

# Cleavages and Coalitions

Comprehensive School Reforms in Norway and  
North Rhine-Westphalia/Germany (1954-1979)

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Katharina Sass

Thesis for the Degree of Philosophiae Doctor (PhD)  
University of Bergen, Norway  
2018

UNIVERSITY OF BERGEN



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Date of defence: 18.06.2018

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Year: 2018

Title: Cleavages and Coalitions

Name: Katharina Sass

Print: Skipnes Kommunikasjon / University of Bergen

## Abstract

This study examines comprehensive school reforms in Norway and the German federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) in the period from around 1954 to 1979 from a comparative-historical perspective. In both cases, great educational expansions took place during this period. However, in Norway, the expansion was connected to a prolongation of comprehensive schooling from seven to nine years and to the abolition of grading in lower secondary schooling, while in Germany multi-tiered parallel schooling from grade five persisted despite attempts at reform. The study examines potential reasons for this difference in historical outcomes. In doing so, it sheds light not only on the dynamics of school politics, but also contributes to the general understanding of the different cleavage structures and balances of power of the two societies.

The results and arguments of the study can be summarized in three steps. Firstly, it places the post-war reforms of primary and lower secondary schooling in the context of the long-term institutional development of the two countries' school systems. It explores the history of comprehensive and other structural reforms, as well as the history of school political debates about state-church conflicts, centralization, language or women's access to education. It is shown that the Norwegian trend towards comprehensivization dates back well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as does the German trend towards hierarchical differentiation of school types. This indicates that feedback effects of previous reforms play a role in both cases. At the same time, there are also great similarities between the two cases. In both Norway and Prussia/Rhineland-Westphalia, recurring debates led to reform phases of educational expansion, during which liberal and later social democratic reformers propagated comprehensive schooling, while many conservatives – especially in Germany, and less militantly also in Norway – opposed it. The post-war reform phase shaped the school system significantly in both cases and left important legacies, so it can be considered a particularly relevant critical juncture. Furthermore, in the second half of the 1970s there was a political trend reversal in both cases, forcing social democratic governments to relinquish their most far-reaching reform ideas. Despite a certain amount of path dependence, the development was open to the extent that more similar school political compromises could have come about if actors had made different choices.

Secondly, the thesis offers a detailed, comparative analysis of the material power resources and of the ideology and degree of ideological unity of the protagonists, consenters and antagonists of comprehensive school reforms. It is shown that the distribution of material power resources is relevant, for example in the sense that reform protagonists in Norway were somewhat stronger with regard to their membership numbers, election results and organizational unity. However, it also becomes clear that material power resources and interests are not the whole story. Ideology must be considered as an important additional factor. The analysis shows that actors were divided ideologically along a left/right-axis in

both cases, indicating that conflicts over comprehensive schooling are an expression of the class cleavage. There are similarities between the ideologies of the major collective actors; for example, the main argument of reform protagonists was in both cases their quest for social equality and justice, while reform antagonists valued academic standards, selection based on competitive achievement and parental rights. At the same time, the arguments, which became hegemonic in the two cases, differ greatly. In Norway, the idea that parallel schooling, tracking and ability grouping contribute to an unacceptable reproduction of inequality became hegemonic. Teaching all students in the same classes, independent of their background and abilities, was also justified with the need to create a spirit of cooperation and to foster joy in learning. Even some representatives of the Norwegian Conservative Party consented to this kind of thinking and the party remained split over school politics, at least until the 1970s. In Germany, on the other hand, the hegemonic ideological argument was that learning is facilitated by supposedly homogenous ability groups and that students should therefore be divided into school types which are in accordance with their biological endowments. In particular, the legitimacy of the *Gymnasium* as the school type of high-achievers and future elites remained high. Several leading social democrats in NRW were influenced by this thinking and did not support comprehensive school reforms wholeheartedly, so the German Social Democratic Party was split on the issue.

Finally, the thesis emphasizes the importance of the unequal cleavage structures of Norway and NRW/Germany for the different cross-class coalitions, which came about in school politics. It spells out how the rural-urban cleavage, the center-periphery cleavage, the state-church cleavage, the communist-socialist cleavage and the gender cleavage came to expression in school political debates in the two cases and how these affected the outcomes of attempts at comprehensive school reform. In the Norwegian case, the rural-urban and center-periphery cleavages manifested themselves in emotional debates about centralization, Christian education and language. The state-church cleavage also played a role in debates about Christian private schooling and about the Christian preamble of the school law. The gender cleavage came to expression for example in debates about coeducation and equal curricula for boys and girls. Overall, the Labor Party mostly succeeded in handling these cleavages in a way which at least did not sabotage and sometimes even strengthened its comprehensive school reforms. In particular, it formed an alliance with the rural population, with the primary school teachers and with the women's movement. However, potential alliances between the political center and the Conservative Party were weakened by disagreements over these issues.

