

## Economics, Ideology and Strategy. An Analysis of the EC-Debate in Norwegian and Danish Organizations 1961-72\*

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This article presents a comparative analysis of the EC-debate in Norway and Denmark preceding the referenda in 1972. The focus is on the basic economic interests involved, and how major organizations presented their arguments to protect their sectors of the economy. The theoretical point of departure is the idea of rational behavior, where actors are supposed to pursue self-interests. Special emphasis is placed on strategic considerations, because each group needed to appeal to people outside their own sector to mobilize a majority of the national vote. Ideological legitimization as well as variations in economic conditions and geographic mobility are discussed. The empirical basis is a content analysis of editorials in Norwegian and Danish organizational papers. The conclusion is that although it is important to include egoistic self-interests in order to understand the positions of various groups in the EC-debate, it is also important to include aspects beyond narrow sectorial interests. Strategic considerations led to rapprochement between traditional opponents along the left-right axis in Norway, while the same groups in Denmark, although they agreed on the EC-issue, confronted each other with respect to major economic questions.

### Introduction

In September/October 1972 referenda were arranged in Denmark and Norway concerning membership of the two countries in the European Communities (EC). A solid majority (63 percent) of the Danes voted in favor of joining, while the majority in Norway (53 percent) voted no to membership. This outcome might seem strange, considering the fact that these two small nations in the northern periphery of Europe have so much in common. In terms of language and culture they are closely related. Their geopolitical situation is basically the same, and they are both members of the NATO-alliance. Economically they are both very much dependent upon trade relations with other

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countries. Consequently, one should expect that their interest for joining an enlarged European market would be roughly equal. Yet, their roads parted with regard to this important decision. The question of why this happened is a challenging topic for comparative analysis.

The question of EC-membership was discussed simultaneously in Norway and Denmark, as well as in Great Britain and Ireland. It first appeared on the agenda in the autumn of 1961, but was removed in January 1963 when President de Gaulle of France closed the door to further expansion of the Communities. Next it was debated for a brief period in 1967. The third and final debate started in the summer of 1970 and ended with the referenda two years later. Throughout this period the debate was more intensive and probably more divisive in Norway than in Denmark. The debate provides interesting material for studying arguments presented for and against joining the EC. In the present article an attempt will be made to analyze comparatively the position advocated by house organs of some key economic organizations in the two countries.

## The Idea of Rational Behavior

The 'rational' interpretation of politics is based on the assumption that the individual is consciously calculating which outcome he prefers when considering his goals (Barry 1970, Riker & Ordeshook 1973, Goodin 1976, Lewin & Vedung 1980, Laver 1981). This analytical point of departure does not exclude other explanations of human behavior (Downs 1957, 27-31). A rational choice model is, however, not an unambiguously given entity. We may have different types of rational models, for instance relating to issue-proximity or utility calculations (Pettersen 1981). Formal demands of the theoretically elaborate models will also encounter severe difficulties in empirical research.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, most theorists have been concerned with individual behavior, not taking account of outside constraints on decisions (Midgaard 1980). In an analysis of interest-organizations we are immediately faced with the problem of *collective rationality*. Very little effort seems to have been given to this aspect, except a few major studies of organizations (Olson 1965, Hirschman 1970).

The debate on EC-membership in Norway and Denmark provides an interesting case in a rational choice perspective. With respect to goals, both countries were very close to the most simplified situation; the focus was concentrated on two aspects, closely related to each other, whether or not to join the European Communities, and how to win the upcoming referendum.

While an individual to a great extent is free to choose whatever action which will further his interests, organizations will meet constraints concerning actions taken and arguments used in public. Organizational leaders must be careful to avoid actions or statements which will be considered illegitimate by their own

members. This may be the case if leaders deviate from stated goals of the organizations in order to please possible coalition partners, or if arguments presented seem to be inconsistent with previous stands. Historical traditions and continuity are also important for the actors to be considered credible actors (Molin 1966). In the EC-debate it was furthermore insufficient for the actors to concentrate only on their own situation. In order to fulfill their goals with respect to EC-membership they had to win a referendum. The relative size of each group was therefore important. Because no organization commanded a majority of the electorate on its own, the need for coalition partners was evident. Strategic considerations linking sectorial self-interests and general interests would be essential for any useful model in this case. We have therefore concentrated on a modified rational choice model taking care of strategic considerations.

## The Problem

Organized interest groups have played an important role in political life in the Nordic countries. Stein Rokkan's two channels of influence — the numeric-democratic and the corporate pluralist — have been a distinctive feature of these systems (Rokkan 1966). In the EC-debate the role of organizations was more important than normal. Most of the EC-struggle took part outside of the ordinary channels, and the conflict created alliances and conflicts across the usual political pattern (Gleditsch & Hellevik 1977, Valen 1981, Bjørklund 1982).

Both in Norway and Denmark economic questions have been decisive for political cleavages in the post-World War II period. Rokkan's tripolar model illustrating the basic economic cleavages was originally based on Norwegian experiences, but the model is applicable to Danish society as well (Valen & Rokkan 1974). We will use this model as an organizing principle in this analysis, using the three economic sectors mentioned below as criteria for the selection of specific organizations. Rokkan's model includes three poles, each representing a major economic interest group: "*Labor*", representing the unionized workers and their organizations both on the local and national level; "*Business*" representing the interests of employers and owners in trade and industry; and thirdly "*Farmers*" representing the primary sector, mainly agriculture and fisheries.<sup>2</sup>

Taking into consideration the importance of economic interest organizations with regard to Norwegian and Danish entry into the European Communities, our initial question is *to what extent the different groups justify their position towards EC-membership in terms of economic self-interest, and to what extent the arguments given can be understood on the basis of economic, cultural and historical differences between the two countries.*

In order to establish the *components of self-interest* it has been necessary to map the basic economic conditions for each group. Three aspects are vital. Firstly the *relative importance* of the sector in relation to the total national economy. This involves both the number of *employed persons* in the sector and *economic output*. A weak sector will be in a different position from a strong one. The sector's dependence on national resources is another aspect of relevance. Thirdly the importance of *international markets* for each sector will be central. Sectors exporting a major part of their production will naturally be more interested in market expansion than sectors depending on national market protection.

