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### 3 The Public Sphere in the Nordic Model

Five institutional fields were pinpointed as the main components of a public sphere in the introductory chapter (Engelstad, Larsen, Rogstad & Steen-Johnsen, this volume). They vary significantly in their institutional structure as well as the distribution of power. These variations to a large extent determine how the public sphere as a whole will function. In the present chapter each of the fields are briefly presented, in order to show some of their specificities, while at the same time pointing to their links to politics and political regulation.

Even though material from Norway is the most prominent in this book, Norwegian society is part of a broader type of social formation. A broader focus on Nordic societies accentuates that the constellation of institutions in one country is not the product of purely random historical processes, but represent more stable institutional clusters. To the degree that there are central commonalities between the Nordic countries also when it comes to the shape of the public sphere, it makes sense to talk of a Nordic model in this respect, not only in the politico-economic sphere, as is most common.

There have been and still are controversies over the fruitfulness of the concept of a Nordic model. Hence, the chapter is introduced by a brief discussion of alternative ways of conceiving a ‘model’. Moreover, the discussion is informed by two important works: *Comparing Media Systems* (Hallin & Mancini, 2004) and *The Media Welfare State* (Syvertsen, Enli, Mjøs & Moe, 2014). Even though these works are limited to the media field, and thus cover only part of the topic treated here, they give valuable impulses to the understanding of the public sphere as a whole.

#### 3.1 A Nordic Model

Does a Nordic model exist? The issue was raised in a classical article by Lars Mjøset (1992) and still does not seem to be settled. Mjøset (1992) stated there is no such thing, and others agree with reference to specific social fields (recently Gooderham, Navrbjerg, Olsen & Steen, 2015, on organization of labour markets). However, there is no lack of research assuming the existence of the Nordic model (Ryner, 2007; Dølvik et al., 2015), while other research takes a more neutral view (Alestalo, Hort & Kuhnle, 2009). One reason the question remains unsettled may be the lack of agreement on what constitutes a ‘model’ and the variables to be included. Quite often, institutional characteristics and outcome variables are confounded, for example, labour market policy formation and the level of unemployment, but then the concept of a model loses what it might have of explanatory power. The reasons for the negative answers of Mjøset (1992) and Gooderham et al. (2015), however, lie elsewhere – namely in their

claims that there must be relatively strict homology between the units for the model to be fruitful. Obviously, no two societies are identical; but if that was the case, what criteria must be met in order to subsume them under one model?

This question may be viewed from two angles, those of ‘typology’ and ‘ideal type’ (van Kersbergen & Vis, 2015). A *typology* consists of a set of types; well-known typologies are, for example, varieties of capitalism (Hall & Soskice, 2001) or welfare state regimes (Esping-Andersen, 1990). The Nordic countries are treated as part of a larger type of European countries in the former case, as a separate type in the latter. Within each type, differences between units (countries in this case) are not measured; what is measured is the dissimilarity from other types. The *ideal type* is a model in a stricter sense, a construct – whether purely abstract or originating in observation – from which units may deviate in several respects. An ideal type/model measures differences within the type by constructing a common denominator from which the actual countries deviate. Applied to the Esping-Andersen example, this means how actual social democratic welfare states conform to and differ from a given model. In this case, the question is not whether one unit deviates significantly in relation to one variable but whether and how one unit deviates from the bundle of all the variables in the model. Here, both Mjøset (1992) and Gooderham et al. (2015) appear too strict because they focus on single components and not on the whole.

It is in the sense of ideal type that the notion of a ‘Nordic model’ is discussed in the following. It has the advantage of depicting individual variations between units – even if they are referred to as one bundle – while at the same time conceptualizing changes over time. The effectiveness of the model is measured against empirical variations in the Nordic societies at any given time and whether core elements are present to a degree that it makes sense to talk about a common basic structure sufficiently different from other post-industrial countries. In its socio-economic version, the Nordic model has three main components: (i) a large, active and at the same time liberal state; (ii) class compromise and cooperative relationships between labour market parties organized in national federations and (iii) a generous welfare state. In many respects, these elements are reciprocally supportive in the same sense as the conception of institutional bundling in *Varieties of Capitalism* (Hall & Soskice, eds., 2001), as specified by Dølvik et al. (2015) and Engelstad & Hagelund (2015).

The sustainability of the Nordic model rests on the dynamism of capitalism, tempered by broad normative and institutional preconditions. This gives the model considerable stability and at the same time necessary flexibility. The normative preconditions constitute democratic culture, egalitarianism and social inclusion developed over a period of more than a century (Alestalo et al., 2009; Aakvaag, this volume). In a broad sense, these norms do not differ significantly from those in many other democratic societies; the salient point is how they have materialized over time in institutional structures. They could not be developed and sustained without a wide space for political and social deliberation. A well-functioning public sphere as an arena for the formation of basic consensus – and at the same time conflict and compromise – is

**Table 1:** Core elements in the extended Nordic model

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**Normative preconditions**

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- Democratic culture
  - Egalitarianism
  - Social inclusion
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**Large, active and liberal state**

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- Input democracy, political decisions preceded by deliberation and broad hearing processes
  - Active labour market policy, facilitation of coordinated wage bargaining
  - Policies of redistribution and generous social security net
  - Liberal orientation with guarantees of freedom of expression
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**Concertation between labour market parties**

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- Broad system of political regulation
  - Basic agreements between trade union federations and employer associations
  - Labour market federations regularly take part in coordinated wage bargaining
  - Employee participation in decisions on the job and at the enterprise level
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**Generous welfare state**

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- Universal rights to welfare provisions
  - Public and free education at all levels
  - Virtually free health care
  - Well-developed public pension system
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**The public sphere**

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- High level of state activity in the structuring of the public sphere, on a par with the economic realm
  - Active policies, including economic support, in all five core institutional fields in the public sphere: media, arts and culture, research and higher education, voluntary organizations and religious communities
  - Universalism and inclusion as guiding principles for policies
  - Arm's length distance on the part of the state regarding decisions on journalistic, artistic and cultural matters
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a precondition for the Nordic model. Therefore, the public sphere is a necessary condition for the model and should be included in it. The core elements in this extended Nordic model are specified and summarized in Table 1.