In the case of NRW, on the other hand, the state-church cleavage was a major obstacle for the social democrats and their liberal allies. The Catholic rural population was integrated in a broad cross-class coalition under the umbrella of the Christian Democratic Union, for example over issues such as denominational schooling, Catholic private schooling and the

centralization of “dwarf schools” so a potential reform alliance with the social democrats was out of the question. The state-church cleavage also split the teachers’ organizations and the women’s movement. Primary and lower secondary school teachers were split into social democratic and Christian currents, which made it easier for *Gymnasium* teachers to dominate politically. Catholic women’s and teachers’ organizations played an important role in Catholic private schooling for girls and stood in opposition to liberal and leftwing parts of the women’s movement with regard to topics such as coeducation, equal curricula for the sexes and comprehensive schooling. The gender cleavage therefore did not weaken the internal unity of the Christian democrats and their allies. Finally, the communist-socialist cleavage played an important role in NRW. Antagonists employed anti-communist arguments against comprehensive schooling regularly. The prevalence of anti-communism deepened the internal splits of the social democrats and the teachers’ organizations and thus weakened them considerably.



## Acknowledgements

*“For each individual is the synthesis not only of existing relations, but of the history of these relations. He is a précis of all the past. It will be said that what each individual can change is very little, considering his strength. This is true up to a point. But when the individual can associate himself with all the other individuals who want the same changes, and if the changes wanted are rational, the individual can be multiplied an impressive number of times and can obtain a change which is far more radical than at first sight ever seemed possible.”*  
(Antonio Gramsci, 1972, p. 353)

According to Antonio Gramsci, all human beings are intellectuals in the sense that they enter into active and conscious relations with other human beings and with the natural world around them. They are never just limited, single individuals. Their thoughts are never just “their” thoughts. On the contrary, the history of humanity and its relations is mirrored in each of them. And by creating consciousness about these relations, they also change them.

I would like to say a few words about my own history and about the many people who have entered this history at some point and contributed to the final shape of this study. I was born in 1986 in the city of Cologne, attended a primary school and later a *Gymnasium* there, then preceded to university and finally got a PhD scholarship at the University of Bergen, Norway. From an early age, I became aware of the fact that I was privileged: I grew up in physical and emotional safety, with well-educated parents, who encouraged me to ask questions. I realized that all children were not as lucky. Some were struggling with daily survival in an environment characterized by poverty and violence. At the *Gymnasium* that I attended, not many children belonged into this category. However, we shared the school grounds with a *Hauptschule*, and it was clear to everyone that there was a hierarchy between “them” and “us”. Once, the parents’ association of our school organized a petition to have the *Hauptschule* removed from our school grounds, arguing that the *Hauptschule* students were a source of violence. For these parents, it was not sufficient that the school system separated children at the age of ten, allocating some to high status and some to low status schools. In addition, the *Hauptschule* students should ideally never come into contact with their children at all. I was only a teenager, but I felt that these social relations were somehow demeaning us all.

At the age of 20, I met my future Norwegian husband, Remy, and discovered a different reality in Norwegian society. Yes, there was inequality here, too. And yet, the differences seemed less extreme. I was also confronted with Norwegians’ almost complete lack of understanding for the German school system. As Remy once said to me: “In Norway, kids just go to school.” The worries of German parents regarding their offspring’s educational paths were completely foreign to him. I decided to set out to analyze why most Norwegians thought



so differently about comprehensive schooling than most Germans and how they had created a school system that brought all children together with the aim of fostering solidarity between them.

On that journey, I have met many people who have helped me develop my understanding of these issues. First of all, I am grateful to my supervisor, Ole Johnny Olsen, who has lived in Germany himself and has shared his Norwegian perspective on Germany's education system with me during our many enjoyable discussions. His steady support, critical remarks and optimistic attitude were crucial for me during the research process. Also my co-supervisor, Rune Saksind, made an impact on this project by pointing me to a wealth of relevant literature and by asking critical questions, for example about my understanding of class as a political and social category.

In addition, many other senior colleagues at the Department of Sociology have given me useful feedback and advice, including my encouraging mentor, Ann Nilsen, and Olav Korsnes. I have also had helpful discussions with senior colleagues at the Department of Comparative Politics and the Department of Administration and Organization Theory. I am very grateful to them all. The colleagues of the PhD group have been another source of many good suggestions and critical remarks. The PhD group has also been a wonderful collective to be a part of.

My research stays in Germany at the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies in Cologne in 2015 and at the Department of Politics and Public Administration of the University of Konstanz in 2017 have given me opportunities to collect material, exchange ideas with German researchers and have my ideas challenged by them. I am especially grateful to Wolfgang Streeck and Marius Busemeyer, as well as to the many other German colleagues who have commented on my work.

I would also like to thank my friends and family for their steady support. Many of them have taken an interest and shared their thoughts with me. Special thanks go to my father, Fiete, and to Paul Oehlke, who have read and commented on my work in its final stages. In addition, I would like to thank my friend, Kristina Onstand Sangolt, for taking me to school with her one day and giving me a first-hand experience of what her job as a Norwegian primary school teacher is like. I also thank my mother, Ulla, my parents-in-law, Nina and Tom, and especially my husband, Remy, without whose emotional and practical support I could not have completed this study.

Not least, I want to thank my interview partners, who were all experts in the field of school politics, and who – in contrast to me – had the great advantage of having lived through the late 1950s to 1970s as active participants in the political processes. It was both an honor and a very enjoyable experience to have the opportunity to speak to them and listen to their fascinating accounts of this eventful time. All of the interview partners shared information

generously and many of them kept in touch until the research project was finished, continuing to supply me with literature and ideas. It is very much due to them that I understood that school politics are influenced by many additional cleavages besides the class cleavage. I am very grateful to all of my interview partners for their immense contributions to this project.