#### *Strategic Considerations*

The strategic need of the participants in the EC-debate to appeal to groups outside their own economic sector does not necessarily lead to formation of formal alliances. The factual content of such appeals would vary according to which arguments were thought to be most relevant and effective for the specific groups. If organizations belonging to one sector appealed to people indirectly dependent on this sector, saying that EC-membership would have implications beyond the narrow economic interests of this particular sector, this would be an example of strategic argumentation. On the other hand, appeals could also be made referring to the general interest of the country, above sectorial interests.

Our second question takes care of these strategic considerations, asking *how the organizations will argue in order to mobilize a majority of the national vote in the referenda, and thus secure the economic interests involved*.

The Norwegian primary sector is the problematic sector in the EC-issue. The sparsely populated areas in Norway, located along the coast and especially in the Northern region, were dependent on agriculture and fisheries both directly and indirectly, because of few alternatives with regard to employment. We will therefore expect that Norwegian primary sector organizations will justify their opposition towards EC-membership with arguments connected to rural problems, especially settlement and employment, in peripheral areas. Conversely, we will expect that organizations representing all other sectors of the economy will emphasize the importance of EC-membership to economic expansion and growth in the national economy.

#### *Ideological Legitimization*

Research on political parties has shown that the credibility of an actor is dependent on continuity in the arguments used to mobilize support (Molin 1966). Much in the same way organizations cannot allow themselves to argue along lines considered to be opportunistic and inconsistent. In a strategic situation actors therefore have a strong incentive to make references to general values

shared by their own and other groups. Our third problem deals with *the use of ideological arguments by the organizations to legitimize the self-interests involved*. What kinds of ideological arguments are used, and what part does ideology play as legitimization of sectorial interests?<sup>3</sup>

Keeping in mind the traditional attitudes towards basic ideological dimensions like the degree of state interference in economic life, and the economic liberalistic ideal of open international markets, we will be able to formulate at least some expectations as regards the ideological content of the debate. The crucial question is how the different interest groups' position on these major ideological dimensions affected their argumentation in the EC-debate.

We know that the Norwegian agricultural groups favor national market protection and restrictions on the use of natural resources. Because of our interest in the legitimization aspect it is reasonable to expect that their ideological arguments will be tied to the primary sector's need of national control over agricultural politics and protection of natural resources.

The trade union movement might argue from a more diverse set of ideological loyalties. On the one hand, the priority of economic growth as a means of securing full employment and a rising standard of living will be emphasized. In this perspective the market expansion through the EC would be favorable. On the other hand, the traditional labor demand of control over national and international capital is important and could lead to more EC-scepticism within the labor groups. The decisive factor is which of these two ideological elements will be more important during the debate. We can thus formulate two alternative expectations, depending on the emphasis put on each of these ideological questions. We can expect that either the labor groups will argue that the possibilities to control effectively the international capitalists will be greater, or a more pessimistic view that the possibilities to control these forces both nationally and internationally will be smaller, if Norway joined the EC.

The remainder of our interest-groups consist of the Norwegian and Danish private business and the Danish agricultural organizations. These groups represent export market interests, and are traditionally suspicious of increasing state interference in business, both nationally and internationally. In connection with market expansion in Western Europe it is therefore reasonable to expect that these organizations will be especially oriented towards liberalistic economic principles. International free trade and market expansion without state interference could be secured through EC-membership.

#### *Variations in Economic Conditions*

The average growth in GNP per capita was the same in both countries in the period 1960-1970. The economic growth in this period was, however, markedly higher than in the preceding decade. In the beginning of the 1970's there was a change in the rate of growth. In 1971 this resulted in lower growth in Den-

mark than in Norway. This is especially of interest here because the EC-debate was in a decisive phase this year. If we take a look at unemployment statistics we can see that the situation in Denmark is clearly more unstable than in Norway. The two years preceding the referenda show increased unemployment in Denmark, while the unemployment rates in Norway were low and stable. The trade balance also gives the impression of growing difficulties in the Danish economy (Aardal 1979). Our question is to what extent variations in economic conditions influence the debate. The terms of trade will be of particular interest to Danish organizations. It is reasonable to expect that these organizations will emphasize EC-membership as a solution to national economic problems to a greater extent towards the end of the debate, while Norwegian argumentation will show no significant change in this direction from the first years of the debate until the end.<sup>4</sup>

#### *Geographic Mobility*

In the post-war period Norway had experienced a process of geographic mobility where people moved from sparsely populated areas to more central ones. This process was closely linked to major changes in the industrial pattern with a shift away from primary sector activity to secondary and tertiary sectors, including trade and industry. This movement process especially affected the economically weak regions and resulted in movements both within regions and between regions. Even though the general geographic mobility was high, certain regions were more affected than others. Northern Norway had not developed industrial production on the same scale as other parts of the country and therefore was less able to keep people leaving agriculture and fisheries occupied within the region. The net movement from Northern Norway reached its peak at the same time as Norway entered its last offensive of trying to join the EC. Because the coastal areas in Northern Norway to a large extent were dependent on the primary sector, a further weakening of this sector would lead to even more geographic mobility away from the region. In turn this would create more difficulties for the economic life in the area. *To what extent did this situation influence the arguments used?* The future of Northern Norway was closely linked to geographic stability. It is therefore reasonable to expect that strategic arguments combining regional and sectorial interests will be more and more emphasized by Norwegian agricultural and fisheries organizations during the debate.