### 3.2 The Public Sphere: a Specification

In the Introduction to this volume, the public sphere is described as a constellation – a mosaic or a network of arenas are the concepts used by Habermas (1996 [1992]) – of institutional fields circumscribed by institutionalization of the freedom of expression. In *The Structural Transformations of the Public Sphere* (1989 [1962]), Habermas conceived the public sphere as a channel allowing flows of communication between citizens and from the citizens to the state. The public sphere was further divided into the political public sphere and the literary public sphere. In this conception, the state is located at the receiving end, whereas citizens shape the channels of mediation. When *Structural Transformations* uses the idea of ‘institutions’ of the public sphere (1989, p. 31ff), it denotes the meeting places of socio-physical media of communication: coffee houses, journals, theatres. This is a narrower concept of institution than the one used here. Thereby, other aspects of institutions, not least the freedom of expression, function as the institutional basis for the public sphere and remain under-the-matized. This void points to a more general lacuna in Habermas’ theory, the role of the state as facilitating or restricting processes of public deliberation (Benson, 2009).

Keeping the focus on the public sphere *between* citizens and the state implies that the public sphere differs in extension from the totality of issues and facts that are communicated in modern societies. This delimitation may be experienced as counterintuitive, but that is mainly due to the drastic changes in institutions and patterns of communication since the original conceptualization. Unfortunately, in his later developments Habermas remains vague on the extension and shape of the public sphere. Within the narrower limits presented here, five specific institutional fields may be singled out as constituting its core. They have in common the characteristics of a *topos* in a double sense – of being topics of debate and criticism and of producing knowledge and at the same time of being social spaces manifested in institutions. The five *topoi* are the media, arts and cultural production, voluntary organizations, research and higher education and religion. What these *topoi* have in common is that they are sources of the formation and revision of and critical debate on social opinions relevant to collective decision making. In the Nordic region, common to all these is that they are closely connected to the state by comprehensive sets of restrictions and various forms of facilitation – political, economic or otherwise.

Of the five fields, the media is most obviously a part of the public sphere and the one that is most studied. Here, the media is taken in a broad sense, ranging from TV channels at the national level to small niche journals. Arts and cultural production held a prominent position in *Structural Transformations* but later drifted into the background. Despite enormous aesthetic changes in tastes and modes of expression, these fields are still constitutive of collective identities. Voluntary organizations emerge around all kinds of issues; relevant here are those associations that transcend the private sphere and develop some form of collective opinion formation and function as ‘schools in democracy’. Research and higher education is the arena per se

for the innovative, deliberative development of conceptual tools for understanding social processes and technological inventions that affect all aspects of social life. Finally, despite secularization, religion is still and probably will remain a privileged source of reflection and diffusion of social values and morality.

This taxonomy may be compared to Jeffery Alexander's (2006) conceptualization of the public sphere. What Alexander terms communicative institutions consist of mass media, public opinion polls and voluntary organizations. Two of these elements coincide with the ones presented here; the remaining differences reflect contrasts between the Nordic societies and the US. On the other hand, the arts and culture are to a lesser extent a socio-political theme in the US; opinion polls play a more marginal role in the Nordic countries, and religious organizations are more easily classified as voluntary organizations in the US than in the Nordic countries, where the Lutheran majority churches continue to have ties to the state.

### 3.3 Public Sphere Regimes and the Media Welfare State

To our knowledge, taxonomies of public sphere 'regimes' in a broad sense have not yet been developed, except for the narrower theme of media regimes. Covering the modern world as a whole, Hallin & Mancini (2004) developed a typology with three media regimes: a liberal type, a polarized pluralist type and a democratic corporatist type. Their taxonomy rests on four criteria: early development and broad diffusion of mass media; a degree of independence from political groups; a degree of professionalization and self-regulation and a degree of state intervention to protect freedom of the press. The democratic corporatist type is characterized by high scores on all four variables. The Nordic countries are classified as democratic corporatist, along with Germany, Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands and Switzerland (*ibid.*, p. 67). However, within this group there is considerable variation; the Nordic countries stand out as a separate cluster with altogether far higher scores on all variables than the rest (Hallin & Mancini, 2004, p. 299).

In *The Media Welfare State*, Syvertsen et al. (2014) delimit a specific Nordic media model by combining inspiration from Hallin & Mancini (2004) with elements from Esping-Andersen's (1990) typology of liberal, conservative and social democratic welfare states. Based on a theoretical assumption of a homology between the welfare state and the structure of the media (2014, p. 20,) four pillars in the Nordic media model are singled out (2014, p. 17):

- Communication services conceived as public goods
- Editorial freedom from intervention from outside
- Economic support for a pluralist press
- Preferences for consensual solutions involving cooperation between main stakeholders

When viewed in isolation, none of these four pillars are exclusive to the Nordic countries; the main point is how they are specified and combined. Editorial freedom is a general norm in modern societies, albeit differently institutionalized. Likewise, economic support for the press is found outside the Nordic region (to be discussed below). Economic support may be interpreted in light of the conception of communication services as a public good. At the same time, in the conception of Syvertsen et al. (2014, p. 20), this constitutes the main link between the media regime and the welfare state. The welfare state is universalistic in the sense that most provisions are equally accessible to the population as a whole. Therefore, it is the obligation of the state to offer provisions and services to all citizens, irrespective of social status or wealth. In parallel, access to the information necessary for participation in political deliberation should be equally available. This is the main justification of a large system of public broadcasting in which state ownership has a central part and for economic support of (parts of) the press in order to guarantee pluralism in channels of information. Similarly, state intervention is a crucial precondition for a broad distribution of news and other information. This presupposes, then, an active media policy that retains legitimacy, among other things, by neutrality in party politics.

Finally, Syvertsen et al. (2014) point to a core feature of the Nordic welfare state model, that of cooperation and consensual solutions via an elaborate system of agreements, along with ‘input democracy’ (Goodin, 2004), which means that stakeholders are actively invited to participate in political deliberation of prospective legal reforms. In its most developed form, this is connected to labour market bargaining and negotiations over welfare state issues (Dølvik et al., 2015; Hagelund & Pedersen, 2015). The willingness to reach agreement in no way precludes conflict over economic and welfare state issues; the point is one of bargaining over wages and working conditions being institutionalized on a higher level. The same is true for media policy or cultural policies in general; they constitute frameworks where disagreements can be fought out without seriously threatening political stability.

