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Divided Unions: The Effect of Union System Structures on Labour Unions' Welfare Policy Influence

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Divided Unions: The Effect of Union System Structures on Labour Unions' Welfare Policy Influence

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Abstract

Seeing how unions across different union systems seem to differ both in terms of their unity as well as influence over policy making, the purpose of this research has been to analyse how the structure of the union system affects both union unity and union influence on policymaking. This was done through a historical study of four welfare reforms in Sweden and Denmark, around the millennium shift. Although expecting that skill-segmentation between unions (as more present in Sweden than Denmark) would result in both more disunited and less influential unions, the findings differed. Rather, unions were much more diverse than to be structured on a just skill level, while union unity had little effect on overall union influence. Interpreting the findings, it was concluded that whilst the union system structure does matter for union unity, union diversity meant that union coalitions were much more flexible than expected. However, as unity itself seemed to matter little for union influence, the union system structure was not found to have a noticeable impact on union influence over policymaking.

1. Introduction

In 1995, the French government proposed a welfare reform that would remove the possibility for early retirement at the age of 55. Following the announcement, all four major French union confederations jointly went into opposition, and by December the proposal was withdrawn (Marier, 2002). Six years later in Germany, the government similarly sought to reform pensions. However, unlike the case of France, the larger German unions failed to deliver a united response, and the government was able to implement their reforms with little influence from the unions (Keune, 2018).

These two cases show that although the union system is commonly thought of as composed of a single monolithic union movement, guarding the hard-fought-for welfare state, the union system is in fact composed of a highly diverse range of unions. However as seen by the examples above, this diversity does not necessarily translate into disunity across union systems, with some producing united influential unions, and others divided marginalised ones. Seeking to answer why these differences occur, this thesis will examine four cases of welfare reform in Sweden and Denmark, aiming to shed light on the role of the union system structure on unions' influence over welfare policymaking.

The thesis will begin by reviewing existing literature on union influence over welfare policymaking from multiple perspectives, identifying a theoretical gap to fill. Then, a theoretical framework will be established, with concrete theoretical expectations and conceptualisations. Finalising the preparatory section, the research method, case, and data selection will be explained. The research itself will be composed of three parts, beginning with an in-depth description of the four cases, followed by an analysis, and ending with a conclusion based on the findings.

2. Literature review

Union influence on welfare policymaking is not a new area of study. Therefore, before beginning with the research, the thesis will begin with a review of previous literature on union influence on welfare policymaking. The literature can be grouped into three broad theoretical perspectives: *power resources*, *new politics*, and *comparative political economy*.

Power resources perspective

The central argument of the power resources perspective is that the varying influence of unions during welfare policymaking can be explained by the difference in union power resources (Esping-Andersen, 1990; Korpi, 1983), such as union density, union centralisation, coordination between unions, and expertise (Keune, 2018, pp. 463-464). These resources are aggregated from all unions as the power resources perspective treats union as one unified class-based actor who is always in support of the most extensive welfare state possible (Esping-Andersen, 1985, 1990; Korpi, 1983). Initially theorised for welfare expansion (Korpi, 1983, 1998), Korpi and Palme (2003) argue that it is equally relevant for welfare reform as well.

Developing on the effects of institutional frameworks on union power resources, other authors have highlighted how further influence can be gained by unions acting as administrators of welfare provision (Beland, 2001; Boeri, Brugiavini, & Calmfors, 2001; Gordon, 2015). Similarly, the policymaking process is also relevant, as within it, unions' formal role and influence can range from policymaking veto-players to mere lobby organisations (Jørgensen & Schulze, 2011; Kangas, Lundberg, & Ploug, 2010).

Finally, several authors have developed the argument that unions can gain significant influence through a symbiotic relationship with primarily social democratic parties, trading voters and funding for policy influence through the party as its legislative representative (Anderson, 2001; Allern & Bale, 2017). This relationship varies but can develop to the degree that the unions become embedded in a party (Allern & Bale, 2017; Lundberg, 2001).

New politics thesis

The role of unions as the central welfare defender has however been criticised by the new politics thesis (Pierson, 1994, 1996). It argues that the long-term existence of welfare states has created a structural shift where unions' role as the defender of welfare provisions has been usurped by client-based groups. Although proponents of the power resources perspective conceded that unions have had their power diminished in recent decades (Ebbinghaus, 2015, pp. 525-526), critical opinions still emerged against the dismissal of unions. Especially in conservative and social democratic welfare regimes, unions have been found to still dominate the field of welfare policy and have at multiple times, and in several countries mobilised to oppose or mitigate attempts at welfare reform (Scarborough, 2000, pp. 241-244). Even within the new politics framework itself, due to their organised nature, unions have also been found

to be able to leverage their strong voter mobilizing capabilities, to prevent or alter policy in return for electoral support (Anderson, 2001; Anderson & Meyer, 2003; Ebbinghaus, 2011).

Comparative political economy

Lastly, a sizable body of literature can be found in the field of comparative political economy. Authors from this field have identified how unions can influence policy through partaking in “social pacts” with governments, negotiating wage constraints for increased welfare (Regini, 1995). Later research found these social pacts to be relevant during welfare reform where unions negotiate mitigated welfare reforms in return for electoral support (Hassel, 2009).

Identifying that the distributive outcome differed between union systems, several authors draw conclusions similar to the power resource perspective about the importance of union density and centralisation for significant union influence (Avdagic, 2010, p. 651; Baccaro & Simoni, 2008; Culpepper & Regan, 2015; Hassel, 2009, pp. 12-13). However, comparative political economists also contributed further by disaggregating unions as a movement, highlighting how the perceived (by power resources scholars) as cohesive union movement, is actually composed of many unions with diverse goals. Union influence is thus found to not only dependent on available power resources, but also the degree to which unions can coordinate their resources towards a common goal (Avdagic, 2010, pp. 633-634; Baccaro & Simoni, 2008).

The gap in the literature

Reviewing the literature on union influence on welfare policymaking, the contribution from this research is twofold. First, although unions are now increasingly regarded as a diverse group of actors rather than one cohesive unit, less is known about why in certain union systems this diversity results in union divisions, whilst in others, unions are able to stay united. This thesis will therefore build on emerging literature on union system structures, aiming to answer how the structuring of the union system can affect union unity. Second, previous literature has tended to analyse the effects of unity on union influence over policymaking only on the level of complete policy. This has resulted in simplistic analyses of the effects of unity on influence, as it neglects the impact unity can have on the union’s ability to shape parts of policies rather than just accept or reject them. This thesis will fill that gap by offering a much more detailed analysis of the effects of union unity towards specific policy aspects to see if it has an effect on union influence. Thus, embedding the research in existing literature, the following research

question will guide the continued research. *How does the union system structure affect unions' influence on welfare policymaking?*

3. Theoretical framework

Drawing from emerging literature on the effects of union system structures, the central premise on which the frameworks build on, is that unions are interest-diverse rather than interest-aligned. Because of economic development, contemporary unions organise a wide range of workers: from cleaners to accountants to engineers (Ebbinghaus & Visser, 2000). This has, according to researchers on union system structures, led to a union interest divergence based on the increasing skill-difference of union members and thus the unions themselves, for several reasons. (1) The welfare state has developed into a redistribution scheme from high-skilled union members to low-skilled union members (Nijhuis, 2009, 2013). (2) Based on skill levels, union members have developed differing labour market risk profiles and thus welfare needs (Avdagic, 2010; Häusermann, 2010a). (3) Based on skill-level, union members increasingly differ in their ability to negotiate independently with employers (Palier & Thelen, 2010; Trampusch, 2007; Yang & Hyeok, 2019).

However, while this interest divergence is constant, the impact it has on overall union unity is dependent on how the unions are structured in the union system. By comparing the union structures in the union systems of the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, Nijhuis (2009, 2013) identified that the unity of unions towards welfare expansion depended strongly on if unions were structured vertically (per sector) or horizontally (per occupation). This is because vertical unions were more skill-mixed than horizontal unions (which are skill-segmented), resulting in more aligned union interests. Building upon Nijhuis' (2009, 2013) research, Yang (2017) similarly concludes that union systems with more skill-inclusive unions (vertical) result in more solidary and united unions than skill-narrow union systems. Häusermann (2010a, 2010b) identifies the same potent skill-cleavage when researching pension reform in Europe. She emphasises that the development of segmented high-skilled and low-skilled unions has led to increasingly divided union systems, with low-skilled unions being vastly more supportive of public redistribution than their high-skilled counterparts. Researching the increasing dualization of the French and German labour market, Palier and Thelen (2010) also find clearly divergent welfare positions between unions organising workers in traditional core economic sectors versus in newer peripheral sectors. Whilst not explicit, their research does imply that the core-periphery division is characterised by a clear skill divide between high-skilled core

workers and low-skilled peripheral workers, showcasing that even vertical union system structures can develop increased skill-segmentation (Palier & Thelen, 2010, pp. 124, 127).

