

## **i Information about the exam**

### **SOS2603 - Nordic welfare society - contemporary perspectives**

- Written examination
- November 14, 2022 at 9:00-13:00 (4 hours)

#### **About the exam**

- You must answer both part 1 (short answer assignment) and part 2 (long answer assignment). Part 1 counts 1/3 and part 2 counts 2/3 of the final exam grade.
  - In part 1, you will outline and discuss two of three concepts.
  - In part 2, you will answer one of three assignments.
- Line spacing, font and size cannot be adjusted in the Inspira format.
- The examination text is in English and you may submit your response in Norwegian, Swedish, Danish or English.

#### **Examination support material**

Dictionaries handed in before the examination.

#### **Questions during the exam**

If you have any questions during the exam, please contact the senior supervisors in the room.

#### **After the exam**

After the examination you will see your submission under **Archive**.

**Good luck!**

## 1 Part 1: Short answer

Outline and discuss briefly two of the following concepts. Please specify which two of the three assignments you have chosen in your answer.

- A. Social democratic welfare regime.
- B. Social investment
- C. The Ghent system for unemployment benefits

Fill in your answer here

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Maximum marks: 0

## 2 Part 2: Long answer

Answer one of the following three assignments. Please specify in your answer which of the three assignments you have answered.

1. Do you consider "the Nordic Model" a useful concept? Discuss at least two ways of understanding such a model.
2. What kind of similarities and differences do we see among the Nordic countries in their immigration and integration policies? Discuss in particular the criteria for naturalization and citizenship
3. In her lecture and readings for the course Mari Teigen refers to the Nordic countries as women-friendly welfare states. Other scholars, for instance Ruth Lister, argue that there are some limits to the extent to which Nordic countries have succeeded in becoming women-friendly and gender inclusive. What arguments do you see for either position?

Fill in your answer here



# Exam questions sos2603 Autumn 2022

Short answers:

## A. Social democratic welfare regime.

By this is meant the characteristics identified by Esping-Andersen (1990) related to welfare services in the Nordic states. High degree of decommodification, universal welfare etc (see table) The social democratic regime is discussed in many of the texts. A good answer lists the most important criteria (universalism, decommodification, state as main service provider) and mentions that Kuhnle etc. has criticized the use of the term social democratic for the Nordic welfare state as they think other political parties have been important in introducing universalism in welfare state architecture.

	Social democratic	Conservative	Liberal
Kinds of support for welfare state	Universal rates Generous support level + related to income	Labor-market dependent support. Generous level for those included	"Flat rate universalism" Low support level Means testing
Decommodification	High	Depends on kind of work	Market-based/ low
Stratification	Inclusive also for middle classes which now receive support at same level as more disadvantaged.	Guild privileges still present, not much redistribution, status conservation	Dualization. Stigma and low support for poor people. Private solutions for middle classes
State-market-family relations	High support levels + legal status means that autonomy from family is possible, but have to work	In support of traditional family model	In support of private solutions
Coalitions	Middle classes/farmers + workers common interests ( corporatism 1)	Church and state (corporatism 2)	Few common interests pluralism
Main service provider	Welfare state	Family/employer	Market/family

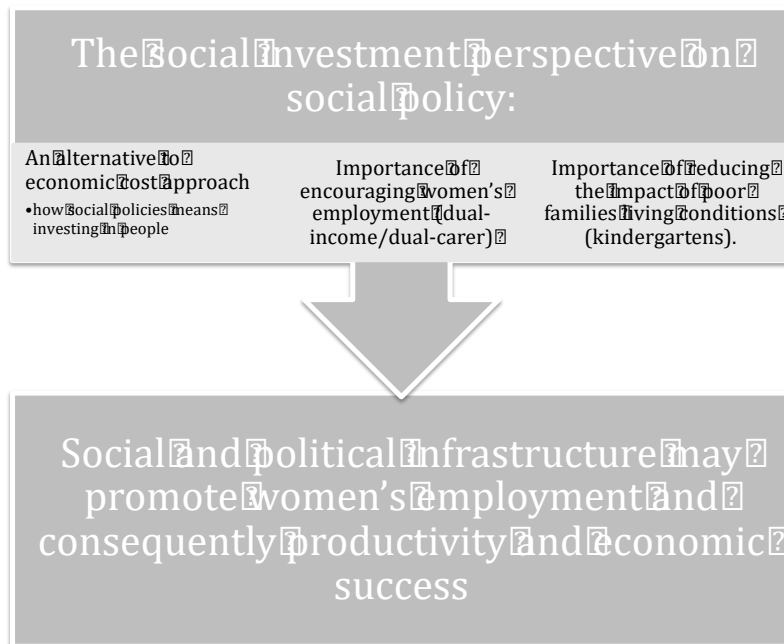
Byrkjeflot 2021

## B. Social investment

Discussed in Mari Teigen's lecture (see ppt below) and particularly in this article, (but also Kettunen):