### 3.4 The Nordic Model: Historical Background

Despite considerable variation in political history and economic structure (Stråth, 2001), common cultural roots are clearly present in the Nordic countries in the welfare sector and the culture sector, and in the shape of the public sphere. Two long historical lines have been decisive. The Lutheran reformation and establishment of Lutheran state churches led to the requirement that every citizen should be able to read the Bible, institutionalized in the teaching of the catechism. Therefore, the level of literacy by 1800 was virtually 100 percent across Scandinavia (Tveit, 1991), well above the numbers for England and France. In parallel, freedom of expression was already institutionalized around 1800 – in 1766 in Sweden, in 1814 in Norway and somewhat

later in 1849 in Denmark. This formed the basis for the flowering of newspapers and magazines and for the mobilization of social movements from the mid-nineteenth century. Add to this the emergence of a modern, comprehensive system for primary education from the latter half of the nineteenth century, in contrast to the more stratified nature of educational systems in, for example, England and Germany.

A shorter but no less decisive historical line runs through the development of social democracy after World War I. Except for Finland, the labour movement in the Nordic countries remained unified, with a dominant Labour party outside the Third International closely connected with one trade union federation. Moreover, the labour parties were able to forge alliances with farmers and smallholders. Social democratic parties in power for decade after decade, particularly in Sweden and Norway, made the twentieth century the Age of Social Democracy (Sejersted 2011). The policies of social democracy rested on the basic conception of a mixed economy, both in business and in cultural life, and may be summarized in three aspects of reform: coordination, modernization and inclusion. The notion of inclusion is common to all the Scandinavian countries (more problematic in Finland, which experienced a civil war) and is most pertinently expressed in the metaphor of Sweden as the *People's Home* (*folkhemmet*) launched by the Social Democratic party in the 1920s. This conception of inclusion is directly relevant to the theory of the public sphere, as it stands in contrast to the idea of a proletarian 'counter public sphere' (*Lageröffentlichkeit*, cf. Negt & Kluge, 1993 [1972]) existing as a parallel to the public sphere of the bourgeoisie. Such parallel institutions did exist in Scandinavia in the period between the two world wars, with class – based newspapers, magazines, publishing houses, theatres and sports associations. But in the golden decades of social democracy after World War II, they were merged into common national institutions.

Common political developments also emerged out of exchanges between the Nordic countries after World War II and out of experiences and ideas on democratic reforms, such as reforms of schools, old age pensions and sickness allowances. A formalized source of commonalities in the Nordic region is the establishment of institutions for Nordic cooperation after World War II, both on a parliamentary level and on a governmental level via the Nordic Council and the Nordic Ministerial Council, respectively. For a long time, these organizations functioned as strategic arenas for coordination and deliberation on a policy level but lost much of their force when Sweden and Finland joined the EU in 1994, while Norway and Iceland were partly integrated into the EU via the European Economic Agreement.

To make it easier to deal with, in the following the Nordic model is described and discussed with reference to the four countries on the European mainland, while mostly leaving out Iceland and the sparsely populated islands in the Atlantic. This would be detrimental if the discussion was built on the assumption that a Nordic model is fruitful only if all five Nordic states confirm a common pattern. However, given the mode of reasoning employed here – that is, presenting a model and discussing commonalities and deviances – it does not create a serious problem.

### 3.5 The Position of the State in the Nordic Public Sphere

To liberalists, the characterization of the social democratic state as both strong *and* liberal may appear an oxymoron. However, this notion rests on a complex set of checks and balances institutionalized over a long time. The point of departure is the existence of an efficient state administration in the Nordic region from the eighteenth century in societies where political power was strongly centralized. This meant that the subsequent process of modernization to a large extent was centred on the democratization of an otherwise relatively well – functioning administrative apparatus. Already from the mid-nineteenth century, the principle of ‘arm’s length distance’ emerged, allowing popular movements – such as religious lay movements – autonomy vis-à-vis the state and at the same time considerable influence within their field of interest (Nielsen, 2015, p. 49). Democratizing processes did not develop without conflict and backlash, but in the latter half of the nineteenth century they were well on their way in Scandinavian societies (Finland at the time was still under Russian rule).

Parallel to social democratic welfare policy, a broad public responsibility for the culture sector emerged after World War II as another aspect of social inclusion. Here, a parallel version of the arm’s length principle materialized, connected to state subvention of the arts (Mangset, 2013; Larsen, this volume): economic support should not entail restrictions on artistic creativity and production. The same logic applies to the press and broadcasting. State ownership of or state subsidies to the media do not have an effect on what is publicized. One reason for this liberal element in the state is that freedom of the press was firmly established before the growth in the social democratic inclination to state intervention took force and not the other way round.

A prominent aspect of the strong *and* liberal state is the direct contributions from the state to enlightened public debate. Two aspects deserve special mention. As part of the ‘input democracy’, public committees with broad representation are appointed to investigate a large range of socio-political problems, thus laying foundations for political decisions. In Sweden and Norway, the reports are published in special series (SOU, NOU); Denmark and Finland have a slightly less formalized system of publication. Another aspect of information from the state concerns public access to official documents. In Sweden, this was introduced in 1766, whereas the rest of the Nordic countries followed suit well after World War II; it was introduced in Finland in 1951 and in Denmark and Norway in 1970. In the 2000s, the legislation was revised and extended in all Nordic countries (Jørgensen, 2014, p. 10). In some respects, the rules in the Nordic countries take the lead internationally; at present, the right to information is anchored in the constitution in Finland, Norway and Sweden. Even though specific rules on access to information vary between the Nordic countries, the differences are the product of historical contingencies and show no clear pattern (*ibid.*, p. 34f).

### 3.6 Freedom of Expression

Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden all have freedom of expression enshrined in the law, but there are differences in the level of detail. The Swedish provisions on freedom of expression go back to the promulgation of ‘His Majesty’s Gracious Ordinance Relating to Freedom of Writing and of the Press’ of 1766; current provisions were adopted in a modernization process in 1949. Article 1 of Sweden’s Freedom of the Press Act states: ‘The freedom of the press is understood to mean the right of every Swedish citizen to publish written matter, without prior hindrance by a public authority or other public body, and not to be prosecuted thereafter on grounds of its content other than before a lawful court, or punished therefore other than because the content contravenes an express provision of law, enacted to preserve public order without suppressing information to the public.’

A Russian semi-colony up to 1917, Finland had for a long time rather strict censorship. Subsequently, its location between east and west constituted a pressure for the freedom of expression during the Cold War (Salovaara-Moring, 2009). Today, Finland is ranked at the top of the World Press Freedom Index (2016). In the Finnish Constitution of 1999, section 12 states: ‘Everyone has the freedom of expression. Freedom of expression entails the right to express, disseminate and receive information, opinions and other communications without prior prevention by anyone.’