The effect of union disunity is discussed in most of the union structure research, with it being regarded as widely negative for union influence. Tying it back to earlier literature on power resources, it was found that when unions were divided, so were their power resources (votes, funding, expertise). This division thus diminished any unions' ability to demand concessions, as isolated, no union has enough power resources to credibly threaten economic or electoral harm unless demands are met. Should union divisions become conflicting, then union influence is further affected as the power resources of either side negate one another (Avedagic, 2010; Häuserman, 2010a, 2010b; Nijhuis, 2009, 2013; Yang & Hyeok, 2019).

Theoretical expectations

Based on the framework above, to answer the research question, two theoretical expectations can be formulated. First, based on the reoccurring theme of homogenous workers' interests due to a skill-based difference, it is expected that unions representing differently skilled workers would hold different welfare positions. Seeing both the moderating and exacerbating effects the union system structure can have on these interest divergences, it is expected that *a union system structure where unions are less skill-segmented should result in more unified unions.*

Second, as also outlined in the theoretical framework, unions are expected to be able to exert more influence over welfare policy if they act more united. The more unified unions are, the more power resources they collectively have, and the more influence they should be able to exert over the policy outcome. Therefore, it is expected that *union influence over welfare policy will be higher when union unity is higher.*

Conceptualisations

Union system structure

Although there is no single union system structure, the concept of union system structure refers to the defining characteristics and way in which unions are organised in a union system (Ebbinghaus & Visser, 2000, p. 40). In the literature, a traditional conceptualisation is the blue-versus white-collar unions, where unions are structured based on the characteristics if they organise manual or non-manual workers (Forsen, 2019, p. 20; Solnick, 1985, pp. 237-238). An alternative conceptualisation comes from Nijhuis (2013) and Yang (2017), who conceptualises the union structure in terms of their organisational direction, with unions either organising

workers horizontally (per occupation) or vertically (per sector). However, as neither of these conceptualisations adequately consider inter-union skill differentials, neither is particularly useful alone for this research.

Rather, this thesis will employ an expanded conceptualisation based on Häusermann's (2010a) work. She conceptualises the union system structure directly based on the skill level of the union members, with union systems being composed of high-skilled or low-skilled unions, depending on the occupation of its members. Yet, this is too binary to be useful for this research. Thus, drawing from her own research which also identified medium-skilled workers (2010a, pp. 58-59) and Nijhuis's (2010) identified mixed skilled unions, this research will expand on her conceptualisation by also including high-medium and medium-low skilled unions. Not only should this yield a more detailed depiction of skill-segmentation between unions, but it also better captures the existence of sectoral unions, which contain a mix of differently skilled workers (Nijhuis, 2013)

Operationalisation of the union system structure will utilize parts of Häusermann's (2010a) operationalisation. Based on the organised occupation(s), a union can be classified as organising members from one or more of ten identified post-industrial classes. These ten classes can then in turn be classified into one of three broader skill groups (high, medium, low), allowing for a union to be given a skill level based on its members¹ (Häusermann, 2010a, p. 233). When applying this to a union confederation, the same logic applies only that instead of individuals, member unions are measured and aggregated.

Union unity

Union unity is conceptualised as the unions' ability to align their position towards a common position (Ebbinghaus, 1993, p. 3). In the literature, unity has tended to be conceptualised on the level of overall policy, as a coordinated response towards a policy proposal (Keune, 2018, pp. 472-473; Nijhuis, 2013, pp. 36-38). However, because this research targets four large proposals in-depth, only looking at the level of complete policy will not suffice. Thus, drawing from research on policy design, in addition to overall policy positions, unity will additionally be conceptualised as a coordinated response towards specific policy instruments (e.g. a new tax) or specific policy calibrations (e.g. new tax rate) (Haelg, Sewerin, & Schmidt, 2020). This inclusion of (potential) union unity on several levels of a policy should result in a more accurate

¹ A union was classified as high-medium or medium-low skilled if it contained both skill groups.

depiction of unity, as unions could differ on overall support whilst still sharing opposition towards specific policy instruments. These positions will be grouped into one out of four inductively created categories, *generosity demands*, *duration demands*, *eligibility demands*, and *other demands*. However, it needs to be stressed that these are purely descriptive categories for clarity and does not carry any analytical weight.

Influence

Influence will be conceptualised as “provide resources to politicians, and in return, the interest group will receive their desired policy outcome” (Farrer, 2017, p. 12). These resources can vary but are commonly conceptualised as member preferences, financial aid, or expertise. It is a much less in depth-conceptualisation than presented by Cashore and Howlett (2014, pp. 24-25), where policy influence can also be exercised before and after policymaking. However, as the goal is to analyse influence on specific policy proposals, additional levels are not relevant.

Measuring influence can be done by analysing either change in funding (Farrer, 2017), or on an ordinal scale where policy demands are coded between fully met and not met (Dür, Marshall, & Bernhagen, 2019, p. 46). However, as critiqued by Whiteley and Winyard (1987, p. 111), such measures are not enough to causally identify influence. Thus, in line with a more qualitative-subjective approach, for this research, influence will be interpreted on an individual concession basis (Dür, Marshall, & Bernhagen, 2019, p. 44), whilst to deduce the source of influence, the process behind each concession will be analysed (Marier, 2002, p. 33).

4. Research design

Research method

The design of the research will be a comparative case study of four attempts at welfare reform in Sweden and Denmark. As the research does not contain any “hard” comparable concepts, by using two cases in each country case, it should strengthen the between, as well as within-case comparison. Because welfare reform does not take place in a parliamentary vacuum, the analysis does not lend itself well to pure positivist content analysis of position and policy documents. The research will therefore aim to instead substantiate the analysis by a richer individual case description based on interpretations of events surrounding the reforms through a historical study (Trachtenberg, 2006).

Case selection

The country cases of Sweden and Denmark were selected based on the Most Similar System Design, as the countries share many of the theoretically important variables from earlier literature. Identified similarities are: (1) High union density and centralisation (Ebbinghaus & Visser, 2000, pp. 57-58), (2) a competitive political context (Green-Pedersen, 2004; Statistiska centralbyrån, 2020), (3) a relevant social democratic party (Jochem, 2003), and (4) the unions do not have a formal position within the decision-making process (Kangas, Lundberg, & Ploug, 2010). At the same time, they differ on the independent variable, with the Swedish union system structure being heavily skill-segmented, whilst the Danish union system structure is more skill-mixed. Despite the risk of overlooking other relevant factors, the Swedish and Danish cases are nevertheless a good fit, as according to Lijphart (1971, p. 689), area studies are more likely to be similar and comparable than randomly selected cases.

The four policy proposals selected are the Swedish pension reform of 1994; the Swedish unemployment insurance reform of 1996; the Danish unemployment insurance reform of 1995; the Danish early retirement reform of 1998/99. These types of reforms were selected because earlier literature has identified both pensions and unemployment insurance as central welfare questions for unions (Anderson, 2001, p. 1074). The specific reforms were selected because all occurred around the same time and have been identified as significant attempts at welfare reform (Arndt, 2013; Jochem, 2003; Kananen, 2012; Klitgaard & Nørgaard, 2010).

Since in both Sweden and Denmark, the union movement is characterised by strong union confederations (Ebbinghaus & Visser, 2000), and the practical infeasibility of analysing 100+ unions, the research will analyse the union system structure on the level of confederation rather than union. Although this does sacrifice some union diversity, analysing individual confederations does still entail disaggregating the union system. Internal division within the confederations will also be considered, allowing for union diversity to be further expressed.

In the Swedish case, three union confederations have been chosen. These confederations are *Landsorganisationen i Sverige (LO-S²)* [The Swedish Trade Union Confederation], *Sveriges akademikers centralorganisation (SACO)* [The Swedish Confederation of Professional Associations], and *Tjänstemännens centralorganisation (TCO)* [Confederation of Professional Employees]. Collectively, they represent 97% of Sweden's unionised workers.

² Because both Denmark and Sweden has a confederation with the same name they will be marked with (-S) or (-DK) for clarification.

