

## Editorial Note

### Corporate Pluralism in Nordic Democracies

Studies of interest organization participation in governmental decision-making have become increasingly popular among political scientists in Western Europe and America. There exists a common agreement that corporate political representation has assumed an increased importance in Western political systems, but substantial differences exist with regard to analytical frameworks, concepts, and more general theoretical direction of the investigations. Subsequently, there is little agreement about how to characterize the present politics of Western countries.

The Nordic tradition in the study of corporate pluralism is, however, rather coherent in the analytical framework and concepts employed, as this issue of *Scandinavian Political Studies* shows. Most Nordic analyses of the relationship between interest organizations and government have been based upon an inductive strategy, rejecting the more far-reaching, normative theories of a corporate society. They have stressed the notion of a *pluralist* corporate structure in the Nordic countries. The resources, capabilities, and actual involvement of organized interests have been studied.

The articles by Jacob A. Buksti and Lars Nørby Johansen and Voitto Helander represent efforts to map and analyze the total system of interest organizations and their contacts and consultations with government and different forms of coordination between interest organizations and government. Tom Christensen and Morten Egeberg's article takes the analysis of corporate political participation one step further by looking at the overall relationship between government and interest organization in the Norwegian case.

The increased impact of organized interests on the policy-making process is, however, not only found at the central level. Gudmund Hernes and Arne Selvik investigate the tendencies towards increased corporate involvement in the decision-making process at the local level in Norway.

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comprehensive theoretical frameworks for the functioning of modern democracy on the basis of the various theoretical approaches. One main problem he identifies is that in most of the studies the focus has mainly been on the *corporate* channel of political participation and not on the relationship between *numerical democracy* and *corporate pluralism*. In Stein Rokkan's terms, the important question is more precisely to what extent resources decide and how votes count in the political system. The future task is to do research along this line and to try to integrate all the empirical and theoretical understanding of the functioning of modern democracy.

Finally, we wish to thank Martin Heisler for fruitful comments during the editorial process, which, of course, leaves no responsibility for the final edition of this special issue to him.

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