In Denmark, freedom of expression was introduced in the Constitution of 1848 and is presently laid out in Article 77: ‘Any person shall be entitled to publish his thoughts in printing, in writing, and in speech, provided that he may be held answerable in a court of justice. Censorship and other preventive measures shall never again be introduced.’

The Norwegian provisions are very similar to the Danish ones and are enshrined in the Constitution. The legal foundation of freedom of expression is laid out in Article 100, as it has been since 1814. The article has been amended several times, most recently in 2004 (with some minor linguistic amendments in 2006): ‘There shall be freedom of expression. No one may be held liable in law for having imparted or received information, ideas or messages unless this can be justified in relation to the grounds for freedom of expression, which are the seeking of truth, the promotion of democracy and the individual’s freedom to form opinions’.

Particular to the Norwegian Constitution is that Article 100 obliges the state to put in place the infrastructure necessary for ensuring real freedom of expression. This concerns not only citizens’ access to state documents but also implies a broader obligation by the state to take charge of the communicative infrastructures, for example, by guaranteeing public broadcasting and subsidizing newspapers. Also particular to Norway is work environment legislation protecting whistleblowers (Trygstad, this volume).

The enactment of freedom of expression in the law does not mean that freedom of expression is absolute (Kierulf & Rønning, 2009). Numerous exceptions cover threats, defamation, libel, slander, invasion of privacy, harassment, discrimination and hate

speech. These exceptions are similar in the Nordic countries, even though blasphemy is still formally proscribed in Denmark and Finland; it is a dormant issue in Denmark and virtually so in Finland as well. However, restrictions on hate speech, not least directed towards minority groups, have recently been sharpened in all the Nordic countries.

Freedom of expression is not only a question of legal restrictions but of what different citizens consider justified or legitimate (Enjolras, Rasmussen & Steen-Johnsen, 2014). An implication of growing cultural and religious pluralism is that freedom of expression is tested when citizens profess to have different and sometimes incompatible values. One example is the response to the Mohammed cartoons published in 2006 by the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten*, which sparked heated debates across all the Nordic countries and other secular Western democracies (Bangstad, 2014; Elgvin & Rogstad, this volume). The response of many Muslims was quite similar in the three countries but was more critical in Denmark and Norway than in Sweden, partly because the publishing houses were located in the former two countries. However, the Norwegian government made contact with the national Islamic Council to calm emotions. Sweden is usually regarded as a far more multicultural country than either Norway or Denmark (Brochmann & Hagelund, 2012). While ‘racism’ and ‘racialization’ are concepts widely used in the Swedish context, they are less prevalent in the other two countries (Mulinari & Neergaard, 2012). At the same time, Swedish tolerance may have as a consequence that politically incorrect statements are more commonly regarded as less acceptable. The problem was illustrated in the winter of 2016 in the debate that followed the revelation that the Swedish media had failed to report organized sexual harassment by young males of immigrant descent because they were afraid of fuelling racism.

### 3.7 Media Institutions

A global trend is that the institution of media is changing in line with market developments. The presentation of news is thoroughly transformed by the Internet and social media (Enjolras & Steen-Johnsen, this volume); more recently news is distributed to an increasing degree through new channels controlled by giant Internet enterprises. In tandem, traditional media houses are downscaling; heavy losses in income from advertising after 2000 have created a new economic situation, most seriously for newspapers. Media organizations as actors are becoming more conspicuous and single-minded commercial players (Enjolras et al., 2014). In the Nordic societies, the Internet is of special significance. Four of the five Nordic countries are in the world’s top ten on the ICT Development Index, while Finland is ranked number 12. All are above the US, for example, which is ranked as number 15 (International Telecommunication Union, 2016, p. 46).

Unavoidably, these changes create tensions within the mixed system of Nordic media institutions. Both publicly owned and privately owned media are the object of comprehensive media policies. The broadcasting field includes a well-developed system of public service broadcasting, along with commercial radio and television. Newspapers, in contrast, are privately owned. Changes are taking place with such speed that it is impossible to predict the future situation, even in the short run. At present, however, it seems at least that public service broadcasting still enjoys high support (Harrie, 2012), higher than in most of the rest of Europe.

In Sweden, the three public service companies financed by a licence fee – *Sveriges Television* (SVT), *Sveriges Radio* and *Utbildningsradion* (UR) – are limited companies owned by the foundation *Forvaltningsstiftelsen*. The foundation owns and administers all the shares in the three companies. *Norsk Rikskringkasting* (NRK) is the only license-financed public service broadcaster in Norway. It delivers content on radio, television, the Internet, mobile phones and tablets. NRK has been a state-owned limited company since 1996, and the state holds all its shares. In Denmark, *Danmarks radio* (DR) is the only media company with its main funding coming from the license fee. But Denmark has a different model than Norway and Sweden, in that the license fee is also used to partly finance other companies, most importantly TV2, although its main funding source is advertising. Since 2011, a privately owned national radio station, *Radio24syv*, has also been financed with license money. Nevertheless, DR does receive the majority of the public service funds (Ohlsson, 2015).

The Scandinavian countries held out against commercialization longer than the rest of Europe (Hilliard & Keith, 1995; Hujanen & Jauert, 1998), but in the 1980s politicians allowed for local transmission in the national markets, as well as satellite transmissions, whereby the monopoly on television broadcasts of the national public service broadcasters was lifted. Shortly after this de-regulation, national cultural policies permitted a second national broadcaster to be distributed nationwide, as the technology now allowed for more channels to be carried on the analogue terrestrial network. The Danish TV2 was established in 1988, the Norwegian TV2 in 1992 and the Swedish TV4 in 1992. They were all defined as commercial public service broadcasters. The Norwegian TV2 and Swedish TV4 were fully financed by advertisements. In order to get the privilege of being distributed throughout the country alongside the license-financed public service broadcasters, they were all obliged to fulfil some cultural policy obligations.

In Iceland and Finland, public service media are financed by a public service tax. In Iceland, the public service broadcaster, RÚV, is also allowed to carry advertisements, which amounted to approximately one third of the revenues in 2013. In both countries, citizens below a specific income level are exempted from the tax, as are senior citizens. The Icelandic tax is fixed, while the Finnish one is progressive (Ohlsson, 2015, p. 21).

Even though the press in the Nordic countries is constituted of privately owned commercial enterprises, there is considerable regulation by the state, something that

requires a fine balance between liberal and social democratic values – safeguarding the freedom of the press on one hand and safeguarding citizens' general access to information on the other. All the Nordic countries are ranked in the top 10 on the World Press Freedom Index (2016).