Finally, I would like to express my hope that this work will be of relevance to anyone interested in school politics today – especially to those who dare to dream of the time when all human beings will be enabled to develop their capacities as creative intellectuals and live and learn together in solidarity and peace.

University of Bergen, Department of Sociology, April 2018



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## 1 Introduction

This study analyzes comprehensive school reforms in Norway and the German federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) in the period from around 1954 to 1979. This was – so far at least – the last period in West German history when the creation of a ten-year comprehensive school system briefly seemed to be a real possibility, at least in the eyes of some school political actors. But while the Norwegian system was greatly reformed during this period, the West German system displayed much greater stickiness. As a result, most children in Norway today are taught in comprehensive schools until the age of 16. Over time, nine and later ten years of comprehensive schooling has become an almost self-evident feature of Norwegian society. In contrast, children in most German federal states, including NRW, are still divided into different, hierarchically ordered secondary school types at the age of ten and the possibility of comprehensive school reforms remains a highly contested issue. The starting point for this research project was a wish to understand the reasons for these diverging historical outcomes. By studying the coalitions and oppositions in post-war school politics and the ideological justifications behind the reforms, it has been attempted to analyze how this major reform period has enduringly shaped the Norwegian and German school systems.

To start with, the study focused on the left/right or class dimension of the political conflicts over comprehensive schooling. As the study progressed, however, it became clear that the outcomes of comprehensive school reforms could be fully understood only in light of the hegemonic balance in the school political field as a whole. Crosscutting reform debates and cleavages, which influenced the shape of reform coalitions and oppositions in the field of comprehensive schooling, were therefore included in the analysis. The roles of religious divisions, of rural-urban divisions, of gender, of language debates and of anti-communism in primary and lower secondary school politics were explored. By searching for explanatory factors on a historical and societal level, the resulting analysis sheds light not only on school politics but also contributes to the general understanding of the cleavage and power structures of the two societies under investigation. Upper secondary schooling, special schooling and post-secondary education were also reformed in both countries. However, this study focuses on reforms and conflicts related to general primary and lower secondary education which is the level on which attempts at comprehensivization went the furthest. In this introduction, the reforms are first summarized in brief. The relevance of the topic is then discussed both from a historical perspective and with regard to current debates. In the next step, it is outlined in more detail how the research questions are approached in this study and the structure of the thesis is presented.



## 1.1 The reforms

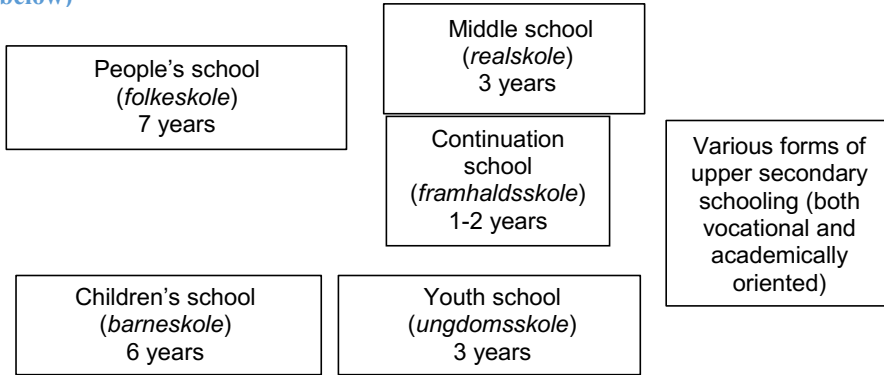
In 1954, the Norwegian public school system consisted of a comprehensive seven-year people's school (*folkeskole*), which had been introduced in 1920, followed by two parallel lower secondary school types: the middle school (*realskole*) and the continuation school (*framhaldsskole*). The *realskole* was academically oriented and led to upper secondary schooling in the three-year *gymnas* and then potentially to university. However, it could also be followed by other upper secondary or vocational kinds of education. The *framhaldsskole* did not award any formal qualifications but was seen as a useful prolongation of the education of working class children, girls and children with rural backgrounds especially. In the course of the reforms, these two lower secondary school types were replaced with a three-year comprehensive lower secondary school, the youth school (*ungdomsskole*). The former people's school was renamed the children's school (*barneskole*) and shortened by one year to six years. Comprehensive schooling was thus prolonged from seven to nine years (see Figure 1.1). The reform was connected to the introduction of nine years of obligatory schooling. Grades in the children's school were abolished. In the 1990s, the school enrolment age was lowered by one year, and the children's school was prolonged again to seven years. The Norwegian school system today provides ten years of comprehensive and obligatory primary schooling in the seven-year children's school (*barneskole*), followed by the three-year youth school (*ungdomsskole*). In addition, the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s witnessed reform debates about Christian education, Christian private schools and the Christian preamble of the school law. Centralization of rural schools was also an important issue. Coeducation of girls and boys and equal curricula for both sexes were introduced. The formerly separate Association of Female Primary School Teachers merged with its male counterpart in the 1960s. Finally, the Norwegian language struggle also played a role in school politics of the time. As the analysis in the present study demonstrates, all of these issues are related to the development of comprehensive school reforms in the sense that they influenced school political alliances and oppositions.

