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The Role of NGOs in Norwegian-European Relations

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Preface

This project is sponsored by The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Norway and concerns the role of Norwegian non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in European policies. The authors would like to thank the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for financial support and guidance, the persons we have interviewed and the persons who have provided valuable comments on earlier draft versions of this report.

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Summary

The aim of this study is to provide a better understanding of the role of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the relationship between the NGOs and the Norwegian government, in the issue area of European policies. Two ongoing processes form the background for this project: On the one hand, the Norwegian government is attempting to strengthen the involvement of NGOs in national policy-making in relation to EEA/EU policies. On the other hand, EU has initiated a process in order to improve and develop its relationship with NGOs at the European level. Although these processes are independent of each other, there are parallels and possible connections in some areas.

In chapter 1, we present the analytical framework and formulate the research questions this report attempts to answer. They include the following questions: What forms of interaction exists between Norwegian NGOs and the Norwegian government in the issue area of EEA/EU policies? To what degree, and in which forms, do Norwegian NGOs interact with European NGOs? And how is the relationship between European NGOs and the EU institutions developing? These are the main questions in this study. 27 interviews with representatives of NGOs, Norwegian ministries and the EU have been conducted in order to provide some answers to these questions. Chapter 1 also defines what we mean by a NGO. In this study a “NGO” is defined as a non-commercial organisation independent of the state, all though they may receive grants. NGOs selected for this study are organisations with an interest in the outcome of EU policy processes, mainly pursuing ideal or altruistic interests, not only personal interests of their members.

In chapter 2, we develop the theoretical approach for the study. Taking different normative democratic theories (competitive pluralist democracy, participatory democracy and deliberative democracy) as the starting point, we discuss criteria for legitimate NGO participation as well as limits of NGO participation within the constraints of liberal democracy. How can we justify NGO participation in policy-making without entering into conflict with the principle of “one-man one-vote”? Two principles for NGO representation in policy making are identified as possible ways to reconcile liberal democracy with such representation. We conclude that NGO participation should be supplemental and subordinated the institutions of liberal democracy, but that NGO participation is legitimate if it is functional in achieving stipulated public objectives, or if it contributes to openness, accessibility and inclusiveness.

Chapter 3 presents the Norwegian NGOs included in this study and their European connections. 30 links between these organisations and European umbrella organisations have been detected. But only two Norwegian NGOs have established an office in Brussels. There are reasons to believe that Norwegian NGOs are less active in the European arena than their counterparts in EU member states: Many NGOs lack the competence level and/or the interest, necessary to participate actively in European affairs. An indication of this is the absence of Norwegian NGOs at the European level in important policy areas such as gender, the elderly, asylum and anti-poverty. In

addition some European umbrella organisations only admit NGOs from EU member countries. Finally the Norwegian NGOs lack the advantage of having national representatives and employees in EU institutions.

Chapter 4 takes a closer look at the relationship between Norwegian NGOs and the Norwegian government in the issue area of EEA/EU. The chapter looks at three ministries with frequent contacts with NGOs; the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Social Affairs. The Ministry of Environment seems to have the most developed and efficient organisation handling NGOs in relation to European issues. The ministry established regular half-year meetings with NGOs on EEA/EU matters in 1997. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is viewed by most NGOs in this study as more hierarchical, more formal, and less interested and including towards NGOs. However, the ministry has started a process to improve its relationships with NGOs. It has recently launched a package of proposals with the intent of increasing the participation and influence of NGOs, both domestically and in the EU. The Ministry of Social Affairs' handling of NGOs is judged to be a bit more flexible than the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but not as efficient as the Ministry of Environment. NGOs seem to be most integrated in the area of disabled, and less in the area of drugs and alcohol and the elderly.

Chapter 5 summarises the findings in the previous chapters in accordance with the analytical framework developed in chapter 1. It further discusses how the EFTA-EEA status of Norway may affect the relationship between NGOs and the Norwegian government. It is pointed out that in contrast to the EU, there are yet few national consultation forums where NGOs can voice their opinion on EEA/EU issues. The (re)structuring of the relationships between EU and NGOs, seems to affect the relationship between national authorities and NGOs in Norway. As the NGO-relations become more structured in the EU system, one will expect that official Norwegian representatives refer to similar consultation mechanisms and codes of conduct, and Norwegian NGOs represented in European umbrella organisations.

To some degree participation of Norwegian NGOs at the European level may compensate for the EEA countries reduced access to and influence on EU policies compared to member countries: European umbrella organisations may give Norwegian NGOs access to information on on-going policy processes which the Norwegian government has limited, or no access to. After a formal act is proposed by the Commission, and before the act is finally approved by the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament, the Norwegian government has limited access and even less influence on the EU policy process. However, Norwegian NGOs may, as members of European umbrella organisations, have better access to information, and they are free to lobby EU institutions as part of an influential umbrella organisation. At certain stages of the EU policy-making process, NGOs in non-member countries like Norway may, in other words, have a wider access to information than their national governments. NGOs in member countries lack this relative advantage with regard to their national governments. This potential vis-à-vis the national government should be an incentive for Norwegian NGOs to participate more active at the European level.

Chapter 6 presents our proposals for developing stronger relationships between government and NGOs in Norway. NGOs argued that the Norwegian Government's proposals to improve relations with NGOs fail to address an important issue: The need to improve the *dialogue* between the government and the NGOs on EEA/EU issues. None of the ministries in our study uses NGO participation in analysis and agenda-setting through multi-stakeholder groups, round tables and commissions in the preparatory stage of decision-making in the issue area of EEA/EU. If the goal is to contribute to participatory and deliberative democracy, the government should consider how to include NGOs in formats which allows for a sincere exchange of thoughts and ideas. In many instances "consultations" are not sufficient to avoid declaratory exchanges of comments and reiteration of already decided policies, and enhance learning in a true deliberative and exploratory way. The ministries should allow NGOs to participate in analysis and agenda-setting. It is important to create settings and an environment which makes true and sincere dialogue possible.

1 Introduction

The aim of this study is to better understand the relationship between the Norwegian government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in the issue area of European policies, and the role of NGOs in Norwegian-European relations. Norway is not a member of the European Union (EU). Without membership in the EU, it is an undisputed fact that Norwegian authorities and NGOs have less influence in the EU than member countries. Two times, the Norwegian people have rejected membership in the union in referendums (in 1972 and 1994). In 1972, 53.5 per cent voted no and in 1994, 52.2 per cent. This divide has cut through the Norwegian people and most political parties and organisations. It has, no doubt, weakened the interest in European matters, and made it harder to discuss and engage in questions concerning European policies and development without turning it into a new debate on Norwegian membership in the EU. As we will later argue, this may also affect the engagement in European policies by Norwegian NGOs.

The European Economic Area (EEA) agreement, signed in 1992, regulates the formal relationship between Norway and the EU. The negotiations between EFTA and the EU began in 1990. At that time, EFTA numbered six members: Austria, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland. The motivation behind the EEA was the EU initiative to create a single market and the wish to secure access to the European market without becoming a member of the European Union.

It is, however, a different EEA and also a different EU today than was initially envisaged. Austria, Finland and Sweden are now members of the EU. Switzerland chose not to be part of the EEA agreement, thus making Iceland, Norway and from May 1995, Liechtenstein the only EFTA-EEA states. Also the EU itself has changed. The monetary union, new competences in foreign, security and defence policy and justice and the increased power of the European Parliament are some of the changes that have taken place. Moreover, the process of enlargement of the EU into Central and Southern Europe, the Lisbon process and the Convention on the future of Europe are ongoing processes that will imply significant changes the EU in the near future (Emerson et al. 2002).

1.1 Background for the study

There are two processes, in particular, which form the background for this study. On the one hand, the Norwegian government is attempting to increase the national interest, knowledge level and participation among its citizens and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) with regard to the EEA agreement, and towards the EU. On the other hand, EU has initiated a process in order to improve and develop its relationship with NGOs. Although these processes are independent of each other, there are parallels and possible connections in some areas. We shall address these processes in turn.

1.1.1 Increasing Norwegian participation within the EEA Agreement

Being aware of the fact that public opinion polls show no signs of a fundamental and stable shift in Norwegian attitudes towards membership in the EU, the Governments focus has been on how to utilise the possibilities existing *within* the EEA agreement (European Policy Platform 2002 of the Norwegian Government). The present Government is a coalition between three parties, where the majority of the members in two of them, the Liberal Party (*Venstre*) and the Christian Democratic Party (*Kristelig Folkeparti*), are opposed to Norwegian membership in the EU. The Conservative Party (*Høyre*) is in favour of membership. The government has stated that it will resign if the issue of EU membership is again put on the political agenda. However, the opposition is equally divided both within and between the parties. The opposition, therefore, has agreed with the Governments approach on the issue of EU. Thus, the former government took the same approach, stressing the EEA agreement as the foundation of Norway's relationship with the EU. In the White Paper *Norway and Europe at the Dawn of a New Century* (St.meld. nr. 12, 2000-2001), the former Labour (*Arbeiderpartiet*) government described the chosen strategy the following way:

The EFTA-countries have no formal say in the internal decision-making in the EU. They have, however, the opportunity to participate in the preparatory work on rules that are relevant for inclusion in the EEA agreement. The Government stresses the importance of utilising the opportunities given by the EEA agreement in this phase. Improvements can still be made in the internal co-ordination of Government branches, in order to secure the broadest possible foundation for the development of Norwegian positions, by entering into a dialogue with interest groups and external environments, and by carrying it through as broad and open as possible in all phases of management (St.meld. nr. 12, 2000-2001:14)¹.

The White Paper concluded that the Government would take a closer look at the way interest organisations and other affected groups are consulted in the preparatory phase, and also the routines for making information available (St.meld. nr. 12, 2000-2001:97). In the parliamentary debate following the White Paper, the Government was asked to evaluate the democratic processes in relation to the EEA agreement with the aim of making these more open, accessible and inclusive. Moreover, the Government was asked to create an economic support mechanism where interest organisations could apply for economic support in order to increase their own competence in EU matters

¹ Translation by the authors.

and strengthen their participation and influence in relation to EU (Innst. S. nr. 239, 2000-2001)².

February 21 2002 Prime Minister Bondevik's second Government issued *The European Policy Platform – Challenges, Goals and Measures*. The platform (point 4.5.3) contained specific measures related to the civil society which included

- improving the exchange of information and co-operation between civil society and the government,
- supporting the NGO's efforts to create European networks,
- establishing a "European Political Forum" where NGOs are invited to discuss issues related to EU and EEA together with representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
- establishing similar forums in other ministries,
- widening the criteria for economic support to NGOs involved in European cooperation projects,
- considering joining the European Action Program Promoting European Non-Governmental Organisations,
- considering providing offices for NGOs at the Mission of Norway to the European Union in Brussels³.

In April 2002, the new Government presented the white paper on the EEA agreement (St.meld. nr. 27, 2001-2002), as part of the follow-up of the questions raised by Parliament on the white paper on EU policy (St.meld. nr. 12, 2000-2001). The government has stated that it intends to present a White Paper on the functioning of the EEA agreement once every year.

1.1.2 Improving NGO relationships in the EU

The EU has a long tradition of cooperation with NGOs (Prodi and Kinnock 2000, Pavan-Woolfe and Kröger 2001). We will present some of the most recent initiatives taken, most notably the discussion paper by Prodi and Kinnock (2000), and the processes in relation to the *White Paper on European Governance* (Commission of the European Communities, 2001).

2 One of the reasons that the white paper treated these issues was a "private proposal" from three members of Parliament in 2000, where they asked the Government to explore how to secure greater openness and stronger and broader influence for affected interests in the preparatory phase within the framework of the EEA agreement (Dok. nr. 8:88, 1999-2000). The proposal was supported by all political parties in the Committee of Foreign Affairs (Innst. S. nr. 13, 2000-2001). Furthermore, the Committee asked the Government to present a white Paper on the functioning of the EEA agreement on a yearly basis. The Committee also underlined the necessity of more information and greater legitimacy in the work on EEA issues among the public (Innst. S. nr. 13, 2000-2001).

3 We return to these proposals in chapter 4.

On 18 January 2000, the Commission approved a Commissions Discussions Paper, presented by President Prodi and Vice-President Kinnock, called *The Commission and Non-Governmental Organisations: Building a stronger partnership*.⁴ The purpose of the paper was two-fold: To give an overview of the existing relationships between the Commission and NGOs and some current problems, and second, to suggest possible ways of developing and strengthening these relationships (Prodi and Kinnock, 2000:2). The background for the paper was described in the following way:

Over the last two decades, the partnership between the European Commission and NGOs has expanded on all fronts. This intensification has covered a range of issues, from policy dialogue and policy delivery, to project and programme management, both within the EU and in its partner countries. It results from a number of interwoven factors, related both to changes and developments within the EU institutions themselves, as well as to developments within the NGO Community. As the European Commission has acquired additional responsibilities in a number of new policy areas, this has been matched by an ever-increasing number of NGOs operating within and outside Europe and a widening in the scope of their work. This trend can be seen in the increasing number of national NGOs creating or joining European associations and networks often based in Brussels. With the enlargement of the EU on the not too distant horizon, and the increased public scrutiny of EU affairs, there is no reason to believe that this process will slow down, rather the contrary.

The paper gives a good description of the changing relationship between the Commission and NGOs. NGO representatives are being consulted and included in dialogue and discussion in a number of policy areas. NGOs and networks have been established or selected in order to provide information, experience and expertise, and some Directorates-Generals have established specific frameworks for dialogue. Moreover, EU funds a number of NGO-led activities within the Community and abroad, which are coherent with and contribute to the implementation of EC policies. Still, however, the discussion paper identifies a number of problems in the relationships between the Commission and NGOs where co-operation could usefully be improved:

- Co-operation with NGOs is organised by policy areas (environment, social affairs, humanitarian and development aid, trade etc) implying considerable differences in the relationship between NGOs and the Commission from one sector to another with regard to access to information, the way dialogue and consultation is organised and the availability of core-funding. While recognising the specificity of different sectors, most NGOs feel that there should be a greater effort at a coherent Commission-wide approach;

4 The report may be downloaded: http://europa.eu.int/comm/secretariat_general/sgc/ong/en/index.htm

- There is a lack of sufficient information for NGOs in particular on funding and financial procedures. Better guidance on application procedures and more comprehensible application forms would be much appreciated;
- The NGO sector is a dynamic one which is constantly evolving. Commission departments often find it difficult to follow this evolution. In particular they lack adequate information on the various NGOs with which they come into contact;
- Internal Commission procedures are often complex. Although the NGOs have on the whole welcomed the Commission's Vade-mecum on Grant Management as providing clear rules, they are concerned that emphasis on financial rigour will place an increasing burden on NGOs applying for funding⁵;
- As part of its overall policy on transparency, the Commission should provide better information for NGOs and improve communication with them as a means of building a true partnership (Commission Discussion paper; Prodi and Kinnock, 2000:6-7).

The Discussion Paper was described as “a first step in a process involving an extensive exchange of view with the NGO community”. Parallel to this, however, the relationships between the Commission and NGOs were extensively addressed in the preparatory work on the *White Paper on European Governance* which was issued by the Commission on 11 October 2000. The preparation of the White Paper was organised in 12 working groups. Working group 2A concentrated on “Consultation and Participation of Civil society”. As part of the working programme, the Working Group organised a series of hearings with representatives of stakeholder organisations, including the social partners and NGOs⁶. In the report from the Working Group, it was concluded that there are shortcomings in “current Commission consultation practices” (Pavan-Woolfe and Kröger, 2001). The following shortcomings were identified:

- Specific **consultation forums** (advisory committees, expert groups) have mushroomed: to date there exist roughly 700 of these bodies, the composition, activities and impact of which remain rather opaque. By their very nature, these forums provide privileged access to the Commission's policy-shaping process for a limited number of stakeholder organisations. A minimum requirement of transparent Governance will be to shed more light on these existing consultation mechanisms.
- Whether a consultation procedure is carried out in a meaningful manner is **too much dependent on the capacity of the individual Commission departments**. Whilst there are undoubtedly examples of excellency, appropriate guidance and

5 For a description of the Commission's Vade-mecum on Grant Management, see http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/youth/program/vadem_sub_en.pdf. The purpose of the Vade-mecum is to serve as a reliable reference guide for users receiving and managing grants from the EU.

6 For an overview of the consultations conducted for the preparation of the White Paper, see Governance Team (2001:SG/8533/01-EN).

assistance is lacking for those who are less experienced in running consultation processes.

- Excellency in consultation has not been exploited with a view to building an **institutional memory** of best practice.
- NGOs feel that their role is **insufficiently recognised** and that the Commission is often paying lip service to the need of improving the dialogue with civil society without providing the **guarantees needed for a stable framework** in this respect.

The White Paper on European Governance (2001) expressed some similar views on the existing Commission consultation practices: “There is currently a lack of clarity about how consultations are run and to whom the Institutions listen”. Thus, the Commission concluded that the Institutions and national authorities “must reinforce their efforts to consult better on EU policies”. And furthermore, what is needed is “a **reinforced culture of consultation and dialogue**” (Commission of the European Communities, 2001:16-17).

We shall return to the actual proposals from Prodi and Kinnock (2000), Working Group 2A (2001) and the Commission (2001) later. The point here is that the ongoing processes in the EU and the initiatives taken by the Norwegian Parliament and Government have similarities. Moreover, Norwegian authorities and Norwegian NGOs interact with the counterparts in the EU within the framework of the EEA agreement. It is yet unclear to what degree these processes can be seen together. We will, however, return to this question in chapter 5.

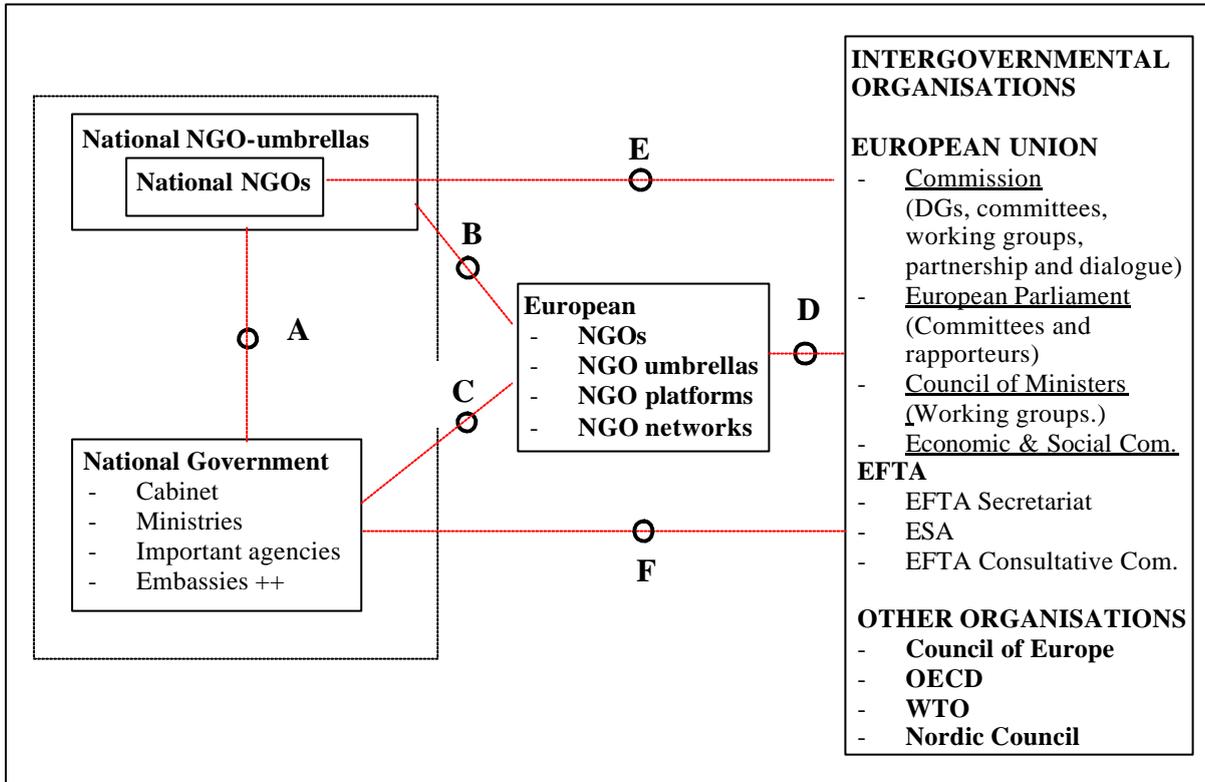
1.1.3 Analytical framework

As shown in figure 1.1, there are many possible ways of interaction between the different actors discussed so far. First, there is the interaction between Norwegian authorities and Norwegian NGOs (labelled A in the figure). Second, there is the interaction between Norwegian NGO and European NGOs, NGO umbrella organisations, platforms and networks (labelled B in the figure). Third, there is interaction between Norwegian authorities and European NGOs, NGO umbrella organisations, platforms and networks (labelled C in the figure). Fourth, there is the interaction between European NGOs, NGO umbrella organisations, platforms and networks and the EU and other intergovernmental organisations like EFTA, the Council of Europe and so on (labelled D in the figure). Fifth, there is the interaction between Norwegian NGOs and intergovernmental organisations (labelled E in the figure). Finally, there is the direct interaction between Norwegian authorities and the EU (labelled F in the figure).

There is also interaction, of course, between Norwegian authorities and the EU via intergovernmental organisations like EFTA, the EFTA Consultative Committee, and the Council of Europe and so on. For the sake of simplicity, however, we have omitted this interaction in the figure. This interaction will be seen as part of the interaction between Norwegian authorities and the EU. Having said that, it must be stressed that the main

focus in this study is the relationship between Norwegian authorities and Norwegian NGOs in the issue area of European policies, labelled A in figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1 Paths of interaction between the Norwegian government, Norwegian NGOs and their European counterparts.



It should be stressed that figure 1.1 shows *possible* ways of interaction. Once again, it is an empirical question, which we are now about to explore, to determine the strength and also depth of these interactions. Still, the figure shows the main actors in the issue area covered by this study.

The possible ways of interaction can also be seen as part of different strategies for national coordination of EEA/EU policies. Ove K. Pedersen (2002:167) differentiates between three ways national coordination can take place. The first he calls “the administrative” approach where there is no systematic attempt to include NGOs or other organisations. This is also called the “with-in-strategy” and implies that private interests, NGOs and other organisations for the most part are held outside the national coordination process. In our figure, this would imply a weak path of interaction or relationship in A.

The second approach is called “the pluralistic” approach. Here, there is interplay between authorities and private interests, NGOs and other organisations in the national coordination process. This is also called the “go-through-strategy”. This would imply a strong path of interaction or relationship in A.

The third approach is the “private”, where private interests, NGOs and other organisations go directly to the EU institutions (and also umbrella organisations and networks) without going through national authorities. This is also called the “by-pass-

strategy”. The activity is on the initiative of the NGOs, but regularly sponsored by public sources. In figure 1.1 this represents a strong path of interaction or relationship in B and E and implicitly D.

We will for the most part concentrate on relation A, B, D, and E. Relation C and F will be addressed when it is seen as relevant for subject matter of this study.

1.1.4 Main questions and problems

The main questions and problems addressed in this study can be summarized as follows:

- What are the relationships between NGOs and the Norwegian Government within the issue area of European policies? How can this be described? What forms of interaction exists, how do they function and how can they eventually be improved?
- To what degree do Norwegian NGOs interact with European NGOs, umbrella organisations, platforms and networks? What forms of interaction exists? Do Norwegian NGOs have access and opportunities to participate in NGO networks, platforms and umbrella organisations? How do these relationships function and how can they be improved?
- How is the relationship between European NGOs and the EU and EEA institutions developing? What can be learned from the processes in the EU in relation to NGO involvement and participation for the Norwegian case? Can some of the proposals in the EU be transferred to the Norwegian context? Will the processes and changes in the EU affect, indirectly or directly, the relationship between Norwegian authorities and Norwegian NGOs?

This last question will have no definite answer, but we will still discuss possible effects of the changes taking place in the EU for the relationship between Norwegian authorities and Norwegian NGOs. Moreover, while figure 1.1 map possible ways of interaction, it does not deliver any theoretical or normative perspectives for the study. The meanings of the terms civil society, democracy, participation and thus the role and function of NGOs, however, are not self-evident. They can be seen as “essentially contested concepts” (Connolly, 1983). Thus, there are different opinions as to the proper role and function of NGOs in a liberal-democracy. These questions get even more complicated when one moves to intergovernmental organisations and the EU. As Armstrong (2001:2) argues about the notion of a European “civil society”:

Not only can European civil society be interpreted in different ways it can be harnessed towards different theoretical projects from liberalism, through civic republicanism, through more recent “Third Way” constructions. Each approach has its own implications not only for the role of civil society itself, but also for the role of government. Thus it becomes clear that the rediscovery of civil society as means of connecting society to structures of governance is open to quite contrasting interpretations and which, in some variants, may have far reaching consequences for the transformation of governance structures themselves.

To describe, analyse and to better understand the ongoing processes and the views of the different political actors, both in Norway and EU, it is therefore necessary to clarify further different positions, opinions and views on the “proper” role of NGOs, and see how these positions are connected to different “theoretical projects”. This will be covered in chapter 2. Thus, chapter 2 further develops the analytical and theoretical approach for this study. The aim, however, is not to argue that one position is better than the other, but to develop a framework which is able to shed light on different positions and practises, and also to understand conflicts between authorities and NGOs on the substance of the relationships and how it should be organised.

In chapter 3, we will concentrate on a selected number of Norwegian NGOs and see how they work nationally and analyse their European connections in the issue area of European policies. Our hypothesis is that the EU and European policies are given a low priority among Norwegian NGOs. This is expected because of the polarisation on the issue of Norwegian membership in the EU, and because of the fact that Norway is not a member of the EU. On the other hand, however, the NGOs may utilise the new channels of influence which NGO umbrella organisations, networks and so on open up.