Freedom of the press rests on the autonomy of editorial decisions. This implies freedom from intervention in editorial decisions both by the state and by owners. The main thing that guarantees editorial freedom from state intervention is the freedom of expression, which is common to all the Nordic countries, as mentioned above. Freedom from undue intervention by owners is promoted indirectly in two ways. The first is by legislation regulating ownership concentration in the press, which has as its primary intention guaranteeing a variety of views, but thereby indirectly signals the importance of editorial autonomy. Ownership regulations of the press are found in France and Great Britain, among other countries, but only in Norway among the Nordic countries (Medieeierskapsutredningen, 2012). The second is the so-called Editorial Bill (*Redaktørplakaten*), which is a declaration of autonomy adopted by the national press associations that is valid for all newspapers that are members of these associations.

A strong argument for economic support of the press is the intention to preserve diversity and competition, in a combination of liberal and social democratic values. In Sweden and Norway, subsidies are in several cases allocated to so-called 'number two papers' (the second largest papers in terms of circulation in a specific region). Economic support includes direct economic support of selected newspapers and exemption from the value-added tax (VAT), valid for the industry as a whole. Of these, exemption from the VAT is practised in virtually all European countries and in Norway specifically for digital distribution of news content. Moreover, subsidies may cover expenses relating to distribution, as is the case in Denmark. Direct economic support of the press is to varying degrees found in the Nordic countries, except in Finland, but also in other European countries such as France and Austria (Murschetz, 1998; NOU 2010:14, p. 48).

Finally, the autonomy of the press rests on its degree of self-imposed ethical regulations. Common to the Nordic countries are well-established institutions promoting professional ethics. However, the practical design varies considerably between countries. Denmark has a special code of media ethics, anchored in legislation on media responsibility. The act also covers the responsibilities of the editor. Breaches of media ethics are overseen by a committee headed by a lawyer appointed by the Minister of Justice. In the other Nordic countries, media ethics are based on the self-regulation of the press. Finland, Norway and Sweden all have a combination of ethical codes issued by the media associations and committees overseeing their practice. In addition to the committee, Sweden has a special media ombudsman. In all four countries, relevant media are obliged to report verdicts on breaches of the ethical code in the paper. In addition, Sweden has introduced fines as a special type of sanction.

### 3.8 The Arts and Cultural Institutions

The cultural policy scholar Peter Duelund (2003) points out that in the post-war era, ‘cultural policies in the Nordic countries have generally been included in the idea of state subsidized welfare. As such, these policies result from a balance of individual liberty and collective political regulations. According to Nordic ideas of social welfare, cultural policy should ensure both freedom of artistic expression and equal access for everyone to art and cultural products’ (2003, pp. 486–487).

Due to their history as sovereign powers for centuries, Denmark and Sweden have based their cultural policies on feudal and aristocratic traditions and have made use of traditional institutions in establishing their constitutional democracies. Norway, Finland and Iceland developed their national cultural policies and public cultural institutions within a much shorter time span (Duelund, 2008, p. 12). What unites the cultural policies in the Nordic countries in the post-war era is the Social Democratic movement and the ideas behind the creation of the new welfare state (*ibid.*, p. 14). Part of the Social Democratic welfare state was a cultural model, upon which the cultural policies of the Nordic countries were based.

The period between 1960 and 1975 is often depicted as one of the democratization of culture (Duelund, 2003, 2008; Mangset, 1992). Cultural policy was considered an instrument in the political and cultural education of the people, fostering critical and independent thinking, which is a prerequisite for a well-functioning democracy. In addition, cultural policy was considered a market corrective; through cultural policies one sought to promote cultural activities as alternatives to the commercial cultural industry, thus preventing cultural levelling.

The decade between 1975 and 1985 is often labelled a time of cultural democracy. A broader concept of culture was introduced that included amateur activities, a new focus on local initiatives and ideas of participation. Instead of spreading high culture to a broad audience nationwide, the goal was now to inspire citizens to engage in cultural activities in their local communities. The change was part of a broad trend; in many parts of Europe, ideas were spread about what was labelled the new cultural policy focusing on the notion of cultural democracy (Larsen, 2012; Vestheim, 1995).

Duelund (2008, pp. 16–17) depicts the time from 1985 to 1995 as one of economic instrumentalism. He describes this period as a time when people wanted to use cultural policy to promote and tighten the link between the arts and businesses. People were seeking more private sponsorship of cultural institutions. Norwegian cultural policy scholars have labelled the time from 1980 onward as a period characterized by instrumental cultural policy, meaning that culture was seen as an instrument to achieve positive effects on other areas rather than as a goal in itself (Mangset, 1992; Røyseng, 2007; Vestheim, 1995). Duelund (2008, pp. 17–18) goes on to define a new period from 1995, which he labels political colonization (1995–2003). He describes the time after 1995 as one of a return to the national. Examples are debates in Denmark and the Netherlands on the creation of a cultural canon, and in France a separate

Ministry of Immigration and National Identity were established. When he labels this period one of political colonization, Duellund of course is referring to Habermas' (1987) theory of systems colonization of the lifeworld. He characterizes the period from 1985 to 1995 as one when cultural policy was colonized by the market (which should be part of the lifeworld) and the period from 1995 to 2003 (when the study ended) as one when political colonization of the lifeworld took place.

Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland all have arts councils, but they differ from the British arts council model in that the ministry dealing with culture also has considerable influence on the culture sector in each of these countries. The Nordic cultural model is somewhere in between the British arts council model and the French cultural model, which is based on a strong Ministry of Culture. The Danish Arts Council was established in 1964, the Norwegian in 1965, the Finish in 1967 and the Swedish in 1974 (Mangset, 2013, ch. 4).

The Norwegian and the Swedish arts councils are quite similar. However, one difference is that the Swedish council provides support for arts organizations, in addition to artists and projects. In Norway, the arts organizations receive their support directly from the Ministry of Culture. In Denmark, several arm's length bodies were established, with separate bodies for music, theatre, visual arts and literature. However, these were all united in 2014. In addition to the National Arts Council, Finland has also had regional arts councils since the 1960s (Mangset, 2013, ch. 4).

