the Social Liberal Party and the Conservative Party – have existed for more than 100 years and have all regularly participated in government. Since they are either in power or have the prospect of being in the next government, they have a strong interest in proposing plausible and coherent policies, and it is fair to say that they do so. This is reinforced by the fact that most governments are minority governments and the country's tradition of consensus-driven policies. There is a strong tradition of broad compromise and agreement, and daily politics is less partisan than in some other countries.

Newer parties (e.g., the Danish People's Party, Alternative and since June 2019 the New Right) may be more tempted to propose popular, even populist, policies. However, parties that aspire to participate in future governments have to moderate their views. The Danish People's Party provided the necessary parliamentary support for the liberal-conservative minority government (2009 – 2011) and the subsequent three-party government (2015 – 2019). In this way, the Danish People's Party has managed to promote some of the party's core issues (e.g., elderly and immigration policy). Since 2019, the Social Democratic Party has formed a minority government with the support of the Unity List (left-wing party), Socialists Peoples' Party and the Social Liberal party.

Citation:

Jørgen Grønnegård Christensen and Jørgen Elklit (eds.), *Det demokratiske system*. 4. udg., Chapter 3. Hans Reitzels Forlag, 2016.

Websites of the Danish political parties currently represented in the parliament (Folketinget) in order of representation after the June 2019 election:

The Social Democratic Party: www.socialdemokratiet.dk

The Liberal Party: www.venstre.dk

The Danish People's Party: www.danskfolkeparti.dk

The Social Liberal Party: www.radikale.dk

The Socialist People's Party: www.sf.dk

The Unity List: www.enhedslisten.dk

The Conservative Party: www.konservative.dk

The Alternative: <http://alternativet.dk/>

The New Right: <https://nyeborgerlige.dk/>

The Liberal Alliance: <http://liberalalliance.dk>

Finland

Score 8

At the time of writing, nine parties held seats in the Finnish parliament (Eduskunta). Of those, five parties held more than 10% of the seats, and can be considered as major parties. Although empirical research on intra-party democracy has to date dealt mainly with the Center Party (Kesk), the findings of this research can be assumed to apply to other major parties as well. In general, candidates for parliamentary elections are proposed by local party organizations. The final decision on which candidates will be nominated is taken at the district level of the party organization (which usually coincides with the electoral district) in a vote open to all members of the party in question. However, it is also evident that the structure of internal decision-making systems within political parties has developed in two directions. While active party members operate in voluntary, subnational organizational units, national policy functions are decided by career politicians who constitute the party elite. This dualism places power in the hands of party elites, and most particularly the party chairs. This has led to a marginalization of party members from the executive functions within each party. As intra-party meetings are the highest decision-making institutions within political parties, the average party member participates in party meetings only indirectly by helping to elect delegates. As a result of the pandemic, municipal elections were postponed by six weeks in the spring of 2021. It is apparent that the difficult pandemic situation made it more difficult for potential candidates to sign up for elections and to carry out campaigns.

Citation:

Karina Jutila, "Yksillä säännöillä, kaksilla korteilla," Dissertation, University of Tampere, 2003; Rauli Mickelsson, "Suomen puolueet. Historia, muutos ja nykypäivä," Tampere: Vastapaino, 2007; Vesa J. Koskimaa, Intra-Party Power: The Ascendancy of Parties' Public "Face," in Lauri Karvonen, Heikki Paloheimo and Tapio Raunio, eds. *The Changing Balance of Political Power in Finland*, Stockholm: Santérus Förlag; Lauri Karvonen, "Parties, Governments, and Voters in Finland," ECPR Press, 2014, p.62.

Germany

Score 8 Party leaders are increasingly elected on the basis of votes among all party members, but the procedure changes from time to time. The SPD selected their leaders through a vote of all members in 2019. In 2021, they did so through a party congress. The CDU has selected their leaders at party conventions, including the election of Armin Laschet as the new party head in January 2021. Following his defeat in the general election in September 2021, this procedure has been subject to increasing criticism. In December 2021, the CDU conducted the first general vote among all members to decide on Laschet's successor, a process that resulted in a majority voiting for Friedrich Merz. Generally, there is thus a clear trend toward ensuring the broad participation of party members in determining leadership, and the selection of party leaders often goes hand in hand with policy decisions. In addition, party conventions are where the toughest and most contested policy issues are discussed and decided on.

Iceland

Score 8 In the 2013 parliamentary elections, four out of 15 parties gained more than 10% of the votes. These four parties all hold their national conventions, which are the supreme decision-making forums for the parties, every second year. The conventions issue resolutions on major public policy issues, which oblige the members of parliament of the respective party to abide by these directives. Representatives from the regional and local party units of all parties have the right to participate in party conventions. The number of representatives attending is proportional to the number of party members in each unit. The nomination processes vary slightly among parties. Most parties have a tradition of primary elections in which only party members or declared supporters have the right to vote. The Progressive Party has for long had different rules, under which most constituencies have a constituency board (Kjördæmisráð) that selects candidates to a constituency congress (Kjördæmisþing). The number of representatives of each local party unit is equal to the proportion of each unit's membership to the total membership of all units. At these congresses, candidates are elected one by one.

Regeneration (Viðreisn) does not hold primary elections. The Pirate Party (Píratarpartíð), which has held seats in Althingi since 2013, holds electronic primary elections in every constituency. Further, the Pirate Party uses internet platforms to conduct open debates on many policy issues. The People's Party (Flokkur fólksins) and the Centre Party (Miðflokkurinn), two parties that gained parliamentary seats for the first time in 2017 and won re-election in 2021, did not have any open selection procedures. Meanwhile, the Pirate Party held electronic primaries countrywide. In the nomination processes for the 2021 elections, the Social Democrats (Samfylkingin) decided to change from primaries to a much more internal

nomination method. This led to disputes within the party and cost the party support. The independence Party held primaries in all constituencies in 2021.

Luxembourg

Score 8

Inner-party democracy takes place with different levels of intensity within the political parties, of which seven are represented in parliament – the Christian Social People’s Party (CSV), the Democratic Party (DP), the Luxembourg Socialist Workers’ Party (LSAP), the Greens (déi Gréng), the Alternative Democratic Reform Party (ADR), The Left (déi Lenk) and the Pirate Party (Piratenpartei). The current three-party coalition involves the DP, the LSAP and the Greens.

The years 2020 and 2021 have been marked by a change in the leadership of the two major political parties CSV and LSAP. A Politmonitor poll from November 2021 showed that the country’s major parties are all losing support, while politicians from smaller parties are gaining popularity.

The leadership of political parties in Luxembourg is determined in accordance with their statutes, which generally prescribe a specific designation procedure following an election procedure held during their congresses, conventions or conferences. These are open, in terms of candidacies and voting, only to their members. Non-members may be invited to participate as observers for the public part of these events. As a general rule, parties are led by a president, one of several vice-presidents, a general secretary and a treasurer. Since 2019, the Greens (a member of the coalition government) have implemented a co-presidency principle that became reality in 2020, when Djuna Bernard and Meris Šhović were elected to these positions during the party’s online congress. Following its leadership difficulties encountered early 2021, the main opposition party – the Christian Social People’s Party (CSV) – also adopted the co-presidency principle, electing Claude Wiseler and Elisabeth Margue at the extraordinary congress held the same year. The political platforms of parties are the result and expression of the internal reflection of their members grouped into specialized committees. These platforms are democratically adopted at the congresses, conventions or conferences. Even if they are not directly involved in drafting these documents, non-members are invited to participate in public debates and their viewpoints and propositions are often considered in order to improve the public appeal of such documents. Beyond the specifics relating to the ideological line of each political party, the platforms on EU topics and those drafted for European elections show a high degree of convergence.

Citation:

« TNS. Politmonitor, 15.11.2021 ». <https://download.rtl.lu/2021/11/17/3c474b61b5800e0f8f3f4b837421e65f.pdf>. Accessed 14 January 2022.

European Election Database. Norsk Senter For Forskningsdata. https://o.nsd.no/european_election_database/country/luxembourg/parties.html. Accessed 14 January 2022.

Norway

Score 8 All political parties give special preference to their members in terms of internal decision-making. Party manifestos are approved at annual party congresses, while regional party meetings nominate their constituency's electoral candidates. Non-party members can be nominated as candidates, but this is rare and happens mostly in small municipalities in local elections. In most parties, attempts are made to anchor major policy agendas in the views of party members and party representatives. Membership in political parties has been halved, from 15% to 7% of adult voters over the last 30 years.

In some instances, new policy initiatives have been launched by party leaders without prior consultation with the party members. Concerns have recently been raised about structural biases in nomination processes that favor active party members' preferences over those of average voters who rarely have or take the time to become active in political nomination processes. Some political parties have therefore begun experimenting with new modes of nominating and picking candidates. Compared to other European countries, the threshold for establishing new political movements in Norway is rather high, although the role of parties as political movements has decreased and voters are also increasingly demonstrating less loyalty to specific parties.

Sweden

Score 8 Politics in Sweden is party politics. The political parties shape public discourse on political issues and control public decision-making at all levels of the political system. All the major parties have developed extensive party organizations, in part supported by state subsidies. Party membership has historically been high but has declined over the last couple of decades. Elected delegates from all constituencies make decisions on party policy and programs at national conferences. These meetings are increasingly public events, used not only as forums to make decisions, but also to market the party politically. Beyond that, however, rank and file members are very rarely consulted or invited to voice their opinions on daily policy issues.

Candidate selection, too, is an internal party matter. Voters do have the opportunity to indicate support for specific candidates, however.

Over the past years, the internet has played a role in making the decision-making process within the major parties more open. In the period under review, political parties maintained an active online presence through their web sites and social media for the purpose of communicating their platform and addressing voters. This is sure to intensify during the next year ahead of the general elections.

United States

Score 8

There are two major parties, the Democratic and Republican parties, operating at the local, state and federal levels in nearly all areas of the country. Unlike in parties in parliamentary systems, individual officeholders (for example, members of Congress) decide their own positions on policy issues, subject to informal influence from party leaders. Thus, party programs or platforms, amounting to collective statements of party policies, do not exist. A national party platform is written every fourth year at each party's presidential nominating convention but is rarely referred to after the convention.

The occasion for intra-party democracy is therefore the nomination of party candidates for office. Party nominations are determined by primary elections and open caucuses conducted within each party in each state, thus putting these decisions directly in the hands of ordinary party members. The Trump nomination underscored the critical views of analysts about the dangers of relying on ordinary party members to select party nominees. Yet, former supporters of Senator Bernie Sanders' unsuccessful pursuit of the 2016 Democratic presidential nomination successfully pressured the Democratic party to reduce the role of party leaders in the 2020 presidential nomination contest.

Canada

Score 7

There are currently four major political parties at the federal level in Canada: the Liberal Party of Canada (LPC), the Conservative Party of Canada (CPC), the New Democratic Party (NDP) and the Bloc Québécois (BQ).

In April 2013, the LPC elected Justin Trudeau as their new leader, through an open-voting process that included non-party members. The policy formation process is also relatively open, new ideas are gathered from Liberal members and supporters through local groups, then written up as policy resolutions that are voted on and prioritized first within provincial and territorial associations and then at the LPC's biannual conventions. All resolutions passed at the convention become official party policy. Following the 2021 federal elections, the LPC formed another minority government.

Decisions in the CPC are mostly made by the elite, and while grassroots views and resolutions passed at party conventions constitute input, they are not binding. In August 2020, the CPC chose Erin O'Toole, as the new party leader. O'Toole temporarily remained leader despite the disappointing performance of the CPC at the 2021 federal elections when the party finished second once more and stayed in opposition. O'Toole had steered the CPC toward the center in the hope of defeating

the LPC, and he must now contend with the so-called social conservatives members of the party who want restrictions on abortions and looser gun control. (A month after the observation period Erin O'Toole who was voted out of his leadership position on February 2, 2022 by his party's caucus in the House of Commons).

Unlike the CPC and most of the LPC, the NDP is integrated with its provincial counterparts. A wide range of views are expressed at NDP policy conferences, but all policy resolutions passed are non-binding on the party leadership. Jagmeet Singh is the first person of an ethnic minority background to lead a major federal party. The NDP is split between members who want the party to retain a left-wing ideological purity and members who think the party should position itself toward the center-left with the objective of forming a government. Jagmeet Singh has aligned the party with the first camp.

The BQ differs from all other parties in that it runs candidates only in Quebec. Although the BQ garnered only 7.6% of the vote in the 2019 federal elections, it won 32 seats because its support is concentrated in Québec. It is an important political force in federal politics. While the BQ has some informal ties with the provincial Parti Québécois, which also supports the independence of the province, there are no organizational links. BQ leader Yves-François Blanchet is very popular and he wields a lot of power within the party. The BQ does not accept questioning of the secessionist position but debate has occurred on the strategy for reaching independence.

Lithuania

Score 7

Lithuanian parties usually restrict decision-making to party members. Although in many cases, all party members can participate in important decisions, their capacity to influence the most critical party decisions is insufficient. Some political parties are more democratically structured than others: in 2007, the Social Democratic party of Lithuania, the Lithuanian Christian Democrats and the Homeland Union were found to be the most democratic in terms of internal decision-making. The latter two parties have since merged to form a party whose leader is directly elected by all party members. In 2018, this party selected its candidate for president (Ingrida Šimonytė) during primary elections, which were open to members of the public in addition to party members. In 2017, members of the Social Democratic party of Lithuania directly elected the party's chair for the first time in the party's history. Gintautas Paluckas, who won the party election, started the process of renewing the party elite. Between 2001 and 2015, the party was dominated by members over the age of 50. As a result of Paluckas' victory, the party leadership decided to split from the ruling coalition led by the Lithuanian Farmers and Greens Union. Most of the party's serving members of parliament continued to support the Skvernelis government after forming the Social Democratic and Labor parliamentary group, and later establishing a new political party. In 2021, a member of the European Parliament, Vilija

Blinkevičiūtė, was elected as the head of the Social Democratic party. In 2021, Gabrielius Landsbergis was reelected as the chairman of the conservative party – he was the only candidate for the post, as others had canceled their candidacies in favor of Landsbergis.

Some other political parties are primarily used as a platform for their leaders to express their own political interests. Following the success of non-party candidates in the 2015 municipal elections, the Lithuanian Farmers and Greens Union brought together a group of non-party candidates for the 2016 parliamentary elections. Many of these candidates, campaigning as a movement rather than a political party, won against the candidates of established political parties. Many of Prime Minister Skvernelis' parliamentary group and government ministers were not party members. A number of them followed Skvernelis when he decided to establish a new party after disagreements with the head of the Lithuanian Farmers and Greens Union. Most of the members of the current Šimonytė government are party members, but the prime minister herself is not.

Citation:

G. Žvaliauskas, *Ar partijos Lietuvoje yra demokratiškos?* Technologija, Kaunas, 2007.

G. Žvaliauskas, *Lietuvos socialdemokratų partijos elito kaita 2001–2015 m. laikotarpiu, Viešoji politika ir administravimas*, 2017, T. 16, Nr. 1, p. 52-67.

Mexico

Score 7

In terms of candidate selection, it is normal for the presidential candidate of each of the major parties to participate in some kind of primary election. The selection of candidates in all parties for the 2018 elections was unusual. The Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) selected José Antonio Meade, a former finance minister, who was not a party member. The Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) and the National Action Party (PAN) agreed to present a common candidate, Ricardo Anaya, following bitter internal debates because of the strange left-right-coalition. MORENA, a rather personalistic movement, selected former PRD-politician Andrés Manuel López Obrador.

Candidate nomination for other mandates vary from state to state and from municipality to municipality because of the federal system. PRI, the governing party, tends to be rather secretive, clientelist and hierarchical. Meanwhile, MORENA tends to be heavily reliant on the personality of its leader, AMLO. PAN is much more of a members' party, with a degree of internal democracy, but an exclusionary attitude toward non-party members. The question of which party is in government is also crucial. Incumbent parties tend to be more internally authoritarian because of their greater patronage resources. In general, the PRI is probably the most controlled and authoritarian of the major parties.

In terms of candidates to both chambers of Congress, all parties are dominated by a leadership elite which makes all relevant decisions. They can operate in this

exclusionary way because they are in control of the delegates' votes. When the candidate lists are chosen, delegates will vote as their respective leaders indicate.

The current governing party, MORENA, promised during the election campaign to change the country's political culture and adopt a more open process in its politics. To date, the results have been ambivalent. On the one hand, MORENA is highly hierarchical, and decisions are made by the undisputed leader, President López Obrador, in a traditional caudillo-like style. On the other hand, several elements of participatory democracy have been introduced, such as the introduction of the recall referendum that was scheduled for 2022. This constitutional change enables voters to remove the president and governors after the middle of their term. Although participation in direct democratic mechanisms has to date been very limited, future use could change the country's political culture.

Greene, K./Sánchez-Talanquer, M (2018). Mexico's Party System Under Stress. *Journal of Democracy*, 29, 4, October 2018: 31-42.

Spain

Score 7

Parties in Spain are progressively allowing all members and even (for some issues) non-members to participate in making key decisions. Party candidate lists and issue agendas have not been as open. Internal debates within most Spanish political parties on electoral programs are common and made public. However, party leadership structures keep a significant level of control over the most important decisions, including the appointment of individual party leaders.

Spain's political landscape now includes five major parties that draw more than 10% of the popular vote at the national level: the social-democratic PSOE, the conservative party PP, the left-wing party Podemos, the center-right Ciudadanos party and the right-wing populist party Vox.

The PSOE has never been a president-driven party. Internal debate on electoral programs is common and even public, frequently involving some of the regional branches (especially the powerful Andalusian and Catalan sections, the latter of which is formally an independent party). The manner in which the PSOE selects its leader and main candidates has become quite open. With regard to the 2019 elections, the PSOE secretary-general was automatically named the party's prime-ministerial candidate (since no other candidate sought to challenge him).

PP President Pablo Casado, who was selected as party chairman in 2018 after a vote by members (for the first time), was automatically named the party's prime-ministerial candidate.

Podemos and Ciudadanos present themselves as more internally democratic. However, despite the rhetoric in these two parties, closed groups of party leaders were able to fully control the most important decisions.

The Vox party has presented itself as more grassroots oriented and internally democratic than Spain's traditional parties. However, the reformed statute of the party presented suppressed the election of candidates by party members, and gave total control over the procedure and election to the national direction.

Following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, these parties have increased their use of digital tools to foster internal party activities.

Citation:

Juan Rodríguez Teruel and Oscar Barberà (2022): “¿Cuánto ha cambiado la oferta política? El impacto de los nuevos partidos en el reclutamiento de los candidatos,” Elecciones autonómicas 2019-2022, Madrid: Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas.

Cyprus

Score 6

The adoption of procedures to allow party members (and friends) to elect the party leadership and choose party candidates began in the 1990s. Gradually, party leaders have attempted to bypass procedures or create conditions that negate the need for grassroots members to exercise such powers.