In chapter 4, we analyse the existing relationships between Norwegian authorities and Norwegian NGOs. We ask the questions: Who participates in what forms? Which interactions are typical? Can we identify typical patterns? Which information - and direction of – interaction is dominant? What are the typical experiences for NGOs regarding national authorities, and what are the typical experiences for national authorities regarding NGOs?

In chapter 5, we will try to draw together the findings in the previous chapters and discuss how the EFTA-EEA status affects the relationship between Norwegian NGOs and national authorities. Thus, we try to identify the implications of being a signatory state to the EEA agreement without being a member of the European Union.

In chapter 6, we present some suggestions for how to strengthen the relationships between the authorities and NGOs in the issue area of EEA/EU, based on the previous chapters.

1.2 Choices, limitations and data

It would be an impossible task to cover all NGOs in Norway. The subject matter, however, does not require such completeness. NGOs have different roles to play in a democracy, and not all of them are part of political processes which will be influenced by European developments. From the outset, therefore, we decided to focus on NGOs with a political, social, environmental or humanitarian cause for two reasons. First, the “social partners” seem better integrated in the political systems both nationally and in the EU. On the one hand, employer organisations, business organisations and trade unions have a long tradition of collective bargaining and representation, and have rights

and access to procedures, which in many cases are reserved for these organisations.⁷ On the other hand, trade unions and employer and business organisations have access to institutions and procedures which may pave the way for other NGO categories in the future. Thus, they will be referred to, but not fully included in the analysis⁸.

Second, we decided to study organisations pursuing *ideal interests*, opposed to the individual interests of their members, and organisations aiming for the *common good*, opposed to economic benefits or other government favours to particular projects or groups.⁹ By using these criteria we focus on organisations working for political causes. The advantage of this is that the government's treatment of these NGOs normally cannot be interpreted as a typical treatment of entities seeking special favours or permits. This way the relationship between the NGO and the government may be seen as an exchange of viewpoints, allowing us to study the relationship without checking for particularities within each and every NGO.

To be relevant for this study, the NGO must:

- Have a social, environmental, humanitarian or other political cause, which may be labelled an ideal interest.
- Be independent with regards to government interests and procedures. This does not exclude NGOs receiving grants from public sources as long as these sources do not interfere with the decisions, or agendas, of the NGOs.
- Be independent with regards to business entities, including units in the primary sector.
- Have an interest in the outcome of European political processes, or (at least) in national politics derived from European political processes.

⁷ The consultative committee in the EU and the so-called "European Agreements" in which the social partners get to decide matters without the normal legal procedures, are two examples.

⁸ In doing so, we follow the same approach as Prodi and Kinnock (2000:4) in the paper "The Commission and Non-Governmental Organisations: Building a stronger partnership". Although arguing that trade unions, business and professionals might also be considered to be non-governmental organisations, they limited their study to organisations active in the so-called "Third Sector, i.e. in the non-governmental and non-economic field". Prodi and Kinnock's (2000:3-4) definition of NGOs is very similar to the one we have chosen for this study. It contains the following characteristics of an NGO:

- NGOs are not created to generate personal profit. Although they may have paid employees and engage in revenue-generating activities they do not distribute profits or surpluses to members or management;
- NGOs are voluntary. This means that they are formed voluntarily and that there is usually an element of voluntary participation in the organisation;
- NGOs are distinguished from informal or ad hoc groups by having some degree of formal or institutional existence. Usually, NGOs have formal statutes or other governing document setting out their mission, objectives and scope. They are accountable to their members and donors;
- NGOs are independent, in particular of government and other public authorities and of political parties or commercial organisations;
- NGOs are not self-serving in aims and related values. Their aim is to act in the public arena at large, on concerns and issues related to the well being of people, specific groups of people or society as a whole. They are not pursuing the commercial or professional interests of their members.

⁹ The short-term goal of a NGO in this study may be state aid, or the elimination of a regulatory obstacle, as long as this is instrumental with regard to the main long-term goal, which must be ideal and a common good.

These criteria exclude political parties as they are closely linked to constitutional institutions and have important constitutional roles to play. Organisations engaged in international aid and rescue and relief operations, are excluded as they are less engaged in policies concerning the relationship between Norway and EU and have most of their international staff located in developing countries. Neither is organisations providing services to their members like organisations for car-owners, house-owners, people interested in literature, gardening or travelling considered relevant as they primarily focus on serving their members' individual interests.

The European Governance Team of the European Commission included five types of organisations under the term 'civil society'¹⁰:

1. Labour-market players
2. Organisations representing social and economic players
3. NGOs which bring people together in a common cause
4. Community-based organisations
5. Religious communities.

This study will focus on the organisations belonging to the third category. These types of organisations will hereafter be referred to only as "NGOs". Although this narrows the scope of the study quite effectively, it is still not sufficient. The number of NGOs is still so large, that it would be impossible to cover them all. We have, however, included all NGOs of this sort with at least one full time employee in a statistical overview in order to cover developmental trends within the NGO community. We selected organisations within the field of environmental issues, social issues and European issues, based on national importance, international engagement, number of members and possible interests for issues regarding the EU.

The data, which this study is based on, are of two types, written sources and interviews. The qualitative data in form of interviews with NGOs, bureaucrats and politicians were collected on two occasions. A first round of interviews was conducted in Brussels between the 6 and 9 of March 2002. A second round of interviews was conducted in Oslo between 13 and 16 of May 2002 (for the list of interviews, see appendix 5). In addition, we have gathered additional information by phone from organisations and ministries. Apart from the interviews and collection of additional information, the primary data source is written sources and extensive use of the Internet to gather information on the processes going on nationally and in the EU.

The next chapter further develops the analytical and theoretical approach for this study, and tries to handle the complexity of democratic theory and "theoretical projects" with

¹⁰ European Governance Working Group 2A report (June 2001), pages 910. The categories refer to descriptions first time presented in the ECOSOC opinion of 22 September 1999.

different views on the “proper” role of NGOs and civil society in relation to liberal-democracy and supranational politics.

2 The role of NGOs in national and supranational politics

There is a variety of democratic models and theories that differ fundamentally in what they identify as the core of democracy and democratic values (Dahl 1971, Liiphart 1984, Held 1987, Eriksen 1995, Dryzek 2000). Moreover, different schools of thought also disagree on the nature of participation, and as far as they address the issue, prescribe different roles for NGO participation in democratic processes. At the same time, it is an undisputed fact that organised interests have been part of the policy-making process for a long time. This participation has been contested, some claim that strong interest organisations have too much influence; others argue that organised interests has too little influence. The issue of the legitimacy of the relationships between organised interests and the institutions of liberal democracy, therefore, represent political, theoretical and normative challenges for modern society.

These challenges, however, are not limited to nation states. Organised interests and NGOs participate and play an important role in policy-making within the EU (Andersen and Eliassen 1993, Eliassen and Monsen 1997, Kohler-Koch 1997, Kohler-Koch and Quittkat 1999, Mazey and Richardson 2001). Moreover, interest organisations and NGOs have for a long time participated in international bodies, and the number of NGOs participating has exploded in the last decades. In 1948 there were 48 NGOs with consultative status in the UN. In 1998, the number was 1350 NGOs. At the same time, there has been a rise of international NGOs who are represented in many countries. Greenpeace is represented in 20 countries, Friends of the Earth in 50 and World Wildlife Fund is represented in 28 countries (Ostry, 2001).

Furthermore, NGOs increasingly participate in Treaty-monitoring and policy-making in institutions like the World Bank, ECOSOC, ITO, OECD, CBD, UNCED, and WTO. The participation includes *ad hoc* consultations, access to meetings, access to information, the possibility of circulating written statements, the possibility to speak at certain meetings and the right to propose items for the agenda of the body. Of the above bodies, participatory rights are most extensive in the UN bodies and least in the WTO (ICTSD, 1999). Thus, NGO participation is effectively spreading across borders and being transposed to the international level, and some are even talking about an emerging “global civil society” which provides variable channels of opportunity for political involvement by NGOs (Warkentin, 2001).

It is one thing to identify NGO participation; however, it is another thing to justify it. The aim of this chapter is threefold. First, we will discuss some possible justifications for NGO participation and legitimate limits on NGO participation, primarily in a national context. Second, we will briefly present and discuss the nature of participation within different schools of democratic thought, and identify different forms of participation by NGOs. Third, we will try to extract from the prior discussions the main differences and agreements, and use this as an analytical framework for the following

chapters. As such, this chapter will hopefully present the tools necessary to describe and interpret different views on participation and legitimacy of NGO participation in policy-making expressed by governmental bodies and NGOs.

In addition, however, we will describe some of the current changes that have taken place in the corporative arrangements in Norway. We will also describe some of the changes that have taken place in the NGO community over the last decades. This will be done in order to present a background for the study of the particular arrangements in the issue area of EEA/EU in the following chapters. Finally, we will look at the proposals and suggestions which have been made in the EU in order to improve the relationships with NGOs, in the context of different schools of democratic thought. The relationships with NGOs have, contrary to the Norwegian case, been quite thoroughly discussed in the EU and the debate is, in our opinion, highly relevant also for Norway.

It must be stressed once again that the point here is not to choose or pick one “correct” definition of democracy or participation. The goal is to better understand the underlying values that the actors reveal and the theoretical schools they can be associated with. Moreover, there is no “value-free” point from where democracy can be viewed. Thus, any choice so to speak, has a normative component. Therefore, the struggle about the nature of democracy is also part of the political process itself. This also includes the question of how to organise the relationships between the institutions of liberal democracy and organised interests, and the legitimacy of these relationships. Our point of departure, however, is to try to draw *implications* from different normative views on these issues.

2.1 The legitimacy of NGO participation and political design

The question of the legitimacy of the relationships between the institutions of liberal democracy and NGOs has been raised in different contexts and from different angles. As pointed out by both Anderson (1979) and Cawson (1983), interest group representation in national policy-making developed in a piecemeal manner in response to pressing policy problems. Only afterwards have there been attempts to justify this development from the perspective of normative democratic theory. At the outset and somewhat simplified, the problem can be stated as a conflict between two different principles of representation: The “numerical” or parliamentary channel reflected in institutions of liberal democracy representing “one-man one-vote”, and the channel of representation based on “affected”, “special” and “functional” interests or ideologies¹¹.

There is probably no single solution which can solve the conflict between these representational principles. In the following, however, we shall approach the problem in accordance with Anderson (1979), as a problem not only for empirical research, but also a question of normative analysis and a problem in applied or positive political theory. In

¹¹ It is simplified in the sense that the principle of “one-man, one-vote” usually is constrained by other considerations. In Norway, for instance, due to differences in regional representation in Parliament, some votes count more than others. This is done in order to secure a larger representation from the least populated and most peripheral areas of Norway.

its widest sense, this is an issue which touches upon the constitutional order of modern society. It is, according to Anderson (1979), a question of political design or architecture. As Egeberg (1990) argues, it is an issue which goes to the hearth of public domain, the principles for governance. Who can reasonably and legitimately decide what, when and how? Moreover, we shall also turn the table and approach the problem from the perspective of NGOs. When and under which conditions is it wise, reasonable and relevant for NGOs to participate? The question may seem abundant, but is, as we shall see, more complex than it may seem.

2.1.1 Reconciling liberal democracy and interest representation

The fundamental question for Anderson (1979) and Egeberg (1990) is how to reconcile principles for interest representation with the fundamental principles for liberal democracy. For both, the starting point of the discussion is the majority principle, or the sovereignty of the people. As Anderson (1979:276) states the core of liberal democracy: “The sovereign prerogative rests entirely with the people”. The representative institutions of liberal democracy, representing “one man one vote”, are fundamentally a relationship between the elected and the citizens. The canons of liberal democracy, therefore, “provide a ground for criticism of any structured relationship between interest organisations and the state in the process of policy-making” (Anderson, 1979:276). According to Anderson (1979:278), the relevant criteria to reconcile the core principle of liberal democracy with interest group politics are the following:

... to be compatible with democratic theory, interest group process must be shown to be (1) capable of generating policies that are in the public interest rather than the interest of some “faction” of the community, (2) impartial as among the interests present or potential in the community, (3) supplemental to the process of direct popular representation and not a substitute for it.

The question of what the “real” public interests are is a difficult one. None the less, within a system which does not produce something which at least can be viewed as in the public interest, each and everyone can be seen as “debased”, according to Anderson, if the rulers govern in their own self-interest. Competitive pluralist democracy offers one possible solution to the problem by balancing different competing interests. But as Anderson (1979:282) argues, interest group pluralism “does not provide a sufficient basis for a *policy* of interest representation”. It is simply not a plausible model of institutional design in a democratic society. The reasons are the following: It contains no principles for political design. It contains no principles for which interests are to be taken into account. It provides no criteria for the inclusion or exclusion of any association. It gives no guidelines for balancing different interests. It has no doctrine of “affected interests”. It is simply, according to Anderson (1979:285), a theory of group power. Thus, there is “no representative theory, no way of saying that this particular configuration of interests was entitled to participate in the formulation of this particular policy”.

Corporatist arrangements, however, are judged somewhat better by Anderson (1979). In fact, it is through the discussion of corporatism Anderson (1979) develops his criteria for reconciling interest group participation with liberal democracy. Although it may be

difficult to justify from democratic theory the rights given to business and labour to decide what are, in fact, public decisions, it is here the first step towards reconciliation is to be found:

While such structural influence for dominant economic groups is often offensive to democratic sensitivities, this does seem to be the one theory of corporatist representation which is compatible with democratic design. Interest administration is seen as an administrative instrument, a means for the achievement of public purposes. The problem of political design is to create institutions for the effective coordination of organisations which have a vital role to play in the execution of public policy or it is to design forums where in which putatively hostile or competitive interests will be caused to deliberate and arrive at a common policy. The interests that are appropriately represented are those that are essential to the achievement of a public purpose or those who overt conflict would be socially destructive. Such a conception of corporatist representation is consistent with the fundamental canons of democratic political design (Anderson, 1979:289).

From this, Anderson (1979:293) develops his criteria for the reconciling liberal democracy and interest group representation. Any coherent theory of political design must “contain both procedural and substantive principles”. The overall design criterion for interest representation is that “form follow function”. This implies that the criteria of design follows from what the institutions are supposed to do. The sovereign decision on what the public purposes are must rest with the people. Thus, “in a democratic order, interest representation is legitimate only insofar as it is instrumental to the achievement of stipulated public objectives”. From this, two basic principles are deduced:

The first is that the criterion of interest representation itself be embedded in a substantive standard for policy-making. The second is that the decisions taken by bodies structured on functional lines are not rendered legitimate by virtue of the principle of representation on which they are based but by the conformity of their decisions to some substantive criterion of public action. In designing systems of interest representation then, the first technical problem is to state the objectives of public purpose, the standards to which the propriety of policy decisions are to be measured, in such a way that the procedure for making decisions and the legitimate participants therein is logically entailed in the criterion of public policy itself. The system of representation is to be derived from the standards of justification for public action (Anderson, 1979:294).

Although Anderson (1979:291) argues that he has not developed a full fledged theory of interest representation in a democracy, his criteria none the less provide one possible way to justify NGO participation in policy-making, and thus a way to reconcile the principle of “one-man one-vote” and representation based on “special” interests, “functional” interests, “affected” interests or ideology. In Anderson’s (1979) perspective, interest representation is subordinated the parliamentary channel, and supplemental to it with the aim of being functional in achieving “stipulated public objectives”.

There are, however, some problems which can be further reflected upon. First, it is not always the case that “stipulated public objectives” are that clear. Political bargaining, compromises and deliberation does not necessarily produce well-defined public policies. Often, public objectives can be interpreted in different ways. On the one hand, therefore, the form of representation may not be easily deduced from its actual function. On the other hand, it is not sure that the state actually knows what it wants to do, nor how to do it. It seems reasonable, therefore, to differentiate between different stages of policy-making. Policy-making can be divided into different stages (preparatory phase – decision-making – implementation). There are, of course, decisions made in all phases of policy-making, what to include or not to include in the preparatory phase and so on, but the state is probably less likely to know what it wants in the preparatory phase. It makes sense, therefore, to analytically distinguish between these three stages of policy-making¹², and it can be argued that the relevance of Anderson’s (1979) criteria will vary depending upon the stage of policy-making.

Second, Anderson’s (1979) approach can be further developed by dividing between different modes of participation. Obviously, there are many ways in which NGOs can participate. In international bodies we have already mentioned *ad hoc* consultations, access to meetings, access to information, the possibility of circulating written statements, the possibility to speak at certain meetings and the right to propose items for the agenda of the body. Dalal-Clayton (1996:30) has developed a typology of participation in policy processes which can be seen as a continuum from weak to strong participation. It includes (1) listening only, (2) listening and giving information, (3) being consulted, (4) participation in analysis and agenda-setting, (5) participation in reaching consensus on the main strategy elements and (6) involvement in decision-making on the policy, strategy or its components¹³. Within each level, participation may be narrow with few actors or broad with many actors. Category 4-6 is labelled “participatory”, category 3 is labelled “strictly consultative” and category 1-2 is labelled “dominantly internal to Government” (Dalal-Clayton, 1996:30).

Third, there are other relevant criteria for including NGOs. Under circumstances where the “stipulated public objectives” are unclear, in the preparatory stage of policy formation and under less formalised arrangements, it can be argued that criteria like *openness, accessibility and inclusiveness* may be more appropriate criteria for design. It seems reasonable to argue that the relationships between authorities and interest organisations should be seen as a continuum from pluralist to corporatist arrangements. Thus, one might argue that the closer one comes to the final stages of decision-making, and the more formal the arrangement become, the more relevant the criteria developed by Anderson (1979) becomes.

Fourth, one may argue that the principle of “affected interests” is underplayed by Anderson (1979). Representation of interests can be based on functional, special, affected or ideological considerations. It can be argued, however, that “affected”

12 These stages are familiar and commonly used stages within the EU decision making process.

13 The typology is based on Bass, Dalal-Clayton and Pretty (1995).

interests represent a special category among interests. Although it can be difficult to define who the affected interests are, this does not make the principle less important (Egeberg, 1990:166). The more selective and narrow the public policy is, the greater possibility that some are more affected than other, and the more reasonable it becomes that these are secured greater influence (Egeberg 1981:23-25, Egeberg 1990:166). Thus, although a majority decision is seen as democratic and just, it is still reasonable to argue that one still should take into account the principle of affected interests, and that the principle of being instrumental to achieving stipulated public objectives must be weighted against the principle of affected interests. This can be said to be the case for the social partners and agricultural organisations in the EU. Moreover, if “affected” interests can be “properly” identified and they include only a limited number of actors, the principle of affected interests arguably must be weighted against the principles of openness, accessibility and inclusiveness.

Young (1989, 1990, 2000) goes as far as to argue that disadvantaged groups should have their own representatives, guarantees of consultation and veto power over policies that affect them¹⁴. This, however, raises a number of new problems and is difficult to reconcile with the canons of liberal democracy. It seems more reasonable, therefore, to argue that interest representation and interest participation based on “affected” interests should be supplemental to the process of direct popular representation and not a substitute for it (Anderson 1979, Cohen and Rodgers 1992, Hernes 1997), although “affected” interests may be said to represent a special case. Within this constraint, however, one may also argue that the state should play an active role in sponsoring and certifying groups, removing obstacles to participation, remedy inequalities of representation, and create channels and forums for participation where needed (Cohen and Rodgers 1992, Dryzek 2000).

Finally, if one assumes that “stipulated public objectives” not always are that clear, one might also object that Anderson’s (1979) criteria are too top-down oriented, where the state represents the supply side and interests organisations the demand side. The development of public policies, however, have also been explained as a result of the opposite relationship, where interest organisations in fact represent a supply side of problems and possible solutions which bureaucrats and politicians have their own interest in advancing (Hernes, 1997). Moreover, as also acknowledged by Anderson (1979), corporatist arrangements can create functional segments that in time become largely autonomous structures of power. They can generate their own logic and escape the control of voters, parties, legislators or the judiciary (Olsen, 1983:153).

As such, there is no single solution to the problem of interest representation. By combining “modes of participation” with “stages of policy-making”, however, we may illustrate when the different criteria are most appropriate and how they apply in different political contexts. The criteria for deciding whether interest representation is legitimate may be altered, depending on the situation:

¹⁴ This is, however, according to Young (2000:150), a last resort option: “...it seems to me, that reserving seats in authoritative decision-making bodies should be a last resort and temporary option for representing otherwise excluded perspectives”.

- In situations where extended modes of participation are allowed, and particularly, in the later stages of decision-making, the criteria should be: *If this is instrumental to achieving stipulated public objectives.* (Anderson’s functional criteria.)
- In situations where only simple modes of participation are allowed, and particularly in the earlier stages of decision-making, the criteria should be: *If this contributes to openness, accessibility and inclusiveness.* (Criteria of form, associated with liberal democracy.)
- In situations where “affected” interests can be “properly” identified and they include only a limited number of actors, the principles of openness, accessibility and inclusiveness and also the principle of being instrumental to achieving stipulated public objectives, must be weighted against the principle of affected interests.

We may illustrate the application of the principles as a pattern decided by the two dimensions of modes and stages of participation:

Table 2.1: Two criteria for deciding whether interest representation is legitimate

MODES OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION; / STAGES OF DECISION-MAKING:	Participants listening only <i>For example, receiving information from a government PR campaign or open database.</i>	Participants listening and giving information <i>For example, through public inquiries, media activities and ‘hot-lines’.</i>	Participants being consulted <i>For example, through working groups and meetings held to discuss policy.</i>	Participation in analysis and agenda - setting <i>For example, through multi-stakeholder groups, round tables and commissions.</i>	Participation in reaching consensus on the main strategy elements <i>For example, through national round tables, parliamentary/select committees, and conflict mediation.</i>	Participants involved in decision-making on the policy, strategy or its components
Preparatory phase	<p style="text-align: center;">Contributes to openness, accessibility and inclusiveness</p>					
Decision-making						<p>Instrumental to achieving stipulated public objectives</p>
Implementation						

Application of the principles of openness, accessibility and inclusiveness and the principle of being instrumental to stipulated public objectives in relation to modes of participation and stages of decision-making.

For the sake of simplicity, we have omitted the principle of affected interests from the table. As we argued above, however, this principle can be seen as a constraint on the

other principles, but is still regarded as subordinate to the principle of being instrumental to stipulated public objectives. Moving from simple to more extended forms of participation in the table can be seen as a move from pluralist to corporatist arrangements, where the criteria for participation should be stricter the closer one gets to actual decision-making. Liberal democracy puts further constraints on NGO participation in the phase of decision-making. Being supplemental and subordinate to the institutions of liberal democracy implies that the actual decisions have to be made by the representative institutions of “one man one vote”. That the restrictions on the mode of participation should be stronger in the phase of implementation, however, is not self evident. Implementation can be seen as a *process* which involves a number of decisions-points (Dimitrakopoulos and Richardson, 2001). The stronger restriction here, however, primarily concerns the *purposes or intentions* of the policies to be implemented. When laws and regulations are being implemented, they should not be implemented differently from the intentions of the legislative body. As such, it should be seen as a compliance restriction in accordance with stipulated public objectives. It does not exclude consultations over the *means* of implementation¹⁵.

The weakest form of participation in our table is “Participants listening only” in the implementation phase. The strongest form of participation would be “Participants involved in decision-making on the policy, strategy or its components” in all stages of decision-making and with few other participants. As such, these can be seen as a continuum from weak pluralism to strong corporatism along the two dimensions. This, of course, does not indicate that it is legitimate to involve NGOs in all stages of decision-making and in all modes of participation. Nor does it imply that participation in one mode or stage of decision-making necessarily is more or less democratic than the other. As we have argued and as the criteria reflect, *it depends*. Modes and stages of participation will and have to be contextual. The table shows possible ways in which participation in different stages and modes of participation *can be* justified. In other words, the table shows possible applications of the different principles which legitimise NGO participation. Moreover, there are other legitimate concerns which we have not addressed like efficiency, competence or expertise (Dahl, 1970), protection of privacy, sensitive international negotiations or national security issues in need of protection, which democratic norms arguably must be weighted against.

2.1.2 Justifying NGO participation from the perspective of NGOs

The above discussion has primarily seen NGO participation as a problem from the perspective of liberal democracy. The problem, however, can also be turned on its head: When and under which conditions is it wise, reasonable and relevant for NGOs to participate? Dryzek (2000), arguing from a deliberative point of view, makes the point that NGOs cannot turn their back to the state since the democratic well-being of civil

¹⁵ As Dimitrakopoulos and Richardson (2001:3) point out, the “implementation process presents opportunities to re-fight battles lost in the policy formulation stage. Thus implementation frequently fails because of the conflicting interests involved in it”.

society is crucially dependent upon how the state organises or obstructs interest representation. This, however, does not imply that it is wise to participate under all circumstances. NGOs can choose to direct its attention towards civil society and disregard the state (see also Olsen, 1983:151). Whether or not to do so is, according to Dryzek, dependent upon two kinds of concerns:

The first concerns the substantive goals of the group: are they more likely to be furthered by action in the public sphere, or more directly through the state? The second concerns the implications for democracy: does the democratic gain in terms of a more democratic (because more inclusive) state out-weight the democratic loss caused by a less vital and authentically democratic public sphere? (Dryzek, 2000:82).

Dryzek (2000:83) does not think there that are any universal answer to these questions, but he argues for two criteria which should guide the search for answers to these questions:

... from the point of view of democracy, benign inclusion in the state is possible only when two conditions hold. First, a group's defining concern must be capable of assimilation to an established or emerging state imperative. Second, civil society's discourse capacities must not be unduly depleted by the group's entry into the state. These criteria help determine whether any particular group's inclusion in the state constitutes a democratic gain or loss, for the group in question and, more importantly, for the polity as a whole. Absent such conditions, oppositional civil society may be a better focus for democratisation efforts than the state.

Dryzek's (2000) first criterion is close to the criterion proposed by Anderson (1979), but seen from the perspective of NGOs. Thus, when the emerging or stipulated public objectives or imperatives are in accordance with the organisations own goals, there are instrumental reasons for both sides to cooperate.

