

Studies on the Development of  
Interest Group Populations  
in Corporative Systems



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Interest Group Populations  
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PhD Dissertation

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## Table of Contents

Acknowledgements .....	7
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	9
Review of selected studies on interest group populations .....	12
Snapshot studies investigating group mobilization .....	16
Studies that investigate the disbandment, survival, and volatility of interest groups .....	17
Studies investigating population development.....	19
Studies of the Danish population .....	20
The contributions of the dissertation to the literature.....	22
The papers comprising the dissertation .....	24
Outline of this report.....	26
Chapter 2: The dependent variable: population development .....	29
Interest groups .....	29
Interest group populations.....	30
Categorization of groups .....	32
The concept of population development.....	33
The focus of the papers comprising the dissertation .....	36
Chapter 3: The independent variables: population mechanisms, societal factors, and the moderating effect of corporative institutions.....	39
Classic perspectives.....	39
Neopluralism: focus on population mechanisms and the societal context .....	41
The population mechanisms.....	42
The societal context .....	44
Corporative institutions as a moderating variable .....	46
The focus of the papers comprising the dissertation .....	52
Chapter 4: Research design.....	53
The Danish case .....	53
The population lists, the representation database, and the surveys .....	56
Selected years.....	56
The population lists and political representation data base .....	57
The surveys.....	60

Chapter 5: The Danish population development: overview of selected results.....	63
<b>The subpopulation level</b> .....	<b>63</b>
<b>The aggregated level</b> .....	<b>67</b>
<b>Formation</b> .....	<b>67</b>
<b>Political representation</b> .....	<b>69</b>
<b>Disbandment</b> .....	<b>73</b>
Chapter 6: Conclusion, discussion, and implications of the dissertation.....	79
References.....	85
English summary.....	93
Dansk resume.....	95

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# Chapter 1: Introduction

Interest groups are very important players in modern democracies. Depending on one's perspective, they can be seen as the heroes of democracy; they give citizens democratic competencies, contribute to a varied public debate, and channel citizens' communication to and control with decision makers. Conversely, they may also be seen as democracy's scoundrels, pushing forward narrow special interests at the expense of other, more legitimate interests (Halpin, 2010; Warren, 2001). No matter which view is taken, most scholars agree that interest groups are important and several studies have investigated how and to what degree interest groups influence public policy (Binderkrantz, 2008; Dür and De Bièvre, 2007; Mahoney, 2007).

As interest groups potentially have considerable influence on politics, it is crucial to know which societal interests are represented by groups and which are not. This depends on how an interest group population is composed of different interest group types and how this develops over time. An interest group population is defined as all of the interest groups in existence at a specific point in time. If all of the interest groups in a population represent business interests, the interests of labor are not represented and the system is therefore biased. The diversity in interest group populations can be considered a democratic good, as it can contribute to a more varied debate in which various societal interests are heard (Binderkrantz, 2012; Danielian and Page, 1994; Schattschneider, 1960). It can offset democratic deficits in political institutions and produce better political outcomes as more societal interests are taken into account. However, diversity can also complicate the communication between interest groups and decision-makers if the population is so chaotic and unorganized that decision-makers lose track of which groups represent which interests.

The composition of an interest group population is the product of multiple events, such as which groups emerge at all, which groups are mobilized politically, which groups gain political representation, which groups survive, and which groups die. Mapping the composition of a population is interesting, as it can serve as an indicator for whether or not the representation of interests is biased. However, there are problems associated with assessing bias and representation patterns by investigating the composition of an interest group population. First, different interest groups are not equally strong, which makes it difficult to evaluate whether a societal group is well-represented or

not. Second, it is difficult to evaluate the weight of different societal interests from a normative perspective – how many groups should represent the elderly so as to correspond to their weight in society? It is therefore impossible to sketch a picture of an unbiased interest group population in which all societal interests are represented in accordance with their weight in society (Schlozman, 1984). Despite this obstacle, many studies have dealt with and documented the organizational bias of different kinds of interest group systems from Schattschneider (1960), Walker (1983; 1992), and Schlozman (1984; 2010), all of whom investigate the Washington interest group population, to studies investigating more bounded systems, such as the groups appearing in the media (Binderkrantz, 2012; Danielian and Page, 1994) or in specific political arenas (Berry, 1999; Binderkrantz et al., 2015).

The studies mentioned above and many others all provide excellent snapshots of how different systems are composed of various interest group types. An alternative approach is to focus on the dynamics of representation rather than snapshots. Few studies take this approach, as discussed below, even though doing so can answer important questions such as which interest group types are gaining ground, which are retreating, which are the most persistent, and which are the most vulnerable. The answers to these questions may indicate which societal groups have a voice in the political debate, which do not, and how this changes over time. Even though more groups do not necessarily equal more power, developments in the numbers of interest groups do tell us something about the dynamics of interest representation, and more groups do mean more voices that speak for a specific case.

Along with the question of how interest group populations are composed, the interest group literature has also been preoccupied with which factors explain the pattern of representation; from the classic pluralist focus on how societal disturbances would make interest groups proliferate (Truman, 1951) to Olson's (1965) insights on the importance of the intensity of preferences, to the newer literature that combines these and adds considerations about internal dynamics of interest group populations (Gray and Lowery, 2004). However, also in regard to the explanations of interest group representation, the literature has largely neglected the dynamic component regarding what explains the development of interest group populations. This dissertation will build upon the literature on interest group representation and add a dynamic component to this literature by investigating how interest group populations develop over time and which factors explain this development. The overall research question of the project is:

How do populations of interest groups develop, and can population mechanisms, societal factors, and corporative institutions explain this development?

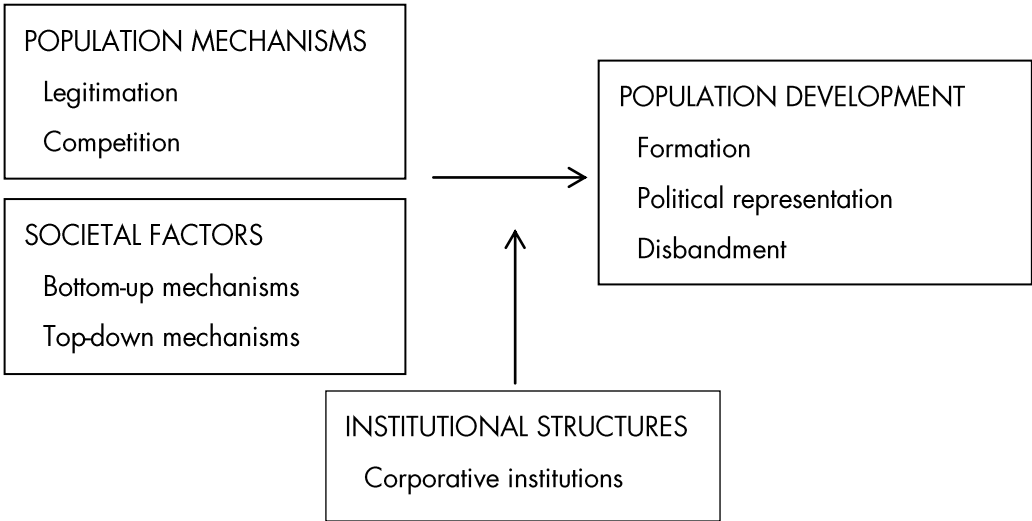
The development of an interest group population is the result of three particular events: interest group formation, political representation, and disbandment. The formation event is the founding of a group. This is the group's first meeting or when it writes its statutes. A group obtains political representation once it enters a political arena, such as the parliament, the media, or the administration. The disbandment event is when the group ceases to exist. Who enters and exits the population obviously shapes the contours of the population, but the political component regarding which groups are represented in political arenas is important for development as well, as political influence is one of the main goals of most interest groups. The dissertation investigates the three components of development, both separately and in combination. All three components are investigated at the aggregated population level, including all of the interest groups in a population. Moreover, formation and disbandment are also investigated at the subpopulation level on a more bounded population.

With respect to which factors explain the development, the dissertation builds on the newer literature, which takes both societal factors, such as demographic changes and government activities, and the internal dynamics of the interest group population, such as the number of groups in the population, into account. The dissertation adds to this literature in two ways. First, it develops a theoretical setup specifically aimed at explaining the dynamic component of interest group populations instead of, as earlier studies have done, focusing on snapshots of the composition of the populations. Second, it also investigates the effect of the institutional set-up within which the population is operating, more specifically how corporatist institutions affect population development. Institutional structures have been investigated in the literature on the lobbying behavior of interest groups (Mahoney, 2004), however, the effect of institutional structures on representation patterns has not been a topic for investigation.

The Danish system is traditionally considered to be one of the most corporative systems in the world (Christiansen et al., 2010; Lijphart and Crepaz, 1991; Siaroff, 1999; Öberg et al., 2011). This case is therefore excellent for investigating the effect of corporatist institutions on population development. Another advantage of the Danish case is that a unique data source can be utilized. In the 1970s, a large research project mapping all existing Danish interest groups was conducted (Buksti and Johansen, 1983). This gives a unique opportunity to investigate the dynamics of the Danish system. In this

manner, the project includes all existing interest groups – not only the politically active ones. To my knowledge, this project is the first to map the development of a total population, including both the politically active groups and those that are not politically active, but potentially politically active (this distinction will be discussed in Chapter 3). Figure 1.1 presents the overall model that is investigated in the dissertation. The variables in the model are discussed in greater detail in Chapters 2 and 3. The dissertation contributes to the literature on interest groups in various ways. These contributions will be discussed after a review of selected studies of interest group populations. The literature review serves to make it clearer where this dissertation contributes to the literature and why these contributions are important.

Figure 1.1. The theoretical model of the dissertation



## Review of selected studies on interest group populations

As discussed, many authors have been preoccupied with questions concerning the formation and mobilization of interest groups as well as the organizational bias of interest group systems (Baumgartner and Leech, 1998: 83; Danielian and Page, 1994; Schattschneider, 1960; Schlozman, 1984; 2010; Walker, 1983; 1992). However, there are fewer studies that explicitly focus on the development of interest group populations. The studies included in this review are studies that have a clear and explicit focus on a bounded interest group population and where the questions regarding bias and representation are central rather than questions regarding the political influence of the groups. In this way, access studies that investigate groups in specific political

arenas, such as Binderkrantz et al. (2015) and Rasmussen and Gross (2015), with a rather explicit focus on the influence component, are not included.

The studies that will be discussed are still rather diverse. They differ in their approaches and how they set up their theoretical expectations. What they have in common is that they all investigate the composition of a population by focusing on group formation, political mobilization and representation, death, volatility, or simply make overviews of a specific population. Few of the studies investigate the development of a total population over time.

The studies are divided into three groups according to their focus. The first group includes the snapshot studies that investigate the composition of various populations by focusing on the mobilization of interest groups at a single point in time. Some of these studies actually have snapshots at more than one point in time, such as Schlozman (2010) and Gray and Lowery (1996b), but they do not focus explicitly on the dynamics of representation. Instead, they treat their data as multiple snapshots of a specific population without offering much attention to the development perspective. Some of these studies, such as Halpin et al. (2012), are rather descriptive, while others have theoretical expectations about how the population is comprised based on societal factors that create disturbances in the interest group environment or dynamics within the population. The second group covers studies that investigate the disbandment, survival, and volatility of groups – factors that, together with formation, shape interest group populations. The third group is studies with a dynamic component that explicitly investigate the development of populations rather than focus on populations at one point in time. This dissertation fits into the latter group of studies, as it examines the development of a total interest group population over time. Table 1.1 provides an overview of the reviewed studies. The next three sections will present and discuss these studies. The Danish studies that come closest to being population studies are then introduced briefly in order to provide an overview of our knowledge of the Danish population.

Table 1.1. Overview of the selected studies of interest group populations

	Population under study	Investigation of	Expectations: societal factors	Expectations: population dynamics
Snapshot studies that investigate group mobilization				
Schlozman (1984; 2010)	Interest organizations that are politically active in Washington	Group mobilization	Threatened interest	-
Walker (1983; 1992)	Survey of national interest groups in the US	Group mobilization	Threatened interests Patrons	-
Gray and Lowery (1996b) Lowery and Gray (1995)	Organized interests registered to lobby state legislatures in the US	Group mobilization	Number of potential constituency Level of government goods and services Interest certainty Size of government	Density dependence
Messer et al. (2011)	Survey of interest groups active in the EU institutions	Group mobilization	Potential constituency Legislative activity Interest certainty Policy participation opportunities	Density dependence
Gray and Lowery (2001)	Organized interests registered to lobby state legislatures in the US	Group mobilization and death	-	Density dependence
Wonka et al. (2010)	Interest groups active in the EU	Group mobilization	-	-
Halpin et al. (2012)	Interest groups active in Scotland	Group mobilization	-	-
Studies that investigate the disbandment, survival, and volatility of interest groups				
Nownes and Lipinski (2005)	Gay and lesbian rights groups in the US	Group death	Issue salience	Density dependence
Anderson et al. (2004)	Organized interests registered to lobby state legislatures in the US	Volatility Persistence	-	Liability of newness Liability of senescence

	Population under study	Investigation of	Expectations: societal factors	Expectations: population dynamics
Berkhout and Lowery (2011)	Sample of interest groups active in the EU commission and parliament	Volatility	Corporatist traditions EU Institutions	
Gray and Lowery (1997)	Survey of organized interests registered to lobby state legislatures in six states in the US	Interest group mortality anxiety	-	Density Competition for resources
Halpin and Thomas (2012)	Survey of interest groups active in Scottish public policy	Interest group mortality anxiety	-	Density Competition for resources
Dynamic studies that investigate population development over time				
Berry (1999)	Interest groups that participates in US congressional hearings	Group mobilization	Shift in values Growth of welfare state	-
Nownes (2004)	Gay and lesbian rights groups in the US	Group formation	Number of congressional hearings Issue salience Percentage of democrats in congress President's preferences	Density dependence
Nownes (2010)	Transgender interest groups in the US	Group formation	Government activity Transgender laws	Density dependence
Jordan and Greenan (2012)	All interest groups listed in the <i>Directory of British Associations</i>	Population development	-	-
Jordan et al. (2012)	All interest groups listed in the <i>Directory of British Associations</i> and the <i>Encyclopedia of Associations</i> (US)	Population development	-	-
Berkhout and Lowery (2010)	Interest groups active in the EU	Population development	-	-

## Snapshot studies investigating group mobilization

The studies investigating mobilization all note the paradox built into the group system: that, on the one hand, groups can serve as a route for the representation of citizens but, on the other hand, the group system can also promote special interests at the expense of the public good. Even though not all studies establish explicit hypotheses concerning mobilization, the theoretical foundations for many of the studies, such as Schlozman (1984; 2010), Walker (1983; 1992), Gray and Lowery (1996b), Lowery and Gray (1995) and Messer et al. (2011), are in many ways in line with the classical pluralist argument that groups will form rather automatically when their policy environment is somehow disturbed and societal interests are threatened (Truman, 1951). In this way, their central expectation is that citizens will mobilize around policy questions that are salient to them. Threatened interests are therefore the essential factor for group mobilization. However, they also recognize that there are barriers to entry, as it may be easier for some individuals to join than others due to differences in time, money, skills, and contacts (Schlozman, 1984: 1009).

Some of the studies in the first group have expanded their theoretical scope further, paying attention to the concept of interest group populations. Gray and Lowery (1996b) were among the first to deal directly with questions about interest group populations and set forward expectations about the population dynamics. The focus remains on mobilization, as they develop the *Energy-Stability-Area* model that aims to explain group mobilization by explaining the variations in the density of a population (number of groups) and diversity across the American states. In many ways, the expectations established by this model also reflect the core ideas underlying Truman's (1951) disturbance theory. More concretely, they expect the number of potential constituency, the level of government goods and services, and interest certainty (measured as party competition) to affect the number of interest groups that are politically active. However, they also have expectations about how the dynamics within the population may affect the mobilization of groups. They argue that some of the variables in their model may exhibit density dependence, meaning that the effects of these variables are conditioned on the number of groups in the population. In this way, they are the first to unite theory and data especially designed to the population level of interest groups. They name their approach "the population ecology framework," inspired by organizational ecology theory (see Hannan and Freeman, 1989).



The ESA-model has been modified and tested on the EU interest group system at a single point in time by Messer et al. (2011). However, they use a sample of the population of policy active groups in the EU and not total population data. Gray and Lowery (2001) develop their expectations about density dependence further and develop a model that explains birth- and death rates of the 1997-population with the density of the 1990-population (note that they consider a group dead simply because it is not policy active; however, the group may still exist, which has implications for the results). Wonka et al. (2010) have gathered a population dataset in the EU context very similar to Gray and Lowery (1996b), but in the EU context at a single point in time. Their aim is purely descriptive, as is the case with Halpin et al. (2012), who map the population of politically active groups in Scotland.

All of the studies in the first group examine populations of politically active groups. Most of them use lobby registration data to construct their population lists, the consequence of which is that only politically active groups are included. As discussed below, the distinction between the restricted population of politically active groups and the total interest group population can have implications for the results. The snapshot studies all draw useful maps of the composition of interest group populations. Moreover, many of them also set forward useful theoretical explanations to why interest groups mobilize. However, they do not focus on the dynamic component of interest representation, as they only focus on snapshots of the population. Furthermore, all of the studies focus exclusively on the politically active groups – not the total population.

Studies that investigate the disbandment, survival, and volatility of interest groups

Formation and mobilization are obviously very important events in the shaping of a population, but so are interest group disbandment and the volatility of the system. As seen in table 1.1, numerous studies have focused on these concepts. Nownes and Lipinski (2005), Anderson et al. (2004), Gray and Lowery (1997), and Halpin and Thomas (2012) all investigate the causes of interest group deaths. Nownes and Lipinsky (2005) develop expectations inspired by both the pluralists' thoughts about political opportunity structures and population dynamics. They use population data on a subpopulation of interest groups and record actual group deaths. They find that density and group age both have an effect on the death rate of the interest group population.

