

# Immigrant Organisations as Schools of Bureaucracy

Marianne Takle, NOVA, HiOA

*Ethnicities*. OnlineFirst 5 August 2014

<http://etn.sagepub.com/content/early/2014/08/04/1468796814546575>

## Introduction

Immigrant organisations are often seen as schools of democracy. In a Nordic context, scholars conclude the members are socialised in a democratic culture through the immigrant organisations' internal democratic procedures (Bay et al., 2010; Bengtsson, 2010; Hagelund and Loga, 2009; Predelli, 2008). The Norwegian government's normative ideal is that immigrant organisations should be places where members learn democratic values through practice. It expects voluntary organisations to have internal democratic structures and contribute to democratic education (White Paper No. 6 (2012–2013)). This ideal is reflected in the municipal administration in Oslo, Norway. Regulations state immigrant organisations must be registered in public records to be recognised as formal organisations, included in the corporative channel and apply for funding from the state and the municipality (Enhet for mangfold og integrering [EMI], 2013). To register, an organisation must formulate written statutes which must include descriptions of the organisation's internal democratic process, its main purpose and its membership criteria. These statutes shall not only secure the organisations' internal democracies, but also introduce a specific bureaucratic structure in the organisations.

The aim of this article is to analyse how immigrant organisations also serve as schools of bureaucracy, not only democracy. I examine the interactions between the authorities and the immigrant organisations registered in public records, and raise two questions. Firstly, how can we understand the way Norwegian authorities facilitate and expect immigrant organisations to serve as schools of democracy – and to what extent are there elements of bureaucratic schooling? Secondly, how can the immigrant organisations' adaptation to these expectations be understood as an adaptation to an administrative culture?

To answer these questions, I discuss the relationship between democracy and bureaucracy as both analytical and practical concepts within the framework of national traditions. Analytically there is a distinction. In general terms, democracy means government by the people, while bureaucracy is based on civic and rule-bound administration (Olsen, 2007). In practice the two concepts overlap. Few activities in a modern democracy are possible without bureaucratic administration, but there can be bureaucratic administration without democracy.

Moreover, in practice, both democracy and bureaucracy are embedded in political and administrative traditions. In this article the requirements of democratic and administrative adaptations are examined in the context of the Nordic tradition of organising the voluntary sector. In line with this tradition, crucial parts of the democratic opinion-making process take place in formalised voluntary organisations – as parallel bureaucratic structures. It is therefore crucial to distinguish between democratic and bureaucratic regulations in the wider society, and the expectations imposed on immigrant organisations in relation to their internal administrative structure.

This case study, within a Nordic context, can be seen in light of how European countries have a common characteristic of placing an obligation on newcomers to learn how to be democratic citizens (Joppke, 2007). There is a disagreement in the scholarly debate whether civic integration requirements can be understood in terms of nationalism and historically evolved national traditions (Joppke, 2007; Mouritsen, 2012a). With this debate as a point of departure, this article argues that various European countries have different cultural interpretations of how civic integration requirements should be implemented. When newcomers are recognised as ethnic groups, such as immigrant organisations, this is a form of multicultural accommodation. In common with multicultural policies, the Nordic tradition is based on the aim of incorporating individuals into society not only as individuals, but also as groups. Both approaches are used to analyse Norwegian policy towards immigrant organisations.

The article is divided into five sections. The first discusses the links between bureaucracy as a precondition for democracy; civic integration and national tradition;

and multicultural accommodation and the Nordic tradition of voluntary organisation. The second section presents the article's methodology and selection of data. The third part discusses the Norwegian administrative framework by focusing on how the historically evolved Nordic tradition of the voluntary organisation is applied to immigrant organisations in Oslo. The fourth section examines and compares how the immigrant organisations adapt to the requirements. The last section summarises and concludes.

## **Bureaucracy and the Nordic Tradition**

### ***Bureaucracy as a Precondition for Democracy***

In liberal democracies, legitimate democratic elections and decision-making are unthinkable without bureaucratic administration. Since Weber, it has been common to characterise the modern age in terms of bureaucratic organisation including hierarchical organisation, formal and neutral decisions and written documentation. According to Weber (1978) ideal-type bureaucracies are based on a rational–legal form of organisation. The rational–legal organisational form is crucial in democracies, while tradition and charismatic personality are less important. In practice, there are always combinations.

The bureaucracy has the task of carrying out the decisions of the democratically elected representations, but discretionary decisions (and autonomy) are also essential in bureaucracies. Efforts to understand and participate in a democracy require the citizens to have knowledge of how the bureaucracy works. This is especially the case in relation to an understanding of democracy which, in addition to free and fair competitive elections, includes elements of the opinion-making process in the concept such as freedom of expression, the availability of alternative sources of information and associational autonomy (Dahl, 1989; Norris, 2011).

In addition (not an alternative) to defining bureaucracy as an ideal-type and as a rational tool executing the commands of elected leaders, bureaucracy can be seen as an institution with organisational and normative principles on its own (Olsen, 2007: 139). According to Olsen (2005: 19) it is important to include bureaucracy as an institution and not only an instrument, to look at empirical studies in their time and context and not only at Weber's ideal-types and to take into account the political and

normative order bureaucracy it is part of. His argument is that it is crucial to not only focus on the internal characteristics of the bureau, but also to perceive bureaucratic organisation as a part of a repertoire of overlapping, supplementary and competing administrative forms in contemporary democracies together with market organisation and network organisation (Olsen, 2007: 137).