#### *Complexity of the Debate*

We have now mainly been concerned with the factual *content* of the EC-debate in our two countries. It may also be of interest to take a look at formal aspects of the debate. Two aspects will be of particular interest in this respect;

first of all the *structural complexity* of the argumentation. This has to do with the extent to which various actors are able to formulate concise attitudes towards membership in the EC. If the actors are hesitant and cautious vs. the membership question, the structural complexity is high. A definite and clear-cut position on the other hand indicates low structural complexity.

The other interesting aspect has to do with the *rationality complexity*, i.e. the variety of issues and arguments brought into the debate in order to support the different organizations' position vis-à-vis the membership issue. If the arguments are few and concentrated, we say that the rationality complexity is low. If the number of arguments is large and nuanced, the rationality complexity will be high.

*Our question will then be how the EC-debate changed with respect to structural and rational complexity from the beginning to the end, and to what extent this change may be understood on the basis of the overall context of this debate.*

The structural complexity will be very much dependent on the clarity of the actual alternatives vs. EC-membership at the particular time. In this matter the final conditions of entry were not clear, formally speaking, until the result of the official negotiations was presented in early 1972. The probable conditions were, however, known much earlier. As time went by, the different organizations also clarified their principal attitudes towards the EC. This was especially the case with respect to organizations which experienced internal disagreement in the first phases of the debate.

The rational complexity will be more dependent on the strategic context of the debate. The closer we move towards the referendum, the more important it will be to try to mobilize and attract voters outside the organization's own economic sector, and the more varied will be the arguments used. Our expectation concerning the formal aspects of the debate will be that the structural complexity in general will decrease from the beginning to the end. On the other hand it is reasonable to expect that the rational complexity will increase in the same period.

## Data and Methods

Because we are interested in the arguments presented by the various organizations, we have concentrated on the leadership groups in these organizations. The interest groups included in the analysis represent all the functional-economic poles of Rokkan's model. All organizations have their own papers or magazines closely connected to the organization. Most of them are house organs. An important question is of course to what extent we may presuppose that these papers express the opinions of the respective organization on different issues. We have primarily concentrated on *editorial articles*, where one usually



finds the “profile” of the paper. Editors in these papers are frequently recruited from the organizations themselves and belong to the organizational leadership. Statements and decisions taken by the organizations are printed quite often as editorial comments. Because we are studying the papers over time, incidental comments contradicting official policy will not be decisive for the overall impression of the arguments used.<sup>5</sup>

### *Relational Textual Analysis*

The unit of analysis is each editorial comment. Statements or arguments refer to an issue or a theme one may *like*, *dislike* or take a *neutral position* on. Our approach will be *relational*, because we will relate the separate statements made by the various organizations to the economic position and the particular strategic needs of each group (Vedung 1971). Like other content analyses we are also interested in the “chains of argumentation”, i.e. how different arguments or statements are linked together. It has therefore been necessary to obtain knowledge of the texts by extensive reading of the material. In the original analysis we have used direct quotations to present details of the argumentation. We also found that absence of certain statements in a specific period and paper did not mean that these arguments were no longer important to the organization. Sometimes it was enough to refer to binding decisions taken by organizational leaders once or twice.<sup>6</sup> Quantitative content analysis does, however, offer advantages for this kind of material. Most important, we can check the representativity of arguments used by the various organizations, the general methodological objectivity and the systematic collection of data. In order to find the major patterns in the arguments used we have employed factor analysis (Child 1970, Rummel 1970). This will also enable us to relate the position of each organization to the others.<sup>7</sup>

## The Empirical Analysis

After World War II Norway had given priority to Atlantic cooperation, including United States and Great Britain, more than to European contacts (Bergh 1977). Great Britain also became Norway’s most important trading partner. When Great Britain applied for EC-membership in the fall of 1961, this created a new situation, opening up for closer cooperation with the rest of Europe. The national reconstruction after damage during the war was almost finished and the focus of interest now shifted towards long-term economic goals. The overriding political goals of the period were economic growth and full employment. Enlargement of markets through the EC raised considerable interest in Norway at this stage.

The post-war period in Denmark marked a transition from a dominating agricultural economy towards modern industrial production. Around 1960 the

industrial expansion seemed to come to a halt. There was less manpower available, and the increase in wages resulted in increasing growth of national consumption of production, in addition to increased import from abroad. The European Common market was a contributing factor to increased difficulties for Danish agricultural exports because of its trade policy based on reduction of tariffs *within* the Market (Westergård Andersen 1974). Denmark joined EFTA, but was not overly enthusiastic about it because a trade-war between EC and EFTA was feared. It was of utmost importance to Denmark to avoid such a conflict, not the least because Danish export was more or less evenly distributed between the two groups. The most important market for Danish agricultural production was Great Britain, and when Britain applied for EC-membership, Denmark followed suit. The closer contact with Europe also made this rapprochement easier for the Danes.

#### *The EC-Debate among Agricultural and Fisheries Organizations*

We will now turn to the empirical analysis of our data. The emphasis on questions relating the membership issue to specific economic sectorial interests was a general and stable feature of the EC-debate from beginning to end. This includes all organizations studied. In view of the strong connections between our organizations and the respective economic interests, this was of course no surprise. In a comparative perspective, however, it is important to establish that economic-structural conditions in Norway and Denmark were decisive for the organizations' stand on the membership issue. Structural differences between the two countries can to a large extent explain why they chose different alternatives regarding the EC.