In Germany, the four-year comprehensive primary school (*Grundschule*) was introduced in 1920 as well. In 1954, it made up the lower stage of the people's school (*Volksschule*). The majority of students continued to the upper stage of the people's school and then potentially to vocational training or the labor market. Only a minority received secondary schooling either in a middle school (*Realschule*) or in the prestigious academic secondary school, the *Gymnasium*. In Germany, school politics are conducted on the federal state level. In the 1960s, the number of *Realschulen* and *Gymnasien* was increased significantly in the largest West German federal state of NRW. In addition, a new school type was introduced: the integrated comprehensive school (*Integrierte Gesamtschule*). Despite its name and the original intentions of reformers, it was not comprehensive because the other parallel school types were not abolished. The primary school was separated from the upper stage of the

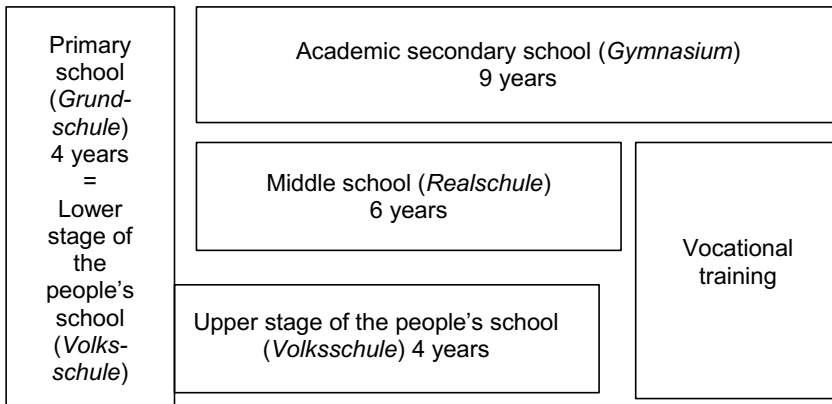
*Volksschule* which was turned into an independent lower secondary school type, the *Hauptschule*. Nine, and later ten years of obligatory schooling, were introduced (see Figures 1.2 and 1.3). At the same time, the *Hauptschule* became mostly independent of denomination, even though exceptions remained. The conflict over denominational schooling occupied much school political space in the 1950s and 1960s. The centralization of schools in rural areas was not as important a topic as in Norway but there was a debate about this too. This was related to the denominational division of primary schools which increased the number of small schools in rural areas. Furthermore, coeducation was introduced in most NRW schools during this reform period, against the opposition of Catholic female teachers, who defended Catholic private schooling for girls. Finally, Germany's division into a capitalist West and communist East played a role in school politics as anti-communist arguments against comprehensive schooling were influential. In NRW, this also became evident in the conflict over the cooperative school reform during the late 1970s. The cooperative school was meant to be a combination of school types under one roof, which would secure the supply of schools in rural areas, but in 1978 its introduction was stopped by an alliance of reform antagonists who collected over 3.6 million signatures.

There were similarities between the reforms: nine years of obligatory schooling were introduced in both countries. Public investment in schooling was increased. Furthermore, public education was, and still is, comparatively dominant both in Norway and Germany (cf. OECD 2010a/b, 2012). The few private schools in both countries were mostly Christian schools, though in NRW they were mostly Catholic and in Norway Protestant. However, with respect to comprehensive schooling, the outcomes were very different. In this study, the concept of comprehensive schooling refers to the collective instruction of all children of a given age within the same educational institution, and in some cases entirely within the same courses and classes. Since the parallel school structure was maintained in Germany but abolished in Norway, it is clear that comprehensive education is more far-reaching in the latter case. Furthermore, the integrated comprehensive school in NRW differentiates by dividing students up into two ability groups in some subjects. In Norway, on the other hand, internal differentiation in the new youth school was increasingly reduced in the course of the reform period, from two independent tracks, to ability grouping, and finally to the abolition of all organizational differentiation. Today, all students are taught in common classes without permanent ability grouping until the tenth grade. There is, however, individual differentiation for short time periods. This study attempts to explain these differences by shedding light on the different reform coalitions and hegemonic balances in the two countries.

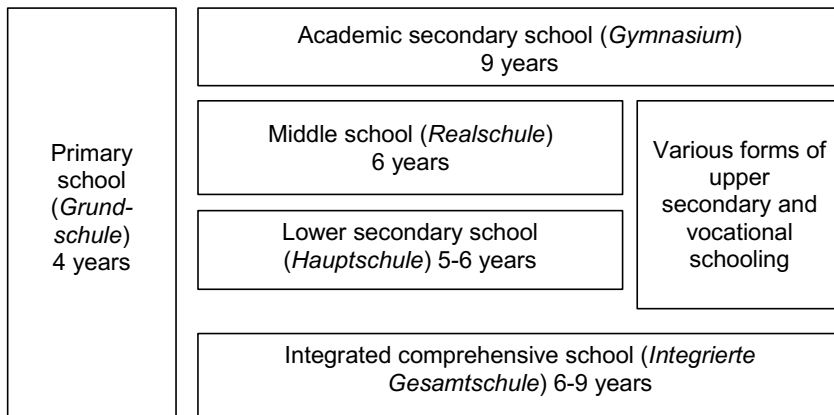
**Figure 1.1: The Norwegian general public school system in 1954 (above) and 1979 (below)**