The Democratic Rally (Δημοκρατικός Συναγερμός, DISY) formed, in mid-2020, groups to “produce policies” for the 2021 parliamentary elections. However, no platform of policies was produced for the campaign except a brief two-page text, as in 2019. The presidential candidate for 2018 was nominated by simply approving the already announced candidacy of the incumbent president. In the 2021 parliamentary elections, 10 candidates were nominated by the party chairman, while one surplus candidacy was submitted, requiring election in one constituency. Party officials have priority as candidates. Since 2018, the party leader's powers have been broader and internal dialogue has been absent.

The Progressive Party of the Working People (Ανορθωτικό Κόμμα Εργαζομένου Λαού, AKEL) adheres to the principle of democratic centralism. Party members and friends choose candidates, with the final decision in the hands of the party leadership and managed via an opaque procedure. The party congress (1,200 cadres) elects the 105-member Central Committee (CC), which in turn elects the secretary general. AKEL's presidential candidate is selected by party cells, based on proposals by the CC and a vote by an extraordinary congress. Electoral programs are approved by the party's leadership.

The Democratic Party (Δημοκρατικό Κόμμα, DIKO) applies a direct vote for its leadership. However, the CC (150 members) nominates the presidential candidate, while regulations set the procedures for the nomination of candidates to other offices. The CC also approves the electoral program.

France

Score 6

Parties are usually both centralized and organized hierarchically. There are few registered fee-paying political activists. These are all serious limitations to the inclusiveness of citizens. Many politicians are not selected by a party; they are individuals who have made their breakthrough locally and impose themselves on the party apparatus. In the case of the Macron movement, the change is even more radical: candidates were selected from a pool of volunteers with most candidates lacking any prior political experience. In contrast, national politicians normally have a concrete and ground-based knowledge of people's aspirations and claims based on local experience. Another factor is the popular election of the president. Candidates' programs are inclusive; no policy sector is forgotten in their long to-do list. A third factor lies in recent changes in the selection of candidates for presidential elections. Primaries have taken place, first within the Socialist Party, then in the neo-Gaullist conservative Union for Popular Movement (UMP, now LR, Les Républicains) before the 2017 election. In these cases, both registered activists and voters sympathetic to the party are eligible to participate. Actually, this "opening" of the process contributed to a further weakening of the parties, which are already very feeble organizations. The strong participation in the 2017 primaries (up to 4.4 million in the case of the conservatives) can be seen as a form of citizen participation in a crucial political party decision. However, in spite of this apparent success, the primaries in France have confirmed the American experience: they are the most efficient instruments for weakening and destroying political parties. The socialist and conservative primaries have been profitable to the most radical candidates in both cases, deserting the moderate political space and thus permitting the landslide success of the centrist Macron. The traditional parties of government were deeply divided and weakened. Given this catastrophic experience, they decided not to do it again. In 2021, Les Républicains reserved the choice to registered activists (triggering an increase from 70,000 to 148,000 fee-paying members within a three-month period), and the declining Socialist Party gave up organization of a primary altogether. As for the president's movement, La République en Marche, it remains purely a product of and for Macron. It has not been able to transform itself into a political party capable of playing a proper role in decision-making and mediation between citizens and government in spite of being the largest political movement at present with 400,000 supporters (although most supporters are followers rather than activists).

Greece

Score 6

All major political parties (i.e., New Democracy, Syriza and Pasok, which enjoy the largest representation in parliament) continue to suffer (to varying degrees) from intense factionalism, but – compared to the past – have become more open with regard to policy discussions and democratic participation.

The center-right New Democracy, now in government under its leader Kyriakos Mitsotakis, has made some effort to encourage supporters to participate in defining the party's agenda. The last national congress of the party took place in December 2019, while the next one is scheduled for 2022. The radical-left Syriza's party organs are regularly convened by the party leader (Alexis Tsipras) to discuss the party's line, but the party's rank-and-file are rarely consulted. Syriza's last national congress took place in October 2016, with a subsequent congress continuously postponed. In Syriza, there are open and public debates among party factions. The third largest party, the socialist Pasok (leading a center-left coalition named Kinal) conducted a party congress in late 2019 and also conducted nationwide elections to select the party's new leader in late 2021, in which all members of the party were eligible to vote. It is too early to tell how the newly elected leader (Nikos Androulakis) will manage the party.

Very heavy-handed leadership is more pronounced among small parties, including in the traditional Communist Party of Greece (the KKE) and the party of Yanis Varoufakis (Mera25). In these parties, a very small circle around the party leader, if not the leader himself, has the final word on all decisions. To sum up, intra-party life is more developed in larger than in smaller parties. Meanwhile, in larger parties over time, there have been improvements on the openness of issue agendas, and the exchange of views and public deliberation among party officials.

Citation:

On preparations of New Democracy's national party congress: <https://synedrio.nd.gr/>

On preparations of Syriza's national party congress: <https://www.syriza.gr/page/synedria.html#>

Hungary

Score 6

After the 2010 elections, the former party system collapsed, and a new party system characterized by the co-existence of Fidesz and a plethora of smaller opposition parties emerged. In the 2014 and 2018 elections, the fragmentation of the opposition facilitated the victory of Fidesz. Since the 2018 elections, the six major opposition parties – the Democratic Coalition (DK), Jobbik, the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP), Dialogue (P), Politics Can Be Different (LMP) and Momentum – have intensified their cooperation. At the end of 2020, they agreed to hold primaries for both the prime ministerial candidate and the candidates for all 106 National Assembly districts. These primaries have led to an activation of party members, and have expanded the say of party members and supporters in decision-making. In contrast, Fidesz is still characterized by very centralized internal decision-making. Only a few party members, sometimes even the prime minister alone, make decisions on personnel and issues.

Switzerland

Score 6

Party decisions and party lists are formally produced at conventions of party members or delegates. A 1999 analysis of local party organizations found that Swiss parties – with the exception of the Green party – prioritized party leaders’ strategic capabilities over membership participation. This tendency has increased in recent years.

However, these oligarchic tendencies are arguably not the primary problem with regard to inclusion in Swiss parties. The decline in party membership and party identification – particularly in the case of the Radical and Christian Democratic parties – along with the low level of party resources, may be even greater problems since party decisions are being made by an increasingly shrinking active party membership base.

Citation:

Tresch, Anke, Lauener, Lukas, Bernhard, Laurent, Lutz, Georg and Laura Scaperrotta 2020. Eidgenössische Wahlen 2019. Wahlteilnahme und Wahlentscheid. FORS-Lausanne. DOI: 10.24447/SLC-2020-00001

VATTER, Adrian 2018: Das politische System der Schweiz. 3rd edition. Baden-Baden: Nomos (UTB), chapter 3

United Kingdom

Score 6

A distinction needs to be made for all major parties between the election of the leader, on which party members have a say, and the selection of other personnel or decisions over major issues, for which there are generally much more restrictive procedures. The selection of parliamentary and local council candidates usually involves local party members. Annual party conferences notionally have a major role in settling policy positions, but in practice it is party leaders that have the most significant role.

The Conservative Party restricts decision-making to party members. In most cases, a number of selected delegates participate in the most important personnel and issue decisions. Central party influence over candidate selection has varied in recent years. David Cameron introduced a “priority list” with at least 50% women and significant representation from ethnic minorities, from which all target seats and Conservative-held seats were supposed to be selected. In the run-up to the 2010 election and in the wake of the parliamentary expenses scandal, this requirement was relaxed. After the general election, selection rules reverted to the post-2005 procedure. The party leader is elected by a poll of all party members, who choose from a shortlist of two candidates nominated by Conservative Party members of parliament after a series of votes to eliminate other candidates. When the Conservative Party holds a majority in Parliament, the parliamentary Conservative Party is obliged to nominate the incumbent party leader as prime minister. Boris Johnson successfully used this mechanism to replace Theresa May in 2019.

The Labour Party also restricts decision-making to party members, although trade union influence remains strong. In most cases, a number of selected delegates participate in important personnel and issue decisions. Central party influence over local candidate selection has varied. Since 1988, there has had to be at least one woman on every shortlist. Since 2001, candidates require the approval of the central party's head office prior to selection by their respective constituency Labour Party. Some political allies of the previous leader, Jeremy Corbyn, favored a return to mandatory reselection, which would have increased the influence of the left-wing within the party and was therefore highly contested. The Labour Party's selection process for party leader was changed prior to the election of Jeremy Corbyn. Previously the old electoral college voted for the party leader, consisting of the Parliamentary Labour Party, constituency Labour parties, and the trade unions and affiliated organizations. Each group had one-third of the total vote. Since the procedural change, the choice is now based on a "one member, one vote" system. In addition, "registered supporters" were able to vote by paying £3, an amount increased to £25 in 2017, to be entitled to vote as well. The winning candidate must secure at least 50% of the vote. Consequently, the election process can take several rounds, as the candidate with the fewest votes after each round drops out, and their second preferences are redistributed to the remaining candidates, until the winning candidate has reached the required quorum. Keir Starmer emerged victorious in the first round of that process in the Labour leadership election in April 2020.

Belgium

Score 5

Belgium maintains a multiparty political system, with 12 parties represented in the national parliament. Party organizations come in a broad variety of forms. Due to the high fractionalization of the May 2019 election, only two parties maintained a vote share above 10% at the national level: the conservative, separatist New Flemish Alliance (N-VA, 16%) and the extreme-right, separatist Vlaams Belang (12%). The historically dominant parties, such as the Socialists (respectively 9.5% and 6.7% for the French and Flemish wings), Christian Democrats (respectively 8.9% and 3.7% for the Flemish and French wings), the Liberals (8.5% and 7.5%) and the Greens (6.1% for both wings) all individually fell below 10%.

However, this observation must be qualified by the fact that each party runs only in its own district, mainly Flanders and Brussels for Flemish parties, or Wallonia and Brussels for French-speaking parties. Hence, the actual percentage totals for each given party should be increased by about a 70% ratio for the Flemish parties and by a 130% ratio for the French-speaking parties. The big picture is that the historically dominant party groupings (Socialists, Christian Democrats and Liberals) have been losing ground over the last decades, achieving historically low results in 2019.

Regarding internal selection procedures, Bram Wauters (2013) writes that "all Belgian parties represented in parliament give their members a direct say in the

appointment of the party leader, be it at a party conference in which all members can participate and vote or via internal elections granting each member one vote (either by postal or electronic voting, or by arranging polling booths in local party sections).

Many of the parties selected new leaders over the 2019-2021 period. The competitiveness of internal party elections varies widely. In many internal elections, the winner is elected by a crushing majority – and, sometimes, there is only one candidate. But it does happen that some internal elections are highly competitive, and lead to surprising results (among others, the Greens typically have competitive internal elections, and both the Christian Democrats and the Liberals have occasionally tight contests). Overall, the process is thus mostly controlled by the party elites.

Citation:

Electoral results: <https://elections2019.belgium.be/fr>

Parties asking their voters to validate government agreements: <https://plus.lesoir.be/250867/article/2019-10-02/accords-gouvernementaux-wallonie-bruxelles-et-flandre-prennent-un-cap-different>

Election in the liberal party: <http://www.mr.be/candidatsalapresidence/>

https://www.rtbf.be/info/belgique/detail_qui-sont-les-quatre-candidats-a-la-presidence-du-mr?id=10337835

Election in the Christian Democratic party: <https://www.cdenv.be/wie-zijn-we/voorzittersverkiezingen/kandidaten/>

Elections in the socialist parties: https://www.rtbf.be/info/belgique/detail_paul-magnette-elu-comme-prevu-nouveau-president-du-ps?id=10345699

https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20191108_04707702

Wauters, Bram (2013). “Democratising Party Leadership Selection in Belgium: Motivations and Decision Makers.” *Political Studies* 62/S1, 62-80, DOI: 10.1111/1467-9248.12002.

Chile

Score 5

Chile has a presidential governmental system. As the president determines the government’s policy agenda, presidential elections are much more relevant than congressional elections in terms of policy direction. Therefore, in campaigns for the presidency, government programs are presented by the presidential candidates and not by their coalitions or parties. These global program proposals tend to be limited to descriptions of policies’ intended public effects rather than technical details or any detailed discussion of content. The primary elections for the 2013, 2017 and 2021 presidential elections demonstrated that candidate selection and issue agendas are largely controlled by the parties’ leaders. However, the left-wing Broad Front (Frente Amplio) coalition – formed in 2017 by several minor new parties, and to which new President Gabriel Boric belongs – can be seen as a positive exception to the centralized and top-down tendency within parties.

Estonia

Score 5

Decision-making processes are very similar among the main parties. Formally, each party member can propose issues, but in reality, inner circles of 15 to 20 elite party members make the most important decisions. All parties have an annual congress at

which delegates elect the party leader and other governing bodies. One such body is the board, which votes on political decisions, issues statements, and submits proposals to the party's parliamentary group and to the party's members in the government. The board also nominates ministerial candidates when the party is part of a coalition government. Another important decision-making body is the council, which manages the party when the general assembly is not in session. The council is comprised of board members and elected representatives from the various regions. The council negotiates agreements with other parties in the parliament, including decisions on whether to enter a governing coalition. Like the board, the council can also submit proposals to the party's parliamentary group and the party's members in the government. As a rule, it is the council's responsibility to compose and agree upon the lists of candidates for general and European Parliament elections. Local party organizations propose lists for municipal elections.

Ireland

Score 5

The taoiseach is elected by the lower house of the parliament and is usually the leader of the biggest party in parliament. The position of party leader is therefore of great significance.

In the 2020 general election, the vote shares received by the parties were Sinn Féin 24.5%, Fianna Fáil 22.2%, Fine Gael 20.9%, the Greens 7.1%, the Labour Party 4.4%, the Social Democrats 2.9%, People Before Profit 2.6%, and Aontú 1.9%. Meanwhile, independent candidates won around 13.5% of the votes.

Specific party procedures for selecting party leaders and presidential candidates are detailed below. However, all the main parties now use a one member one voting system, meaning that each party member can vote once for the party candidate in their constituency. As such, party members are important gatekeepers to the selection of parliamentary candidates. While most candidates are selected locally, they need to be approved by the party's national executive, which reserves the right to veto any local choice or to add a new name to the ticket. Empirically, the national parties are more likely to add a name to the ticket than to veto someone selected locally. For example, for the 2016 general election, 15 of Fine Gael's 89 candidates and 16 of Fianna Fáil's 71 candidates were added to the ticket by the respective party's national constituency committees (see Reidy 2016). The introduction of gender quotas, which threatens political parties with losing half of their state funding if the proportion of male or female nominated candidates falls below 30%, appears to have further strengthened the hands of the national party. Ready (2016, 71) states: "the requirement for parties to meet specific gender targets facilitated the party center exerting even more control over selection processes than at previous elections." In 2020, of the 516 candidates running for 159 seats in 39 constituencies in the general election, 160 or 31% were women (Carswell & O'Halloran, 2020).

Fine Gael:

The party leader is selected by an electoral college comprising the Fine Gael Parliamentary Party (weighting 65%), ordinary Fine Gael members (weighting 25%) and Fine Gael local representatives (city and county councilors, and members of *Údarás na Gaeltachta*, weighting 10%). On 2 June 2017, Leo Varadkar beat Simon Coveney to become the new leader of Fine Gael. He was appointed taoiseach by President Higgins following a vote in *Dáil Éireann* on 14 June 2017.

Fianna Fáil:

The party has a pyramidal structure based on the local branches (*cumainn*). There are approximately 3,000 of these across the country. The party leader is elected by an electoral college comprising ordinary members (weighting 45%), parliamentary deputies (weighting 40%) and other elected representatives (weighting 15%). Before the establishment of this electoral college, Micheal Martin was elected as leader of Fianna Fáil on 26 January 2011, in an election in which only members of parliament who were members of the Fianna Fáil party were eligible to vote.

Sinn Féin:

In February 2018, Mary Lou McDonald, after a special party conference in Dublin (*Ard Fheis*), succeeded Gerry Adams as leader of Sinn Féin. Since the party entered politics in 1986, no vote of confidence in the party leader has been tabled. The *Ard Fheis* (National Delegate Conference) is Sinn Féin's ultimate policymaking body, where delegates – directly elected by members of local branches (*cumainn*) – vote on and adopt policies.

In autumn 2018, Michael D. Higgins, the president of Ireland, was re-elected by a considerable majority, obtaining a record 822,566 first-preference votes, to serve for a second seven-year term.

Citation:

Theresa Reidy (2016), 'Candidate Selection and the Illusion of Grass Roots Democracy,' in Michael Gallagher and Michael Marsh (eds) *How Ireland Voted 2016*. Palgrave.

Israel

Score 5

According to the last parliamentary election that took place on 23 March 2021, only two parties – Likud and Yesh Atid – can be considered major parties, having gained at least 10% of the popular vote.

Likud is characterized by intra-party democratic institutions. It chooses its candidates through primary elections and has elected representative institutions that take part in decision-making, such as decisions on whether the party will join or leave a governing coalition, and debates over policy stances. Nevertheless, despite its formal

democratic procedures, the power of former Prime Minister Netanyahu on Likud's institutions is overwhelming, after effectively removing all his significant rivals from power.

Within the Yesh Atid party, some consultation with party members is conducted, but important decisions are made by senior members and specifically by the party leader. Moreover, the regulations authorize the party's leader to decide on the most important personnel issues, such as the list of electoral candidates.

Other parties are characterized by intra-party institutions which range from highly democratic to completely undemocratic.

Citation:

The Knesset and the Central Elections Committee website: "Parliamentary groups of the 24th Knesset," (in Hebrew) <https://votes24.bechirof.gov.il/>

Italy

Score 5

With regard to intra-party democracy, Italy's major parties differ significantly. At one end of the spectrum lies the Forza Italia (FI) party, which was previously called Popolo della Libertà (the People of Freedom Party), where decision-making and leadership selection are both fundamentally dominated by its leader, Silvio Berlusconi. Requests to adopt primaries to designate candidates for leading positions at national and subnational levels were recurrently aired but have always been stopped by Berlusconi. The situation is rather different in the main center-left party, the Democratic Party, where leadership has in past years been selected through primaries open not only to party members but to anyone willing to subscribe a declaration of support for the center-left coalition. A similar procedure was sometimes adopted for the selection of parliamentary candidates.

The Movimento Cinque Stelle (Five Star Movement, M5S) has introduced new mechanisms of online direct consultations for decisions and for candidate selection. At the same time, behind the scenes (and sometimes openly), movement founder Beppe Grillo has maintained a very strong steering and veto role. Internal opponents have found it very difficult to win a platform to voice their positions, and dissidents have frequently been expelled from the party.

Northern League party activists and members selected their current leader, Matteo Salvini, through primaries in 2017. The party is now totally dominated by its leader.

Overall intra-party democracy in Italy's political system is not well established and shows a large degree of variation across parties. In particular, it seems difficult to balance an increasing personalization of leadership and the preservation of internal debate. Discussions about regulating the internal dynamics of political parties are recurrent, but have not been implemented.

Latvia

Score 5 The Law on Political Parties mandates that certain political-party decisions be made in the context of full-membership meetings or by elected officials of the parties. These include party officer elections as well as decisions on party governing statutes and party programs. Other decisions must be taken in accordance with party statutes, but are not subject to regulation. Regulations allow for little input from party members. By comparison, commercial law provides more rights to shareholders than rights accorded to party members in their own party.