As an analytical concept, Olsen (2005, 2007) bases his definition of bureaucracy on Weber, and the term signifies three elements. Firstly, a distinct organisational setting, which is formalised, hierarchical, specialised, standardised, rule-based and impersonal. Secondly, a professional full-time administrative staff with life-long employment, appointed to office on the basis of merit. Thirdly, a larger organisational and normative structure where government is founded on authority, that is, the belief in a legitimate, rational–legal political order and the right of the state to define and enforce this legal order (Olsen, 2005, 2007: 138).

Inspired by Olsen's approach to bureaucracy, this article understands the notion of bureaucracy as civic and rule-bound administration which is embedded in different historical administrative traditions. The article defines civic and rule-bound administration as formalised, hierarchical, specialised, rule-based and impersonal organisations. It examines these elements in the interactions between the authorities' requirements in relation to formalised organisation such as written documentation of decision-making, accounting, reporting and statutes and immigrant organisations' adaptation. Moreover, the article examines how these elements are embedded in the Nordic tradition of voluntary organisations. In the Nordic countries, as in most European countries, national consciousness has been developed within the framework of state institutions, and state administration and national culture are mutually constituting and reconstituting each other (Glick Schiller, 2010: 31–2). The close relationship between state administration and national culture means that a country's bureaucratic administration is a crucial part of a country's national cultural traditions.

### ***Civic Integration and National Traditions***

Since the end of the 1990s, there has been an increasing tendency to impose civic integration requirements on the immigrant population across Europe. Several countries have introduced new integration requirements such as language skills,

nationality tests, knowledge of the country's political principles and administrative institutions and procedural commitment to liberal-democratic principles. As mentioned in the introduction, the disagreements in the scholarly debate whether such requirements can be understood in terms of nationalism and historically evolved national traditions is relevant for this study.

According to Joppke (2007, 2009, 2010) such civic integration requirements represent a convergence on a liberal paradigm for integration among European countries. In a study of the Netherlands, France and Germany he finds various interpretations and implementations of civic integration, but concludes that these do not confirm the national models because they run counter to what the national models would predict (Joppke, 2007). He emphasises the exclusionary and discriminatory possibilities inherent in civic integration. He also calls this form of civic integration a repressive liberalism because of its power and disciplinary effect. However, Joppke (2007: 14) believes it would be misleading to interpret civic integration towards immigrants as a rebirth of nationalism or racism as it leaves the ethical orientation of the migrant intact. His argument is that liberal constitutionalism rules out these possibilities (Joppke, 2007).

In contrast, Mouritsen and Olsen (2011) emphasise that such liberal integration requirements are combined with the reinvention of national identity. Based on a study from Denmark, the authors argue that this combination is not only a nationally specific form of liberalism, but it also bears traits of the return of nationalism. However, the normative content of this nationalism is mainly civic, and tied to pride in a particular form of small-scale democracy, egalitarianism and welfare society (Mouritsen and Olsen, 2011: 17). In a critique of Joppke's analysis, Mouritsen (2012b: 847) argues that the civic requirements represent the citizenship identity and virtue dimension, which Joppke thinks is declining in Europe. Mouritsen argues that these requirements are not just symbolic, but represent what newcomers should do, and be capable of doing well, for their new country. This is not only liberalism as a way of marking identity, but also a form of nationalism (Mouritsen, 2012b). Moreover, in a comparison of civic integration in Germany, Great Britain and Denmark, Mouritsen (2012a) finds a variety of responses to fairly similar challenges. Although occurring in liberal and civic terminology, he concludes that their

integration and citizenship policies still reflect the path-dependent reactions of culturally bounded nation-states. His argument is that national identity is still relevant for European countries, but consists of different elements today than the previous ethno-cultural form (Mouritsen, 2012a, 2012b). With this debate as a point of departure, this article argues that various European countries have different cultural interpretations of how civic integration requirements should be implemented.

### ***Multicultural Accommodation***

As scholars on multiculturalism have argued, there is no such thing as a neutral state, and any public space, policy or society is structured around certain kinds of understanding or practices which prioritise some cultural values over others (Kymlicka, 1995; Modood, 2007). The term 'multiculturalism' is used in several different ways. One distinction can be made between 'multicultural' referring to the fact of cultural diversity and the term 'multiculturalism' referring to a normative response to that fact (Parekh, 2006: 6). This article concentrates on multiculturalism in contemporary societies, and analyses multicultural politics as a normative ideal that immigrant origin minorities should be granted special rights in order to strengthen their social participation. One normative justification for multicultural politics starts out from the politics of recognition of difference or respect for identities that are important to people (Modood, 2007). The differences at issue are those that are perceived both by the outsider and by the group members, and refer to race, ethnicity, cultural heritage or religious community.

Multicultural accommodation of minorities is different from integration because it recognises the groups, not just individuals, at the levels of identities, associations, belonging, including dispersion, behaviour, culture, religious practice, etc (Modood, 2007: 38). While individuals have rights, mediating institutions such as immigrant associations may also be encouraged to be active public players and may even have a formal representative or administrative role to play in the state (Meer and Modood, 2012: 178). In line with multiculturalism as a normative ideal, policy measures that recognise and accommodate immigrant organisations in Oslo mean that these groups' identities and cultures are not left to the private sphere. In common with multicultural politics, the Nordic tradition is based on the aim of incorporating individuals into society not only as individuals, but also as groups. Both approaches are relevant to an

analysis of the Norwegian policy towards immigrant organisations.

