

# Abstracts

**Lars Hennelund og Per Schwartz**

*The Influence of Members in Danish Political Parties*

Members of political parties have basically two ways to achieve influence on the party's parliamentary representatives. They can try to influence the party programme or the executive committee of the party, or they can keep close contact to their local MP and thereby influence him/her. In the Socialist Peoples Party (SF) the party members have substantial influence on the party programme and on the party's executive committee. On the other hand, members of the Social-democratic Party and the Liberal Party (Venstre) have a considerable influence on the MP's through contact directly between the local party organizations and the MP's. Members of the Centre Democrats (CD) have limited influence on their party's parliamentary group.

**Jørgen Elklit og Roger Buch Jensen**

*Political Parties and Local Democracy*

Richard S. Katz and Peter Mair argue that a new party model is in the making. They find that this model, the cartel party, identifies actual tendencies much better than the catch-all-model. This article tests their argument on the development of Danish local politics and local party organizations. Contrary to expectations, campaign styles and forms have not changed in Danish local elections, nor has the funding situation which has not improved to the same degree as at the national level. But the interrelationships between local parties nevertheless display some of the basic behavioural features which Katz and Mair see as indicative of the cartel party. Yet, this is a traditional pattern in the relationship between Danish parties, particularly at the local level. Consequently, the cartel party-model needs further research and testing before it can be accepted as the fourth step in the development of political parties.

**Peter Munk Christiansen and Niels Chr. Sidenius**

*Decline of Corporatism?*

A drastic reduction in the number of traditional corporatist institutions in Denmark has been documented earlier. To what extent does this represent a decline of the traditional strong sectoral corporatist traits of Danish political decision-making? New survey data makes it possible to follow the extent and assessed importance of contacts between organisations and political and administrative actors. These data points to a clear increase in the extent of contacts to all levels of the political and administrative apparatus as well as to an increasing number of organizations assessing these contacts as being important.

**Jens Peter Christensen**

*The Political and Legal Responsibility of Danish Ministers*

The Danish Constitution contains rules concerning the political and legal responsibility of ministers. In the public debate it is often asserted that a minister is responsible for everything that is going on within his ministry. This assertion is not true. The legal responsibility of ministers is - according to law - restricted to cases in which the minister personally (with intention or gross negligence) has violated or assisted in violation of the law. The political responsibility of ministers is - according to parliamentary practice - restricted in an almost similar way.

**Torben K. Jensen***Europeanization, the Political Parties, and the Europe Committee*

Although the members of the Europe Committee in the Danish Parliament have contacts with MPs and organisations abroad much more frequently than the rest of the Danish legislators, they are not weaved into a transnational or European decision network. Neither do they - as regards fundamental beliefs and attitudes - constitute a decision segment detached from their party groups.

Danish parliamentary groups differ considerably in their positions on how much authority EU should be given in the future in different policy-fields. But at the same time one can observe a striking parallelism. All groups find that the EU should have some authority concerning economic and international issues but only modest authority concerning social, cultural, legal and constitutional issues.

Although a lot of political problems become more transnational in their nature, Danish legislators seem to operate within a traditional nation-state paradigm mixed with some confederate elements.

**Peter Marker***The Transition of Austrian Corporatism*

The austrian political system is characterized by an extensive and strongly institutionalized co-operation between the government, the trade unions and the employers associations. Similar neocorporative structures are found in many other european countries but in Austria, however, the influence of the interest organizations seems to be more far-reaching than anywhere else. The most important institution is a special commission which throughout the postwar period has controlled the development of prices and wages in the country. Furthermore, the interest organizations are incorporated in the political decision making proces in other areas such as fiscal policy, education policy and even foreign policy. The austrian membership of the European Union might, however, bring changes to the relationship between the state and the interest organizations in Austria.