In the run-up to the 2018 parliamentary election, three new parties emerged and gained substantial support: the nationalist-conservative New Conservative Party (Jauna Konservatīva Partija, JKP), the center-left-liberal Development/For! (Attīstībai/PAR, AP) and the populist “Who Owns the State?” (Kam pieder valsts?, KPV LV) party. In their statutes, all three parties indicated a decision-making procedure in which power lies with the party’s general assembly and is directed by the board of the party. In the case of JKP, there is also an intermediate body of the party council. Since these parties have been elected to the Saeima, with the exception of KPV LV, there has been no indication that party guidelines have been seriously mismanaged.

Malta

Score 5 Political parties are increasingly coming under pressure to consult beyond party membership. This shift has been driven by voter volatility, with voters less constrained by party loyalties. Rank and file views today are also made known through social media, and in most cases these are discussed and taken note of. However, most of this internal consultation takes place within the official organs of parties, such as the parliamentary group and the executive. Recently, the Nationalist Party (PN) decided to open the second round of voting for the party’s leaders to its members. However, these members are only allowed to vote after party delegates have made an initial choice from among the contenders. The result has been the election of leaders who do not have the support of a number of the old stalwarts of the party. The Labor Party’s recent selection of a new leader took place through a vote that was open to all party members. The Labor Party has also altered its statute to ensure that the deputy leader can no longer be a member of parliament in order to allow the party to strengthen communication with its grassroots.

Citation:

https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/interview/111722/the_pns_rejuvenation_is_a_work_in_progress__michael_piccino#.YbscEMoVxBc

https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/96011/analysis_the_pns_bitter_internal_battle_splitting_along_class_lines#.YbschsoVxBc

https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/112741/bernards_sisyphian_predicament_the_pn_leaders_predicame
[nt#.YbseFMoVxBc](https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/103776/daniel_micallef_confirmed_as_pl_deputy_leader_for_party_affairs#.YbsfxsoVxBc)https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/103776/daniel_micallef_confirmed_as_pl_deputy_leader_for_party_affairs#.YbsfxsoVxBc

Poland

Score 5

For the last decade, political parties have functioned under legislation that strictly defines the role of a political party and how parties are financed. Since most funding is public, the government mandates that democratic principles govern parties themselves. However, the reality is mixed, with some parties meeting democratic standards while others fall short (Winławska et al. 2021). While in the 2015 parliamentary elections, only two parties – the Law and Justice Party (PiS) and the Civic Platform (PO) – received more than 10% of the votes, in October 2019, the social-democratic Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) also managed to overcome this threshold. The three parties differ enormously from one another in their internal decision-making processes. PiS, led by Jarosław Kaczyński since 2003, is characterized by a hierarchical model of organization. Legal statutes and bodies notwithstanding, all important decisions are ultimately made directly or indirectly by Jarosław Kaczyński. By contrast, PO, the second-largest party in parliament, and SLD have given members a more significant say, which has allowed for more far-reaching internal debates. The SLD was renamed the New Left (NL) in 2020 and has merged with the Spring party in 2021.

Citation:

Winławska, M., A. Paczeński, B. Brodzińska-Mirowska, M. Jacuński (2021): Party Management from the Perspective of Party Members: Evidence from Poland, in: *Problems of Post-Communism* 68(4): 315-326 (<https://doi.org/10.1080/10758216.2020.1757466>).

Portugal

Score 5

A total of 10 parties, running on nine lists, won seats in the most recent parliamentary elections held on 6 October 2019. Only three of these parties obtained more than 10% of the vote: the Socialist Party (Partido Socialista, PS), which received 36.3% of the vote and 108 seats; the Social Democratic Party (Partido Social Democrata, PSD), which won 27.8% of the vote and 79 seats; and the Left Bloc (Bloco de Esquerda, BE), with 10.2% and 19 seats.

Of the other lists that obtained seats, the most successful was the Unitarian Democratic Coalition (Coligação Democrática Unitária, CDU) between the Portuguese Communist Party (Partido Comunista Português, PCP) and the Ecologist Party (Partido Ecologista “Os Verdes,” PEV), which secured 6.3% of the vote and a combined total of 12 seats, which resulted in 10 seats for the PCP and two for the PEV.

In both the PS and PSD, party leaders are directly elected by party members, while party members also elect delegates to the party congresses. However, regarding

policy issues and candidates other than the party leader, the rank-and-file members have little say. Instead, decisions are largely made by the party leadership, which – depending on the internal balance of power – may have to negotiate with the leaders of opposing internal factions.

In short, the members of these two parties elect a leader who then presents a list for the other positions. The party’s representatives in the government are selected by the leader in consultation with the party’s political commission (although there is no obligation to act on this advice).

In January 2015, the PS approved new statutes that use primary elections to choose political candidates, and let registered party sympathizers (not just members) vote to choose the party leader. While current party leader António Costa gained the leadership of the party in a primary election, this mechanism was not used to select candidates in subsequent legislative or party leadership elections, which reverted to the direct election model previously noted.

BE party members elect delegates that convene at the party’s national convention and in turn elect an 80-member national committee called “Mesa Nacional,” which is elected proportionally. The Mesa Nacional then votes for the party’s political commission, which has 18 members since the 2018 convention. In its 10th convention, held in June 2016, the party changed its statutes slightly, albeit the change did not significantly alter the degree of internal democracy. Due to this change, it is now up to the political commission to elect the secretariat, which is comprised of 10 people since the 2018 convention. Until the ninth party convention held in November 2014, the BE had two national coordinators within the permanent commission. After this convention, the party returned to the model of a single coordinator, in this case Catarina Martins, who has retained her position since.

South Korea

Score 5

There is widespread agreement among political scientists, political observers, politicians and the general public that political parties are one of the weakest links in South Korean democracy. Parties are organized in a top-down fashion, and typically led by a few powerful individuals (who may or may not hold official party offices). Parties often disband, rename and regroup around these leaders without the comprehensive involvement of members. In general, ordinary party members have very little to say. While the selection of presidential candidates has become more democratic since the introduction of the primary system in 2015, issue-oriented participation by party members remains anemic, and party organizations remain weak. Only some of the smaller parties not represented in the parliament, such as the Green Party, are organized in a bottom-up way. Organizing local party chapters remains illegal in Korea, making it almost impossible to build grassroots organizations. Due to their focus on personalities, parties tend to be ill-prepared to

govern, and thus depend on co-opting political outsiders that have little experience in the political arena.

Australia

Score 4

Elected members and senators – but no other party members – are responsible for decision-making in both major parties. Decisions regarding who should hold positions within the party, such as ministerial positions for the party in government, have largely been at the discretion of the elected leader in coalition governments. Labor prime ministers cannot choose their ministers freely, but instead have to allocate portfolios among a set of candidates selected by the factions.

The Liberal-National coalition has traditionally had a more open and inclusive process for determining leadership than the Labor party, which is dominated by factions to which most members are beholden. These factions are regularly criticized for making opaque decisions and for contributing to a lack of decision-making transparency. In response, the process for selecting the Labor party leader was altered in 2013, giving 50% of the votes to the wider party membership, with the remaining 50% staying with elected members and senators.

With regard to the development of policy agendas, both parties have inclusive forums for developing policy platforms. However, in practice, a small leadership group in each party tightly controls decisions on major policies.

Citation:

<http://www.smh.com.au/comment/malcolm-turnbulls-downfall-was-that-he-wasnt-allowed-to-lead-20160705-gpyrnc.html>

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/jan/23/mark-butler-factions-are-destroying-labors-capacity-to-campaign>

Austria

Score 4

The Austrian party system is going through a process of deconcentration. The traditionally dominant parties – the Social Democratic Party (Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs, SPÖ) and the conservative, Christian democratic Austrian People's Party (Österreichische Volkspartei, ÖVP) – have experienced an almost uninterrupted decline since 1980. Winning 37.5% and 21.2% of the total vote in the 2019 national election, they are however still the country's two largest parties. At the national level, the FPÖ has been the second largest party (rather than the largest) during only one government term, back in 1999.

In general, the major parties have spent little time developing intra-party democracy and have focused instead on appealing to specific groups, whose support is

considered necessary to win elections. In preparation for the 2017 general elections, the ÖVP changed its traditional procedure for nominating candidates. The party transferred total authority for the nomination process to one person, the party's candidate for the Chancellor's Office, Sebastian Kurz. This did not change for the 2019 elections, with the ÖVP remaining the party of Sebastian Kurz. This development must be seen as a significant decline in intra-party democracy and carries some similarities to what is currently happening to the U.S. Republican Party under the influence of former president Trump.

In contrast to the ÖVP, the other parties have largely followed their traditional procedures, ensuring that the different intra-party interests continue to be represented. However, after losing its primary position in parliament and now in opposition, the SPÖ has started to reform its internal decision-making procedures, which will give party members a stronger role. This was first exemplified in the decision about the new mayor of Vienna, Michael Ludwig. The SPÖ's new national party leader, Pamela Rendi-Wagner, was initially chosen by the traditional process in 2018. However, in 2020, she was confirmed by a party member vote in which more than 41% of party members participated, with 71.4% backing Rendi-Wagner.

Bulgaria

Score 4

Bulgaria's heretofore unprecedented four-party coalition, which was formed after two general elections, amid a pandemic and after two weeks of intensive but broadcasted deliberation, shook up the country's political establishment.

The election delivered an important lesson: whereas no parliamentary group in the May-June parliament was prepared to enter into a coalition with GERB as the largest party, and the lead party (There is Such a People, ITN) of the July-October parliament did not want to cooperate with any other party, the spirit of cooperation – despite the various cleavages – prevailed in the parliament elected in November. ITN's leader, Slavi Trifonov, has not held a public office and did not run for election in 2021.

In this respect, ITN resembles the Movement for Rights and Freedoms party (DPS), whose honorable chairperson, Ahmed Dogan, designs and/or approves the decisions made in the party. More of an electoral alliance than party per se, We Continue the Change (PP) has scheduled party-building events for the early part of spring 2022. Democratic Bulgaria is a classical liberal coalition involving a substantial Green presence. Decisions are made by the bodies of the three parties and then discussed by a coordinating body guided by the three leaders.

The Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP) is the oldest political party in parliament. Having suffered several splits in 2020 and 2021, the party is now united around its leader, Korneliya Ninova, who is also minister of the economy and industry and deputy prime minister.

This parliament consists of seven relatively small parliamentary groups, opposition or coalition partners, each of which have little choice but to be inclusive and maintain a spirit of dialogue. The only exception is the newly elected Revival – a radical, extremist party that opposes COVID-19 policies, the planned adoption of the euro, and Bulgaria’s membership in NATO and EU. Revival advocates establishing closer ties with Russia and threatens to bring about a revolutionary occupation of parliament and overthrow of the government if other parties do not agree with their demands.

Irrespective of changes at the helm of the party and its parliamentary group, GERB remains a leader-centered party. Boyko Borisov holds a position similar to that of Ahmed Dogan, but is also the most frequent public representative of GERB. In short, six of the seven parliamentary groups in parliament are leader-centered.

Croatia

Score 4

Croatian parties are characterized by a rigid structure. The degree of intra-party democracy is generally low, members do not regularly participate in party activities and the party leadership maintains considerable control over selection procedures and debates. In the HDZ (Croatian Democratic Union), no internal elections took place until April 2016. While the party’s chairman has been elected directly by party members ever since, the latter have not had the chance to choose between different candidates due to high formal and informal barriers. These barriers include the need to collect 11,000 signatures in order to become an official candidate. Incumbents also have substantial leverage over intra-party rivals due to widespread clientelism and the potential to punish party members who do not toe the existing party line. The threshold and barriers mentioned above are not as high in the second largest party, the Social Democratic Party (SDP). The SDP is somewhat more open to internal debates, but does not tolerate the existence of open political blocs.

In the last parliamentary elections, the left-green coalition gathered around the platform *Možemo* (Yes, we can – M!) won seven seats, and won the local elections in Zagreb. The extent to which the new political grouping will allow party members to participate in shaping key party policies remains to be seen. The current SDP leadership has dissolved a number of local party organizations in the country, including the largest in Zagreb, expelling a number of prominent SDP members. As a result, the SDP’s deputy club in the Croatian parliament has split; it now has fewer SDP members than does the deputy club of the Social Democrats, which includes former SDP members who disagree with the current party leadership.

Citation:

Ćelap, K., D. Nikić Čakar (2017): Unutarstranačka demokracija u Hrvatskoj: (Ne)moć običnih članova u procesu stvaranja stranačkih politika, in: *Politička misao* 54(3): 80-107.

Czechia

Score 4

The 2021 parliamentary elections transformed the Czech political landscape. Neither the Social Democrats (ČSSD) nor the Communists (KSČM) crossed the 5% threshold required for parliamentary representation. Only a coalition of three conservative parties – the Pirate Party (in coalition with a broadly liberal grouping) which had moved toward the political center, the far-right Freedom and Direct Democracy (Svoboda a prima demokracie, SPD), and Babiš's ANO – won representation. The traditional parties had developed formal structures and means of participation in electing their leaders and voting at congresses on policies although, in practice, active involvement by members was limited. The internal organization of the Pirate party is the most systematically inclusive as it enables both members and sympathizers to engage in agenda-setting and other activities, the majority of which take place online. The internal decision-making of the ANO party is the polar opposite. The party is hierarchically organized, and its founder and leader, Andrej Babiš and a small group of his allies, dominate the decision-making process. The internal organization of SPD is even more restrictive, as the party leader Tomio Okamura controls both the decision-making and party finance in ways that involve intimidation and – according to investigative journalists – even extortion.

Netherlands

Score 4

The dominant political view is that government interference in private organizations like political parties is incompatible with the role of the state in a liberal democracy. A law for internal party democracy is appropriate for countries with a history of non-democratic governance (e.g., Germany, some states in southern Europe and in central and eastern Europe). However, in the Netherlands with its strong democratic tradition, many consider it superfluous. Several recent reports show the vulnerability of Dutch democracy to (international) manipulation through weak controls over and accountability for party finance, political campaigning and candidate selection. For example, some political parties deal with their representatives' ethical issues (especially regarding gender issues) through internal councils or executive organs, political parties report inflated numbers of formal members in order to boost state subsidies, and candidate lists and leadership-succession practices frequently lack transparency, illustrating Robert Michels' thesis that political parties act as oligarchies.

In addition, political parties are not obliged to have a membership organization or conduct internal decision-making practices democratically. One party (the anti-immigrant party PVV) has only one member – its leader – and not even its members of parliament or local councils are able to join the party they represent, and not even members of parliament have any formal say in policies, candidate selection or internal workings of this party. Several political parties have received very considerable amounts of money (up to €1 billion), sometimes from foreign countries.

Entrepreneurs have sold time with ministers and other high officials from governmental parties to companies during dinner parties in order to finance campaigns, eradicating the line between partisan activities and formal duties. Some political scientists therefore advocate a separate law on political parties, including grounds for prohibiting parties that undermine democracy itself; and an independent (non-state) commission for oversight and enforcement. Such a Party Law that would acknowledge the special and crucial functions that parties perform in the country's democracy is now being prepared.

The very narrow basis of political parties is reflected in their membership figures. Political-party membership reached an all-time low of 285,851 in 2015. It increased to 316,000 in 2021 (2.4% of the electorate), owing to an increase in young voters joining D66, Green Left and Forum for Democracy. Approximately 10% of party members are considered active. Frequently party activism is used as a launching pad for a political career. Across all major political parties, political activists and (semi-)professionals dominate decision-making with regard to candidate lists and political agendas. Political parties are not bottom-up movements. Rather, they are intermediaries between political elites and their electorates, with political-party members as links. The attitude to intra-party democracy (e.g., party congresses, election of party leaders and intra-party referendums) is ambivalent. One former minister of defense and Labor party member commented: "Party congresses don't buy combat planes." Party leadership succession, even in political parties with some tradition of intra-party democracy (e.g., Christian Democrats, social democrats and D66), is not necessarily democratically regulated, but is often determined by opaque, "spontaneous" selection processes managed by party elites. In recent years, some political parties – such as the PvdA – have moved to a primary model, but can and do return to much more closed procedures of leadership and candidate selection.

The functional loss of political parties as clear representatives of social groups reverberates across the political system at all levels (see also "Association Competence (Others)"). Lower-educated citizens' mobilization and integration into politics has declined in particular. Paired with the decline of the centrist parties (in particular the former dominant parties, the social-democratic PvdA and Christian democratic CDA), the rise of more extremist and fringe parties, increasing electoral volatility, parliamentary fragmentation, polarization on particularly cultural issues and strong anti-establishment sentiments have created anxieties regarding the role of politicians and political parties.

Citation:

R.B. Andeweg and G.A. Irwin (2014), *Governance and Politics of The Netherlands*. Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan: 80-95

NRC Handelsblad, 26 January 2019. Kabinet: verbod op partijfinanciering van buiten de EU.

NRC Handelsblad, 9 March 2019. Politieke partijen die regels ontwijken – en een ministerie dat steeds wegkijkt.

<https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/rapporten/2018/02/01/rapport-he-t-publieke-belang-van-politieke-partijen>

Gr. A'dammer, Rijkema, 8 December 2021. Onzeker gesternte.

NRC, 20 March, 2021. Wij zijn het Wilde Westen van het politieke geld.

Andre Krouwel (2012) *Leadership and Candidate Selection in Krouwel, A (2012). Party Transformations in European democracies.* SUNY Press (State University of New York Press).

Andre Krouwel (1999) *The selection of parliamentary candidates in Western Europe: The paradox of democracy*, Working Paper Vrije Universiteit
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/279848031_The_selection_of_parliamentary_candidates_in_Western_Europe_The_paradox_of_democracy

New Zealand

Score 4

There are currently five political parties in the New Zealand House of Representatives. The two major parties, Labour (65 seats) National (33 seats) and Labour (46 seats) dominate the electoral map. Three minor parties won parliamentary representation in the 2020 election: the Green Party, ACT (both 10 seats), and the Māori Party (two seats).

The organizational structure of the Labour party is complex, as it mainly consists of affiliated members – that is, those who are members of affiliated trade unions. Although the party refuses to disclose membership numbers (a policy shared by the National Party), it is thought to have a current membership of approximately 7,000. Decisions with regard to personnel and policy are therefore not restricted to individual party members. However, at the same time, Labour uses a system of delegates. The selection process for candidates for parliamentary seats is based on a heavily formalized moderating procedure that takes into account criteria such as ethnic background, gender and region. Following pressure from grassroots members to have a voice in the selection of the party leader, in 2011 the party took away the parliamentary caucus's sole responsibility for choosing the leadership, replacing it with a combination of party membership (40%), parliamentary caucus (40%) and affiliated trade unions (20%).

The National Party considerably increased the central leadership's influence in an organizational reform in 2003. The newly created National Management Board, which includes the parliamentary leader, plays an especially influential role in pre-selecting parliamentary candidates for electorate seats (to a so-called Candidate's Club) – although these are still required to compete with other nominees, using the existing decentralized electorate selection process. The selection of candidates for list seats has been equally centralized at the expense of regional party organizations. The party leader is chosen by the members of the parliamentary caucus.