To understand why the Swedish union system was so skill-segmented in 1998, three historical unionisation factors need to be accounted for. (1) Industrial unionism has dominated Swedish unions through history, resulting in a dominance of vertical unions. (2) Blue-collar LO-S historically rejected all white-collar high-skilled workers so TCO and SACO, unionised all higher-skilled workers in every sector. (3) White-collar unionism was very successful, resulting in TCO/SACO maintaining a relatively high share of total unionised workers (Ebbinghaus & Visser, 2000, pp. 614-617). These three historical factors have had a strong impact on the Swedish union system and resulted in a skill divide between low-medium-skilled LO-S and medium-high-skilled TCO/SACO. Furthermore, these two sides are relatively equal in terms of cumulative members, which should lead to divided and non-influential confederations, as LO-S and TCO/SACO will split the unions in the middle.

Table 1. Total members and skill-level categorisation in LO-S, TCO, and SACO in 1998 (Compiled by author. For an in-depth explanation, see appendix B).

	LO-S	TCO	SACO
Individual members	1,824,385	1,050,899	341,119
<i>Breakdown of member skill level</i>			
High-Skilled (%)	20,779 (1%)	234,608 (24%)	341,119 (100%)
High-Medium-Skilled (%)	N/A	723,354 (74%)	N/A
Medium-Low-Skilled (%)	1,208,536 (68,5%)	N/A	N/A
Low-Skilled (%)	547,830(31%)	16,937 (2%)	N/A

Although the Danish union system is composed of more union confederations than Sweden, the analysis will only incorporate *Landsorganisationen i Danmark* (LO-DK) [The Danish Confederation of Trade Unions] and *Funktionærernes og Tjenestemændenes Fællesråd* (FTF) [The Confederation of Professionals in Denmark]. These two collectively represent 85% of all Danish unionised workers and are the only confederations that represent more than 10% of the total unionised workers in Denmark (Ebbinghaus & Visser, 2000, p. 194).

The Danish union system structure is more skill-mixed, which can similarly be explained by three historical factors. (1) Unlike Sweden, occupational unionism was the historical norm which, whilst industrial unionism would dominate towards the end of the 20th century, still resulted in fewer vertical unions. (2) LO-DK chose to incorporate higher-skilled white-collar

unions. (3) White collar unionism was not especially successful in Denmark (Ebbinghaus & Visser, 2000, pp. 164-168). These three factors led to a very different Danish union system structure in 1997, compared to Sweden. The failure of white-collar unionism and LO-DKs acceptance of higher-skilled workers have led to LO-DK playing a more dominant role in the Danish union system (Due, Jensen, Madsen, & Petersen, 1994, p. 159) and resulted in a more skill-mixed distribution among the confederation.

Table 2. Total members and skill-level categorisation in LO-DK and FTF in 1997 (Compiled by author. For an in-depth explanation, see appendix B).

	LO-DK	FTF
Individual members	1,480,356	340,991
<i>Breakdown of member skill level</i>		
High-skilled (%)	87,732 (6%)	174,433 (79,5%)
High-Medium-Skilled (%)	376,370 (25%)	45,171 (20,5%)
Medium-Low-Skilled (%)	360,248 (24,3%)	N/A
Low-skilled (%)	578,345 (38%)	N/A

Data selection

Because the aim is to provide a richer case description, data collection will take a broad approach in terms of types of sources. Although the case studies will rely heavily on policy and consultation documents, to get a better understanding of intra-, and inter-confederation politics, these documents will be supplemented by both news articles and secondary sources whose access to key actors during these reforms could benefit the case descriptions.

Due to practical constraints, there is a data-asymmetry between the two countries, as union policy documents are more readily available in Sweden than in Denmark³ which does slightly limit the Danish case descriptions. Nevertheless, alternative sources should suffice, as they offer access to other relevant documents or first-hand accounts of the events as a replacement. To ensure that news archival search is systematic between the two countries, the research will only utilise national-level newspapers and the same keywords⁴

³ See appendix A

⁴ See appendix A

Data on the confederations and unions will exclusively come from Ebbinghaus and Visser (2000), as their book has extensive and standardised data on unions not found elsewhere. Whilst this does have the drawback of the data used not being from the same year as the specific reforms, it should not be an issue as the largest time discrepancy is three years, during which no significant changes occurred (Ebbinghaus & Visser, 2000, p. 618). Furthermore, whilst skill-relevant information is lacking on some of the smaller unions (worst among FTF unions), the available information should suffice as an adequate proxy for the confederations' skill level, as historical factors discussed early, should ensure consistency within the union systems.

5. Case studies

The Swedish pension reform of 1994

Towards the end of the 1980s, Sweden had begun to suffer under increased structural unemployment, which put several welfare provisions, including the pension system under severe financial strain. Fearing that it would collapse, the conservative government established a parliamentary committee comprised of all parliamentary parties in 1991. The goal was to produce a pension reform proposal, which they finished in 1994 (Marier, 2002).

The proposal suggested three major changes in the system. (1) It would change the pension from being based on contributions from the fifteen highest-paid years out of thirty, to lifetime. This was to be capped at a ceiling, after which further (lower) contributions would not result in a higher pension. In tandem, benefits related to higher-education, conscription, childcare, and unemployment would be counted towards pension contributions. (2) The retirement age would increase to sixty-five, where early retirement would lead to a proportionally lower pension. (3) The sources of contributions would shift from employer only, to an equal employer employee split of 9.25% of the salary each. This however was planned to be offset by increased wages (SOU 1994:20).

TCO was first to oppose the reform after its announcement because the change to lifetime contributions would result in lower pensions for two-thirds of its members (Dagens Nyheter, 1994a). TCO later expanded its criticism to include split contributions, which it feared would lead to a high marginal tax rate for high-income workers (Dagens Nyheter, 1994b). Opposition to split contributions was shared by LO-S but justified differently, arguing that many low-skilled employees would not be adequately compensated (TT Nyhetsbyrå, 1994a).

Internally though, LO-S saw internal division when the largest union of metalworkers, and industrial workers came out in opposition to the overall proposal due to the proposed raise of the retirement age, which they could not meet (Göteborgs-Posten, 1994a; TT Nyhetsbyrån, 1994b, 1994d). At the same time, the second-largest, majority female, municipal workers union (*kommunal*) came out in support of the reform as they believed it would increase pensions for low-paid women (TT Nyhetsbyrån, 1994c).

These internal divisions within LO-S prompted TCO to try to take leadership and create a unified position among the confederations to force a withdrawal of the reform (Göteborgs-Posten, 1994a). A concession came shortly thereafter, with the change that split contributions would be phased over five years rather than at one time, which both TCO and LO wanted. However, this can hardly be attributed to the attempted united front, as TCO claimed it were not consulted (Göteborgs-Posten, 1994b).

The attempts at a united front collapsed following the completion of the consultation round, with clear divergent positions among the three confederations. TCO had given up hope on stopping lifetime contributions, but still opposed both that and the split-contributions. Further, it also strongly objected to the too low pension contributions education and childcare benefits, the increased pension age, and the perceived low pension ceiling. It argued that these reforms would hurt the pension of high-income clerks and students, rejecting the overall proposal (TCO, 1994).

SACO also rejected the overall reform, sharing TCO's concerns over the split-contributions, low pension ceiling, and the low pension contributions from study and childcare benefits. However, to TCO's dismay, SACO was principally supportive of the overall proposal and supported the idea of lifetime split contributions and increased but flexible pension age, because it would accentuate and hopefully change the undervalued nature of academics (SACO, 1994).

Despite earlier internal divisions, LO-S chose to support the reform. Whilst it did maintain strong reservations about split contributions and demanded full contributions above the pension ceiling, that alone was not enough to reject the overall reform (LO, 1994). The metal and industrial workers unions were disgruntled but acquiesced as the rest of LO-S had united under the *Kommunal* line, which was supportive because the reforms would overall, lead to higher pensions for most of LO-S's members and especially low-income women (Göteborgs-Posten, 1994e).

Even though there now was targeted criticism of both low contributions from benefits and split contribution, the public debate seemingly moved on and the reform was passed with no further concessions (Prop. 1993/94:250).

The Swedish unemployment insurance reform of 1996

In 1995 the social democratic government, seeking to contain the rising costs from the burdened unemployment insurance (UI) system, created a reform committee that would release its reform proposal in 1996. The reform sought to remake UI in a series of ways. (1) Rather than fully administered by unions with limited state intervention, the new system would be composed of a state-funded base insurance and a larger union-run UI insurance based on voluntary contributions. These would cover 80% of lost income (previously 75%) with a minimum and maximum benefit ceiling. (2) Eligibility would be constrained with UI requirements increasing from 75 hours of work for five months to nine months, of the last twelve. (3) Duration would decrease to 200 days from 300 days. Requalification would require six months of work and after utilising 600 days of UI it would be frozen for four years. (4) To fill a UI deficit, the UI fees would be increased, and any future deficits would have 20% of it paid by increased member contributions (SOU 1996:150).