### ***The Nordic Tradition of Voluntary Organisation***

Norway's bureaucratic administration can be understood within the framework of the Nordic tradition of voluntary organisation. Central characteristics of the voluntary sector in Norway, Sweden, Finland and Denmark are that the organisations have a broad membership base, that participation in voluntary work is seen as an integral part of being a member of an organisation and that they are democratically structured (Trägårdh and Vamstad, 2009; Wollebæk and Sivesind, 2010). The normative ideal is that organisations should be democratically organised in such a way that their actions reflect their members' preferences (Lorentzen, 2004: 31). Groups are seen as a collective of individuals, and democratic procedures within groups give all members an opportunity to participate. Participation in organisations socialises each individual member into democratic values and gives them training in practical democracy.

The Nordic tradition of voluntary organisation is also characterised as a people's movement model, and in the Norwegian context, people's movements have brought broad groups from all over the country into the public domain since the second half of the 1800s (Østerud et al., 2003). Historically, the aim has been to create political weight and legitimacy through mass membership, built on a broad social mobilisation. The Norwegian emphasis on democracy can partly be explained by the fact that civil organisations were established in the same period as when national liberation occurred. Nineteenth-century mainstream popular movements followed the same organisational structure as the political parties. They have been characterised by hierarchical organisation where local organisations are linked together in regional and national organisations (Østerud et al., 2003). People's movements provided local interest in the political centre, and in many cases, acted as counter-cultures.

The hierarchical structures were strengthened after the Second World War. The welfare state emphasised that voluntary organisations should be seen as communities of interest, mediated from the grass-roots to central government through democratic processes (Lorentzen, 2004). The counter-culture organisations in Norway have received recognition of their standpoints and accommodation of their cultural differences in the common national institutions. People's movements have focused on

issues such as disagreements about language, resistance to alcohol, religious questions and opposition to EU membership in 1972 and 1994.

In line with the Nordic tradition formalised, hierarchical, specialised, rule-based and impersonal organisations are established and run outside the state administration and the private sphere. The corporative channel is seen as alternative way of political influence outside the party system and the election channel (Rokkan, 1966). The voluntary organisations function as a parallel bureaucratic structure, but there are also huge overlapping zones between voluntary organisations and state administration. These bureaucratic organisations and participation are crucial for Norwegian democratic culture and identity (Lorentzen, 2004). Although scholars find that there has been a gradual transition in the Norwegian voluntary sector away from the people's movement model towards philanthropy, they simultaneously conclude that, as a normative ideal, the membership-based, democratic and hierarchical model of voluntary organisations has vitality (Wollebæk and Sivesind, 2010).

### **Methodology**

Oslo/Norway provides an interesting case study because the Norwegian authorities practise a thorough, bureaucratic registration of immigrant organisations. According to the government, immigrant organisations are organisations where persons from the same country or ethnic group gather together (White Paper no. 6 (2012–2013)). Immigrant organisations have special support schemes that are regulated by an administrative unit separated from support schemes for other voluntary organisations. In Oslo, this is the Unit for Diversity and Integration (Enhet for mangfold og integrering, EMI).

Around 300 immigrant organisations and networks are registered with EMI, 133 of which are included in this study. This covers all local, membership-based and democratically structured immigrant organisations that have delivered their statutes to EMI (2012). These organisations have been selected because they fulfil the requirements the Norwegian authorities have in relation to democratic voluntary organisations. EMI has categorised these 133 organisations according to their members' countries of origin and to world regions: 6 organisations have a background from Latin America, 41 from Africa; 49 from Asia east of Iran; 16 from Iran and the

Middle East; and 21 from Europe, Turkey and Afghanistan (EMI, 2012).

The selection is based on the authorities' category system. This is crucial for analysing the interactions between the authorities and immigrant organisations. The remaining organisations registered with EMI are not included in EMI's category of membership-based and democratically structured organisations. These are looser networks, foundations and religion-based organisations. However, all 300 organisations registered with EMI can apply to the authorities for funding. All organisations must deliver their statutes to EMI, but EMI does not require the organisations to be membership-based or democratically structured. Such requirements concern only organisations applying for basic support to run an organisation, and this funding is based on membership numbers. There were only 12 such immigrant organisations in 2012 and 21 in 2013. The remaining organisations received support for various forms of activities such as music events, data courses and dance groups. In 2012 and 2013 around 170 events received funding.

While all organisations can apply for funding, not all organisations are funded, and some do not even apply. Of the 133 immigrant organisations included in this study, 42 organisations did not apply for funding in 2012 or 2013. This might imply organisations deliver their statutes to EMI not only to receive funding, but also to be recognised by the authorities. Accommodation might also be important. Only organisations that EMI include in this category of membership-based and democratically structured organisations can participate in the elections to the Council of immigrant organisations in Oslo, which functions as a formal link between organisations and the local authorities.

By formulating their written statutes, these 133 organisations are in a dialogue with the local authorities. Such interactions are crucial to understand whether these organisations function as schools of bureaucracy. This study combines qualitative and quantitative analysis, and is based on interviews, field work and document analysis. I have conducted interviews with the leaders of five organisations, two bureaucrats from the local administration and two street-level bureaucrats. Moreover, I have had informal conversations with members and leaders of organisations and bureaucrats as part of my field work at EMI courses for immigrant organisations and during 14 days

at EMI's Oslo office in 2012. I have participated in several immigrant organisations' public events and at internal meeting in the Council of immigrant organisations.