While both ACT and the Māori Party are also organized in a relatively centralized fashion, they seldom reach the level of 10% of the vote. ACT managed this in 2020, but largely due to National's declining share. The Green Party also reached 10% of the vote, although in New Zealand's system, it is not considered a major party. That

said, the Greens stand out from the rest within the party system with their emphasis on participatory processes. In contrast to other parties, decisions on policy and the selection of parliamentary candidates are made by the party membership, with less control exerted by the parliamentary caucus.

Citation:

Constitution and Rules of the New Zealand National Party (Wellington: New Zealand National Party 2013).

Green Party: <http://www.greens.org.nz/> (accessed October 24, 2015).

NZ Electoral Commission (elections.org.nz, 2017)

Candidate Selection and List Ranking Procedures 2014 (Wellington: Green Party of Aotearoa New Zealand 2014)

Labour Party: Constitution and Rules 2014 (Wellington: New Zealand Labour Party 2014).

Stephens, Gregory R. und John Leslie: Parties, organizational capacities and external change:

New Zealand's National and Labour parties, candidate selection and the advent of MMP, *Political Science* 2011 (63): 205-218.

Slovenia

Score 4

Slovenian party law leaves political parties with some organizational autonomy. Political parties are very heterogeneously organized, with some organized only on the micro level (i.e., in one or several of the 212 municipalities) and others organized only on the macro level. Access to decision-making processes is normally restricted to party members. Whereas party members have the formal right to participate in decisions, the party leadership controls the candidate lists and the policy agendas. The details of internal party decision-making are not widely known to the public, as most decisions are made behind doors that are firmly shut. In the 2018 parliamentary elections, only two political parties managed to win more than 10% of votes.

Japan

Score 3

Parties in Japan are fairly insider-oriented, with policy and personnel decisions driven by leading politicians and their networks.

Japan's strongest party is the LDP (holding 259 of 465 seats in the lower house after the 2021 election). Its coalition partner, Komeito, holds 32 seats. The Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), which has for some time been the LDP's main rival, suffered a major blow before the 2017 election, when many of its lower house members left to form the Constitutional Democratic Party (CDP, 96 seats), an entity primarily devoted to opposing changes to the existing constitution.

The LDP has traditionally revolved around individual politicians, their personal local-level support organizations and the intra-party factions built by key party leaders. Local party chapters may play decisive roles in choosing a parliamentary candidate if there is no "natural" successor to the former incumbent. Ordinary party-member involvement is usually limited to membership in a local-level support organization for a politician, and is mainly (but not solely) based on mutual material

interests: While members want tangible support for their communities, politicians want secure “vote banks” for (re-)election.

Party congresses offer little real opportunity for policy input by delegates. However, delegates from regional party branches have participated in party leader elections since the early 2000s. When Fumio Kishida was elected LDP president in September 2021, votes from party members in the various prefectures counted for half the votes cast in the first round of voting. If no candidate can secure majority in the first round, the party’s Diet members decide the contest. While the LDP has also paid some lip service to increased intra-party democracy, it has shied away from major internal reforms.

Citation:

Eric Johnston, The LDP’s leadership race kicks into high gear this week: This is how it will go down, The Japan Times, 14 September 2021, <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2021/09/14/national/politics-diplomacy/ldp-presidential-campaign-explainer/>

Romania

Score 3

The major Romanian parties remain controlled by leaders that are isolated from the party membership and seemingly have little patience and desire to consult local organizations before making decisions. Delegates to national congresses are selected by local organizations in ways that are not always open and transparent, and which allow relatives of current leaders to be promoted. Romanian parties remain largely clientelistic, nepotistic structures in which the power of a handful of leaders outweighs that of large segments of the membership.

Slovakia

Score 3

The majority of Slovak parties are elite projects that are dominated by a few party leaders (Dolný/ Malová 2016; Gyárfášová 2020). Smer-SD, the dominant party until the 2020 elections, remains strongly centered around Robert Fico, who has led the party since its founding in 1999 and has remained its de facto head even after his resignation as prime minister in March 2018. The inner circle of the party and the number of party representatives with influence are rather limited. The party that gained most votes in the parliamentary elections, OĽaNO, also reflects the character of a personality driven party project with Igor Matovič, who founded the party in 2011 and has headed the party ever since. The program and public support of the party relies mainly on his image and his popularity. OĽaNO is an atypical formation without a membership base, classic party structures and standardized internal processes. Thus, OĽaNO resembles more a vaguely organized movement than an institutionalized party. The party is now confronted with two challenges: achieving sufficient inner consolidation and determining the future role of its founder Igor Matovič, who lost support by his erratic behavior during his short stint as prime minister. In addition to Smer-SD and OĽaNO, the only two parties that gained more than 10% of the votes in the 2020 parliamentary elections, two further parties of the

governing coalition – Sme-Rodina and SaS, but also the far-right L’SNS are leader-dominated. The only more inclusive party that has made it in parliament has been the party Za ľudí (For the People), which was founded by former President Andrej Kiska shortly before the 2020 elections.

Citation:

Dolný, B., D. Malová, D. (2016): Organizational Structures of Political Parties in Slovakia: Parties not for Members. In K. Sobolewska-Mysłik, B. Kosowska-Gąstoł, & P. Borowiec (Eds.), *Organizational Structures of Political Parties in Central and Eastern European Countries*. Kraków: Jagiellonian University Press, 391-418.

Gyárfášová, O. (2020): Slovenské voľby 2020: potvrdenie „stabilnej nestability.“ Prague: Heinrich Böll Stiftung Prague, March 6 (https://cz.boell.org/cs/Slovak_elections_2020).

Turkey

Score 2

The centralized structure of the Political Parties Law (Law 2820) does not encourage intra-party democracy. The right to dismiss local party organizations (Articles 19 and 20), and party members (Article 53), provides party leaders with unlimited powers and thus undermines internal party democracy.

As a general tendency, membership issues, party congresses and executive boards are not democratically managed in most political parties. Nomination processes are dominated by a few party elites or directly by the will of party leaders. Since no wings or cliques are tolerated within parties, in case of serious disagreements, either the party’s leaders tend to expel their adversaries, or opposition groups establish new parties on their own. The ultimate result of this tendency is “party inflation.”

Within the AKP, Erdoğan has no rivals for power. Following the AKP’s 2019 losses in some municipal elections, for instance, some of the party’s leading members, including former Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu, former Minister of Economy Ali Babacan and some current deputies resigned from the party after disciplinary proceedings were initiated. The CHP, on the other hand, introduced some amendments to its party statute that will enable the party assembly to delegate the selection of candidates to the central executive committee. However, that party’s 2018 presidential candidate, Muharrem İnce, established a new party, Memleket Partisi, after he lost a close leadership race to Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu. The MHP traditionally has a strong leader and a centralized structure. The absence of democracy within the party led to the formation of the İYİ Party by figures such as Meral Akşener and Koray Aydın. Among mainstream parties, the HDP respects intra-party democracy more than others by incorporating its multi-cultural voter base into the party cadres.

Kabasakal, M. (2014). Factors influencing intra-party democracy and membership rights: The case of Turkey. *Party Politics*, 20(5), 700-711.

Birgün. “CHP’de yönetmelik değişikliği: PM aday belirleme yetkisini MYK’ye devredebilecek,” 4 September 2019, <https://www.birgun.net/haber/chp-de-yonetmelik-degisikligi-pm-aday-belirleme-yet-kisini-myk-ye-devredebilecek-267223>

Indicator **Association Competence (Employers & Unions)**

Question **To what extent are economic interest associations (e.g., employers, industry, labor) capable of formulating relevant policies?**

41 OECD and EU countries are sorted according to their performance on a scale from 10 (best) to 1 (lowest). This scale is tied to four qualitative evaluation levels.

- 10-9 = Most interest associations are highly capable of formulating relevant policies.
- 8-6 = Many interest associations are highly capable of formulating relevant policies.
- 5-3 = Few interest associations are highly capable of formulating relevant policies.
- 2-1 = Most interest associations are not capable of formulating relevant policies.

Australia

Score 9 The major interest associations, which are run by the employers and business groups and the trade unions, have a history of proposing practical, plausible policies. The main explanation for this is that the government has a long history of involvement and policy consultation with most of the groups (for example, business groups are closely allied with the Liberal Party, farmers' and rural groups are allied with the National Party, and trade unions are allied with the Labor Party). Many elected representatives have at some point in their career been a member of one of these groups, further cementing relations. There are also considerable formal and informal networks linking the various groups to the major political parties, further consolidating the development of practical and coherent policies.

Citation:

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/sep/16/in-the-family-majority-of-australias-lobbyists-are-former-political-insiders>

<https://www.bca.com.au/campaigns>

<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/trade-union-membership/latest-release>

Denmark

Score 9 Given the corporatist tradition in Denmark, especially with regard to labor market issues, the country's major interest organizations are regularly involved in policymaking. The most recent examples include initiatives focusing on the employment of immigrants and lifelong learning. This policy setting enforces discipline on organizations. Although they promote their special interests, they also

have to bring them into a realistic political setting to have influence. This consensus tradition is most clearly seen in the labor market, where organizations have a tradition of settling issues to avoid political interference (the so-called Danish Model), and tripartite agreements are often made.

Citation:

Peter Munk Christiansen og Lise Togeby, *Magten i Danmark*. Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 2005.

Jørgen Grønnegård Christensen og Jørgen Elklit (eds.). *Det demokratiske system*. 3. udgave. Hans Reitzels Forlag, 2013.

Norway

Score 9

The major interest associations all propose practical, plausible policies. Many interest organizations have competent and skilled staffs, enabling them to formulate policies and proposals. The Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions and the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprises have for years been engaged in very close tripartite cooperation with the government. Through this process, these organizations – in combination with the government – have been able to prevent strikes, pursue a moderate wage policy and ensure moderate inflation and interest rates.

This cooperation has also been regarded as important in promoting gradual policy reforms in areas such as health insurance and pension plans. In their work, these interest organizations rely to a large extent on scholarly knowledge, and typically take a long-term perspective.

Similar patterns of organized cooperation are evident in many other policy fields. Employers' associations have traditionally been allied with the conservative parties, farmers' groups with the Center Party, and trade unions with the Labor Party. These ties are most explicit between the Labor Party and the labor unions, with the head of the labor-union confederation always being a member of the party's executive committee. The union confederation and the employers' association both have academics as advisers, and their proposals normally aim at consensus rather than at social confrontation.

In addition to traditional corporatist actors, several consultancy firms have been launched in recent years that seek to influence policymaking. Some, but not all, of these firms disclose their list of customers. Interest associations, which do not employ their own staff to influence policymaking, can hire lobbying services from consultancy firms. However, weaker economic groups do not have the sufficient available resources and are unable to pay for professional support.

Sweden

Score 9

Sweden has a long corporatist tradition. Although corporatism as a mode of governance has declined, economic interest associations are still important players in the policy process (Pierre, 2016).

The major business interest organizations and unions are certainly very capable of analyzing the economic situation and presenting policy proposals. As organized interests, they obviously pursue their respective agendas, but overall, the expertise and policy capacity of the major interest organizations is impressive. During the global economic crisis, for example, the interest associations showed a high degree of responsibility by not counteracting the crisis management of the government.

Citation:

Pierre, Jon. (ed.) 2016. "Oxford Handbook of Swedish Politics." Oxford University Press. Section 10.

United States

Score 9

A vast number of business associations are active in the United States. This is a reflection of the size and complexity of the American economy and of a political culture that fosters participation, but also of the opportunities for lobbying influence in a decentralized political system. The larger, wealthier associations have large professional staffs and can produce credible policy proposals with substantial supporting documentation. Given the large numbers of very small associations, it is not true that "most" business associations can present credible proposals. However, there are certainly several hundred business associations that can draft bills or amendments and present articulate, sophisticated arguments for their positions.

Labor union staff capacity has declined over several decades, as a result of the declining proportion of the workforce organized by unions (now about 11%). It is still sufficient to formulate relevant policy proposals in areas of interest. In general, labor unions are the principal interest organizations that represent the interests of low-income people. Thus, the decline in union capability is a potentially significant weakness of the U.S. political system.

Belgium

Score 8

Belgium has a high level of trade union membership and a strong tradition of social consensus implemented through strong and well-organized trade unions and employers' organizations. For instance, most proposals on wage regulation and employee protection are the result of negotiations between employers' associations and trade unions. Moreover, the trade unions and employers' organizations each have their own well-developed study services with technical (e.g., legal and budgetary) expertise, even covering topics outside their traditional focus areas.

When the outcome of negotiations are positive, proposals are validated by the government and translated into law. This continuous mechanism of cooperation forces these actors to present realistic and well-argued demands (budgeted and framed in legal terms), even if some bargaining and bluffing occurs.

However, it has also happened that negotiations have failed to produce a positive result. In particular, pension and minimum wage negotiations have previously been derailed.

It should be noted that, in contrast to political parties, employers' associations and trade unions are still structured at the national level. However, there are some elements within Belgium's social organizations that appear resistant to change, given a general conservatism and perceived need to protect the institution.

Citation:

<https://plus.lesoir.be/254159/article/2019-10-16/retour-la-case-depart-sans-toucher-au-salaire-minimum>

Va-t-on ramener l'âge de la retraite à 65 ans?

<https://plus.lesoir.be/224006/article/2019-05-13/va-t-ramener-lage-de-la-retraite-65-ans?referer=%2Farchives%2Frecherche%3Fdatefilter%3Dlastyear%26sort%3Dweight%26word%3Dretraite>

La pension à 65 ans recalée

<https://plus.lesoir.be/212077/article/2019-03-13/la-pension-65-ans-recalée?referer=%2Farchives%2Frecherche%3Fdatefilter%3Dlastyear%26sort%3Dweight%26word%3Dretraite%2520pension>

Il faut centrer le débat sur l'âge légal de la pension

<https://plus.lesoir.be/art/d-20190515-3TYHK4?referer=%2Farchives%2Frecherche%3Fdatefilter%3Dlastyear%26sort%3Dweight%26word%3Dretraite%2520pension>

La pension à mi-temps passe, les doutes restent

<https://plus.lesoir.be/art/d-20190403-3T61XD?referer=%2Farchives%2Frecherche%3Fdatefilter%3Dlastyear%26sort%3Dweight%26word%3Dretraite%2520pension>

Canada

Score 8

Many business associations, employers' groups and trade unions develop policy proposals that identify the causes of problems, make use of scholarly research to support their analysis, propose technically feasible measures to attain policy objectives, take account of long-term interests, and anticipate policy effects. Among the most competent associations in this respect are the Business Council of Canada, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters Association, the Canadian Labor Congress and Unifor, formerly the Canadian Auto Workers. Reflecting Canada's federal structure, many employers' associations and trade unions are provincial in nature. In Québec, where something close to a corporatist model has existed since the 1960s, trade unions such as the Confédération des syndicats nationaux have been influential policy voices, especially on issues such as the French language, socioeconomic inequalities, and gender.

Finland

Score 8 Employers' and employees' organizations became involved in a series of comprehensive income-policy agreements in 1968 concerning wages, working conditions, and social-welfare programs and legislation. While this institutional arrangement for cooperation between government and associations has since slightly eroded, it created a framework for advancing responsible, considered and expert-based policy proposals on the part of the large economic-interest associations. Other mechanisms, including associations' participation as members and experts in the committee system, have worked in the same direction. This corporatist structure is regularly criticized. Although not uncontroversial, this consensus style of policymaking has led to reasonable policies with fairly broad support. Recent trends indicate that corporatism is becoming increasingly important as support for and membership in traditional political parties is decreasing.

According to Greve et al. (2020) the role of trade unions and work councils as social partners has been more limited in Finland than in other Nordic countries. They were consulted during the preparation of the government support packages, but not to the extent seen in Denmark, for example. One reason for this could be that many unemployment-related issues (e.g., short-term work and wage supplement systems) were already covered by national regulation.

Citation:

Voitto Helander and Dag Anckar, *Consultation and Political Culture. Essays on the Case of Finland*, Commentationes Scientiarum Socialium, nr 19, 1983, Helsinki: The Finnish Society of Sciences and Letters.

Blom, Anders. 2018. *Taloudelliset eturyhmät politiikan sisäpiirissä: Tutkimus liike-elämän poliittisesta vaikuttamisesta kolmikantaisessa Suomessa 1968–2011*. Turun Yliopiston julkaisuja.

Blom, Anders. 2019. "Suomen malli murroksessa – edunvalvonnan ja korporatistimin uudet kuviot," <https://politiikasta.fi/suomen-malli-murroksessa-edunvalvonnan-ja-korporatistimin-uudet-kuviot/>

Greve, B, Blomquist, P, Hvinden, B, van Gerven, M. Nordic welfare states – still standing or changed by the COVID-19 crisis? *Soc Policy Adm.* 2020; 1– 17. <https://doi.org/10.1111/spol.12675>

Germany

Score 8 Economic interest associations like trade unions or employers' associations in Germany are well-functioning organizations endowed with rich analytical and lobbying resources. They are definitely able to develop policy strategies and proposals and to present alternatives to current politics. Both trade unions and employers' association have their own economic think tanks supporting their policy proposals through substantive research on costs and benefits of different options. Furthermore, these organizations also invest substantial resources in lobbying for their positions among the general public and do so successfully. For example, the decision to introduce a general statutory minimum wage had been preceded by trade unions' extensive public lobbying.

Iceland

Score 8 The main interest organizations in Iceland continue to have considerable influence on public policymaking and engagement with political parties.

The Confederation of Icelandic Employers (Samtök atvinnulífsins, SA), referred to as the employers' association, has close, informal ties to the right-wing Independence Party. Likewise, the Icelandic Confederation of Labor (Alþýðusamband Íslands, ASÍ) has close links to the parties on the left, although its formal ties to the Social Democratic Party were severed in 1942. Until its breakup in the 1990s, the cooperative movement, with its strong ties to the agricultural sector, was closely linked to the Progressive Party (Framsókn), which has its origins in the farmers' movement.

Closely associated with the Confederation of Icelandic Employers is the Iceland Chamber of Commerce, which – despite stating that all was well just before the 2008 collapse – continues to provide advice to the government.

A small group of vessel-owning oligarchs has amassed huge wealth through the discriminatory fisheries management system. They are widely viewed as holding significant political power, which they use to prevent reform of fisheries management, prevent the ratification of the new constitution and keep Iceland out of the European Union.

All major interest organizations have a staff of skilled employees who create research-based policy proposals that are usually well grounded, coherent and in line with the organizations' goals.

Citation:

Gunnarsson, Styrmir (2009), *Umsátrid (The Siege)*, Veröld, Reykjavík.

Israel

Score 8 Israel has a vibrant business community that often interacts with government departments and Knesset representatives in order to advance its agenda in Israel and abroad. At least three major business groups – the Federation of Israeli Chambers of Commerce, the Manufacturers' Association of Israel and a group for coordination between financial organizations – actively pursue policy goals through legal, regulatory or project-based perspectives. In general, Israeli businesses are well represented in the political sphere, and most economic-interest associations are highly capable of formulating relevant policy proposals. However, there is a significant degree of social inequality in this practice, as the Arab business sector seldom enjoys such close and productive ties with the government.

In addition, the Labor Federation is involved in policymaking. Given its weakening position over the last decades, its influence (e.g., in the adoption of the new pension legislation) was conditioned on cooperating with business associations (most prominently, the Manufacturers' Association).