Dryzek's (2000:111) second criterion, however, is more problematic. It is basically the claim that "a depleted civil society means a less democratic polity, even though it might mean a more democratic state". Dryzek's conclusion is based on two premises. The first is the problem of co-optation. If a group's defining concern can not be assimilated with a state imperative, "then inclusion means being co-opted or bought off cheaply". Such co-optation has been a standing concern in the literature. Among other things, integrated participation can be a technique to increase governmental control and legitimacy without necessarily giving organisations any influence. It may prevent actions upon problems; distract attention and waste time (Olsen, 1983:152).

The second assumption is the claim that democratisation, historically has begun in oppositional civil society rather than the state. Therefore, "counter intuitively" a degree of exclusion in the pattern of state interest participation is therefore necessary in order for civil society itself to flourish, and to secure a further progressive development in society (Dryzek, 2000:104). As such, civil society is sometimes better off when left alone.

Although Dryzek (2000) does not want to draw any general conclusions as to the strategies NGOs should chose, it can be questioned whether there is a necessary trade-off between entry into the state and what seems almost like a retreat from civil society in Dryzek's description. It is questionable whether there is a necessary democratic loss associated with NGO participation for democracy as a whole. NGOs may be capable of doing both, cooperate with the state on some issues while at the same time direct their attention to civil society on others. Norway, however, seems to depart from a more strict separation between state and civil society, which are more dominant in Britain and the United States (Dryzek 1995, Olsen 1983, Sivesind et al. 2002). As Sivesind et al. (2002) argue:

... the history of Norwegian associations departs from those of the Anglo-American world. While voluntary organisations in Britain and the United States gradually developed a collective identity as a moral force outside, and partly in opposition to the state, associations in Norway did not share a common self-understanding as constituting a sector of its own. Neither did they see their welfare provisions as of a different kind from those of public authorities (Sivesind et al. 2002:15).

To what degree this is the case regarding EEA/EU issues, will be addressed in the next chapter. But as we have seen, participation is not unproblematic for NGOs, and not necessarily what best serves the interests of NGOs in all circumstances.

2.2 Democracy and the nature of participation

Until now we have focused upon how to reconcile and justify interest representation with the institutions of liberal democracy. We have not, however, addressed *the nature of participation itself* and its role and function in democratic theory. The nature of participation can be seen as a way to provide justifications for NGO participation independently of the issue of how to balance and reconcile the different principles of representation. In the following we will briefly describe three different schools of democratic thought: “competitive pluralist democracy”, “participatory democracy” and “deliberate democracy”, and address the issue of participation within these “schools”. These theories, however, are not fully separable. Depending on the theorist in question, they partly overlap, and there are also different positions, approaches and controversies within each theory. As such, our presentation will not do justice to all aspects of these theories, but hopefully, the main elements as described here, will highlight differences relevant for the understanding of the relationship between NGOs and national governments in the issue area of European policies.

2.2.1 “Competitive pluralist democracy”

“Competitive pluralist democracy” travels under many names, but it is often seen as a response to Joseph A. Schumpeter's approach to democracy. For Schumpeter (1947), democracy was first and foremost “a political method, that is to say, a certain type of institutional arrangement for arriving at political – legislative and administrative – decisions and hence incapable of being an end in itself” (Schumpeter, 1947:242). The

core of democracy as seen by Schumpeter (1947) was the ability of citizens to replace one government with another by voting. Voting secured competition among elites and political parties and, thus, protected citizens from tyranny by the political elite in power. In Schumpeter's democratic system, the only full participants within representative democracy were the members of the political elite (Held, 1987). The proper role of citizens was a limited one, the right to periodically choose and authorize government to act on their behalf. As Pateman (1970:5) remarks, all that participation entails in the Schumpeterian approach is that "enough citizens participate to keep the electoral machinery – the institutional arrangements – working satisfactorily".

Although Schumpeter's (1947) model of democracy was meant to be both an empirical and more realist approach to democracy, as opposed to what he called classical democracy, his theory was soon challenged on the same grounds. On the one hand, it was seen not only as an empirical theory, but also as a highly normative one (Pateman 1970, Miller 1983). On the other hand, it was challenged on empirical grounds. In Schumpeter's theory there is little or nothing that stands between the individual citizen and the elected leaders. Intermediary groups like community associations, religious organisations, trade unions, business organisations and NGOs are so to speak, non-existent (Held, 1987:186).

What has later been described as the "pluralists", or "empirical democratic theorists", challenged Schumpeter's description of Western democracy exactly on these grounds. Pluralists accepted Schumpeter's claim that it is the way political leaders are selected (methods) which separate democracies from non-democracies, and also that one of the fundamental duties of government is to prevent anyone to undermine the freedom of others. This was for pluralists not only secured by competition among political elites, but also through competition by different organised interests trying to influence government. Although resources are unequally distributed, nearly all groups have some resources that can be mobilized in order to influence the political process. This assumption made it possible to argue that there are different, but not necessarily equal, sources of power. These again compete over influence. This is described the following way by Held (1987):

In the pluralist account, power is non-hierarchically and competitively arranged. It is an inextricable part of an 'endless process of bargaining' between numerous groups representing different interests, including, for example, business organisations, trade unions, political parties, ethnic groups, students, prison officers, women's institutes, religious groups. These interest groups may be structured around particular economic or cultural 'cleavages', such as social class, religion or ethnicity. But in the long term, constellations of social forces tend to change their composition, alter their concerns and shift their positions (Held, 1987:189).

According to the pluralists, the outcomes, or overall direction of public policy, emerge from a series of relatively uncoordinated impacts upon government, influenced from all sides by competing forces "without any one force wielding excessive influence". In this process, the executive tries to mediate and adjudicate between competing demands (Held, 1987:190:191). Moreover, this ideally secures a set of policies or outcomes

which in the long run are positive for the citizenry at large. For one of the most prominent pluralists, Robert A. Dahl, what he called “polyarchy” (1971, 1982, 1989); regular elections and political competition among parties, groups and individuals, was the minimum requirement to secure the citizens control over political leaders. For Dahl (1982), “polyarchy” required seven institutions in particular:

1. Control over government decisions about policy is constitutionally vested in elected officials.
2. Elected officials are chosen in frequent and fairly conducted elections in which coercion is comparatively uncommon.
3. Practically all adults have the right to vote in the election of officials.
4. Practically all adults have the right to run for election offices in the government, though age limits may be higher for holding office than for suffrage.
5. Citizens have the right to express themselves without the danger of severe punishment on political matters broadly defined, including criticism of officials, the government, the regime, the socioeconomic order, and the prevailing ideology.
6. Citizens have a right to seek out alternative sources of information. Moreover, alternative sources of information exist and are protected by law.
7. To achieve the various rights, including those listed above, citizens also have a right to form relatively independent associations or organisations, including independent political parties and interest groups (Dahl, 1982:11).

These are, according to Dahl, the required institution or modern democratic systems or large-scale democracy, and countries can be classified according to the extent their political institutions approximate these criteria. Dahl’s pluralist theory of “polyarchy” includes, one may argue, the necessary requirements for participation in modern democracies. It is, however, as Pateman (1970:9) argues, competition which is the crucial element in “polyarchy”. The value of a polyarchical system lies in “the fact that it makes possible an extension of the number, size and diversity of the minorities that can bring their influence to bear on policy decisions, and the whole political ethos of the society”. It does not, however, place actual participation as a condition for a functioning democracy much beyond the Schumpeterian model, nor does it say much about the role of organisations and interest groups and how they should be connected to the political system as such.

The treatment of NGOs in light of the model of competitive pluralist democracy

Competitive pluralist democracy theory emphasises the need for competing elites to participate in politics – more or less to compensate for the indirect and weak voter participation in politics, and for the generally low level of political engagement. In this view of democracy, NGOs forms a valuable channel of influence *in addition* to the

conventional channel where voters elect representatives to parliament which in turn decides which political party – or parties - to lead the executive branch. However, to be this kind of valuable channel, it presupposes that the NGOs are independent actors. If the NGOs are manned by more or less the same individuals who are working in the government, and are funded by the same government, this may question their contribution to democracy.

Their democratic contribution may also be taken into question if the NGOs lack the political strength derived from having a large number of members. Do the NGOs play the role of independent experts, without a substantial membership structure? The government's equal treatment of NGOs is another challenge related to this perspective. Does the government make sure that NGOs are given an equal and fair opportunity to influence government decisions? As such, making decision processes more open, accessibly and inclusive can be seen as principles adopted to avoid competitive pluralist democracy to decay into a simple power struggle among competing elites.

2.2.2 “Participatory democracy”

Proponents of participatory democracy can be placed on a continuum from weak to strong participation. Dahl has frequently made a clear distinction between “polyarchy” as a descriptive model of democracy and democracy as an ideal. For Dahl, participation is part of the democratic ideal. “Effective participation” is one of the defining characteristics of the ideal of democracy in the following sense: “Throughout the process of collective decision-making, including the stage of putting matters on the agenda, each citizen ought to have adequate and equal opportunities for expressing his or her preferences as to the final outcome” (Dahl, 1982:6). As such, Dahl (1982, 1989) can be seen as a proponent also of participatory democracy, and Dahl (1985) has argued strongly for an extension of democratic principles and democracy to the workplace and larger corporations. Still, however, there are others who have put the case for participatory democracy in stronger terms.

Carole Pateman (1970) is one of them. She argues that the major function of democracy is an educative one, and that the existence of representative institutions at the national level is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for democracy:

The theory of participatory democracy is built round the central assertion that individuals and their institutions cannot be considered in isolation from one another. The existence of representative institutions at national level is not sufficient for democracy; for maximum participation by all the people at the level of socialisation, or ‘social training’, for democracy must take place in other spheres in order that the necessary individual attitudes and psychological qualities can be developed. This development takes place through participation itself. The major function of democracy in the theory of participatory democracy is therefore an educative one, in the very widest sense, including both the psychological aspect and the gaining of practice in democratic skills and procedures. Thus there is no special problem about the stability of participatory system; it is self-

sustaining through the educative impact of the participatory process. Participation develops and fosters the very qualities necessary for it; the more individuals participate, the better able they become to do so. Subsidiary hypotheses about participation are that it has an integrative effect and that it aids the acceptance of collective decisions (Pateman, 1970:42-43).

Held (1987:262) summarises the justification for participatory democracy as a claim regarding the right to self-development. This right, according to participatory theorists, can only be achieved in a “participatory society” which fosters a sense of political efficacy, nurtures concerns for collective problems and contributes to learning and interest in governing processes. Some key features are direct participation and party officials who are directly accountable to members. Thus, “participatory democracy” place actual participation as a condition for a functioning democracy beyond the Schumpeterian model and pluralist theories.

For some, participation is primarily supposed to take place within the institutions of representative democracy and extended to the workplace. For others, participation should primarily take place in organisations and communities, or within interest organisations and civil society. Representative democracy should be supplemented and extended primarily increasing the scope of governance for associations (Hirst, 1993:116). Some participatory theorists reject representative democracy altogether (see for instance Barber, 1984:145-147).

The treatment of NGOs in light of the model of participatory democracy

In this perspective the internal proceeding of NGOs is important. NGOs are viewed as forums where citizens may engage and gain insights into the functioning of society. It is desirable to have active discussions among members and a continuous dialogue between the governing bodies of the NGOs and their members. A highly professional NGO staff, however, may weaken the participation of its members and reduce the dialogue between its members and the governing bodies. The interaction between NGOs and the government is also important in this perspective: The government should not judge the interaction only by their instrumental value to the daily tasks of running the government. Likewise, the NGOs should not judge the interaction only by the short-term value with regard to their policy goals. Both the government and the NGOs should recognize that their interaction have a broader educational function which can benefit them both.

2.2.3 “Deliberative democracy”

Deliberate democracy is defined by Bohman and Rehg (1997:ix) as the idea that legitimate lawmaking originates

from the public deliberation of citizens. As a normative account of legitimacy, deliberate democracy evokes ideals of rational legislation, participatory politics,

and civic-self-governance. In short, it presents an ideal of political autonomy based on the practical reasoning of citizens.

Thus, participation is a feature also of deliberate democracy. Its focus, however, can be seen as a reaction to rational-choice frameworks for decision making. Deliberative theorists, according to Bohman and Rehg (1997:xiii), are “in general agreement that the political process involves more than self-interested competition governed by bargaining and aggregative mechanisms”. What matters is the nature of communication. Dryzek (2000) describes the deliberative turn in democratic theory the following way:

Deliberation as a social process is distinguished from other kinds of communication in that deliberators are amenable to changing their judgements, preferences, and views during the course of their interaction, which involve persuasion rather than coercion, manipulation, or deception. The essence of democracy itself is now widely taken to be deliberation, as opposed to voting, interest aggregation, constitutional rights, or even self-government. The deliberative turn represents a renewed concern with the authenticity of democracy: the degree to which democratic control is substantive rather than symbolic, and engaged by competent citizens (Dryzek, 2000:2).

While there is no general agreement on the exact content of these conditions, an authentic democracy exists, according to Dryzek (2000:2), to the degree that “reflective preferences influence collective outcomes”. This, according to Dryzek (2000:2), rules out “domination via the exercise of power, manipulation, indoctrination, propaganda, deception, expressions of mere self-interest, threats (of the sort that characterise bargaining), and attempts to impose ideological conformity”. Such distortions must be counteracted by equality in deliberative competence across political actors.

It is not, however, in Dryzek’s approach, necessary for deliberation to end with consensus. Consensus is achieved when everyone support the outcome for “exactly the same reasons” (Dryzek, 2000:48). Consensus, at best, according to Dryzek, should instead be seen as a regulatory ideal to which real world arrangements could inspire, though never actually reach. In fact, Dryzek (2000), contrary to Cohen (1989) and Habermas (1996), is quite opposed to consensus even as a regulatory ideal: “In a pluralistic world, consensus is unattainable, unnecessary, and undesirable. More feasible and attractive are workable agreements in which participants agree on a course of action, “but for different reasons” (Dryzek, 2000:170). The way to reach such an agreement is through deliberation.

The treatment of NGOs in light of the model of deliberative democracy

In this perspective the focal point of democracy is the quality of the political dialogue from the individual level, to large collective entities engaged in political deliberations. Different modes of participation – hearing, consultation or active involvement in decision-making – may be related to different modes of communication. The mode of NGO participation in government politics should be determined with regard to the expected quality of the exchange of views: There is less reason for a hearing if all that could be expected is an oral rephrasing of attitudes that has been noted before. For

example, if the government entity expects that the NGO(s) have information and insight from which they may learn, they should invite to a meeting with a form that allows for an open and sincere dialogue. The degree of professionalised NGO administration may also be relevant to this perspective. A highly professional staff of a NGO may be able to communicate better with government officials, than members which use part of their free time to represent their organisations. Professional staffs will have the opportunity to learn the jargons of the government and have more experience which may be helpful when interpreting messages from the other side.

Seen together, these three approaches to democracy can be said to entail three different approaches to participation. As William M. Lafferty (1983:36) argues, participation has been associated with different functions in democratic theories. The most common is to see participation as an act primarily directed towards power and influence. In this view, participation is primarily seen as *instrumental*. You participate in order to achieve something and the ultimate goal is to influence political decisions. In our context, this would be the dominant view within what we have called “competitive pluralist democracy”. Second, participation can have the function as an act necessary for *learning* and self-consciousness. The functions of participation in democratic systems are here seen as dialectic. They go together, and participation mutually supports the quality of its citizens and political institutions. This would be the dominant view within what we have called “participatory democracy”. Third, participation can also function as an act of externalisation and dialog. In this view, participation primarily reflects the need for *deliberation* and mutual acknowledgement among all participants. In our approach, this could be said to be the dominant view within what we have called “deliberative democracy”.

The three identified functions of participation (instrumental, learning, deliberation) are not, however, exclusive. There is no reason why deliberation can not take place within competitive pluralist democracy or participatory democracy. Further, there is no reason why participation can not be widespread and extensive within competitive pluralist democracy and deliberative democracy. Moreover, learning can take place within all three theories of democracy. It can also be argued that an act is never purely instrumental or purely deliberative (Lafferty 1983). The point here, however, is that some forms of participation are more dominant in some approaches than others, and most importantly, that these types of participation may have different *implications* for ways to organise the relationships between NGOs and authorities.

From the “Competitive pluralist democracy” perspective, independent organisations help to prevent dominations, create mutual control and help to curb hierarchy (Dahl, 1982). They may, however, also “stabilise injustices, deform civic consciousness, distort the public agenda, and alienate final control over the agenda” (Dahl, 1982:40). A central task for government would therefore be to make sure that there exists a certain balance of interests and prevent domination by one or few groups. From the “participatory democracy” perspective, participation in politics may be seen as contributing to learning and the development of democratic skills, independent of which “channel” or arena participation takes place within. The more who participates the

better it is. From the perspective of “deliberative democracy”, it is not so much the representations of different “interests” based on “functional” “special”, “affected” or ideological considerations *per se* which is important, but the way in which different interests are placed on the political agenda. The “intuitive ideal” of deliberative democracy is that “the justification of the terms and conditions of association proceeds through public argument and reasoning among equal citizens” (Cohen, 1989:21). Deliberation should be free, reasoned, made in a deliberative way, among equals aiming at a rationally motivated consensus. As such, from the perspective of deliberative democracy, the more actors and arguments which take part in the public deliberative debate, the better.

What then if consensus is not arrived at? Taking Dryzek’s (2000) approach as an example, if an “authentic democracy” does not produce consensus, who should have the final say? Is it reasonable to claim that an “authentic democracy” should rule out “domination via the exercise of power” and “threats of the sort that characterise bargaining”? It seems, given Dryzek’s own argument, that consensus is “unattainable, unnecessary, and undesirable”, that the real issue concerns the *legitimacy* of the use of power and threats in a democratic society. As such, it seems that the question of the *nature of participation* within the three above perspectives on democracy must be subordinated the principles regulating the authority, hierarchy and relationship between the representative institutions of liberal democracy, representing “one man one vote”, and organised interests groups.

In the next section, we will turn our attention from the questions of how to reconcile liberal democracy and NGO participation and the nature of participation to the question of how the relationship between organised interests and the institutions of liberal democracy are and have been arranged in Norway. The integration of organised interests into the formation and implementation of public policies is a core institutional trait of the Scandinavian countries (Christiansen and Rommetvedt, 1999)¹⁶. Corporatism has therefore been regarded as an empirical alternative to interest group pluralism (Armingeon, 2002). Organised interests, particularly labour and business and agricultural organisations, have been granted extensive participatory rights and access to the political system in Norway through what has been called corporatism. Similar rights and access has been granted to NGOs in other areas, although not identical and not to the same extent. At the same time, there are studies that point in the direction of a reduction in the use of traditional “corporatist” structures in favour of a corresponding increase in lobbyism, both towards administrative and parliamentary actors in Norway (Rommetvedt, 2000). It seems, therefore, necessary to describe the ways in which corporatism and lobbyism has developed in Norway, before the later chapters describe the actual arrangements in the issue area of EEA/EU matters.

¹⁶ As Armingeon (2002) argues, Scandinavia is “the heartland of corporatism”. This is explained by strong trade unions, strong social democratic parties and politically united countries.

2.3 Corporatism and lobbyism in Norway

The relationship between private interests and government has been described in numerous ways. Pluralism and (neo) corporatism, segmentation, iron triangles, issue networks, policy communities, are frequently used in order to characterize the relations between organized interests and public authorities (Rommetvedt, 2000). In the following we will take Schmitter's (1979) well-known definitions of corporatism as our starting point. Schmitter (1979:13) defined corporatism as

a system of interest representation in which the constituent units are organised into a limited number of singular, compulsory, noncompetitive, hierarchically ordered and functionally differentiated categories, recognized or licensed (if not created) by the state and granted a deliberative representational monopoly within their respective categories in exchange for observing certain controls in their selection of leaders and articulation of demands and supports¹⁷.

The rationale for the institutional arrangement of corporatism was the constraints on both sides of the agreement (Armingeon, 2002). The state needs a limited number of private actors to come to terms with (Armingeon, 2002:152). Moreover, strongly institutionalised relations with interest organisations enhance the possibility of parliamentary acceptance and successful implementation of new policies (Christiansen and Rommetvedt, 1999). On the other side of the agreement, integration in the political and administrative decision making process is a means to create, maintain or increase substantial benefits for interest organisations. Integration in public decision-making may imply a privileged position allowing some actors to pursue the substantial goals of an organisation within the political system (Christiansen and Rommetvedt, 1999). Within corporatism, interest organisations attain a quasi-legal status and a prescriptive right to speak for their segments of the population. They have the opportunity to influence the process of government directly, and thus to some extent also to bypass the parliament (Schmitter 1979:18, Rommetvedt 2000).

As pointed out by Rommetvedt (2000), however, Schmitter did not view corporatism in terms "have or have not". A political system like the Norwegian, can be a mixture of elements of corporatism and pluralism. In order to analyse and detect changes in different forms of political participation, Rommetvedt (2000) makes a distinction between two different methods of exerting influence on the authorities: corporatist participation and lobbyism on the other (see also Rommetvedt and Opedal, 1995; Christiansen and Rommetvedt, 1999). In simplified terms, corporatism and lobbyism are defined the following way by Rommetvedt (2000:116):

¹⁷ Corporatism is thus defined as the opposite of pluralism. Pluralism was defined by Schmitter (1979:15) in accordance with what we above called competitive pluralist democracy: "Pluralism can be defined as a system of interest representation in which the constituent units are organised into an unspecified number of multiple, voluntary, competitive nonhierarchically ordered and self-determined (as to the type or scope of interest) categories which are not specially licensed, recognised, subsidised, created or otherwise controlled in leadership selection or interest articulation by the state and which do not exercise a monopoly or representational activity within their respective categories".

In simplified terms, *corporatism* can be defined as a highly institutionalised and formal method of political participation and influence, often with negotiations and agreements implying mutual obligations for the participants. *Lobbyism* is a form of political participation and influence that is less institutionalised, less formal and without negotiated obligations. One of the conditions for corporatism is that the authorities establish institutional arrangements and bodies involving participation by affected organisations. Such bodies, on the other hand, are not necessary for lobbyism. Interest organisations and other lobbyists can lobby on their own initiative. Hence, lobbyism is a more flexible strategy than corporatism.

Lobbyism is, therefore, more relevant in pluralist government systems (Rommetvedt, 2000). The strategies of interest organisation, however, can be directed towards both administrative as parliamentary actors. By combining the two dimensions, institutionalisation (corporatism – pluralism) and direction (administrative – parliamentary), Rommetvedt (2000) develops a fourfold typology as shown in figure 2.2:

Table 2.2: Types of relation between public authorities and organised interests

		Institutionalisation	
		Low	High
Direction	Parliament	Parliamentary lobbyism	Parliamentary corporatism
	Administration	Administrative lobbyism	Administrative corporatism

Source: Rommetvedt (2000:117)¹⁸.

According to Rommetvedt (2000), the concept of corporatism provides a relatively good description of the Norwegian system in the 1950s and 1960s. In the 1980s and 1990s, however, Norway has developed more in the direction of pluralism. Several data and surveys support such a conclusion. First, an important element of the corporatist system is formal representation and participation of organisations on governmental boards, committees and councils. The number of corporatist arrangements, however, (public councils, boards and committees) with interest representation, has been

¹⁸ Of these types of relations, parliamentary corporatism is not, according to Rommetvedt (2000:116), regarded as relevant in contemporary Norway. Parliamentary corporatism is strictly speaking based on functional representation in the legislature. In Norway, the composition of the *Storting* is based on territorial representation from the counties. Thus, the corporative channel has been dominated by representatives from organisations and civil servants and is therefore more precisely characterised as administrative corporatism. In the typology, parliamentary lobbyism is used by Rommetvedt (2000) as a label for informal relations between organisations and MPs, and the informal relations towards civil servants and the attempts to influence them made by organisations referred to as administrative lobbyism.

considerably reduced, from 1155 in 1977 to less than 600 by the end of 1995 (Christiansen and Rommetvedt 1999, Rommetvedt 2000).

Moreover, the exclusivity of business-labour representation within these committees has steadily declined. In 1983, only one fifth of the environmental organisations were represented in governmental boards and committees, compared with almost fifty per cent of the industrial organizations. In 1993, one third of the environmental organizations and 37 per cent of the industrial organizations were represented in governmental committees. Although industrial organisations are still the most frequently represented in governmental committees, the gap has been considerably reduced. The data, none the less, shows a reduction in corporatist arrangements in Norway (Rommetvedt, 2000).

At the same time, the Norwegian Parliament (*Stortinget*) has strengthened its position vis-à-vis the government over the last decades. This is partly due to minority governments and an increase in the activities of Parliament, but also an increase in the level of conflicts in the *Storting*. Norwegian governments have over the last decades been forced to tolerate defeat in parliamentary voting more often than before (Rommetvedt, 1998, 2002a, 2002b). This has had the following effects:

... the outcomes of policy-making processes are more uncertain. This constitutes at the same time both a problem and an opportunity for interest organisations trying to make an impact on policy-making. Organisations that previously have been heard by the administration can no longer be certain that the Parliament will approve the proposals worked out in the corporative channel and/or in the administration, and then put forward by the government. Increasingly they will have to follow up the issues in the parliamentary channel to ensure that the final decisions correspond with the organisations' own interests. For organisations which have not succeeded in promoting their viewpoints through the corporative channel, the procedure in the *Storting* represents a new opportunity to influence the outcomes of the decisions (Rommetvedt, 2000:122).

This has lead organisations to view decisions in the Parliament as the most important ones to target. Surprisingly few, when asked, regard decisions in the government as most important. Moreover, several organisations say the importance of contacts with the administration has been reduced (Rommetvedt, 2000). Furthermore, when asked about the changes in the frequencies of contact with the Norwegian Parliament and the political leadership of the ministries over the last 10-15 years, sixty-seven per cent of the environmental organisations and 40 per cent of industrial organisations stated that their contacts with the *Storting* have increased. Further, 36 per cent of the environmental organisations and 27 per cent of the industrial organisations answered that their contacts with the political leadership of the ministries have increased. Only seven to nine per cent of the organisations say that these kinds of relations have decreased. Thus, the data shows that the parliamentary lobbyism has increased the most (Rommetvedt, 2000).