Following the release of the proposal, the confederations were outraged, with TCO and LO-S sharing strong opposition to the proposal because of the inclusion of higher unemployment fees, the eligibility reductions, and the low increase in generosity. More importantly, LO-S and TCO grassroots protests emerged and got so intense that soon after its release, the government had to postpone the reform (TT Nyhetsbyrå, 1996b).

In the meantime, the consultation reports were finished with all three confederations rejecting virtually the entire reform. Opposition was especially strong towards the four-year freeze, increased eligibility requirements, lowered duration, and the change in financing. The only significant difference between the confederations was that LO-S demanded higher base benefits (90%) and objected to increased fees. TCO demanded a higher benefit ceiling, while SACO preferred an increase in the benefit ceiling over higher base benefits (LO, 1996; SACO, 1996; TCO, 1996).

Still aiming to reform the UI system, in 1997 the government invited only LO-S for negotiations (Edebalk, 2012). The outcome of these negotiations is reflected in the altered but passed reform where LO-S achieved several significant concessions. Whilst neither the ceiling

nor that base amount would rise more than initially, the UI duration would stay at 300 days without any definite end. The months worked requirements would be increased, but only to six months, and the extra funding would come from increased fees (Prop. 1997:107). Despite being disgruntled over having to increase fees, LO-S was nevertheless satisfied with the reform as it would result in higher benefits for its members. TCO/SACO however still rejected the reform, as without a raised benefit ceiling, most members would not see increased benefits but still contribute more (Svenska Dagbladet, 1997).

The Danish early retirement reform of 1998-99

On November 26th the Danish social democratic government revealed the next year's budget, which in its draft contained a major attempt at reforming the existing early retirement pension scheme. The reform proposed the following. (1) An increase in the numbers of years needed to contribute into an unemployment fund to qualify for an early pension from 20 out of the previous 25 years, to 25 out of the previous 30 years. (2) A new mandatory contribution for early pension which had to be paid from the age of 35. (3) A lowered retirement age to 65 from 67, but with the caveat that retirement before 62 would result in a lower pension (Folketingstidende A, 1998-1999a, 1998-1999b).

The large LO-DK union *Specialarbejderforbundet i Danmark* (SiD) condemned the proposal on the day the proposal was released and were joined by the metalworkers (Metal) and women's union (KAD). All three condemned every aspect of the reform and even threatened to pull party funding (Jyllands-Posten, 1998a, 1998b; Politiken, 1998a). LO-DK itself did not share this position and would accept the changes of new extra fee, on the condition that it was placed in a separate, withdrawable account (Politiken, 1998a). Seeing the unpopularity among the unions, the government opened negotiations with LO-DK and agreed to not lower the pensions for people retiring early and with pensions lower than 200.000 Danish Crowns. They would however not agree to separate the new fee. This was not sufficient for LO-DK, who in turn demanded that the new fees be implemented later, to give workers more time to think if they wanted to opt-in. (Politiken, 1998b).

At the same time, more LO-DK and FTF affiliated unions came out in opposition to the reforms, because of the impact the flexible retirement would have on their members (Jyllands-Posten, 1998c, 1998d). With increased opposition, the government conceded again and agreed to postpone the implementation of the new fee from January 1st to April 1st (Jyllands-Posten, 1998e; Politiken, 1998c). Despite continued opposition and low opinion polls (Politiken,

1998d), the government passed the first part of the reform in December with no more concessions (Folketingstidende C, 1998-1999a).

The second, part dealing with the lower pensions and changed retirement age was however postponed until next year (Politiken, 1999a). LO-DK, maintaining that the extra early pension fee should be individual and withdrawable, was able to get that additional concession in negotiations with the government soon after the new debate began (Jensen & Mouritzen, 2009; Politiken, 1999b). With LO-DK quickly appeased, the rest of the early pension reform became law in April despite anger from the FTF and LO-DK defector unions (Folketingstidende C, 1998-1999b).

The Danish unemployment insurance reform of 1995

The reform, which was proposed on October 4th, 1995, by the Danish social democratic government, contained a series of core changes to the Danish UI system. (1) The possible duration of benefits was to be lowered from seven to five years. Of these five, three would require participation in an active labour market policy, such as education or the newly proposed public works programs. (2) During the three “active” years the person had to accept a “fair” job offer and if not, could lose unemployment for four weeks, or if repeatedly, permanent. (3) Unskilled youth under 25 who had been unemployed for six out of the last nine months had to partake in a training program, whilst youth under 18 would completely lose their access to UI (Folketingstidende A, 1995-1996).

On the day of the proposal, FTF came out in opposition, rejecting both the idea of public works and the lowered benefit duration. Whilst LO-DK did not comment (Politiken, 1995a) individual LO-DK unions would respond carefully optimistic, only questioning the implementation of the public works rather than the concept itself. The exception to this was SiD, whose position aligned with FTF. A week later, LO-DK would come out in support of the public works jobs on the condition of fair pay and quality jobs, but argued that reducing the UI duration made reform unacceptable (Politiken, 1995c; Torfing, 2004, p. 111). The hopes for quality public works were however dashed when the minister of employment clarified that these public works would be made menial and unattractive (Politiken, 1995b).

Despite some internal debate, LO-DK rejected the reform proposal, with special emphasis placed on the planned lowered UI duration and low quality of the public works during that year's LO-Congress. (Politiken, 1995d). FTF maintained their earlier position that active labour market policies are good, but that public works or any constraints in either duration or

eligibility would not reduce unemployment in a constructive way (Torfing, 2004, pp. 115-117; Winter, 2003, pp. 307-308).

Nevertheless, despite concentrated opposition from both LO-DK and FTF, the government moved to pass the proposal in the Folketing on the 14th of December 1995 with no concessions made (Folketingstidende C, 1995-1996). Furthermore, contrary to the FTF's (and now LO-DK's) objection to UI eligibility constraints, in a deal made with the Liberal and Conservative party, the final policy would include further eligibility constraints by doubling the weeks needed to qualify for UI, from 26 weeks work, to 52 during the last three years (Klitgaard & Nørgaard, 2010).

6. Analysis

Table.3 Overview of union positions and concessions across all four cases.

Cases	Swedish pension reform of 1994	Danish early retirement reform of 1998/99	Swedish unemployment insurance reform of 1996	Danish unemployment insurance reform of 1994
Policy reform level				
Proposal level	Withdrawal demanded by TCO and SACO: No concession	Withdrawal demanded by SiD, Metal, KAD (LO-DK unions), and FTF: No concession	Withdrawal demanded by TCO and SACO: No concession	Withdrawal demanded by LO-DK and FTF: No concession
Policy instrument level				
Generosity demands	No change to split contributions demanded by LO-S, TCO, and SACO: No concession No change to lifetime contributions demanded by TCO: No concession	No new early pension fee demanded by SiD, Metal, KAD (LO-DK members): No concession	No increase of UI fees demanded by LO-S: No concession	
Duration demands	No increased in the pension age demanded by TCO: No concession	No lowered but flexible pension age demanded by SiD, Metal, KAD (LO-DK members) and FTF: Dispensation for pensions under 200.000 DK	No insurance duration decrease demanded by TCO, LO-S, and SACO: No duration decrease nor defined end	No insurance duration decrease demanded by LO-DK and FTF: No concession
Eligibility demands			No raised eligibility requirements demanded by TCO, LO-S, and SACO: Months worked requirements increased by one rather than four months	No eligibility reduction demanded by LO-S FTF: No concession

Other demands			No Change in UI financing demanded by TCO, LO-S, and SACO: No concession	No new public works demanded by FTF and SiD (LO-DK member): No concession
Policy calibration level				
Generosity demands	Higher pension contributions from benefits demanded by TCO and SACO: No concession Raised pension contribution ceiling demanded by TCO and SACO: No concession Demand full contribution above the contribution ceiling demanded by LO-S: No concession		Increased benefit celling demanded TCO and SACO: No concession Increased base benefits Demanded by LO-S and SACO: No concession	Skill enhancing and adequately paid public works demanded by LO-DK: No concession
Duration demands				
Eligibility demands				
Other demands	Split contributions phased in demanded by LO-S and TCO: Five-year transition period included	New fee to be withdrawable and private demanded by LO-DK: Contributions made private and withdrawable Postponement of extra fee demanded by LO-DK: Postponed by 4 months		

Taking the four cases together, it seems that it is not possible to interpret the findings as supporting either theoretical expectation or reach the expected answer for the question, *how does the union system structure affect unions' influence on welfare policymaking?*

First, the theoretical expectation stipulated that because the Danish union system was based on a more skill-mixed structure, it would result in higher union unity between LO-DK and FTF than in Sweden, where the more skill-segmented union system structure would result in disunity between LO-S and TCO/SACO. Analysing the position towards the full reform proposals, this expectation cannot be met. While in both the Swedish cases the expected divide between LO-S TCO/SACO took place, in Denmark, LO-DK and FTF were only united during the unemployment reform. Contrary to expectations, opposition towards the Danish early retirement reform consisted of the amalgam of high-skilled FTF and low-skilled LO-DK unions that defected. Furthermore, when analysing the cases in-depth and considering unity towards specific policy instruments or calibrations, the findings deviate further from the expectations. Within both country cases, there were no coherent union coalitions with the differently skilled unions and confederations acting united and vice versa. Furthermore, during both the Swedish UI reform and the Danish early retirement reform, the findings are opposite to what was expected with the confederations being largely united in Sweden and disunited in Denmark (on an instrument/calibration-level).