Citation:

Israel. The Knesset. Protocol Number 827 from the Economic Affairs Committee. October 15th, 2018. (Hebrew). Retrieved from <https://main.knesset.gov.il/Activity/committees/Economics/Pages/CommitteeProtocols.aspx?ItemID=2074129>

"Law Bill." In the Knesset's official website (regarding "Bill of Limitation of the Advertisement and Marketing of Tobacco Products Act (Amendment Number 7), 2018," by several MKs). Last Seen: October 28th, 2018. (Hebrew). <https://main.knesset.gov.il/Activity/Legislation/Laws/Pages/LawBill.aspx?t=lawsuggestionssearch&lawitemid=2020202>.

Linder-Gantz, Roni. "The Advertisement Blitz: The Smoking Companies Are Out for a Final Battle." In TheMarker website. October 15th, 2018. (Hebrew). <https://www.themarker.com/news/health/premium-1.6554561>.

Linder-Gantz, Roni. "The Day the Smoke around the Tobacco Advertisement Cleared – and the MKs Chose the Side of the Public." In TheMarker website. June 26th, 2018. (Hebrew). <https://www.themarker.com/consumer/health/premium-1.6213257>.

Miller, Elhanan, "Finance minister says government has failed Arabs," Times of Israel, 24.02. 2014, <http://www.timesofisrael.com/finance-minister-says-government-has-failed-arabs/>.

"The chamber for coordination between financial organizations," Maot website (Hebrew)

Solomon, Shoshanna, "Netanyahu to head panel to tackle high-tech workers pinch," The Times of Israel, 28.12.2016, <http://www.timesofisrael.com/netanyahu-to-head-panel-to-tackle-high-tech-workers-pinch/>

The Industry Association Press Releases, <https://bit.ly/2ANM3kP>

"Israel Business Conference 2016," Globes, <http://www.globes.co.il/news/home.aspx?fid=8750>

"Netanyahu to open Globes Business Conference on Wed," Globes, 18.12.2018: <https://en.globes.co.il/en/article-netanyahu-to-open-globes-business-on-wed-1001265135>

Latvia

Score 8

The National Tripartite Cooperation Council (Nacionālā trīspusējās sadarbības padome, NTSP), which links employers' associations, business associations and trade unions, provides a good example of effective association involvement in policy formulation. The members of the NTSP are all capable of proposing concrete measures, and work with academic figures in order to ensure quality inputs into the policy dialogue.

Employers' and business associations are continually engaged with the policy process on specific issues such as energy policy, formulation of the national development plan and tax policy. The Latvian Chamber of Commerce (LTRK) engages in ongoing dialogue with the government, and along with the slightly less influential Employers' Confederation of Latvia (LDDK), forms a part of the tripartite council.

The Foreign Investors' Council (FICIL) has a strong capacity for presenting well-formulated policy proposals. FICIL conducts an annual structured dialogue at the prime-ministerial level. The actions that come out of these dialogues are subsequently implemented and monitored. The 2018 council meeting focused attention on labor availability and quality, governance issues within the education and transport sectors, public sector effectiveness (including digitalization, rule of law, and combating economic and financial crimes), and developments in the energy sector.

Citation:

1. The Foreign Investors' Council in Latvia, Information available: <http://www.ficil.lv/index.php/home/>, Last accessed: 12.01.2022.

2. National Tripartite Cooperation Council, Agenda available at (in Latvian): <https://www.mk.gov.lv/lv/content/nacionalas-trispusejas-sadarbibas-padomes-sedes>, 12.01.2022.

Luxembourg

Score 8

Under Luxembourg's specific social-partnership model, the government consults with unions, employers' organizations and professional chambers over draft bills that touch on their members' interests. Furthermore, all opinions, as well as the modified draft bills, are published on the parliament's website. Unions and employers' organizations are consulted in every case; every draft bill is submitted to the appropriate employee organization (Chambre des Salariés) and to employers' organizations (Chambre de Commerce and Chambre des Métiers) if it concerns their members' interests. Civil society groups may also be included in the process, depending on the purpose of the draft bill or new policy.

The so-called tripartite social model is based on institutionalized and ongoing dialogue between the government, employers and trade unions on important economic and social issues, with the goal of reaching consensus. Nowadays, five institutions engage in ongoing social dialogue: the Economic Committee, the Economic and Social Council, the Tripartite Coordination Committee, the Permanent Committee on Labor and Employment and the Tripartite Steel Conference (although this latter organization is not continuously active). The most influential trade unions in Luxembourg are the OGBL, the LCGB and the CNFP.

Citation:

"Tripartite: Luxembourg's social model ". <https://luxembourg.public.lu/en/society-and-culture/political-system/tripartite.html>. Accessed 14 January 2022.

www.vosidees.lu. <https://www.vosidees.lu/>. Accessed 14 January 2022.

Netherlands

Score 8

For a long time, there was no lobbying culture in the Netherlands in the usual sense. Instead, prominent members of labor unions and business associations are regular members of high-level formal and informal networks that also include high-level

civil servants and politicians. For example, the day the government announced that it was going into crisis mode due to the coronavirus pandemic, the chairs of the two major employers' and labor unions met with the ministers of Finance, Economic Affairs and Climate, and Social Affairs and Employment. In the next months, they cobbled together the generous and fast wage-support system that would ultimately save jobs and business activities during the coronavirus lockdowns (see "Economy" and "Labor Markets"). Members of these networks discuss labor market and other important socioeconomic policy issues. These processes have become institutionalized. For instance, there are tripartite negotiations, especially organized in and through the Socioeconomic Council (Sociaal-Economische Raad, SER), in which employers, employees and government experts are fixed discussion partners in government decision-making regarding labor issues. A similar process takes place for regular negotiations with economic interest associations.

The analytic capacities of business and labor associations are well-developed. For example, the strongest labor union, FNV, has claimed success in influencing government policy on stricter hiring and firing rules, the pension agreement, and stricter regulation of a flexible labor market. However, membership in trade unions has shown a continuous decline, particularly among younger people. In addition, members and supporters of trade unions and professional and commercial associations frequently have more radical opinions than their representatives. In recent demonstrations, especially by farmers, teachers and hospital workers, association representatives in negotiations with the government were called back by their followers.

Since the mid-1970s, employers' associations have consistently been in favor of the liberalization of labor market institutions. They have supported efforts to decentralize, deregulate, individualize and more recently also to decollectivize wages, working-time arrangements and collective bargaining. In the early 2010s, however, even while employers organizations maintained that labor-cost moderation was necessary, they started to acknowledge that the purchasing power of large groups of (middle-class) employees was lagging behind and that in some sectors, labor shortages had reached dangerous levels. Moderation among unions and the presence of center-right (dominated) governments reduced the urgency of dismantling the Dutch corporatist framework throughout most of the post-1970s period. Most demands made by employers thus ended up in the general agreements; however, this posture has changed, and employers organizations have several times questioned the need for collective bargaining and corporatist decision-making. The weakness of the unions has clearly emboldened employers, which could signal more labor market unrest in the (near) future.

This institutionalized "poldering" model has seen the rise of a parallel venue of strong business lobbying. There is now a Professional Association for Public Affairs (BVPA) that boasts 600 members (four times the number of parliamentarians) and a special public-affairs professorship at Leiden University. The professionalization of

lobbying is said to be necessary in order to curb unethical practices such as the creation of foundations or crowdsourcing initiatives as a means of pursuing business interests. However, the “quiet politics” (Culpepper) of business lobbying through organizations such as the Commissie Tabaksblat, the Amsterdam (later Holland) Financial Center (Engelen), or Dutch Trade Investment Board (Follow the Money) has proven more than successful in influencing public policies on corporate governance, easing regulation of the banking and financial sector, keeping taxes for business low, and influencing the Dutch stance on Russian gas imports. There is convincing evidence that in terms of election programs and promises, over the long run, Dutch households have been systematically disadvantaged compared to corporations and business. For example, tax reductions and exemptions for business are systematically higher than for ordinary citizens (see also “Taxes”).

Citation:

P.D. Culpepper, 2010. *Quiet Politics and Business Power. Corporate Control in Europe and Japan*, Cambridge University Press

W. Bolhuis, *Van woord tot akkoord: een analyse van verkiezingsprogramma's en regeerakkoorden, 1885-2017*, Universiteit Leiden

W. Bolhuis, *Elke formatie faalt. Verkiezingsbeloftes die nooit werden waargemaakt*, Uitgeverij Brooklyn, 2018

NRC, Marée, 3 November 2021. Dit jaar opnieuw sterke daling vakbondsleden

NTC, Pelgrim and Sterk, 8 March 2021. Han Busker: 'De flexibele arneidsmarkt werd gezien als natuurkracht'

NRC, Heck, 5 April 2021. De ceo kan de minister altijd bellen

Follow the Money, Keyzer and Geurts, 11 September 2021. Shell fluisterde Nederlands standpunt in over gas uit Rusland

Boumans, S. (2021). Neoliberalisation of industrial relations: The ideational development of Dutch employers' organisations between 1976 and 2019. *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, 1-22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0143831X211020086>

Spain

Score 8

During the period under review, the government actively engaged in dialogue with Spain's biggest trade unions (UGT and CCOO) and employers' associations. The social stakeholders and the government signed several agreements, including on the increase in the minimum wage, the plans for temporary layoffs during the pandemic (ERTEs), a benefit programs for self-employed workers, the Economic Reactivation and Employment Agreement, and the Remote Working Agreement. The government also convened many meetings with trade unions (UGT and CCOO) and employers' associations to structure and monitor the various economic and social responses to the pandemic.

In November 2020, the government, trade unions and employers' associations set up the Social Dialogue Board for Recovery, Transformation and Resilience. This board serves as a channel for the regulation of dialogue between the government and social stakeholders regarding the design and implementation of the national recovery plan.

More generally, the main economic interest associations are coping with increasingly constrained resources and a fragmentation of both the labor market and the economic landscape (as is also happening to political parties). But they remain closely involved in the policymaking process at the executive level.

Citation:

Gobierno de España (2021), Plan de Recuperación, Transformación y Resiliencia https://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/temas/fondos-recuperacion/Documents/160621-Plan_Recuperacion_Transformacion_Resiliencia.pdf

Austria

Score 7

The role of economic interest groups is still very strong in Austria: Significant associations include the Austrian Economic Chambers (Wirtschaftskammern) and the Federation of Austrian Industry (Die Industriellenvereinigung) for business and employers; the Austrian Trade Union Federation (Österreichischer Gewerkschaftsbund) and the Austrian Federal Chamber of Labor (Arbeiterkammern) for employees; and the Chamber of Agriculture (Landwirtschaftskammern) for farmers. In many cases, interest groups continue to formulate (almost) complete laws by themselves, which parliament subsequently only needs to approve. These groups' ability to shape politics may have been reduced as a result of Austria's integration into the European Union, but – in domestic politics – their influence remains strong. Though formally independent of political parties, the groups have various individual links to the parties, especially to the Social Democratic Party and the Austrian People's Party. Moreover, their influence is enhanced by their practice of acting in a coordinated, neo-corporatist way through the social-partnership network.

This has changed to some extent in recent years. The SPÖ's closest allies have lost ground after the party's fall from power in 2017. The formation of a new coalition government between the ÖVP and the Greens early in 2020 continued the post-2017 policies. In fact, the ÖVP-Green government was the first national government that did not include any minister representing the government's social partners (Sozialpartner).

Citation:

<https://www.addendum.org/politometer/eine-regierung-ohne-sozialpartner/#:~:text=Eine%20Regierung%20ohne%20Sozialpartner%20%2D%20Addendum&text=Die%20t%C3%BCrkis%2Dgr%C3%BCne%20Koalition%20ist,Minister%20oder%20Staatssekret%C3%A4r%20vertreten%20ist.&text=hatte%20zuvor%20eine%20Funktion%20in%20einer%20der%20sozialpartnerschaftlichen%20Organisationen.>

Czechia

Score 7

The main employers' unions and trade unions both have considerable resources and expertise with which to develop coherent policies. Trade unions have a significant competence with regard to labor relations and economic policy more generally; they

can lobby ministries and parliament and influence government directly through tripartite consultation structures. Employers also have access to considerable resources, but have a different agenda, favoring a less regulated labor market and lower business taxes. To strengthen their position, the trade unions align their position with European legislation. Consultation with the trade unions and employers intensified during the pandemic period and their input into the recovery plan was substantial.

Greece

Score 7 Interest associations often make relevant policy proposals in a few policy areas, such as macroeconomic policy, incomes and pensions, and labor relations.

Probably the most efficient interest association in this respect is the Hellenic Federation of Enterprises (SEV). SEV's think tank is the Institute of Economic and Industrial Research (IOBE). The General Confederation of Workers of Greece (GSEE) counts on its think tank, the Labor Institute (INE), for information and advice on policy matters. The remainder of the large interest associations, such as the national association of merchants (ESEE) and the association of artisans, craftsmen and owners of small enterprises (GSEVE), have relatively less well-resourced and smaller think tanks. The same holds for the General Confederation of Civil Servants (ADEDY), which has revived its own think tank (ADEDY Polykentro)

As in the past, in the period under review, the government only periodically consulted with economic interest associations. Limited consultation was the result of the COVID-19 crisis. Naturally, government ministers appeared at all major events staged by economic interest associations (e.g., annual conventions and specific conferences) and submitted drafts of government policy to the scrutiny of interest associations, including the government plan for the development of national economy (the Pissarides Plan).

Citation:

The opinions expressed by INE, a GSEE think tank supporting labor unions, are available at <https://www.inegsee.gr/> (in Greek only).

The website of the think tank of ADEDY is available at <https://kpolykentro.gr/>

For opinions mostly reflecting the views of Greek industrialists, see the website of the IOBE think tank at http://iobe.gr/default_en.asp (English version of the website).

Ireland

Score 7 During the economic crisis the capacity of the trade unions and the employers' and farmers' associations to influence policy was seriously diminished. However, these associations are staffed by economists and other experts who conduct detailed background research and make detailed – if selective – cases to support their favored policies. They make detailed submissions to the Finance Ministry during the annual

budget process. The government takes some account of these arguments when preparing the budget and in formulating other policies.

Citation:

The number of independent commentaries and online policy forums has grown in recent years, see

<http://www.publicpolicy.ie/>

<http://www.irisheconomy.ie/>

<http://www.nerinstitute.net/>

<http://politicalreform.ie/>

<http://www.politics.ie/>

Italy

Score 7

The big-interest associations (employers' associations and trade unions) have developed research units which regularly use experts and rely upon scholarly knowledge. Their proposals are often detailed and based upon substantive policy know-how. However, it must be noted that trade unions generally have a rather conservative outlook, and are reluctant to adopt innovative policies in the areas of labor relations or pensions.

Employers' associations (the most important of which being Confindustria) in general adopt a more innovative perspective, and are less defensive of the status quo. However, their policies are much more prudent on issues associated with increasing economic competitiveness or reducing government subsidies. In recent years, two of the largest trade unions (CISL and UIL) have shown a somewhat greater willingness to negotiate with the government and employers' associations over measures designed to increase the flexibility of labor relations.

Japan

Score 7

Japan's leading business and labor organizations regularly publish policy proposals aimed at influencing public debate and policymaking. The three umbrella business federations – Keidanren, the Japan Association of Corporate Executives (Doyukai), and the Japanese Chamber of Industry and Commerce (Nissho) – as well as Rengo, the leading trade-union federation, try to impact policy by publishing policy papers and participating in government advisory committees. As the business sector's financial support of political parties has declined and major companies have globalized their operations, politicians may have become less willing to accommodate the views of these interest groups.

While there is an obvious scramble for influence between Rengo and the business organizations, there is also a notable degree of competition among the business organizations themselves. For instance, Keidanren is dominated by large enterprise groups, and has been somewhat slow in demanding further economic opening. Critics also contend that its membership policies are too conservative, de facto keeping startups and tech companies at bay. However, the accession of new members such as Facebook in 2019 may indicate that the federation is trying to

adapt. The Doyukai is characterized more by strong independent companies, and has been outspoken in demanding a more open business environment.

Citation:

On 70th anniversary, top business lobby looks at what distance to keep from politics, The Mainichi, 31 May 2017, <https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20170531/p2a/00m/0na/021000c>

Shigenori Arai, Facebook joins Keidanren, Japan's leading business lobby, Nikkei Asian Review, 2 July 2019, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Business/Companies/Facebook-joins-Keidanren-Japan-s-leading-business-lobby>

Malta

Score 7

Economic interest associations have structures capable of formulating relevant public policies. The greater resources commanded by economic interest associations enable them to employ highly qualified personnel and consult qualified academics according to the policy issue involved. The larger trade unions have their own research officers and can also draw on the expertise of the Center for Labor Studies (CLS) at the University of Malta which was established to facilitate the trade union sector. Trade unions also use existing studies or academic and specialist support. EU support funds and structures such as internship programs have strengthened non-economic interest associations, allowing them to produce detailed research in their area of expertise. Their strength was demonstrated during the pandemic and through close consultation with government.

Citation:

https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/110982/business_aviation_groups_ask_maltese_government_to_reconsider_covid19_travel_measures#.YbsiXsqZOa4

<https://webmail.gov.mt/password>

https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/109254/covid19_government_launches_20_million_financial_package_and_tax_credits#.Ybsi98qZOa4

New Zealand

Score 7

There are few well-organized and well-staffed interest groups in New Zealand. The largest and most prominent are the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions (bringing together over 320,000 members in 27 affiliated unions), Federated Farmers, and the Chambers of Commerce, and BusinessNZ. All are involved in policy formation and dissemination, and all seek to influence government policy. However, there is an underlying asymmetry. During the 1990s and 2000s business interests relied on the work of the New Zealand Business Roundtable, an organization of chief executives of major business firms. In 2012, this merged with the New Zealand Institute to form the New Zealand Initiative (NZI), a libertarian think tank that lobbies for pro-market economic and social policies, although the NZI does not have the same degree of networked influence as its predecessors.

Citation:

Business New Zealand – Submissions: <http://www.businessnz.org.nz/submissions> (accessed October 24, 2015).

New Zealand Council of Trade Unions, About us (<https://www.union.org.nz/about/>)

The New Zealand Initiative: <http://nzinitiative.org.nz/> (accessed October 24, 2015).

The National Business Review: Roundtable and NZ Institute Morph Into New Libertarian Think Tank: <http://www.nbr.co.nz/article/roundtable-and-nz-institute-morph-nz-initiative-ck-115751> (accessed October 9, 2014).

South Korea

Score 7

Business associations such as the Korean Employers Federation and the Federation of Korean Industries, as well as labor-union umbrella groups such as the Federation of Korean Trade Unions and the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU), have some expertise in developing policy proposals. They are supported by think tanks that provide scholarly advice. However, these groups are relatively weak in comparison to their most powerful members – that is, business conglomerates and company-level trade unions. Some individual businesses such as Samsung, LG and Hyundai have their own think tanks that produce high-quality research and are able to analyze and provide alternatives to government policies. Under the Park government, major business organizations supported by large conglomerates had significant influence over the formulation of policies. Under the Moon administration, the influence of business groups has remained strong, if somewhat contradictory. Labor organizations have come to wield considerable power in formulating major social and economic policies, thanks to the Moon government's more labor-friendly stance.