**Figure 1.2: The North-Rhine Westphalian general public school system in 1954**



**Figure 1.3: The North-Rhine Westphalian general public school system in 1979**



## 1.2 Historical and current relevance

In both Norway and Germany, school and other education reforms were an important point of public debate in the period under examination. The educational expansion reached an unprecedented peak, as increasing numbers of youths stayed on in the school system also after having completed obligatory schooling. In both cases, the material living standards of the population improved considerably. In many political areas, the course was set for the development of the Norwegian and the German welfare states. To name just a few examples; social security systems were reformed and, especially during the 1970s, workers' participatory rights and women's rights were strengthened. The time was characterized by a great spirit for reform, which, however, waned from the second half of the 1970s. Even though the character of the Norwegian and the German welfare states differed and continue to differ in many respects (cf. Esping-Andersen, 1990), the provision of free, high-quality education at least for a significant proportion of the population was in both cases associated with economic growth along a high-road path, based on specialized, well-educated workers and employees able to cope with technological progress. The school reforms analyzed here should be seen in this larger context. The idea of prolonging comprehensive schooling was an element especially in social democrats' general eagerness for reform. It was meant as an attack on the traditional educational privileges of the upper and upper middle classes which – from the reformers' point of view – were standing in the way of social, economic and democratic progress. The main aim of reformers was to open up the education system to working class children, but also to children from the countryside and girls (cf. Chapters 5 and 6).

Today, there is no agreement whether relative class inequalities in the school system were actually reduced. The reforms' distributional effects continue to be a subject of debate (cf. Herrlitz et al, 2009, pp. 190ff; Hjellbrekke/Korsnes, 2006, pp.119f; Hopf, 2010, pp. 97ff; Lindbekk, 2008; Maaz et al, 2008, pp. 214ff). However, it is clear that in absolute terms, children from lower class backgrounds significantly increased their participation in upper secondary schooling, especially in Norway. The percentage of Norwegian youths who finished upper secondary education rose from 35 to 53 percent for the age cohorts born in 1954/55 and 1964/65. For youths with working class backgrounds, the percentage rose from 26 to 39.7 percent. Lindbekk (2008, p. 97) concludes that class background continued to have a rather stable relative effect, but that the effect of parents' education on their children's educational attainment was reduced by one-fifth as a result of the youth school reform (cf. however Hjellbrekke/Korsnes, 2006, pp. 119f). Furthermore, the effect of class background was reduced slightly by the abolition of ability grouping in the youth school. Especially in the most peripheral municipalities, the youth school reform increased the average level of education significantly. Women's earlier disadvantages at the upper secondary level of schooling disappeared (Lindbekk, 2008, pp. 91ff).

Also for Germany, the consensus in the literature is that educational inequalities based on gender and denomination decreased during the period in question. The attendance of children of low-skilled and high-skilled workers at the *Gymnasium* increased from one and two percent in 1950 to 10 and 12 percent in 1982 respectively. For the *Realschule*, the respective numbers are three and five percent in 1950 and 24 and 30 percent in 1982 (Schimpl-Neimanns, 2000, p. 654). Other social classes benefited from the educational expansion to a higher degree, however. Overall, it seems that educational opportunities became slightly more equal at the level of the middle school leaving certificate, attained for example at the *Realschule*. Working class children's relative disadvantage was not significantly reduced with regard to the *Gymnasium* (Schimpl-Neimanns, 2000; Geißler, 2011, pp. 282ff). The integrated comprehensive schools, however, continued to function as a possible path to the *Abitur* exam for children from more disadvantaged backgrounds, as these schools were and still are less socially selective than the *Gymnasium* (Köller, 2008, pp. 459f).

The legacies of the school reforms of the 1950s to 1970s remain relevant for debates about the reproduction of educational and economic inequality in the school system today. Despite the fact that social background and educational achievement are still correlated in both countries, it is clear that the Norwegian comprehensive school system is more open socially. A large amount of research on the German education system shows that sorting students into different tiers of the school system at the age of ten (re)creates particularly strong social inequalities (cf. van Ackeren/Klemm, 2011, 89ff, 134ff). In general, most researchers agree that the many points of transition reinforce inequality in the German system (Maaz et al, 2008, p. 243). Comprehensive systems, on the other hand, comprise fewer such points. In international comparisons of the equity of education systems, Norway has fared comparatively well, while Germany has often been criticized for its high degree of social reproduction (cf. OECD 1972, 2005, 2010a/b, 2016). The overall variation between students' performance is significantly greater in the German than in the Norwegian system. Furthermore, in Norway, almost all variation between students' performance is within-school variation, while in Germany, variation between schools is very high. In other words, in Norway it makes little difference which school students attend, while in Germany it makes a great difference (OECD, 2016, p. 226). Overall, the OECD (2010b, p. 36) concludes that "on balance, early selection into different institutional tracks is associated with larger socio-economic inequalities in learning opportunities without being associated with better overall performance [in PISA tests]".

Researchers' conclusion that the tracked German system is conducive to the reproduction of inequality has not led to far-reaching comprehensive school reforms. On the contrary, the multi-tier school system has persisted and the number of parallel school types has even increased in some federal states. Nevertheless, comprehensive school reforms – for example a prolongation of the comprehensive primary school – remain a topic of debate. Numerous collective actors, such as political parties, teachers' and parents' organizations or unions, are

involved in the ongoing struggle over the school system. The educational certificates of the lowest secondary schools (the *Hauptschule* as well as the special schools) have become largely worthless on the labor market. As a result, these school types have become schools for the most deprived children of society; those of poor, often immigrant, workers or unemployed people, who lack the educational and financial resources necessary to ensure the educational success of their children (Solga 2004; Solga/Wagner 2007). This has recently contributed to the abolition of the *Hauptschule* in some federal states and to a development towards a two-tier system (Edelstein, 2010; Hartong/Nikolai, 2016; Helbig/Nikolai, 2015, pp. 99ff). In NRW, the *Hauptschule* has not yet been abolished but the percentage of students attending this school type is declining rapidly.