A further dissimilarity between the Nordic countries is found in policies on literature. In this regard, Norway is an outlier, with extensive support for literature, with two main elements. Most of the national fiction literature, in addition to some non-fiction, children's literature, translated books and comic books, are bought by the Arts Council and distributed to public libraries. And there is an agreement between the Publishers Association and the Booksellers Association regarding fixed prices on new books, representing an exemption from competition law. In contrast, Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Iceland all have free prices on books. Finland introduced free prices on books in 1971, and Denmark was the last of the Nordic countries to introduce free prices in 2011. In this system, the publishers can stipulate a suggested retail price, but the booksellers are not obliged to follow it. In contrast, in Norway and Sweden there was a voluntary subscription agreement between the Publishers Association and the Booksellers Association in the period between 1970 and 1993, with the publishers suggesting a retail price that the booksellers were obliged to follow (Larsen, Rønning, & Slaatta, 2012; Rønning, Slaatta, Torvund, Larsen, & Colbjørnsen, 2012).

### 3.9 Research and Higher Education

In *Structural Transformation*, it was implied that the public sphere was dominated by enlightened citizens with general knowledge and interests. At the time, universities were basically professional schools of theology and jurisprudence. In present-day society, expert knowledge has acquired a central position in the public sphere, as a large portion of the population is educated as a result of the continuous production of knowledge and the hegemonic culture of scientific understanding of the world. Apart from their influence on the public sphere per se, research and higher education have salient spillover effects on policy formation. A central question in this respect is the degree to which they constitute a general public concern or are organized as private foundations.

In the Nordic region, research and higher education are mainly state responsibilities. As a rule, universities are owned and funded by the state. The most common exceptions are business schools and theological seminaries. However, some of these are also publicly owned, and most are integrated into the national educational system. In the Nordic region, the volume of research is high at between 3.1 and 3.4 percent of the GNP in Denmark, Finland and Sweden for 2013. The volume has increased somewhat in Denmark and declined somewhat in Sweden since 2001 (NIFU, 2015, Table 4). These figures are well above the EU average (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2016a). The great exception here is Norway, where the volume has remained stable at around 1.6 percent of the GNP since 2001. However, it should be noted that due to oil revenues Norway's GNP is about 30 percent higher than those of the other Nordic countries, which means that the differences in volume per capita are not dramatically different.

Student fees at public universities are virtually negligible. The Nordic countries also have a high degree of enrolment in tertiary education. The percentage of age cohorts 20–29 years old varies between 45 percent in Denmark and 30 percent in Norway (OECD 2016a, Chart C1.1). A very large majority is enrolled in public schools and universities, with percentages varying from 98 percent in Denmark to 73 percent in Finland – all higher than the average in the OECD countries (OECD 2016a, Chart C3.1). In most of Europe, including the Nordic countries, traditional differences in higher education have to some extent been levelled by the Bologna Process, which aimed at coordinating and streamlining higher education across the continent as a whole.

In all Nordic countries, research councils play a salient role, despite considerable variation in their organization. At the one extreme, Norway has one national research council, whereas in Sweden there are four publicly funded and one semi-public foundation, *Riksbankens jubileumsfond*. The amount of research funded by public means is relatively similar in the Nordic countries, around 30 percent of total funding in Denmark, Finland and Sweden. Again, Norway is the outlier, with more than 50 percent public funding of research (NIFU, 2015, Table 12).

All the Nordic countries have an elaborate system for research ethics on the national level, established by state intervention. In contrast to much of the professional ethics standards that are managed by professional organizations, research ethics are anchored in legislation. With some variation, they have a discipline-based system with three to five different national committees and occasionally sub-committees. These issue guidelines for research ethics and pronounce verdicts regarding accusations of scientific fraud. In one sense, the committees for research ethics may be seen as putting restrictions on scholarly freedom of speech. However, the ethical guidelines function rather as a defence mechanism against the silencing of researchers by employers. They also help increase confidence in research amongst the public.

A peculiarity for the Nordic region was a wave of large-scale power and democracy studies conducted in all four countries between the 1970s and the 2000s. These were politically initiated as broad investigations of the distribution of power and of the functioning of democracy in society as a whole. They were concluded with large general reports in addition to a considerable number of specialized books and papers. Addressing instances outside the purely academic realm, the power studies have been characterized as a special form of social reflexivity (Götz, 2013).

### 3.10 Voluntary Organizations

The significance of voluntary organizations in deliberations about and the functioning of the public sphere has increased greatly in the last two decades. In *Making Democracy Work* (1993), Robert Putnam argues that all kinds of associations where citizens meet strengthen both social trust and the propensity for political activity. Here, there is a clear parallel to the early Habermas. In later works, Putnam expressed concern that these arenas were becoming fragmented and therefore that social belonging and political activity were being fragmented, thus facilitating ethnic cleavages (Putnam 2007).

In the Nordic case, Putnam's thesis of the importance of civic associations is clearly confirmed; however, his concern about their decline is not. Several studies have demonstrated the differences between the Nordic countries and the US (Rothstein, 2001; Torpe, 2003). In general, the Nordic countries are at the top in terms of organizational propensity in the world, with an average of about 2.5 organization memberships per capita (Friberg & Kangas, 2008, Table 4.1). 'In addition, record high shares of the population volunteer', between 35 and 58 percent, as compared to, for example, the US with 22 percent (Sivesind & Selle, 2010, p. 99f).

Trade unions and employer associations are placed at the heart of the Nordic model; therefore, interest organizations have a very strong presence in the public sphere. Both labour market parties are organized in multi-level organizations. In all the Nordic countries, union density is very high, comprising some two thirds of the workforce in Denmark, Finland and Sweden and slightly over one half in Norway,

compared to the OECD average of 17 percent (OECD, 2016b). Trade union membership has declined somewhat since 2000, with the greatest decline in Sweden and the least decline in Norway. One important reason for the decline in Sweden, Finland and Denmark is that the administration of unemployment insurance has been removed from the trade unions (the Ghent system) to public agencies (Lind, 2007). The high membership rates have been a crucial condition for the bargaining strength of the unions and therefore for their strong position as political actors and participants in the public sphere. The same is true for the employer associations. The activity of the labour market parties is not restricted to negotiations over issues of working life but extend to adjacent policy fields such as education, vocational training (Nyen & Tønder, 2015), pensions and health policies (Hagelund & Pedersen, 2015).