Starting with the rural pole in Rokkan's scheme, it is fair to say that the national differences between Norway and Denmark first of all concerned the primary sector. In Norway, where agriculture was very much regulated and subsidized by the State, the agricultural organizations placed their main line of argumentation on the question of protecting the *home-market* against competition from abroad. As the major farmers' paper put it: "... it is clear that any kind of affiliation will have serious consequences and dangers for the kind of development we want in Norwegian agriculture."<sup>8</sup> This statement came in the first period of the debate, in 1961. As time went by the agricultural organizations increasingly stressed, as an absolute condition, that permanent exceptions from the Market's rules of free competition should be granted.

The agricultural sector in Denmark was in a totally different position vis-à-vis the export markets, and in contrast to their Norwegian colleagues, they underlined the advantages in terms of a possible market expansion that would be a result of Danish EC-membership.

The fisheries in Norway were placed in a somewhat different position from the agricultural sector of the country. The export of fishery products was vital

for the future of this sector. Two aspects are, however, important for the understanding of why the fishery organizations did not favor membership, despite the obvious advantages this would give them in the huge European market. First of all, EC-membership would not suffice for the total export of Norwegian fish. The trade discriminations of the EC against so-called third countries would therefore present negative consequences for Norwegian export of dried and salted fish, in particular, to countries outside an enlarged Community. A more fundamental argument from this group was, however, the question of national control over natural resources in the sea. The total number of fish has been steadily decreasing over a number of years, which resulted in decreasing catch for the fishermen. If Norway joined the EC, it would be more difficult, or even impossible, to deny access to Norwegian fishing grounds for fishermen from the EC-countries. The fishery organizations therefore argued that the whole fishery basis in terms of natural resources would then be endangered.

The Danish fisheries played a less important role in the total economic structure than did the Norwegian fisheries. Even if the Danish fishermen's organization underlined the necessity of protecting the basic resources involved, the EC-market was more attractive from their point of view. To the extent that the Danish fishermen's organization took a clear position in the debate, they emphasized the importance of export markets and economic growth. The basic cleavage in the EC-debate divided the home market sectors from the export oriented sectors. In this context this means a conflict between Norwegian primary sector organizations and Norwegian and Danish export interests. Because the most numerous collection of anti-market sentiments was found in Norway, the debate to a large extent was quite different in the two countries. It is possible to quantify this national difference with our data, by using *nation* as a "dummy variable" and thereby get a picture of which arguments and issues were more or less characteristic for each country. Table 1 shows the arguments with highest factor loadings separately for Norway and Denmark in the period 1961-1972.

Table 1 shows clearly that the different situations with respect to economic interests in the two countries resulted in a very different profile for the debate. This was the case both with regard to arguments dealing with economic self interests and strategic economic questions like protection of employment and settlement in peripheral areas in Norway. Even though economic-sectorial issues were fundamental in connection with the organizations' stand on the membership issue, the particular profile of this debate could be primarily observed through the strategic-economic argumentation.

It was a typical feature of the debate that strategic elements were increasingly emphasized during the period from the beginning of the 1960's to the 1970's. The Norwegian primary organizations did not, for instance, emphasize

Table 1. Variables with highest factor loadings: "nation"  
used as dummy. 1961-1972.

Nation	Factor loadings	Variables
NORWAY	.41	Permanent exceptions for agriculture
	.40	Taking care of peripheral areas
	.39	Pursuing a national agricultural policy
	.37	Positive reference to agricult. organizations
	.33	In favor of trade agreement with the EC
	.33	Negative towards the EC
DENMARK	.40	Advantages connected to access to the British market
	.37	In favor of free competition
	.37	Advantages for exports
	.35	In favor of the membership alternative
	.33	Advantages in commodity markets
	.32	Advantages for price policy

the necessity of taking special care of employment and settlement in the periphery in the first period of the debate, in 1961-1962. These types of issues, however, became more and more frequent in the later phases of the debate. In 1972, the Norwegian Farmers' Association (Bondelaget) even urged their members, in public, to underline strategic considerations for not joining the Market. In this way, they said, it would be possible to appeal to a broader segment of the total population. The last period of the debate coincided with a climax in the long term process of geographical resettlement in Norway. The protection of the settlement structure was therefore increasingly more important to the organizations taking care of groups most affected by these changes.

In Denmark, it was a general feature of the EC-debate that the export oriented organizations stressed the importance of EC-membership for the total national economic growth through an increase in the foreign exchange reserves from export of goods. We found a corresponding line of argumentation among Norwegian export groups, but with one major difference. The Danish economy was clearly more unstable than the Norwegian in the beginning of the 1970's. This could be seen in an increase in the deficit in the balance of trade. We did not find that this phenomenon was mentioned in the first half of the debate. In the last period, however, it was underlined very strongly that EC-membership would be vital in solving the economic problems of the country. This was especially the case of Danish agricultural organizations, having in mind this sector's ability to earn foreign currency in a large market.

Concerning the more ideologically flavored argumentation by the primary

sector organizations, the ability of the EC-institutions to disregard specific national regulations and supportive actions was at the heart of the Norwegian debate. The issue of *supranationality* was closely linked to the possibilities of pursuing national control over the agricultural sector. When the fishery organizations became more involved in the debate, the question of national control also included natural resources. The linking of ideological issues with basic economic sectorial interests was so obvious in our data that we conclude that ideology in this sense was more or less a *legitimization* of self interests.