In Norway, schooling continues to be a topic of debate as well. For example, there have been conflicts over whether grades should be reintroduced in the last years of the children's school. The Conservative Party has traditionally supported the reintroduction of grades but has recently decided to relinquish this political aim for the time being. In addition, schools in Oslo have been experimenting with permanent ability grouping, which has also been supported by the Conservative Party (Wilden/Juven, 2013).<sup>1</sup> The Norwegian Socialist Left Party, on the other hand, suggests abolishing homework because it contributes to the reproduction of social inequality; it wants to replace homework with comprehensive afternoon exercises at school. Despite these debates, comprehensive primary and lower secondary schooling as such is not seriously questioned by anyone. The fact that comprehensive schooling enjoys such widespread support in Norwegian society in itself represents an interesting object of study from a German researcher's point of view.

This study analyzes the political struggles over the most important school reforms of the 1950s to 1970s with the aim to understand why the political outcomes were so different. Instead of focusing on the distributional effects of the reforms, as much research has done, it focuses on how the reforms came about and on what this tells us about these two societies and their school politics. In doing so, the thesis fills a gap in the relevant literature. Few contributions have analyzed the development of primary and lower secondary schooling in Scandinavia and Germany comparatively and historically (but see Wiborg, 2009, 2010) and previous explanations of the Scandinavian trend towards comprehensive schooling and the German trend towards differentiation have not been entirely convincing (cf. section 7.2). In general, comparative literature on the politics of education has so far been rather sparse compared to comparative literature on other aspects of modern welfare states. Furthermore, much of the literature has focused on upper secondary, vocational and higher education rather

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<sup>1</sup> The author has also collected anecdotal evidence from students indicating that more or less informal ability grouping is practiced in some subjects in Norwegian youth schools outside of Oslo as well, which is not in line with national regulations and which would merit further systematic research (cf. also OECD, 2010b, p. 212, which, however, gives no information about how permanent Norwegian ability grouping is and whether it is conducted within classes or between classes).

than on primary and lower secondary education. This is rather strange considering that the politics of primary and lower secondary education have played and continue to play an extremely important role all over the world, with great consequences for the population (cf. Moe/Wiborg, 2017b, p. 11). In the two cases of this study, the events of the post-war reform period significantly influenced the shape of the current school system and thus the fate of millions of schoolchildren, teachers and families. Hopefully, the present analysis of this period can inform current debates about school reforms and contribute to an increased understanding of how coalitions and conflicts in school politics come about.<sup>2</sup>

### 1.3 Research questions and thesis outline

The overarching research questions of this study can be formulated in the following way: why was the abolition of parallel school tiers, tracking, ability grouping and grading effectively carried out in Norway, while comparable reforms attempted in West Germany during the same period remained limited in scope? Why were the reforms a strongly contested issue in Germany but not in Norway? What are the reasons for the stickiness of the multi-tier German school structure and what are the reasons for the Norwegian willingness to reform? In the following, the outline of the thesis is presented. This is connected with a more detailed discussion of the various angles from which these questions are approached in this study.

Chapter 2 introduces the theoretical framework of the study. It should be remarked that the theories discussed here – Gramscian theory, power resources theory, historical institutionalism and Rokkanian theory – are not meant to be tested in the present study but merely provide perspectives and concepts which were found to be helpful in structuring and guiding the historical comparison. In line with the case-oriented and comparative-historical research design (cf. below), the study was based on a constant dialogue between theory and data. The starting point was various conflict theories, especially Gramscian theory and power resources theory, which emphasize the importance of historical actors, their relations and attempts at coalition-making, their material power resources, as well as their ideological standpoints and arguments. As the study progressed, it became evident that concepts from historical institutionalist literature were useful to position actors' struggles in the historical context. Feedback effects of previous struggles and reforms, leading to a certain amount of path-dependence, needed to be taken into account. Finally, as the author became more

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<sup>2</sup> The author is of the opinion that social scientists should be open about their personal background and standpoints (as suggested f.ex. by Weber, 1985 [1922], pp. 146, 155ff). It should therefore be remarked at this point that the author is herself a supporter of comprehensive schooling and has participated in the German student movement (termed *Bildungsstreik*, "Educational Strike") from 2009 to 2012 which fought against the reproduction of inequality in the German education system. The author still shares the ideals of this movement, including the conviction that schooling should contribute to emancipation and democratic progress. However, the author's perspective on the issues at hand has become more differentiated in the course of this research project. This is due not least to the interesting expert interviews which were conducted in both countries and which shed light on school politics in ways not previously considered by the author. Hopefully, reading this thesis will have a similar effect on others. It may be useful to remind oneself that political actors' motivations, as well as society as a whole, are complex.

familiar with the cases at hand, it also became clear that an exclusive focus on class divisions and left/right oppositions in school politics would not be sufficient to understand the political compromises that had come about. Even though the class cleavage clearly was relevant and came to expression in debates about comprehensive schooling, crosscutting school political debates influenced the alliances between collective actors. Rokkanian theory was discovered to be highly fruitful in making sense of these findings because it broadened the focus to include additional crosscutting political cleavages besides the class cleavage.