Two types of documents are used. One type is publicly available documents from the Norwegian government and the City of Oslo, such as White Papers and regulations. Of special relevance are documents from EMI about registration of immigrant organisations and support schemes. The other type of document is immigrant organisations' statutes from EMI's (2012) archives. The statutes are chosen for three reasons. Firstly, all relevant immigrant organisations are included in the analysis. Immigrant organisations are often difficult to reach in surveys, and therefore many scholars draw conclusions on the basis of low-response rates. Secondly, the requirements in the statutes correspond in many ways with the information I would have collected in a survey. Thirdly, the immigrant organisations' written statutes have two different target groups. They are made by and for the organisations and their members, and thereby formulate what their members have in common. The statutes are also sent to the public registers and are formulated with the aim of being recognised as formal organisations, and are therefore adapted to the expectations of the political authorities. The statutes' dual target groups make them especially useful for studying the immigrant organisations' diverging forms of adaptation to the Norwegian administrative framework.

### **Norwegian Administrative Framework**

Studies from the Nordic countries show that central elements of the Nordic tradition of organising the voluntary sector are applied to immigrant organisations, (Bay et al., 2010; Borevi, 2004; Hagelund and Loga, 2009; Kugelberg, 2011; Myrberg and Rogstad, 2011; Ødegård, 2010; Predelli, 2008; Pyykkonen, 2007). These studies fail to place these elements in the wider context of a Nordic tradition. I attempt this in the following analysis.

### ***Democratic knowledge***

When this tradition is applied to immigrant organisations it is expected that they are membership-based and that all members have an opportunity to participate in the election of their organisation's leadership and representatives. The government formulates the democratic ideal by referring explicitly to Norwegian tradition:

Meanwhile, the government is concerned that the voluntary organisations, including immigrant organisations, follow democratic principles. By allocating support to organisations it has traditionally been emphasised that the organisations must have a democratically elected leadership and an elected board. This also applies to immigrant organisations. (White Paper No. 39 (2006–2007): 62)

This ideal is reflected in the state's support schemes for immigrant organisations which are channelled through the local administration. These support schemes follow two main political strategies: to support membership-based and democratically structured immigrant organisations; and to support cooperation between two or more ethnic or national groups. The municipality's own support scheme for local immigrant organisations follows the latter strategy. Both strategies are civic as they enable immigrant organisations to maintain the culture and traditions of their members' countries of origin (see Joppke, 2007: 4). Policy practice in Oslo shows the majority of immigrant organisations' activities actually receiving support consists of classic cultural resources such as culture, cooking and dancing, to name but three (EMI, 2013). The immigrants' maintenance of their cultural identity is seen as an asset to their democratic participation:

The grant does not support the organisations' identity building and activities that promote a common identity as immigrants or as members of an ethnic or national group. When the government supports local immigrant organisations that are built around a sense of belonging to an ethnic or national group, it is because it is important to have a position and a community that supports participation in civil and political life. (White Paper No. 39 (2006–2007): 163)

This is in line with multicultural policy. The government's intention is, however, not to have a multicultural policy in the sense that the society is organised in relation to individuals belonging to different ethnic, national and religious groups (see Meer and Modood, 2012; Modood, 2007). There has been made several studies of public documents in Norway, and all of them find that Norway has an ambiguous policy (Engebrigtsen and Fuglerud, 2009; Gressgård, 2005; Seeberg, 2004; Stokke, 2012). These studies also conclude that the Norwegian idea of equality is based on equality

as homogeneity. If the idea is that homogeneity is a precondition for equality, it will be difficult for the government to support national and ethnic groups' political participation. It thus appears that the policy is based on the belief that identities are important, but that identities linked to other ethnic or national groups shall not influence majority institutions. Through studies of White Papers from the early 2000s, Gressgård (2005) e.g. finds a general recognition of cultural differences, but in practice this politics is tied to the individual. The Norwegian government's respect for immigrants' and their descendants' culture as groups is limited to some areas and rather instrumental. The government sees the ethnic and national groups as places for social integration in small communities. The idea is that such integration among equals will lead to increased participation in the wider society:

Immigrant organisations can function as a stepping stone for contact with other inhabitants and participation in other arenas, and in this way strengthen immigrants' belonging to the larger society. (White Paper No. 6 (2012–2013: 126)

In accordance with the Nordic tradition of voluntary organisations, the idea is that immigrant organisations engaged in cultural activities can be places where members learn democratic values in practice. Voluntary organisations are expected to contribute to democratic education (White Paper No. 6 (2012–2013: 123).

In contrast to the Nordic tradition, the government only supports membership-based immigrant organisations at the local level, and not at regional or national levels. According to the Nordic tradition, the links between levels ideally may create political weight and influence from the grass-roots to central government through democratic processes (Østerud et al., 2003). There are national immigrant organisations in Norway, but these are expert groups that are neither linked to the local organisations nor membership-based (Nødland et al., 2007). This policy of supporting only membership-based immigrant organisations at the local level leads to a fragmented landscape of small, local organisations without political influence (Takle, 2012). The government sees the democratic knowledge as mainly achieved through participation in immigrant organisations as a means of individual participation outside the organisations and in the majority society. Moreover, few organisations are funded on the basis of their membership numbers, and internal democratic structures are not

required for all types of funding. The normative ideals of having membership-based and democratically structured immigrant organisations are not reflected in how the funding to these organisations is allocated.

### ***Bureaucratic Knowledge***

The expectations that immigrant organisations adapt to the civic and rule-bound administration are not explicitly stated at policy level. It is, however, an important part of the practical implementation of the policy on immigrant organisations at the local administrative level. These differences can be understood in relation to the various tasks performed at these levels: the closer the authorities get to the organisations, the more specific the education becomes.