In the case of Denmark, the ideological argument had to do with the EC's market-liberal character. To the extent that the organizations took a clear position on the supranational peculiarity of the Community, they were positive. Not the least because of the advantages a joint, coordinated market policy would have for the export industries. The principle of free competition in the market was the core of the Danish agricultural organizations' evaluation of the EC-membership. The consideration of economic self interests seemed to be basic also for these groups when they argued in a more ideologically oriented way.

#### *The EC-Debate among Business Organizations*

The employers' organizations were of course closely connected to major export industries. They favored EC-membership mainly because this would ensure continued industrial growth through increased export of commodities and better conditions for new investments. The free labor market of the Community was seen as an advantage in order to provide access to manpower in a region with shortage of manpower. At the same time regional unemployment could be lowered because of the possibilities of moving workers within a large, common market.

The strategic-economic argumentation of the business groups was mainly linked to the potential economic growth in an enlarged EC. In 1967 and 1970-1971 the references to such strategic arguments were quite infrequent. On the other hand, it is typical that the Norwegian Employers' organization did put considerable weight on strategic arguments in 1972, shortly before the referendum. They argued very strongly that EC-membership would not jeopardize the present social security system in Norway, and the settlement structure. This line of argument was probably a direct message to opponents of membership who were especially interested in these questions.

With respect to ideological issues, the Norwegian business organization was surprisingly uninterested in these matters. Economic liberalism was a basic value, but ideological arguments did not play a major part in their total argumentation. The Danish Employers' organization did, however, show a deeper interest in ideological issues, but even this group showed a relatively low involvement with internationalistic issues. With respect to the question of state

interference in the national economy, the Danish organization clearly confronted the labor movement. In a vital ideological question we therefore find strong disagreement between two groups favoring the same alternative regarding the EC-connection. Even though the Norwegian business organization did not show the same involvement on this specific issue, this means that the different organizations had widely divergent premises for their stand in the debate. The positive evaluation by the business groups of supranationality, loss of national sovereignty and integration was therefore closely linked to a wish for a liberalization of the terms of market competition.

#### *The Debate in the Labor Organizations*

The labor movement was not directly linked to the industrial sector the way the employer groups were, but emphasized that it was important to ensure good conditions for the export industry in the future, because this was a precondition for growth in industrial production and thereby a precondition for stable employment. The labor movement therefore agreed with the stand taken by the industry groups on the preferred affiliation with the EC. The Danish labor movement was somewhat more enthusiastic with respect to the export advantages than the Norwegians, who did not accentuate this aspect as much as the Danes. The Norwegian labor movement was more occupied with questions dealing with wages and working conditions for the workers, in addition to the need for a policy of social and economic redistribution.

The general priority given by the labor organizations to economic growth and stable employment had important consequences for the strategic arguments used by these organizations. In the same way as the export oriented business organizations, the labor groups emphasized the decisive impact the EC would have on the total economic growth of the country. These organizations did not base their strategic-economic argumentations on issues like protection of the periphery the way anti-marketeters did. In 1972 the labor groups paid more attention to such questions, probably in order to broaden their public appeal in the last phase of the debate. They did, however, make it clear that from their point of view the ultimate condition for securing employment and settlement in peripheral areas was a continued economic growth, which would be most effectively substantiated if we joined the EC.

Dealing with ideological argumentation, we found that the metal workers' organizations in both countries were more occupied with the potential threat from international capital than the central labor organizations. The metal workers' organizations were split in the EC-question, and after a while they participated very little in the debate. The Norwegian Federation of Trade Unions (Landsorganisasjonen) therefore took more and more of the initiative in the public debate as it materialized in their organizational papers. The labor organizations did, nevertheless, have a particular profile on ideological questi-

ons, compared to the employers' organizations. The Norwegian Federation of Trade Unions (LO) in particular emphasized the importance of the EC for the international solidarity between workers. In this connection they underlined the eventual control of powerful multi-national corporations on a broader international basis. They also argued in terms of increased state interference with private business in order to implement a policy of economic redistribution.

Even though the Danish labor organizations put major emphasis on the advantages to exports if Denmark joined the Market, the period of 1970-1971 is an interesting exception. In these years the labor movement not only argued more in ideological terms than before, but they also signalled more doubts about the membership alternative than they had previously done.

### *Coalition Efforts*

When an organization is dependent on a decision made by the national electorate, and not by political elites, it will also be more dependent on its ability to provide a number of "coalition partners". This means that it will have to try to mobilize a majority of the population taking part in the referendum.

The coalition efforts varied very much in the two countries. In Norway we found two important coalition groups which accentuated more and more questions which they agreed upon, and at the same time indicated disagreement with groups outside this informal coalition. The two Norwegian agricultural organizations did not, for instance, emphasize questions like the restructuring of their sector, over which they had fought bitter fights in the postwar period. They instead stressed the *common interests* of the organizations in the EC-issue. On the other flank, we found that the traditional opponents in Norwegian politics, the labor union and the employers' organization, approached each other. This was especially the case at the end of the debate, where they argued more in terms of issues they agreed upon. Within both these "coalition groups" we found explicit statements about the need of taking consciously into consideration coalition-strategic deliberations.

In Denmark, however, the situation was quite different. Here, strong disagreements were expressed between the organization of employers and the labor movement. This was the case both in the beginning of the debate, and at the end, close to the referendum. The employers' association in Denmark clearly intended to lead a "right-wing opposition" against both the trade union and the social-democratic government with respect to their economic policy at the time. The employers' argumentation was very much characterized by traditional left-right issues. Even though the employers' organization emphasized the advantages for business if Denmark joined the EC, they also made a point of not leaning too heavily on the labor groups in obtaining their support at the referendum. The justification of this cautiousness was that the

employers did not want to risk tying up their freedom of action after the referendum vis-à-vis the labor movement.