Midtbøen, A.H. & M. Teigen (2014) Social Investment in Gender Equality? Changing Perspectives on Work and Welfare in Norway, NORA - Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research, 22:4, 267-282 (15s)

## Social investment – a baseline for social democracy



### C. The Ghent system

- The Ghent system is the predominant form of unemployment benefit in the Nordic countries (except Norway). It refers to a system for unemployment benefits where workers are insured against unemployment by union membership. This system exists in Sweden, Denmark and Finland but not in Norway. In Norway the unemployment benefits are paid by the state.
- It is usual to assume that the difference in method for unemployment benefits accounts for the higher degree of unionization in rest of Nordics compared to Norway (60+ vs 50+). In the Ghent system the level and method for unemployment insurance is regulated by the state and since different governments may have different views of the value of giving unions power the system is more unstable and politically contested
- The Ghent system has been partly undermined in the other Nordic countries since early 2000
- Increase in insurance premium costs in Sweden caused more people to leave the system this led to fall of unionization from 2006 to 2008. Increased again until 2016

Alternative unions have diluted the Ghent system in Denmark where 17% are insured in «yellow» cross-occupational associations,  
The changes are therefore reversible in Sweden, but this is much less the case in

Denmark (Kjellberg and Ibsen 2016). Norway is more stable at lower levels, partly because we do not have a Ghent system.

Source: lecture 7, Neergaard 2014, Gordon 2019

Nergaard, Kristine (2014), "Social Democratic Capitalism". In: Adrian Wilkinson, Geoffrey Wood, and Richard Deeg (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Employment Relations*. Oxford University Press, 292-316. (24 pages)

Gordon, Joshua C. "The Perils of Vanguardism: Explaining radical cuts to unemployment insurance in Sweden." *Socio-Economic Review* 17, no. 4 (2019): 947-968.

## Essay:

### 2A. Do you consider "the Nordic Model" a useful concept? Discuss at least two ways of understanding such a model.

The distinction between three ways of understanding the Nordic model is summarized as a preliminary conclusion after the first three lectures. In lecture three and then as well as in Byrkjeflot forthcoming (uploaded in canvas module 3 and included as required reading) I summarize the differences in a table:

Table 1. Three ways of "explaining" Nordic model

	Political economy/welfare studies approach	Cultural construction approach	Political process approach
Important sources	Korpi, Esping-Andersen 1983/1990,	Stråth/Sørensen Trägårdh 1997 Witoszek 2011	Rokkan, Kuhnle, Rothstein Knudsen
Concepts/keywords	Resource mobilization , social democracy, Crisis compromise, farmer and workers movement, social pacts, <b>corporatism</b>	Lutheranism, statist individualism, pastoral enlightenment , equality and trust, values, <b>civil society</b>	Institutional process, compromise culture, cleavages, path dependency, <b>Governance by association</b>
Central actors	Unions, employers, farmer movements, political parties, parliaments	"The free farmer", The statist individualist, potato priests and civil servants, poets and national myths	States and municipalities, civil servants, professions, people's movements, associations
Key historical period	1890 – 1935	1800-1950	1850 - 1945

The distinction between a political economy and a cultural construction approach is the easiest to grasp, while the political process approach may be less developed and perhaps more difficult to distinguish from the first two. While the political economy approach emphasize socio-political aspects, power resources, elite compromises, social democracy (Korpi 1983, Esping-Andersen 1990), the cultural constructionists argue for the role of religion, free farmers, and a welfare-individualistic culture in the making of the Nordic model

(Sørensen and Stråth 1997, Berggren and Trägårdh 2006). In parallel with the latter perspective there has also emerged a literature emphasizing high quality of government, high trust, 'consensual governance' (Rothstein 2011, Kuhnle 2009). Kuhnle's article is assigned as reading in lecture 1 as well as Esping-Andersen and there are three readings by Trägårdh. Kettunen's review of the 1997 book (Kettunen 1999 assigned as reading in lecture 2) is a nice summary of the culturalist position.

