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Lunch will be provided

### Welfare Systems and the Non-Profit Sector – A changed Relationship. Denmark, Norway, Italy and the UK Compared

#### Abstract:

I seek to evaluate the robustness of the *social origin theory* by analysing welfare developments in four European countries – Denmark and Norway representing the social-democratic model, United Kingdom representing the liberal model, and Italy representing the corporatist type of welfare system. In all countries, the importance of the non-profit sector has increased and its relation to other societal sectors – market, state and informal sector – has changed. The data are from the National Satellite Accounts surveys in the four countries done in 2011-2013.

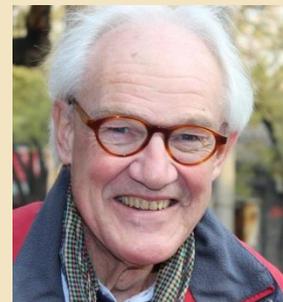
The social origins theory has been used to analyse the position of the nonprofit sector in a wide range of national studies and argues that the characteristics of the nonprofit sector are shaped by state institutions, the market economy and the informal sectors of family and community. Notably, the theory distinguishes between two types of nonprofit activities: service and expressive. This distinction is a crucial explanatory factor in understanding volunteering and helps clarify how the non-profit sector is interacting with and situated in relation to the surrounding pillars of welfare.

However, the social origin theory cannot fully account for changes during the present transformation of the European welfare systems. First, it conflates the voluntary sector with voluntary work by predicting a strong link between the size of the nonprofit sector and the amount of volunteering. This fails to account for the increasing proportion of volunteering taking place outside the nonprofit sector. Second, distinguishing service from expressive activities is not sufficient. It is necessary to differentiate varieties of volunteer activities. Instead of focusing on the act of volunteering we have to examine the sectoral contexts in which volunteering takes place. Specific policy areas have their own set of policies, and volunteers are assigned different roles within these areas.

#### Bios:

Thomas P. Boje is professor in sociology at Roskilde University, Denmark and has previously been professor in sociology at Umeå University, Sweden. He has been American Studies Fellow at Harvard University, Jean Monnet Fellow at European University Institute. He has chaired several EU—framework projects during the years on work-life balance, civil society and welfare policy.

Today, Thomas P. Boje is part of a Danish consortium, which has carried out the Danish section the *Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project* during the period 2004-07 and is part of the EU-project on “*Third Sector Impact*” See <http://www.frivillighedsus.dk/>. He is currently head of the research programme “*The socio-economic impact of the organised civil society and volunteering in Denmark anno 2014.*”



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