The question of coalition effort not only affected relationships with other organizations. It also included the need to appeal to people outside specific organizations. The different organizations' use of strategic-economic arguments to a great extent was determined by their position in the economic structure in the country. This means that economically strong sectors emphasized their sector's importance for the general growth and level of employment, while economically weak sectors emphasized the *indirect* importance to parts of society. The Norwegian primary sector organizations tried to build a "periphery-coalition" based on the negative consequences of EC-membership for the primary sector itself and thereby other parts of the economic life in the peripheral areas. For reasons of space we cannot present the results of the factor analysis in its totality. To illustrate some points regarding the strategic aspect of the debate, however, we will present the first factor in 1972 in the Norwegian data. Because we have used principal components solution, this factor is the most important one, explaining most of the total variance. The first factor in the Norwegian data in all separate analyses was a dimension which separated EC-supporters from EC-opponents, and explained between 35 and 44 percent of the total variance.

Table 2. Factor I/1972 Norway: Negative results of negotiations: no satisfactory protection of agriculture and settlement.

Positive factor loadings	Variables
.93	Dissatisfied with negotiation results
.92	Negative towards EC-supporters
.91	Take care of the interests of the people
.89	Negative comments on the EC
.88	In favor of trade-agreement
.84	Positive towards primary sector organizations
.80	Against EC-membership
.78	Protect interests of peripheral areas
.69	In favor of a national agricultural policy
.65	Protect agriculture
.62	In favor of a national restructuring of agriculture
.60	Want permanent exceptions from the EC-rules
.60	Opposes supranationality
.56	Negative towards EC-policy on structural rationalization

Factor scores:

Norwegian Farmers' Association:	1.006
Norwegian Smallholders Assoc.:	0.718
Norwegian Fishermen's Organiz.:	0.645



Table 2 shows the positive pole of factor I in 1972. The opposition towards the agricultural policy of the EC was a stable feature in the debate with respect to the primary sector organizations. This was the case in all periods from 1961. References to the interests of "the people", especially those living in peripheral areas, clearly show that strategic appeals were central in the concluding years of the debate. Both arguments concerning the whole population and peripheral areas have high factor loadings on this factor. The factor scores shown below factor I indicate that all three of the Norwegian primary sector organizations joined forces in this argumentation.

Table 3 shows the negative pole of the same factor, giving ample evidence to our contention of the pro-and anti-EC character of this dimension.

Table 3. Factor I/1972: Norway: EC - a precondition for economic growth

Negative factor loadings	Variables
.99	In favor of EC-membership
.99	No alternative to membership
.99	Positive comments on Rome-treaty
.99	Negative towards EC-opponents
.97	Positive towards EC-supporters
.97	Favorable comments on Labor party
.93	Advantages for economic growth
.90	Advantages for business
.89	Positive towards the EC
.87	In favor of European integration
.86	Against trade-agreements/association
.79	Favorable for workers

Factor scores:

Norwegian Federation of Trade Unions:	1.537
Norwegian Employers' Association:	0.833

In Table 3, we have only included those variables which both organizations have used in their argumentation. This was done by checking the underlying matrix. The variables in Table 3 all indicate positive evaluations of an EC-membership. The important arguments are found in the references to economic growth and advantages for industry and business. In the more "qualitative" part of the analysis, studying the actual texts, we found that EC-membership was seen as a precondition for future economic growth. Table 3 also shows the interesting alliance between the labor movement and the Employers' group, both scoring high on this dimension. This "center-alliance" argued mostly in terms of total economic growth and employment, and traditional opponents found common ground on these questions. Another traditional

conflict in Norwegian politics on the other hand was revitalized: the conflict between rural and urban sectors.

Although the situation was different in Denmark, we did find evidence of a similar rural-urban conflict in the Danish data. Again referring to the factor analyses, all the first factors separated between rural, or rather agricultural, organizations on one pole, and urban organizations on the other. In contrast to the Norwegian debate, this dimension was not a pro- and anti-EC dimension.

Although we did not find coalition efforts of the same magnitude in Denmark as in Norway, the Danish groups also argued on a strategic basis. Common to all Danish groups was their emphasis on the overall positive effects EC-membership would have for their country. Even though the employers' organization gave voice to some confrontations with the labor movement, this did not prevent them from emphasizing the need to take care of established rights for workers inside a future EC. The Employers' Association in this way could indicate both disagreement with other groups and stress common interests with the members of other organizations. Despite their internal disagreements on issues regarding economic control, they joined forces with respect to the membership-alternative in an "economic-growth" coalition.

Table 4 below illustrates some of the tension between The Employers' Association and the Federation of Trade Unions.

Table 4. Factor III/1972 Denmark: EC-markets a precondition for economic growth.

Factor loadings	Variables
.93	Improved working conditions
.91	In favor of Rome-treaty
.86	Negative comments on trade unions
.85	Negative comments on wages
.85	Negative comments on prices
.85	In favor of economic growth
.83	Advantages for wages
.83	Negative towards tax-policies
.81	In favor of structural changes
.69	In favor of customs- and currency union
.67	Advantages for social security system
.66	Positive towards international markets
.66	Advantages for employment
.65	Negative comments on authorities/administration
.63	Advantages for labor market
.63	Positive towards the EC

Factor scores:

Danish Employers' Association:	2.104
Danish Smallholders Association:	0.550
Danish Federation of Trade Unions:	0.096

Factor III in 1972 explains 15.2 percent of the total variance in the Danish data. The differences in factor scores between the two major interest groups in the secondary and tertiary sectors are mainly due to disagreements on the economic policies of the social-democratic government at the time. This had to do with dissatisfaction of business groups as regards wages, prices and taxes. It is important to point out that these internal differences between major economic organizations did not affect their common goal of joining the Common Market. Factor I in 1972, not shown here, indicates agreement between these groups on the basic issue as regards the membership alternative. It is, however, interesting to find such a clear illustration of the different settings in Norway and Denmark with respect to coalition efforts. While labor and business organizations emphasized their common evaluation as regards the EC, the Danish organization could "afford" to voice disagreements within the economic-growth coalition.