Although there are too many deviations to be individually analysed, accounting for union positional justifications for some of the most surprising deviations could at least result in a tentative explanation for their occurrence. It seems that other types of union characteristics often dominated, resulting in the union system structure reflecting different union structures than as expected. For example, during the Swedish unemployment reform, the surprising unity between TCO, LO-S, and SACO against eligibility and duration reduction can be explained as neither confederation based their opposition on their skill level. Rather, they all justified their opposition on worries of the effects on members working in economically vulnerable sectors. Since they all organised vulnerable workers, a pure reduction in UI was not in any of the confederations' interests (LO, 1996; SACO, 1996; TCO, 1996). Similarly, the surprising coalition of high-skilled FTF and low-skilled SiD, Metal, and KAD during the Danish early retirement reform can also be explained by looking at how they justified their positions. It seems that once again skill-level was not really considered. Rather, the central characteristic which defined the positions of both FTF SiD/Metal/KAD was the occupational load and the

impossibility of working until the age of sixty-two for many of its members (Jyllands-Posten, 1998b, 1998c; Politiken, 1998a).

This flexibility in what characteristic defines a confederation's position seems to even be flexible within a reform proposal. As seen during the Swedish pension reform, TCO/SACO's opposition to the low pension contributions from benefits did stem from their view that it would hurt their higher-skilled members for whom, higher-education and childcare would be disproportionately costly compared to low-skilled workers (TCO 1994; SACO 1994). However, during the same pension reform, when analysing the confederations' stances towards lifetime contributions, the alignment had shifted as well as on what characteristics the confederations justified their position on. Central to both TCO's opposition and SACO/LO-S's support for lifetime contributions seems to have been their income levels rather than skill. This as the change would benefit low-income workers which were spread among both SACO and LO-S at the expense of high-income workers who were concentrated in TCO (Dagens Nyheter, 1994b; LO, 1994; SACO, 1994). Whilst income and skill could arguably be related, had skill been the dominant characteristic then SACO should have aligned with TCO rather than LO-S.

A potential explanation for the theoretical deviations could thus be that unions simply are too diverse to be conceptualised as structured based on one characteristic (skill level). This does not mean that skill-level nor skill-segmentation does not matter, only that skill-level is not as dominant as expected, with unions seemingly structured on several characteristics at the same time. As different reform instruments affect these characteristics differently, union coalitions seem to be highly flexible as a consequence. Although not researched in-depth, I see no reason for why these findings of union diversity and differing instrument impact could not be generalised further both within these cases and beyond, since neither is context-dependent.

Despite the first theoretical expectation being wrong, the findings could still shed light on the expectation that union influence on welfare policy will be higher when union unity is higher. However, like the first expectation, when comparing outcomes between the four cases, it seems like unity did not have a noticeable effect on the influence of unions. On a policy level, although united opposition only occurred once during the Danish UI reform, this was not enough to force a withdrawal of the overall reform. Expanding the analysis to policy instrument, it also does not support the expectation. Two significant concessions were granted during the Swedish case of UI reform in the face of universal union opposition to any eligibility and duration constraints. However, the same universal opposition during the early retirement reform did not lead to

concessions on split-contribution. In the Danish early retirement case, every concession was surprisingly granted in the face of divided confederation and union opposition. When the unions then were united during the Danish UI reform, it did however not result in any concession at all.

Analysing the processes behind the concessions, a tentative explanation for the lack of importance of unity in both country cases can be identified in line with earlier power resources literature about the effects of union-party relationships (Allern & Bale, 2017). Because contrary to expectations, when looking at the process behind the concessions, each concession was targeted or negotiated with LO-DK or LO-S exclusively, rather than the wider union movement. This privileged position was most evident in the Swedish UI reform where despite shared opposition on specific instruments and the wider reform, only LO-S was invited for negotiations (Edebalk, 2012). Similarly, during the Danish early pension reform, despite opposition to pension changes being championed by SiD and FTF (Jyllands-Posten, 1998c, 1998d), the concessions were nevertheless negotiated with LO-DK (Jensen & Mouritzen, 2009).

This privileged position and influence exclusively granted to LO-DK and LO-S can be explained by accounting for the fact that it was the social democratic parties that proposed three out of the four reforms (and held a veto during the Swedish pensions reform) (Jochem, 2003), and that both the LO-DK and LO-S had strong electoral and financial connections to the social democratic party (Jansson, 2017; Jyllands-Posten, 1998a). The reason why unity mattered less than the positions of LO-S and LO-DK could be explained because electorally, for the social democratic parties, upsetting FTF or TCO/SACO was not particularly dangerous since their members were not key constituencies. If LO-S/DK was appeased, upsetting the rest of the union movement did not really matter, a view which was expressed by both TCO/SACO and FTF themselves during the reforms (Torfing, 2004; Svenska Dagbladet, 1997), as well as by other researchers (Andersen & Larsen, 2005). Accounting for the internal division within LO-S and LO-DK further supports this explanation. As seen in the Swedish cases, when LO-S suffered internal divisions (pension reform) they saw fewer concessions than when no internal divisions took place (UI reform). This makes sense from the relationship perspective as a divided LO-S is less useful to appease for the social democratic party than a united LO-S.

7. Conclusion

The research completed during this project sought to increase our understanding of union influence on welfare policymaking by answering the question *How does the union system structure affect unions' influence on welfare policymaking?* It set out to analyse what role skill-segmentation of union confederations played in affecting both their unity and overall influence, through a comparative study of four welfare reforms in Sweden and Denmark.

The expectation was that *ceteris paribus*, the Swedish union system structure being more skill-segmented, would result in more divided and less influential unions than in the more skill-mixed Danish union system. However, based on these four cases, these expectations were not found to be true. Not only was no consistent union division or unity found in either country, but union coalitions often reflected different shared union characteristics other than one based on skill levels, depending on the policy instrument concerned. Regarding union influence, there was no noticeable difference in concessions between instances where unions were united versus when they were not. Analysing the context behind the concession, a tentative explanation for why unity did not matter was identified to be the connection between LO-S/DK and the social democratic parties. This connection meant that the social democratic parties depended more on LO-S/DK's electoral support than on the other confederations', resulting in their concerns being privileged over the rest of the union movement.

Tying these findings back to the research question, it is clear that the union system structure does affect union unity, although not in the way expected. However, as unity did not seem to matter much for influence, it does not seem like the union system structure has that much of an effect on union influence over welfare policymaking.

Before finishing, some limitations of the research should be addressed. Besides the data issues discussed in the research design section, the research also only looked at union responses towards policy proposals once they were already in motion. This risk biasing the general findings against union influence, as their role in the agenda-setting process has not been considered. Furthermore, whilst potentially important, the type of reform (e.g. retrenchment versus recalibration) also was not considered, with the analysis not making a distinction between them.

Nevertheless, the thesis still contains some relevant academic implications. Not finding the dominant role of skill differences in the union system structure as expected, the research still

highlighted a diversity and heterogeneity of unions interest, contrary to the power resources perspective's class-based account. Further research should focus on studying structural factors affecting union interests, beginning perhaps with occupational strain or sectoral unemployment risk as identified in this research. Building on the limitations, continued research should be made on the agenda-setting capabilities of unions and how they, in conjunction with political parties can influence welfare policymaking before it even reaches the parliamentary arena. Lastly, it seems that both union demands and government concessions differed quite significantly between the (albeit) descriptive categories (e.g generosity demands were common, but concessions were not). Further research should investigate why certain types of demands are made more than others and if the type of demand influences the government's inclination to grant concessions.