This, however, does not imply that administrative lobbyism has decreased. There is still widespread contact between authorities and interest organisations, particularly with central administration. In the survey cited by Rommetvedt (2000), more than eighty

percent of the environmental organisations were monthly or weekly in touch with civil servants in ministries or agencies/directorates. Three-quarters of the industrial organisations had weekly or monthly contact with civil servants in ministries, while more than half had the same frequency in their relations with directorates. Most organisations are in contact with the various bodies within Parliament a few times a year. The main conclusion drawn by Rommetvedt (2000:124) is that “both industrial and environmental organisations carry out an extensive lobbyism towards various political authorities. Although parliamentary lobbyism is considerable and increasing, administrative lobbyism is even more extensive”¹⁹.

2.3.1 Changes in the NGO community

Parallel with the changes in relationships between interest organisations and authorities, there are also major changes taking place within the NGO community itself. Voluntary organisations are becoming more professionalised and specialised as they orientate themselves more towards the state and increasingly towards the market. The number of interest organisations has increased markedly, from 1100 in 1976 to almost 2400 in 1993 (Andersen and Lauritsen, 1990; Hallenstvedt and Trollvik, 1993). There are, however, high rates of turnover. There are also major changes in the composition of voluntary organisations, and some categories have grown at the expense of others. In percentage, education associations have been most severely hit, but the religious organisations have experienced the strongest reduction in the number of associations (Sivesind, et al. 2002:99). Also traditional humanitarian organisations, covering public health and social conditions, have lost many local branches. These have to some extent been replaced by a relatively new type of association (at the local level), the interest associations for the handicapped. As such, people seem to participate more in associations that further their specific diagnosis than in the (older) more general welfare associations. The decline in the number of associations also holds for associations with a social purpose. Also associations for children and youth are declining. In contrast, the most leisure oriented types of organisations are growing rapidly (Sivesind, et al. 2002:100-101)²⁰.

Another change is that many of the new organisations share one important characteristic: they are not membership organisations in the traditional sense. As argued by Selle and Øymyr (1995), the dominant view within democratic theory that makes voluntary organisations “core-institutions” within democratic societies, are that the organisations themselves are open, member based, internally democratic and

19 This may, according to Rommetvedt (2000:124), result from “the fact that there is a substantially higher number of issues and executive officers in the administration than in the Storting. A smaller number of decisions are made in the Parliament, but these decisions are considered to be of great importance to the organisations”.

20 The conclusions drawn by Sivesind et al. (2002) are based on a classification of the “voluntary sector” developed in The Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project (CNP). Here, five criteria are used to identify so called voluntary organisations. They must be: (1) organised, meaning institutionalised to some extent; (2) private, that is institutionally autonomous from government; (3) self-governing; (4) non-profit distributing; and (5) voluntary, with some meaningful degree of voluntary participation or contribution. This definition, however, is broader than the one we have chosen, in the sense that it includes foundations, housing co-operatives, political parties, trade unions and employers organisations as well as certain welfare service providers (Sivesind et al., 2002).

independent of public authorities (Selle and Øymyr, 1995:274). A growing number of NGOs, however, are not member-based, but are instead foundations without ordinary “members”. They have “supportive members”, but these “members” have no formal saying in the organisation. Thus, strictly speaking, they cannot formally be seen as NGOs according to the criterion of a member based internal democracy as characteristics of NGOs. They are still regarded as NGOs, or at least treated equally with NGOs by public authorities. One example is the Norwegian environmental organisation Bellona. Bellona participates on equal terms with NGOs in committees and other forums set up by different ministries. As such, it is impossible to draw a strict empirical line between NGOs and foundations when it comes to external treatment. In principle, however, foundations are by definition difficult to include in the category of NGOs.

Moreover, there are a growing number of local community associations which further the interests of an extremely local area, such as a street or a neighbourhood and engage in a very limited set of issues or “individual focusing activities” (Sivesind et al. 2002:103). Contrary to traditional associations in Norway, they are not necessarily linked to a national organisation, even in cases where such an organisation exists. Thus, there is a decline in “hierarchical structures” and Sivesind et al. (2002:103) concludes that if this trend continues (they believe it will), “the Norwegian voluntary sector is moving towards a two-part organisational society, where the national level is institutionally separate from the local level”.

Furthermore, an increasing number of organisations are directing their activities towards their own members’ interests. Activities directed towards the community at large are in decline. Combined with the two-part organisational society, Selle and Øymyr (1995) regard these developments within voluntary organisations as highly problematic from a democratic point of view. According to Achterberg (1995:168), voluntary associations are regarded in liberal democratic theory “primarily in terms of their role as the social foundation of a pluralistic politics; that is, they provide articulation for the divergent interests in civil society and thereby prevent any tendency towards the formation of potentially tyrannical homogeneous majorities”. In the same manner, Selle and Øymyr (1995) argues that expression of divergent interests in civil society necessitates organisations which at the same time are local and national, and express concerns which go beyond the private interests of the managing group within the organisation.

Selle and Øymyr (1995:75) go further and claim that that which points beyond the local community is more important than ever before. This claim is justified from the following perspective: “It is namely the grand political decisions that establish the framework for local decisions ... What it is all about is changes in public interest for, and access to, where the decisive decisions are made (Selle and Øymyr, 1995:70). A viable civil society, according to Selle and Øymyr (1995:70), is necessary for modern society to flourish and for democracy to be further developed. Voluntary organisations are arenas for activity and can also express alternative values and norms. From a democratic point of view, it is the last which is seen as most important (Selle and Øymyr, 1995:71). Voluntary organisations represent a diversity of values which are important in a democratic society. It is seen as the “democratic infrastructure” of modern society. As already argued, however, there are major changes taking place

within the voluntary sector. In order to grasp the implications of these changes for society at large, Selle and Øymyr (1995:251) develops a typology of voluntary organisations along three dimensions.

The first relates to whether the organisations activity can be characterised as private (internally oriented) or public (outward oriented). An outward oriented organisation, however, can also have activities which are internally oriented. The second dimension is related to ideology, whether or not the organisation is change oriented. An organisation that deviates from what are the common views of its surroundings is defined as change oriented. The third dimension relates to the degree of socialisation within the organisation, whether it is weak or strong. The dimension is supposed to measure how deeply involved and engaged the members of the organisation are. Table 2.4 shows the eightfold typology based on these three dimensions:

Table 2.3.1: A typology of organisational dynamics

Activity	Public (outward oriented)				Private (internally oriented)			
Ideology	Change oriented		No change orientation		Change oriented		No change orientation	
Socialisation	Strong	Weak	Strong	Weak	Strong	Weak	Strong	Weak
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

Source: Selle and Øymyr (1995:251).

The main findings reported by Selle and Øymyr (1995), is that the organisations of the first type (which they call the traditional social movements, characterised by a high degree of public outward oriented activity, a change oriented ideology and a strong organisational socialisation), has been weakened quite strongly. It might be an organisational type which was fit for another time, but which is now on its way out. Relatively speaking, there are fewer organisations of this type than ever before. In general, there are fewer change oriented organisations, and fewer organisations with a strong socialisation. The growth in organisation is primarily to be found in type 6 and 8 (Selle and Øymyr, 1995:270).

There is, however, no mentioning of international bodies, organisations or intergovernmental bodies in Selle and Øymyr's (1995) approach. It is tempting to argue that if what matters is the interest for, and access to "where the decisive decisions are made", it is not enough focus mainly on activities within the national border. It is therefore necessary, given the subject matter of this study, that the understanding of public (outward oriented) organisations is changed and the international dimension included. We shall in the next chapter therefore use this typology in our analysis of Norwegian NGOs. We shall use (outward oriented) activity as a measure of interest in, and access to, European policies within the EEA agreement. First, we will take a closer look at the debate on NGO participation within the EU.

2.4 Justifying NGO relationships in the EU

Contrary to what has been the case in Norway, the justification of the relationships between the EU Institutions and NGOs has been quite thoroughly discussed among the different actors. Some of the reasons for this are the perceived lack of legitimacy, “the democratic deficit”, the complexity and the lack of public support for EU policies. As stated in the White Paper on governance:

Today, political leaders throughout Europe are facing a real paradox. On the one hand, Europeans want them to find solutions to the major problems confronting our societies. On the other hand, people increasingly distrust institutions and politics or are simply not interested in them. The problem is acknowledged by national parliaments and governments alike. It is particularly acute at the level of the European Union. Many people are losing confidence in a poorly understood and complex system to deliver the policies that they want. The Union is often seen as remote and at the same time too intrusive (Commission of the European Communities, 2001 428 final:3).

As such, the relationships with NGOs in the EU are part of the broader agenda of European governance and integration, and the development of what Prodi and Kinnock (2000:5) calls a “European public opinion”. Prodi and Kinnock (2000) summarises what they call the “rationale” behind the existing co-operation and “the desire to strengthen and enhance it” in five points:

1. Fostering participatory democracy
2. Representing the views of specific groups of citizens to the European Institutions
3. Contributing to policy making
4. Contributing to project management
5. Contributing to European integration

The first point, fostering participatory democracy, describes NGO participation as an additional channel for participation:

The right of citizens to form associations to pursue a common purpose is a fundamental freedom in a democracy. Belonging to an association provides an opportunity for citizens to participate actively in new ways other than or in addition to involvement in political parties or trade unions. Increasingly NGOs are recognised as a significant component of civil society and as providing valuable support for a democratic system of government. Governments and international organisations are taking more notice of them and involving them in the policy and decision-making process (Prodi and Kinnock, 2000:4).

In accordance with Anderson’s (1979) criterion, this participation is clearly seen as supplemental to the institutions of representative democracy:

The decision-making process in the EU is first and foremost legitimised by the elected representatives of the European people. However, NGOs can make a

contribution to in fostering a more participatory democracy both within the European Union and beyond. The European Union is founded on the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and the rule of law, principles which are common to the Member States (Prodi and Kinnock, 2000:4).

The second point, representing the views of specific groups of citizens to the European Institutions, can be seen as a deliberate certifying of groups to actively remedy inequalities of representation, and create channels and forums for disadvantaged groups and issues:

The role of NGOs in representing the views to the European Institutions of specific groups of citizens (such as people with disabilities, ethnic minorities) or on specific issues (such as the environment, animal welfare, world trade). In particular, many NGOs have an ability to reach the poorest and most disadvantaged and to provide a voice for those not sufficiently heard through other channels. In the European context, NGOs perform this role ... (Prodi and Kinnock, 2000:5).

There is also another instrumental side to this, in the claim that NGO involvement in policy shaping and implementation “helps to win public acceptance for the EU” (Prodi and Kinnock, 2000:5).

The third point, contributing to policy making, acknowledges that NGOs have an expertise which is valuable. NGOs can contribute to policy discussions, provide expert input for EU policymaking, and through their links at local, regional, national and European level, NGOs can “provide feedback on the success or otherwise of specific policies thereby contributing to the Commission’s task of defining and implementing policies” (Prodi and Kinnock, 2000:5).

The fourth point, contributing to project management, highlights NGOs contribution to managing, monitoring and evaluating projects financed by the EU. Again, it is seen as part of an active remedy of inequalities “tackling social exclusion and discrimination, protecting the natural environment, and the provision of humanitarian and development aid” (Prodi and Kinnock, 2000:5).

The fifth point, contributing to European integration, gives NGO an important role in the creation of a “European political entity”, and argues that there are common goals between EU and NGOs:

By encouraging national NGOs to work together to achieve common goals, the European NGO networks are making an important contribution to the formation of a "European public opinion" usually seen as a pre-requisite to the establishment of a true European political entity. At the same time this also contributes to promoting European integration in a practical way and often at grassroots level ... Therefore, strengthening the relationship between the Commission and NGOs can help both parties to be more successful in achieving their respective goals. At the same time, the Commission will need to recognise and support the development and independence of the NGO sector (Prodi and Kinnock, 2000:5).

A such, there are both emerging or stipulated public objectives or imperatives in accordance with NGOs own goals, and thus instrumental reasons for both sides to cooperate.

Seen in relation to Prodi and Kinnock (2000), the report of Working Group 2A, “Consultation and participation of Civil Society” (Pavan-Woolfe and Kröger, 2001), and also the White Paper on European Governance (Commission of the European Communities, 2001, 428 final), focused to a lesser degree upon the “rationale” behind co-operation with NGOs. Both documents expressed more instrumental reasons for participation and had their main focus on how to improve consultations. The report of Working Group 2A, however, stressed that the aim of NGO contacts was to contribute “to a policy-making process that reflects the diversity of interests, perspectives and needs in the European Union” (Pavan-Woolfe and Kröger, 2001:6)²¹. The White Paper stressed the opening up of policy-making as a way to get “more people and organisations involved in shaping and delivering EU policy” (Commission of the European Communities, 2001, 428 final:3). Participation was addressed in an own paragraph under “Principles of good governance”:

Participation The quality, relevance and effectiveness of EU policies depend on ensuring wide participation throughout the policy chain – from conception to implementation. Improved participation is likely to create more confidence in the end result and in the Institutions which deliver policies. Participation crucially depends on central governments following an inclusive approach when developing and implementing EU policies (Commission of the European Communities, 2001, 428 final:10).

The reference to “quality” can be seen in a deliberate perspective. The same can be said about the following: “Civil society plays an important role in giving voice to the concerns of citizens and delivering services that meet peoples needs ... The organisations which make up civil society mobilise people and support, for instance, those suffering from exclusion or discrimination ... Non governmental organisations play an important role at global level in development policy. They often act as an early warning system for the direction of political debate” (Commission of the European Communities, 2001, 428 final:14). Moreover, it was argued that “Civil society increasingly sees Europe as offering a good platform to change policy orientations and society”. This is further described as a “chance to get citizens more actively involved in achieving the Union’s objectives and to offer them a structured channel for feedback, criticism and protest” (Commission of the European Communities, 2001, 428 final:15). The dominant justification for NGO participation, none the less, seems to be more instrumental to the overall objective of “generating a sense of belonging to Europe”, and to “broaden the debate on Europe’s role” (Commission of the European Communities, 2001, 428 final:11:15).

²¹ Besides this, the report argued that the the “benefits of being open to outside input are thus already recognised”, with reference to Prodi and Kinnock (2000). (Pavan-Woolfe and Kröger, 2001:6).

While the report from Working Group 2A clearly stressed that the consultation process was a supplement and not a substitute for political mediation and the elected representatives of the European people (Pavan-Woolfe and Kröger 2001:7), this was not explicitly stated in the White Paper. The White Paper, however, addressed the role of the European Parliament in the following:

What is needed is a **reinforced culture of consultation and dialogue**; a culture which is adopted by all European Institutions and which associates particularly the European Parliament in the consultative process, given its role in representing the citizen. The European Parliament should play a prominent role, for instance, by reinforcing its use of public hearings. European political parties are an important factor in European integration and contribute to European awareness and voicing the concerns of citizens (Commission of the European Communities, 2001, 428 final:16).

The European Parliaments reaction to the White Paper on Governance, however, was quite reluctant. The resolution adopted by the European Parliament points to a number of issues not being properly addressed according to Parliament. The first point made in the resolution concerns the proper context of the White Paper. It is argued that “reform of ‘European governance’ must be based on a fundamental critical analysis of the democratic deficit and hence also a status report on the application of the principles of legitimacy, parliamentary scrutiny, open government, scrutiny and participation” (European Parliament, a5-0399/2001:2). It is especially the transparency of the Council that is the main concern of Parliament. It is therefore argued that it is “regrettable that the White Paper does not contain clear indications as to how ‘governance’ can be improved by increasing the transparency of the Council as co-legislator, through its Rules of Procedure and without amending the Treaties” (European Parliament, a5-0399/2001:2) ²².

Moreover, the European Parliament called for prudence regarding participatory democracy from the perspective of political accountability: “elements of participatory democracy in the political system of the Union must be introduced cautiously with a constant eye to the recognised principles and structural elements of representative democracy and the rule of law and, on the other, citizens of the Union rightly expect transparent decision-making processes and, at the same time, clear political accountability for decisions” (European Parliament, a5-0399/2001:2).

Another concern addressed by Parliament was that administrative efficiency can jeopardise democratic legitimisation. At the same time, however, the Parliament seemed

²² The following statement is another expression of this view by the European Parliament: “Takes the view that increased transparency and openness on the part of the Council as legislator is a sine qua non for good governance and that keeping interested parties informed of the Council’s legislative work is the basic precondition for improving understanding and increasing participation on the part of the general public ... Stresses once again in this connection the need for the Council to hold its meetings in public when acting in a legislative capacity; in such cases, debates and votes must be made public; pursuant to the Council’s Rules of Procedure, public debates must take place at the start and at the end of all legislative procedures, and the results of votes and explanations of votes by Members of the Council must be published (European Parliament, a5-0399/2001:5).

doubtful about the effects of some of the proposals in the White Paper. Instead of making consultations more effective, Parliament was afraid that the proposals would actually escalate consultations and hence make it even less efficient:

whereas screening of the ‘unwieldy system’ of almost 700 advisory bodies on which the Commission relies is long overdue but, according to the White Paper on reform of the Commission, a list of the committees and working groups involved in formal or structured consultation procedures (Action 5) was to have been drawn up and published by June 2001, on the other hand a number of proposals mentioned in the White Paper such as ‘on-line consultation through the interactive policy-making initiative’ actually give rise to the risk of an escalation in consultation and such a development would be incompatible with the White Paper’s other goal of ‘reducing the long delays associated with the adoption and implementation of Community rules’ (European Parliament, a5-0399/2001:3).

Moreover, the European Parliament makes a strong statement regarding democratic legitimacy of “organised civil society”:

‘organised civil society’ as ‘the sum of all organisational structures whose members have objectives and responsibilities that are of general interest and who also act as mediators between the public authorities and citizens’, whilst important, are inevitably sectoral and cannot be regarded as having its own democratic legitimacy, given that representatives are not elected by the people and therefore cannot be voted out by the people ... consultation of interested parties with the aim of improving draft legislation can only ever supplement and can never replace the procedures and decisions of legislative bodies which possess democratic legitimacy; only the Council and Parliament, as co-legislators, can take responsible decisions in the context of legislative procedures, due account being taken of the opinions of the bodies specified in the Treaties, i.e. in particular the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions (European Parliament, a5-0399/2001:3).

Therefore, according to the European Parliament, the further debate on governance should be guided by the following principles:

- (a) governance by the Union institutions requires democratic legitimacy; this is provided jointly by the European Parliament and the parliaments of the Member States, the latter as the bodies exercising democratic scrutiny over governments acting in the Council;
- (b) democratic legitimacy presupposes that the political will underpinning decisions is arrived at through parliamentary deliberation; this is a substantive and not merely a formal requirement; there is also an urgent need for democratic legitimacy and scrutiny when implementing rules are adopted by the executive;
- (c) legitimacy is understood to mean that political decisions must be underpinned by a fundamental consensus, such as that expressed in the Charter of Fundamental Rights recognised by the European Union - in the sense of a list of individual rights and an objective value system;

(d) legitimacy in this sense is ultimately inconceivable without clear attribution of political responsibility and cannot be replaced by ‘technical’ factors such as ‘effectiveness’ or ‘coherence’ (European Parliament, a5-0399/2001:4).

The reluctant attitude towards the role of organised civil society is no doubt part of the internal struggle for power among the EU institutions. From the perspective of the European Parliament, “the directly elected Members of the European Parliament are the representatives of the citizens of the European Union” (European Parliament, a5-0399/2001:7). From a democratic point of view, the arguments put forward for transparent decision-making processes, both in the Council and in the Commission, are understandable, and also justifiable. Moreover, as shown earlier, there are good reasons for the European Parliament to make the case that “organised civil society” should only supplement and not replace the procedures and decisions of legislative bodies. That the principles and structural elements of representative democracy and the rule of law should be recognised and clear political accountability for decisions upheld, are also important principles at the core of liberal democracy.

But the reluctance expressed towards “organised civil society” arguably underplays empirical facts and also aspects of democratic theory. “Organised civil society” does not only direct their attention towards the Commission. With the increased political power of the European Parliament, Parliament itself is becoming more important for lobbying from “organised civil society”. As argued by Shepard (1999:164) MEPs are increasingly “a target for group pressure because of its growing consequences for the political system”. The arguments made for greater openness, accountability and transparency in the Council and the Commission, can therefore be seen as a parallel to the rules of procedure which regulates pressure group's access to Parliament.

The European Parliament argues that it is easily achievable “to undertake to attach in future to each legislative proposal a list of all the committees, experts, associations, organisations and institutes consulted when the proposal was drafted” (European Parliament, a5-0399/2001:3). This is described as an “important breakthrough” and welcomed. But in the same manner, one could also argue that the same demand perhaps should be directed towards the European Parliament.

Parliament further argues that “however indispensable it may be to consult relevant groups and experts when drafting legislative proposals in particular, it should not be allowed to add a further level of bureaucracy, for instance in the form of ‘accredited organisations’ or ‘organisations with partnership agreements’ (European Parliament, a5-0399/2001:7). This, it can be argued, represents a denial of the fact that this level already can be said to be in place. As pointed out by Prodi and Kinnock (2000), there is a long tradition of consultation between the Commission and NGOs. The agricultural advisory committees have existed as a formal mechanism for consultation with NGOs and socio-professional organisations for about 40 years! The Liaison Committee of Development NGOs has had quarterly meetings with the Commission for 25 years. Although not being a “formal” consultative structure, it has de facto gained such standing within the EU system (Prodi and Kinnock, 2000:8-9). The whole point of the exercise is to make a more open, accessible and transparent system across the different branches of the Commission. Accredited organisations and partnership arrangements

are already in place. As such, the resolution adopted by the European Parliament may have been too reluctant.

None the less, the ongoing debate in the EU is, as we have seen, of great interest, more advanced and highly relevant for the way interest organisations and other affected groups are consulted and participate in the issue area of European policies in Norway. The question is how open, accessible and inclusive these processes within EU are for Norwegian NGOs. To this we now turn.

3 Norwegian NGOs and their European connections

The aim of this chapter is first to give a brief empirical overview of the Norwegian NGOs within the scope of this study: environmental, social, humanitarian and other political organisations. Second, we will give a brief empirical overview of the *formal* European connections of a selection of Norwegian NGOs. And finally we will address some *qualitative* aspects of these connections. How important are the formal connections with European counterparts seen to be? Are European issues been given priority by the different organisations? How active are the organisations on European matters? In other words, what we address in this chapter is the “by-pass strategy” (Pedersen, 2002), where private interests, NGOs and other organisations go directly to the EU institutions, umbrella organisations or networks, without going through national authorities. Moreover, we will in relation to the above questions, place the Norwegian NGOs in accordance with the typology developed in 2.3.1.

3.1 The professional capacity of Norwegian NGOs

The common conception of NGOs today in Norway, and in many other European countries, is that NGOs are less dominated by mass movements and more geared towards professional lobbying of public officials and politicians. It seems that the large membership driven political organisations are in decline. This impression is backed by the following findings:

- Between 1983 and 1997 political parties in Norway lost half of their members (see Annex 1.)
- The number of employees in NGO secretariats in Norway has increased. This is a general trend in many NGOs in Norway which can be explained partly due to the proliferation of umbrella organisations which can afford to employ professionals, which again can be seen as a reflection of the growing complexity of modern society. A recent international survey, however, indicates that the share of employees in Norwegian NGOs is relative low compared with other EU countries. (Wollebæk, Selle, Lorentzen 2000:79-86, St.meld. nr. 27, 1996-97, see also Annex 1.)

According to our data, gathered from the major NGOs in Norway today, there are roughly;

190 employees in “organisations with a social cause”,

160 employees in “environment and development organisations”,

90 employees in “organisations with a humanitarian cause” and

40 employees in “other political organisations” (excluding political parties) (see also Annex 2, table 03 – 07).

The sectors most dominated by professional staffs, have most ties to international organisations: In “organisations with a social cause”, all but one organisation is a member of a European or a global, umbrella organisation. We see almost the same proportion among “environment and development organisations”. In contrast, less than one third of “humanitarian organisations” and “other political organisations” have ties to international organisations.

A comparative study of 24 countries, half of them European, concluded that a large NGO staff encourages private volunteer action (Salamon 2001:11). Sweden and Finland, however, who were the only Nordic countries included in the study, were the exceptions. These two countries had low value on “staff” but significant amounts of “volunteering”. Although Norway was not included in the study, the similarities between the Nordic countries may indicate that the positive correlation between staffing and volunteering may not be true also for Norway. The relatively small NGO staffs in Norway, in comparison with EU countries, and the finding that the levels of volunteer action in Norway is relative high compared with most EU countries, suggests that the trend of professionalisation may be weaker in Nordic NGO-sector compared to most EU countries.

Proliferation of Norwegian umbrella organisations

In our data “organisations with a social cause” are organised as part of five national umbrella organisations. Only two of the major NGOs have chosen to stand alone (the elderly and the lesbian and gay organisation). Most of the “environment and development organisations” have also chosen to join national umbrella organisations. Only a few of the “humanitarian organisations” and “other political organisations”, however, have joined an umbrella organisation. It seems that the organisation with most employees and most ties to international NGOs are the ones which most frequently are a member of a national umbrella organisation.

Relatively meagre public funding of Norwegian NGOs

A recent international study suggests that state aid to Norwegian NGOs is low in comparison with EU countries²³. According to the study, the state aid’s share of the voluntary sector’s revenue in Norway in 1997 was significantly lower than in the EU. State aid amounted to an average share of 35.5 per cent in Norway, compared with 54.8 per cent average in EU countries. The state aid was found to be most dominant for NGOs in the health sector (82.1 per cent), social services (66.1 per cent), and education (50.0 per cent). The advocacy sector, which includes “political organisations”, receives in average 35.5 per cent of their revenue from state aid (Sivesind et al. 2002).