In Chapter 3, the methodological aspects of the research design and the study's comparative-historical approach are discussed in more detail. First, it is explained that the case-oriented, comparative-historical research strategy of this study implies a focus on historical specificity and context. The cases are analyzed symmetrically and in-depth. During this process, empirical findings enter into a dialectical relationship with theoretical, analytic frames, inspiring new perspectives on data and theory alike. The study aims at a historical interpretation as well as a causal analysis of the processes under investigation, but the potential to generalize beyond the cases in question is, of course, limited. In future work, the analysis could be extended to additional cases with the aim of exploring to what extent the findings of the present study might be generalizable. In the next step, the case selection of this study is discussed. It is argued that Norway and Germany/NRW are maximally different regarding the comprehensiveness of their school systems, yet most similar regarding many other features of their education systems and societies, making a comparison fruitful. Furthermore, the various primary and secondary sources of data are introduced and potential strengths and weaknesses of these sources are discussed. In addition, the study relies on expert interviews with representatives of school political actors of the time. The chapter therefore introduces the method of expert interviewing, specific challenges related to this methodological approach, as well as the experts who have been interviewed. Finally, the research design is summed up.

Chapter 4 gives a historical-sociological overview of the development of Norway's and Germany's school systems from early times to the 1980s. Most of the relevant collective actors are introduced here for the first time. The chapter traces the institutional development and provides the historical context necessary to understand the differing historical conditions of the post-war reform period. The historical narrative focuses on the long-term development of the major political cleavages in the two countries and aims at identifying particularly relevant periods of change – in other words, critical junctures – as well as feedback effects of previous reforms and long-term trends and continuities. In the final section of this chapter, the long-term institutional development of the two cases is compared. It is shown that the post-war reform period in both cases constituted a critical juncture but that the historical conditions for post-war reformers differed considerably. Trends of educational expansion manifested



themselves in both cases but this was connected to trends of comprehensivization in Norway and hierarchical differentiation in Germany.

In Chapter 5, the focus lies on school political conflicts related to comprehensive schooling, including debates about the potential abolition of parallel school types, differentiation within comprehensive school types and grades. The first two sections analyze the Norwegian case and the third and fourth sections analyze NRW. For each case, the political playing field is analyzed in the first step. Protagonists, consenters and antagonists to specific reforms are identified and their material power resources, such as election results, financial resources, membership numbers and social base are examined. In the second step, the ideological arguments championed by protagonists, consenters and antagonists are analyzed in detail. For the Norwegian case, this is done with respect to the youth school reform and the abolition of grading. For the North Rhine-Westphalian case, the ideological conflicts over the introduction of the integrated comprehensive school and the attempted cooperative school reform are analyzed in turn. In the final section, the two cases are compared. With regard to the political playing fields and the material power resources of the relevant collective actors, both similarities and important differences can be discerned. Some of these differences cannot be explained by the distribution of material power resources and material interests alone, such as the fact that the religious and rural population in the Norwegian case consented to the reforms and opposed them in the North Rhine-Westphalian case. For this reason, the ideological arguments employed in the two cases are compared in detail. It is shown that collective actors were in both cases divided over these questions along a political left-right axis. Conflicts over comprehensive schooling can therefore be considered an expression of the class cleavage. However, the cross-class coalitions, which developed in school politics, differed significantly. There are also great differences between the ideological arguments which became hegemonic in the two cases.

Chapter 6 focuses on various additional school political struggles which are shown to have influenced coalitions for and against comprehensive school reforms in some way. These struggles were not expressions of the class cleavage but of crosscutting political cleavages like the rural-urban cleavage, the center-periphery cleavage, the state-church cleavage, the communist-socialist cleavage and the gender cleavage. In the first part of the chapter, struggles over religion are at the center of analysis. For the Norwegian case, the debates about Christian education, Christian private schools and the Christian preamble of the school law are analyzed. For NRW, the conflict over denominational schooling, which was related to the introduction of the *Hauptschule* as an independent lower secondary school type, is discussed. Again, the division into protagonists, consenters and antagonists of the reforms and their ideological arguments are analyzed in detail. The second part of the chapter focuses on struggles over the centralization of rural schooling. These struggles were much fiercer in Norway but they can also be traced in North-Rhine Westphalian debates. The comparison of

protagonists, consenters and antagonists in this area of politics is illuminating as similarities and differences between the Norwegian center parties and the German Christian Democratic Union become clear. The third and fourth parts of the chapter focus on two country-specific conflicts, namely the Norwegian language struggle and West German anti-communism and the communist-socialist cleavage in school politics in Germany. These conflicts have no direct equivalents in the other case but have both influenced the alliances between school political actors. Furthermore, struggles related to gender are compared, with a focus on the role played by female teachers' unions and the debates about coeducation and equal curricula for boys and girls. Finally, in the last section the relevance of crosscutting cleavages for the historical outcomes in the two cases is compared. It is shown how different cleavages contributed to a weakening or strengthening of political alliances in the school political field.