Switzerland

Score 7

Employers' organizations and trade unions in Switzerland are pragmatic and avoid rigidly ideological stances. Of course, the major interest organizations do have their ideologies, but this does not prevent them from entering rational discussions with other organizations and political parties. Furthermore, interest organizations in general have access to more substantial professional resources and often have a better-informed view of problems than do political parties. Thus, despite the defense of their own interests, associations often provide better policy proposals than do parties.

The influence of employers' organizations has declined as single firms or small groups have elected to engage in their own lobbying activities. Internal differences have also split these organizations.

United Kingdom

Score 7

Major business associations propose practical policy solutions, which are rooted in a realistic assessment of the circumstances in which they will be carried out. Until recently, the polarization between the major parties had diminished, especially in the field of socioeconomic policy matters. The positions of the two main parties had appeared to diverge in the 2019 general election. However, in the course of the pandemic, the essential role of the state was broadly accepted by both business and labor interests. Especially with the Brexit decision, there is little incentive for business associations or trade unions to engage in wishful thinking if they want to be taken seriously in the national policy discourse. However, some economic interests do propose somewhat more provocative ideas.

The process of the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union led to some more assertive stances both from business (concerned especially about threats to its access to European markets and curbs on skilled immigrant workers) and trade unions (notably around protections deriving from EU rules). Some business groups were, however, more concerned about what they perceive as excessive regulatory burdens associated with EU membership. Although British business associations were divided over Westminster's political ties to Brussels, access to the European Single Market was at the very heart of Britain's economic interest, namely their world leading financial and insurance industries. Overall, the influence of economic interest groups is relatively low-key, though not insubstantial. Several international businesses, such as Airbus and certain Japanese investors, were vocal during the Brexit debates. Several more international businesses (e.g., Nissan and BMW) have made it clear since the referendum result that disruptions to their densely woven supply chains across the European Single Market will negatively affect their British production facilities. While somewhat masked by reduced trade volumes as a result of the pandemic, border frictions have certainly arisen, but with more pronounced effects on SMEs than larger companies.

Despite being capable of formulating policies, the eventual result of the EU-UK negotiations (namely a comparatively "hard" Brexit) indicates that the influence of associations on both sides of industry must be judged relatively minor in the face of clear political preferences. As the pandemic recedes, businesses are starting to express concerns about increased taxation and the – so far – limited changes in regulatory measures, while trade unions are worried about the rising cost of living.

Bulgaria

Score 6

The capacity of the major employers' and business associations to make policy proposals is relatively well developed. These bodies can influence and propose policies in at least three ways: first, through their participation in the National Council for Tripartite Cooperation; second, through various EU-funded projects

aimed at improving competitiveness and the business environment; and third, through their own capacity to perform research, formulate proposals and initiate public debates. All major associations were relatively active in this regard throughout the period in review. They also cooperate with academic institutions and scholars, think tanks and other interest groups.

In Bulgaria there are two trade union confederations, both represented in the National Council for Tripartite Cooperation. In contrast to the employers' associations, the unions rely more heavily on their internal expertise in drafting and promoting proposals, cooperating comparatively less with academia and external scholars. Most reports and proposals drafted by the trade unions go beyond labor relations, and relate to taxation, transfers, foreign investors and other political issues.

Estonia

Score 6

The Estonian Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) is comprised of 18 branch unions. In comparison to many western European countries, its policy-formulation capacity is rather weak. The head office includes the secretariat that prepares various documents, including draft-law proposals, and organizes cooperation between the members of the confederation; there is no special research or analysis unit responsible for preparing concrete policy proposals. Trade unions are typically invited to contribute to policymaking processes initiated by the government.

The Estonian Employers' Union (EEU) has been more active proposing policies and its analytic capacity has significantly increased in recent years. For example, the EEU was behind the Governance Reform Radar initiative and is closely linked to the State Reform Foundation, which has produced a detailed list of reform proposals. Similar positive change is also visible regarding the ETUC. Both organizations have a "policy impact" section on their websites. Meanwhile, support from the European Social Fund has played an important role in capacity-building. Both the ETUC and EEU make use of various measures (e.g., training programs, hiring analysts and requesting studies) envisaged in the 2014 – 2020 programming period.

Lithuania

Score 6

Most Lithuanian interest associations, including employers' associations and trade unions, have a rather limited ability to formulate well-crafted policies. They typically lack skilled research staff, and only rarely engage in cooperation with academic bodies or individual experts to commission impact assessments of draft legal initiatives. The Investors' Forum, which represents foreign investors in Lithuania, is one of the exceptions, as it has regular annual meetings with the government and provides policy recommendations based on its members' input. This association successfully advocated the adoption of a more flexible labor code as part of the new

“social model.” The Infobalt IT industry association is also actively engaged in representing its interests in the e-governance policy area. Some economic-interest organizations, including the Lithuanian Confederation of Industrialists (which is represented on the Tripartite Council and the European Economic and Social Committee), have improved their policy-formulation capacities. Some business associations and even individual businesses support think tanks. In 2019, the University of Pennsylvania recognized the Lithuanian Free Market Institute as being among the most influential public policy centers in Central and Eastern Europe, ranking it 152th in the region. An accord signed by the government, business organizations, and trade unions in October 2017 encourages employee participation in trade unions and the formation of business associations as well as supports the capacity-building efforts of social partners.

Citation:
University of Pennsylvania. “2019 Global Go To Think Tanks.”
https://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1017&context=think_tanks

Mexico

Score 6

With regard to economic interest organizations, there is clear asymmetry. Trade unions are not sophisticated organizations in Mexico, while employers and business associations mostly are. However, these organizations tend to be dominated by a small group of empowered agents who guide most of their policy positions and decision-making processes. The collective interest of those supposedly represented by the association is seldom the one that prevails. A good example of this is the Employers Confederation of the Mexican (COPARMEX): it would be in their best interest to push for a tax consolidation (combined reporting) reform. However, because it is not in the interest of the most influential members of the organization (frequently owners of the largest companies in the country), this issue is almost completely out of the organization’s agenda.

Due to the anti-corruption efforts of the new government, several union leaders are facing corruption charges, including the leader of Pemex’s workers’ union. In addition, the former CEO of Pemex is also facing corruption charges.

In contrast to its predecessors, the new government is cooperating more with NGOs, and social movements and activists, which has at least partly counterbalanced the traditional weight of established interest associations.

Poland

Score 6

Poland has a relatively developed universe of interest associations. Business associations and trade unions have become increasingly professional over time. The trade unions, especially NSZZ Solidarność, used to have quite friendly relations with the PiS government, which have now deteriorated due to the government bypassing

trade unions over decisions regarding COVID-19 measures. Trade unions are also more critical of the school reforms and have supported the various teachers' strikes. Leading business associations such as the Konfederacja Lewiatan and the Business Center Club (BCC) have the expertise and resources to carry out research and formulate elaborate reform proposals. Konfederacja Lewiatan monitors many draft bills, and its spokespeople maintain a strong media presence. There are also a number of smaller associations that organize internationally known events such as the European Forum for New Ideas (EFNI), which annually invites leading public intellectuals, academics, and politicians, both Polish and European, to the EFNI conference in Sopot. All associations complain about not being involved in government policy discussions, despite the formal existence of the Council of Social Dialogue.

Slovakia

Score 6

In Slovakia, business associations and unions alike have some policy competence. Business associations are in a better position to provide full-blown policy proposals as they have more resources and some of them run or support think tanks. Trade unions are less well equipped and have suffered from fragmentation. Some trade unions, including those representing medical doctors, nurses and teachers, can analyze the impact of decisions and formulate relevant policies. KOZ SR, the main Trade Union Confederation representing almost 30 sectoral unions, has focused primarily on increasing the minimum wage and an assortment of less controversial issues such as workplace security.

Slovenia

Score 6

In Slovenia, with its strong corporatist tradition, economic-interest associations are very well organized, and possess relatively strong analytical capacities to propose and assess policies. Most economic and social policies are discussed in detail in the Economic and Social Council, a tripartite body. Trade unions and employers' associations do not have their own research institutes but cooperate with universities and think tanks. Trade unions' analytical capacities have suffered from the fragmentation associated with the coexistence of seven separate union confederations. In the period under review, however, there were some setbacks for the Economic and Social Council, despite an increase in meetings, as employee representatives pulled out of the council in May 2021, accusing the government of breaking the rules of social dialogue.

Chile

- Score 5** Policy proposals by economic-interest groups do address relevant topics and are not always short-sighted or untenable; however, they tend to be narrow and largely guided by the groups' interests. Unions as a socioeconomic interest group are relatively weak, and their influence in formulating policies relevant to their interests is quite limited. Exceptions to this rule of thumb do occur.

Portugal

- Score 5** A few employers' associations and trade unions are capable of formulating relevant policies. However, their proposals are largely reactive to government measures rather than being proactive in setting policy debate. While employers and trade unions have expressed dissatisfaction at some policies these tend to be reactions to specific government measures rather than ex ante and general policy proposals. And, as most of the policies regarded austerity, to which the government is no longer committed, they have even less relevance today.

Turkey

- Score 5** The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges (TOBB) is the most influential business association in Turkey, representing more than 1.2 million enterprises and members of various industry and business chambers. The Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey (TEPAV), affiliated with TOBB University in Ankara, provides extensive surveys in various fields. The pro-Western, Istanbul-centric Turkish Industrialists' and Entrepreneurs' Association (TÜSİAD) and the conservative, Anatolian-centric Independent Industrialists' and Entrepreneurs' Association (MÜSİAD), also have R&D units and sponsor reports on political reforms, education, healthcare, security, and migration.

Among labor unions, the ideological split between secular unions such as the Confederation of Public Workers' Unions (KESK) and the Confederation of Revolutionary Trade Unions of Turkey (DİSK) and the more conservative-Islamic Confederation of Turkish Real Trade Unions (Hak-İş) tends to prevent common action. In many instances, this has led the government to offer wage increases that are well below real inflation rates.

Citation:

Şahin, A., & Söylemez, A. (2017). Sendikalara Yönelik Politikaların Belirlenmesinde Sendikaların Rolü Ve 6356 Sayılı Sendikalar Kanunu. *Sosyal Ekonomik Araştırmalar Dergisi*, 17, 135-144.

Croatia

Score 4

Trade unions cover about one-quarter of employees. Union membership is declining and is higher in the public than in the private sector. Like most other economic interest associations, trade unions have focused on opposing government proposals, but have lacked the will and ability to develop their own proposals. In 2019, trade unions became more active and the three trade union confederations – Union of Autonomous Trade Unions of Croatia (UATUC), Independent Trade Unions of Croatia (NHS) and Association of Croatia Trade Unions (Matica) – led a campaign to collect signatures for a petition to hold a referendum on changes to the pension system reform. The teachers' unions orchestrated a strike in 2019. Like other public sector trade unions, however, they have failed to propose measures to improve the quality of public services and have focused only on securing salary hikes.

There is only one representative association for employers, the Croatian Employers' Association (HUP). The HUP carries out some policy analysis relating to institutional reforms. The HUP publishes thematic articles through its newspaper and electronic bulletin. It presents positions on current economic themes through press conferences and media campaigns. However, effective coordination between HUP members in designing their own solutions or seriously challenging government is lacking, since many employers are heavily dependent on state contracts. The Chamber of Trades and Crafts, which has been particularly vocal in making proposals concerning vocational education, has played a more constructive role.

In April 2020, the Croatian Employers' Association (Hrvatska udruga poslodavaca, HUP) hired a new chief economist, striving to raise the quality of the group's policy assessments. In 2021, the group published analytical projections related to the Recovery and Resilience Mechanism. Based on this information, HUP proposed to the government that 50% of the funds should go to the private sector. The government ignored this request, as evidenced by the fact that the HUP announced only a few weeks before the adoption of the policy that it was still not involved in the process of drafting this strategic document.

Cyprus

Score 4

Tripartite consultations (comprising the government, employers' associations and trade unions) are an established tradition in labor relations. The actors participate in order to promote their sectoral interests. They have no research institutes beyond study teams, with limited capacity and scope. The left-wing Pancyprian Federation of Labor (Παγκύπρια Εργατική Ομοσπονδία, PEO) is a rare exception. Its research institute regularly produces and publishes scientific studies on the economy and labor market.

Citation:

1. Hoteliers and unions agree on terms for collective agreement, Cyprus Mail, 28 August 2019, <https://cyprus-mail.com/2019/08/28/hoteliers-and-unions-agree-on-terms-for-collective-agreement/>

France

Score 4

Business associations, mainly the largest employer's union (Mouvement des Entreprises de France, MEDEF) but also agricultural associations, are able to formulate policy proposals and contribute to agenda setting. They have their own research capabilities, and can successfully lobby government and parliamentarians. Weaker organizations such as the association of small and medium-sized companies complain that their specific interests are marginalized by larger national groups and by the government. Trade unions are usually more reactive in spite or because of their relatively small membership numbers, with trade-union members accounting for less than 8% of the workforce (the lowest percentage within the OECD) and split into several rival organizations. The strategy of the unions is to compensate for their weakness at the company level by negotiating at the sectoral level or even at the national level, and by organizing mass protests in the streets. In areas where interest groups are united and strong, as in agriculture and education, they may have substantial influence, effectively making decisions jointly with the government. In other areas, the weakness of organized interests results in marginal involvement in decision-making, which may lead to friction during implementation. President Hollande's attempt to rejuvenate social dialogue produced limited results. A major problem is the political split within the trade-union movement. Two corporatist and "conservative" unions (CGT and FO), have taken advantage of their footing in the civil service and public sector, and tend to resist or reject any serious change. They have long relied upon mass mobilization to block reforms, but their ability to mobilize is diminishing except in a few sectors such as public transport. Meanwhile, two other trade unions (CFDT and UNSA) have adopted more moderate positions, and tried to balance advocacy for workers' interests with a constructive role in negotiating reforms. However, President Macron did not honor this constructive attitude, and did not try to forge reform alliances that included the unions. On the contrary, the government's rejection of the agreement between the social partners on the issue of unemployment insurance marks a recent failure of social concertation. The government contended that the agreement did not go far enough in tackling the costs and loopholes in a system that provided overgenerous benefits and too few incentives to accept available jobs. It presented its own reform bill, which passed parliament and has been in force since October 2021.

Hungary

Score 4

Domestic business associations, especially the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, have been capable of formulating relevant policies, but have proved loyal to the government. The trade unions have recently adopted a much more critical position toward the government. However, as their membership is small

(somewhat below 10%) and they suffer from fragmentation, they are weak and lack the resources to conduct thorough policy analysis.

Romania

Score 3

While policymaking in Romania is often influenced in a particularistic fashion by individual business interests, business associations are rather weak and have played a minor role in proposing concrete policy measures, much less offering cost-benefit analyses of the likely effects of such policies. Unions have not played an active role in policy formulation either. Union density has decreased considerably since 1990, with union structure fragmented and weakly developed. Unions have become increasingly distrusted as various leaders have joined political parties and sought political careers, often by sacrificing the interests of the union members to their own personal objectives. Moreover, when economic interest associations are capable of formulating relevant policies, this has been somewhat undermined by the unwillingness of the government to consider their views, as was demonstrated by the recent tax reforms which prompted significant criticism from labor organizations.

Indicator

Association Competence (Others)

Question

To what extent are non-economic interest associations capable of formulating relevant policies?

41 OECD and EU countries are sorted according to their performance on a scale from 10 (best) to 1 (lowest). This scale is tied to four qualitative evaluation levels.

- 10-9 = Most interest associations are highly capable of formulating relevant policies.
- 8-6 = Many interest associations are highly capable of formulating relevant policies.
- 5-3 = Few interest associations are highly capable of formulating relevant policies.
- 2-1 = Most interest associations are not capable of formulating relevant policies.

Iceland

Score 9

Iceland has many active, noneconomic interest organizations in various fields. Although many have a reasonable level of prominence, only a few have the capacity and competence to exert significant influence on public policy. The largest are the Organization of Disabled in Iceland (Öryrkjabandalagið), with 41 associated organizations and a staff of 19, and the Consumers' Association of Iceland (Neytendasamtökin), with a staff of six today and 7,300 members in 2018 (more recent information is not accessible). The Nature and Wildlife Conservation Organization (Náttúruverndarsamtök Íslands), which had 1,400 members and one member of staff in 2018, is also influential. This group has managed to feature prominently in public debates about hydro and geothermal power plants, and has expressed reservations about further construction of aluminum smelters around the country. Landvernd, the Icelandic Environmental Association with 6,000 members and 16 employees, also has influence.

Citation:

Landvernd, <http://landvernd.is/en>. Accessed 20th October 2019.

Consumers' Association of Iceland (Neytendasamtökin), <https://ns.is/>. Accessed 22 December 2018.

The Organisation of Disabled in Iceland (Öryrkjabandalagið), <https://www.obi.is/is/english> Accessed 20th October 2019.

Norway

Score 9

The government and the opposition parties listen carefully to the opinions expressed by business, farmers and union leaders. Intellectuals and academics also receive significant attention. Environmental groups have a substantial influence on environmental policy. The large organizations are professional in communicating

their messages to politicians and to the public, and are sometimes able to set the political agenda.

In addition, there are numerous formal arenas for routine consultation between governments and various kinds of interest organizations. In many areas, such consultations are formalized and have become a routine mode of policy formulation.

Sweden

Score 9 For noneconomic interest associations, their capacity to conduct analysis and produce relevant policy proposals varies significantly depending on their size.

For instance, in the environmental policy field, the major interest organizations have large staff that conduct high-quality studies and present highly relevant policy proposals. In other policy fields, small interest associations do not have the staff to produce high-quality policy proposals. Yet, if we assess the quality of noneconomic interest associations over the very broad range of all Swedish interest associations, most of them produce high-quality policy proposals (Pierre, 2016).

Citation:

Pierre, Jon. (ed.) 2016. "Oxford Handbook of Swedish Politics." Oxford University Press.

Australia

Score 8 A number of social interest groups, environmental groups and religious groups take responsible and well-considered positions and are, therefore, taken very seriously by government, although there are also groups that take extreme positions. The extent to which the proposals are well thought-out and feasible varies considerably. In general, the proposals from mainstream interest groups are of high quality in part because many elected representatives are drawn from these groups, or have had considerable contact with them prior to their election. The proposals also tend to be of high quality because of the expertise of the groups themselves and their narrow (often single-issue) interest, which means the groups can focus exclusively on a single problem and the ways in which it can be resolved.

Citation:

<https://theconversation.com/au/topics/australian-lobby-groups-28197>

Canada

Score 8 Interest groups and social movements are influential in shaping public policy in Canada. In some policy sectors, like the environment and climate change, they put forward concrete policy proposals backed up by costs/benefits analysis. In other areas, they work to put issues onto the political and policy agenda, and they propose principles upon which reforms can be based.