Gray and Lowery (1997) and Halpin and Thomas (2012) take another approach to the question about interest group death. They investigate the underlying mechanism by examining the level of the individual groups rather than the aggregated population level. They expect both that population traits such as the population's density and the level of competition for resources between the groups in the population will affect their survival prospects. They investigate this at the group level by examining mortality anxiety among the groups in a population. Mortality anxiety is defined as the perceptions among group entrepreneurs concerning the future prospects for their group. Gray and Lowery (1997) use survey data from all interest organizations registered to lobby in six American states, while Halpin and Thomas (2012) investigate the Scottish case, with groups active in the Scottish Government's policy consultations. In this sense, the two studies restrict their populations to politically active groups. Even though they do not examine the causes of interest group deaths directly, the measure of mortality anxiety may provide an indication of what causes interest group deaths; and thereby how one side of the shaping of a population occurs. Overall, the two studies produce similar findings. The most important findings are that the density, degree of competition between the population's group, degree of conflict over policy goals, reliance on finance from sales and services, group size, and age of the population all affect mortality anxiety.

The studies on volatility also focus exclusively on the politically active groups as they use lobby registration data. Anderson et al. (2004) investigate the organizational persistence and draw on insights from organization ecologists to test the liability of newness hypothesis (i.e., recently founded groups are less likely to survive) and the liability of senescence hypotheses (older organizations are less likely to survive). They conclude that interest organizations are far less persistent than expected, that turnover rates are high, that there is strong support for the liability of newness hypothesis, and that persistence is unevenly distributed, both across the range of substantive interests and organizational types. Berkhout and Lowery (2011) investigate the volatility in the EU interest group system. They expect that the EU system will be very stable, with limited volatility, as the corporatist tradition with stable interest group populations characterizing most of the EU member states might be replicated at the EU level. They find that the system is surprisingly volatile, even over a short time period (2003-2009).

Contrary to the snapshot studies, some of the studies on disbandment and volatility actually touch on the dynamic components of interest group populations as they compare populations at multiple points in time. However, they all focus rather narrowly on disbandment or volatility and therefore

do not set up theoretical expectations regarding the overall development of the populations. Furthermore, none of the studies focus on a total population, as they either investigate subpopulations or restrict their population to the politically active groups.

### Studies investigating population development

The final group of studies covers those that explicitly set out to investigate how a population develops over time, thereby focusing on the dynamics of populations. As seen in table 1.1, half of the studies on development are rather explorative and without explicit theoretical expectations, while the other half relies on theoretical expectations rather similar to the mobilization studies in the first group. However, none of them establish a theoretical framework explicitly aimed at explaining the development of a full population.

The studies by Nownes (2004; 2010) and Berry (1999) both have theoretical expectations to the development of the populations but operate with rather restricted populations. Both focus on societal factors. Berry's (1999) expectations about why interest groups mobilize and how populations develop center on societal values, especially the rise of postmodernism. Nownes' (2004; 2010) primary focus is the investigation of population dynamics, as he tests the density dependence theory. The argument here is that group formation will depend on the number of groups in the population (the density). He uses societal factors as an alternative explanation and also tests whether group formation reflects the structure of political opportunities.

As already mentioned, both Berry's (1999) and Nownes' (2004; 2010) populations are restricted in different ways. Berry focuses on interest groups active in three different sessions of Congress (in 1963, 1979, and 1991), thereby only including politically active groups. He has an explicit focus on dynamics and long-term changes and classifies groups into types which render it possible to track changes in the composition of this subpopulation. His most important result is that citizen groups are actually overrepresented in the legislative process and that their overrepresentation increased in the period under study. Compared to most other studies, Berry has a rather long time perspective but a very restricted population. Nownes' (2004; 2010) approach is very different to all of the other studies in this review. His population consists of all of the groups in existence in the lifetime of a population, meaning that he includes all of the groups, not only the politically active ones; however, he only focuses on subpopulations and not total populations. His studies are time-series studies, as he maps the subpopulations over an extended period of time. In both studies, he uses the population ecology ap-

proach and shows that the subpopulations develop as expected by the theory of density dependence – the population birthrate is explained by its density. As he focuses on the population of all existing interest groups, his is the data which possibly fits best with the population line of thought of all the reviewed studies (Lowery, 2012: 47).

One reason why few studies track entire populations over time may be that the data that must be collected for such studies is rather difficult to collect. A good source for tracking populations over time is to use directories. This approach is taken by Jordan and Greenan (2012), who count group entries in the 1970, 1992, and 2007 issues of the *Directory of British Associations* to obtain a picture of the development of the British interest group population. Jordan et al. (2012) compare the data from Jordan and Greenan (2012) with data on the development of the US interest group population from the *US Encyclopedia of Associations*. Both studies examine the total number of national associations in the US and UK over time and trends in group numbers distributed by sector using the categories from the two respective directories (from 1959-2005 in the US case, and for the years 1970, 1992, and 2006 in the UK case.) Their conclusion is that both systems grew, but that the growth is far more pronounced in the US system than in the UK. An alternative strategy to using directories to track interest group populations is to use a patched-up design with several interest group directories. Berkhout and Lowery (2010) do this to investigate the development in the EU interest group population since 1990.

Summing up the studies in this last group are those that come closest to the objectives of this dissertation. Even though they focus explicitly on the dynamics of populations, however, none of them has the theoretical framework necessary to explain a full population's development or the data to map a total population of interest groups. This dissertation can therefore fill an important gap in the literature by providing this. As discussed, the dissertation uses Denmark as a case. The next section will briefly discuss the Danish studies that are relevant in regard to interest group populations.

## Studies of the Danish population

Even though the composition of the population has not been the main topic of any Danish studies, earlier studies have touched upon the question. A range of studies has investigated the development of different sectors of Danish society, some of which also touch upon the development of the interest group populations in these areas. Due et al. (1994), Larsen (1980), and Petersen (1980) have analyzed the development of the organizational sys-

tem on the private labor market in Denmark, an area which has been marked by centralization since the 1980s. Buksti (1974) and Daugbjerg (2005) investigate the agricultural sector. Buksti (1974) focuses on the interplay between the interest groups on the agricultural area in the period between 1957 and 1961. One of his main conclusions is that changes in the organizational structure of the agricultural area represent a response to changes in the environment of the organizations as economic, social, and political factors (Buksti, 1974: 273).

As in the labor market area, agriculture has also witnessed a number of interest group mergers. Daugbjerg (2005) provides a more recent overview of the Danish agricultural interest group population. In line with Buksti, he concludes that: "domestic pressures have been the more important factors influencing the farm interest group system" (Daugbjerg, 2005: 86) and points out the emergence of new policy issues, such as pollution and food safety, and the declining number of farmers as the reasons for the changes in the organizational structure. A newer, more complete study of a Danish sub-population is found in the Opedal et al. (2011) study of the population of patient groups. They investigate the population at one point in time in 2008 and describe different characteristics of the population, but their main focus is the influence strategies pursued by the groups.

The Danish studies that comes closest to a total population study are the surveys conducted in 1975 and 1981 by Buksti and Johansen (1995; 1983), which map the entire population of Danish groups. The data from the surveys was primarily collected to explain the group participation in public policy-making (Buksti and Johansen, 1979; Buksti, 1984; Buksti, 1980), which was in line with the Danish research tradition at that time. But the authors also made some descriptive analyses of the total population (Buksti and Johansen, 1977b). Similar surveys of all Danish national interest groups were also conducted in 1993 (Christiansen and Sidenius, 1995), 2000 (Christiansen and Nørgaard, 2003), and 2004 (Binderkrantz, 2005), all of which provide a valuable overview of the Danish population, even though they do not treat it as an object of analysis.

Christiansen (2012) is the only contemporary study with an explicit focus on how the Danish population has developed over time. He discusses the development of both the classic corporative policy areas as well as areas where the state has promoted the formation of interest groups. By comparing the five Danish surveys mentioned above, he draws a first picture of how the population has developed over time. Christiansen's main conclusion is that the number of Danish interest groups has been relatively stable over the last three decades (around 2,000 groups) but that new group types, such as

environmental groups, consumer groups, and patient groups, have joined the more traditional economic groups, such as unions and business groups. In this way, there have been some initial attempts to map the Danish population. The dissertation will follow these up by mapping the total Danish population at multiple points in time, which is one of the main contributions of the dissertation. This is discussed in the next section.

## The contributions of the dissertation to the literature

Overall, the literature review of the international and Danish literature on interest group populations gives reason to stress some important points that still must be investigated to obtain a more thorough understanding of how interest group populations develop and the dynamics behind this. First, it is clear from table 1.1 that the studies of interest group populations have mainly been conducted in the US context or in countries with a pluralistic system, such as the UK. In this way, there has been little focus on how the institutional settings, such as whether systems are marked by pluralism or corporatism, affect interest group populations. However, there are some important differences between pluralist and corporative systems, which may affect the composition and development of populations. More specifically, the corporative institutions are expected to possibly moderate the effects of the societal factors and population dynamics that are expected to explain population development.

Corporative systems are marked by institutionalized interaction between the interest groups and decision makers. The system is largely ordered, and the interest group–decision maker interaction is somewhat predictable. Some selected groups have a privileged position and are involved in almost all of the phases in the policy process. In pluralist systems, the involvement of interest groups is more unstructured and ad hoc (Binderkrantz, 2005 26-37; Christiansen and Nørgaard, 2003 13-14; Öberg et al., 2011). This difference between the relatively ordered corporative systems and more loosely organized pluralist systems may give reason to very different dynamics within the respective populations. Corporative populations may be more stable and less characterized by competition between the groups compared to pluralist populations, which can be rather volatile and competitive. Therefore, the results from the American population studies cannot necessarily be generalized to corporative environments. There is a need for studies investigating the populations in a corporative context. This dissertation will investigate the de-

velopment of the Danish interest group population. The Danish interest group system is traditionally considered to be a corporative system with a relatively high degree of institutionalization in the interest group–state relationship (Christiansen et al., 2010; Rommetvedt et al., 2013; Öberg et al., 2011). The dissertation thus adds to our knowledge about how the institutional settings of a system, in this case corporatism, affect interest group populations.

By focusing on how corporative structures affect population development, the dissertation makes both empirical and theoretical contributions to the interest group literature. As seen in table 1.1, none of the studies investigating how total populations develop over time establishes an explanatory framework or simply states theoretically based expectations to the development. The studies that focus on total development are all quite explorative in nature, such as Jordan and Greenan (2012) and Jordan et al. (2012), or their main focus is on the methodological challenges gathering population data, such as Berkhout and Lowery (2010).

This dissertation therefore makes an important theoretical contribution, as it develops a theoretical framework for explaining population development over time. This is done by focusing on development from two different perspectives – the aggregated population perspective and the subpopulation perspective – and examining three different aspects that, together, shape the development of a population: the formation, the political representation, and the disbandment of interest groups. The population mechanisms, such as legitimation and competition, societal factors, such as the growth of the welfare state and demographic changes, and the institutional setup – the corporative institutions – are all included as explanatory factors.

Another point made clear by table 1.1 is that even though the population level of interest groups has gained increasing attention, there is still a lack of studies using population data on a total population of interest groups at multiple points in time. First, the lion's share of the studies merely maps the respective population at a single point in time. Second, the studies in table 1.1 all have somewhat limited populations. Almost all of the studies focus on politically active groups, either because of how they conduct their data collection (Gray and Lowery, 1996b) or due to the theoretical limits of their populations (Berry, 1999). The studies that also include groups that are not politically active investigate subpopulations (Nownes, 2004; 2010) or rely extensively on a single data source (Jordan and Greenan, 2012; Jordan et al., 2012), which can also have implications for the results (Nownes, 2012: 107). However, this dissertation will argue that it is fruitful to make a definition of an interest group population that consists of both the interest groups that are politically active and those that are not, as the dynamics in total populations may

be different from the dynamics in the populations of only politically active groups. The distinction between these concepts will be discussed further in Chapter 3.

Summing up, this dissertation makes an important theoretical contribution to the literature, as it develops a theoretical framework for explaining population development over time, including societal factors, population dynamics, and the institutional frames within which the population works. It also makes an important empirical contribution, as it uses multiple sources to map a total population consisting of all of the existing interest groups at multiple points in time.

## The papers comprising the dissertation

The dissertation consists of four papers and this summary report. The aim of the summary report is to present an overall argument about how interest group populations develop, which factors explain this development, and to explain how the four papers comprising the dissertation provide parts of the answer to the overall research question. In this sense, the summary report is not a summary of the four papers, but rather a common frame for them. For this reason, the argument about the moderating effects of the corporative structures has a much more prominent role in the summary report than in the individual papers. The argument ties the papers together, however, even though the individual papers do not investigate it explicitly. The corporative institutions are treated directly as independent variables in some of the papers, while they are discussed as scope conditions for the Danish case in others. However, all of the papers show that the corporative institutions are important with respect to the development of the Danish population, and they should therefore have a central role in the common argument that ties the papers together. The four studies making up the dissertation are presented briefly below.

Paper 1: Fisker, Helene Marie (2015). Gamle venner og nye bekendtskaber. Udvikling i den danske interessegruppepopulation. *Politica* 47 (1) [Referred to as *Gamle venner*].

The first paper provides a general overview of how the Danish population has developed in terms of the composition of interest group types by comparing the composition of group types in 1975 and 2010. In this manner, the paper examines the formation and disbandment part of the development concept for the aggregated Danish population. This is done by assigning all of the groups in the 1975 and 2010 populations to interest group categories



and comparing the composition of the two populations. The main argument in the paper is that there has been a shift in the population from the 1970s, when the population was dominated by economic groups, until today, where the population is more diverse and balanced between the economic groups and the citizen groups. This shift is argued to be due to four societal factors: changed values and demographic changes (bottom-up) and changed corporative structures and the growth of the welfare state (top-down).

Paper 2: Binderkrantz, Anne Skorkjær; Fisker, Helene Marie and Pedersen, Helene Helboe (2015). A Rise of Citizen Groups? From Mobilization to Political Representation. Working paper. [Referred to as *A Rise of Citizen Groups*]

The second paper builds on the results of the first and takes them one step further by investigating which consequences the development in the population has for the political role of the Danish interest groups. This is done by investigating whether the development in the population translates to political representation in three political arenas. In this way, the primary focus of the paper is on the political-representation aspect of development. This is investigated on the aggregated population. The central argument in the paper is that the degree to which changes in the population result in changed representation in the political arenas depends on the dynamics of resource exchange between interest groups and gatekeepers in the different political arenas. It is therefore primarily the societal factors and corporative structures that are used to explain the political representation component of development.

Paper 3: Fisker, Helene Marie (2015) Dead or Alive? Explaining the Long-Term Survival Chances of Interest Groups. *West European Politics* 38 (3): 709-729 [Referred to as *Dead or Alive*].

The third paper investigates interest group disbandment. Disbandment is a difficult concept to investigate, as it requires information about the groups that no longer exist. The paper tries to solve this problem by tracking all of the interest groups in the 1975 population from 1975 until 2010 in order to establish whether they survived or died. In this way, this paper focuses on the aggregated population. The argument in the paper is that both interest group factors, such as resources and organizational traits, and contextual factors, such as population dynamics and interest group–policymaker relations, explain whether groups survive or disband. The paper thus uses population dynamics, societal factors, and the corporative structures to explain interest group disbandment.

Paper 4: Fisker, Helene Marie (2013) Density Dependence in Corporative Systems: Development of the Population of Danish Patient Groups (1901–2011). *Interest Groups & Advocacy* 2(2): 119-138. [Referred to as Density Dependence].

The last paper shifts the level of analysis from the aggregated population to a subpopulation – the population of Danish patient groups. The study is a test of the most used population level theory: density dependence theory. This theory states that the development of an interest group population can be explained by two mechanisms: legitimation and competition. The expectation is that the founding rate of interest groups in a specific year depends on the density of the population (the number of interest groups) in that year. At low levels of density, the founding rate will increase with increases in density due to the legitimation effect. At high levels of density, the founding rate will decrease with increases in density due to the competition effect. As the dependent variable in the paper is density, both the formation and disbandment aspect of development is investigated. The primary focus is on the population mechanisms and how they work in corporative systems, but societal factors are used as control variables.

## Outline of this report

The summary has six chapters. The first has introduced the research question of the dissertation, reviewed the relevant literature, and discussed the dissertation's contributions to the literature. The second chapter discusses the dependent variable of the project – the development of interest group populations – as this is not a straightforward concept. Before this can be done, the definitions of interest groups and interest group populations are discussed. Chapter 3 focuses on the independent variables in the dissertation: the explanations for population development. Explanations for interest group formation and mobilization have been discussed since the classical pluralists began paying attention to the subject of interest groups in politics. The explanations brought forward by this early literature as well as insights from the newer literature are discussed in the beginning of Chapter 3. It is then argued that one particular factor has been neglected in the literature on the composition and development of interest group populations. Institutions, such as corporative structures, are an important but neglected moderating variable that must be taken into account in the investigation of how populations develop and whether societal factors and population dynamics explain the development. This is the central theoretical argument made in the disser-

tation. Chapter 4 presents the dissertation's research design and discusses the data sources used in the four papers. Chapter 5 provides an overview over the main results of the four papers with a special focus on the results regarding the moderating effects of the corporative structures. The last chapter concludes by discussing the results, the contributions made by the dissertation, and the implications for future research.



## Chapter 2: The dependent variable: population development

This chapter will discuss the dependent variable in the dissertation: population development. This is not a straightforward concept to work with, as multiple factors come into play in the development process. The development of a population is a product of three events: the formation, political representation, and disbandment of the population's group. Before development is discussed, however, it must be established what an interest group is and what an interest group population is. These concepts are applied in different ways in different studies, and how they are defined may have important implications for the results.

### Interest groups

There is some measure of disagreement about the definition of an interest group in the literature. As Jordan et al. (2004) stress, various studies use different definitions of groups, which obviously has consequences for the comparability of studies. This dissertation defines interest groups as formal organizations with members who work at the national level, who do not run for elections, and who may potentially seek to influence public policy (Binderkrantz, 2005: 50; Buksti and Johansen, 1977b: 390). This is a standard definition; at least for the European studies of interest groups.