²³ These figures are based on the definition of the “voluntary sector” in the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project (CNP) (Sivesind et al. 2002).

Less membership-driven NGOs

Most of the NGOs allow for individual membership. Three of the 41 organisations in this study do *not* allow for individual membership. Neither do they have a democratic system of “one man one vote”. These have all three been established during the last two decades by strong individuals which dominated their organisation for many years²⁴. Moreover, the more frequent use of umbrella organisations, networks and forums as a unit for lobbying and representation, have most likely increased the distance between individual members and spoke-persons of the NGOs. One might say that the democratic process in many NGOs has been weakened in exchange for a stronger voice in the media and at the international arena, as NGOs gather together in umbrella organisations, and in exchange for stronger international engagement. This observation, which is based on our interviews, gives support to the claim by Selle and Øymyr (1995) that many of the new NGOs (including umbrella organisations) are not membership organisations in the traditional sense.

3.2 Connections between Norwegian and European NGOs

Figure 3.1 below, gives an impression of the number of formal European connections between Norwegian NGOs and European organisations and how they relate to each other in different sectors. (The NGO abbreviations are explained in Annex 3 and 4). There are many more international connections if one includes the global and developmental organisations.

At first glance, it seems that there are very frequent ties between Norwegian NGOs and European umbrella organisations and federations. There is also evidence that Norwegian NGOs are *more* active in the international arena than before (Knudsen 1997). Based on the interviews conducted for this report, however, it is no overstatement to argue that there are few organisations who actually regard the European connections as important for their organisation. Many of the interviewed organisations do not give priority to European issues in terms of resources and attention, and it is hard to find traces of active engagement in European matters from other Norwegian NGOs. As such, there are reasons to believe that Norwegian NGOs are less connected to the European level than their counterparts in the member countries in EU. There are at least four reasons for this:

Exclusion

Some European NGOs do not admit NGOs from non-member countries. This is the case for the Liaison Committee which has approximately 900 member organisations in the field of development, emergency relief and development education. The Norwegian NGO against racism (A.S.) and The Norwegian Association for Women’s Rights (NKF) have both attempted to join European federations (EWL and ENAR) but were only

24 The three NGOs: NOAS (Annette Thommessen), Bellona (Frederic Hauge) and Antirasistisk senter (Khalid Salimi).

allowed an observatory status. Only NGOs from EU member countries were allowed full membership.

Lack of interest

In other cases there is a lack of interest on the side of Norwegian NGOs which may explain why they are not represented in “European affairs”. This seems to be the case in the area of the elderly. The main European network for NGOs devoted to the elderly is AGE. AGE is a platform of major NGOs from all EU member countries, Japan, the U.S., Chile and Switzerland. The main Norwegian NGO in this field, however, “Norsk Pensjonistforbund” (NPF) does not participate in this network, nor does any other Norwegian NGO. The same situation is found in the field of asylum, poverty and unemployment. Neither the Norwegian NGO “NOAS”, the umbrella organisation “Velferdsalliansen”, nor organisations with a Christian allegiance, are actively involved in work at the European level. The main federation in poverty is EAPN (anti poverty network). EAPN only allows membership from NGOs in EU member countries. There is, however, a process going on in order to open up for Norwegian NGO participation as part of Norwegian participation in the “EU Programme on Social Exclusion” which was approved in 2002. There are still many other organisations in this area, which allow Norwegian NGOs to be a member: FEANTSA (working for the homeless) and ENU (working for the Unemployed) are two examples. NGOs from most EU member countries are represented in these, while Norwegian NGOs are absent.

The lack of interest may be explained by the controversies regarding EU membership in Norway. After two referendums on the question of EU membership (in 1972 and 1994), it seems that some NGOs view EU-related work as less relevant than national work and less relevant than to be engaged at the global level. In fact, many NGOs are almost as much oriented towards the global level as the national level. The European level, however, is a white spot for many NGOs, despite the fact that Norway as a signatory state to the EEA agreement is obliged to implement all EU legislation covering the internal market and some other areas. The referendums seem to have polarised the attitude of many NGOs towards the EU, and most likely contributed to a lack of interest in European affairs.

Lack of competence

In our interviews with NGOs, several NGOs explained the low engagement in EEA/EU issues and lack of participation in European umbrella organisation, with the quite frank acknowledgement that they had little knowledge and competence in relation to EEA and EU. EU is seen as complicated and resource demanding. To get above the threshold where one feels able to participate, is therefore an important barrier and explanation for low engagement.

FRISAM – a state office devoted to the promotion of voluntarism in Norway – have together with a group of Norwegian NGOs organised annual courses for NGOs interested to learn more about how the EU system works. The course includes a visit to Brussels to national institutions and EU institutions of general interest and to organisations/entities of particular interest to each course participant. These so-called “FRISAM courses” are sponsored by a grant from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as

part of the scheme covering *Information related to European co-operation*. These were first offered in 1998 and the number of participants has gradually grown to approximately 50 in 2002.

In 2001, World Wildlife Fund Norway and The European Movement Norway (“Europabevegelsen”) initiated a collaborative effort to develop the competence among environmental NGOs in relation to EUs environmental policy processes. The Ministry of Environment sponsored the project, and as a result, several NGOs have participated in a seminar and a study trip to Brussels. The “Competence Project” is still running, and interest for the project is said to be increasing among NGOs.

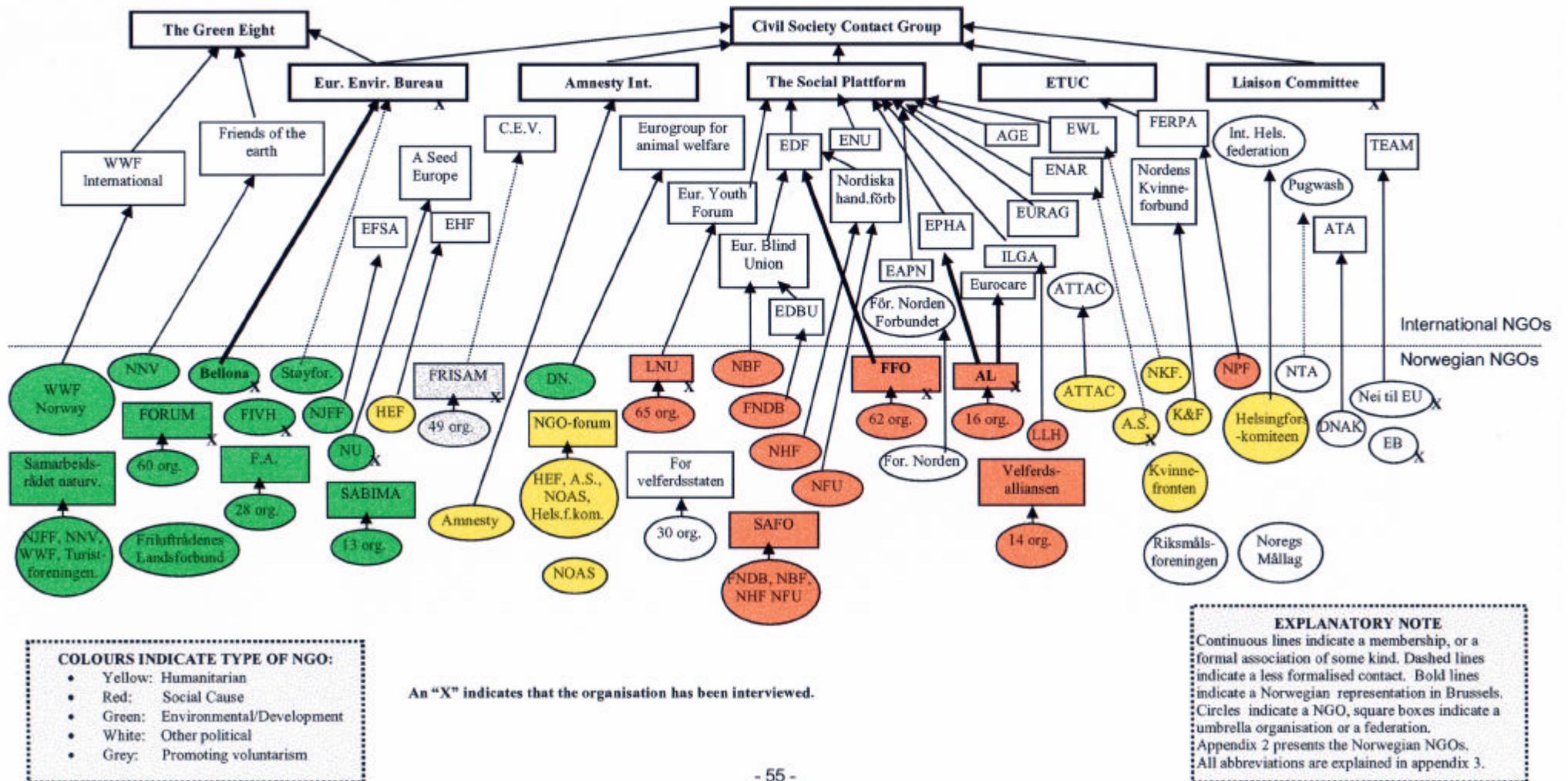
Lack of Norwegians in the EU institutions

Finally, Norway’s status as a non-member country may affect NGO involvement also in other ways. The low representation of Norwegian NGOs in the EU may be more than a question of attitude and competence. There are no Norwegian politicians to speak to in the Council of Ministers and in the European Parliament. In addition, there are very few Norwegians in the European Commission. Norwegian NGOs working in the EU often find themselves in meetings without any backing from Norwegian delegates. In the process of gathering information, they receive relatively little assistance from Norwegian politicians and civil servants. A Norwegian study of lobbying the European Parliament shows that common culture and language is an important criterion of success, although the votes are rarely divided along national borders (Dahl and Sverdrup, 1996).

Conclusion

There are, as we have seen, many connections between Norwegian NGOs and their European umbrella organisations and networks (as shown in figure 3.1). Due to exclusion from European federations, lack of interest in European matters, lack of competence and weak official representation of Norwegians in EU institutions, there is reason to believe that Norwegian NGOs have *fewer affiliations* with organisations at the European level than NGOs located in the member countries. Our interviews support this assumption. There are few organisations who actually regard the European connections as important for their organisation. Few organisations give priority to European issues in terms of resources and attention, and very few organisations are actively engaged in European matters, let alone, represented with their own staff in Brussels.

Figure 3.1. NORWEGIAN NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS, AND THEIR EUROPEAN CONNECTIONS



3.3 Qualitative aspects concerning the relationship between Norwegian and European NGOs

Some NGOs, however, are actively engaged in European politics, and also argue that it is important to participate. They have also made experiences which concerns the strategies and requirements for effective participation, and arguments for why participation is important. In the following, we consider and assess some of the qualitative aspects of Norwegian NGO participation:

The need to belong to a European umbrella organisation

Norwegian NGOs who are actively engaged in European politics tend to agree that one must be associated with, or a member of, a European umbrella organisation if one is to have any influence on EU policy. Such a relationship is also required to receive valuable information. This means that Norwegian NGOs who wants to engage in European politics as a first step first should orientate themselves among possible partners at the European level,.

A tendency to view EU as a more important source than the Norwegian government

Among those Norwegian NGOs who are actively engaged in European politics, there is a tendency to view EU institutions as a more important source of information than the Norwegian government. This was especially emphasized by the three Norwegian NGOs which so far have established a permanent office in Brussels: Rusfeltets Samarbeidsorgan (former name Avholdsfolkets Landsråd), Bellona and Funksjonshemmedes Fellesorganisasjon (FFO). FFO criticized a Green Paper from the Norwegian government on disability policy for not taking sufficiently into account the relevant EU legislation. Where NGOs see that the EU has a more “advanced” regulation compared to Norway, they generally try to exploit this in national debates and lobbying activities.

Norwegian NGOs compared to NGOs in EU member countries

In paragraph 2.3.1 we introduced a typology of organisations based on three dimensions:

Table 3.1: A typology of organisational dynamics

Activity	Public (outward oriented)				Private (internally oriented)			
Ideology	Change oriented		No change orientation		Change oriented		No change orientation	
Socialisation	Strong	Weak	Strong	Weak	Strong	Weak	Strong	Weak
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

Source: Selle and Øymyr (1995:251).

Outward activity is understood as a measure of interest in, and access to, European politics and policies. We have already suggested that Norwegian NGOs are part of a general trend towards professionalisation (3.1) and internationalisation (3.2). These trends are, however, found to be less radical in Norway than in EU countries, and Norwegian NGOs on average also receive less public funding than their EU counterparts. Norwegian NGOs have traditionally belonged to type “1”, and in general had strong socialisation. Type “6” and “8” are now the fastest growing NGO types (Selle and Øymyr 1995, Sivesind et al. 2002). The relatively weaker professionalisation and internationalisation of NGOs in Norway, suggests that Norwegian NGOs compared with NGOs in EU member countries, are:

- less outward orientated, both with respect to members, and European politics and policies (although not necessarily to the general public or globally),
- experiencing stronger socialisation (one would expect the members to play a greater role - being more involved in the activities – in organisations which are less professionalised).

One can ask if the relatively low degree of professionalisation constitutes a problem for the international efforts of Norwegian NGOs.

Norwegian NGOs on the European level

There is no legal basis for the civil dialogue in the EU. The general access to information and consultation procedures for NGOs, therefore, is not based on legal right, but rather a privilege which has to be granted by EU institutions. Norwegian NGOs, which do not belong to a member country, are excluded from several important European umbrella organisations (like the Liaison Committee, EAPN and ENAR) and some consultation procedures. Norwegian NGOs will therefore have to identify and apply more informal methods if they are to influence EU institutions. In addition, Norwegian NGO’s drawback of belonging to a non-member country may imply that they have more to gain from *accessing* information from the EU, than from *influencing* EU institutions. This is also due to the fact that a larger portion of the political struggles are fought at the national arena in non-member countries, compared to member countries, and the fact that the Norwegian government has limited access to information in the decision-making phase in the EU. Thus, Norwegian NGOs may have most to gain at the national level when retrieving information from EU. On the other hand, however, several Norwegian NGOs claim to have been able to influence decisions within the EU,

and there are several success stories told by Norwegian NGOs. The fact that it is difficult, therefore, does not imply that it is impossible.

Since the 1970's the European Commission have encouraged the consolidation of NGOs into platforms. There are many influential European platforms. Among these are:

- The European Environmental Bureau (EEB). Established in 1974 and consists of 134 European organisations and federations from 25 countries. Their mission is to promote environmental policies and sustainable policies on the European Union level.
- The Liaison Committee. Established as a broad network alliance in 1975. The Commission has always been the major source of its funding. It has approximately 900 members organised under national platforms in each EU member country.
- The platform of social NGO. Created in 1995 and consists of approximately 40 European NGOs, federations and networks. The aim is to promote the social dimension of the EU.
- The European Disability Forum (EDF). A member of the social platform. Was established in 1993 as the consultative committee to the European Commission's program HELIOS II. In 1997 it was established as an independent forum, consisting of 67 organisations on the European level. The aim of EDF is to represent disabled people in dialogue with the EU and other European authorities.

All the groups above are part of the "meta-umbrella", the Civil Society Contact Group. This was established in February 2002 to promote the involvement of civil society within the work of the "European Convention".

According to our informants there are two main reasons for EU to promote the establishments of European platforms of NGOs. First, the number of NGO requests, meetings, and funding schemes has surpassed the European Commission's capacity. Second, the consolidation of NGOs is sought to secure both adequate funding of NGOs and a sufficient level of professionalism and competence. At the expert level, units of the Commission see NGOs as valuable assets in their policy building. In contrast, the financial services of the Commission and the Secretary General of the Commission are sceptical of introducing new legal grounds for NGO funding. This creates conflicts from time to time, which encourages Commission units to construct schemes – most often programs – to secure the funding of networks/federations.

In this situation it is critical for Norwegian NGOs to be well integrated in a European umbrella organisation or network. The fact that only three Norwegian NGOs have any representation in Brussels, and that Norwegian NGOs are absent on the European level in important policy areas such as gender, the elderly, asylum and anti-poverty, shows that the NGOs have not yet exploited their potential at the European level. This may, however, require a further consolidation of Norwegian NGOs also in Norway. In some areas, the cooperation among Norwegian NGOs is rather weak. A further pooling of

resources is required if one fully wants to exploit the potential for political influence at the European level.

The next chapter concern the qualitative aspects of the relationship between Norwegian NGOs and the Norwegian government.

4 The relationship between NGOs and the Norwegian Government

As we described in chapter 1, the Norwegian government has initiated a process to increase Norwegian participation both domestically and in the EU within the framework of the EEA agreement. The aim is to improve and utilise the participation by NGOs, and to further strengthen the national coordination and processes on EEA/EU issues in Norway. As we saw in chapter 3, however, there are several problems associated with this. It is not easy to detect a profound interest on EEA/EU issues among Norwegian NGOs, and there are also structural difficulties within the national NGO community, especially within the social sector. This makes it harder for NGOs to connect themselves to the European umbrella organisations.

In this chapter, we will first give a short presentation of existing contacts between national authorities and NGOs on EEA/EU issues, based on our own data and secondary sources. Second, we will present some of the findings from interviews with bureaucrats within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Social Affairs. Third, we will present some of the findings from the interviews with NGOs. The questions are the same, but seen from the other side of the table. This makes it possible to explore if NGOs and ministries view their relationship differently. From these data, we will first try to place the different ministries according to table 2.1 presented in chapter 2. Thus, we will try to assess the modes of political participation in different stages of decision making. Are NGOs listening, giving information, being consulted or do they participate in analysis and agenda-setting? Second, we will try to place the different ministries according to the different strategies of national coordination identified by Pedersen (2002:167), presented in chapter 1.

To recall, Pedersen (2002) differentiates between three ways national coordination can take place. The first he calls “the administrative” approach where there is no systematic attempt to include NGOs or other organisations. This is also called the “with-in-strategy” and implies that private interests, NGOs and other organisations are held outside the national coordination process. The second approach is called “the pluralistic” approach. Here, there is interplay between authorities and private interests, NGOs and other organisations in the national coordination process. This is also called the “go-through-strategy”²⁵.

In relation to these strategies, we will try to answer the following questions: How is the role of NGOs conceived by these ministries? How is the relationship between the ministries and the NGOs organised? What type of interaction is the dominant? What differences do we find between the ministries? How valuable is NGOs seen in relation

²⁵ The third approach (the “private” approach or “by-pass strategy”, where private interests, NGOs and other organisations go directly to the EU institutions, and also umbrella NGS and networks without going through national authorities) was discussed in chapter 3 and is not relevant for this chapter.

to EEA/EU issues? In the following, we will address the three ministries (the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Social Affairs) in turn. Thereafter, we will present some comparative data on Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden from Pedersen (2002). The data are based on a survey among central administration in the four countries²⁶. These data do not only give valuable information on the contacts between central administration and different organisations, but also shows how Norway compares with the Nordic member states. Finally, this chapter presents and discusses some of the measures proposed in order to strengthen the involvement by NGOs in EEA/EU matters by the Government. The discussion is based on the interviews with NGOs and the ministries, but the conclusions and recommendations are our own.

4.1 Existing relationships between ministries and NGOs

The Ministry of Environment:

We have seven interviews which concerns the Ministry of Environment. From the interviews and data collected for this study, there is not much doubt that the Ministry of Environment have the most developed and effective organisation handling NGOs on EEA and EU related issues. NGOs also point to the Ministry of Environment as the “model” for how this should be done by other ministries. This, however, is not surprising, since the Ministry have had to deal with environmental NGOs from the start of its creation. Environmental NGOs played an important role in environmental policy in getting environmental issues defined and accepted as political issues (Jansen and Osland, 1996). The Ministry of Environment was established in 1972. Environmental NGOs have continued to be active in public policy, both in terms of cooperation and confrontations with the state. Thus, there is a long tradition in the environmental field to include environmental NGOs in the political process.

Participation by environmental NGOs has been formalised in most phases of the policy making process. They submit proposals to environmental authorities, are represented on boards and in committees, and through the “hearing institution” or inquiries they comment on recommendations, draft bills and policy programmes (Jansen and Osland, 1996). In addition, they appreciate and increasingly use informal channels to influence the environmental administration and Parliament (*Stortinget*) (Rommetvedt and Opedal, 1995).

There are however, no explicit, written rules or guidelines when it comes to who should be consulted in different cases and situations (Skivenes, 2001), except for the

²⁶ The survey was part of the research project “National forvaltningspolitikk, europæisering og nordiske samarbeide”, with Bengt Jacobsen, Per Legræid and Ove K. Pedersen. The survey was sent to ministries, directorates and boards in central administration. All where directly subordinated Government (or a minister), concerned the whole country and had standing staff. The respond percentage was 80 per cent in Denmark, 86 per cent in Norway, 83 per cent in Sweden and 77 per cent in Finland (Pedersen, 2002:144).

instruction that “interested parties” must be consulted after the proposals are published and before the decision is taken (*Utreddningsinstruksen 5.1*, Skivenes 2001). The principle of affected interests is therefore flexible and open for interpretation by the different ministries. It can be applied differently under different circumstances and also differently by the different ministries.

The Ministry of Environment seems to have a quite liberal approach towards organisations who want to participate, and the interpretation of the principle of affected interests has been broadened. As such, the institutional structure is corporatist in terms of being formal and pluralistic in terms of participation. Furthermore, the Aarhus Convention which is partly being implemented by a new law proposed on the Right to Environmental Information, grants NGOs and individuals the right to information and participation. Article 6 in the Convention requires “Parties” to guarantee public participation in decision-making with a potentially significant environmental impact, sets requirements for notifying the public concerned about the decision-making early in the process and sets time frames for public participation procedures within a decision-making process²⁷.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was the first ministry, with the exception of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to establish a website dedicated to EEA/EU issues. The first EEA documents were available on the net in June 1997, and autumn 1998 and “Møteplass Europa” (“Meeting point Europe”) was established. It contains (in full text, or by hyperlinks) extensive information on the institutional framework, procedural rules, EEA relevant draft legislation and references to EU and EEA case law. In January 2001, the Ministry of Environment as the first sector ministry organised a similar website, called “Møteplass Europa – Miljø” (Meeting point Europe – environment), which contains information on EEA/EU environmental issues. The aim was to make it easier for organisations, public administration and other interested parties to find information on EU’s environmental policy and new environmental legislation which may become part of the EEA-agreement. The website further contains news, documents and links to documents, inquiries, calendar of happenings, meetings in committees, guides to decisions and work in EEA and EU, information about EEA in the environmental area, contact persons and also links to other websites. Moreover, the website is frequently updated and the Ministry is also continuously working to improve the website. The website, no doubt, represents a valuable tool for keeping oneself updated on EEA/EU environmental issues.

In addition to the website, the Ministry of Environment established regular half year meetings with NGOs in 1997 on EEA/EU issues. WTO issues were included at a later stage, with the justification that there are many parallel issues and inter-linkages between the issues addressed in the two institutions. At first, it was only environmental NGOs who were invited to the meetings, but later the “social partners” were included on the initiative of the Confederation of Norwegian Business and Industry (NHO). The Confederation of Norwegian Commercial and Service Enterprises (HSH) came later,

27 For more information on the Aarhus Convention, see <http://www.unep.org/env/pp/implementation%20guide/english/part2.pdf>.

and the two last members are The Consumer Council (*Forbrukerrådet*) and the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (*Kommunenes Sentralforbund*). The Ministry also have other forums and regular meetings with NGOs, but these do not engage in EEA/EU issues.

In addition, the Ministry also cooperates with and funds the Competence project (described in chapter 3), and also contributes to the funding of the European Environmental Bureau (EEB) (described in chapter 3), which is an umbrella organisation for environmental NGOs placed in Brussels. Moreover, the Ministry has sponsored studies on the EU which could be seen as “handbooks” in how to lobby the EU institutions (Dahl and Sverdrup 1996a, 1996b). In these studies, organisations who wish to engage in EU politics are given an overview of how the different institutions function, explicit and specific advices on how to lobby these institutions most effectively, and recommendation of strategies that could be chosen if one intends to lobby the European Parliament or other EU institutions.

Seen in relation to the table developed in chapter 2, the Ministry of Environment involves NGOs in different modes of participation and in different stages of the political process in EEA/EU matters. It must be added that the actual placing of the relationship is based on relatively few interviews and the categories are not easily separable. None the less, the table gives a tentative description of the relationships between NGOs and the ministry. NGOs do not participate in what could be called strong corporatist arrangements on EEA/EU issues. Consultation is probably what best describes the involvement by NGOs in the modes of participation and in the different stages of the political process on EEA/EU issues. This is to a lesser degree the case for actual decision-making (therefore in brackets). This is shown in table 4.1:

Table 4.1.1: Inclusion of NGOs by the Ministry of Environment in EEA/EU matters

MODES OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION: <i>/</i>	Participants listening only <i>For example, receiving information from a government PR campaign or open database.</i>	Participants listening and giving information <i>For example, through public inquiries, media activities and ‘hot-lines’.</i>	Participants being consulted <i>For example, through working groups and meetings held to discuss policy.</i>	Participation in analysis and agenda-setting <i>For example, through multi-stakeholder groups, round tables and commissions.</i>	Participation in reaching consensus on the main strategy elements <i>For example, through national round tables, parliamentary/select committees, and conflict mediation.</i>	Participants involved in decision-making on the policy, strategy or its components
STAGES OF DECISION-MAKING:						
Preparatory phase	X	X	X			
Decision-making	X	X	(X)			
Implementation	X	X	X			

Based on interviews with NGOs and the Ministry of Environment.