Some of the most influential noneconomic interest associations include Greenpeace Canada and the David Suzuki Foundation, which have been pushing for the federal government to adopt ambitious greenhouse gas emissions reductions targets (in 2021, the federal government committed to Canada reducing its greenhouse gas emissions to 40%-45% below 2005 levels by 2030); the National Council of Women of Canada, a long-standing organization advocating on women's issues; EGALE, a prominent association advocating for members of the LGBTQ+ community; Black Lives Matter Canada, a deconcentrated platform mobilized to struggle for racial minority rights; and religious-based organizations such as Focus on the Family Canada and Real Women of Canada, which have promoted socially-conservative positions like restrictions on abortion.

In addition to these associations, there are several influential think tanks, for example, the Institute for Research on Public Policy, the Fraser Institute, the CD Howe Institute, and Pembina Institute.

Denmark

Score 8

In accordance with the corporatist tradition, major interest organizations are often members of committees and commissions tasked with preparing legislation. They provide information for the government and legitimacy for the policies adopted, thereby facilitating implementation. Some civil society organizations may find it more difficult than the larger labor market organizations to get access to the government. Despite occasional criticism of the role of experts and commissions, they remain important.

Citation:

Peter Munk Christiansen og Lise Tøgeby, *Magten i Danmark*. Copenhagen: Gyldendal.
Jørgen Grønnegård Christensen og Jørgen Elklit (eds.), *Det Demokratiske system*. 4. udg. 2016.

Finland

Score 8

Most associations' policy-relevant positions are based on expert knowledge and feasibility analyses. In this sense, associations clearly contribute to the general quality of decision-making. True, exaggeration and one-sided arguments are in the very nature of interest organizations and the ensuing negotiation process, but the prevailing style of policymaking grants access to various and often competing interests. The contribution of interest associations' expert knowledge is therefore on the whole a valuable asset that enhances the quality of policymaking. Interest associations also have a high profile in public discourse, and often help shape public opinion. The fact remains, however, that the function of interest associations is to promote certain interests at the potential expense of others.

Germany

Score 8 As of July 2021, the government's official list contained 2,297 registered associations (Bundestag 2021), which marks a slight decline in numbers relative to 2019. One-third of those can be considered noneconomic interest associations. Within the process of policy formulation, interest-group expertise plays a key role in providing ministerial officials with in-depth information necessary to make decisions. Citizen groups, social movements and grassroots lobbying organizations are increasingly influential actors, particularly at the local level. Policy proposals produced by noneconomic interest groups can be described as reasonable, but their suggestions sometimes appear unrealistic.

Citation:

Bundestag (2021): Bekanntmachung der öffentlichen Liste über die Registrierung von Verbänden und deren Vertretern vom 8. Juni 2021, <https://www.bundestag.de/parlament/lobbyliste> (accessed: 15 July 2022).

Luxembourg

Score 8 Interest groups have and can have an important impact on policymaking. However, drawing on academic knowledge within Luxembourg is limited. Some larger non-governmental organizations maintain small research departments and propagate their opinions through publications (e.g., Caritas, Mouvement Écologique, CEFIS, SOLEP, IDEA Fondation, the Consumers Protection Association) and conferences, by offering comments on draft bills, or by proposing policies.

Interest group communications are often made via social media, as well as through other communication channels. For younger voters, important issues include refugee aid, the lack of affordable housing (i.e., the vacancy report project, "Leerstandsmelder"), heritage protection (including the "Mouvement patrimonial" association) and environmental protection (e.g., refill initiatives). In addition, the Zentrum für politisch Bildung, together with national and/or international bodies, organizes awareness-raising campaigns for children, parents, professionals and the general public on a wide range of topics (democracy, citizenship, political behavior, etc.). However, public participation in traditional organizations is on the decline.

New Zealand

Score 8 There is a rich tradition of consultation with societal groups during policy formulation. The degree of consultation with groups and individuals and the way in which their proposals have been dealt with is reported in regulatory impact statements (RIS). Recent RISs claim that consultation has had a substantive impact in several cases. Still, societal groups differ significantly in their organizational

resources and thus in their ability to make an impact on policy consultation processes. For example, the National Advisory Council on the Employment of Women (NACEW) is an advisory body to the Ministry for Women, and comprises five cross-sectoral women's organizations, including the Māori Women's Welfare League and Pacifica. Input is provided to the ministry on a quarterly basis. The Zero Carbon Act that was passed in early November 2019 is a case in point. While the consultation process received around 15,000 submissions – including those from environmental organizations and Māori groups – the law has been criticized for giving undue benefits to dairy industry lobby groups: the law stipulates a reduction of greenhouse gases to net zero by 2050, with the exception of methane from meat and dairy herds – New Zealand's largest greenhouse gas emission (the target for methane is a cut between 24%-47% from 2017 levels).

Citation:

Regulatory Impact Statement Information Release: <http://www.treasury.govt.nz/publications/informationreleases/ris> (accessed November 30, 2015).

Dunlop (2019) "Māori seek direct input into govt's climate change policy." Radio New Zealand (<https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/te-manu-korihi/388797/maori-seek-direct-input-into-govt-s-climate-change-policy>).

Toop (2019) "Agriculture's role in getting to Zero Carbon." Stuff (<https://www.stuff.co.nz/environment/117994549/agricultures-role-in-getting-to-zero-carbon>).

Slovakia

Score 8

Slovakia has a vibrant third sector and many competent interest associations whose analyses and proposals have featured prominently in the media. Slovakia has a strategy on civil society development, including a legislative and information portal, Slov-Lex, which allows the public to take an active role in the lawmaking process. Think tanks are an integral part of civil society, feature close links to academia and other experts and profoundly influence public discourse. They often serve as a substitute for political opposition. The election of former civil society activist Zuzana Čaputová as the first female president of Slovakia in 2019 represents a meaningful signal. Čaputová previously worked as a lawyer for the NGO-watchdog VIA IURIS, which focuses on improving the rule of law and judicial system. After the murder of Kuciak, VIA IURIS played an important role in informing the public and advocating for more integrity and transparency in the political sphere.

United Kingdom

Score 8

The United Kingdom has a tradition of close scrutiny of policy proposals. The quality and realism of policy proposals determines the degree to which any interest group is taken seriously in the country's national political discourse and there are many NGOs that have had a tangible impact on policy thinking. Green interest groups in particular have helped to shape the policies of successive governments. There are vocal campaigners for rural interests, while both sides of the migration debate have been nourished by interest groups.

There is an abundance of NGOs with often-narrow policy agendas that tend to be pushed forward without much consideration of the wider ramifications of the pursuit of their issue. By the same token, the diversity of such bodies allows a wide range of proposals to obtain a hearing. There is also a rich variety of think tanks able to feed ideas and specific proposals into policymaking, facilitated by the cultivation of links with decision-makers.

United States

Score 8 Public-interest or civil society associations' competence in proposing reasonable policy initiatives is unusually high in the United States. This high level of competence is in part due to associations' ability to attract highly qualified professional staff, and in part due to their media and communication skills. This holds true for groups such as the Environmental Defense Fund, Common Cause and the National Taxpayers' Union. From the standpoint of developing credible policies, these associations have the advantage of focusing on broad interests, rather than self-interested ones, as their central mission. However, they are subject to ideological biases and membership demands that tend to favor extreme views. Citizens' groups do not receive public support for their policy development or representational activities.

Belgium

Score 7 There is a wide range of civil society groups with influence on policy formation in Europe, and Belgium performs well in this regard. A broad diversity of noneconomic interest associations, at all levels from local to national, receive state funding, including environmental, cultural, religious/philosophical, sports/leisure and minority (such as individuals with handicaps) groups.

The largest groups can both make proposals and influence policy. Consociationalism also implies that some socially important decisions are made smoothly. The decisions to legalize same-sex marriage in 2003 and euthanasia in 2002 followed intense but quite dispassionate debates. The contrast with France or the United States over similar issues is all the more striking.

The main reason why this can happen is again related to the predominance of political parties. Some groups and associations that receive funding either initially have, or subsequently develop, preferential political relationships with political parties and/or government actors. This means that social groups, associations and (to some extent) some leaders and cadres of publicly funded educational institutions often have long-standing ties to a given political party. It implies that there is a strong incentive for noneconomic interest associations to propose policies, and further to ensure that these proposals are well founded, as there is a high probability that the proposals will somehow enter into the parliamentary debates. In addition,

many civil society groups attempt to influence policy via the (all important) ministerial cabinets; this may be efficient in terms of exerting influence over policy formulation, especially when some interpersonal and partisan ties exist.

Obviously, the negative aspect of this structure is its dependence on public funding. On the positive side, some groups are able to coalesce into broader umbrella organizations (e.g., around environmental protection), which are able to hire stable staff with policy expertise and are thus able to intervene in policy debates.

Chile

Score 7

A substantial number of autonomous, self-organized groups, associations and organizations exist in Chile. Civil society's organizational landscape has become increasingly differentiated since the return to democracy. Religious, environmental and social organizations, as well as NGOs, academic groups and professional associations often present substantive policy-reform proposals that contribute positively to policy discussions and government reforms and take long-term perspectives into account. Various political foundations and think tanks play a decisive role as formulators of relevant policies. On the other hand, there are great disparities in the durability and organizational strength of associations, mostly as a result of social inequalities. In addition, numerous think tanks are directly connected to economic-interest groups.

Czechia

Score 7

Interest associations have grown considerably in Czechia since 1990. As of March 2020, over 135,000 autonomous, self-organized groups, associations, foundations and organizations were registered in the country, although not all of them were active. Over the last decade, many new NGOs have emerged with a focus on areas such as corruption, city planning, LGBTQ+ rights, food safety, and participatory budgeting on the local level. Many of these have the resources and expertise to formulate relevant policy proposals. For example, in the 2021 general elections, two groups were visible, namely We are Fair (JsmeFer), which harnessed support for candidates committed to supporting same-sex marriage, and Circle a Woman (Zakrouzkuj zenu), which asked voters to give preferential votes to female candidates. The latter might have contributed to a significant increase of women among newly elected members of parliament. The biggest impact was from the movement Million Moments for Democracy (MMD), which formed in January 2018 with the aim of collecting one million signatures opposing Babiš as prime minister in view of accusations of his corrupt practices. In 2019, it claimed to have collected 420,000 signatures and held mass public demonstrations, which continued during the pandemic, that criticized the government's alleged incompetence and poor

communication. MMD probably contributed to uniting part of the opposition to Babiš and to the five percentage point increase in turnout in the 2021 parliamentary election.

Ireland

Score 7

There is a strong tradition of interest associations and advocacy groups in Ireland, especially in the areas of health and social policy. While their influence was diminished by the financial constraints of the last six years, they continue to have an impact on policies relating to issues such as drug abuse, provision for people with disabilities, homelessness, asylum-seekers, and perceived inequalities and injustices in Irish society. While many of these associations prepare relevant policy proposals, their emphasis is on advocacy rather than analysis. The most influential of these associations, Social Justice Ireland, evolved from an association of members of Roman Catholic religious orders.

For Social Justice Ireland, see
<http://www.socialjustice.ie>

Israel

Score 7

Noneconomic associations and NGOs have become increasingly influential in recent years, with over 47,000 non-profit organizations registered with the Ministry of Justice. Along with professional consultancy firms, they fill the gap left by state's privatization policies. Both social and environmental interest groups often formulate relevant policies and cooperate with government and academic bodies, and many of these groups have legal and research teams that support their policy engagement.

Citation:

ACRI. Anti-NGO Legislation in the Israeli Knesset. February 2016, <http://www.acri.org.il/en/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Anti-NGO-Bills-Overview-Updated-February-2016.pdf>

"Collaborative discourse in the Civil Society" March 2016, Civic Leadership in Israel, (Hebrew)
http://migzar3.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/report-2016_web-1.pdf

Guidestar, the NGOs' website of Israel. By the Ministry of Justice. (Hebrew). Last seen: October 31st, 2018.
<https://www.guidestar.org.il/home>

H CJ 3646/18 Yedid Centers of Rights in the Community V the Minister of Justice (Hebrew)

Kalian, Gil "The non-profit sector in Israel is smaller than thought," Calcalist 16/3/2016,
<http://www.calcalist.co.il/local/articles/0,7340,L-3683649,00.html> (Hebrew)

Madhala, Shavit, et al. Israeli Welfare Organizations: A Snapshot. Policy Paper 03.2018. Internet Edition. Jerusalem: the Taub Center for Social Policy Studies in Israel, 2018.

Memorandum of Ordinances of Courts (Fees) (Representative Action), 2017. (Hebrew). Full text:
https://www.nevo.co.il/law_html/law11/43143.htm

Nisan, Limor, "Civil society and the third sector in Israel," IDI paper for the 10th Caesarea conference, June 2010:
<https://bit.ly/2YcMs8y> (Hebrew)

Regulations of Courts (Fees), 2007 (Hebrew)

Shamai, Barkat. "Starting Today: Significant Fees on Submission of Representative Actions." In Globes website. May 8th, 2018. (Hebrew).

The Associations Act, 1980 (Hebrew)

"The Clinic for Representation Populations from the Periphery Presented a Lawsuit Against the Ordinances Dictating for the First Time a High Fee at the Time of Submitting a Request for the Approval of Representative Action." In the Center for Clinical Legal Education's website. Last seen: November 4th, 2018. (Hebrew). [Here the statement of claim can be found]

The Obligation to Reveal as to Who is Supported by Foreign Statal Entity Act, 2011 (Hebrew)

"The transparency law has passed finally" Knesset website 12.7.2016, <http://main.knesset.gov.il/News/PressReleases/pages/press120716.aspx> (Hebrew)

Netherlands

Score 7

Policymaking in the Netherlands has a strong neo-corporatist ("poldering") tradition that systematically involves all kinds of interest associations in the policymaking process – not just with regard to business and labor issues, but also in the education, care, culture, sports and health sectors. Owing to their well-established positions, associations such as the consumer association; the associations for home-owners, for car owners or for bikers and cyclists; all kinds of environmental NGOs, religious associations, municipal (Vereniging voor Nederlandse Gemeenten) and provincial interests (InterProvinciaal Overleg), and medical and other professional associations (e.g., teachers, universities, legal professions) can influence policymaking through the existing consensus-seeking structures. Tradeoffs are actively negotiated with ministries, other involved governments, stakeholder organizations and even NGOs. Furthermore, noneconomic interest organizations react to policy proposals by ministries and have a role in amending and changing the proposals in the early stages of the cabinet formation and regular policymaking process. During the 2021 cabinet-formation process, many noneconomic associations – representing, for example, the arts, education, the elderly and the care sector – inundated negotiators with policy memos and demands. Of course, they are also involved again at a later stage, during implementation processes. Sometimes, as in the Lelystad airport noise case, truly spontaneous citizen activist groups may be successful in penetrating official policymaking.

Recent research by investigative journalists has unearthed serious evidence that there are systematic links between political parties and more informal sources of influence through jobs and positions in noneconomic and non-political associations. For example, the American tactic of shadow-lobbying – big corporations hiring ostensibly neutral research bodies as indirect sources, above suspicion, that then criticize government policy initiatives – is also practiced in the Netherlands. More important, political parties, especially VVD, D66, PvdA and CDA, are successfully pushing party members that leave formal political positions into high-level

leadership and administrative positions in the non-political and noneconomic associations that make up the third sector or civil society – like chairperson positions in the Dutch Association of Local Governments (VNG), the Dutch Organization of Scientific Research (NWO), the Dutch Organization for Applied Scientific Research (TNO), health insurance companies, the National Railway system (NS), etc. Of course, a considerable number of politicians also leave political jobs to go to more lucrative lobbying jobs in business or to prominent civil society organizations. The most recent case is that of the minister of infrastructure and water management leaving her position in the Rutte III caretaker government for a position as chair of Energie Nederland, the umbrella organization for energy companies.

Citation:

Woldendorp, J.J. (2014). Blijvend succes voor het poldermodel? Hoe een klein land met een kleine economie probeert te overleven op de wereldmarkt. In F.H. Becker & M. Hurenkamp (Eds.), *De gelukkige onderneming. Arbeidsverhoudingen voor de 21ste eeuw (Jaarboek voor de sociaal-democratie, 2014)* (pp. 211-227). Amsterdam: Wiardi Beckman Stichting/Uitgeverij Van Genneep.

NRC Next, 25 juni 2019. 'Maatschappelijke kosten Lelystad Airport onderschat.' NRC,

Meeus, 20 November 2021 Heeft de Amerikaanse methode van 'schaduwlobbyen' Den Haag bereikt?

Groene Amsterdammer, 22 February, 2021. Keken and Wittman, Baantjes in de polder. Hoe Nederland liberaal-blauw kleurde.

Montesquieu Instituut, 2 September 2021. Democratie op Donderdag: afkoelingsperiode bewinsdpersonen

Slovenia

Score 7

Slovenia's vibrant third sector has been quite active in monitoring government activities. Despite a decline in public funding, most interest associations have considerable policy knowledge, and many can rely on think tanks that involve various experts from the universities and research institutes in their work. Policy proposals developed by interest associations, although not numerous, have been featured prominently in the media. During the period under review, interest associations have been heavily involved in three major political issues: the environmental impact of frequent fires that have taken place at waste-management plants, the new legislation on waterside areas and various infrastructure projects (e.g., the second railway to the port of Koper and the Karavanke tunnel). Within the growing political polarization in Slovenia, political pressure from the government on NGOs has increased, and NGOs have become less independent and have in some cases become very political in their activities.

Austria

Score 6

Alongside economic interest groups, organized religious communities, particularly the officially recognized denominations, have a formalized role within the decision-making process. The peculiar Austrian institution of "officially recognized religious denomination" institutionalizes the participation of major religious groups within

policymaking. Like the economic interest groups, they are – often, though not always- consulted before the cabinet approves the draft of a law. This is a critical stage of the process, as most cabinet-approved drafts are also approved by parliament.

A number of other groups occasionally exert notable influence, including the physicians' chamber, various environmental groups (e.g., Greenpeace) and some human rights organizations (e.g., Amnesty International).

It must be emphasized, however, that not all draft proposals are subject to consultation procedures. A ruling majority can push through a legislative agenda, without formal consultation with interest groups. This happens from time to time, particularly when the government is in a hurry to pass a bill.

The capability of noneconomic groups to formulate policies is, overall, considerably more limited than that of economic interest groups, particularly professional associations.

Croatia

Score 6

A number of social-interest organizations in Croatia have the capacity to propose relevant policy proposals. For instance, experts from Citizens Organize to Oversee Voting (Građani organizirano nadgledaju glasanje, GONG), an association of various organizations for the protection and promotion of human rights originally formed in 1997, have participated in the process of drafting various laws on lobbying and elections. Green Action (Zelena Akcija) is another example of a social-interest organization with strong analytical capacity and the ability to promote its issues in the media. Recently, the NGO Franak has played a very important role in gathering debtors and former debtors in order to sue foreign banks for alleged malpractices in issuing CHF loans since 2005.

Estonia

Score 6

The policy-formulation capacity of noneconomic interest groups varies across fields of interest and with the scope of the intended impact. Most civil society associations are small and possess limited financial and human resources. Therefore, their in-house capacity is very low, and most analyses have been carried out as single projects on a contractual basis. The level of capacity also depends on the formal policy agenda, as it is easier to add a new proposal to the existing agenda than to set the agenda. Environmental groups are mainly local, but their actions can have a nationwide impact on transport and industrial policy. Religious groups are sporadically, though increasingly active in domestic politics. In recent years, the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church and several civil society groups (e.g., Foundation for Protection of Family and Traditions, SAPTK) have actively criticized the legalization of same-sex marriages and abortion rights, among other things. An

attempt by SAPTK and Estonia's conservative parties (IL and EKRE) to organize a public referendum to change the Estonian constitution failed in January 2021.

