

New Forms of Management and Organizational Trends among Employers – European Developments

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In the paper we will analyse trends in organizational characteristics and developments among companies and employers in Europe. The aim is, firstly, to analyse possible changes among employers and their organizations, observing for example tendencies toward organizational mergers or organizational decentralisation in the national IR-systems (Marginson 2005). Secondly focus will be on analysing and discussing why and under which conditions companies (and employers) becomes (or do not become) member of an employers' association (Traxler 2004, Croucher et al. 2006)). This will especially be analysed in connection with a discussion of whether new forms of management (e.g. HRM) changes the willingness of companies to join employers' associations.

The paper is part of a research project 'Employers' Associations in Europe'. In the research project organisational developments among employers and companies are analysed in a comparative perspective. The impact of changing forms of organization among employers are analysed in relation to its impact on the national IR-systems. Parallel to this the research project also deals with the development of supranational and European forms of organization among the employers. This last part is especially related to the European Union.

In this paper we will focus on three different European countries, which partly represent different types of IR-systems in Europe. The countries are respectively Denmark (corporatist model of IR), France (state dominating model of IR) and UK (Liberal model of IR) (Goetschy & Jobert 2004, Commission of the European Community 2004).

Focus in the paper is especially oriented toward a discussion about how and to what degrees new forms of management – like HRM – influence the willingness of companies and employers to organise, and if these new forms of management generally changes the role of employers' associations in the IR-systems. Employers' associations could traditionally be seen as carrier of systems of collective bargaining and the thesis that is discussed is whether the companies that are most into new forms of management are more reluctant to join employers associations compared to companies using more traditional and hierarchical forms of management.

Theoretically the paper refers to the classical discussions related to individual versus collective forms of actions and to the free-rider discussion (Olsen 1965,

Coleman 1990, Elster 1989). This theoretical frame has been used extensively in the analysis of trade unions. It seems however to be just as relevant in the analyses of organizational developments among employers.

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