In our interviews with NGOs, most organisations expressed satisfaction with the way the Ministry of Environment handled their relationship with NGOs and the information

provided by the Ministry on EEA/EU issues. None the less, some expressed their dissatisfaction with the quality of the information that was provided, especially by the Mission of Norway to the EU in Brussels. The main objection was that the information usually did not provide any analysis of the different issues or any analysis of policy implications and relevance for the Norwegian context or situation. One NGO expressed the view that the ministry was more interested in getting information from the NGOs than providing information themselves. In general, however, there were few complaints to be heard from NGOs on the participatory opportunities and information provided by the Ministry.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

In our sample, approximately 15 of the conducted interviews can be related to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Since the main role and function of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is to co-ordinate the work on EEA most organisations had been in contact with and also had an opinion of the ministry. Two conditions, however, complicates the assessment of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. First, several of the interviewed NGOs primarily fall under the scope of other ministries and have most established contacts with the ministry within its own area of interest. Second, the ministry is in the middle of a process where the aim is to improve its relationship with NGOs in the issue area of EEA/EU.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs have ties to NGOs which are engaged in international policies in (at least) four areas: In the *developmental* area the ministry coordinates the tasks related to relief and aid organisations. NORAD, a directorate subordinated the ministry, is responsible for the operative tasks in this field. In the *human rights* area the policy is handled by a department in the ministry. This department is responsible for Norway's participation in intergovernmental conferences and for the Norwegian funding of IGOs and NGOs in the humanitarian area. In the ongoing *trade negotiations* in the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the ministry has established a number of Committees covering the issues and areas of negotiation where also some NGOs participate. Finally the ministry is now in regular contact with Norwegian NGOs *interested in policy outcomes at the European level*.

At the European level, the ministry have offered funding schemes for NGO information projects, on a similar basis as funding for campaigns covering north-south policies and peace work. Starting in 2002, the ministry has also organised meetings with participation from NGOs on a more regular basis. The meetings have been attended by the state secretary. The more regular meetings with NGOs are in accordance with the Government's European policy Platform, published in February 2002. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is also responsible for the embassies and trade missions in foreign

countries. In Brussels the Norwegian mission receives approximately 100 groups each year – more than one third of these are representatives of Norwegian NGOs.²⁸

Although the Ministry of foreign affairs seems to have increased their contacts with NGOs and is funding a range of NGO projects, the process has not yet permeated the NGOs. The majority of the NGOs we interviewed made complaints as to the way NGOs were handled by the ministry on EEA/EU matters²⁹. The complaints covered both access to information and modes of participation. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was viewed by most of the organisations we interviewed as quite different from the other ministries. It was seen as more hierarchical, more formal and less interested and including towards NGOs in general. The common perception was that the ministry first and foremost works alone in EEA/EU issues. One organisation mentioned the preparation of the White Paper on Norway's relation to Europe as an example (St.meld.nr.12, 2000-2001). The organisation did not feel that it had been included in the preparatory work in a satisfactory degree. The result was, according to the NGO, that the White Paper had serious omissions. The White Paper would have been substantively improved if NGOs had been included at an earlier stage, according to this NGO.

Others claimed not to have been invited to meetings or being invited after the meeting was actually held. Several NGOs expressed a feeling that the ministry did not have a systematic overview of the relevant NGOs in EEA/EU issues. Others also complained about a general lack of information from the ministry in EEA/EU matters, and several claimed to fall outside the “hearing institution”, or inquiries, so that they could not comment on recommendations and policy programmes. In fact, some claimed they received more information from the EU Commission directly than from the ministry. One organisation argued that the dominant view on NGOs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was to see the organisations as lobbyist and not as organisations which could contribute to the analysis and surveys of the ministry. The perspective of learning was not seen to be integrated in the ministry. It was argued that the culture in the ministry was more of the sort; “we know best”.

True or not, the perceived differences among some of the interviewed NGOs between the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were striking and also at odds with other areas within the ministry itself. In general, the corporatist channel has become more important also in foreign policy-making. More NGOs are engaged in international politics (Knudsen, 1997), and more organisations have been included in the political decision-making process (Knudsen, 1997). Two other issue areas where the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have included NGOs can serve as examples; trade negotiations in the WTO and in the implementation of development policies.

Looking at the specific WTO arrangements, it is clear that if boards, committees and councils are taken as an indicator of corporatism, then corporatist arrangements has increased rather than decreased, which is contrary to the general development found in

28 Source: Statistical data produced by employees at the Norwegian Mission in Brussels for 1994-1998.

29 Annex 5 lists the organisations we have interviewed for this project.

other policy areas. Already in the first negotiation round within GATT, interest organisations were represented in advisory committees. This practice has been upheld in all the different negotiating rounds within GATT (Tenold and Norvik, 1998:73). In 1979, the GATT Committee (now the WTO Committee) was established under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. There are today a number of formal advisory committees under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs linked to different subject areas within WTO (Langhelle, 2001).

Moreover, the ministry have had a liberal or pluralist approach as to who should participate in this area. In fact, it has been a declared goal from the authorities that the interest organisations should influence the shaping of Norwegian trade policies (Tenold and Norvik, 1998:73). In addition, more cross-cutting issues which affect several sectors and organisations simultaneously, together with an expanded interpretation of the principle of affected interests, have broadened the number of participants. Especially the WTO Committee have a more pluralist character, and the Committee is in principle open for organisations who can justify an interest in the trade negotiations. Some of the other Committees established by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are more specialised, and thus more exclusive in terms of who participates, and not yet open for NGO participation. They seem to reflect the need for expertise, information and know-how which some of the interest organisations obtain. Still, it can be argued that the ministry has created a comprehensive, systematic and broad spectre of Committees covering the issues and areas of negotiation in WTO, with participation including most affected interest organisations and also NGOs (Langhelle, 2001)³⁰.

In the area of development policies, the involvement, co-operation and financing of NGOs and NGO projects in developing countries have increased dramatically the last four decades. In 1963, Government sponsored seven NGOs in seven countries with the amount of 3 million NOK. In 1993, around 500 organisations received 1,5 billion NOK in project support in around 100 different countries (Tvedt, 1997). The relationship between NGOs and the state have developed in close cooperation, and with few controversies between the ministry and NGOs. In the 1990, NGOs according to Tvedt (1997) became an integral and important part of the overall Norwegian foreign aid and policy strategy, especially in the implementation of policy goals. Seen in relation to the discussions in chapter 2, it seems natural to conclude that in both trade negotiations and development policies, the more corporatist structure to be found also within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, can be explained (and justified) in accordance with Anderson's (1979) criterion of the instrumental nature of these arrangements in reaching "stipulated public objectives".

In relation to EEA/EU, however, there have been less corporatist structures to be found. The ongoing process within the ministry, however, is about to change this. If one is to

30 The NGO umbrella "Forum for utvikling og miljø" (Forum for Environment and Development) and WWF Norway are members of the Government's Advisory WTO Committee, and the Advisory Committee on Trade and Environment (Langhelle, 2001).

speculate why this has not been done before, one reason could be the political struggles over Norwegian membership in the EU, which has made the EEA/EU issue politically sensitive in Norway. The WTO negotiations, however, are also controversial so this is not a sufficient explanation. Three other explanations seem more plausible. The first point is that the EEA agreement first and foremost concerns the “four freedoms” where the aim is to secure participation in and the functioning of the inner market. Many NGOs may therefore at first glance seem to fall outside of what the EEA agreement is supposed to secure and this have made NGOs less relevant in the issue area of the EEA agreement. Thus, the contacts seem to be dominated by the social partners and especially research institutions in the area of international politics and policies. This may explain why NGOs have not been included in EFTA’s Consultative Committee.

The second point is that when NGOs still become relevant, the main role and function of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is to *co-ordinate* the work on EEA and not to carry out the actual work on the legal acts and implementing measures (the detailed and technical directives). The ministry itself is therefore not necessarily the right place to discuss specific details in matters which fall under the other ministries.

The third concerns what seems to have been a general perception of the EEA agreement also within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; that Norway would have to implement the EU legislation covered by the agreement no matter what Norwegian positions on the issue would be? As some have argued, “EU decides the policy and the EEA associates have to apply it” (Emerson et al. 2002). This has led to “unease” in Norway over questions of democratic legitimacy, transparency and accountability in the relations with EU (Emerson et al. 2002). If EU in reality is the policy-maker and EEA the policy-taker, one may legitimately ask why the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should invest resources in consultative arrangements on decisions that have already been taken.

As the background for this study illustrates, however, there is a change in Government, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and also Parliament in favour of increasing participation by Norwegian NGOs both domestically and in the EU within the framework of the EEA agreement. The ongoing processes in the ministry are therefore gradually transforming the relationships with NGOs in this area. Apart from this study, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has initiated a study by the Directorate of Public Management on a communication strategy on EEA issues (Statskonsult, 2002)³¹. Moreover, the Directorate of Public Management is further developing the whole website structure on EEA/EU issues with links to the different ministries and Office of the Prime Minister. The new website will no doubt be a valuable tool for keeping oneself updated on EEA/EU issues.

The fact that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is in the middle of a process to improve its relationships with NGOs, makes it difficult to place the inclusion of NGOs by the ministry in the categories of modes and stages of participation. Again, noting that we have relatively few interviews and that the categories are not easily separable, NGOs

³¹ Statskonsult has also conducted several studies on the effects of the EEA agreement on legislation and administration in Norway (see for instance Statskonsult 1998, 2000).

have not participated in what could be called strong corporatist arrangements on EEA/EU issues. Moreover, the meetings organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are not comparable with the bi-annual meetings organised by the Ministry of Environment. The meetings have been thematic conferences and less of the type “Participants being consulted”. Although these meetings have also included discussions, the dominant feature of the relationship does not qualify as consultation. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ relationship with NGOs would fit best in the category “Participants listening, and giving information”, except for the stage of decision-making where participation seems to be even more exclusive. The involvement by NGOs in the modes of participation and in the different stages of the political process in EEA/EU matters is shown in table 4.2:

Table 4.1.2: Inclusion of NGOs by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in EEA/EU matters

MODES OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION: /	Participants listening only <i>For example, receiving information from a government PR campaign or open database.</i>	Participants listening and giving information <i>For example, through public inquiries, media activities and ‘hot-lines’.</i>	Participants being consulted <i>For example, through working groups and meetings held to discuss policy.</i>	Participation in analysis and agenda-setting <i>For example, through multi-stakeholder groups, round tables and commissions.</i>	Participation in reaching consensus on the main strategy elements <i>For example, through national round tables, parliamentary/select committees, and conflict mediation.</i>	Participants involved in decision-making on the policy, strategy or its components
STAGES OF DECISION-MAKING:						
Preparatory phase	X	X				
Decision-making	X					
Implementation	X	X				

Based on interviews with NGOs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

One important reason for placing the relationship between NGOs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the above categories is the fact that there, contrary to the Ministry of Environment, have been no formal group or forum where the Ministry meets regularly with NGOs. The Government’s European Policy Platform, however, proposes the establishing of a “European Forum” which is to be a formal meeting place between representatives of the ministry and NGOs with a vested interest in European policies. Moreover, there have been meetings with the NGOs who participate in FRISAM (see chapter 3) on how to structure the co-operation with NGOs. Furthermore, Government have proposed to increase the funding covering *Information related to European co-operation* from NOK 2.5 million in 2002, to NOK 4.5 million in 2003. In addition the activities covered by this scheme, is widened to include “network building” and travel costs. Together with other proposals, which we return to later in the chapter, the Ministry is thus in the state of improving its relationships with NGOs and also initiating consultations.

The Ministry of Social Affairs:

We have eight interviews which can be related to the Ministry of Social Affairs. The views expressed by the NGOs on the Ministry of Social Affairs are somewhat mixed. The impression from the interviews and additional information gathered from the ministry, however, is that the Ministry of Social Affairs falls somewhere in between the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. On the one hand it was argued by some NGOs that the ministry was interested in arguments provided by NGOs on different issues raised in relation to EEA/EU and also in the participation of Norwegian NGOs in European umbrella organisations and networks.

On the other hand, there was a general complaint from some organisations that they did not receive any or little information on EEA/EU issues from the Ministry of Social Affairs, and that the “hearing institution” or inquiries was used only to a limited extent by the ministry. Moreover, the NGOs expressed that they wanted to see more initiatives and a more proactive role on EEA/EU issues from the ministry. There was, according to some NGOs, little or no dialogue or consultations on the agenda in the EU. As such, there was a feeling in some NGOs that EEA/EU matters had too low priority in parts of the ministry.

The Ministry of Social Affairs was established in 1916. It has during its existence at times been part of a Ministry of Health (and Social Affairs). Today, the health and social issues are organised in two different ministries but with a joint directorate as subordinate agency for both. Also within the issue areas of health and social issues there is a long tradition of NGO involvement in the political process. The ministry has a number of boards and committees where NGOs are represented. This includes among other things policies towards elderly, disabled and drugs and alcohol.

Historically, there have been fewer boards and committees in relation to health and welfare than in the economic and work area, but the NGOs engaged themselves early in social issues like health policies, alcohol policies and elderly policies (Berven 2000). Moreover, the cooperation between the ministry and NGOs has traditionally had the characteristics of being more practical and informal (Berven, 2001). This does not imply, however, that the NGOs have been without influence. NGOs have influenced the political process and participated extensively in the implementation of health and social policies in Norway (Veiden 1991, Bjarnar, 2001). As such, NGOs have played an active role in the creation of the Norwegian welfare state. There is a tendency also that some NGOs seek representation in boards and committees more than before (Berven 2001).

In the policy area of drugs and alcohol, the Ministry of Social Affairs sponsors the work conducted by AL (now *Rusfeltets Samarbeidsorgan*) on EEA/EU issues. There is, however, no formal committee or forum in this policy area where NGOs are consulted regularly on EEA/EU issues. In the policy area of elderly, the situation is the same. There is a State Council for Elderly (from 2002 State Council of Seniors (*Statens Seniorråd*)), but EEA/EU issues have not been taken up here. In the policy area of disabled, the Ministry of Social Affairs have been in charge of a contact group called GFI (*Gruppen for spørsmål som gjelder funksjonshemmede i internasjonale fora*) where several NGOs and a number of ministries were represented. The group existed from 1990 to 2002, and initially met regularly every half year.

The group has, however, not been functioning for the last two years, and the ministry decided not to continue the group in 2002. The initial aim of the group was co-ordination and exchange of information. It became difficult, however, to get continuity in the participation of the different members. It also became difficult to find topics that were seen as relevant by all participants, and the meetings did only to a very limited extent fulfil the function of co-ordination. Thus, the group more or less stopped functioning. Instead, the ministry has in letters said that it intends to find other ways to secure information and dialogue with NGOs. FFO, however, have asked the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for help to once again establish the group as a functioning group on EEA/EU issues (Ovesen, 2002).

The ministry also for some years gave a separate grant to finance a full time position in FFO to make the organisation capable of working towards European umbrella organisations and the EU³². This has from 2002 been included in the ministry's general grant to FFO. The ministry also provides some funding to EDF. There is also a "State Council for disabled" (*Statens råd for funksjonshemmede*) where the two umbrella organisations are represented (5 out of 13 members). In principle, EEA/EU issues can also be raised and discussed here, and EEA/EU issues have at times been on the agenda. There are no ministries represented in the Council, but the Council may invite representatives of ministries to take part in its meetings (and are expected to invite the the responsible ministry when important matters are discussed). The Council also meets with the "State Secretary Group for the co-ordination of policies towards the disabled", which co-ordinates policies between the different ministries. The State Council for disabled, however, also made complaints regarding the termination of the GFI group, and regretted the decision especially because the GFI group was the only forum for exchange of information between ministries which also included NGOs. It is therefore unlikely that the "State Council for disabled" can replace or fulfil the tasks provided by GFI.

As for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, there are several explanations for the relatively low integration of NGOs on EEA/EU issues within the Ministry of Social Affairs. The most important is probably again that the EEA agreement first and foremost concerns the "four freedoms" and the inner market. The social issues are thus not included in the EEA agreement, although the social dimension has been included in the Lisbon process. Moreover, many of the EU Directives and EEA issues are cross-sectoral. The strongly sectoral policy-making in Norway (Gudmundsen, 2002) seems to create problems also for NGO participation and inclusion. Many EU Directives relevant for example for disabled, first and foremost fall under the scope of other ministries like the Ministry of Transport and Communications. NGO participation should then be handled by the Ministry of Transport and Communications and not the Ministry of Social Affairs. The difficulties surrounding the GFI group can be seen partly in this context. It is ultimately linked to the broader problem of cross-sectoral co-ordination.

³² From 2002 this support was included in the general support to FFO.

Norway participated in the EU “HELIOS II programme (1993-1996)”³³, and the Ministry of Social Affairs have for a long time worked to secure Norwegian participation in the “EU Programme on Social Exclusion”. Norwegian participation in the programme, however, was approved by Parliament (*Stortinget*) the 30. of May 2002, and the ministry has already had meetings with possible participants in the programme. NGOs are also actively involved and co-operates with the ministry on activities in relation to the “European Year of Peoples with Disabilities 2003”, which is another programme that has been included in the EEA agreement. The Ministry of Social Affairs has also worked actively to get the EU Anti-discrimination programme included in the EEA agreement. Norway wants inclusion, but agreement with the other EFTA-EEA states has not been reached. This programme comprises activities to prevent discrimination on the grounds of disability, age, sexual orientation, race or ethnic origin and religion or belief.

In addition, the ministry have worked actively to open up for Norwegian NGO participation in EAPN (European Anti Poverty Network). The ministry have had meetings with EAPN and also arranged a meeting between the ministry, Norwegian NGOs and EAPN to establish contacts (November 2002). The intention is to create a contact forum linked to the social inclusion programme where NGOs and the ministry will meet on a regular basis. The ministries website now includes linkages to the EU and “The Social Inclusion Process”, EAPN and the Mission of Norway in Brussels and the Counsellor in Health and Social Affairs. The website, however, is far less developed than the websites in the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Taking into account the limited number of interviews, that the categories are not easily separable, and that the involvement of NGOs in the ministry seems to vary across subject area, the involvement by NGOs in the modes of participation and the different stages of the political process in EEA/EU matters within the Ministry of Social Affairs is shown in table 4.1.3:

33 The objective of the Helios II programme was to “promote equal opportunities for and the integration of disabled people through the development of a community-level policy of cooperation with the Member States and non-governmental organisations directly involved in the fields of functional rehabilitation, educational integration and economic and social integration”. (See: <http://europa.eu.int/scadplus/printversion/en/cha/c11405c.htm>).

Table 4.1.3: Inclusion of NGOs by the Ministry of Social Affairs on EEA/EU issues

MODES OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION; <i>/</i> STAGES OF DECISION-MAKING:	Participants listening only <i>For example, receiving information from a government PR campaign or open database.</i>	Participants listening and giving information <i>For example, through public inquiries, media activities and 'hot-lines'.</i>	Participants being consulted <i>For example, through working groups and meetings held to discuss policy.</i>	Participation in analysis and agenda-setting <i>For example, through multi-stakeholder groups, round tables and commissions.</i>	Participation in reaching consensus on the main strategy elements <i>For example, through national round tables, parliamentary/select committees, and conflict mediation.</i>	Participants involved in decision-making on the policy, strategy or its components
Preparatory phase	X	X	(X)			
Decision-making	X	X				
Implementation	X	X	X			

Based on interviews with NGOs and the Ministry of Social Affairs.

The table first and foremost describes the relationship within the policy area of disabled. For elderly and drugs and alcohol the situation is different. NGOs are, as we have seen, less integrated in these areas than what is the case for disabled. The NGOs in the area of disabled are also actively involved in the implementation of the “European Year of Peoples with Disabilities 2003”. Compared with the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the relationship with NGOs would fit best in the category “Participants listening, and giving information”, and to some degree in “Participants being consulted”. The reason for the X in brackets is the fact that the GFI group is not functioning. Although there are extensive bilateral discussions and consultations with FFO in the area of disabled, there is no formally structured dialogue on EEA/EU developments between the ministry and NGOs since the termination of the GFI group. It seems, however, that there have been few actual cases and therefore questionable if there is a need for a formally structured GFI group or similar groups in the other areas. Here, as we have seen, the opinions are mixed.

Seen in the strategy perspectives of Pedersen (2002) our findings indicate that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been dominated by “the administrative” or “with-in-strategy”, but that there has been a change towards “the pluralistic strategy” or “go-through-strategy”. The Ministry of Environment is already dominated by the “the pluralistic strategy” or “go-through-strategy”. The Ministry of Social Affairs is somewhere in between but has yet to develop a full fledged strategy for how the ministry should organise its relationships with NGOs in EEA/EU issues, especially in the area of elderly and drugs and alcohol. It must be added though, that the circumstances of the different ministries in relation to NGOs are different. Being the ministry in charge of co-ordinating EEA/EU policies, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs faces the challenge of how to identify and delineate the relevant NGOs. This is a much easier task for the Ministry of Environment. Also for the Ministry of Social Affairs this is more difficult. The number and fragmented structure of NGOs in this field makes it harder to delineate and identify relevant NGOs and to structure the relationships in a systematic and coherent manner.

4.2 The case of Norway compared

In his study of the Nordic countries integration in the EU and the effects on national administration of EU membership (or EEA attachment in the case of Norway), Ove K. Pedersen (2002) presents some comparative data on Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden which are highly relevant for our study. The data, however, does not differentiate between interest organisations and NGOs. As such, it is not possible to draw any conclusions on the extent of NGO involvement. None the less, the data describes some general trends between the countries. The first question raised is basically what we have tried to answer above, to what degree organisations (in our case NGOs) is included in the processes that attempts to coordinate national policies towards the EU. Table 4.2.1 shows the frequency of contacts between employees in central administration and national interest organisations and business companies in EU related issues in the year 1998.

Table 4.2.1: The frequency of contacts between employees in central administration and national interest organisations (int) and business companies (buis) in EU related issues. 1998. Percentage:

	Denmark		Norway		Sweden		Finland		The Nordic countries	
	Int	Buis	Int	Buis	Int	Buis	Int	Buis	Int	Buis
Daily	4	7	1	4	3	6	0	8	2	6
Weekly	9	4	4	7	9	8	5	10	7	7
Monthly	22	12	16	11	17	14	18	15	18	13
Seldom	29	33	43	38	43	31	39	35	36	34
Never	36	44	36	40	36	41	38	32	37	40

Source: Pedersen, 2002:170.

Seeing the categories monthly, weekly and daily together, 35 per cent of the employees in central administration in Denmark are in contact with interest organisations monthly or more frequently. In Sweden 29 per cent, Finland 23 per cent and 21 per cent in Norway. Thus, it is the Danish administration that has the most frequent contacts and the Norwegian administration that has the least contact with interest organisations. Contacts with business companies are somewhat different, but also here, Norway has the least contact although the differences are smaller for business companies. For Norway the percentage is 22, for Denmark 23 per cent, for Sweden 28 per cent, and for Finland 33 per cent. According to Pedersen, the contacts are mostly informal in Sweden and Finland, but there are no figures for Norway.

In the survey presented by Pedersen (2002), the employees in central administration were also asked to what degree national interest organisations and business companies were represented in public committees or national working groups on EU related issues,

where they themselves participated. Table 4.2.2 shows the numbers for the Nordic countries in percentage:

Table 4.2.2: The representation of national interest organisations (int) and business companies (buis) in public committees or national working groups on EU related issues according to employees in central administration. 1998. Percentage:

	Denmark		Norway		Sweden		Finland		The Nordic countries	
	Int	Buis	Int	Buis	Int	Buis	Int	Buis	Int	Buis
To a high degree	25	3	14	10	18	9	6	6	16	7
To some degree	29	16	30	30	31	27	22	18	28	22
Little	9	17	16	22	19	30	32	51	19	31
No	37	63	39	33	33	34	38	23	36	40

Source: Pedersen, 2002:172.

Seeing the categories “Highly” and “Somewhat” together, 54 per cent has met representatives from interest organisations in committees or national working groups in Denmark. The number for Sweden is 49 per cent, for Norway 44 per cent and in Finland 28 per cent. For business companies the numbers are 40 per cent for Norway, 36 per cent for Sweden, 24 per cent for Finland and only 19 per cent for Denmark³⁴. According to Pedersen (2002:173), both Sweden and Norway seem to grant both interest organisations and business companies access through representation to a larger extent than what is done in Denmark and Finland. In Denmark it is primarily interest organisations that participate, while the differences between interest organisations and business companies are in less in Finland, but low for both categories.

Seen together, Sweden is seen as the central administration which is most open for interest organisations and business companies in their national coordination. In one area, however, Norway is special compared with the other Nordic countries. 40 per cent of employees in central administration claim to - a high or some degree - to have met experts in public committees or national working groups. Only 20 per cent report to have done so in Denmark³⁵. Expert representation in Norway is thus approximately at the same level as the representation by interest organisations and business companies.

³⁴ According to Pedersen (2002:172), however, Sweden and Finland to a larger extent use committees or national working groups as part of national coordination than what is the case for Denmark and Norway. Thus the number of committees or national working groups is larger in these countries.

³⁵ Pedersen (2002:173) does not present the numbers for Finland and Sweden, but they are in between Denmark and Norway.

Pedersen (2002:207) also presents comparative data on the degree of success by units of central administration getting their own attitudes and wishes accepted in different institutions. This is shown in table 4.2.3:

Table 4.2.3: The degree of success (“very good” or “good”) of units in central administration getting their own attitudes and wishes in EU related issues accepted in different institutions. 1998. Percentage:

	Denmark	Norway	Sweden	Finland
Commission/General Directorate, EU	51	17	31	34
Preparatory/expert committees	47	22	33	47
The Council of Ministers/COREPER and underlying committees and groups	37	3	24	25
National administration/Coordinating committees	52	41	45	64
National interest organisations	47	25	29	28
Government/leadership in ministry	49	38	49	42
Parliament	35	22	22	40

Source: Pedersen, 2002:207.

Not surprisingly, Norway scores very low compared with the other Nordic countries, especially towards the Council but also the Commission. Expert committees are somewhat better but also here the reported degree of success is low. Compared with Denmark in particular, the success is also low towards national interest organisations. It is somewhat better for national administration and coordinating committees, but Norwegian employees have in general larger problems in getting their own attitudes and wishes accepted in all the different institutions. It is only for Parliament that Norwegian employees report the same (low) degree of success as the Swedish employees.