France

Score 6

The number of non-business associations has been increasing in recent years, and member figures have been rising. In many cases, especially at the local level, such organizations are dependent on the financial support of public authorities. Moreover, most associations are reactive, preferring to object rather than make their own proposals. Nonetheless, there are a number of noneconomic associations that combine pluralistic approaches, long-term views and a public perspective. This can be seen in fields such as urban policy (where national programs and local public actors rely on the expertise and commitment of associations dealing with local issues) or social policy (aid to people with different social problems or handicaps). Furthermore, many associations addressing the issues of the environment, climate change and anti-corruption policies have acquired or significantly increased their competencies, and enhanced the quality of their policy oversight and advice. This development has resulted from a combination of political activism and new legal instruments provided to associations, in particular before the courts. A similar evolution can be observed in the field of economic/fiscal policy, thanks to the creation of new think tanks.

Italy

Score 6

The landscape of non-economic interest organizations is increasingly rich and diversified. But only few of them are able to formulate articulated policy proposals. Most operate in a reactive mode instead. Among the most professional associations, some religious (e.g., Caritas or Comunità di S. Egidio, which deal mainly with poverty and immigration policies), humanitarian (e.g., Emergency) and environmental groups (e.g., Legambiente, FAI and WWF) deserve special mention, and are able to provide well-articulated, expert analysis. An increasing number of single-issue movements are gaining ground in Italy, and are contributing to policymaking in their respective areas.

There are also a series of foundations and think tanks in the field of international affairs (IAI, ISPI), social and economic problems (Censis or Fondazione Agnelli) producing critical studies and conducting oversight activities. With COVID-19, medical field foundations have increased their activity and visibility. Their infrastructure, resources and personnel are in general limited.

Malta

Score 6

Malta has a large number of noneconomic interest associations. Though typically short on resources, they access external support through international membership or

regional federations, which helps them, on occasion, to formulate extremely well-informed policy papers. EU funds and other structures (e.g., the internship programs) have also helped them improve their policy capacities. In the recent budget, the government earmarked financial support for NGOs. A number of NGOs have worked proactively in various policy areas, such as rent reform, transport reform, prison reform and constitutional reform. Few organizations employ full-time staff, but many have academics as part of their leadership structure, thereby utilizing their expertise. In some cases, organizations are able to attract research support on a voluntary basis from like-minded academics and other volunteers. Nonetheless, many of them still need to become proactive, rather than reactive to events or government proposals. Partisan NGOs at times muddy the waters. However, the majority of NGOs campaign on specific issues, with environmental groups being a classic case of dispassionate campaigning.

https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/comment/blogs/112169/great_so_now_the_eu_is_responsible_for_daphnes_murder_too#.YbsloMqZOa4

https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/comment/blogs/110583/all_hail_the_new_colonialism#.YbsnfT67ako

Mexico

Score 6

Against the background of corporatist authoritarianism in 20th century Mexico, economic interest groups in democratic Mexico could draw on many associational experiences. Moreover, since the early 2000s, there has been a considerable increase in the quantity and the sophistication of noneconomic interest groups in Mexican civil society. Many talented graduates have found positions in domestic and international NGOs, and work to influence policy in Mexico via advocacy-oriented strategies. Several tertiary-education institutes (e.g., ITAM, Colmex, CIDE) both teach and conduct public policy research, and some are highly influential in the political sphere as think tanks and/or advocacy institutions, often through the personal linkages to the government and its administration. Furthermore, there has been an increase in the number of national and international advocacy NGOs that, depending on the sector and the government in place, are also relevant in the agenda-setting process. Moreover, many grassroots organizations founded in the last 10 years aim to influence local and regional policymaking. Finally, the degree of movement of personnel between NGOs, think tanks and government is high compared to other OECD countries. While the capacity of most of these organizations to propose policy reforms in complex policy settings is rather restricted, it has been growing steadily and their role influencing public opinion is more relevant every year. Examples of these associations include IMCO, Mexico Evalua and Mexicanos Primero, which have been able to affect the policy agenda of the government in the last years on issues related to transparency, accountability and development effectiveness.

The record of the new government of President López Obrador and his party MORENA toward social movements and NGOs has been mixed so far. On the one hand, MORENA is associated with social movements and is trying to establish a new

style in Mexican politics, away from traditional vested interests. On the other hand, the government's austerity measures have cut state subsidies for NGOs, for which NGOs have heavily criticized the government. Moreover, the populist legacy of the current government also indicates tensions between "popular consultation" on the one hand and top-down, populist decision-making on the other. Mexico nonetheless has a very lively civil society.

El Universal (2018). Mexican NGOs to keep working on the development of civil society. <http://www.eluniversal.com.mx/english/mexican-ngos-keep-working-development-civil-society>

Poland

Score 6 Poland has many interest associations beyond business associations and trade unions. However, compared to other countries, there are comparatively few environmental groups. However, the existing groups have become more important in the current discourse on how to mediate the effects of climate change. Most independent non-governmental organizations are relatively small and do not benefit from the funds distributed by the National Freedom Institute, the official organization in charge of helping NGOs with capacity-building. However, many NGOs have good international contacts, can rely on academic expertise, and can thus develop full-blown policy proposals. The Catholic Church, still the most influential interest group in Poland, pursues relatively narrow interests, and is primarily preoccupied with stabilizing its influence within an increasingly secular society and has to deal with cases of sexual abuse. It currently has good access to the new government, but some of its priests also asked for more national solidarity, peaceful cooperation and a friendlier approach toward refugees. In recent times, some interest groups have become more publicly outspoken. The Polish Doctors' Council frequently complains about the government's actions and that their expertise is not being heard. Similarly, the judges' associations Iustitia and Themis opposed changes to the judiciary and court system. The All-Polish Women's Strike (Ogólnopolski Strajk Kobiet, OSK) has become very vocal against the abortion law, and in general about women's rights and PiS's illiberalism.

Romania

Score 6 While many NGOs have suffered from a lack of resources, quite a number of them have significant analytical capacities, especially in areas such as environmental policy and social protections. Many NGOs have benefited from international funding. The Romanian Orthodox Church, which represents as much as 85% of the population, has been a powerful actor, but has promoted a relatively narrow and conservative agenda.

South Korea

Score 6 The rise of civil society organizations has been one of the last decade's most important political trends in South Korea. The massive peaceful protests against President Park were largely organized by civil society groups that have proven their ability to mobilize the public and their competence in organizing peaceful protests on a massive scale. Some of the largest NGOs, such as the Korean Federation for Environmental Movement, the Citizen Coalition for Economic Justice and the People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy have built up considerable expertise in specialized fields such as environmental policies, electoral reform, corporate reform, welfare policies or human rights. They provide reasonable policy proposals and are supported by a large group of academics and professionals. They also provide a pool of experts for the government. President Moon has appointed several former members of civil society groups to government positions. Unfortunately, this increased level of influence has to some extent undermined their ability to criticize the government. For example, People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy has lost some of its independence, acting to suppress internal criticism of key former members who had become members of the government, such as former Blue House Secretary and Justice Minister Cho Kuk. Highly competent international NGOs such as Transparency International, Amnesty International and Save the Children are also playing an increasingly prominent role in their respective fields.

Switzerland

Score 6 Noneconomic interest groups are very heterogeneous in Switzerland. Some, such as environmental groups, undertake cooperative efforts with academic bodies, offer reasonable proposals and feature considerable capacity for political mobilization.

Recent research emphasizes the growing importance of citizen groups such as the WWF (Eichenberger 2020; Mach et al. 2020).

EICHENBERGER, S. 2020. The Rise of Citizen Groups within the Administration and Parliament in Switzerland. *Swiss Political Science Review*, 26, 206-227.

MACH, A., VARONE, F. & EICHENBERGER, S. 2020. Transformations of Swiss neo-corporatism: From pre-parliamentary negotiations toward privileged pluralism in the parliamentary venue. In: CAREJA, R., EMMENEGGER, P. & GIGER, N. (eds.) *The European Social Model under Pressure*. Wiesbaden: Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-27043-8_4.

Greece

Score 5 Greek civil society is relatively underdeveloped. Civil society associations can press the government on government policy choices, but rarely do they contribute to policymaking in a proactive manner. Most non-economic interest associations do not have the resources to become involved in policy formulation. There are, however, exceptions regarding religious and migration matters.

The Greek Orthodox Church plays a preponderant role in formulating ecclesiastical matters and (to some extent) matters of education. For instance, religion is a compulsory subject in all grades of primary school and high school. Greece's constitution grants the Greek Orthodox Church a privileged position among all churches and dogmas, and the Greek Orthodox Church enjoys a tailor-made taxation regime which allows it to sustain a large amount of landed property. This pattern of heavy church influence on policy formulation has been preserved, regardless of the political profile (right-wing, centrist or left-wing) of the governing party or parties in power.

Finally, there is a vast array of small and medium-sized NGOs which are active in providing social protection and legal assistance to refugees and migrants in the field. NGOs are located in major cities and on the Greek islands of the Aegean where refugees and migrants continue to land. In the period under review, the role of NGOs probably declined, as the Greek state was preoccupied with the management of COVID-19. The state also took it upon itself to manage reception and identification centers (RICs) on several islands and the mainland of Greece, rather than leaving the task to NGOs.

The provisions of the constitution of Greece on the Greek Orthodox Church can be found in article 3 of the constitution.

Lithuania

Score 5

The capacity of noneconomic interest associations to formulate well-crafted and relevant policy proposals varies by group. Most lack skilled staff members and do not engage in cooperation with academic bodies or individual experts. Moreover, the lawmaking and regulatory impact-assessment processes do not sufficiently ensure the participation of relevant stakeholders. Business interest groups tend to have stronger abilities to formulate policies than do social or environmental groups. The Lithuanian Catholic Church is an important player in Lithuanian politics, with its influence typically focused on a small number of policy issues. However, this interest group unsuccessfully lobbied the president to veto legislation designed to make it easier for families to access assisted insemination services. The Non-Governmental Organizations' Information and Support Center facilitates cooperation between NGOs as they seek to represent their interests.

Portugal

Score 5

Noneconomic interest associations continue to have little impact. The focus in recent years on economic issues means that proposals by established groups engaged with other issues attract less visibility than before Portugal's bailout (e.g., proposals by the environmental groups Zero and Quercus). The same is true of religious communities and social interest groups. Interaction with associations appeared to be

largely instrumental and related to political or group objectives rather than policy-driven. Few associations have the ability to formulate policy proposals, while those that are able to formulate policy proposals tend to have very limited resources, often relying on the voluntary contribution of qualified members to formulate policy. Within this landscape, it is worth mentioning the emergence of new social movements focusing on issues including the environment, racial justice and women's rights, such as Greve Climática Estudantil (School Strike for Climate) and Rede 8 de Março (March 8th Network). These typically involve comparatively youthful activists, and tend to rely on direct action in defending their proposals.

Spain

Score 5 Noneconomic interest associations are relatively weak, and it has been difficult for them to influence political decision-making with relevant policy proposals. Furthermore, the lack of a strong, organized civil society is a disincentive for the government to take these associations' views into account as it formulates policy (since the process would then become much more complex without necessarily adding social legitimacy as a compensation). Even the strong Catholic Church lacks a research unit capable of formulating policies, although it remains influential on education and moral issues. Leading environmental groups and some NGOs devoted to human rights (such as Amnesty International) or development aid have gained technical competence, and increasingly rely on academic expertise and specialized publications to influence public opinion and policymakers within their areas of interest. Women's associations are an exception in this portrait. Although they are also weak as autonomous organizations, they have become increasingly influential within the political parties (especially in the PSOE). The LGBTQ+ movement has successfully defended homosexuals' rights. Platforms and networks have been able to gain media attention and even shape public policy by demanding more transparency, better regulation of mortgages, and changes in areas such as healthcare and education. Over the course of the last several years, pensioners have staged several large protests to demand fairer pensions for themselves and for future generations. Social movements promoting or opposing the Catalan government's bid for independence also have experts that conduct research on issues related to independence.

Bulgaria

Score 4 The most active noneconomic interest groups in Bulgaria are largely engaged in four fields: education (especially parents' associations), health (patients' organizations), minorities and the environment. While there are many associations, which often act in accord, they seem more activist than analytical in their efforts. Their proposals are rarely accompanied by attempts to encompass the relevant issues fully, assess potential impacts comprehensively, or argue in favor of or against specific proposals on analytical grounds. The religious communities in Bulgaria have their channels of

political influence, but are not broadly active in the public sphere.

Cyprus

Score 4

A proliferation of civil society groups is connected, among other factors, with funding opportunities from EU and other organizations. Many are subject-oriented associations, with limited capacity to formulate policy proposals. The momentum gained in recent years by some groups active and interested in politics, the economy, and social and environmental issues has slowed down. Issues such as promoting transparency and combating corruption, electoral system reform, and protecting the rights of minority groups have received limited response. Despite media attention and quality proposals on such significant subjects, political forces choose to promote sectoral interests, mostly counting on votes. In the last two years, government officials have targeted NGOs and groups supporting migrants' rights with unsubstantiated accusations.

The activities of associations and in particular of the bicomunal civil society organizations that create spaces for dialogue between the Turkish and Greek Cypriot communities have been affected by restrictions on movement introduced to tackle COVID-19. The Church of Cyprus continues to assert its presence in society and is promoted by public service television. Its influence has not receded, despite conservative statements and actions by its leadership that do not comply with the spirit of Christianity.

1. Bird groups say illegal shooting in Cyprus must stop, Cyprus Mail, 27 September 2019, <https://cyprus-mail.com/2019/09/27/bird-groups-so-illegal-shooting-in-cyprus-must-stop/>

Japan

Score 4

Civil society organizations with a public-policy focus are rare in Japan. With few exceptions, such organizations in Japan have limited depth and breadth. Japan has only a few well-resourced public policy-oriented think tanks. Some non-profit organizations are used by the government bureaucracy as auxiliary mechanisms in areas where it cannot or does not want to become directly involved.

Following the 3/11 disasters, and more recently in the context of the controversy over the government's security-law extension, civil society groups have taken on an increased role in expressing public concerns and organizing mass rallies. High levels of engagement on the part of activists notwithstanding, it is difficult for such actors to create professionally operating, sustainable organizations. Among the general population, the idea of NPOs does not enjoy strong support.

Susanne Brucksch, Japan's Civil Society and its Fight against Nuclear Energy, Sustainable Governance Indicators Website, 09.04.2014, <http://news.sgi-network.org/news/details/1212/theme-democracy-sustainability/japans-civil-society-and-its-fight-against-nuclear-energy/>
U.S.-Japan Council, Japan's NPO Sector Today, Summary of a breakout session of the 2018 Annual Conference, http://www.usjapancouncil.org/japans_npo_sector_today

Latvia

Score 4

A number of environmental interest groups have the capacity to propose concrete policy measures and provide capable analysis of policy effects, often in cooperation with their international networks or academic bodies. Environmental organizations engage in structured policy dialogue with the relevant ministries, which supports sustained involvement in decision-making and has contributed to further capacity development.

Social interest groups are very diverse. However, most lack the capacity to propose concrete policy measures or analyze likely policy outcomes. While the government consults regularly with some social interest groups, such as the Pensioners' Federation, these groups do not produce high-quality policy analysis. Groups representing patients' rights or reproductive health interests are skilled at producing policy proposals, but most lack the resources to engage in sustained advocacy or policy development.

Religious communities have until recently remained largely outside of the public-policy development process, but have now become more vocal in their defense of "traditional Christian values," especially in the context of LGBTQ+ and reproductive rights.

The Civic Alliance is an umbrella group of NGOs that serves as a platform for common issues. In 2017, the alliance galvanized a group of influential NGOs to call for increased transparency and participatory opportunities for NGOs in the government's budget planning process. The NGOs are demanding the type of access and consultation already in place for other social partners, such as the National Tripartite Cooperation Council (NTSP). Unlike the social dialogue process, civic dialogue in Latvia has no official status and does not receive special support from the state or the EU structural forums. As a result, the vast majority of organizations participate in structures such as the Memorandum Council in their spare time, without remuneration. There is therefore an imbalance in the decision-making process, with local and economic lobbies participating in the process actively, but civil society organizations only occasionally.

Hungary

Score 3

The Orbán governments have created a big, lavishly financed pro-government network of fake civil society associations and foundations. In public life they have presented themselves as independent and autonomous organizations, although they clearly support government positions and provide a democratic façade for the government. A series of scandals have arisen as it has become clear that these organizations have received financing from state-owned enterprises. By contrast, Hungary's genuine civil society has suffered from decreasing financial support and

increasing legal restrictions. This has clearly infringed upon their capacity to formulate relevant policies. Nonetheless, a number of interest associations with extensive expertise exist.

Turkey

Score 3

During its tenure in power, the government has created its own set of loyal civil society groups. One such group is TÜRGEV, a foundation led by President Erdoğan's son, which has gained political influence in the executive and has expanded its financial resources. A pro-government research establishment, SETA, conducts research projects on current political, economic and social issues, with the goal of providing policy recommendations. Similarly, KADEM (Women and Democracy Association) was founded with the patronage of Erdoğan's family members and is used as a social policy instrument.

Local and global environmental pressure groups such as Greenpeace have increasingly demonstrated against dam and hydroelectric-energy projects throughout Turkey, but their protests are regularly suppressed by the security forces and subject to criminal investigation. The Turkish Foundation for Combating Soil Erosion for Reforestation and the Protection of Natural Habitat (TEMA) has remained the most well-established environmental organization in Turkey, with 500,000 volunteers.

Various resources, especially land allocation and financial support, have been provided by municipalities to foundations that support the government. Although Ensar Vaqf and other religious foundations have been in the public spotlight due to child abuse scandals, the government has continued to support these organizations. However, most pro-government organizations' resources were cut off, especially after the opposition captured the Istanbul and Ankara metropolitan municipalities in the 2019 local polls.

Citation:

TEMA. <https://www.tema.org.tr/hakimizda/kurumsal/kurulus-oykumuz>

Cumhuriyet. "AKP'nin çocuk istismaları ile sınava... Erdoğan Ensar ve Adıyaman Gerger ile yüzleşecek mi? February 20, 2018. <https://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/akpnin-cocuk-istismarlari-ile-sinavi-erdogan-ensar-ve-adiyaman-gerger-ile-de-yuzlesecek-mi-930278>

Address | Contact

Bertelsmann Stiftung

Carl-Bertelsmann-Straße 256
33311 Gütersloh
Germany
Phone +49 5241 81-0

Dr. Christof Schiller

Phone +49 30 275788-138
christof.schiller@bertelsmann-stiftung.de

Dr. Thorsten Hellmann

Phone +49 5241 81-81236
thorsten.hellmann@bertelsmann-stiftung.de

Pia Paulini

Phone +49 5241 81-81468
pia.paulini@bertelsmann-stiftung.de

www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de
www.sgi-network.org