The Unit for Diversity and Integration in Oslo, EMI, provides information and gives advice and counselling to the registered immigrant organisations. EMI (2013) provides information about funding, offers contact with other organisations and public services, and arranges competence courses and seminars on how to establish and run a formal, rule-based and impersonal organisation. Its methods include courses, personal contact between street level bureaucrats and members of the organisations, information on homepages and written guidelines. EMI (2013) arranges an annual one-day course on how to apply for funding, in which street-level bureaucrats explain the application forms and give advice on how to fill them in. Moreover, EMI (2013) arranges courses on bureaucratic organisation on how to write reports on the immigrant organisations' activities and their accounting. Other kinds of courses are related to media training and rules for formal organisation and democratic, impersonal leadership. These courses are open to all members of immigrant organisations, and involve an education of the individual member in the kind of organisational structure the local authorities expect.

There is a close contact between the street level bureaucrats and the immigrant organisations. EMI (2013) expects immigrant organisations to deliver all necessary written documents and updated information within the agreed time needed to deal with their request or support application. It also emphasises that, when street-level bureaucrats are invited to an organisation's events they must be informed well in advance so they are able to attend. Studies of the immigrant organisations' files in

archives at EMI (2012) show that there is continuous correspondence between various immigrant organisations and street-level bureaucrats about how to write statutes and apply for funding. Emails and telephone conversations are used to inform leaders of immigrant organisations about how to establish and run an organisation in Oslo.

EMI has web pages with information about how immigrant organisations should write their statutes. According to these web pages, the statutes are the foundation of an organisation:

The statutes are formal, written and adopted regulatory frameworks. The most important aspect of the statutes is that they determine the purpose of the organisation and how it shall be organised, managed and operated. The basis for this is normally democratic procedures, which build on votes and choices made by majority decisions. (EMI, 2013)

EMI's web pages describe how the statutes should be designed, define the main purpose of the organisation, define membership criteria and describe the democratic procedures regarding annual meetings, elections, accounting and reporting. EMI (2013) states the members constitute the organisation, and the members should decide the organisation's activities at membership and annual meetings. Moreover, it emphasises the importance of having precise democratic procedures for elections and voting, and that members are also obliged to be active in a democratic organisation. Every immigrant organisation that wants to register must have a meeting with the street-level bureaucrats at EMI:

The duration of these meetings is around one hour, depending on how much the new organisation wants to tell us about its progress, plans and history. The intention of the conversation is to get to know the organisation's work and its representatives, and to lay a foundation for a mutual relationship of trust for further cooperation. (EMI, 2013)

The street-level bureaucrats give immigrant organisations an informal note with advice on what is expected to be included in the statutes (EMI, 2012). According to this advice, the written statutes represent an organisation's constitution. The note says the statutes should describe the internal democratic decision-making process and how the members are included in the democratic election process. Advice on membership

states the organisations should be open and inclusive.

EMI's (2012) note states the statutes should describe the organisation's main purpose, and this should include the ideas behind the organisation and the organisation's aims.

A bureaucrat's handwritten note on an immigrant organisations' statute states that this organisation: 'Should be recommended to provide more comprehensive statutes' (EMI, 2012). This might indicate the street-level bureaucrats expect immigrant organisations to follow their advice on presenting written documentation of how each organisation has formalised its democratic procedures, impersonal hierarchical structure, specialised aims and rule-based criteria for membership.

This education in bureaucratic administration of the immigrant organisations is a kind of civic-integration requirement, but it is also intertwined in the Nordic tradition of organising the voluntary sector. A crucial aspect of this tradition is how the voluntary organisations function as parallel bureaucratic structures. The establishment of formal organisations and their participation in public administration through the corporate channel is crucial for Norwegian democratic culture. The municipal's education of immigrant organisations in bureaucratic administration can be seen as a way of recognising these organisations.

Immigrant organisations are obliged to send their written statutes to be registered, to fill in application forms to apply for funding and follow strict requirements for reporting on how the financial support has been used. While these are ways of learning and practising bureaucratic administration, they also function as means to control the immigrant organisations. There have been several scandals over the past two decades where both immigrant and majority organisations have manipulated their membership lists in order to increase their financial support from the authorities (PWC, 2009). This has led to stricter requirements regarding membership documentation, but mainly for those organisations that receive funding on the basis of membership numbers.

Studies on other Nordic countries' support for immigrant organisations show similar reporting requirements, as Kugelberg (2011) shows in her studies on Sweden. Based

on studies of Finland and inspired by Foucault, Pyykkönen (2007) sees this as various forms of ‘techniques of government’. However, immigrant organisations are not only controlled in relation to how they understand and implement liberal democratic procedures. The authorities control whether the statutes and reports fulfil the requirements for voluntary organisations in Norway. As Mouritsen (2006: 86) concludes in his studies on Denmark, comprehensive Nordic values penetrate all aspects of personal and social life, but are rarely specified and discussed critically. In a Norwegian context, such comprehensive Nordic values might be seen in how the bureaucrats educate immigrant organisations. This is a kind of active citizenship involvement (Hvinden and Johansson, 2007). The requirements of membership-based organisations with internal democracy combined with thorough administrative education and control are ways of including minorities in the country’s administrative culture.

### **3. Immigrant Organisations’ various adaptations**

There is a huge need among immigrants for information on how to write statutes. It is not enough just to tell them some principles about what to include, you have to sit beside them and tell them what to write. I had never heard of statutes before I established an organisation myself. I therefore spent several hours learning how to write them. This was ten years ago, and I think the authorities do a better job with the immigrant organisations now.

This is a quote from a leader of an immigrant organisation, who emphasises that immigrant organisations need education in how to write statutes. The question raised in the following section show how immigrant organisations’ adaptation to these expectations can also be understood as an adaptation to an administrative culture. It analyses how organisations formulate their internal democratic procedures, the main purpose of the organisation and the membership criteria.