The five characteristics of the definition deserve elaboration. First, the formalization criterion is fulfilled if the interest group has written statutes. Second, the group must have some kind of members, be they individuals, companies, institutions, or other interest groups. Third, the groups must work at the national level. In this way, local interest groups are excluded together with transnational interest groups without a specific Danish division. Transnational interest groups with a Danish division, such as *Red Barnet* (the Danish division of Safe the Children) or *Greenpeace Denmark*, are included in the definition. Fourth, political parties are in many ways similar to interest groups, as they also represent citizen interests. However, the fourth criterion excludes the political parties as an interest group does not run for elections. Finally, the groups must be potentially politically active, meaning that groups that are not politically active all the time are also included, but they must have the potential to mobilize politically. An example of a group that shifted from be-

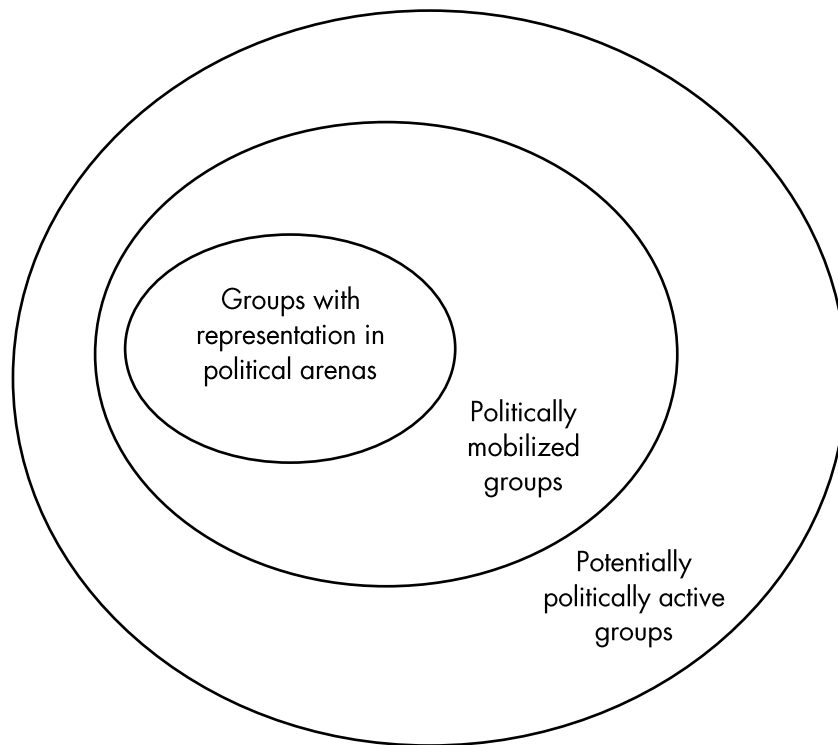
ing potentially politically active to politically active is the Danish American Bulldog Team, which is a hobby organization for American Bulldog owners. This group does not normally devote energy to politics but instead functions as a social club for dog owners. When a law regarding specific dog breeds was proposed and enacted in 2010, however, the Danish American Bulldog Team mobilized politically and worked to gain influence on the design of this legislation. After having established what an interest group is, the next section will discuss the definition of an interest group population.

## Interest group populations

As discussed in the introduction, a range of studies beginning with Lowery and Gray (1995) have paid attention to the population level of interest groups. However, there is possibly an even greater disagreement about how the “interest group population” concept should be used than the concept “interest groups.” The definition of a population is an important matter, as it may have consequences for the results. This dissertation defines an interest group population as the total number of existing interest groups within a political system at a given time. In this way, all of the existing groups, be they politically active or not, are included. As discussed above, a distinction can be drawn between the population of potentially politically active groups that are not politically active but can be mobilized politically, the groups that are mobilized politically but are not represented in political arenas, and the groups that are actually represented in the political arenas. This is shown in figure 2.1.

As this dissertation investigates the total population, the definition here of a population includes all of the groups in the three layers in figure 2.1. This is the same approach as the studies by Nownes (2004; 2010), who uses multiple sources to map his populations. Jordan and Greenan (2012) and Jordan et al. (2012) also attempt to map the population of all existing groups. They use directories or encyclopedias of interest groups as population lists. These do not require the group having been policy active in a specific year and therefore include more groups than merely the politically active ones. However, the groups must still be on the radar of the directories to be included and some of the smaller groups may be neglected (see Nownes, 2012 for a discussion of the problems with using encyclopedias).

Figure 2.1. Three layers of an interest group population



As discussed in Chapter 1, however, most population studies define their population more narrowly and only include groups that are politically active or politically mobilized at the time of the investigation, as represented in the second circle in figure 2.1 (e.g. Anderson et al., 2004; Halpin and Thomas, 2012; Leech et al., 2005; Lowery and Gray, 1995; Messer et al., 2011 and many more). Some studies have an even narrower definition, focusing on only one specific political arena, such as the legislative arena, thereby only including groups with political representation, as depicted in the inner circle of figure 2.1 (Berry, 1999). Many of these studies define their population as the politically mobilized or politically represented groups due to data availability. This is for instance the case for the studies using lobby registrations to define the population. These will inevitably only include groups that are politically active at the point in time under investigation (e.g., Leech et al., 2005; Lowery and Gray, 1995).

This is not without problem, however, as many of the interesting questions about interest group populations regard whether a specific constituency is represented by a group and not whether or not the group is politically active in a specific year. Many groups periodically go into policy hibernation and may not always be politically active, as there might not always be a specific case to fight for. But this does not mean that they are dead. Defining the

population in regard to politically active groups therefore raises problems estimating some of the core concepts. The density of the population will be understated, while the volatility of the population will be overstated. It is therefore much more in tune with the population approach to define the population as all existing interest groups (Lowery, 2012). Even though a group is not politically active all the time, it is still part of the population and other groups will remain aware of its existence and act accordingly. In this manner, the dissertation makes a valuable contribution to the literature, as it maps out and investigates dynamics within a total population of all existing groups and not just the politically active ones. To my knowledge, a study of a total population at multiple points in time has not been conducted earlier.

One final factor where definitions of populations vary between studies relates to scope. Most authors use the term population to describe all kinds of interest groups within the population's boundaries, whether this is merely politically mobilized groups or all interest groups. Other studies define populations more narrowly as all groups of the same kind, such as the population of patient groups or the population of gay and lesbian groups (Nownes, 2004; 2010). This dissertation also uses the distinction between the aggregated total population and subpopulations, as parts of the research question address the subpopulation of Danish patient groups.

## Categorization of groups

The interest groups that fit the definition in this dissertation are rather diverse. Given that the goal is to investigate a total population, a crucial step is to categorize the interest groups into different interest group types in order to get a handle on which group types decrease and which types increase. The project draws a distinction between *economic groups* and *citizen groups*. The former are those that represent members on the basis of their vocation or profession (Berry, 1999: 2), such as unions, business groups, institutional groups (organizing public authorities and institutions), and professional groups, such as groups of history teachers or different types of doctors. *Citizen groups* represent member interests on areas not related to their jobs. These are identity groups such as groups of patients, students, or the elderly, public interest groups such as environmental or humanitarian groups, and leisure groups such as sport or hobby groups. The seven main categories have additional subcategories to make the distinction more fine-grained (see Interarena, 2010c).

This scheme is useful for comparing the population for a number of reasons. The division between the economic groups and citizen groups is quite



common in the literature (Dunleavy, 1988; Halpin, 2006). By dividing groups into economic and citizen groups, the dissertation is able to provide an answer to some of the normative questions pervading the interest group literature. Since Schattschneider (1960) pointed out the underrepresentation of especially the resource-disadvantaged and the broad public interests that benefit society in general, the question about whether this bias actually exists has been on the agenda of interest group scholars (Schlozman, 2012). This question is obviously also relevant in the investigation of populations, both because of the normative implications and because the dynamics driving the formation and mobilization of groups that only represent members with a selective and material interest in group goals may be different from the dynamics driving the development of groups that seek collective goods.

Furthermore, the seven main categories and subcategories make the classification very fine-grained, which is appropriate for investigating how the population has developed in greater detail and thereby answers some of the theoretical questions posed in the dissertation. For instance, the *Gamle venner* paper presents expectations about how the rise of post-materialist values will create good living conditions for public interest groups, such as environment groups. This particular expectation can be investigated as the classification separates environment groups from other kinds of public interest groups. Furthermore, the classification also distinguishes between sectional groups related to the member's work situation, such as unions, and sectional groups not related to the member's work situation, such as client groups. Another theoretical expectation outlined in the *Gamle venner* paper is that the number of welfare state client groups has increased since 1975, which can also be investigated via the classification of groups. In conclusion, the classification is very well suited to investigating the questions concerning the development of the Danish population.

## The concept of population development

As discussed in the introduction, the composition of interest group populations is a crucial feature of democratic systems, and how the composition of populations develops is an important indicator for which groups have a voice in the political system and which have not. Development is not a straightforward concept, as a population's development is determined by multiple factors. As sketched out in figure 1.1, the dissertation focuses on three different events that together shape the development of a population: formation, political representation, and disbandment. All of these concepts are investigated at the aggregated population level. The concepts of for-

mation and disbandment are also investigated at the subpopulation level. The three concepts are treated either separately or in combination in the four papers comprising the dissertation. The last section of this chapter will describe which papers investigate which concepts and at which level. Before doing so, each concept is presented and discussed in this section.

As figure 1.1 shows, the first interesting aspect of a population's development is formation. As discussed, the formation event is the actual founding of a group, such as the date when a group writes its statutes or holds its first meeting. Studying formation allows us to say something about growth in the number of groups in a population (the number of groups is obviously also affected by disbandment, as discussed below). Whether a population consists of ten or 1000 groups is an important characteristic. Even though it should be kept in mind that pure numbers do not tell us all about the strength of the organizations, high numbers of interest groups in an area indicate that the area is salient to a large number of people, and a large number of voices add to the chances of a constituency being heard.

Investigating formation also tells us something about the composition of the population. Which types of groups form determines the composition of the population. Since Schattschneider (1960) questioned the classical pluralist assumptions about the unbiased interest group system, many studies have focused on the question of bias and diversity in the interest group system by focusing on the distribution of group types (Baumgartner and Leech, 1998: 83-100; Binderkrantz, 2012; Binderkrantz et al., 2015; Danielian and Page, 1994; Schlozman and Tierney, 1986; 2010). However, the question about the dynamic of bias – how formation patterns change over time – is much less investigated empirically (Baumgartner and Leech, 1998: 100-119). Comparison of the composition of the population at different points in time provides an indication of the diversity in the population, whether this changes over time, and thereby also the dynamics of representation. This is an important component in the development of a population. As discussed in the literature review, empirical knowledge regarding the development of total populations over time is very limited, as such studies require information about total populations over time. In this way, an overview over how the formation patterns change over time contributes with important empirical knowledge.

The second aspect of development is the political representation of groups in political arenas such as the parliament, the media, and the administration. An increase in the number of citizen groups that form and enter the population does not necessarily mean an increase in the number of citizen groups that gain access to the halls of power. Many interest group studies deal with the concept of influence, which is very difficult to get a grip on (Dür

and De Bièvre, 2007; Mahoney, 2007; Yackee, 2006). However, one important step on the way to political influence is to gain representation in political arenas, and empirical studies have shown how the political representation of groups varies across political arenas (Beyers, 2004; Binderkrantz et al., 2015; Bouwen, 2004; Halpin et al., 2012). The pattern of groups with political representation and how this pattern develops is therefore obviously also an important component of the development of an interest group population. On this background, political representation is the second event shaping development, as can be seen in figure 1.1.

The third aspect of development in figure 1.1 is interest group disbandment. As discussed, many studies have been occupied with questions regarding bias and diversity in interest group systems. Most of these studies have focused on the formation and mobilization of groups, as this is one of the determinants for how populations are comprised (Nownes, 2004; Schlozman and Tierney, 1986; 2010). However, this is only one side of the mechanism that shapes interest group populations and their development; the disbandment of groups is the other. Many studies have noted how there is considerable turnover in interest group populations (Gray and Lowery, 1996a; Halpin and Thomas, 2012; Schlozman, 2010); and not all groups that emerge survive over time, something which is often implicitly assumed, especially in the classic interest group literature (Halpin and Thomas, 2012: 215). However, very few studies have linked the questions concerning interest group survival and disbandment to the investigations of bias and diversity in populations. This is puzzling, as systematical differences in terms of which group types disband affect which interests are present in the population and thereby how the population develops in the same way as differences in formation and mobilization (Gray and Lowery, 1997; Halpin and Thomas, 2012: 217). Disbandment should therefore also be included among the population development concepts. However, disbandment is a difficult concept to investigate, as it requires information about groups that no longer exist. The few studies that treat the disbandment question use cross sectional data and must therefore rely on indirect measures of survival, such as “mortality anxiety,” that is, the perceptions of group entrepreneurs of the future prospects for their groups (Gray and Lowery, 1997; Halpin and Thomas, 2012). However, the survival question calls for studies that investigate which groups actually survive and which ones actually disband, as these concepts are very different from mortality anxiety. The dissertation will therefore investigate actual disbandment by tracking interest groups over time in order to establish if they survived or disbanded.

The formation and disbandment concepts concerning population development are investigated at two different levels: the aggregated population level, where the total population of Danish interest groups is investigated, and the subpopulation level, where the population of Danish patient groups is investigated. Investigating development at two different levels has two particular benefits. First, there is a theoretical consideration. Even though the population theories can be expected to apply to both the aggregated population and a subpopulation, the dynamics within the two can be expected to differ as the groups in the aggregated population are much more heterogeneous than the groups in the subpopulation. Second, there is a methodological advantage in limiting the scope to a subpopulation, as it is possible to conduct a more fine-grained analysis in terms of the points in time on a subpopulation; this will be discussed further in Chapter 4, which elaborates on the design and data of the dissertation.

## The focus of the papers comprising the dissertation

The four papers in the dissertation treat the three concepts of development either separately or in combination. The *Gamle venner* paper provides an overview of the groups in existence in the Danish population in 1975 and 2010 in order to investigate both the growth and composition of the aggregated Danish population. As the number of groups in the population is affected by both formation and disbandment, these concepts are investigated together in this paper. The paper *A Rise of Citizen Groups* also treats the development of the aggregated Danish population. The paper builds on the results from the paper *Gamle venner* and expands on them with data on the political representation of interest groups to investigate how the formation pattern translates into political representation. In this way, the political representation aspects of development are the focus point in this paper. The third paper, *Dead or Alive*, focuses on the disbandment concept in the investigation of which groups in the aggregated Danish population actually disbanded and which survived between 1975 and till 2010. Where the first three papers focus on the aggregated Danish population, the last paper, *Density Dependence*, zooms in from the aggregated population to a subpopulation. The paper follows the population of Danish patient groups on an annual basis from 1901 to 2011 to explore the development in population density (the number of groups). As the developments regarding density are a product of

both group formation and group disbandment, these concepts are treated in the last paper.

In this way, the concept of development is investigated from three different angles and on two different levels of analyses, and the four papers comprising the dissertation contribute with parts of the answer to the research question in the dissertation. This chapter has focused on the dependent variable – the right side of figure 1.1. The next chapter will elaborate on the left side of the figure and the independent variables in the dissertation: societal factors, population mechanisms, and the moderating effect of the corporative institutions.



## Chapter 3: The independent variables: population mechanisms, societal factors, and the moderating effect of corporative institutions

As discussed in the literature review in Chapter 1, many of the population studies establish explicit theoretical expectations as to which factors explain especially interest group mobilization as well as formation and disbandment. Theoretical expectations are rarer among the studies that explicitly examine the development of populations, however, and no studies have developed a theoretical framework to explain the development of a total population. One of the central contributions made by this dissertation is to set up such a framework that explains population development by combining societal factors, population dynamics, and corporative institutions.

The inspiration for a theoretical framework that includes these three factors comes from the classical perspectives on interest group mobilization and the newer streams in the literature that are sometimes referred to under the common label “neopluralism” (Gray and Lowery, 2004). The newer streams are quite diverse and include both theoretical expectations regarding population mechanisms and societal factors. These perspectives are discussed in the next sections, especially paying attention to their respective explanations of interest group formation, political representation, and disbandment. It is then argued that the literature has largely neglected the effect of institutional structures, such as corporative institutions, when it comes to questions regarding the composition of interest group populations. An argument about how corporative structures moderate the effects of population mechanisms and societal factors on population development is stated. The last section of this chapter presents which of the independent variables the four papers comprising the dissertation focus on.

### Classic perspectives

The early literature on interest groups was rather preoccupied with formation issues. Truman (1951) is often viewed as one of the main representatives for the pluralist approach. In his book, *The Governmental Process*, he formulated

the disturbance theory of group representation. His main argument is that groups will form rather automatically when their policy environment is disturbed and interests are threatened. He identifies three categories of social disturbances that facilitate group formation: socioeconomic change, the behavior of allied groups and opponents, and changes in governmental institutions or policies (Grossmann, 2012: 36; Truman, 1951).

As Truman presumed that group formation would occur automatically, he paid little attention to how the interest group population was comprised; he simply assumed that interest group populations would be a reflection of the salient interests in society. All interests would be represented, and once an interest group was born it would simply go on surviving. Later authors, such as Schattschneider (1960), Scholzman (1984), and Beer (1982), have shared the opinion that groups will emerge when social, political, and economic structures provide opportunity for new groups to form; but they have also pointed out how there may be barriers to entry for some types of interest groups, which can create a bias in the interest group population so that the composition may not reflect the interests of society. Both Schattschneider (1960) and Scholzman (1984) stress that economic interests and other representatives from the upper class often dominate interest group populations. As discussed in the literature review, many studies are inspired by the classical pluralist ideas about how societal disturbances spur group formation.

Olson (1965) offered an explanation for the observation that interest group populations may be biased toward economic groups. He challenged the pluralist view that interest groups would emerge automatically with a theory inspired by economic transaction theories. His critique of the pluralist paradigm is undoubtedly the one that obtained the most attention in the literature (Baumgartner and Leech, 1998: 64-71). Contrary to the pluralists, Olson argued that threatened interests are not sufficient for groups to form, as interest groups will face collective action problems. Many groups work for goods that their potential constituency will benefit from whether they are members of the interest group or not. Every rational individual will therefore have an incentive to free-ride and benefit from the work of the group without paying for membership. One solution to this problem is that the group offers selective incentives in return for membership.