Apart from the political organizations and labour market federations shaping the public topography of the twentieth century, social movements with more specific goals have been a salient part of the organizational landscape in Scandinavia. A typical example in Denmark is the liberal Christian movement inspired by N.F.S. Grundtvig. In Sweden, the ‘popular movements’ (*folkrorelsena*), including but not limited to the labour movement, had a lasting influence throughout the twentieth century and gave birth to the conception of Swedish society as the Home of the People (*folkhemmet*). Norway saw a combination of religious lay movements, temperance organizations and movements for a new Norwegian language merge into what is commonly called the ‘counter cultures’ (Rokkan 1970); here, tensions between the labour movement and the others were pronounced. These movements have had considerable influence within their respective policy fields throughout Scandinavia.

The interactions between social movements and the state have continued, albeit in different forms. Traditionally, interest organizations have to a great extent been included in decision-making processes via representation on public committees. However, the number of standing committees has declined steeply since 1980, while lobbying has increased, not least that directed to the parliamentary channel, as illustrated by the cases of Norway and Denmark (Gulbrandsen et al., 2002; Rommetvedt et al., 2011). Social movements and civil society organizations also act as advisors and dialogue partners in policy formation, as, for example, in environmental policies (Gåsdaal & Sande, 2009). Obviously, these relationships are not without strains and conflicts. Interaction with the state contributes to mainstreaming and professionalization, resulting in increased distance from the members. At the same time, the close contact with the state makes associations visible partners in the Nordic ‘input democracy’ (Goodin, 2004).

A crucial field for nonprofit organizations is the production of welfare services. In parts of Europe and the US, this is their main field of activity, whereas it is comparatively small in the Nordic countries. At the high end, in the Netherlands and Iceland more than 30 percent of the workforce in welfare services is employed by voluntary organizations. As a consequence, public funding of the nonprofit sector is very high in these countries. In the Nordic region, the average is below 10 percent and is some-

what higher in Denmark (Sivesind & Selle, 2010, p. 106). This is mostly due to the size of the public sector (for long-term state–organization relationships, see Henriksen & Bundesen, 2004.)

The relatively low degree of civic participation in the nonprofit welfare sector in the Nordic countries is compensated by a higher degree of activity in the sector of cultural organizations, not least sports and music. Although the public sector supports culture and sports with a considerable amount of funding, some 75 percent of the income in this sector is generated through the sector’s own activities and events, membership fees, lotteries and support from sponsors (Arnesen, Sivesind & Gulbrandsen, 2016).

It is a common assumption that public funding in the voluntary sector leads to a lower degree of citizen volunteering – the ‘crowding out’ hypothesis (Bolton & Katok, 1998). The Nordic countries show the opposite. High public subvention goes together with a high degree of participation. One reason for the lack of support for the crowding out hypothesis lies in the effect of facilitation by public subvention; volunteering becomes a more attractive alternative if it is complemented by infrastructure and some professional assistance.

At the same time, a tendency toward polarization in the field of voluntary associations has become visible. Whereas grassroots activities are mostly limited to local communities, organizations operating at the national political level representing all parts of the voluntary sector become more professionalized and less dependent on participation from the local level associations. Nevertheless, if participating in the public sphere to a lesser extent serves as a ‘school in democracy’, organizations still secure open channels to political authorities for citizenship interests and initiatives regarding special interest and current issues. In particular, the central level is highly active in influencing policy making processes through direct contact with political and administrative authorities and through media and the Internet (Arnesen, Sivesind & Gulbrandsen, 2016). Even if grassroots participation to a large extent is limited to the local community and to a lesser extent serves as a ‘school in democracy’ in a strong sense, it still fosters a feeling of responsibility for the quality of social relationships.

### 3.11 Religion

A constituent part of the political history of the Nordic countries is the establishment of national state churches after the Lutheran reformation in the mid-sixteenth century. Today, only Denmark has a traditional state church system, while in the other countries the large Lutheran majority churches maintain various ties to the state. In addition to growing secularization, obvious reasons for the change in this system are the growing religious diversity due to waves of immigration into Scandinavia from the

1960s on and internal democratization in the majority churches, which resulted in the desire of many clergy members to be liberated from state patronage.

In Sweden, the state church in its original form was dismantled in 2000 and transformed into the Church of Sweden, which still has two thirds of the population as members. Even though the Church is subsidized by the state, members also pay a special church tax. In contrast, there is no pressure at present to abolish the state church in Denmark. Norway stands between these two in that the state church is being transformed into an independent Church of Norway, freed from direct state administration but still in a privileged position among others as it is fully funded by the state, with no special church tax, as in Sweden. Finland actually has two official folk churches, the majority Lutheran church and, reflecting its former connection to Russia, an orthodox church that counts about one percent of the population as members.

Over a 150-year period, the majority churches have coexisted in ambiguous relationships with religious lay movements that are most outspoken in Sweden and Norway and that comprise an activist and considerably large minority of the population. The dominant Grundtvig movement in Denmark has represented a liberal and inclusive version of Christianity, which may be one reason for the absence of pressure on the state church. The largest religious group outside Christianity in the Nordic countries is at present Muslims, who are estimated to include about 5 percent of the population in Sweden, 3 percent in Norway, 3 to 5 percent in Denmark and less than 1 percent in Finland (Pew, 2011). On average, the Nordic region is approximately on a par with Europe as a whole in this regard (4.5 per cent).

A counterpoint to the privileged position of the Lutheran majority churches is the strong constitutional guarantee of freedom of religion in all Nordic countries (Llorent-Bedmar & Cobano-Delgado, 2014). Moreover, the state facilitates and partly subsidizes all religious communities and congregations. This is most noticeable in Norway, where religious associations, be they Roman Catholic, Muslim or Buddhist, receive the same subsidies per member as the Church of Norway.

An important aspect of the privileges of the Lutheran majority churches has been the teaching of Christianity in the school system. Previously, religious education in the public schools was closely linked to the teaching of the Church, even though other religious creeds were also taught. This is now replaced by more neutral teaching of religious issues, whereas Christianity still enjoys special privileges, not least due to its core position in national history. The exception here is Sweden, where religious teaching in schools has been explicitly non-confessional since 1969 (Llorent-Bedmar & Cobano-Delgado, 2014).

The strong commitment on the part of the state to religious matters in the Nordic countries is paradoxical. One might believe that 400 years of the state church system would contribute to extensive religious indoctrination. Actually, the opposite is the case; the Nordic countries are viewed as some of the most secular in the world. When asked in a European survey whether they believe in God, Nordic respondents were

definitely in the bottom group. At one end was Sweden, where 18 percent of the population confirmed they believe in God, and at the other end was Finland, where 33 percent believe in God. Denmark and Norway stand in between (Eurostat 2010, Table QB32). As a comparison, the average for the 27 EU members was 51 percent. One effect of this secularization of the population is that the majority churches also become secularized; they focus more on social ethics and are more prone to take stands on social questions with a political bent, even if abstaining from direct party politics (Repstad 2010).