#### ***Internal Democratic Process***

A review of the 133 immigrant organisations’ statutes shows most of them meet the formal requirements placed on voluntary organisations in Norway, although as stated, this is not required to apply for all kinds of funding. The formulation of written statutes is an exercise in itself – only 65 statutes are formulated in correct Norwegian,

32 are written in Norwegian with some minor language mistakes, and 30 include incorrect Norwegian. EMI also accepts statutes in the English language, and six statutes are written in English. While language knowledge is important neither for the organisations' internal procedures nor for their contact with the local administration, it is crucial for democratic participation in the wider society.

As a part of the fulfilment of the formal requirements, the organisations' statutes describe how their organisation is based on democratic procedures. A review of the statutes shows 98 organisations have specified their internal democratic procedures in a formal way, while 32 statutes are short and written in a summary way. Three statutes do not mention the internal democratic process. As the table below shows, those describing their internal democratic processes do this in different ways.

Number of Organisations /Formal Procedures	Decision Making Procedures	Elections Procedures	Procedures to Secure Impersonal Individual Roles
61	X	X	
20	X	X	X
19	X		
12	X		X
11	–	–	–
6		X	
4			X

*Table 1. Number of Organisations/Formal Procedures*

One democratic procedure is related to formal decision-making. This is the task mainly performed by the formal organisational entities such as the annual general meeting and the board. The other procedure is related to how members are included in the election process. Nearly half of the organisations combine these two democratic procedures, and thereby adapt to the administrative culture that characterises the Nordic tradition of voluntary organisation. Another 20 immigrant organisations also

include a formalisation of tasks related to individual roles in the organisations such as leaders, secretaries and accountants. By defining impersonal roles the organisations can prevent organisational structures based on either tradition or the leadership qualities of an individual. While Norwegian authorities do not require such procedures to be included in the statutes, according to informal conversations with bureaucrats (2012) they expect such impersonal structures to be followed in practice.

### ***Main Purpose of the Organisation***

All immigrant organisations unite several aims in their statute's main purpose. Each organisation's combination of purposes defines the organisation's profile. The most often mentioned main purpose, formulated by 103 immigrant organisations, is the aim of helping their members become better integrated in Norwegian society. This covers information mainly about the health system, education system, and language and culture. Such information is crucial for learning how the Norwegian public administration works, and is a precondition for democratic participation. Most immigrant organisations in Oslo combine this with the aim of maintaining the culture and traditions of their country of origin: 99 immigrant organisations define their main purpose as arranging sports and cultural activities such as football, yoga, swimming, music festivals, cooking, dancing, concerts and celebrations of national days. These organisations formulate these activities as a way of retaining their 'own culture'. This is critically described in an interview with one organisation's leader: 'There are lots of hobby activities, which will not lead to political influence.'

Only seven organisations state they aim to influence Norwegian society and politics. Five organisations aim to make the Norwegian health institutions better adapted to contemporary multicultural society. The two remaining organisations have defined clear aims in relation to how they want to influence Norwegian society, and one of them formulates this as an aim:

To make visible the ethnic minorities' situation and the problems that minorities have in Norwegian society. To influence laws, policies and decisions, which are of particular importance for persons with a background as an immigrant or refugee.

This low level of ambitions does not, however, support the critique from previous studies that the Nordic tradition is co-opting and depoliticising voluntary organisations (Ålund and Schierup, 1991: 116–121), although the outcome is the same. There are two reasons. One is that the organisations are not oriented towards political issues. The other is that they are not included in political processes. Several researchers conclude that the authorities relatively rarely bring local immigrant organisations into the formal decision-making processes through discussions, dialogues and consultations (Hagelund and Loga, 2009; Predelli, 2008; Rogstad, 2007). As discussed above, the authorities only support local membership organisations, and not membership-based organisations at regional and national levels. The outcome is that the authorities only teach organisations how to practise internal democracy, while they have few opportunities to represent immigrant organisations in the corporative channel (Takle, 2012).

Nevertheless, the performance of all these different activities is in line with how the Norwegian government perceives the immigrant organisations' maintenance of their cultural identity as an asset to their democratic participation (White Paper No. 39 (2006–2007)). The idea is that simply by organising these various activities in formal organisations is a way of learning democratic procedures. However, many of these formally organised activities function as an education in the specific way of running a formal organisation in Oslo.

### ***Membership Requirements***

Most statutes define formal criteria regarding who can become members of the organisations. Some have loosely defined criteria, whereas others are more detailed. The importance of such rules is emphasised in an interview with one organisation's leader.

If we do not have these formal organisations with clear rules for membership, there will be closed networks among different groups. Only those who are invited can become members. In such closed networks some persons will take the lead, while others will be suppressed.

This leader is preoccupied with the importance of formal guidelines for the members' inclusion, voice and exit options. Seventy-nine organisations give membership to all

persons who support the main purpose of the organisation. This must be seen in relation to most organisations having the main purpose of maintaining the culture of their country of origin. Other organisations (34) specify that their members must both come from a specific country of origin and be permanently living in Norway, while 15 organisations are open to all persons coming from one ethnic or national group.

Most organisations have written and formalised rules for when and how members can be excluded. A number of organisations (101) require their members to only pay their membership fees and support the organisations' statutes and main purpose. These organisations adapt to the authorities' requirements and administrative culture.