Given the free-rider problem and variations in the abilities of interest groups to provide selective incentives, Olson did not agree with the pluralist expectations that the composition of an interest group population would mirror the interests in society. Instead, he expected that populations would be biased in favor of small groups with significant stakes in politics (Gray and Lowery, 2004: 165). In line with Truman and the pluralists, however, Olson as-



sumed that the interest group population was simply an accumulation of the mobilization of groups and that it could experience rather unrestrained growth. However, numerous studies have indicated that the collective action problem may not be as severe as Olson predicted and that public interest groups that fight for public non-excludable goods actually form in large numbers (Baumgartner and Leech, 1998: 68-82; Gray and Lowery, 2004; Moe, 1981; Rothenberg, 1988; Walker, 1983). This indicates that interest group populations will most likely not be as balanced as in Truman's pluralist heaven or as biased as Olson predicts. Multiple context factors such as institutions, governmental policies, and existing interests also play a role for the composition of interest group populations (Baumgartner and Leech, 1998: 80). The newer streams in the literature on interest groups focus on these very contextual factors, which are discussed in the next two sections.

## Neopluralism: focus on population mechanisms and the societal context

As proposed above, there has been some convergence between the classical approaches to the study of interest groups in more recent interest group studies (Binderkrantz, 2005: 45; Mahoney and Baumgartner, 2008). Many of the newer studies draw on the insights from Truman (1951) and the pluralist approach, arguing that groups mobilize as a response to policy problems and their proposed solutions. However, they also recognize that mobilization is neither easy nor automatic and that the interest group population will never be a perfect reflection of the interests in society. Conversely, they share the view that the collective action problem is not as severe as Olson (1965) proposed (Gray and Lowery, 2004: 166). Some authors argue that this is a new paradigm, which they have named neopluralism (Gray and Lowery, 2004; Grossmann, 2012: 13; Lewis, 2013; McFarland, 2007).

Gray and Lowery (2004) identify six attributes of this emerging approach. They argue that newer studies pay increasing attention to: First, a broader range of organizations active in public policy, as they include not only membership organizations but also institutions. Second, the level of competition between similar interest groups. Third, how the context may condition outcomes. Fourth, the high level of uncertainty characterizing both individual interest groups and the whole population, as there may be uncertainty about the survival of the organizations, about their own interests, and about the intentions of other groups. Fifth, the linkages between the different stages of the influence-production process. Sixth, the fact that the influence production

process is not unidirectional, but that there are feedback processes between the stages.

Whether neopluralism is a new paradigm or not, many of these attributes can be found in recent interest group studies. A consequence of taking these six attributes seriously is that we should focus both on population mechanisms and the societal context in the investigation of formation and mobilization issues as well as other aspects of interest group politics (Gray and Lowery, 2004: 166). As seen in figure 1.1, this is also the approach in this dissertation. The next two sections will discuss how the population mechanisms and societal factors can be expected to affect population development through formation, representation, and disbandment.

### The population mechanisms

As discussed in the literature review, the studies of interest group populations are quite heterogeneous, but their common foundation is the notion that interest group populations have their own dynamics which must be studied with theory and data designed for the population level (Gray and Lowery, 2004). The general assumption made by population studies is that populations are shaped by selection processes in which the degree of fit between groups and their environments influences both which groups emerge, which groups survive, and which groups disband (Aldrich, 1999; Hannan and Freeman, 1987; Hannan and Freeman, 1988). In other words, context matters a great deal.

Lowery and Gray (2004) argue that the traits of and dynamics within a population may have implications for almost all of the elements of interest group politics and must therefore also be expected to affect the population's development – especially regarding formation and disbandment. Empirically, studies show how population traits, such as the density of a population (the number of groups), can influence the formation and disbandment of interest groups (Nownes, 2004; Nownes and Lipinski, 2005). In this way, changes in the composition of a population can favor some types of interests while disadvantaging others. Density may therefore influence the diversity or bias in an interest group system (Lowery et al., 2005) as well as the strategies groups use to obtain influence (Gray and Lowery, 1998) and whether they are successful in influencing public policy (Gray et al., 2007; Johnson, 2008). Consequently, the population traits and mechanisms must be taken into consideration if we want to understand how interest group populations develop (Lowery, 2012: 53; Messer et al., 2011).

Two population mechanisms are expected to be especially important for both formation and disbandment: legitimation and competition. Legitimation entails that relevant actors see the group form as the natural way to affect collective action (Carroll and Hannan, 2000: 223). Hence, a group form (e.g., the patient group form) is legitimate when it becomes a “taken-for-granted element in a social structure” (Hannan, 2005: 54). When a new group form emerges, it lacks legitimacy, which renders it difficult for new groups to emerge. But when the size of the population increases, it heightens the likelihood that the audience will take the group form for granted (Aldrich et al., 1994). In the words of Hannan and Freeman (1987: 918): “Once a sufficient number of instances of the form exists, the need for justification (and thus the cost of organizing) declines.” Hence, the legitimation mechanism is especially expected to affect the formation component of development (Nownes, 2004; Nownes, 2010). As the population grows and the group form gains legitimacy, new groups will mobilize more easily. Therefore, there is a positive feedback mechanism between density and formation rates for group forms that gain legitimacy, at least in the beginning of the population’s lifetime when groups are scarce. Legitimation has also been shown to affect interest group disbandment, as legitimate group forms are more robust and less likely to disband than group forms that are not legitimate (Nownes and Lipinski, 2005).

With respect to competition, the most fundamental assumption in the population studies is that interest groups will compete for scarce resources, such as members, finances, and attention from policymakers in order to survive (Gray and Lowery, 1996a; 1996b; Nownes, 2004). High levels of competition mean more insecurity about resources, which therefore provides a negative feedback mechanism that prevents new groups from forming and extinguishes existing groups. In this manner, the competition mechanism is also an important factor for population development, as competition is expected to have a negative effect on formation and a positive effect on disbandment. Especially for dense, older populations, this may play a major role. Gray and Lowery (1997) suggest that two different kinds of competition are relevant: Both diffuse competition and direct competition can affect formation and disbandment. Direct competition is the interest groups’ own perception of competition, whereas diffuse competition is often operationalized as the number of similar groups in the environment (the population’s density).

One important point of criticism has been raised regarding the studies that investigate population mechanisms: The logic behind the population mechanisms is that groups are rather passive and do not adapt to changing conditions in their environment. However, it is also possible that interest

group leaders are able to respond to the signals from the environment and adapt accordingly (Jordan and Halpin, 2009). Interest group leaders' actions may therefore also shape the population level of interest groups. This criticism is in no way incompatible with the population level theories; it merely suggests that the actions of group leaders should also be considered, as they are often capable of managing and adapting to negative environmental factors.

## The societal context

Apart from focusing on internal population mechanisms, the newer studies of interest groups, in what some authors call the neopluralist paradigm, also focus on other factors in the environment surrounding interest groups, such as the societal context. Focusing on such context factors is in line with the population line of thought, discussed above, as these factors are also a part of the environment surrounding the interest groups. Interest groups do not exist in a vacuum; they are affected by the societal and political context. This section discusses how societal factors are expected to affect development, especially regarding formation and representation.

Many studies, especially from the US, refer to supply and demand factors when discussing the societal factors possibly affecting interest group mobilization and representation (Gray et al., 2005; Leech et al., 2005; Mahoney, 2004). I will use the terms top-down and bottom-up mechanisms. These concepts are better suited to a model of population development that also applies to interest group systems outside the US that might resemble a free-market less. The bottom-up mechanisms resemble the classical pluralist ideas about interest group mobilization (Truman, 1951). The argument is that changes in the political system, such as socioeconomic developments, are likely to spur changes in interest group populations, as they create a supply of potential members with interests that must be protected and represented (Grant, 2004). Berry's (1999) expectations as to why interest groups form and how populations develop are an example of this. He centers on societal values in his investigation of the rise of citizen groups in the US and argues that: "Citizen group advocacy represents the political consequence of the public's changing constellation of values" (Berry, 1999: 5). As post-materialist values have become more dominant in the US, a number of public interest groups that promote these values have formed. Similar developments are expected in the Danish context, where the increasing importance of "new politics" issues, such as immigration and the environment, and basic demographic

changes, such as the increasing number of immigrants and elderly, are expected to have a positive impact on the formation of citizen groups.

The top-down mechanisms work in the opposite direction. Here, the argument is that government activities trigger the emergence of interest groups. As Leech et al. (2005: 20) write, the possibility for government action must exist for interest groups to form. This can be due to policymakers' demands for interest groups with specialized knowledge about various areas or simply because the mere existence of policy programs spurs the formation and political representation of interest groups to protect these programs. Berry (1999) also points to changes in the structure and operation of government as an explanation for interest group formation and representation. He stresses that especially the growth of the welfare state has provided opportunities for the formation of citizen groups in the US: "not only groups demand new programs but new programs demand new groups" (Berry, 1999: 29). In the Danish case, the growth of the welfare state is also expected to affect formation and political representation. More policy programs are expected to stimulate demand from policymakers for new kinds of interest groups capable of representing their members' interests on other issues connected to welfare state programs instead of the classic economic issues, and the mere existence of these policy programs is expected to lead to the formation and political representation of groups that protect these programs.

The mechanisms at the top of the political system are also expected to affect political representation more directly. An important factor in the interest groups' environment regarding political representation in different political arenas is the gatekeepers of these political arenas. In order to move from pure formation and political mobilization to real political representation in the political arenas, the interest groups must pass the gatekeepers of the arenas: the bureaucrats in the administration, the reporters in the media, and the politicians in the parliament (Binderkrantz et al., 2015). The relationship between the groups and the gatekeepers can be seen as one of resource exchange. Neither the state nor the interest groups can pursue their goals alone. The groups deliver political and technical information to decision makers, receiving political representation and potentially influence in return (Binderkrantz et al., 2015; Bouwen, 2004; Braun, 2012; Öberg et al., 2011). Groups must therefore be able to supply the relevant goods to obtain political representation. As Binderkrantz et al. (2015) point out, however, groups must also demand access to the arena, and not all groups are equally interested in all arenas. In summary, then, political representation requires that the interest groups demand access to a specific arena and are able to supply goods demanded by the arena's gatekeepers.

A brief example can illustrate the exchange logic (for a more comprehensive discussion of this argument, see Binderkrantz et al., 2015). Citizen groups are likely to demand access to the public arenas, such as the parliament and the media, as they are often interested in affecting the political agenda. The gatekeepers of these arenas, the politicians and reporters, are also likely to demand the resources the citizen groups possess, such as broad public appeal and newsworthy stories. On the other hand, the economic groups are expected to demand access to the arenas where decisions are made, the administration, as they focus relatively more on affecting the decision-making process. The gatekeepers of this arena, the bureaucrats, are likely to demand the resources that the economic groups possess, such as technical information and control over members (Binderkrantz et al., 2015). Consequently, the gatekeepers are also a part of the interest group population's environment, which may affect the political representation aspect of population development.

As seen in the discussion above, many studies have focused on the context in which the interest groups operate with respect to the population mechanisms and societal factors. However, one thing that the literature has largely neglected is how the institutional frames within which the populations operate affect the interest group populations. How institutional structures affect the lobbying behavior and lobbying success of interest groups has been a topic for investigation, and institutional structures have been found to actually matter for interest groups' lobbying behavior (Mahoney, 2004; 2007; Mahoney and Baumgartner, 2008). However, the effect of institutional structures has not received the same attention when it comes to explaining the composition of interest group populations. As table 1.1 shows, almost all of the studies of interest group populations have been conducted in pluralist settings, such as the US or the UK. This may be because the population theories are developed in a pluralist context (Gray and Lowery, 1996b; Lowery and Gray, 1995). However, the institutional frame may moderate the effect of the population mechanisms and the societal factors on population development. This important aspect has not been investigated, as there has been little variation in the institutional frame among the population studies. This is discussed in the next section.

## Corporative institutions as a moderating variable

The most relevant institutional structure regarding interest group populations and their composition is whether the system is marked by pluralism or corporatism. The concept of corporatism as a system of interest representation was

introduced by Schmitter (1974). He defines corporatism as a system of interest representation with a limited number of compulsory, noncompetitive, hierarchically ordered, and functionally differentiated interest groups. In the Scandinavian context, corporatism is often defined as the institutionalized integration of interest groups in policy making and implementation. The state privileges selected groups by granting them the representational monopoly of specific interests; in return, the groups control their members' demands and supports (Christiansen et al., 2010; Rommetvedt et al., 2013; Öberg et al., 2011). Corporatism thus represents a logic of interest mediation that may have consequences for the organizational structures and thereby for how interest group populations are comprised (Christiansen, 2012: 161). As discussed in the introduction, most population studies have investigated populations in pluralist settings, but examining interest group populations from a corporative perspective gives rise to other expectations for how populations are comprised of different group types and how this changes over time. More specifically, the corporative structures are expected to moderate the effects of both the population mechanism and the societal factors on the three development concepts: formation, political representation, and disbandment. This argument will be discussed in greater detail in the following.

As seen in figure 1.1, the corporative structures are expected to moderate the effects of the population mechanisms on formation and disbandment. The corporative ideal type is that each group represents a specific interest and a division of labor is fixed by formal agreements. In the extreme, this implies that the interest group system becomes non-competitive (Schmitter, 1974). Therefore, groups will not compete to represent the same interests and recruit the same potential members (Johansen and Kristensen, 1982: 191; Lehmbruch, 1982: 4). Even though this assumption should probably be relaxed, as several authors have suggested that pluralism and corporatism represent end points on a continuum (Molina and Rhodes, 2002; Siaroff, 1999), it still has important consequences in relation to the expectations concerning the effect of population mechanisms on formation and disbandment.

As discussed, legitimation is one of the most important population mechanisms in regarding group formation and also with respect to disbandment. Legitimacy may facilitate formation, while group forms that are not yet legitimate may have difficulty forming. When groups seek legitimacy, it is for a specific audience. In pluralist systems where access to policymakers is supposed to be very open, gaining legitimacy from a broad audience is important. Members, supporters, patrons, the general public, and the state are therefore all equally important sources of legitimacy. In corporative systems,

these actors are also important but not to the same degree. The primary way of gaining influence in corporative systems is through interaction with the state (Öberg et al., 2011; Öberg, 1994: 22). Therefore, groups must be legitimate in the eyes of the state, as the state grants selected groups a privileged position in the decision making process. For this reason, the legitimation mechanism may work differently in corporative systems than in pluralist. Legitimation is often considered to increase with the organization's age (Hannan, 2005). This may not be the case in corporative systems where the most effective way to gain legitimacy may be to secure a place in the corporative committees. In this way, the corporative structures may affect how groups become legitimate, as the primary source of legitimacy is the state. The effect of legitimation on formation may therefore be different in corporative systems than in pluralist systems. In corporative systems, state recognition, rather than recognition from a broader audience, may enhance legitimation and thereby increase the formation rates of specific interest groups.

The second important population mechanism is competition. As discussed above, high levels of competition may have a negative effect on group formation and, conversely, positive effects on group disbandment. However, the corporative institutions can also be expected to moderate these effects. Population level theories (Gray and Lowery, 1996a; Lowery and Gray, 1995; Lowery, 2012) assume that interest groups work in a competitive environment in which they compete with similar groups for scarce resources, such as members, selective benefits, finances, access to the policy-making process, and causes to lobby for (Gray and Lowery, 1996a). However, the level of competition between the interest groups can be expected to differ between pluralist and corporative systems, especially for three of these resource dimensions. The first dimension concerns the competition for members. As discussed, the corporative ideal is that groups represent a specific constituency and have a monopoly on the representation of their interests, meaning that competition for members should be absent or at least very limited in corporative systems (Christiansen and Nørgaard, 2003: 31; Schmitter, 1974: 93). This assumption about monopoly on representation should probably be relaxed, but a lower degree of competition between the interest groups in corporative system is plausible (Cawson, 1986: 42).

The second dimension concerns access to the policy-making process. As the most important way to gain access to policymakers in corporative systems is to have a privileged position and cooperate with the state, the interest groups could be expected to compete for seats in corporative committees. However, the insiders groups that have already gained a privileged position are difficult to challenge. They may have been represented in public



committees for decades and be seen as the natural representative for their constituency, which makes them very hard to oust. Therefore, there will probably be less competition for this resource as well, at least in comparison with pluralist systems.

The third dimension concerns causes to lobby for. In a functionally differentiated interest group system, such as the one Schmitter (1974) describes, the groups will not compete for these causes as every group has their own turf. Cawson (1986: 42) offers a softening of this assumption as he discusses how the domains of interest groups can be more or less fixed or overlapping. Therefore, the competition for causes can also be expected to be lower in corporative systems than in pluralist ones. Overall, the corporative institutions may dampen the effects of competition on formation, as there are simply lower levels of competition in corporative systems. Summing up, the effects of the population mechanisms, legitimation, and competition on interest group formation and disbandment are expected to be both moderated and dampened by the corporative institutions.

As seen in figure 1.1, the effects of societal factors on formation, political representation, and disbandment are also expected to be moderated by the corporative institutions. In regard to formation, three societal factors are expected to affect this concept in the Danish context: the increasing importance of “new politics” issues, demographic changes, and the growth of the welfare state. Groups could therefore be expected to proliferate to protect interests on these areas. However, the corporative institutions are also expected to dampen these effects. Corporative systems have very strong traditions for which groups represent which societal interests and which groups are invited to participate in the political process (Christiansen, 2012; Öberg et al., 2011). The dynamics of group proliferation and the issues groups form around can therefore be expected to differ between corporative and pluralist systems. Cawson (1986) argues that the most important groups in corporative systems are class organizations of capital and labor. “According to corporatist theory groups can, and do, form around political preferences, but these processes are far less significant for politics and power relationships than groups which form around socio-economic functions...” (Cawson, 1986: 11). In this way, groups can primarily be expected to form around traditional economic class interest, so corporative populations would primarily be comprised of trade unions, trade associations and agricultural groups. Cawson (1986: 38) also suggests that groups may form around skills, and this means that powerful professional groups controlling specific occupations will emerge. Consequently, from a corporatist point of view, interest groups will emerge on areas where the state requires the interest groups as a

negotiation partner capable of formulating their members' demands, but also discipline and control them (Öberg, 1994: 21-27). Consequently, the expected growth of groups as a response to societal factors may also be dampened by the corporative institutions.