It may of course be difficult to identify clear alternatives in the assigned texts so I think we have to see the value in making other kind of distinctions between different ways of seeing the Nordic models as well, like discussing Kuhnle's critique of Esping-Andersen's term social democratic welfare regime. A good essay will outline the Esping-Andersen position, which is perhaps the easiest to identify, and contrast with explanations for the Nordic model that argues for more long-term cultural explanations (religion, free farmer, myths, statist individualism etc.) In my third lecture I put emphasis on people's movements and the broader political compromises than those emphasized by Esping-Andersen (see also Kettunen 2012).

**Or 2B What kind of similarities and differences do we see among the Nordic countries in their immigration and integration policies? Discuss in particular the criteria for naturalization and citizenship**

The three readings associated with Grete Brochmann's lecture are relevant and particularly the following powerpoint from her lecture:



**Criteria for naturalization in Scandinavia.** (Source: Brochmann and Midtbøen 2020)

Table 1 Naturalization requirements in the Scandinavian countries

Requirement	Sweden	Norway	Denmark
Identity documentation	Yes	Yes	No
Residence	5 years	7 years	9 years
Release from other citizenship	No	Yes	No
Language skills	No requirement	Test (CEFR level A2)	Test (CEFR level B2)
Citizenship test	No	Yes	Yes
Self-support	No	No	Yes
No debt to the state	Yes	No	Yes
Conduct (max. waiting time for a criminal act)	7 years	34,5 years	Permanent exclusion
Citizenship ceremony	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary
Oath of allegiance	No	Yes (if attending ceremony)	Mandatory



Borevi, Karin, Kristian Kriegbaum Jensen and Per Mouritsen. 2017. "The Civic Turn of Immigrant Integration Policies in the Scandinavian Welfare States." *Comparative Migration Studies* 5(1):9. p1-14 (14s)

Brochmann, Grete and I. Seland 2010. "Citizenship Policies and Ideas of Nationhood in Scandinavia". *Citizenship Studies*, vol 14, no 4. Pp 429-445 [16 pages]

Brochmann, G., & Midtbøen, A. H. (2020). Philosophies of integration? Elite views on citizenship policies in Scandinavia. *Ethnicities*, 1-19 (19s)

**2C In her lecture and readings for the course Mari Teigen refers to the Nordic countries as women-friendly welfare states. Other scholars, for instance Ruth Lister, argue that there are some limits to the extent to which Nordic countries have succeeded in becoming women-friendly and gender inclusive. What arguments do you see for either position?**

Teigen, Mari & Hege Skjeie (2017). "The Nordic Gender Equality Model". In: Oddbjørn Knutsen (ed.). *The Nordic Models in Political Science. Challenged, but still viable?* Bergen: Fagbokforlaget. 125-144 (19p)

@ Lister, R. (2009) "A Nordic Nirvana? Gender, Citizenship, and Social Justice in the Nordic Welfare States", *Social Politics* 16(2): 242-278 [37 pages].

@Midtbøen, A.H. & M. Teigen (2014) *Social Investment in Gender Equality? Changing Perspectives on Work and Welfare in Norway*, *NORA - Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research*, 22:4, 267-282 (15s)

Mari Teigen present the half full and half empty discussion of women-friendly state position and Lister's half empty position in powerpoints 44-49 lecture 5 2022

My summary in lecture 10:

## Gender politics (L5) and family politics (L6)

- A Nordic gender equality model?
  - From male-breadwinner to dual earner model
  - Policies for developing "true women-friendly societies". (Hernes 1987)
  - A turn towards *social investment* and *family policy*
- Family politics
  - Kindergartens
  - Parental leave, father quota, gender balance norms and quotas
  - Economic benefit of gender equality
- Lister's critique ++ still a gender equality paradox:
  - Do such policies also slow down women's careers (employed in "pink ghettos", prefer part-time etc.) Do the Nordics have the most segregated labor markets?
  - Mainly equal in politics not in business life.
  - Gender-segmented labor markets
  - Minority women are marginalized economically and politically