Finally, the research also highlights some practical implications for unions and confederations. As seen in these four cases, the connection to a political party seems to have been a key determinant for influence. This has implications for a-political unions and unions with a diverse member voting spectrum. They are at risk of being increasingly marginalised, lacking the organisation or willingness to become important electoral allies and thus gain influence through party leveraging.

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⁶ There is a large difference in author availability both within newspapers and between newspaper. Because of this, to both maintain consistency and clarity considering the high amount of individual article, I elected to only utilise corporate authors. I know this is a deviation from the APA norm, however, had I not done this, the in-text citations would have very inconsistent within and across the cases, potentially confusing the reader.

⁷ All translations are the authors own.

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Appendix A – Danish data collection log and news archival search

Log of attempts at collecting Danish union consultation reports

13/04: Began the search online for policy consultation documents on websites and open archives. found nothing.

16/04: Called FHO (a new confederation following FTF and LO-DK's merger) who directed me to Kirsten Kvist, the secretary for politics and analysis. Sent her an email the same day. Also called the AC confederations to see if they knew anything and was re-directed to Käthe Munk Ryom (international relations consultant) who said she would have time for me on the 19th.

19/04: Called Ryom who said that she would distribute my request through AC to see if someone knew about the consultation answers. Got the response that they could not find anything the same day.

21/04: Kirsten Kvist got back to me, claiming that she also had not been able to find my requested documents. She redirected me to the Folketing (parliament) as they usually have old documents.

22/04: Checked the Folketing archives for the consultation reports however they were not available in digital format

23/04: Called the Folketing who said that if I sent them an email for the specific law and consultation report they could scan their archives and send them documents to me. Sent the email to Rikke Friis Touborg who is a librarian at parliament.

26/04: I get the response from the librarian Touborg that before 2001, the Folketing does not archive consultation reports unless they are requested by the relevant committee. In this case, the consultation reports were not, so they said that they sadly did not have them. Touborg recommended that I check the national archives.

27/04: Called the national archives. Did not lead anywhere because they were not certain they had it but also because the prices for both the search and the scanning would amount to 100-200 euros at least. Called FHO again, hoping that they would perhaps have some alternative documents such as internal newspapers/yearly reports/ general policy documents. Was told to send my request to Mette C. Pedersen who would once again ask around.

28/04: Mette emails back saying that she has a colleague that could perhaps help me but that he was on vacation until 03/05 and that she would get back to me.

05/05: Email Mette about her colleague. She responds that he has not been able to find any of the types of documents requested. Email her back further specifying the type and ask if they have **anything** that could be useful to me

06/05: Gets told that they cannot help with my request and that I should try the archives at the worker's museum. Call them the same day and they re-direct me to the national archives.

06/05: Gave up.

Summary of newspapers and keywords used during the research

During the Archival search the research limited itself to only national level newspapers which in the Swedish case were: *Dagens Nyheter*, *Göteborgs-Posten*, *Svenska Dagbladet*, and *TT Nyhetsbyrå*.

Keywords used during the archival search for the Swedish newspapers were: type of welfare affected (*pension*, *arbetslöshetsbidrag*), the confederations (*LO*, *TCO*, *SACO*), and “union movement” (*facken*).

In the Danish case the newspaper used were: *Jyllands-Posten* and *Politiken*.

Keywords used during the archival search for the Danish newspaper were the type of welfare affected (*efterløn*, *dagpeng*), the confederations (*LO*, *FTF*), and “union movement” (*fagbevægelse*).

Appendix B – Union system structure and union classifications

As stated in the above text, operationalisation of the union system structure is done by classifying each union based on the post-industrial class the occupational character of its members fits in. There are 10 post-industrial class groups that are divided on their work logic and skill level. these 10 groups are then further classified into one out 5 broader post-industrial class groups of which the two *Capital accumulators* (CA) and *Sociocultural professionals* (SCP) are considered high-skilled. *Mixed service functionaries* (MSF) are considered medium-skilled. *Blue-collar workers* (BC) and *Low service functionaries* (LSF) are considered low-skilled. Using occupational categories of the ILO’s International Standard Classification of Occupations (2012) every occupation group gets placed into one of the 10 post-industrial class groups and thus also a corresponding skill-group.’

Drawing from data on both Swedish and Danish unions (Ebbinghaus & Visser, 2000), each individual union is first checked for its occupational background. That occupational background is then applied on the ISCO-8 classification giving each union one or more occupational standardised occupational groups. Depending on which occupational groups a union contains they are then classified as one or more of Häusermann’s(2010a) post-industrial class and skill group. If union contained more than once skill-group it was classified as either high-medium-skilled, or medium-low-skilled, depending on the mix.

Table 4. Classification of post-industrial class groups

Independent work logic	Technical work logic	Organisational work logic	Interpersonal work logic	
Large employers, self-employed professionals, and petty bourgeoisie with employees (CA) Self-employed ≤24	Technical experts (CA) 21 Physical, mathematical and engineering science professionals	Higher-grade managers (CA) 11 legislators and senior officials; 12 corporate managers	Sociocultural (semi)professionals (SCP) 22 life science and health professionals; 23 teaching professionals; 24 other professionals’ 32 life science and health associate	Professional/managerial employees
Petty bourgeoisie without employees	Technicians (MSF) 31 physical and engineering science	Associate managers (CA) 13 general managers	professionals; 33 teaching associate professionals; 34	Associate professional and managerial employees

(MSF) Self-employed >24	associate professionals		other associate professionals	
	Skilled crafts (BC) 71 extraction and building trades workers; 72 metal, machinery, and related trades workers; 73 precision, handicraft, printing, and related trades workers; 74 other craft and related trades workers	Skilled office workers and routine office workers (MSF) 41 office clerks; 42 customer service clerks	Skilled service and routine service (LSF) Skilled service and routine service (LSF)	Generally and vocationally skilled workers
	Routine operatives and routine agriculture (BC) 61 market-oriented skilled agricultural and fishery workers; 92 agricultural, fishery, and related laborers; 81 stationary-plant and related operators; 82 machine operators and assemblers; 83 drivers and mobile-plant operators; 93 laborers in mining, construction, manufacturing, and transport			Low- and unskilled workers

*Number Infront of each occupational category is its ISCO-8 number

Table 5. Post-industrial skill groups

High-skilled workers	<i>Capital accumulators (CA)</i>	<i>Sociocultural professionals (SCP)</i>
Medium-skilled workers	<i>Mixed service functionaries (MSF)</i>	
Low-skilled workers	<i>Blue-collar workers (BC)</i>	<i>Low service functionaries (LSF)</i>

Table 6. Total members and skill-level categorisation of member unions in LO-S, TCO, and SACO in 1998

	LO-S	TCO	SACO
Individual members	1,824,385	1,050,899	341,119
Breakdown of member skill level			
High-Skilled (%)	20,779 (1%)	234,608 (24%)	341,119 (100%)
High-Medium-Skilled (%)	N/A	723,354 (74%)	N/A
Medium-Low-Skilled (%)	1,208,536 (68,5%)	N/A	N/A
Low-Skilled (%)	547,830(31%)	16,937 (2%)	N/A

Table.7 Post-industrial class group and skill group classification of each major⁸ Swedish union in 1998

Name	Occupational background (ISCO-8 classification)	Skill level (post-industrial class group)	Members
LO-S affiliated unions			
<i>Fastighetsanställdas förbund (Maintenance workers union)</i>	Building maintenance workers (91 Cleaners and Helpers)	Low-Skilled (Skilled service and routine service, LSF)	44,302
<i>Försäkringsanställdas förbund (Insurance workers union)</i>	Insurance agents (31 Sales and Purchasing Agents and Brokers)	High-skilled (Sociocultural (semi) professionals, SCP)	13,760