Even though the effects of the societal factors may be dampened, interest groups are still expected to form as a response to societal changes. These new subpopulations that emerge on new policy areas are also expected to be affected by the corporative institutions. The new groups are expected to differentiate from one another and organize in such a manner that each group has its own turf and no groups have overlapping issue niches. This is how corporative systems are structured in the first place, and these structures are expected to stick and be reproduced, even on new policy areas (Christiansen and Nørgaard, 2003: 93-98; Christiansen, 2012: 165). In this manner, the corporative institutions may moderate the effects of societal factors on group formation; they limit the formation of new groups and create and maintain order and stability in the population.

The corporative institutions are also expected to moderate the effects of societal factors on the political representation pattern. One step on the way to political influence is to gain representation in the political arenas, such as the parliament, the media, and the administration (Binderkrantz et al., 2015). The administration is the arena in which the corporative structures are expected to play the largest role for the political representation pattern, as the Scandinavian variant of corporatism entails that selected groups have seats in public boards and committees which are part of the administrative arena (Christiansen et al., 2010; Rommetvedt et al., 2013; Öberg et al., 2011). In this way, the interplay between groups and the state is formalized and structured. In some policy areas, such as the labor market area and the agricultural area, the patterns of representation have been very stable for decades, and the central players are large groups that have been parts of the systems since the beginning (Christiansen, 2012). In this way, interest groups and decision makers know each other well and are used to working together. The corporative structures may therefore have a reproducing effect on the large organizations that have seats in the public boards and committees; they are expected to keep their privileged position over time, and the pattern of political representation in the public boards and committees is thereby preserved. Moreover, the corporative institutions may also make it difficult for new groups to enter the administrative arena for the very reason that there are these strong traditions for which groups are invited in. As was the case for formation, the corporative structures are also expected to have a stabilizing effect in regard to political representation. The groups that are part of the

corporative system are likely to retain their positions as insiders, while the groups outside the corporative system are not very likely to be invited in. The pattern of representation in the administrative arena is therefore likely to be reproduced year after year due to the corporative institutions (Binderkrantz and Christiansen, 2015:11).

The same argument can be put forward with respect to disbandment. The corporative institutions are also expected to have a stabilizing effect regarding the disbandment of interest groups. A privileged position is one of the most important resources for groups in corporative systems (Binderkrantz and Christiansen, 2015: 3). The insider groups with these resources are therefore expected to have a lower risk of disbandment than groups that are not corporative partners. As discussed above, there is an exchange relationship between the insider groups and decision makers; the state can give groups influence on the spending of public expenditures and legislation, and in return the privileged interest groups can provide technical information about policy issues and control over and support from the group's members (Christiansen, 2013; Rommetvedt et al., 2013; Öberg et al., 2011; Öberg, 1994: 21-27). A privileged position therefore cement the societal relevance of groups, and this may be positive for their survival chances. In addition, a privileged position also sends a strong signal to current and potential members that the interest group is an important political player and therefore worthwhile engaging in. This further underlines how the corporative institutions have a stabilizing effect on the population, as the system reproduces itself by securing the survival of the privileged groups.

Summing up, the corporative institutions are expected to work as an important moderator between the societal factors, population mechanisms, and the three concepts of population development. They are expected to have a dampening effect on the population mechanisms and the societal factors and therefore limit and stabilize the population. This means that corporative populations are expected to have relatively few groups that are functionally differentiated and that the population will be ordered and structured primarily in accordance with the occupational structures. Corporative populations are also expected to be stable, both regarding the number of interest groups and the composition of groups, as the corporative structures limit the proliferation of new groups and reproduces the composition regarding formation, political representation, and disbandment.

## The focus of the papers comprising the dissertation

The four papers comprising the dissertation treat the relationship between the population mechanisms, the societal factors, and the three concepts of development either separately or in combination. All papers are somehow occupied with the moderating effect of the corporative structures. The *Gamele venner* paper focuses on whether the total Danish population develops as expected from four societal factors: changed values and demographic changes (bottom-up) and the growth of the welfare state and developments in corporative structures (top-down). In this paper, the corporative institutions are thereby treated as a societal change rather than a moderating factor. *A Rise of Citizen Groups* also focuses on the societal factors. The paper investigates how resource exchange dynamics between interest groups and arena gatekeepers affect the degree of spill-over from formation to political representation. The third paper, *Dead or Alive*, focuses on what explains interest group disbandment. Both population mechanisms (competition), interest group factors, and context factors, such as whether the groups have seats in corporative committees, are used as explanatory variables. The last paper, *Density Dependence*, focuses primarily on the effects of population mechanisms (legitimation and competition) on the formation rate of a subpopulation. However, the paper also uses societal factors as control variables. Summing up, the four papers use either societal factors, population mechanisms, or both to explain the three development concepts, and all of the papers somehow focus on the moderating effects of the corporative institutions. This chapter has discussed the left side of figure 1.1, the dissertation's independent variables, and the moderating effect of the corporative institutions. The chapter thus concludes the theoretical part of the summary report. The next chapters will treat the empirical sections, starting with the research design of the project.

## Chapter 4: Research design

This section will present and discuss the research design of the project. As discussed above, the main theoretical claim made in the dissertation is that societal factors and population mechanisms affect the development of interest group populations and that corporative institutions moderate these effects. This claim is tested on the Danish case. The choice of case is obviously important for the results. The chapter begins by discussing why the Danish case is well-suited for investigating the research question. The papers comprising the dissertation have different designs and details and the operationalization of variables can be found in the papers. Some considerations regarding data and coding have been relevant for all of the papers, however, as they rely on roughly the same data sources: population lists, survey data, and political representation data from three political arenas, which are discussed after the case selection.

### The Danish case

The research question about how interest group populations develop and whether population mechanisms, societal factors, and corporative institutions explain the development is investigated with respect to the Danish case. There are multiple reasons for choosing the Danish interest group population. First, the Danish interest group system is traditionally considered to be a corporative system with a relatively institutionalized relationship between selected interest groups and the state (Christiansen et al., 2010; Lijphart and Crepaz, 1991; Siaroff, 1999; Öberg et al., 2011). As seen in the literature review in Chapter 1, the lion's share of the population studies has been conducted in the US, where the interest group system is characterized by pluralism. As discussed in Chapter 3, however, there are important differences between populations in corporative and pluralist systems. The corporative institutions are expected to moderate the effect of societal factors and population mechanisms on population development. Therefore, there is a need for studies investigating populations and their development in corporative systems such as the Danish.

However, numerous studies have documented how the level of corporatism in Denmark has decreased over time. Christiansen et al. (2010), Öberg et al. (2011), and Rommetvedt et al. (2013) all find that corporatism has been in

decline since its heyday in the 1970s. All of these studies consider the number of public committees and commissions with interest representation, as this is argued to be the best indicator for corporatism in the Scandinavian context, and they all find that the level of corporatism has been in decline since 1980, at least regarding corporatism in policy preparation. Other studies have pointed out that even though the number of committees and commissions with interest group seats has declined, this can be seen more as an adaptation of the corporative system rather than a decline (Binderkrantz and Christiansen, 2015). In this manner, the Danish case provides the opportunity to study not only how populations develop in a corporative context but also what changes in the corporative structures mean for the population's development.

In some ways, the corporative traits render Denmark a special case, as some selected interest groups enjoy a privileged position. It should be stressed, however, that privileged inclusion can also be found to varying degrees in other political systems, such as the US and UK (Pallesen, 2006; Winter, 1984). Besides, from privileged inclusion, the Danish case actually has many scope conditions resembling those of many other Western democracies, which indicates that the development of the Danish population may be similar to the development in other countries. For instance, the Danish interest group system has experienced moderate growth in terms of both density and diversity in the last three decades (Binderkrantz, 2012), which is quite similar to both the US and UK (Jordan and Greenan, 2012; Jordan et al., 2012). Furthermore, Denmark has experienced some general societal developments that most other Western democracies have also undergone. These include developments that may affect especially the formation and political representation of interest groups, as discussed in chapter 3: the increasing importance of "new politics" issues, such as immigration and environmental issues (Stubager, 2009), basic demographic changes with growing numbers of immigrants and senior citizens, and the general growth of the welfare state.

The final reason for selecting Denmark as a case is more pragmatic. As discussed, studies of the development of the entire population over time are rare, as gathering the data required for such studies is difficult and time-consuming; especially if the focus is on the total population of both groups that are politically active and groups that are not, as in this dissertation, and not only the politically active groups. It is therefore a major advantage to use historical data rather than data collected retrospectively. Jordan et al. (2012: 154) discuss and show how historical data are more reliable than retrospective data when the goal is to estimate interest group populations over time.

For the Danish case, there is a unique possibility to investigate the development with high-quality historical data, as five surveys of all of the national politically relevant interest groups were conducted between 1975 and 2010. Both the population lists and the surveys from these studies are used to map the population together with newly gathered data covering the Danish interest group population. This is elaborated in the next sections.

In regard to the case selection, questions could be raised about how useful a study of a corporative system is in regard to drawing conclusions about the effect of corporative institutions. The ideal way to investigate this is obviously to make a comparison of a corporative and a pluralist system. However, as discussed gathering population-level data of total populations is very time-consuming. As many studies have already been conducted in pluralist settings, I have chosen to focus solely on a corporative population and conduct a thorough investigation of all of the existing groups at multiple points in time. The dissertation is still able to answer some questions about the effects of corporatism. First, the papers comprising the dissertation compare the results found in the Danish case with results from studies of pluralist systems. In this sense, the dissertation builds on the previous literature to compare pluralist and corporative systems. Second, the Danish case is investigated at multiple points in time, both at the high and low points of corporatism. This longitudinal design also provides opportunities to compare the composition of the population under different levels of corporatism. These two approaches give some useful indications of the role of the corporative structures. It is not possible to draw firm conclusions about the causal effects of corporatism from these kinds of analyses, however, and the results will be interpreted accordingly.

In addition to the aggregated Danish population, the dissertation also investigates the subpopulation of Danish patient groups. The main goal of this part of the dissertation is to test whether the population develops as expected according to density dependence theory. This subpopulation is well suited for testing the theory, as it has well-defined boundaries, which make it relatively easy to establish what a patient group is. Furthermore, the population has a lengthy history, as the first Danish patient group was established in 1901. Additionally, the population size is on the one hand so small that it is possible to map all of the groups in all years, but it is also big enough to test the theory of density dependence with an appropriate statistical model. The health area, where the patient groups operate, is an area with relatively weak corporative structures. In this manner, the boundaries of the dissertation's argument about a moderating effect of the corporative structures can be tested. If the corporative structures appear to moderate the effects of the

population mechanisms on this subpopulation, they can also be expected to do this in other subpopulations with stronger corporative traditions.

## The population lists, the representation database, and the surveys

To investigate the question about population development, it is, as discussed, necessary to gather information about all of the existing groups over time. There are multiple ways to address this challenge. Some studies rely entirely on encyclopedias to build their population lists (Jordan and Greenan, 2012; Jordan et al., 2012), others use lobby registration data (Berkhout and Lowery, 2011; Gray and Lowery, 1996b), and yet others combine multiple sources (Nownes, 2004; 2012; 2010). My approach is to use multiple sources, as doing so provides the best, most comprehensive population list when working to map the total population of all existing groups and not only the politically active ones. The next sections discuss the years chosen for the analyses and the various datasets used in the dissertation.

### Selected years

The four papers in the dissertation investigate the different time periods suitable for answering the respective research questions, but they rely on roughly the same data sources. However, the 1975–2010 period is central in all of the papers comprising the dissertation. This is partly because good historical data sources are available for the year 1975, as discussed above. But more importantly, the comparison between 1975 and 2010 is interesting as regards the dissertation's expectations about a moderating effect of corporative structures, which is a recurring theme in all of the papers.

Danish corporatism culminated in the latter part of the 1970s and has been argued to be in decline ever since (Christiansen, 2012: 170; Christiansen et al., 2010: 31; Rommetvedt et al., 2013; Öberg et al., 2011). By comparing 1975 and 2010, the dissertation investigates two years with varying degrees of corporatism. In this sense, the 1975–2010 period is central to all four papers.

It can be argued that the 1975–2010 span is too long a time-span, as many changes can have appeared in this space of time. The ideal approach would be to map the population for all of the years. This has not been possible, as mapping one year alone is a demanding task. However, this problem may be less serious for two reasons. First, the Danish population actually appears to be quite stable over time. The study mentioned in the literature re-



view by Christiansen (2012) revealed considerable stability in the Danish population over the last three decades. Even though this study represents a rough overview of the population conducted by comparing population lists of various studies, it indicates that no major fluctuations in the population can be expected in the years between 1975 and 2010, even though not all of the years are investigated. Furthermore, some of the papers comprising the dissertation include additional points in time in order to obtain a more fine-grained picture of the development.

The *Gamle venner* paper, which investigates formation and disbandment, and *A Rise of Citizen Groups*, with its focus on political representation, both focus on the two years: 1975 and 2010. The *Dead or Alive* paper also focuses on the years 1975 and 2010, but it adds an extra point in time: the year 1993. The aim of this paper is to investigate which factors explain interest group survival. This is achieved by tracking all of the groups in existence in 1975 and 1993 and up to the year 2010 in order to evaluate if they survived or disbanded in this period. The two different points in time have two different purposes. First, they provide opportunity to investigate the survival question, both in the very long run (34 years) and the medium run (17 years). Second, they serve as a robustness test of the results to test the hypotheses in two different time periods. The last paper, *Density Dependence in Corporative Systems*, covers all of the years from 1901 until 2011. The main goal of this paper is to test the density dependence theory on the population of Danish patient groups. The argument is that the population density in one year explains the birth rate of the interest group population in the same year. In order to test this, information about the density and birthrate for all of the years of the population's lifetime is required. As the first Danish patient group was established in 1901, the appropriate time period for this study is from 1901 to 2011. The next sections will describe the data sources that the dissertation uses – the population lists, political representation data, and survey data – in greater detail.

### The population lists and political representation data base

To get a handle on the composition of the population at various points in time, lists including all groups in the population at the selected time points were constructed. The aggregated population was mapped at two different points, 1975 and 2010, and included all of the existing groups, both the politically active and the potentially politically active groups. The political representation of interest groups in three political arenas was also mapped for these two points in time.

To construct the population list for 1975, Buksti and Johansen's (1983) study was used as the starting point. They used various sources to compile a population list of 1,946 Danish interest groups. When this list was scrutinized, however, it revealed that some of the groups did not fit the definition of the population for this project. Some regional and local groups were included as well as a few secretariats, including *Foreningen af Smede- og Maskinvirksomheder i København*, which is a local group, *Landboorganisationernes Faglige Sekretariat*, and *Fællessekretariatet for de Søfarendes Organisationer*, which manage administrative tasks for the connected groups but are not actually genuine interest groups themselves and were therefore deleted.

To ensure that the population list was as comprehensive as possible, the list was supplemented with the names of groups that were represented in three different political arenas: the parliament, the administration, and the media. This map of political representation was constructed by the interarena project (see Interarena, 2010a). For the parliamentary arena, all of the interest groups that sent letters to the standing committees of the Danish parliament in 1975/1976 were registered. For the administration, all of the groups that had seats in public boards and committees in 1975 were registered (see Johansen and Kristensen, 1978). For the media arena, groups that appeared in news stories in the Danish newspapers *Politiken* and *Jyllands-Posten* from June 1975 to June 1976 were registered. For all of the issues, the front page was read through, and for selected weeks we also read the entire paper. These three sources provide a map of the political representation of interest groups in 1975.

A final source was used to ensure that the 1975 population list was as complete as possible. The Interarena project conducted a survey of all Danish national interest groups in 2010 (see more details below). This survey contained a question asking about their respective formation years. This information was scrutinized to find groups formed before 1975, resulting in 94 new groups being found. The Interarena survey had a response rate of 65 percent. It is therefore possible that there might be groups among the non-responders that were established before 1975, but this number is likely quite small, and there is no reason to believe that there are systematic differences in the composition of group types between the groups that did not respond to the survey and the ones that did. Therefore, the inclusion of a few more groups will probably not change the pattern of how the population was composed in 1975. Ultimately, the population list for 1975 contained 2,127 groups.

For 2010, the Interarena project compiled a comprehensive population list (2010a). The point of departure was population lists from previous re-

search projects on Danish interest groups (see Christiansen, 2012), which were updated using Internet-based searches (see Binderkrantz et al., 2015) and supplemented with the same kind of political representation data from three political arenas, as discussed above. In this manner, a representation database with information about all of the groups that appeared in the parliament, the administration, and the media in 2010 was also constructed. Group appearances on all front pages and for full issues in selected weeks in *Politiken* and *Jyllands-Posten* were registered to cover the media arena. For the parliamentary arena, groups that appeared before the parliamentary committees (deputations) were registered by scrutinizing all of the agendas from parliamentary committees. In addition to this, all of the groups that send letters to the parliamentary committees were registered. For the administrative arena, the groups that participated in public consultations regarding specific bills and all groups that were represented in public committees were registered. The 2010 population list includes 2,543 groups.

To be able to compare the two population lists, it is necessary to code the groups into similar categories. The Interarena coding scheme was used to classify the groups (see Interarena, 2010c). As discussed in Chapter 2, this scheme is well suited to investigate the research question. I coded all of the groups from the 1975 population lists into group types. This was no easy task, as many of the groups no longer exist. For many of the groups on the 1975 list, sufficient information about the group could be found in the Buksti and Johansen (1977a) handbook, which lists all of the groups included in their 1975 study. For the groups where this information was not available, some still existed. For these, it was relatively easy to find information on their websites about their history, upon which basis it was possible to establish the group type and whether it had changed since 1975. For the groups that no longer exist, Internet-based searches were conducted to establish the group type. This usually produced enough information. In the end, all 2,127 groups on the list were assigned to a group category. Likewise, all of the groups in the 2010 population were coded into group types. This was done by the Interarena team (see Binderkrantz et al., 2015). A reliability test of the 2010 coding was conducted, where a third expert coder recoded 100 randomly drawn groups. The test resulted in a Cohen's Kappa of 0.906.