If religious matters nevertheless are visibly present in the public sphere, it is due to several factors. One is the presence of specific Christian political parties, which are small and quite unlike broad Christian Democratic parties on the European continent. In Norway in particular, the Christian People's Party holds a privileged position as a party in the centre of the left–right dimension. Another factor is the high degree of attention evoked by Islam, even though its adherents constitute a tiny minority of the population. The growth in religious diversity has also led to the formation of interfaith associations, originally comprising a variety of Christian denominations and more recently also including organizations that are not Christian and even those that are humanistic. This increase in organizational efficiency has also made religion more visible in the public sphere (Furseth, this volume).

### 3.12 A Nordic Model of the Public Sphere: a Fruitful Construct?

In the introduction to this chapter, the 'Nordic model' was specified as an ideal type based on a set of interrelated elements, as summarized in Table 1. The test criteria of the fruitfulness of the model or ideal type lie in the subsequent sketch of similarities and differences between the Nordic countries and their deviations from the model. Empirically, the viability of a specific Nordic public sphere must be judged in relation to the impact of international trends. Does the model at present, or will it in the relatively near future, articulate a contrast between Nordic societies and other modern societies? Even if global trends are noticeable in the Nordic region, salient issues indicate that the specificity of the Nordic model is by no means irrelevant. (i) The Internet as a global phenomenon has a considerable influence on the structure of the media in all Nordic countries, but it does not nullify the specific traits of the Nordic region in relation to the strong position of public service broadcasting and public support for the press. (ii) The field of arts and culture is becoming more influenced by market forces and private support. Nevertheless, broad public subvention and national arts councils significantly affect the funding of cultural life. (iii) Important parts of the European university system have been streamlined by the Bologna Process. This, however, has not affected the fact that higher education in the Nordic countries is free. EU research initiatives have expanded, but their volume is modest compared to the

funding through national universities and research councils. (iv) Regarding voluntary organizations, there is in many respects a tendency of professionalization; organizations developing into lobby groups, keeping less contact with their members. Yet, the Nordic countries are on top when it comes to membership density, both in national interest organizations and in more locally oriented organizations. (v) Ongoing tendencies of secularization are seen all over Europe, and the Nordic societies are no exception. At the same time, despite the comparatively low degree of religiosity in the population, state churches – or their successor, the national popular church – still hold a dominant position in all the Nordic countries.

These common trends in the Nordic region are obviously mitigated by national specificities, as can be illustrated by various examples. In the media field, this is shown in the differences in support for the press; the Norwegian and Swedish systems are directed toward the production of newspapers, the Danish system is directed toward distribution and Finland has no support system. In the culture field, book prices are regulated in Norway but not in the other countries. In terms of research, Norway has the lowest volume of research measured by percent of GDP per capita, even if this is to some extent an effect of the high volume of GDP, whereas Norwegian voluntary organizations receive a higher degree of public funding. In the religious field, the position of the state church is dissimilar. In Sweden, the state church has been abolished, in Norway abolishment is under way, while in Denmark and Finland there are few or no signs of this.

In order for these observations to be meaningful, they should be seen in relation to the central position of the state. The strong and liberal state common to the Nordic countries, is aptly exemplified by the rate of government spending compared to GNP, which is well above 50 percent in Denmark, Finland and Sweden; due to its oil revenues, Norway has a rate of 44 percent, despite very high spending in absolute numbers (2016 Index of Economic Freedom). From a political perspective, Sweden and Norway appear as the most statist and corporatist, based on long-term hegemony of the labour movement and social democratic parties, whereas the labour movement remained in the minority in Denmark and Finland. In Denmark, the state has a stronger presence in several areas, for example, ownership in the broadcasting sector, in state control of media ethics and in the preservation of the state church. In these respects, Sweden and Norway represent more of a mix – more commercial ownership in broadcasting, a self-imposed system of media ethics and a gradual dissolution of the state church. However, this does not imply a weaker position in terms of the public interest but a more developed coordination between politics and professional groups. For example, the establishment of a public media ombudsman was discussed in Norway in the 1990s (NOU 1996: 12) but was later rejected on the assumption that self-regulation of the press is the best way to secure and manage media ethics (NOU 2011:12).

The noticeable differences between the Nordic countries do not overshadow the more dominant commonalities. And it can be decisively said that in all countries the state holds a central position in all five fields of the public sphere. This is not

to say that the state has no central position in the public sphere in other modern societies. For example, active state support for literature is found in France; public service broadcasting is prominent in the UK and most European universities have been restructured on state initiative according to the Bologna Process. With the very visible exception of religion, what is special about the Nordic model is not so much the presence or absence of single elements but the aggregate effects of all the elements present. The Nordic countries are generally more inclined to broaden the public sphere to make it more democratic and more inclusive. In this process, a strong state and accordingly an intricate and well-developed system of checks and balances are essential elements.

The public sphere is to a very large extent about politics and is shaped by political debates and decisions. Thus, the specificities of the Nordic model are linked to a special political style, shaped by the constellation of liberalism and social democracy. Liberal values were already anchored in society when the labour movement ascended to power. The long-term effect was not only a tendency to compromise but a more dialectical development. Even though the rise of the labour movement implied strong growth in state regulations with a paternalist leaning, in the long run it also elicited responses relating to liberal values. If the labour movement was dominant up to the 1980s, the situation is now reversed (Sejersted 2011); but in both periods the two value sets have coexisted. The extension of freedom of expression and of the arm's length principle may be viewed in this light. State subsidies are given to the press to preserve cultural and political diversity, which is a compact expression of the same phenomenon.

Finally, a brief comment on the case of Norway is of some interest, as it demonstrates even more fully the relationship between political structure and the shape of the public sphere. On one hand, Norway is the Nordic country with the strongest neo-corporatist regime, most obviously in the tripartite system of national wage bargaining, with the state playing a very active part. It is also here that the combination of state support and liberal values is the strongest. This is seen in the conception of freedom of expression, in that Norway is the only Nordic country where the state has a constitutional obligation to secure access to information for the public. Moreover, the liberal element comes forth in the economic support for literature through the Arts Council, in broad state subvention of voluntary organizations and in state support of religious congregations of all kinds, including non-religious life stances.

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