⁸ More than 10.000 members

<i>Grafiska fackförbundet</i> (Printers and papers union)	Printers and papermakers (732 Printing Trades Workers)	Low-Skilled (Skilled crafts BC)	31,278
<i>Handelsanställdas förbund</i> (Commercial employees union)	Private sector sales workers (52 Sales Workers)	Low-skilled (Skilled service and routine service LSF)	154,891
<i>Hotell- och restauranganställdas förbund</i> (hotel and restaurant workers union)	Hotel and restaurant workers (512-513 Cooks, Waiters and Bartenders; 911 Cleaners and helpers; 42 Customer Services Clerks)	Medium-Low-skilled (Skilled office workers and routine office workers MSF; Skilled service and routine service LSF)	58,604
<i>Industrifacket</i> (Industrial workers union)	Textile and Chemicals workers (8 Plant and machine operators and assemblers; 31 Science and Engineering Associate Professionals; 753 Garment and Related Trades Workers)	Medium-Low-skilled (Technicians MSF; Skilled crafts BC; Routine operatives and routine agriculture BC)	81,591
<i>Svenska Livsmedelsarbetareförbundet</i> (Swedish Food workers union)	Food workers, artisans, and industrial (8 Plant and machine operators and assemblers; 75 Food Processing, Woodworking, Garment and Other Craft and Related Trades Workers)	Low-skilled (Skilled crafts BC; Routine operatives and routine agriculture BC)	49,346
<i>Svenska Metallindustriarbetareförbundet</i> (Swedish Metalworkers union)	Miners and Metalworkers, all grades (8 Plant and machine operators)	Medium-Low-skilled (Mixed-skilled (Technicians MSF; Skilled crafts BC;	318,196

	and assemblers; 72 Metal, Machinery and Related Trades Workers; 31 Science and Engineering Associate Professionals; 931 Mining and Construction Labourers	Routine operatives and routine agriculture BC)	
<i>Svenska Musikerförbundet</i> (Swedish Musicians union)	Musicians and music related occupation (265 Creative and Performing Artists)	High-skilled (Sociocultural (semi)professionals SCP)	5,643
<i>Svenska Byggnadsarbetareförbundet</i> (Swedish Construction workers union)	Construction workers 71 Building and Related Trades Workers; 93 Mining and Construction Labourers	Low-skilled (Skilled crafts BC; Routine operatives and routine agriculture BC)	100,257
<i>Svenska Elektrikerförbundet</i> (Swedish Electricians union)	Electricians (741 Electrical Equipment Installers and Repairers)	Low-skilled (Skilled crafts BC)	22,993
<i>Facket för service och kommunikation</i> (Service and Communications union)	Logistics, transport infrastructure, energy, administration, correctional facilities, sea-related employment, all grades (33 Business and Administration Associate Professionals; 4 Clerical support workers; 74 Electrical and Electronics Trades Workers; 313 Process Control	Medium-Low-skilled (Technicians MSF; Skilled crafts BC; Skilled office workers and routine office workers MSF)	130,071

	Technicians; 54 Protective Services Workers		
<i>Svenska Kommunalarbetareförbundet</i> (Municipal workers union) (due to the sheer width of this union only the largest section will be noted down)	Municipal workers primarily within elderly care, schools, public maintenance, healthcare, public transport (44 Other Clerical Support Workers; 53 Personal Care Workers; 91 Cleaners and Helpers; 96 Refuse Workers and Other Elementary Workers; 83 Drivers and Mobile Plant Operators; 52 Sales Workers)	Medium-Low-Skilled (Skilled service and routine service LSF; Routine operatives and routine agriculture BC)	620,074
<i>Svenska Skogs och Träfacket</i> (Swedish Forest and wood-workers union)	Forest and wood-related industries (621 Forestry and Related Workers; 731 Handicraft Workers; 75 Food Processing, Woodworking, Garment and Other Craft and Related Trades Workers; 817 Wood Processing and Papermaking Plant Operators)	Low-skilled (Skilled crafts BC; Routine operatives and routine agriculture BC)	61,307
<i>Svenska Lantarbetareförbundet</i> (Swedish Agricultural workers union)	Agriculture and husbandry (92 Agricultural, forestry and fishery labour; 61 Market-oriented Skilled Agricultural Workers)	Low-skilled (Routine operatives and routine agriculture BC)	14,747

<i>Svenska Transportarbetareförbundet</i> (Swedish Transport workers union)	Logistics, personal transportation, security guards (54 Protective Services Workers; 83 Drivers and Mobile Plant Operators)	Low-skilled (Skilled service and routine service LSF; Routine operatives and routine agriculture BC)	68,709
TCO affiliated unions			
<i>Försvarets Civila Tjänstemannaförbund</i> (Union of civilian employees in the defense force)	Public administration (242 Administration Professionals; 25 Information and Communications Technology Professionals; 41 office clerks)	High-Medium-skilled (Sociocultural (semi)professionals SCP; Skilled office workers and routine office workers MSF; Technicians MSF)	6,208
<i>Finansförbundet</i> (Finance workers union)	Financial workers (241 Finance Professionals; 4 Clerical Support Workers)	High-Medium-skilled (Sociocultural (semi)professionals SCP; Skilled office workers and routine office workers MSF; Technicians MSF)	38,029
<i>Försäkringstjänstemannaförbundet</i> (Union of private insurance employees)	Insurance workers (31 Sales and Purchasing Agents and Brokers; 4 Clerical Support Workers)	High-Medium-skilled (Sociocultural (semi)professionals SCP; Skilled office workers and routine office workers MSF; Technicians MSF)	12,138
<i>Handelstjänstemannaförbundet</i> (Union of commercial clerks)	Commercial Clerks (24 Business and Administration Professionals; 33 Business and Administration Associate Professionals; 4 Clerical Support Workers)	High-Medium-skilled (Sociocultural (semi)professionals SCP; Skilled office workers and routine office workers MSF; Technicians MSF)	146,052

<i>Ledarna</i> (Union of leaders)	Managers and mid-level managers (1 Manager)	High-skilled (Higher-grade managers CA)	58,823
<i>Läraryrket</i> (Teachers union)	Teachers (23 Teaching Professionals)	High-skilled (Sociocultural (semi)professionals SCP)	177,334
<i>Svenska Industritjänstemannaförbundet</i> (Swedish union of industrial clerks)	Industrial Clerks (24 Business and Administration Professionals; 33 Business and Administration Associate Professionals; 4 Clerical Support Workers)	High-Medium-skilled (Sociocultural (semi)professionals SCP; Skilled office workers and routine office workers MSF; Technicians MSF)	293,315
<i>Svenska Journalistförbundet</i> (Swedish journalist union)	Journalists (264 Authors, Journalists, and Linguists)	High-skilled (Sociocultural (semi)professionals SCP)	14,510
<i>Sveriges Kommunalväsendet</i> (Swedish union of local government officials)	Any type of skilled clerk within the local public sector (24 Business and Administration Professionals; 25 Information and Communications Technology Professionals; 26 Legal, Social and Cultural professionals; 33 Business and Administration Associate Professionals; 34 Legal, Social and Cultural associate professional; 35 Information and Communications Technicians; 4 Clerical support workers)	High-Medium-skilled (Sociocultural (semi)professionals SCP; Skilled office workers and routine office workers MSF; Technicians MSF)	149,678

<i>Svenska Polisförbundet</i> (Swedish police union)	Police officers (54 Protective Services Workers)	Low-skilled Skilled service and routine service (LSF)	16,937
<i>Statstjänstemannaförbundet</i> (Union of state civil servants)	Any type of skilled clerk within the state public sector (24 Business and Administration Professionals; 25 Information and Communications Technology Professionals; 26 Legal, Social and Cultural professionals; 33 Business and Administration Associate Professionals; 34 Legal, Social and Cultural Associate professional; 35 Information and Communications Technicians; 4 Clerical support workers)	High-Medium-skilled (Sociocultural (semi)professionals SCP; Skilled office workers and routine office workers MSF; Technicians MSF)	77,934
SACO affiliated unions			
<i>Sveriges Civilingenjörsförbund</i> (Swedish Engineer's union)	Engineers (21 Science and Engineering Professionals; 31 Science and Engineering Associate Professionals)	High-skilled (Technical experts CA)	59,494
<i>Civilekonomerna Riksförbund</i> (Union of economists and business administrators)	Economists and business administrators (24 Business and Administration Professionals; 33 Business and Administration Associate Professionals)	High-skilled (Sociocultural (semi)professionals SCP)	15,113

<i>DIK-förbundet</i> (Swedish Association of Graduates in Documentation, Information and Culture)	Social and Cultural professional (26 Legal, Social and Cultural professionals 34 Legal, Social and Cultural associates professional)	High-skilled (Sociocultural (semi)professionals SCP)	13,233
<i>JUSEK</i> (Union of lawyers, political scientists and economists)	Lawyers, political scientist and economists (26 Legal, Social and Cultural professional. 34 Legal, Social and Cultural associates professional)	High-skilled (Sociocultural (semi)professionals SCP)	34,726
<i>Lärarnas Riksförbund</i> (National union of teachers)	Teachers (23 Teaching Professionals)	High-skilled (Sociocultural (semi)professionals SCP)	50,897
<i>Sveriges Läkarförbund</i> (Swedish doctors union)	Doctors (221 Medical Doctors)	High-skilled (Sociocultural (semi)professionals SCP)	26,055
<i>Sveriges Socionomers, personal- och förvaltningstjänstemäns Riksförbund</i> (Swedish union of social workers, Personnel and public administrators)	Social workers and public administrator, (26 Legal, Social and Cultural professional. 34 Legal, Social and Cultural associates professional)	High-skilled (Sociocultural (semi)professionals SCP)	29,082
Sveriges Universitetsläraförbund (Swedish union of university lecturers)	University professors (231 University and Higher Education Teachers)	High-skilled (Sociocultural (semi)professionals SCP; Technical experts CA)	15,477

Table 8. Total members and skill-level categorisation of member unions in LO-DK and FTF in 1997.