As discussed in Chapter 3, the development of the population is investigated both at the aggregated population level and at the subpopulation level. A population list mapping the subpopulation of Danish patient groups was therefore also created in addition to the two population lists of the aggregated population. As discussed, the patient group dataset should include information about population density (number of groups in the population)

and birthrate (number of groups born in a specific year) for every year in the lifetime of the population from 1901. The approach used to map the sub-population was similar to the one described above. I used multiple sources such as internet searches, population lists from existing research projects (Christiansen and Nørgaard, 2003; Interarena, 2010d), books listing patient groups at different points in time (Balslev, 1997; 1999; 2000; Buksti and Johansen, 1977a; Forebyggelsesrådet and Komiteen for Sundhedsoplysning, 1989), and searches in parliamentary documents on the Danish parliament website (Folketinget, 2012). This population list ultimately included 185 different patient groups. In addition to the population lists and political representation data, survey data was also used. The surveys are discussed in the next section.

## The surveys

The survey data is primarily used to establish various characteristics of the interest groups in 1975, 1993, and 2010. Buksti and Johansen (1983) conducted the 1975 survey. Their questionnaire includes questions about the characteristics of the interest groups, such as organizational structure, number of members, budget, and also a range of questions about the frequency and types of contact between interest groups, civil servants, and politicians. The questionnaire was sent to 1,850 groups, approximately 1,600 groups of which responded. The survey data was then supplemented with information about the groups found in their annual reports and similar sources. These sources may have revealed more groups, as the dataset ultimately contained information about 1,946 groups. As discussed, not all of these groups fitted the definition of this project, and data for 1,843 of the 1975 groups was used.

The 1993 survey was conducted by Christensen et al. (1993; see also Christiansen and Nørgaard, 2003: 233) and contained questions quite similar to the 1975 survey. Their population list was constructed in roughly the same way as the 1975 list but supplemented with Internet-based searches. The questionnaire was sent to 1,900 groups, of which 1,316 completed and returned the questionnaire. Some of the groups did not fit this project's definition of an interest group and were excluded. In the end, 1,286 of the groups from the 1993 survey were included.

Finally, a survey conducted by the Interarena project in 2010 is used (Interarena, 2010b). This survey focuses less on the organizational characteristics of groups, at least compared to the earlier surveys, but still includes information about important group characteristics and their influence strategies.

As mentioned, the 2010 population list contained 2,543 groups. A number of 1,645 groups responded to the survey, 1,109 of which indicated that they were politically active. Table 4.1 gives an overview over which datasets are used in the four papers. After this overview of the research design, the next chapter will provide an overview of selected results of the dissertation.

Table 4.1. Overview of datasets and papers

Population	Data type	Year	N (groups)	Used in papers
Aggregated population	Population list	1975	2,127	<i>Gamle venner</i> <i>A Rise of Citizen Groups</i>
Aggregated population	Population list	2010	2,543	<i>Gamle venner</i> <i>A Rise of Citizen Groups</i>
Aggregated population	Survey	1975	1,843	<i>A Rise of Citizen groups</i> <i>Dead or Alive</i>
Aggregated population	Survey	1993	1,286	<i>Dead or Alive</i>
Aggregated population	Survey	2010	1,109	<i>A Rise of Citizen Groups</i>
Aggregated population	Representation data	1975	519	<i>A Rise of Citizen Groups</i>
Aggregated population	Representation data	2010	737	<i>A Rise of Citizen Groups</i>
Patient group population	Population list	1901-2011	185	<i>Density Dependence</i>



## Chapter 5: The Danish population development: overview of selected results

The central question that this dissertation tries to answer is how interest group populations develop and whether population mechanisms, societal factors, and the corporative structures explain the development. The dissertation claims that corporative structures may moderate the effect of the population mechanisms and the societal factors on development. This chapter will present selected results from the dissertation's papers with a particular focus on the moderating effects of the corporative structures. These are not necessarily discussed in the individual papers, but as the goal of this summary report is to give an overview of how the four papers combined answer the research question, this approach is appropriate.

The chapter begins by presenting the results from the subpopulation level, where the focus is mainly on the formation of groups. After this, the results from the aggregated level are presented. At this level the formation, political representation and disbandment were investigated. The three concepts are treated separately even though they are combined in some of the papers comprising the dissertation. For each of the development concepts, the focus is on the consequences of the patterns of formation, political representation, and disbandment for the development of the Danish interest group population, which of the independent variables – population mechanisms and societal factors – explain the patterns, and whether and how the corporative structures moderate the effects. The discussion relates the results to figure 1.1 in order to pin out how the papers fit into the dissertation's theoretical model.

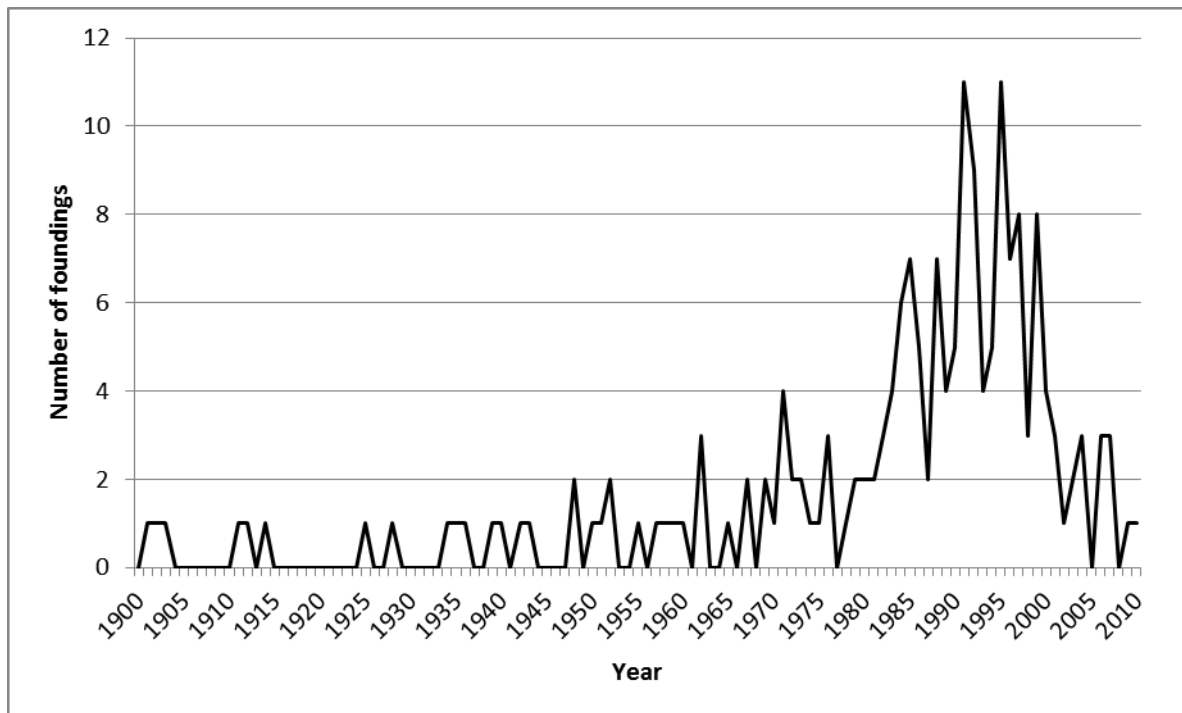
### The subpopulation level

At the subpopulation level, the primary focus was on the concept of interest group formation. As already discussed, the most fine-grained picture of the growth rates of a population are obtained by following it on a yearly basis, which is possible when the object of investigation is a subpopulation. As discussed in Chapter 1, the population of Danish patient groups is expected to follow the development pattern expected by the density dependence theory. The density is the number of groups in a specific year. Due to legitimation and competition effects, the founding rate (the number of group foundings per year) is expected to first increase with increases in density until a certain

level, and then decrease with further increases in density. Figure 5.1 shows the yearly founding rate in the Danish patient group population. The founding rate follows the expected pattern, as it has the shape of an inverted U. As density increases, the birth rate first increases and then decreases. In the years prior to 1980, the population growth was very limited, which may indicate that the patient group form was not yet legitimate.

That the population grows explosively when the density reaches a certain level was expected from the density dependence theory. Increased density is expected to have a positive effect on the founding rate through the legitimation mechanism. These legitimation effects break through around 1980 in the population of Danish patient groups. After the year 2000, the founding rate drops. From 2000 to 2011, up to four new groups were founded per year. Density dependence theory predicts this drop in the founding rate, as density only has a positive effect on the founding rate up to a certain level of density. After this threshold, further increases in density have negative effects on the founding rate as the competition increases and makes it more difficult for new groups to form.

Figure 5.1. Danish patient groups 1901-2011, founding rate



Source: Figure 2 from *Density Dependence*.

The population of Danish patient groups develops as expected by density dependence theory. In order to investigate whether it is the density of the population that explains the development through the legitimation and



competition mechanism, or other societal factors also explain the development a statistical analysis was conducted. Three societal factors are included as control variables: public expenditures to the health area, parliamentary activity on the health area, and the salience of the health area. The results are shown in table 5.1.

Table 5.1. Test of density dependence model. Poisson regression with founding rate as dependent variable

	Model I	Model II	Model III
Density	0.0731*** (0.0173)	0.0680*** (0.0174)	0.0624* (0.0284)
Density <sup>2</sup>	-0.0003*** (0.0001)	-0.0003** (0.0001)	-0.0003* (0.000)
Health expenditures (millions)		-0.0206 (0.0140)	
Parliamentary activity		0.0021 (0.0141)	
Salience			0.0011 (0.0015)
Constant	-2.0500* (0.9395)	1.1485 (1.1177)	-1.8966 (1.5830)
Log-likelihood	-58.5719	-57.4115	-44.8563
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	0.1522	0.1690	0.0862
N	28	28	20

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. \*p < 0.05; \*\*p < 0.01; \*\*\*p < 0.001 (two-tailed test)

Source: Table 1 from the paper *Density Dependence*.

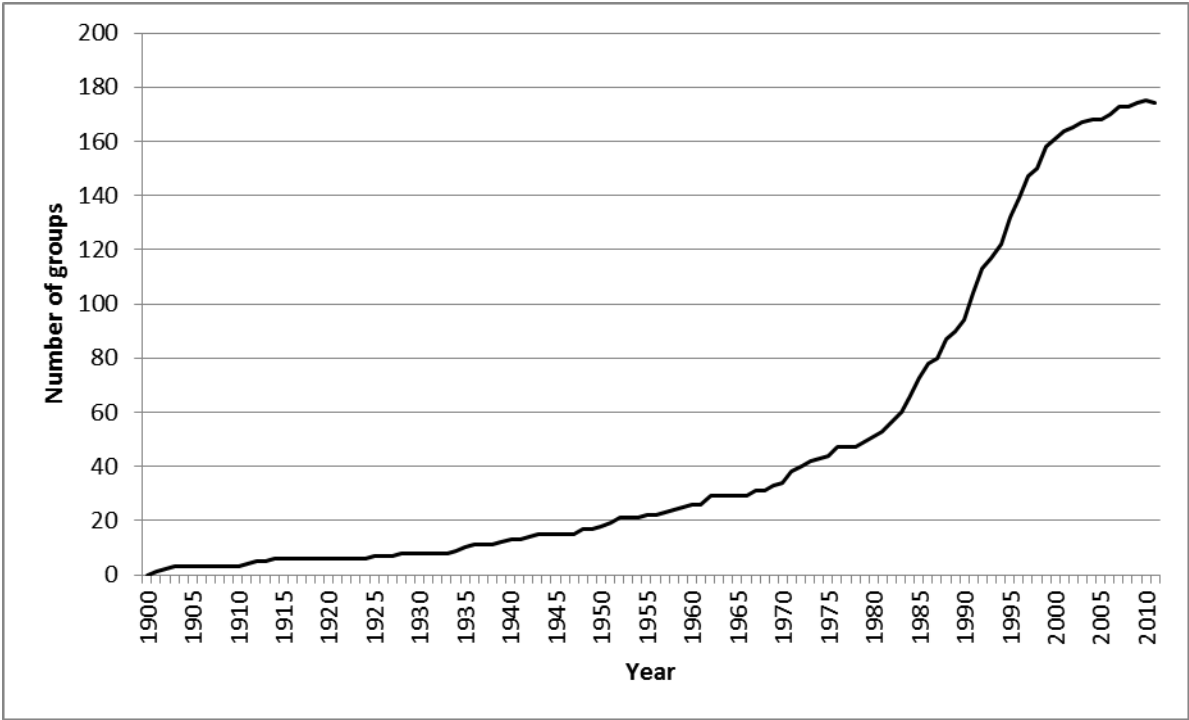
As can be seen in all of the models in table 5.1, the only variable that explains the founding rate would appear to be density. Hence, the general density dependence hypothesis is supported. The density of the population has a positive and curvilinear effect on the founding rate. The societal factor variables do not have any effect on the founding rate of the population.

In this manner, it seems as though especially population mechanisms, legitimation, and competition explain the formation of interest groups in the subpopulation. However, the corporative structures can also play a role for the formation of interest groups at the subpopulation level. As discussed above, conclusions regarding the causal effects of the corporative structures on population development cannot be drawn from these analyses. However, the results provide some indication of the effects of the corporative structures. Figure 5.2 shows the formation pattern of the Danish patient groups as regards the density of the subpopulation.

Figure 5.2 also shows that the interest groups form in the same pattern as expected by density dependence theory. The legitimation effects break through around 1980, which increases the founding rate (and thereby density), and the competition effects become effective around 2000, at which

time the density stops increasing. Density dependence theory says nothing about the timing of these events. However, the results could indicate a kind of delayed density dependence that was expected in corporative systems. As discussed, the corporative institutions are expected to suppress the population mechanisms legitimation and competition. The legitimation mechanism may work differently in corporative systems than in pluralist systems, and the level of competition between the interest groups in a corporative population may be lower than in a pluralist population.

Figure 5.2. Danish patient groups 1901-2011, density



Source: Figure 3 from the paper *Density Dependence*.

In Denmark, corporatism peaks in the end of the 1970s, and figures 5.1 and 5.2 both show how the patient group population is relatively stable until 1980. After 1980, when corporatism declines, the population mechanisms start working. The density of the population increases due to the legitimation effects and then decreases because of competition effects. This can tentatively be interpreted as a kind of delayed density dependence. The mechanisms regulating density are not very strong when the corporative institutions are strong and can thereby suppress the population mechanisms. The population mechanisms set in when the level of corporatism declines. As density dependence theory does not predict anything about the timing of the population mechanisms, it is difficult to make firm conclusions about whether it is the corporative structures that suppress the mechanisms or if the population

would have developed like this even though the corporative institutions had not decreased. Theoretically, however, the corporative institutions were expected to suppress the population mechanisms, and the empirical results show that the population mechanisms have stronger effects on the development of the population in the periods where the corporative structures are weak. This possibly suggests that the corporative structures, together with the population mechanisms, may play a role for the development of the sub-population in regard to formation and, as expected, structure, stabilize, and limit the population.

## The aggregated level

### Formation

The formation concept is also investigated at the aggregated level. Formation is interesting both with respect to the overall growth of populations, as discussed above, and in regard to the composition of group types. Theoretically, three societal factors were expected to affect the formation: the increased attention among the public to new political values, regarding for instance the environment and human rights; basic demographic changes (bottom-up); and the growth of the welfare state (top-down). Together, these factors were expected to contribute to an increase in the number of citizen groups. As discussed, however, the corporative institutions were also expected to moderate the effects of the societal factors at the aggregated level and stabilize the population. Table 5.2 provides a general overview over how many and which groups have formed in the Danish population between 1975 and 2010 by comparing the number and composition of interest group types at these two time points.

Two important results in relation to the development of the Danish population can be extracted from table 5.2. First, there is a relatively high degree of net stability in terms of numbers in the Danish population. There has been a growth from 2,127 groups in 1975 to 2,543 groups in 2010. This is relatively modest growth, however, especially considering the standard assumption in the international literature about an explosion in the number of interest groups in recent decades, at least in the US and UK (Baumgartner and Leech, 1998: 102; Jordan and Maloney, 2007; Jordan et al., 2012: 144). However, it is worth mentioning that Jordan and Greenan (2012) also find a general trend towards stability in their study of the UK.

Table 5.2. Distribution of group types in 1975 and 2010

	1975		2010		Change (percentage points)
	Number	%	Number	%	
Economic groups	1,513	71.1	1,483	58.3	-12.8
Unions	339	15.9	263	10.3	-5.6
Business	730	34.3	699	27.5	-6.8
Institutions	97	4.6	113	4.4	0.1
Professional	347	16.3	408	16.0	-0.3
Citizen groups	614	28.9	1,060	41.7	12.8
Identity	228	10.7	364	14.3	3.6
Leisure	275	12.9	366	14.4	1.5
Public interest	111	5.2	330	13.0	7.8
Total	2,127	100	2,543	100	

Source: table 1 from *Gamle venner*.

Second, there has been a shift in the population regarding how it is composed of different group types, as was expected. Even though there is much net stability, there has been a development towards increased diversity in the Danish interest group population over time. In 1975, the lion's share (71 percent) of the groups were economic groups. They are still in majority in 2010 but to a less degree, as they now occupy 58 percent of the population. In this way, the system has a more balanced composition today than earlier, even though the traditional economic groups, such as unions and business groups, are still pivotal players in the group system. As discussed in the introduction, the number of groups cannot be directly translated to a power pattern, as not all groups have the same strength and resources. However, the number of groups does say something about the plurality of voices, and a particular constituency may have better chances of being heard when many groups are representing them.

To explain the formation regarding the overall population, the dissertation has focused on how the societal factors from figure 1.1 explain the formation component of development. The analysis conducted on the data in table 5.2 is mainly a descriptive analysis. This makes it difficult to disentangle the different effects, and conclusions regarding causal relationships cannot be drawn. However, it can be concluded that the expected shift has taken place, as there has been an increase in the number of citizen groups and it would seem as though the societal factors may contribute to explain the development, as they predicted this rise in the number of citizen groups.

The bottom-up and top-down factors appear to contribute to explaining the formation at the aggregated level, and the expectations regarding the stabilizing corporative institutions also find support. Table 5.2 shows a relatively high degree of net stability in the Danish population between 1975 and 2010 considering that the development is investigated over more than three decades. The citizen groups have increased in numbers, and the traditional corporative partners – the economic groups – are fewer in number than previously. However, the changes are not very large seen in the light of the many studies that conclude that the corporative structures are decreasing in Denmark (Christiansen et al., 2010; Rommetvedt et al., 2013; Öberg et al., 2011). Even though it is often argued that the Danish corporatism is declining, the corporative structures still seem to stabilize the Danish interest group population and possibly suppress the effects of the societal factors. Some policy areas, such as the labour market and industrial sector, have had very strong corporative institutions, and the interest groups active in these areas may not change rapidly. On the contrary, the corporative institutions may shape the composition of the interest group population, and this composition may stick for years after the corporative institutions have declined.