## Problems and Hypotheses versus Empirical Findings

We will now return in a more systematic way to the initial hypotheses of this analysis. Our introductory expectation that Norwegian primary sector organizations would justify their opposition towards EC-membership with arguments connected to rural problems, in particular protection of peripheral employment and settlement, found support in our data. It was characteristic of these groups that their main argument concerned the protection of the home-market against foreign competition, in addition to national control over natural resources. Our expectations concerning the other sector organizations were also supported. This means that they attached more weight to arguments about the advantages of EC-membership for the expansion of business and the economic growth of the country. We did, however, find differences in this matter between labor interests and employer interests. The Norwegian labor movement, in particular, did not emphasize this aspect as much as the other organizations. The stronger emphasis on other aspects by the labor groups was understandable, taking into consideration their historical background as an international movement with an ideological commitment. To the extent the labor organizations were occupied with market issues in a narrow sense, their statements conformed with our expectations.

### *Strategic-Ideological Argumentation*

The need for the participants to extend their appeal to greater segments of the population implied that general statements based more on common interests than on sectorial interests would be emphasized in the debate. The organizations would also feel an urge to establish some sort of *continuity* in their argumentation. Our initial expectation, based on the ideological content of the ar-

guments used, was that the primary sector organizations would link ideological arguments to their sector's need for national control over the agricultural policy and protection of national resources.

Even though we found traces of an argumentation based on what may be called historical-constitutional tradition, arguing against the supranational character of the EC and for a national protectionism, this group on the whole did not argue along traditionalist lines. It was more characteristic that the resistance against supranationality principles and economic liberalism was closely linked to the preference of national control over the agricultural policy and protection of natural resources. This linkage was so explicit that it is fair to say that this type of ideological argument played the part of legitimization of sectorial economic interests. At the end of the EC-debate this strategic element became even more explicit, especially with respect to the Norwegian agricultural organizations.

It was difficult to formulate one specific hypothesis about the ideological argumentation of the labor organizations without knowing to which of two aspects they would give priority: the labor movement's socialist ideology or the national economic growth. Our two alternative hypotheses therefore were either the prospect of more effective control with international capitalism through an EC-membership, or better control of big capital outside the EC.

We have shown that the trade unions in both countries emphasized the need for continued economic growth and stable employment. This goal was shared by the business organizations. The analysis showed that the possibility of a more effective control of multinational corporations if one joined the Market was the argument voiced by the labor groups. In the first part of the debate we found indications that more radical unions were sceptical towards EC-membership, but these organizations did not take active part in the discussion later on, probably because they had internal disagreements on this issue.

Both in Denmark and Norway the metal workers officially opposed membership, but this fact did not materialize in the total debate measured by degree of participation. There was one exception to this; in the period 1970-1971 the Danish Federation of Trade Unions emphasized "anti-capitalist" questions which were not important in their argumentation either before or after. The reasons behind this may have been the extensive dissatisfaction with the bourgeois government in power at that time. It is probable that the labor organizations were more occupied with national, political conflicts than coalitions connected to the EC-struggle. Another aspect was the central labor's relations to anti-marketeers on their own left-wing, a group which opposed EC-membership very much on an ideological basis. The Federation's emphasis on EC as the "stronghold of big capital" could therefore be understood as an attempt to appeal to a particular group of their own members. This would be some sort of intra-organizational strategic argumentation.

Our fifth expectation had to do with the ideological arguments used by the employer groups. The analysis showed that none of these organizations were very much occupied with internationalistic aspects in terms of supranationality. On the other hand they did underline a wish for trade liberalism in connection with a future EC-membership. Both the agricultural organizations and Employers' Association in Denmark emphasized liberalistic principles. Even though the Norwegian Employers' Association supported this view, it was striking that this question played very little part in their total argumentation. While the Danish employer organization confronted the labor organizations on the issue of state interference in business, we found no similar conflict articulated in the Norwegian debate. This probably had to do with the different situations the two countries experienced regarding coalition efforts. Because of the major conflict of interest between home-market sectors and export sectors in Norway, the outcome of the referendum was more uncertain than in Denmark. In Norway the need for (informal) electoral alliances was therefore greater than in Denmark where they could give more room to traditional political conflicts without jeopardizing the Yes-majority. This of course was valid with certain limitations.

#### *Changes in Content of the Debate*

Based on the economic development in the two countries we formulated an expectation that Danish organizations increasingly would emphasize EC-membership as a solution to national economic problems, while Norwegian groups would not emphasize this aspect in the same way. The analysis showed that Danish organizations were more occupied with the prospect of better economic conditions instead of growing problems in the two last periods of the debate than in the first periods. The Danish agricultural organizations were in particular occupied with this aspect, not the least because of this sector's importance regarding earning of foreign capital. The employer organization was not so categorical as the agricultural group, but they too claimed that an EC-membership would play an important role in securing the future for export-industries. In Norway, however, we did not find an increasing emphasis of this kind over the years, even though national economic considerations were central in the Norwegian debate.

The last period of the EC-struggle in Norway coincided with a climax in the process of geographical mobilization where people moved from peripheral parts of the country to more central parts. This process affected those areas where the primary sector was most important, namely the coastal areas and the Northern region. We therefore found it reasonable to expect that the Norwegian primary sector organizations more and more would emphasize the importance of their sector both with respect to settlement and employment in peripheral areas.