Based on the data from the surveys, Pedersen (2002:208) concludes that Norway looks a bit like the other countries, but that Norway also is “the different country” (*annerledeslandet*). The “half” membership through the EEA agreement seem, according to Pedersen, to have the consequence that the opening up of central administration is slowed down, and that the national coordination system seems to limit

political participation and parliamentary control. Although there is some support for these conclusions in the data presented by Pedersen, another interpretation is that EU membership speeds up the opening up of central administration and not necessarily that “half” membership slows it down.

One reason for the opening up of central administration is of course that national interests count also for member countries, and that governments are the main opportunity structure for interest groups to influence the Council of Ministers and the EU policy processes. As argued by Mazey and Richardson (2001), the Council of Ministers is the least directly accessible institution for interest groups of all the EU institutions. Yet, in theory at least, it is maybe the most important target also for interest groups. The most obvious way to influence the Council is therefore through national governments. As “half” or non member, however, this route becomes less attractive for interest groups, which again explain why it, at times at least, is the Norwegian Government who is pushing for NGO participation in European politics rather than the NGOs themselves. So even if one concludes that “half” or non member does not necessarily slow down the opening up of central administration, there are structural elements connected to “half” or non membership which certainly does not contribute to speeding up the process.

4.3 Proposals to improve relationships between NGOs and ministries

Based on the data presented in 4.1 and 4.2, there is not much doubt that there is room for improving the relationship between NGOs and ministries in the issue area of EEA/EU. As we saw in chapter 3, however, it is not only that Norway is not a member which creates problems in the issue area of EEA/EU, but also the fact that many NGOs have a different agenda than the European. Many Norwegian NGOs are more interested and concerned about the developing world than what happens in the EU. As such, many organisations do not give EEA/EU a high priority in terms of staff and resources. As such, the mixed interests and in some areas lack of a European agenda represents a challenge for the Norwegian Government when the aim is to increase participation in EEA/EU issues, both domestically and in the EU. In *The Norwegian Government's European Policy Platform. Challenges, Goals and Measures* (2002), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs proposed a number of measures in order to improve the relationship with NGOs:

4.5.3 Cooperation with non-governmental organizations

Measures: The Government will:

- seek to improve the exchange of information and cooperation between non-governmental actors (the political parties, the social partners, NGOs, etc.) and relevant parts of the central government administration on Norway's European policy;
- encourage non-governmental actors to build networks with the rest of Europe;
- establish a European policy forum between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and non-governmental actors;
- establish forums between other ministries and non-governmental actors on EU- and EEA-related issues in the various fields;
- consider the possibility of participating in the Community Action Programme promoting non-governmental organizations primarily active in the field of environmental protection;
- extend the criteria for receiving funds over the Foreign Ministry budget to include information measures relating to European cooperation, etc.;
- consider the possibility of providing offices for NGOs at the Mission of Norway to the European Union in Brussels;

Responsible: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other affected ministries and institutions in consultation with non-governmental actors.

Deadline: The project group's report, including proposals for follow-up, is to be completed by the end of 2002.

The proposals by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are comprehensive and seem well targeted. The above proposals would, if implemented, remedy many of the concerns of

NGOs that we have identified in this report. Four points, however, are in need of further comments:

First, more resources in terms of fresh money is what most NGOs in our sample claim is necessary in order to increase and further develop their engagement in EEA/EU issues. This is seen as necessary for increasing their engagement both domestically and in the EU. The proposal from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs includes an extension of “the criteria for receiving funds over the Foreign Ministry budget to include information measures relating to European cooperation”, but it is an open question seen from the NGO side, if this measure will be sufficient. As we saw in chapter 3, Norwegian NGOs receive less state funding than the average in EU, and given the additional difficulties not being a member of the EU creates, which are special for Norway, it is an open question if the above proposal will have the necessary effect of drawing NGO attention to EEA/EU issues.

Second, the proposal of providing “offices for NGOs at the Mission of Norway to the European Union in Brussels” is well received by most NGOs, although many are sceptical towards a “Norwegian house”, where Norwegians primarily meet with other Norwegians. Thus, some argue that the “house” should be separate from the localities of the Mission of Norway. Others are most interested in a place to stay for shorter periods of time. In our sample of NGOs all agree that the primary purpose of going to Brussels is to meet with representatives from the EU institutions, NGO umbrella organisations and networks. The NGOs are also positive to some kind of facilities that would make the trip to Brussels less complicated. In addition, however, some argued that it was equally important that the ministries contributed to getting people from EU, NGO umbrella organisations and networks, to Norway. This, however, seems to be covered by the proposal to increase the funding covering European co-operation which now includes activities of “network building” and travel expenses.

Third, the proposals above are all in one way or the other aiming at improving the exchange of information and cooperation between non-governmental actors and central administration. The creation of a European policy forum between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and non-governmental actors and forums between other ministries and non-governmental actors will most likely improve the exchange of information and cooperation. Still it can be argued that there is an additional challenge in creating trust between the actors, and an environment where NGOs feel accepted and recognised and as true participants in a dialogue. There is, at least among some NGOs, a feeling which is comparable to what was reported by working group 2A within the EU Commission:

“NGOs feel that their role is **insufficiently recognised** and that the Commission is often paying lip service to the need of improving the dialogue with civil society without providing the **guarantees needed for a stable framework** in this respect.”

To some degree and for some NGOs this description would be valid also for the Norwegian case.

The fourth and last point is partly related to the need for a stable framework. If one compares the work being done by the Commission to improve the relationships with NGOs, there are several conditions and measures which are less focused upon in the

Norwegian context. This includes the efforts to make consultation processes more transparent, the effort to develop general principles and minimum standards for consultations and the efforts to build a coherent framework for consultations across the ministries. This is partly due to the fact that the population of NGOs is more surveyable, there are simply fewer NGOs in Norway. At the same time, however, the criteria developed by the EU Commission to secure openness and accountability might be relevant also in the Norwegian context. As it is argued in the draft Consultation document (Communication from the Commission, 2002):

Consultation processes run by the Commission must ... be transparent ... both to those who are directly involved and to the general public. It must be clear:

- what issues are being developed
- what mechanisms are being used to consult
- who is being consulted and why
- what has influenced decisions in the formulation of policy (Communication from the Commission, 2002:10)

And further:

It must be apparent:

- which interests they represent
- how inclusive that representation is
- how accurately they represent those interests (Communication from the Commission, 2002:10).

Moreover, the Commission has developed a set of criteria to ensure an equitable treatment in the consultation process:

In order to ensure equitable treatment, the Commission should ensure an adequate coverage of the following parties in the focused consultation process:

- those affected by the policy
- those who will be involved in the implementation of the policy, or
- bodies that have stated objectives giving them a direct interest in the policy (Communication from the Commission, 2002:13)

Furthermore, the Commission has specified a number of additional criteria for determining the relevant parties for consultation in what they refer to as “focused consultations”. They include the criterions of taking into account the wider impacts of the policy in question on other policy areas, the need for specific experience expertise and knowledge, the need to involve non-organised interests if necessary, the possibility of a track record of participants in previous consultations, and the need for a proper balance between the representatives. This includes large and small, social and economic, wider constituencies and specific target groups, member and non-member countries (Communication from the Commission, 2002:14). As such, there are a

number of criteria which can be applied under different circumstances, and that must be weighted against each other.

How relevant the above criteria are for the Norwegian context is debatable, but it seems that the consultation processes are conducted in a less systematic manner in Norway, at least when compared to the future consultation system in EU. On the one hand, some ministries argue that they have a relatively good overview of the relevant NGOs, and that there are few practical problems in defining who the affected interests and thus the participants should be. On the other hand, some organisations argue that they fall outside the “hearing institution” or inquiries and further claim they often are forgotten by ministries. One can therefore question how good the overview of the relevant organisations is in the different ministries. Moreover, except for the record of documents, letters and e-mails, there are no track records of prior consultations in the ministries. There is no comprehensive tracking system linked to specific cases and consultation processes which include what issues are being developed, what mechanisms are being used to consult, who is being consulted and why or what has influenced decisions in the formulation of policy.

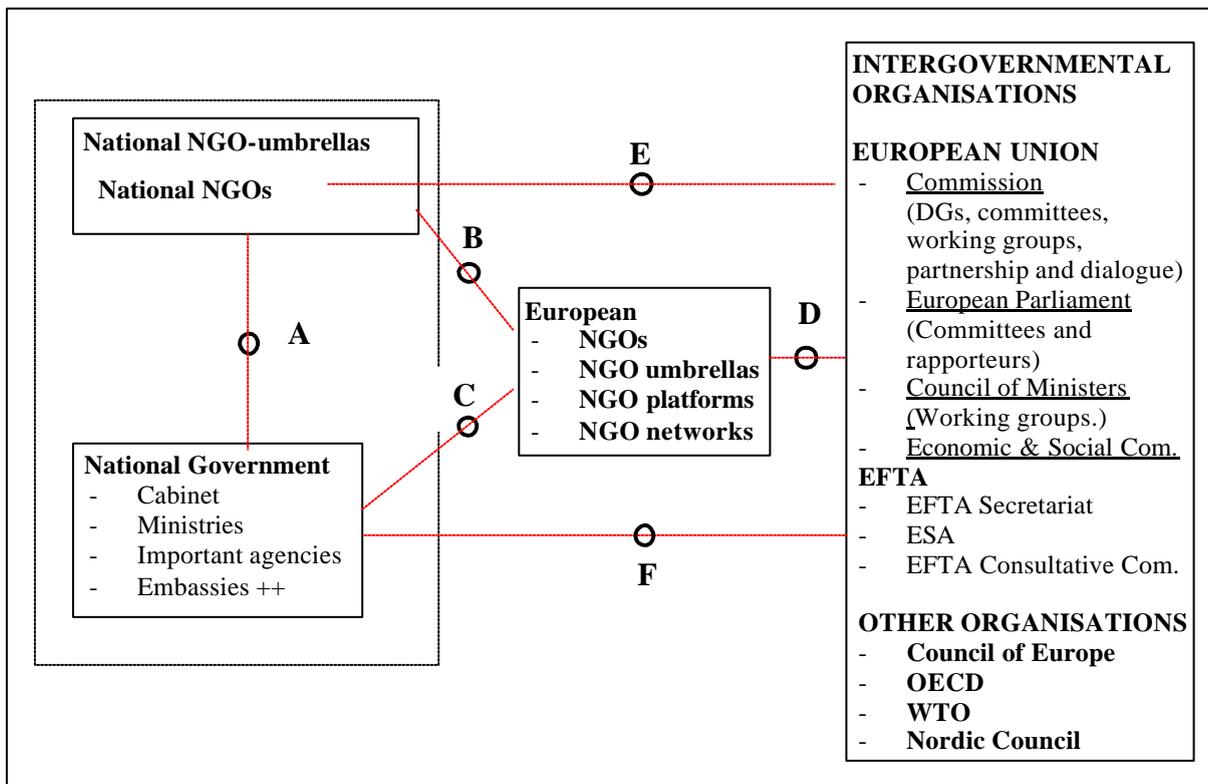
As such, the interpretation of the principles of openness, accessibility and inclusiveness could probably be further specified also in the Norwegian context. Together with the proposals from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, this would probably contribute to the improvement of the relationship between ministries and NGOs in the issue area of EEA/EU issues. Moreover, it might be more necessary in the issue area of EEA/EU than other areas, given the sensitivity of EEA/EU issues in Norway.

5 How does the EFTA-EEA status affect the relationship between NGOs and the Norwegian government?

In this chapter we will summarise some of the findings from the prior chapters and discuss further some issues which seem more pressing than others from what has been discussed so far. The first question regards possible ways in which the two processes which we described as the background for this study (in Norway and in EU) can be seen together. That is, is it likely that the process in the EU moving towards a more structured relationship with NGOs will affect the way relationships are structured in Norway? The second question regards possible problems which arise in the relationship between Norwegian authorities and NGOs from the fact that Norway is not a member of the EU.

We shall take the figure presented in chapter 1 as the starting point for a summary and further discussion of the findings presented so far. We will, as indicated in chapter 1, especially address the relationships A, B, D and E:

Figure 5.1 Paths of interaction between the Norwegian government, Norwegian NGOs and their European counterparts.



As we stressed in chapter 1, figure 5.1 shows *possible* ways of interaction. The strength and depth of some of these interactions, however, was explored in chapter 3 and 4. The findings can be summarised as follows:

Relation A: The interaction between Norwegian authorities and Norwegian NGOs

If the findings in chapter 4 are compared with the status reported in the EU (see chapter 1), there are striking similarities between the problems identified by the Commission and what we have identified in this study. There seems to be differences in the way NGOs are treated and the way in which co-operation with NGOs work, depending on policy area and the ministry in question. This includes access to information and the way dialogue and consultation is organised. As such, the following conclusions from the Commission have some relevance for the Norwegian situation: “whether a consultation procedure is carried out in a meaningful manner is too much dependent on the capacity of the individual Commission departments”, and further, “Excellency in consultation has not been exploited with a view to building an institutional memory of best practice” (Pavan-Woolfe and Kröger, 2000).

In contrast to the EU, however, there are yet few specific consultation forums where NGOs can participate in EEA/EU issues nationally. While there may be too many forums in the EU, there are too few in Norway. The proposals put forward by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in *The Norwegian Government’s European Policy Platform. Challenges, Goals and Measures* (2002), would, if implemented, remedy many of the concerns of NGOs that we have identified in this report. It is doubtful, however, if the increased funding for EEA/EU work by NGOs is seen as sufficient by the NGOs themselves. This, together with the feelings of several NGOs that their role is insufficiently recognised, is maybe the greatest challenge for improving NGO participation.

Last and not least, we have identified structural elements connected to “half” or non membership which certainly does not contribute to strengthen the NGOs wishes to participate in a “go-through-strategy”. As “half” or non member, this route may be less attractive for interest groups since Government, as the main opportunity structure for interest groups to influence the Council of Ministers and the EU policy processes, is more or less absent in the Norwegian case. Square this with an assumption that many Norwegian NGOs lacks a European agenda and you get the situation were the Norwegian Government is pushing for NGO participation in European politics rather than the NGOs themselves. There are, however, as we have seen, a change in attitudes both in the NGO community and in Government which may make it possible to exploit the opportunity structures within the framework of the EEA agreement to a greater extent than before in the future.

Relation B: The interaction between Norwegian NGO and European NGOs, NGO umbrella organisations, platforms and networks

As we saw in chapter 3, there are also several other barriers to increased participation and engagement by the NGOs in EEA/EU issues. These include the exclusion from European federations, lack of interest in European matters, lack of competence and weak official representation of Norwegians in EU institutions, and very few organisations are actively engaged in European issues, let alone, represented with their own staff in Brussels. The fact that Norwegian NGOs are absent on the European level in important policy areas as gender, the elderly, asylum and anti-poverty, shows that there is a long way to go compared with member countries. Still, however, there seems to be a growing interest and awareness of the fact that EU exists and is accessible. The “Competence Project” is one example of such a development, and this project may in the future lead to an increase in the integration of Norwegian NGOs in European umbrella organisation and network.

Relation D: The interaction between European NGOs, NGO umbrella organisations, platforms and networks and the EU and other intergovernmental organisations like EFTA, the Council of Europe and so on

As we have described throughout the chapters, there is increasing concern in the EU on how to structure the relationships between NGOs and the EU institutions. Much of this debate can be seen in the larger context of what is conceived as a legitimacy “crisis” within the EU and an attempt to create a European “civil society”. This is probably the largest and also a crucial difference between the two processes which constitute the background for this study. There is obviously no feeling of a general legitimacy crisis in Norway as is the case in the EU. On the contrary, the institutions of liberal democracy have probably never been less questioned than what is the case today. It is the EEA agreement in itself which is questioned on grounds of legitimacy. The EEA agreement has by one senior political scientist been called a “constitutional catastrophe” (Claes, 2002), where Norway is obliged to implement EU legislation with limited influence on the actual legislation. EEA legislation becomes a part of national legislation and takes precedence over existing national law in case of dispute.

When the Parliament (*Stortinget*) asked the government in Norway to assess the democratic process in relation to the EEA agreement, with the aim of making it more open, accessible and inclusive, the motivation is first and foremost generated from an unclear relationship between the constitution and the EEA agreement, and not a generally perceived legitimacy crisis in Norway in relation to NGOs. As such, the background for the proposals in the EU and Norway are very different. As we saw in chapter 2, the dispute between the Commission and European Parliament over the role of organised civil society can be seen as part of the internal struggle for power among the EU institutions and the question of how EU is to develop in the future.

It seems, however, most likely that the relationship between NGOs and the Commission (and also other EU institutions) will be strengthened in the future. If the proposals are carried through, the interaction will in the future probably become more structured, institutionalised and regulated by a more stable and comprehensive framework. Although it is difficult to assess the actual influence of NGOs within these structures, there are several reasons why Norwegian NGOs should participate. One is to gain information, another is to try to influence first the networks and secondly EU policies. Participation by Norwegian NGOs in NGO umbrella organisations, platforms and networks, are also conceived by Norwegian authorities as an opportunity for NGOs to increase their influence and promote their interests in the EU. This becomes even more important because of the lack of influence by the Norwegian Government vis-à-vis the European Union. It is an opportunity for Norwegian authorities to gain access to additional information on issues which concern them.

The (re)structuring of the relationships between EU and NGOs, however, also seem to affect the relationship between national authorities and Norwegian NGOs directly. There is not much doubt that the new focus on NGOs in Norway also is a result of the ongoing processes within the EU in the same area. The more structured the relationship becomes in the EU, the more difficult it will become to meet with representatives from the EU without being able to say how the NGOs in Norway are being consulted, what mechanisms are being used, what their arguments are, which criteria are being used for selecting NGOs, the Content of the Code of Conduct, who they represent and so on.

Relation E: The interaction between Norwegian NGOs and intergovernmental organisations

Some Norwegian NGOs, most notably Bellona, but also “Rusfeltets Samarbeidsråd” (former “AL”) and FFO have used the “by-pass strategy” and lobbied the Commission and the European Parliament by using their networks and umbrella organisations without going through national authorities. There are, however, few NGOs in Norway who have used this channel, and the number is low even in Denmark, Sweden and Finland, even though it is increasingly being used (Pedersen, 2002)³⁶. One can ask the question, however, how legitimate this channel is for non-member states, seen from the perspective of EU. Although Norway has obligations under the EEA agreement, there are many obligations that we do not have as a non-member. On the other hand, Norway has no formal saying in the legislation within the EU. NGO participation and influence on EU policy can therefore in one perspective be seen as a way of compensating for the Government’s lack of influence in the EU. In fact, several NGOs saw increased support from Government as a way of compensating for the removal of their influence opportunities on legal acts nationally through the EEA agreement (Bolstad, 2002).

³⁶ In fact, NGOs in Denmark usually find it more efficient to lobby national-decision makers than to lobby EU directly (Dahl, Næss and Tangen, 2001).

In another perspective, however, using the language of the European Parliament, NGOs can be seen as representatives of “sectoral interests”. It is highly doubtful if NGO participation can “replace” the Government. Increased participation by NGOs can probably not compensate for the democratic and structural weaknesses in the EEA agreement, a point that was made by Dag Harald Claes at the conference arranged by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in relation to the launching of “The Government’s European Policy Platform”. There is nothing, however, in our view that points in the direction that increased NGO participation will replace the Government in any meaningful way of the word within the existing and evolving opportunity structures in the EU. The opportunity structures provided by the EEA agreement and the privileges granted by the EU and European umbrella organisations for participation in European matters can and should be utilised to the extent possible if this is what NGOs wants.

The participation of Norwegian NGOs at the European level may still, however, to some degree “compensate” for the EEA countries reduced access – and influence – on EU policies compared to member countries: European umbrella organisations may give Norwegian NGOs access to information on on-going policy processes which the Norwegian government have restricted, or no access to. After a formal act is proposed by the Commission, until the act is finally approved by the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament, the Norwegian government have limited access and even less influence on the EU policy process. However, Norwegian NGOs may, as members of European umbrella organisations, have full access to information, and are free to lobby EU institutions as part of an influential umbrella organisation. NGOs in non-member countries like Norway have, in other words, a wider access to information than their national Government at certain stages of the EU policy-making process. NGOs in member countries lack this advantage with regard to their national government. This potential vis-à-vis the national government should be an incitement for Norwegian NGOs to participate *more* active at the European level.

6 Proposals for a stronger relationship between government and NGOs in Norway

On the basis of this report, we view the Norwegian Government's proposals to improve the relationship with NGOs ("The European Policy Platform") as useful and well adjusted to the needs of the NGO sector. Seen in relation to the theoretical and normative approaches discussed in chapter 2, however, we believe that these proposals fail to address the potentially most important issue: The need to improve the dialogue between the government and the NGOs.

This theme is not covered by the paragraphs addressing civil society in the Government's "European Policy Platform". The words used are "exchange of information and co-operation" but there is no mentioning of dialogue and *how* this is to be achieved. There are few operational proposals in the platform, or in the follow-up plans succeeding the plan which addresses the content and forms of dialogue. As such, it is not self-evident what is meant by "exchange of information and co-operation". The proposals, however, address the structural requirements and conditions for dialogue. The establishment of forums between ministries and NGOs on EEA and EU related issues in various fields can be seen as a precondition for improved exchange of information and co-operation, and also dialogue.

We would argue that the ministries first of all should establish a database over the NGO community in order to get a better overview of existing NGOs. This database could be used as a tool for the identification and selection of NGOs which have an interest in EEA/EU related issues, and a platform for the creation of forums between ministries and the NGO community.³⁷ If we return to the theoretical and normative discussions presented in chapter 2, however, it seems clear to us that the current NGO participation is nowhere near the theoretical or normative limits of liberal democracy when it comes to possible NGO participation in the political process.

If we take the initial table of modes and stages of participation presented in chapter 2 as the starting point, table 6.1 below illustrates what to us seem like possible modes of participation in different stages of the political process within the constraints of the principles of openness, accessibility and inclusiveness:

³⁷ Such a database should be designed in order to minimise the ministries administration costs. A database, requiring NGOs to register and regularly renew their interest on the web, is easy to establish and cost-effective to run.

Table 6.1: Two criteria for deciding whether interest representation is legitimate

MODES OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION; / STAGES OF DECISION-MAKING:	Participants listening only <i>For example, receiving information from a government PR campaign or open database.</i>	Participants listening and giving information <i>For example, through public inquiries, media activities and 'hot-lines'.</i>	Participants being consulted <i>For example, through working groups and meetings held to discuss policy.</i>	Participation in analysis and agenda - setting <i>For example, through multi-stakeholder groups, round tables and commissions.</i>	Participation in reaching consensus on the main strategy elements <i>For example, through national round tables, parliamentary/select committees, and conflict mediation.</i>	Participants involved in decision-making on the policy, strategy or its components	
Preparatory phase	X	X	X	X	Instrumental to achieving stipulated public objectives		
Decision-making	Contributes to openness, accessibility and inclusiveness		X				
Implementation	X	X					

Application of the principles of openness, accessibility and inclusiveness and the principle of being instrumental to stipulated public objectives in relation to modes of participation and stages of decision-making.

Although we have stressed that the above categories are not easily separable and that they have only tentatively been applied to the different ministries, there is not much doubt that the full potential of NGO participation is far from utilised from the principles of openness, accessibility and inclusiveness. None of the ministries in our view uses NGO participation in analysis and agenda-setting through multi-stakeholder groups, round tables and commissions in the preparatory stage of decision-making in the issue area of EEA/EU. We would argue, however, that this mode of participation is consistent with the principles of openness, accessibility and inclusiveness and within the constraints provided by liberal democracy. Thus, there is nothing in our view that would by necessity exclude such participation from the principles of liberal democracy.

As we have argued, liberal democracy puts further constraints on NGO participation in the phase of decision-making and even stronger in the phase of implementation. Being supplemental and subordinate to the institutions of liberal democracy implies that the actual decisions have to be made by the representative institutions of “one man one vote”. And when laws and regulations are being implemented, they should not be implemented differently from the intentions of the legislative body. The point is that increasing and structuring NGO participation along the above lines in our view is reconcilable with the core principle of liberal democracy.

It would still make the political process:

- (1) capable of generating policies that are in the public interest rather than the interest of some “faction” of the community,
- (2) impartial among the interests present or potential in the community,
- (3) supplemental to the process of direct popular representation and not a substitute for it.

As such, moving beyond consultations in the preparatory stage of decision-making is one way to make the principles of openness, accessibility and inclusiveness operational in the relationships with NGOs, and it is reconcilable with the core principles of liberal democracy. We do not argue, however, that *not* doing so necessarily is less democratic. Nor do we argue that NGO participation cannot move *beyond* NGO participation in analysis and agenda-setting through multi-stakeholder groups, round tables and commissions. Our point is simply that moving beyond this mode of participation is in need of another justification to be in accordance with the core principles of liberal democracy; it should be justified from the principle of being “instrumental to achieving stipulated public objectives”.

The criteria of openness, accessibility and inclusiveness can be seen as a way primarily to regulate competitive pluralist democracy and to avoid the ills of simple group power, and some kind of regulations on NGO participation may therefore be sufficient. If one takes into account the perspectives of participatory and deliberative democracy, however, extending participation and changing the nature of participation constitutes the real challenge for the relationships between Government and NGOs.

If the goal is to contribute to participatory and deliberative democracy, we would recommend ministries, directorates and other state agencies to consider how to include NGOs in formats which allows for a sincere exchange of thoughts and ideas. Allowing for “consultations” is in many instances not satisfactory to

- *avoid* declaratory exchanges of comments and reiteration of already decided policies and
- *encourage* learning in a true, deliberative and exploratory approach.