### Political representation

The second part of the development concept is political representation. Not all of the groups that form gain access to the halls of power. The dissertation therefore also investigates how changes in the formation pattern in the population spill over to changes in the pattern of interest group representation in political arenas. The formation analyses revealed an increase in the number of citizen groups. The central question regarding political representation is how responsive the political arenas are to these changes in the group population. As discussed in Chapter 3, the responsiveness is expected to vary between arenas and be dependent on the resource exchange dynamics between the interest groups and gatekeepers to the arenas: the bureaucrats in the administration, the reporters in the media, and the politicians in the parliament.

To be represented in the various arenas, the interest groups must demand access and supply the goods demanded by the gatekeepers. The resource exchange argument was presented in Chapter 3. To put it shortly, the citizen groups are likely to demand access to the public arenas, especially the parliament and the media. The gatekeepers here, the politicians and reporters, are also likely to demand the resources possessed by the citizen groups. The economic groups are expected to demand access to the arenas

in which decisions are made, especially the administration. The gatekeepers of this arena, the bureaucrats, are likely to demand the resources possessed by the economic groups. Therefore, it was expected that the administrative arena is the arena that is least responsive to the shifts in the population, the parliament is the most responsive arena, and the media arena is somewhere in between.

Table 5.3 shows the distribution of groups in the population and the distribution of access points in the administration, the media, and the parliament. The first column corresponds to the distribution of groups in table 5.2. The three additional columns show how the access points in the administration, the media, and the parliament are distributed between group types, and thereby the representation pattern in these arenas. As mentioned, the citizen groups have increased their share of the population. Furthermore, table 5.3 shows how changes in the formation pattern spill over to the pattern of representation in the political arenas but to various degrees as expected. In all of the arenas, the citizen groups have gained more ground in 2010 compared to 1975. This important finding shows that changes in formation patterns do influence interest representation in political arenas. However, the degree of spillover differs across the three arenas, as was expected. The parliament is the arena that is most responsive to the changes in the population; here, the representation of the citizen groups increased with 23 percentage points. The administration seems to be the most conservative arena, as the increase in citizen group representation was smallest in this arena. Citizen group access only increased by 5 percentage points compared to the 13 percentage points increase in the population.

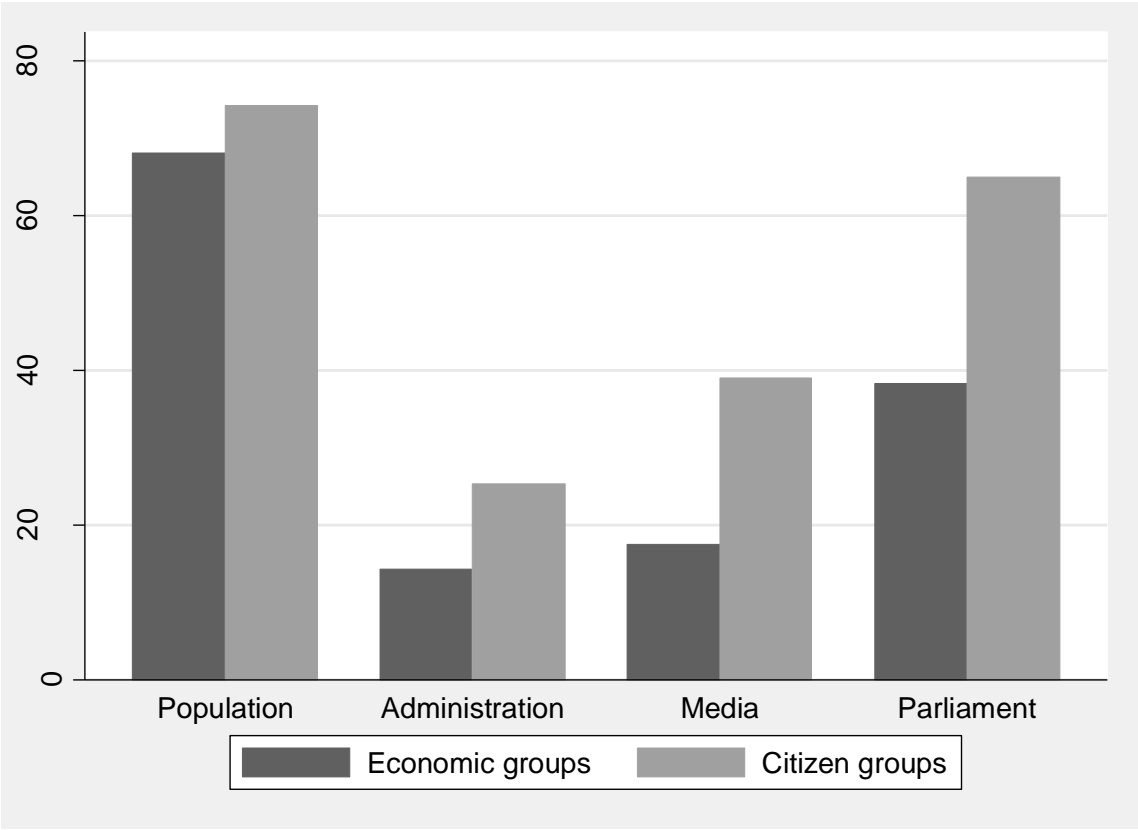
Table 5.3. Overview of group types in the population and three political arenas

	Population (Groups)			Administration (Contacts)			Media (Contacts)			Parliament (Contacts)		
	1975	2010	Change	1975	2010	Change	1975	2010	Change	1975	2010	Change
Economic groups	71.1	58.3	-12.8	88.8	84.1	-4.7	80.7	67.0	-13.7	73.8	50.4	-23.4
Unions	15.9	10.3	-5.6	30.3	25.2	-5.1	41.7	27.3	-14.4	27.0	15.8	-11.2
Business	34.3	27.5	-6.8	39.1	40.9	1.8	26.8	17.6	-9.2	31.5	24.1	-7.4
Institutions	4.6	4.4	-0.2	16.5	13.7	-2.8	10.6	18.8	8.2	10.3	8.4	-1.9
Professional	16.3	16.0	-0.3	2.9	4.2	1.3	1.7	3.4	1.7	5.0	2.1	-2.9
Citizen groups	28.8	41.7	12.8	11.2	15.9	4.7	19.3	33.0	13.7	26.2	49.6	23.4
Identity	10.7	14.3	3.6	6.7	4.3	-2.4	7.7	12.9	5.2	16.2	20.6	4.4
Leisure	12.9	14.4	1.5	1.8	3.0	1.2	3.1	1.9	-1.2	3.6	5.6	2.0
Public interest	5.2	13.0	7.8	2.7	8.6	5.9	8.4	18.3	9.9	6.4	23.3	16.9
Total	2,127	2,543		1,748	1,964		545	800		359	1,071	
	100.0	100.0		100.0	100.0		100.0	100.0		100.0	100.0	

Source: Table 2 from *A Rise of Citizen Groups*.

That the spill over from the population to the political arenas is least pronounced in the administration fits very well with the general expectation in the dissertation about a stabilizing effect of corporative institutions. As discussed, the Scandinavian variant of corporatism entails that privileged interest groups have seats in public boards and committees that are parts of the administrative arena. The administrative arena is therefore the arena in which the corporative institutions play the largest role. That the changes in the composition of the population in regard to formation spill over into the representation of interests in this arena to a very limited degree further indicates that corporative structures largely structure, stabilize and limit the Danish interest group population. Even though more citizen groups exist in 2010 than in 1975, the corporative institutions almost maintain the status quo of political representation in the administrative arena. The representation of citizen groups in the corporative boards and committees do not rise in proportion to their share of the population. This suggests that the corporative institutions may also play an important role for the development of the population in terms of the political representation of groups.

Figure 5.3. Share of new groups in the population and share of access points occupied by new groups in three political arenas, percentage points



Source: Figure 2 from *A Rise of Citizen Groups*.



This point is further underlined by an additional analysis of whether group age plays a role for their access to the three arenas. The interest groups are divided into old groups formed before 1975 and newer groups formed after 1975. Figure 5.3 compares the share of new groups in the population and the three arenas. The figure shows how the administrative arena is the most conservative one, also regarding the inclusion of new groups. Group age is important for both the economic groups and citizen groups alike. Overall, 84 percent of the seats held by interest groups in the administrative arena are occupied by groups formed before 1975. This finding further stresses that the administrative arena is rather conservative and not very responsive to the development in the population regarding formation. This is in line with the general expectations in the dissertation about a stabilizing and limiting effect of the corporative institutions.

## Disbandment

The formation of groups is merely one side of the mechanism shaping interest group populations. The other side is the disbandment or death of groups, as not all groups survive over time. Thus, disbandment also shapes the contours of interest group populations and thereby their development. Disbandment is therefore the final component of the development concept in figure 1.1. Even though the focus in figure 5.2 and table 5.2 was not directly on disbandment, figure 5.2 and table 5.2 show something about disbandment as well as formation. Table 5.2 shows how there has been a decrease in the absolute number of economic groups between 1975 and 2010 and that this reduction seems to be especially driven by the unions and business groups. In regard to figure 5.2, the density of groups in the patient group population is a product of both formation and disbandment. It is difficult to conclude anything about disbandment from this, however, as table 5.2 and figure 5.2 show net changes in the populations and therefore do not distinguish between whether the changes are caused by the formation of new groups or the disbandment of old ones.

For this reason, the dissertation also investigates interest group disbandment directly by focusing on the aggregated population and registers which groups actually survive and which disband. Both group factors, such as resources and organizational traits, and contextual factors, such as population mechanisms (competition) and relations to policy-makers, are expected to explain which groups survive and which groups disband. As described earlier, all of the groups in the 1975 population are traced from 1975 until 2010 in order to establish whether they survived or died. To investigate the effects in

the shorter run and to test the robustness of the results, the expectations are also tested on data from the 1993 survey. Table 5.4 shows an overview of how many groups died and how many groups survived from 1975 to 2010 and from 1993 to 2010, respectively. As was the case for the formation pattern, the disbandment pattern also reveals a relatively large degree of stability. Table 5.4 shows that more than 56 percent of the groups survived from 1975 to 2010, and more than 77 percent survived from 1993 to 2010.

Table 5.4. Overview of the Danish interest groups' development

	1975-2010		1993-2010	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Survived total	1041	56.5	997	77.5
Unchanged	652	35.4	737	57.3
Name change	220	11.9	173	13.5
Changed substantively	16	0.9	8	0.6
Merged	149	8.1	76	5.9
Divided	4	0.2	3	0.2
Dead total	802	43.5	289	22.5
Dead	763	41.4	266	20.7
Absorbed by other group	32	1.7	20	1.6
No longer interest group	7	0.4	3	0.2
Total	1,843	100	1,286	100

Source: Table 1 from *Dead or Alive*.

To test statistically which factors explain survival, table 5.5 presents the results of four logit regression models using group factors (age, group type, number of members, number of employees), and contextual factors (competition, density, number of seats in boards and committees, frequency of contact with decision makers, number of policy areas with contact to decision makers) to explain whether the groups survive or disband.

As seen in the models in table 5.5, the two main predictors for whether groups survive or disband are group resources and whether a group has a seat in public boards or committees. The number of members has a positive effect on the probability of survival for two member types; the more individual members and company members a group has, the higher the probability of its survival. Likewise, the more employees a group has, the higher is the group's probability of survival.

The results also show that population mechanisms (direct competition and the density measure, which expresses the degree of diffuse competition)

do not explain which groups survive or disband. This result differs from the investigation of the subpopulation, where the population mechanisms seemed to affect the formation rate of Danish patient groups. One explanation of this difference may be that the population mechanisms possibly work differently in different policy sectors with different subpopulations. Policy sectors with strong corporative structures, such as the labor market and industrial area, may have less competition between the interest groups, as this subpopulation is highly structured. Other sectors, such as the health sector, where the patient groups operate, may have more competition between groups, as this area is less structured by corporative structures, and the population mechanisms may therefore have stronger effects. As the disbandment analyses are conducted on the aggregated population, the population mechanisms within the different subpopulations may cancel each other out.

Table 5.5. 1976 logit regression: survival as dependent variable (1 = survival)

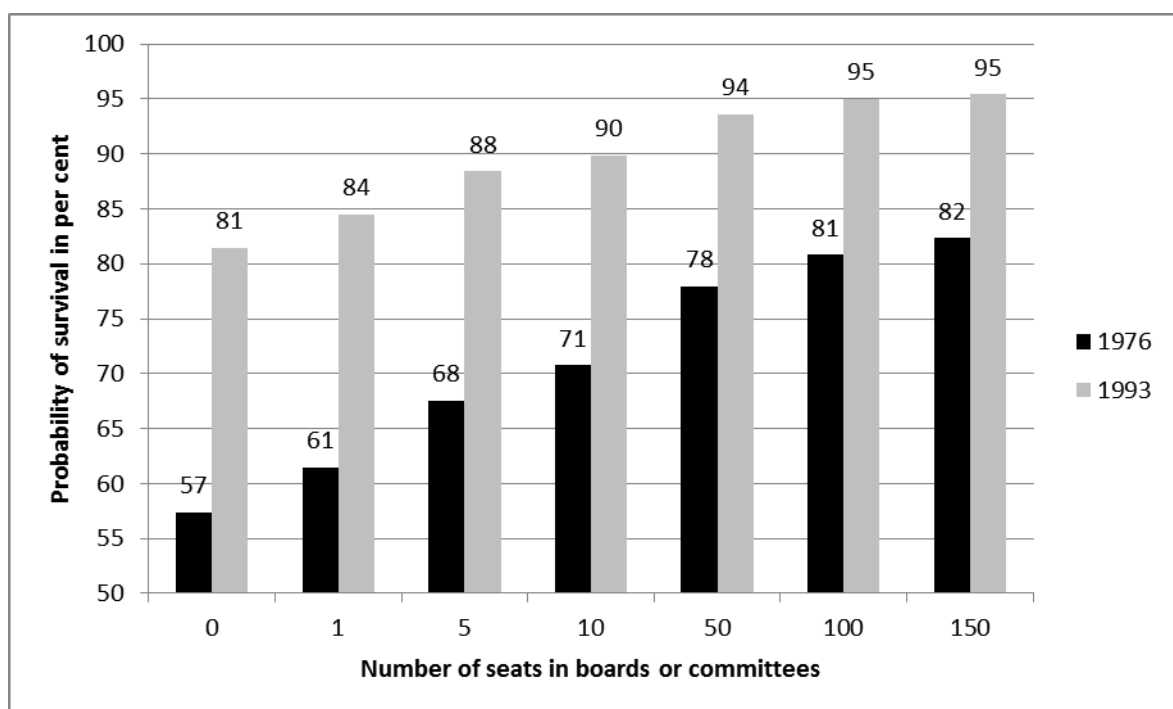
Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Age	0,007 [0,002]***		-0,001 (0,002)	0,001 (0,002)
Group type (reference: unions)				
Business	-0,612 [0,154]***		-0,328 (0,002)	-0,301 [0,237]
Institutional	-0,133 (0,283)		0,139 (0,226)	0,085 [0,386]
Occupational	-0,148 (0,185)		0,247 [0,221]	0,307 [0,228]
Identity	0,137 [0,212]		0,139 (0,263)	0,203 [0,271]
Leisure	0,829 [0,213]***		0,994 [0,258]***	1,090 [0,265]***
Public	-0,158 (0,245)		-0,296 (0,299)	-0,270 [0,312]
Competition		0,191 (0,209)		
Density		0,008 [0,020]		
Density <sup>2</sup>		0,000 (0,000)		
Individual members (ln)			0,110 [0,027]***	0,117 [0,028]***
Company members (ln)			0,120 (0,042) *	0,137 [0,044]**
Regional organization members			0,002 (0,002)	0,002 (0,002)
National organization members			0,025 (0,013) #	0,034 [0,015] *
Number of paid employees (ln)			0,462 [0,078] ***	0,321 [0,093]**
Number of seats in boards or committees (ln)				0,272 [0,117] *
Frequency of contact with decision makers				-0,097 [0,124]
Number of policy areas with contact to decision makers				0,062 [0,048]
Constant	0,233 (0,151)	0,782 [0,199]	-0,584 [0,221]*	-0,734 [0,236]**
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	0,04	0,01	0,09	0,10
N	1631	683	1249	1165

\*\*\*p < 0.001, \*\*p < 0.01, \*p < 0.05, # p < 0.10, standard errors in parentheses

Source: Table 2 from *Dead or Alive*.

As was suggested in all of the analyses discussed above, the analyses of disbandment also find evidence for the expectation that corporative institutions affect the development of the population. This is tested explicitly in regard to disbandment by statistically testing the effect of having seats on boards and committees on disbandment – a standard measure of interest group inclusion in corporative institutions. The results are quite clear: the most important predictor for group survival is whether they have a privileged position in the corporative system in the form of seats in a public board or committee. Figure 5.4 shows how the probability of survival rises with number of seats in boards and committees.

Figure 5.4. Number of seats in boards and committees and probability of survival



Source: Figure 1 from *Dead or Alive*,

Figure 5.4 clearly illustrates that having seats in boards and committees is an important predictor for survival in both years. As expected, groups with a privileged position have a much higher chance of survival than those that are not privileged. In this way, the state have some influence on the shape of the interest group population, as the groups that are privileged by the state are more stable and have a lower risk of disbandment than those outside the corporative system. As suggested regarding formation and political representation, the corporative institutions also have a stabilizing effect on the population with respect to disbandment. In this manner, the corporative system reproduces itself by securing the survival of the privileged groups that may thereby become central players in the corporative system for decades.