The organizations did not separate between employment and settlement because these aspects necessarily were closely linked to each other. However a striking aspect of the debate was that the primary organizations attached more weight to this argument over the years. Being a sector in a minority position these groups clearly were in a defensive situation regarding the other parts of the population. This leads to an emphasis on coalition aspects and on the strategic-economic arguments.

### *The Complexity of the Debate*

Our last problem concerns the formal aspects of the debate. We expected that the structural complexity, measured by the preciseness of the organizations' position versus EC-membership, would decrease over the years. We did not find a *gradual* decline with respect to structural complexity. The major difference was found between the first and the second period of the debate, i.e. between 1961-1962 and 1967. Already by 1967 the organizations expressed clear preferences regarding membership, even though some organizations underlined that they had not *formally* decided which alternative to choose. The overall picture of the debate was therefore not that they carefully balanced Pro's and Con's, but more that they took a stand at a relatively early time and thereafter expanded the reasons for their position, not least by arguing strategically.

Regarding the rational complexity of the debate, we found more exceptions here than for the structural complexity. The main difference was, however, found between the two first periods and the two last periods. Especially in 1972 the debate assumed a "total" character, meaning that a number of new aspects were brought into the discussions. It seems that the strategic context of the EC-debate was important with respect to the rational complexity. The deviant cases consisted of the fact that the labor organizations argued on a broader basis in 1961-1962 than the other organizations. This implied both strategic-economic and strategic-ideological questions. Taking into consideration the traditional international orientation of labor unions, this was not surprising. Later on, these groups followed the general pattern and put most emphasis on the purely economic aspects of an EC-membership. In 1972 we found that the Danish labor organizations argued on a narrower basis than earlier and concentrated upon industrial and national economic conditions. Evaluating the Danish labor's argumentation in a national context, we find that it was no longer necessary for them to confront the government the way they did in 1970, because the bourgeois government had been succeeded by a labor government in 1971.

Another exception were the primary sector organizations which expanded their argumentation earlier than other groups. The Danish Employers' Association showed relatively low rational complexity throughout the whole

debate, but this obviously had to do with their low involvement in the EC-issue beyond sectorial interests.

*In conclusion*, our analysis has shown that although it is important to take into consideration egoistic self-interests in order to understand why Norway and Denmark chose different alternatives regarding the European Communities, it is also vital to include aspects outside narrow economic interests. Institutional arrangements, like the fact that decisions would be taken in national referenda, lead to an emphasis of strategic considerations. One consequence of this was that traditional antagonists on the left-right dimension such as labor- and business groups did not confront each other in Norway, more or less avoiding questions where they disagreed. In Denmark, however, the strategic needs of such an alliance were smaller, and we found that the respective organizations attacked each other on vital economic issues, even though they agreed on the membership question.

#### NOTES

1. The most usual formal demands of rational models are that the preference orderings of the actors are *transitive*, *asymmetric* and *complete*.
2. The organizations analyzed are:  
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge/Landsorganisasjonen i Danmark, Norsk Jern- og Metallarbeiderforbund/Centralorganisationen af Metalarbejdere i Danmark, Norsk Handels- og kontorfunksjonærers forbund/Handels- og kontorfunktionærers forbund i Danmark, Norsk Arbeidsgiverforening/Dansk Arbejdsgiverforening, Norsk Bonde- og Småbrukerlag, Norges Bondelag, Norges Fiskarlag/De Samvirkende danske husmandsforeninger, Landboforeningerne, Dansk Fiskeriforening.
3. Our analysis is explicitly constricted to economic interest organizations. The emphasis of means-ends calculations may need no further justification. We are, nevertheless, aware of implications caused by references to generalized values made by the actors. The inclusion of ideological aspects of the EC-debate, reported later in this article, is an attempt to include "value-rational" calculation, to borrow Max Weber's term.
4. Tables documenting relevant information about economic development in the two countries are given in Aardal, 1979.
5. A study of Norwegian periodicals concludes that the organizational perspective is important for most aspects of the press connected to professions, interest groups and various sectors - both number of copies printed, target groups, economy and functions. Several factors contribute to a close connection between organizations and their house organs with regard to policy as well as general outlook. See Nielsen 1982.
6. The distinction between "sincere" and "expressed" opinions, which is a major concern of some commentators, is of minor importance in this analysis because we explicitly take into consideration strategic argumentation. We are not so much interested in "true" personal opinions as what the organizations themselves want to present in public, taking care of all relevant considerations. A related problem concerns *manifest* vs. *latent* content. In our material the actors try to convey positions as clearly as possible to their readers. When the content is complex and ambiguous this is often the result of a discussion of several issues simultaneously, or that they are weighing pros and cons before taking a firm position.
7. The fact that each editorial article may contain more than one reference to specific arguments makes it difficult to use the most usual multivariate scaling techniques. We will use

factor analysis based on each organization's total number of statements in each year. In order to equalize differences caused by varying numbers of articles and papers per year, we have used frequencies relative to each paper's annual total of arguments. By computing percentages we could operate with a measure of relative engagement in the debate. The use of principal components analysis also provides a ranking of the relevant factors, making it possible to differentiate between the importance of dimensions involved. Each factor is constructed orthogonally on the others, i.e. the factors are not correlated. To avoid common pitfalls in factor analysis, we have made a point of extensive double-checking of the correlation matrix and the relative frequencies of the arguments used. The resulting analysis is thus a combination of all these elements.

8. See *Norges Bondeblad*, no. 17, 1961.

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