	LO-DK	FTF
Individual members	1,480,356	340,991
Breakdown of member skill level		
High-skilled (%)	87,732 (6%)	174,433 (79,5%)
High-Medium-Skilled (%)	376,370 (25%)	45,171 (20,5%)
Medium-Low-Skilled (%)	360,248 (24,3%)	N/A
Low-skilled (%)	578,345 (38%)	N/A

Table 9. Post-industrial class group and skill group classification of each major⁹ Danish union in 1997

Name	Occupational background (ISCO-8 classification)	Skill level (post-industrial class group)	Members
LO-DK affiliated unions			
Dansk Beklaednings- og Tekstilarbejderforbundet (Danish Union of clothing and textile workers)	Textile and Chemicals workers '(8 Plant and machine operators and assemblers; 753 Garment and Related Trades Workers	Low-skilled (Skilled crafts BC; Routine operatives and routine agriculture BC)	17,229
Dansk Elektriker Forbund (Danish Electricians union)	Electricians (741 Electrical Equipment Installers and Repairers)	Low-skilled (Skilled crafts BC)	30,185
Dansk Funktionaerforbund - Serviceforbundet (Danish union of professional and technical employees)	Wide range of service functionaries and associate technicians 225 Veterinarians; 24 Business and Administration Professionals; 26 Legal, Social and Cultural professionals	High-Medium-skilled (Sociocultural (semi)professionals SCP; Technicians MSF; Skilled office workers and routine office workers MSF; Skilled service and routine service LSF)	21,836

⁹ More than 10.000 members

	34 Legal, Social and Cultural associates professional; 73 Handicraft and Printing Workers; 54 Protective Services Workers)		
Dansk Jernbaneforbund (Danish Union of Railway employees)	Railway workers all grade (83 Drivers and Mobile Plant Operators; 52 Sales Workers)	Low-Skilled (Skilled service and routine service (LSF; Routine operatives and routine agriculture BC)	7,260
Dansk Postforbund (Danish Postal workers union)	Postal workers (44 Other Clerical Support Workers)	Low-Skilled (Routine operatives and routine agriculture BC)	11,948
Forbundet af Offentligt Ansatte (Public Employees union)	Public employees on a local level 322 Nursing and Midwifery Associate Professionals; 44 Other Clerical Support Workers; 53 Personal Care Workers; 91 Cleaners and Helpers; 96 Refuse Workers and Other Elementary Workers; 83 Drivers and Mobile Plant Operators; 52 Sales Workers	Medium-Low-Skilled (Skilled office workers and routine office workers (MSF); Skilled service and routine service LSF; Routine operatives and routine agriculture BC)	203,900
Grafisk Forbund (Graphics workers union)	Printers and papermakers (732 Printing Trades Workers)	Low-Skilled (Skilled crafts BC)	22,987
Handels- og Kontorfunktionreres forbund i Danmark (Danish union of Commercial and Office employees)	Commercial Clerks (24 Business and Administration Professionals; 33 Business and Administration Associate Professionals	High-Medium (Sociocultural (semi)professionals SCP; Skilled office workers and routine office workers MSF)	354,534

<i>Kvindeligt Arbejderforbund i Danmark</i> (Danish female workers union)	Service workers, laundries, agriculture, maintenance (53 Personal Care Workers; 91 Cleaners and Helpers; 92 Agricultural, forestry and fishery labour; 51 Personal Services Workers)	Low-skilled (Routine operatives and routine agriculture BC; Skilled service and routine service LSF)	88,232
<i>Malerforbundet I Danmark</i> (Danish painters union)	Painters (713 Painters, Building. Cleaners and Related Trade Workers)	Low-skilled (Routine operatives and routine agriculture BC)	14,089
<i>Dansk Metalarbejderforbund</i> (Danish union of metalworkers)	Miners and Metalworkers, all grades (8 Plant and machine operators and assemblers; 72 Metal, Machinery and Related Trades Workers; 31 Science and Engineering Associate Professionals; 931 Mining and Construction Labourers)	Medium-Low-skill (Mixed-skilled (Technicians MSF; Skilled crafts BC; Routine operatives and routine agriculture BC)	142,456
<i>Naerings- og Nydelsesmiddelarbejderforbundet i Danmark</i> (Danish Food workers union)	food workers, artisans and industrial (8 Plant and machine operators and assemblers; 75 Food Processing, Woodworking, Garment and Other Craft and Related Trades Workers)	Low-skilled (Skilled crafts BC; Routine operatives and routine agriculture BC)	41,913
<i>Paedagogisk MedhjælpereForbund</i> (Union of Educators)	Teachers and Teachers assistants (23 Teaching Professionals)	High-skilled (Sociocultural (semi)professionals SCP)	30,149

<i>Restaurations- og Bryggeriarbejderforbundet (Union of restaurant and Brewery Workers)</i>	Restaurant, hotel workers, and brewers (75 Food Processing, Woodworking, Garment and Other Craft and Related Trades Workers; 51 Personal Services Workers)	Low-skilled (Skilled crafts BC; Routine operatives and routine agriculture BC)	30,911
<i>Specialarbejderforbundet i Danmark (Danish Special workers union)</i>	Logistics, personal transportation, maintenance workers (83 Drivers and Mobile Plant Operators; 96 Refuse Workers and Other Elementary Workers; 82 Assemblers; 71 Building and Related Trades Workers)	Low-skilled (Skilled service and routine service LSF; Routine operatives and routine agriculture BC)	319,680
<i>Socialpaedagogisk Landsforbund (Association of Social Educators)</i>	Social workers (26 Legal, Social and Cultural professionals 34 Legal, Social and Cultural associates professional)	High-skilled (Sociocultural (semi)professionals SCP)	24,796
<i>Forbundet TraeIndustri-Byg i Danmark (Danish union of woodworkers and construction workers)</i>	Construction workers and wood manufacturing (71 Building and Related Trades Workers; 75 Food Processing, Woodworking, Garment and Other Craft and Related Trades Workers)	Low-skilled (Skilled crafts BC; Routine operatives and routine agriculture BC)	71,572
<i>Teknisk Landsforbund (Union of technicians and engineers)</i>	Technicians, engineers and designers (21 Science and Engineering Professionals; 31 Science and	High-medium-skilled (Technical experts CA; Technicians SF)	32,787

	Engineering Associate Professionals		
Telekommunikationsforbundet (Telecommunications union)	Workers within the telecommunications industry, all grade (265 Creative and Performing Artists; 35 Information and Communications Technicians)	Medium-Low-skill (Technicians MSF; Skilled service and routine service LSF)	13,892
FTF affiliated unions			
Borne- og Ungdomspædagogernes Landsorganisation (Association of Child- and Youth Educators)	Educators and special educators (23 Teaching Professionals)	High-skilled (Sociocultural (semi)professionals SCP)	43,648
Centralforeningen for Støttestøtten (Central Organisation of Staff Personnel)	Administrators (24 Business and Administration Professionals; 33 Business and Administration Associate Professionals)	High-skilled (Sociocultural (semi)professionals SCP)	8,821
Danmarks Lærereforening (Danish teachers union)	Educators and special educators (23 Teaching Professionals)	High-skilled (Sociocultural (semi)professionals SCP)	59,229
Dansk Sygeplejerråd (Danish Nurses Union)	Nurses and associate nurses (222 Nursing and Midwifery Professionals; 322 Nursing and Midwifery Associate Professionals)	High-skilled (Sociocultural (semi)professionals SCP)	51,341
Finansforbundet (Finance Union)	Financial worker (4 Business and Administration Professionals; 33 Business and Administration Associate Professionals; 4 Clerical Support Workers)	High-Medium-skilled (Sociocultural (semi) professional's SCP)	45,171

<p><i>Justitsgruppen i CO II</i> (State Lawyers Group)</p>	<p>Lawyers (26 Legal, Social and Cultural professionals 34 Legal, Social and Cultural associates professional)</p>	<p>High-skilled Sociocultural (semi professional's SCP)</p>	<p>11,394</p>
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