This final important finding further underlines that which was suggested in the analyses of formation, both on the aggregated level and subpopulation level, and in the analyses of political representation. As expected, the corporative institutions appear to be an important explanation for the development of the Danish interest group population, whether this is examined from the perspective of formation, political representation, or disbandment, and whether the level of analysis is a subpopulation or the aggregated population. Even though conclusions about causal relationships cannot be drawn from the analyses, the results all indicate that corporative institutions have important implications for population development. In regard to formation, they seem to stabilize and limit the population. The societal factors and population mechanisms did affect the formation rates as expected, but the corporative institutions may dampen these effects. The population remained relatively stable in the period under investigation. In relation to the political representation, the corporative institutions also seem to have a stabilizing effect. The administrative arena – where the corporative institutions play the greatest role – showed to be the most conservative arena regarding spill-over effects from the formation stage to representation in political arenas. Finally, corporative institutions also stabilize the population in regard to disbandment, as they create a virtuous circle for the privileged groups that have a higher chance of survival compared to the groups that are not privileged.

All in all, the expectations in the dissertation are largely confirmed. The societal mechanisms from the top and bottom of the political system and the population mechanisms, legitimation, and competition, appear to affect how the population develops with respect to formation, political representation, and disbandment. Additionally, the corporative institutions of the Danish system may moderate the effects. The empirical evidence suggests that the effect of both the societal mechanisms and population mechanism may be dampened by the corporative institutions, even though no causal relationships can be established due to the characteristics of the analyses. Even though Danish corporatism is often considered to be in decline, this dissertation shows that the Danish interest group population may still be shaped by the corporative institutions. This suggests that the effects of such institutions on interest group populations are persistent and may mark the composition of the population for years after they have weakened. They should therefore have a more prominent place in the literature on interest group populations and interest group representation in general. This is discussed further in the last chapter.

## Chapter 6: Conclusion, discussion, and implications of the dissertation

The composition of interest group populations has important implications for the quality of democracy, as interest groups represent one of the most important links between citizens and policymakers. However, the composition of an interest group population is a difficult concept to investigate, as there is no straightforward way to evaluate whether or not the composition of groups in the population reflects the composition of the interests in society. The questions concerning bias and diversity in the composition of interest group populations are crucial, as many interest groups have been shown to have political influence. This dissertation therefore focuses on the dynamics of interest group populations – how a population develops over time – to obtain a handle on the degree of bias or diversity in an interest group population over time. This dynamic component of interest group populations has received little attention, both theoretically and empirically, in the interest group literature.

The central claim of the dissertation is that population mechanisms and societal factors can explain how a population develops and that corporative institutions moderate these effects, thereby stabilizing and limiting the population. The effect of institutions, such as corporatism, is a largely neglected factor in the studies of the composition of interest group populations and representation patterns more broadly. The claim made here is investigated by focusing on the development of the Danish interest group population over more than three decades.

Three important events shape the development of a population: the formation, political representation, and disbandment of interest groups. These concepts were investigated both separately and together in the papers comprising the dissertation. Furthermore, the development concepts were examined at both the aggregated level on the total population of Danish interest groups – including both the groups that are politically active and the groups that are not – as well as on the subpopulation of the Danish patient groups.

The central finding that binds the papers comprising the dissertation together is that the corporative institutions appear to have an impact on how the Danish interest group population is shaped and develops over time. The

empirical evidence suggested that both the societal factors and population mechanisms have effects on the three development concepts, even though these effects are difficult to disentangle due to the characteristics of the analyses. The analyses further suggest that the corporative institutions may moderate these effects, thereby contributing to stabilizing and limiting the population. Drawing causal conclusions about this would require a direct comparison with a pluralist case. However, it was theoretically expected that the corporative institutions would structure and limit the population, and the Danish population was found to have been relatively stable, even over a period of more than three decades.

In regard to formation, the aggregated population has experienced moderate growth; from 2,005 groups in 1976 to 2,543 groups in 2010. This growth is not comparable to the interest group explosion that many, especially American, scholars have discussed. There appears to be a common assumption in the literature that the number of interest groups has exploded, especially in the US (Jordan et al., 2012: 144). Nownes and Neeley (1996), Salisbury (1992), and Baumgartner and Leech (1998:102) all conclude that there has been a dramatic rise in the number of interest groups in the US since the 1960s. Jordan and Maloney (2007) conclude the same for the UK, while Jordan and Greenan (2012) find more stability in their study of the UK. In any case, such an explosion has not occurred in Denmark.

In the Danish system, especially the economic groups, such as the unions and business groups, have a lengthy history of institutionalized cooperation with the state through corporative committees. This has connected them closely to the political decision-making process, especially with respect to labor market-related questions and industry policies. Traditionally, the economic groups have occupied a considerable share of the population. The analyses showed that this was also the case in 1975, where they occupied as much as 71 percent of the population. Due to societal developments, such as the growth of the welfare state, the emergence of new values, and demographic changes, the citizen groups were expected to gain more ground over time. These expectations found support, but even though the citizen groups have gained more ground, as they almost doubled their number, the economic groups remain in majority in the population in 2010 (58 percent of the population). The composition of the interest group population that was dominant in the 1970s, where the corporative institutions were very strong, seems to stick for years after the corporative institutions have declined. This indicates that the corporative institutions may moderate and dampen the effect of the societal factors, even though firm conclusions cannot be drawn.



In the same way, the results also indicate that the corporative institutions may moderate the effects of the population mechanisms on the formation of groups in the subpopulation of Danish patient groups. The formation pattern in this subpopulation appeared as expected by the theory of density dependence with a rise in the founding rate due to legitimation effects followed by a decrease in the founding rate due to competition effects. As discussed, the density dependence theory does not predict anything about the timing of these events. Keeping this in mind, the empirical evidence could be interpreted as a delayed density dependence mechanism. The population mechanisms set in around 1980, which coincides with the decline of the corporative institutions. This possibly reflects how the corporative institutions also moderate the effects of the population mechanisms on the development of the subpopulations. Whether this is the case or not, the finding that the theories about population mechanisms also work in a Danish context has implications for the literature about interest groups populations. Theories about population mechanisms have not previously been applied to corporative contexts, but this dissertation shows that they can be used to explain the development in contexts other than the pluralist context.

Moving from formation to political representation, the corporative institutions were found to have a stabilizing and preserving effect on the pattern of political representation. The formation pattern discussed above spilled over to the pattern of political representation in the media arena and in the parliamentary arena, while the pattern of representation did not spill over to the administrative arena, where the corporative institutions are central. The corporative institutions appear to leave a mark on the composition of the population that sticks for decades after the decrease of these institutions.

The stabilizing and preserving effects of corporative institutions were possibly most pronounced and directly observable with respect to disbandment. The most important predictor for whether a group disbanded or survived from the 1970s until today was whether or not it had seats in corporative boards or committees. The stability finding is further underlined by the finding that almost half of the Danish groups survived in an almost unchanged form from 1975 to 2010. The corporative institutions create a virtuous circle for the privileged groups, as they have a higher chance of survival than the non-privileged groups.

This stability pattern was recurring through all of the analyses of the dissertation. This yields support to the central claim of the dissertation – that the effects of societal factors and population mechanisms on population development are moderated by the corporative institutions, which thereby contribute to stabilizing and limiting the population. The findings point to the

corporative structures as an explanation for the stability of the population, even though this cannot be concluded definitively. The corporative structures appear to have an impact on which groups form, which ones gain political representation, and which disband. Even though many studies have suggested that the corporative structures in Denmark are declining (Christiansen et al., 2010; Rommetvedt et al., 2013; Öberg et al., 2011) or at least adapting to societal changes (Binderkrantz and Christiansen, 2015), there would appear to be a kind of “institutional stickiness” in the Danish system, as it is still very structured and stable, as could be expected in a system with a high degree of corporatism.

The dissertation’s results indicate that the corporative structures possibly play a role for the development of the population regarding formation, political representation, and disbandment. Previous studies of interest group populations and representation patterns more broadly have largely neglected this important explanatory factor, as most studies have been conducted on the American case or on other cases with a pluralist system. The focus on variations in the institutional frame has therefore been limited, such as whether the system is corporative or pluralist. A focus on the institutional frame within which interest group populations work is important, as this dissertation suggests that corporative institutions may not merely affect the composition of the interest group population, but also that these effects seem to stick for decades after the institutions have declined. That the corporative institutions matter for the development of interest group populations implies that the state has an effective tool with which to adjust the composition of interest group populations. It is the prerogative of the state to invite interest groups to participate in the corporative boards and committees. In this manner, the state can also affect the composition by deciding which groups to invite in and thereby affect the level of diversity in the representation pattern.

Whether the corporative institutions contribute to more or less diversity in an interest group population is a question that requires further investigation. This dissertation showed how there is greater diversity in the Danish interest group population today than in the 1970s and that the corporative structures may limit and stabilize the population, for instance by dampening the spillover effect from formation to representation in political arenas and creating more favorable living conditions for the groups already enjoying a privileged position. This can be interpreted as the corporative structures thereby limiting the diversity of the population. However, this may not necessarily be the case. On the contrary, the corporative institutions may also work in the opposite direction and increase diversity in political representation. Obviously, this depends on which groups the state privileges. Some of the less resourceful

groups that may have very limited opportunities in pluralist systems with a “free market” for political representation may be granted a privileged position in a corporative system and thereby gain a chance of being heard despite limited resources (Christiansen, 2015). This question is outside the scope of this dissertation, but it should be stressed that the presence of corporative institutions does not necessarily imply less diversity in the population.

The investigation of how the corporative structures moderate the effects of societal factors and population mechanisms is one of the main contributions made by this dissertation. This contribution has both theoretical and empirical elements. Regarding the theoretical element, the literature review showed how there was a lack of studies that established theoretically based explanatory frameworks and stated theoretically based expectations to how interest group populations develop over time. The dissertation makes an important theoretical contribution in terms of the development of a theoretical model for how societal factors and population mechanisms affect population development, theoretically arguing that these effects are moderated by the corporative institutions. Societal factors and population mechanisms alike have previously been investigated regarding both interest group formation and mobilization, but the effects of the corporative institutions, and institutions in general, have been largely neglected in the literature about interest group populations and representation patterns in general. By bringing these three factors together in a theoretical framework that explains population development, the dissertation has made a theoretical contribution to the literature on interest groups. Future research should incorporate the effects of such institutions when investigating the development of interest group populations.

With respect to the empirical aspects, the dissertation has tested the theoretical framework on the unique datasets of the Danish interest group population that contains information about the population, characteristics, and behavior of the Danish interest groups between 1975 and 2010. The empirical findings suggest that the societal factors and population mechanisms explain the development of the Danish interest group population and indicate that the corporative structures may moderate these effects even though no causal conclusions can be drawn. The review of the literature showed that there is a lack of studies empirically investigating other contexts than the pluralistic one. This dissertation has contributed with knowledge about how an interest group population in an alternative institutional environment develops and how the institutional structures may affect the development. Furthermore, the dissertation has given a unique empirical overview of how a total population, including both groups that are politically active

and those that are not, develops over more than three decades. To my knowledge, no studies have done this before. In this light, the dissertation has also made an important empirical contribution. Future research could continue this stream of empirical research by directly comparing the development of a population of groups in a pluralist system with the development of a corporative population. This would provide opportunity to conclude more firmly on the effects of the corporative institutions.

A last point worth discussing is whether the findings here can be generalized to settings outside of Denmark. The Danish case is most immediately comparable to the other Scandinavian countries with the same kind of Scandinavian corporatism. It seems plausible that the interest group populations of countries such as Sweden and Norway have undergone the same development and are also formed, limited, and stabilized by the corporative structures resembling those of the Danish system (Christiansen et al., 2010; Rommetvedt et al., 2013; Öberg et al., 2011). However, the theoretical argument made here may also be applicable to countries beyond Scandinavia. Both the societal factors and the population mechanisms are general concepts that can be expected to affect population development in many different political systems. As mentioned in Chapter 4, the scope conditions for the Danish case in many ways resemble those of other Western European countries, which suggests that the same effects could be found here. With respect to the institutional structures, the argument about the corporative institutions might seem customized to the Scandinavian cases. However, the involvement of interest groups in the corporative boards and committees can also be seen as a case of more broad privileged inclusion of interest groups, and this takes place – to varying degrees – in almost all political systems (Pallesen, 2006; Winter, 1984). This suggests that the findings may travel beyond the Scandinavian cases. On this note, the finding here that the theories on population mechanisms developed to the pluralist context also apply to the Danish context suggests that the differences between these systems may not be as great as often assumed. In more general terms, this dissertation shows how the institutional frames of a political system affect the dynamics of representation. This more general insight can probably travel to other political systems beyond the Danish and Scandinavian cases.

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## English summary

This dissertation investigates how populations of interest groups develop over time and whether population mechanisms, societal factors, and corporative institutions can explain this development. How interest group populations develop and which factors explain this development are important questions with implications for the quality of democracy. The answers to these questions can provide indication of the degree of bias and diversity in interest group populations. Earlier studies have especially focused on drawing snapshots of the composition of interest group populations and not on the dynamics and development of populations. The dissertation attempts to fill this gap in the literature by investigating the development of a total interest group population.

As the development of interest group populations has received limited attention in the interest group literature, a theoretical framework is required with theoretical expectations to how interest group populations develop and thorough empirical investigations of this concept. Inspired by classical perspectives on interest groups as well as newer approaches, the dissertation sets up such a theoretical framework. The central claim is that societal factors and population dynamics can explain how a population develops and that corporative institutions moderate the effects of these variables, thereby stabilizing and limiting the population. The effect of institutions, such as corporatism, is a largely neglected factor in the studies of interest group populations and representation patterns more generally. The claim is investigated by focusing on the development of the Danish interest group population over more than three decades. Denmark is traditionally considered to have a corporative system and therefore offers an excellent case for investigating the claim of the dissertation.

Three important events shape the development of a population: the formation, political representation, and disbandment of interest groups. The three development concepts are investigated separately and in combination in the four papers comprising the dissertation. Furthermore, the development concepts are investigated on two levels. First, at the aggregated level – the total population of Danish interest groups – including both groups that are politically active and groups that are not; second, on the subpopulation level, the subpopulation of Danish patient groups.

The results compiled in the dissertation indicate that the corporative structures may play a role for population development with respect to formation, political representation, and disbandment. Both the societal factors

and population mechanisms have an impact on the three development concepts. The analyses further suggest that the corporative institutions may moderate these effects, thereby contributing to stabilizing and limiting the population. As expected, the corporative structures appear to structure and limit the population, possibly explaining why the Danish population has been relatively stable over more than three decades.

The dissertation suggests that the corporative structures are important for the development of the population, as they may moderate the effects of both population mechanisms and societal factors. Previous studies of interest group populations have largely neglected the institutional frames of populations, as most studies have been conducted on the American case or other cases marked by pluralism. In this way, there has been little focus on variations in the institutional frame. A focus on the institutional frames of interest group populations is important. This dissertation suggests that corporative institutions may not only affect the composition of interest group populations but also that they may leave a mark that may stick for decades after the corporative institutions have declined.

## Dansk resume

Denne afhandling undersøger, hvordan populationer af interessegrupper udvikler sig over tid, og om populationsmekanismer, samfundsmæssige faktorer og korporative institutioner kan forklare udviklingen. Hvordan interessegruppepopulationer udvikler sig, og hvilke faktorer der kan forklare udviklingen er vigtige spørgsmål med implikationer for demokratiets kvalitet. Svarene på disse spørgsmål kan give os en indikation af graden af skævvridning og diversitet i interessegruppepopulationer. Tidligere studier har især fokuseret på at tegne øjebliksbilleder af interessegruppepopulationers sammensætning og har ikke fokuseret på dynamikkerne i, og udviklingen af, disse populationer. Denne afhandling forsøger at udfylde dette hul i litteraturen ved at undersøge udviklingen af en total interessegruppepopulation.

Da interessegruppepopulationers udvikling ikke har fået meget opmærksomhed i interessegruppelitteraturen, er der behov for en teoretisk ramme med teoretiske forventninger til, hvordan interessegruppepopulationer udvikler sig samt grundige empiriske undersøgelser af dette fænomen. Inspireret af både klassiske og nyere tilgange til studiet af interessegrupper fremsætter afhandlingen en sådan teoretisk ramme. Det centrale argument er, at samfundsmæssige faktorer og populationsmekanismer kan forklare, hvordan en population udvikler sig, og at korporative institutioner modererer effekterne af disse variable og dermed stabiliserer og begrænser populationen. Tidligere studier af interessegruppepopulationer, og repræsentationsmønstre mere generelt, har ikke fokuseret på effekterne af institutioner som f.eks. korporatisme. Argumentet er undersøgt ved at fokusere på den danske interessegruppepopulations udvikling over mere end tre årtier. Det danske politiske system bliver traditionelt betragtet som et korporativt system, og dette er derfor en god case at undersøge afhandlingens argument på.

Tre vigtige begivenheder former en populations udvikling: interessegruppers opståen, deres politiske repræsentation og deres opløsning. Disse tre begivenheder undersøges både sammen og hver for sig i afhandlingens fire papirer. Ydermere undersøges begivenhederne på to niveauer. Først på det aggregerede niveau på den totale danske interessegruppepopulation, med både interessegrupper der er politisk aktive og grupper der ikke er. Derefter på subpopulationsniveau på populationen af danske patientgrupper.

Afhandlingens resultater indikerer, at de korporative strukturer kan spille en rolle for populationens udvikling i forhold til gruppernes opståen, politiske repræsentation og opløsning. Både de samfundsmæssige faktorer og populationsmekanismerne har effekter på de tre begivenheder. Derudover anty-

der analyserne også, at de korporative institutioner kan moderere disse effekter og dermed bidrage til at stabilisere og begrænse populationen. Som forventet kan de korporative institutioner dermed strukturere og begrænse populationen, og dette kan bidrage til at forklare, hvorfor den danske population har været så relativt stabil gennem mere end tre årtier.

Afhandlingens konklusion er, at korporative strukturer er vigtige for populationers udvikling, da de kan moderere effekterne af både populationsmekanismer og samfundsmæssige faktorer. Tidligere studier af interessegrupppopulationer har stort set ikke interesseret sig for interessegrupppopulationers institutionelle rammer, da de fleste studier undersøger den amerikanske case, eller andre cases der er præget af pluralisme. Derfor har der ikke været meget fokus på variationer i de institutionelle rammer. Et fokus på interessegrupppopulationers institutionelle rammer er vigtigt, da afhandlingen viser, at de korporative strukturer kan have konsekvenser for populationers sammensætning, og at de efterlader sig aftryk i årtier efter de korporative institutioners storhedstid.