Some organisation have, however, included additional constraints on their members, which in the context of the Norwegian administrative tradition are taken for granted and not expected to be included in statutes. This is especially the case in relation to how statutes refer to appropriate behaviour in organisations. Eight organisations have formal rules saying they exclude members who do potentially harmful things to the organisation's reputation. Five organisations focus on the internal relationship among the members, such as the need to respect others' opinions, misuse of one's position, using the organisation as a means of personal gain, setting private aims above the aims of the organisation and impolite behaviour at the organisation's internal meetings. Such rules can be seen both as a message to the members concerning acceptable behaviour in the organisation, and as an attempt to formalise it.

Seen from the perspective of Norwegian administrative culture, some of the organisations' requirements are superfluous and potentially odd. Three organisations have defined exact penalty measures for members who break the organisation's rules. One of these organisations has a rule stating members who are more than 30 minutes late for a meeting must pay a fine of NOK 5, absentees must pay NOK 10 and members who fight at meetings must pay NOK 1000. The statutes state: 'While the fighting continues, other members may find it necessary to ask the police or any other relevant authority to intervene.' This organisation is formalising rules, which in the framework of a Norwegian administrative tradition would belong to normal polite behaviour. The exceptions reveal the variation among the statutes and how some statutes represent new constructions, and these might include a tension between their

members' traditional way of organising groups and Norwegian administrative culture.

## **Conclusion**

The expression 'immigrant organisations as schools of democracy' is insufficient. It provides only a partial understanding of how the authorities facilitate and expect immigrant organisations to adapt to their integration requirements. To gain a more complete understanding one must also examine how the authorities in practice educate the immigrant organisations in bureaucratic administration. This article finds the Norwegian government emphasises that immigrant organisations are expected to contribute to their members' democratic education. However, when these democratic ideals are implemented in practice, street-level bureaucrats educate the members of immigrant organisations in how to establish and run a formal, hierarchical, rule-based and impersonal organisation in Norway. This education has several bureaucratic elements, and can be better described as 'schools of bureaucracy'.

Bureaucratic knowledge is a precondition for democratic participation, and is a supplement to democratic schooling. Street-level bureaucrats' education of immigrant organisations in administrative practice is part of a process where the organisations must learn how the formal administration works in Norway to be able to participate in Norwegian democracy. Through this practice, the bureaucrats convey the state categories and understandings which are crucial for the majority society's self-understanding (Engebrigtsen and Fuglerud, 2009). Bureaucratic administration is a crucial part of a country's national tradition and culture (Olsen, 2007). When Norwegian authorities require that immigrants have knowledge of the country's administrative culture, this is simultaneously a way of marking national identity. As Mouritsen (2012a, 2012b) argues, national identity is still relevant for European countries, but consists of other elements today than in previous ethno-cultural forms.

This emphasis on bureaucratic knowledge is especially relevant in a Nordic context where the voluntary sector functions as a bureaucratic structure. In a Norwegian context, the hierarchical, membership-based and democratically structured voluntary sector is important for democratic culture and identity. In contrast to how the Nordic tradition emphasises that local voluntary organisations gather in national organisations to gain political influence, the authorities only see the democratic and

bureaucratic knowledge achieved through participation in immigrant organisations as a means for individual participation in the wider society. The Norwegian policy is not to organise society along ethnic or national lines, and formal recognition and financial support for immigrant organisations cannot be understood in terms of a multicultural policy. The authorities perceive these organisations as arenas for schooling, but the organisations' activities are preparations that do not lead to political influence for the group in the wider society.

Immigrant organisations formulate written statutes the way the authorities facilitate and expect of them. According to the statutes, immigrant organisations construct their own democratic and bureaucratically structured organisations. The variation among the statutes shows each immigrant organisation has its own form of adaptation and that the organisations are not only objects of Norwegian policies. There is a striking agreement between the Norwegian authorities and most immigrant organisations about the organisations' main purpose. The immigrant organisations adapt to the Norwegian policy by not emphasising that their activities would lead to political influence as a group in the wider society. Most organisations define their main purpose as conducting cultural activities with the aim of maintaining their ethnic or national culture. This is both in line with civic integration requirements and with Norwegian authorities' perception of this as an asset to their democratic participation. However, by formulating their statutes the immigrant organisations are socialised into Norwegian administrative culture. The statutes describe formal procedures for decision-making processes, elections of leaders, main purposes of the organisations and criteria for new members. The transformation of immigration organisations' forms of expression is especially evident for those statutes including a tension between their members' traditional way of organising groups and Norwegian administrative culture.