If the goal is to achieve a more participatory and deliberative democracy the Government should in our view take a step further on the ladder of “participation modes”. This is more than a “listening exercise”. In our view, it involves a form of dialogue where there is an exchange of suggestions, questions and assumptions without a too formal agenda, and without the formal setting which normally implies that the floor is given in accordance with order of rank. A Code of Conduct, NGO accreditation schemes and so on, are tools which could be used in order to secure the needs of discretion and openness in these forums. The challenge remains the same however, how do you create an environment of true and sincere dialogue? To that we have no definitive answer.

We do believe, however, that there is a need for more research on these issues. NGO have the last decades become actors not only on the national but also on the international arena. They are, so to speak, here to stay. The challenges of how to co-

operate and deliberate with NGOs, the legitimacy of their influence, how to reconcile liberal democracy with NGO participation and so on, are issues which will have to be dealt with to a greater extent in the future. It is a common perception in the literature that NGOs in the Scandinavian countries have an open and accessible opportunity structure in relation to Government, ministries and Parliament. As this study shows, however, this assumption can be questioned, and there is in our view a need for more knowledge on the nature of NGO participation, the relationships between NGOs and Governmental bodies.

In this study we have only looked at three ministries out of a total of seventeen. To further understand the NGO-government relationship in Norway, it would be interesting to use the findings in this report to conduct a survey study of ministries, directorates and national state agencies with regard to their relations to NGOs in the issue area of European policies.

Moreover, there is a need for more comparative international studies that could explore and exploit “best practises” and improve the discussions on how the relationships between NGOs and the institutions of liberal democracy could be structured in order to strengthen both.

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Appendix

- Annex 1: Norwegian NGOs: Statistics
- Annex 2: Norwegian non-governmental organizations
- Annex 3: Alphabetical list of Norwegian NGOs (abbreviations)
- Annex 4: Alphabetical list of European NGOs (abbreviations)
- Annex 5: List of interviews conducted as part of this project

ANNEX 1**NORWEGIAN NGOS: STATISTICS**

ACTIVITY OF NGO³⁸	Number of NGOs³⁹	Member-ship 1983>1997⁴⁰	Employees	Employees / NGO	Revenue (NKR)	Revenue / NGO (NKR)
Business and employer organisations	489	16>11 percent	3246	6,6	1.000.612	2.046
Trade unions	679	36>43 percent	3109	4,6	1.005.392	1.480
Political parties (units of)	148	17>9 percent	530	3,6	128.348	867
Other (non-religious) interest organisations	1656		3560	2,1	1.056.553	638
<u>Broken down:⁴¹</u>						
Youth organisations	70					
Hobby organisations	14					
Humanitarian organisations	195	17>16 percent				
Interest organisations	607	4>4 percent ⁴²				
Cultural organisations	47	8>10 percent				
Sport organisations	158	28>29 percent				
Other organisations	161					
Women organisations		4>6 percent				

38 This table is based on surveys in 1997 by Statistics Norway, released in November 2001. (SSB strukturstatistikk 1997.) The organisations are all membership organisations.

39 The figures refers to the number of "foretak" which indicates that they are registered at the state register of Brønnøysund in Norway.

40 This column shows the proportion of the adult population which are member of the given category in 1983 and in 1997. Source: Report published by Statistics Norway in November 1999, ISBN 82-537-4743-8. The categories do not match the categories in the Yellow-pages of Telenor!

41 The figures of the sub-categories are based on search-results using the Yellow-pages of Telenor in Norway online.

42 This figure represents only the local interest organisations.

Annex 2

NORWEGIAN NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS SORTED BY CATEGORY AND NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

Categories:

- Table 1: Business and employers organizations (only partly covered by this project)
 Table 2: Trade Unions (only partly covered by this project)
 Table 3: Environment and development organisations
 Table 4: Organisations with a social cause
 Table 5: Organisations with a humanitarian cause
 Table 6: Other political organizations
 Table 7: Organisations devoted to voluntary activities in general

Table 01

BUSINESS AND EMPLOYERS ORGANISATIONS ⁴³			
NAME:	EMPLOYEES	CATEGORY	MEMBERS
NHO, Confederation of Norwegian Business and Industry Tlf. 23088000.	170	Business and employers organisations	NHO is the Norwegian member of UNICE (Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederation in Europe). NHO consist of 17 regional associations which in turn consist of more than 16.000 member enterprises.
TBL, Federation of Norwegian Manufacturing Industries Tlf. 22590000	65	Business and employers organisations	1220 member companies (92.000 individual members).
PIL, Federation of Norwegian Process Industries Tlf. 23087800	50	Business and employers organisations	Regional association belonging to NHO. More than 700 member companies.
OLF, The Norwegian Oil Industry Association Tlf. 51846501	35	Business and employers organisations	Regional association belonging to NHO. Members: 23 Oil companies and 54 suppliers to the oil industry.
NBL, Næringsmiddelbedriftenes Landsforening Tlf. 23088700	20	Business and employers organisations	Regional association belonging to NHO. 16 member associations.

⁴³ The table is based on the information on the website of the NGOs in 2002.

Table 02

TRADE UNIONS ⁴⁴			
NAME:	EMPLOYEES	CATEGORY	MEMBERS
LO, The Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions Tlf. 23061050	240 ⁴⁵	Trade Unions	LO is the only Norwegian member of ETUC (European Trade Union Confederation). There are 25 associated trade unions in LO. (790.000 individual members.)
NKF, Association of Norwegian municipalities and counties. Tlf. 23062500	130	Trade Unions	Is a member of LO (confederation). Represents 230.000 individual members.
Fellesforbundet - The Norwegian United Federation of Trade Unions (Dominated by traditional industry workers.) Tlf. 23063100	130 ⁴⁶	Trade Unions	Is a member of LO (confederation). 25 associated trade unions. 15.000 individual members.
NITO, The Norwegian Society of Engineers 7Tlf. 22053500	93	Trade Unions	Is a member of the YS confederation. Represents 46.000 individual members.
Norske Siviløkonomers Forening Tlf. 22828000	21	Trade Unions	Is a member of Akademikerne (federation) 12.000 individual members.
YS, Norway's Confederation of Vocational Unions Tlf. 21013600	20	Trade Unions	19 associated trade unions. 190.000 individual members.
Akademikerne, – The Federation of Norwegian Professional Associations Tlf. 22368600	10	Trade Unions	15 member organisations. Represents 118.000 individual members.

44 The table is based on the information on the website of the NGOs in 2002.

45 Source: "Makten, partiet og staten", a book summarizing all employees, published in 1995.

46 Source: Vidar Grønli, Information Officer at Fellesforbundet.

Table 04

ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATIONS⁴⁷			
NAME:	EMPLOYEES	CATEGORY	MEMBERS
Bellona, Miljøstiftelsen Bellona – Bellona Foundation Tlf. 23234600	35	Environment/ development	Is a member of EEB (European Environmental Bureau which in turn is a member of the The Green Eight.) Bellona has no members of its own, but many individual (4000) and corporatist (not disclosed) sponsors. They also allow advertisements on their website.
NJFF, Norges Jeger og Fiskerforbund (The Norwegian association for hunting and fishing.) Tlf. 66792200	27	Environment/ development	97.000 individual members. Member of Samarbeidsrådet for naturvernsaker (council for co-operation) together with WWF, NNV and Turistforeningen.
FIVH, Fremtiden I våre hender – The Future in our hands Tlf. 22201045	17-18	Environmental/ development	17.000 individual members from Norway, 2.000 members are from other countries. Have initiated Norwatch – which is a monitoring activity of Norwegian business in the developing countries.
WWF Norge, World Wildlife Fund, Norge (World Wildlife Fund, Norway) Tlf. 22036500	21	Environment / developmental	4.000 individual members. Member of Samarbeidsrådet for naturvernsaker (council for co-operation) together with NNV, NJFF and Turistforeningen. A full member of WWF International.
NNV, Norges Naturvernforbund – Norwegian Society for the Conservation of Nature / Friends of the Earth Norway Tlf. 22402400	19	Environment / development	17.000 individual members in 18 counties and 155 local units. Member of Samarbeidsrådet for naturvernsaker (council for co-operation) together with WWF, NJFF and Turistforeningen. Since 1991 a member of the Friends of the Earth International.
NU, Natur og Ungdom – Nature and Youth Tlf. 23327400	12	Environment / development	4.500 members (must be under 25 years). Independent youth organisation of Norges Naturvernforbund. Member of A Seed Europe.
ForUM, Forum for utvikling og miljø – The Norwegian Forum for Environment and Development Tlf. 23010300	6	Environment / development	Umbrella organisation. 60 associated organisations in the area of environment and development.
DN, Dyrebeskyttelsen Norge – The Norwegian Federation for Animal Protection Tlf. 23139250	5	Environment / development	Approximately 10.000 individual members. Is a member of WSPA (World Society for the Protection of Animals) and an observer to Eurogroup for Animal Welfare (Leader: Kari Mills / Stavanger.)
F.A. Fellesrådet for Afrika – The Norwegian Council for Africa Tlf. 22989312.	3	Environment / development	Umbrella organisation working to enhance the living conditions in Africa. 28 member organisations and 600 individual member.
FL, Frilufttrådenes Landsforbund – Preservation of outdoor life. Tlf. 67815180	3	Environment / development	17 regional entities.
SABIMA, Samarbeidsrådet for bevaring av biologisk mangfold – Council for the protection of bio-diversity. Tlf. 22363641	2	Environment / development	13 member organisations with a total membership of 15.000.
Støyforeningen, Norsk forening mot støy – The Norwegian Association against noise. Tlf. 22422538	2	Environment / development	Approx. 500 individual members, 25 companies, 130 public entities, and more than 50 trade unions are associated members. Have a loose co-operation with European Environmental Bureau in Brussels.

Table 04

⁴⁷ The table is based on the information on the website of the NGOs in 2002 and telephone conversations with employees at the secretariat.

ORGANISATIONS WITH A SOCIAL CAUSE⁴⁸			
NAME:	EMPLOYEES	CATEGORY	MEMBERS
NBF, Norges Blindeforbund (Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partially Sighted) Tlf. 23215000.	54	Organisation with a social cause	5.165 individual members. NBF is a member of the Norwegian umbrella organisation SAFO. Member of European Blind Union (EBU) which is a member of the European Disabilities Forum (EDF). NBF's international activities are concentrated on international aid.
NHF, Norges Handikapforbund, (Norwegian association for the disabled) Tlf. 22170255.	Approximately 50	Organisation with a social cause	Approximately 24.000 individual members. NHF is a member of the Norwegian umbrella organisation SAFO. NHF is a member of Nordiska Handikapp Förbundet (Nordic Association for disabled) which in turn is a members of EDF. Their international activities are concentrated on international aid. They receive information on European politics from FFO.
FFO, Funksjonshemmedes Fellesorganisasjon – Norwegian Federation of Organisations of Disabled People Tlf. 22799100	21	Organisation with a social cause	FFO is a umbrella organisation consisting of 62 member organisations. FFO is a member of the EDF (European Disability Forum). One of the FFO staff is working part time for EDF in Brussels. FFO is also a member of the council; Nordic Cooperation on Disability, sponsored by The Nordic Council.
LNU, Landsforeningen for barn og unge (The Norwegian Youth Council) Tlf. 233 10600	14	Organisation with a social cause	Umbrella organisation consisting of 65 member organisations. LNU is a member of the European Youth Forum.
NFU, Norsk Forbund for Utviklingshemmede (Norwegian Association for Persons with Developmental Disabilities) Tlf. 22396050.	13	Organisation with a social cause	7.300 individual members. NFU is a member of the Norwegian umbrella organisation SAFO. NFU is also a member of the council; Nordic Cooperation on Disability, sponsored by The Nordic Council.
Rusfeltetssamarbeidsorgan <i>Earlier name:</i> Avholdsfolkets Landsråd – Organisation for alcohol abstinence. Tlf. 23214500.	11	Organisation with a social cause	Umbrella organisation consisting of 16 member organisations. Member of EPHA (European Public Health Alliance). Are also cooperating with Eurocare.
NPF, Norsk Pensjonistforbund – Association for Norwegian Pensioners. Tlf. 22981770	7	Organisation with a social cause	130.000 individual members. Considering affiliation with FERPA (Fédération Européenne des Retraités et Personnes Agées), together with Nordic Pensioners Associations
State Senior Council (Former Statens eldreåd – State council for the elderly). Tlf. 22248595	5	Organisation with a social cause	Not a NGO, but included because they are board members of EURAG (Eur. NGO.)
FNDB, Foreningen Norges døvblinde – The Norwegian Association of the deafblind. Tlf. 22933350.	3	Organisation with a social cause	170 individual members and 150 support members. The leader of FNDB is a member of the interim board of the European Deafblind Union. A member of World Federation of Deafblind.
LLH, Landsforeningen for lesbisk og homofil frigjøring – Organisation for lesbian and gay liberation. Tlf. 22361948	2	Organisation with a social cause	2.000 individual members. Member of International Lesbian and Gay Association.
SAFO, Samarbeidsforumet for funksjonshemmedes organisasjoner – Forum for cooperation among organisations for the disabled	1	Organisation with a social cause	Umbrella organisation for the organisations for disabled which are not member of FFO. Members: NHF, NBF, NFU and FNDB.
Velferdsalliansen – Network for the poor. Tlf. 22686081	1 (relying on the employees of assoc. organisations)	Organisation with a social cause	Network among 14 associated organisations

48 The table is based on the information on the website of the NGOs in 2002 and telephone conversations with employees at the secretariat.

Table 05

ORGANISATIONS WITH A HUMANITARIAN CAUSE⁴⁹			
NAME:	EMPLOYEES	CATEGORY	MEMBERS
Amnesty International Norge Tlf. 22402200	25	Organisations with a humanitarian cause	44.500 individual members. Part of Amnesty International worldwide. Member of the Norwegian NGO-forum for human rights.
HEF, Humanetisk Forbund – Norwegian Humanist Association Tlf. 22111010.	25	Organisations with a humanitarian cause	63.000 individual members. Member of the Norwegian NGO-forum for human rights.
NOAS, Norsk Organisasjon for Asylsøkere – Norwegian Organisation for Asylum Seekers Tlf. 22365660	11	Organisations with a humanitarian cause	500 individual members. Member of the Norwegian NGO-forum for human rights.
A.S., Antirasistisk Senter – Anti-racist Centre Tlf. 22354666	10	Organisations with a humanitarian cause	Umbrella organisation. Main source of income: Norwegian ministries and other public sources. Not a membership organisation. Member of the Norwegian NGO-forum for human rights.
Helsingforskomiteen, Den Norske Helsingforskomité – The Norwegian Helsinki Committee Tlf. 23301100	9	Organisations with a humanitarian cause	700 individual members. (Main income source: Ministry of foreign affairs.) Member of the NGO forum for Human rights. Member of the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights.
K&F, Norges kvinne og familieforbund (Organisation for women and family life.) Tlf. 22478380	5	Organisations with a humanitarian cause	12.000 individual members. K&F is member of Nordens Kvinneforbund (Nordic women's union) and Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW).
Kvinnefronten – The Women's Front of Norway Tlf. 22376054	1	Organisations with a humanitarian cause	Approx. 500 individual members.
NTA, Nei til atomvåpen (No to nuclear weapons.) Tlf. 22050001	1	Organisations with a humanitarian cause	Individual members: Approx. 15.000. Global perspective. NTA have links to the international Pugwash movement.
NKF, Norsk Kvinnesaksforening – The Norwegian Association for Women's Rights Tlf. 33312563	0	Organisations with a humanitarian cause	Approx. 600 individual members. Member of the International Alliance of Women (IAW) and associated member of the European Women's Lobby (EWL)

49 The table is based on the information on the website of the NGOs in 2002 and telephone conversations with employees at the secretariat.

Table 06

OTHER POLITICAL ORGANISATIONS⁵⁰			
NAME:	EMPLOYEES	CATEGORY	MEMBERS
Den Norske Atlanterhavskomité (DNAK) – The Norwegian Atlantic Committee. Tlf. 22403600.	5	Other political organisations	600 individual members. Main task: Provide information and organise conferences and study visits.
Foreningen Norden – Nordic Association Tlf. 21021999	10	Other political organisations	7.000 individual members. Promoting Nordic cooperation. Significant financial support from Nordic Council of Ministers. Member of Foreningen Nordens Forbund. (Nordic umbrella.)
NM, Noregs Mållag – (Organisation in favor of New Norwegian, one of the two official written.) Tlf. 22477100	8	Other political organisations	11.000 individual members
Nei Til EU – No to the EU Tlf. 23354580.	7	Other political organisations	25.500 individual members Is a board member of TEAM (The European Alliance of EU-critical movements.)
EB, Europabevegelsen (inkludert Europeisk Ungdom), The European movement. Tlf. 22993600	7	Other political organisations	9300 individual members.
Riksmålsforbundet (Organisation in favour of Riksmål, which is opposed to having New Norwegian as part of the obligatory curriculum. Tlf. 22562950	2	Other political organisations	2500 individual members
Attac Norge Tlf. 22989304	2	Other political organisations	Approximately 2.500 individual members. Associate member of the Attac international, located in France.
For Velferdsstaten (For the welfare state.)	1 (Assisted by member-organisations secretariat.)	Other political organisations	Network covering 30 organisations, including unions, is listed as associated members, representing one mill. individual members.

Table 07

ORGANISATIONS DEVOTED TO VOLUNTARY ACTIVITIES IN GENERAL⁵¹			
NAME:	EMPLOYEES	CATEGORY	MEMBERS
FRISAM, Avdeling for frivillighet og samarbeid i Sosial- og helsedirektoratet – (Norwegian Centre for Voluntary Work)	7	Organisations devoted to voluntary activities in general.	No individual members. Main activity: Stimulating voluntary work by administering more than 230 local centers in Norway. It has established a Contact Forum consisting of 49 NGOs. FRISAM is financed by the Ministry of Social Affairs. It has had some contacts with the European Council of Voluntary Organisations (CEDAG) which only allow EU members. It has now applied for membership in European Volunteer Centre, a European umbrella organisation.

50 The table is based on the information on the website of the NGOs in 2002 and telephone conversations with employees at the secretariat.

51 The table is based on the information on the website of the NGOs in 2002 and telephone conversations with employees at the secretariat.

Annex 3:**ALPHABETICAL LIST OF NORWEGIAN NGOS, SORTED BY ABBREVIATION**

1.	AL	Avholdtsfolkets Landsråd (Organisation for alcohol abstinence) New name: "Rusfeltets Samarbeidsråd"
2.	Amnesty	Amnesty International Norge (Amnesty International Norway)
3.	A.S.	Antirasistisk Senter (Anti-racist Centre)
4.	Attac	Attac Norge (Attac Norway)
5.	Bellona	Miljøstiftelsen Bellona (Bellona Foundation)
6.	DN	Dyrebeskyttelsen Norge (The Norwegian Federation for Animal Protection)
7.	DNAK	Den norske atlantehavskomiteé (The Norwegian Atlantic Committee)
8.	EB	Europabevegelsen (The European movement)
9.	F.A.	Fellesrådet for Afrika (The Norwegian Council for Africa)
10.	FFO	Funksjonshemmedes Fellesorganisasjon (Norwegian Federation of Organisations of Disabled)
11.	FIVH	Fremtiden I våre hender (The Future in our hands)
12.	FL	Friluftsrådenes Landsforbund (National council for preservation of outdoor life)
13.	FNDB	Foreningen Norges døvblinde (The Norwegian Association of the deafblind)
14.	For Velferdsstaten	For Velferdsstaten (For the welfare state)
15.	Foreningen Norden	Foreningen Norden (Nordic Association)
16.	FORUM	Forum for utvikling og miljø (The Norwegian Forum for Environment and Development)
17.	FRISAM	FRISAM (Norwegian Centre for Voluntary Work)
18.	HEF	Humanetisk Forbund (Norwegian Humanist Association)
19.	Helsingforskomiteen	Den Norske Helsingforskomité (The Norwegian Helsinki Committee)
20.	K & F	Norges kvinne og familieforbund (Organisation for women and family life)
21.	Kvinnefronten	Kvinnefronten (The Women's Front of Norway)
22.	LLH	Landsforeningen for lesbisk og homofil frigjøring (Organisation for lesbian and gay liberation)
23.	LNU	Landsforeningen for barn og unge (The Norwegian Youth Council)
24.	NBF	Norges Blindeforbund (Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partially Sighted)
25.	Nei til EU	Nei Til EU (No to the EU)
26.	NFU	Norsk Forbund for Utviklingshemmede (Norwegian Association for Persons with Developmental Disabilities)
27.	NHF	Handikapforbundet (Norwegian association for the disabled)
28.	NJFF	Norges Jeger og Fiskerforbund (The Norwegian association for hunting and fishing)
29.	NKF	Norsk Kvinnesaksforening (The Norwegian Association for Women's Rights)
30.	NNV	Norges Naturvernforbund (Norwegian Society for the Conservation of Nature / Friends of the Earth Norway)
31.	NOAS	Norsk Organisasjon for Asylsøkere (Norwegian Organisation for Asylum Seekers)
32.	Noregs Mållag	Noregs Mållag (Organisation in favor of New Norwegian, one of the two official written languages)
33.	NPF	Norsk Pensjonistforbund (Association for Norwegian Pensioners)
34.	NTA	Nei til atomvåpen (No to nuclear weapons)
35.	NU	Natur og Ungdom (Nature and Youth)
36.	Riksmålsforbundet	Riksmålsforbundet (Organisation in favour of Riksmål, which is opposed to having New Norwegian as part of the obligatory curriculum.)
37.	SABIMA	Samarbeidsrådet for bevaring av biologisk mangfold (Council for the protection of bio-diversity)
38.	SAFO	Samarbeidsforumet for funksjonshemmedes organisasjoner (Forum for cooperation among organisations for the disabled)
39.	Støyforeningen	Norsk forening mot støy (The Norwegian Association against noise)
40.	Velferdsalliansen	Velferdsalliansen (Network for the poor)
41.	WWF	World Wildlife Fund, Norge (World Wildlife Fund, Norway)

Annex 4:**ALPHABETICAL LIST OF EUROPEAN NGO'S, FEDERATIONS AND FORUMS,
SORTED BY ABBREVIATION**

1.	A SEED	A SEED Europe
2.	AGE	European Older People's Platform
3.	ATA	Atlantic Treaty Association
4.	Amnesty	Amnesty International
5.	Attac	Attac International
6.	C.E.V.	European Vollunteer Centre
7.	CEDAG	European Council for Voluntary Organisations
8.	Civil Society Contact Group	Civil Society Contact Group
9.	EAPN	European Anti Poverty Network
10.	EBU	European Blind Union
11.	EDBU	European Deafblind Union
12.	EDF	European Disability Forum
13.	EEB	European Environmental Bureau
14.	EFSA	European Federation of Sea Anglers
15.	EHF	European Humanist Federation
16.	ENAR	European Network Against Racism
17.	ENU	European Network of the Unemployed
18.	EPHA	European Public Health Alliance
19.	ETUC	European Trade Union Confederation
20.	EURAG	European federation of the elderly
21.	Eurocare	European Council for Alcohol Research Rehabilitation and Education
22.	Eurogroup	Eurogroup for animal welfare
23.	European Youth Forum	European Youth Forum
24.	EWL	The European Women's Lobby
25.	FERPA	European Federation of Retired and Elderly Persons
26.	Foreningen Norden	Foreningen Norden
27.	Friends of the earth	Friends of the earth
28.	Green Eight	The Green Eight
29.	IHF	International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights
30.	ILGA	International Lesbian and Gay Association
31.	Liaison Committee	The Liaison Committee of Development NGOs to the EU
32.	NKF	Nordens Kvinnesaksforening
33.	Nordiska Handikappförbundet	Nordiska Handikappförbundet
34.	Pugwash	Pugwash Conference
35.	Social Plattform	The Social Plattform
36.	TEAM	The European Alliance of EU-critical movements
37.	WWF	World Wildlife Fund

Annex 5:

LIST OF INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED AS PART OF THIS PROJECT

NORWEGIAN NGO'S AND REGIONS:

- March 7, 2002: Miljøstiftelsen Bellona (representative in Brussel)
- March 7, 2002: Representant for the Stavanger-regionen i Brussel, Pål Jacob Jacobsen.
- March 8, 2002: Rusfeltets Samarbeidsorgan (tidligere Avholdsfolkets Landsråd). Representant i Brussel.
- May 14, 2002: Funksjonshemmedes fellesorganisasjon (FFO)
- May 14, 2002: Landsforeningen for barn og unge (LNU)
- May 14, 2002: Fremtiden i våre hender (FIVH)
- May 14, 2002: Miljøstiftelsen Bellona
- May 14, 2002: Norwegian Centre for voluntary work (FRISAM)
- May 15, 2002: Natur og Ungdom (NU)
- May 15, 2002: Nei til EU
- May 15, 2002: Antirasistisk senter (A.S.)
- May 16, 2002: Rusfeltets Samarbeidsorgan (tidligere Avholdsfolkets Landsråd)
- May 16, 2002: FORUM for utvikling og miljø

NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT:

- March 7, 2002: The mission of Norway to the EU, Counsellor of Health and Social Affairs.
- March 7, 2002: The mission of Norway to the EU, Counsellor of the Environment.
- March 7, 2002: The mission of Norway to the EU, Counsellor of Labour.
- May 14, 2002: Ministry of foreign affaires.
- May 14, 2002: Ministry of social affaires.
- May 16, 2002: Ministry of the Environment.
- May 16, 2002: Directorate of public management.
- October 21, 2002: Ministry of foreign affaires.

EUROPEAN UNION / EFTA:

- March 7, 2002: European Commission, Secretariat-General, European Governance Team, Agnes Hubert
- March 7, 2002: European Free Trade Association, EEA Co-ordination unit: Lóa Brynjúlfsdóttir
- March 7, 2002: European Free Trade Association, EEA Co-ordination unit: Tore Myhre
- March 7, 2002: European Union, DG Employment and Social Affaires, Barbara Nolan

EUROPEAN NGO'S

- March 8, 2002 European Environmental Bureau (EEB)
- March 8, 2002 The Liaison Committee