## References

- Bay AH, Hagelund A, Finseraas H (2010) Civil Society and Political Integration of Immigrants in Norway. In: Bengtsson B, Strömblad P, Bay AH (eds) *Diversity, Inclusion and Citizenship in Scandinavia*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 295-323.
- Bengtsson B (2010) Political Opportunity Structure and Ethnic Organisation: How Political, What Opportunities, Which Structures? In: Bengtsson B, Strömblad P, Bay AH (eds) *Diversity, Inclusion and Citizenship in Scandinavia*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 241-269.
- Borevi K (2004) Den svenske diskursen om staten, integrationen och föreningslivet. In Bengtsson b (ed) *Föreningsliv, makt och integration*. Rapport från Integrationspolitiska maktutredningens forskningsprogram. Rapport 49, 31-65.
- Dahl RA (1989) *Democracy and its Critics*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
- EMI (2012) Unit for Diversity and Integration. EMI's archives of immigrant organisations' statutes September/October 2012.
- EMI (2013) Unit for Diversity and Integration. Available from: [http://www.bydelgrunerlokka.oslo.kommune.no/enhet\\_for\\_mangfold\\_og\\_integrering/](http://www.bydelgrunerlokka.oslo.kommune.no/enhet_for_mangfold_og_integrering/) [Last accessed 13.08.2013]
- Engebriksen A, Fuglerud Ø (2009) *Kultur og generasjon. Tilpasningsprosesser blant somaliere og tamiler i Norge*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- Glick Schiller N (2010) Long Distance Nationalism and Peripatetic Patriots. In: Riccio B, Brambilla C (eds) *Transnational Migration, Cosmopolitanism and Dis-located Borders*. Luglio: Guaraldi, 27-53.
- Gressgård R (2005) Hva mener regjeringen med flerkulturelt mangfold? *Nytt Norsk Tidsskrift* 22 (1): 72-79.
- Hagelund A, Loga J (2009) *Frivillighet, innvandring, integrasjon. En kunnskapsoversikt*. ISF Report 1.
- Hvinden B, Johansson H (eds) (2007) *Citizenship in Nordic Welfare States: Dynamics of Choice, Duties and Participation in a Changing Europe*. London: Routledge.
- Joppke C (2007) Beyond national models: Civic integration policies for immigrants in Western Europe. *West European Politics* 30(1): 1-22.
- Joppke C (2009) *Veil Mirror of Identity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Joppke C (2010) *Citizenship and Immigration*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Kugelberg C (2011) Integration Policy and Ethnic Minority Associations. In Shore C et al. (eds) *Policy Worlds. Anthropology and Analysis of Contemporary Power*. New York: Berghahn Books, 264-282.
- Kymlicka W (1995) *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lorentzen H (2004) *Fellesskapets fundament - sivilsamfunnet og individualismen*. Oslo: Pax.
- Meer N, Modood T (2012) How does interculturalism contrast with multiculturalism? *Journal of Intercultural studies* 33(2): 175-196.
- Modood T (2007) *Multiculturalism - A Civic Idea*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Mouritsen P (2006) The particular universalism of a Nordic civic nation: common values, state religion, and Islam in Danish political culture. In: Modood T,

- Zapata-Barrero R, Triandafyllidou A (eds) *Multiculturalism, Muslims and citizenship*. London:Routledge, 70-93.
- Mouritsen P (2012a) The resilience of citizenship traditions: Civic integration in Germany, Great Britain and Denmark. *Ethnicities* 13(1): 86-109.
- Mouritsen P (2012b) The dialectics of liberal citizenship in Europe. *Ethnicities* 12(6): 844-863.
- Mouritsen P, Olsen TV (2011) Denmark between liberalism and nationalism. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, DOI:10.1080/01419870.2011.598233.
- Myrberg G, Rogstad J (2011) Patterns of Participation: Engagement among Ethnic Minorities and the Native Population in Oslo and Stockholm. In: Morales L, Giugni M (eds) *Social Capital, Political Participation and Migration in Europe: Making Multicultural Democracy Work?* Basingstoke: Palgrave, 172-198.
- Norris P (2011) *Democratic Deficit – Critical Citizens Revisited*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Nødland SI, Hidle K, Kvaale G (2007) *Organisasjoner for identitet og integrering. Evaluering av tilskuddsordning for lokale innvandrersorganisasjoner og lokalt frivillig virke*. Stavanger: Report IRIS 064.
- Olsen J P (2005) Maybe It Is Time to Rediscover Bureaucracy. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 16(1):1-24.
- Olsen J P (2007) *Europe in search of Political Order*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Parekh B (2006) *Rethinking Multiculturalism*. New York: Palgrave
- Predelli L N (2008) Political and Cultural Ethnic Mobilisation: The Role of Immigrant Associations in Norway. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 34(6): 935-954.
- Pyykkonen M (2007) Integrating Governmentality: Administrative Expectations for Immigrant Associations in Finland. *Alternatives* 32(1):197-224.
- PWC (2009) Rapport etter undersøkelser av Pakistan Velferds Organisasjon. Price Waterhouse Coopers.
- Rogstad J (2007) *Demokratisk fellesskap. Politisk inkludering og etnisk mobilisering*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- Rokkan S (1966) Norway: Numerical democracy and corporate pluralism. In: Dahl RA (ed) *Political oppositions in Western democracies*. Yale University Press: New Haven.
- Seeberg M L (2004) Antropologer og multikulturalisme i Norge og andre steder. *Norsk antropologisk tidsskrift* 15(4): 215-226.
- Stokke C (2012) A Multicultural Society in the Making. PhD thesis in Social Anthropology, NTNU.
- Takle M (2012) Membership and Internal Democracy Immigrant Organisations in the City of Oslo. *Gritim Working Paper Series* No.12. Barcelona: Universitat Pompeu Fabra
- Trähgårdh L, Vamstad J (2009) *Att ge eller att beskattas. Avdragsrätt för gåvor till ideell verksamhet i Sverige och andra länder*. Stockholm: Tankesmedjan för det civila samhället.
- Wollebæk D, Sivesind K H (2010) *Fra folkebevegelse til filantropi? Frivillig innsats i Norge 1997-2009*. Oslo: ISF Report 3.
- Weber M 1978 (1922) *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* Tübingen, 1 Teil Kap 3.
- White Paper No. 39 (2006-2007). Norwegian Ministry of Culture.
- White paper No.6 (2012-2013). Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion.

- Ødegård G (2010) *Foreningsliv i et flerkulturelt lokalsamfunn. En studie om integrasjon og sosial kapital*. Oslo: ISF Report 6.
- Østerud et al. (2003) *Makten og demokratiet. En sluttbok fra Makt- og demokratiutredningen*. Oslo: Gyldendal.
- Ålund A, Schierup C U (1991) *Paradoxes of Multiculturalism*. Aldershot: Avebury.