In Chapter 7, an overall conclusion is developed. In the first part of the chapter, the main results of this study are summarized in three steps. Firstly, this thesis contributes a comparative-historical analysis of the long-term institutional development of the two countries' school systems and identifies important critical junctures, as well as feedback effects and long-term trends. Secondly, the study contributes a detailed analysis of both material and ideological factors in school politics and emphasizes the importance of ideology as an independent force, which can sometimes override purely material interests. Thirdly, it demonstrates the importance of crosscutting cleavages in school politics and spells out how these cleavages have influenced the historical cases in focus. Importantly, the analysis also includes cleavages which have previously been neglected, such as the communist-socialist cleavage or the gender cleavage. Overall, it can be said that the Norwegian Labor Party compromised with the center parties on several of the crosscutting school political issues mentioned above, which made it difficult for the Conservative Party to build up a strong oppositional camp to comprehensive school reforms. In NRW/Germany, on the other hand, several of the crosscutting debates weakened comprehensive school reform coalitions and a much more stable conservative antagonist alliance developed. In the next part of the chapter, alternative as well as supporting explanations from the research field are discussed and compared with the results of the present work. In contrast to Wiborg's (2009, 2010) findings, it is argued that the one of the reasons why German social democrats did not achieve as much of their school political program as Norwegian social democrats is not that they were too radical politically but rather that they were split internally and that leading social democrats did not support the reforms wholeheartedly. In Norway, on the other hand, the Conservative Party was internally divided in school politics at least until the 1970s. Finally, in the last part of the chapter, some open questions and potential extensions of the study are outlined. It is also discussed in brief how legacies of the post-war reform period potentially influence the current school political situation in Norway and North Rhine-Westphalia/Germany and which similarities can be found between now and then.



## 2 Theoretical framework and key concepts

This chapter introduces the main theoretical perspectives and key concepts which have inspired this work and which were deemed most appropriate for structuring the historical comparison and for guiding and focusing the analysis. At present, not many theoretical contributions have been made which attempt to explain the development of comprehensive schooling, and it is doubtful whether a universal theory explaining all school politics could ever be developed. This work has therefore been inspired by more general theories relating to the dynamics of politics, and concerned with the historical development of Western societies' institutions. It is important to note that this thesis is not meant to test any particular theory. Rather, it is of an explorative and historically interpretive character, in line with a case-oriented research strategy (cf. Ragin, 1987, 1992; Chapter 3). In the course of the research, empirical data has been examined and compared with the aim to identify patterns and relationships. At the same time, various theoretical perspectives have been explored in order to find out which theoretical concepts could be useful to analyze the empirical material. As Ragin (1992, p. 218) points out, "ideas and evidence are mutually dependent; we transform evidence into results with the help of ideas, and we make sense of theoretical ideas and elaborate them by linking them to empirical evidence". This also implies that concepts are used in a sensitizing way in this study, meaning that they merely "suggest directions along which to look", but without providing "prescriptions of what to see" (Blumer, 1954, p. 7).

The theoretical starting point of the study were various actor-centered and conflict-oriented theories, such as power resources theory and Gramscian theory. Based on these theoretical perspectives, the empirical data was analyzed with the aim to identify relevant collective actors, to explore their relations and attempts at coalition-making, their material power resources and their ideological arguments. Over time, the work with the data indicated that concepts from historical institutionalism were fruitful additions to shed light on the cases at hand. Feedback effects of previous struggles and reforms, which influenced actors' possibilities and strategies, needed to be taken into account, and the reform period needed to be put in historical context. Finally, it became evident that an analysis of class divisions and left/right-oppositions alone would not be sufficient to understand the political compromises that had come about in the two cases. Even though the class cleavage was relevant for the outcomes of comprehensive school reforms, so were various crosscutting cleavages, which influenced the alliances between school political actors. Rokkian theory proved highly fruitful to make sense of these findings. In the following, concepts from Gramscian theory, power resources theory and historical institutionalism – which in fact have many similarities – and Rokkian theory are discussed in turn. Finally, it is discussed again how these four theoretical approaches come together in this study, allowing for an analysis of the role of

ideological factors, material factors as well as institutional factors, and combining an actor-oriented perspective with an understanding of the underlying structural conditions.

## 2.1 Reflections on hegemony, ideology, education and state formation

As mentioned, Antonio Gramsci's ideas about hegemony and ideology were one of the theoretical starting points of this research project (cf. Sass, 2014a). Gramsci was a contemporary of the Russian Revolution, a leading Italian communist, and died in 1937 as a result of 10 years in fascist prison. During his time in prison, he wrote his famous prison notebooks, in which he tries to make sense of the events unfolding around him. Even though Gramsci's work is not primarily concerned with education politics, he does in fact make suggestions for a comprehensive school system and criticizes the traditional "social character" of schools as institutions for either ruling or subordinate social groups (Gramsci, 1972, pp. 26ff, p. 40). In general, Gramsci's work can be summarized as "a sustained meditation on a single, but double-sided, theme: the way in which the dominant and the subordinate classes seek to educate society into their own conceptions of the world" (Green, 2013, p. 103).

Among other things, Gramsci analyzes the diverging historical development in Russia and Western Europe. To this end, he adopts a Machiavellian concept of power as "a centaur: half man, half beast, a necessary combination of consent and coercion" (Cox, 1983, p. 164). In places like Russia, he points out, civil society before the revolution had been underdeveloped, so that no significant opposition was brought forward when the Bolsheviks overwhelmed the mainly coercive state apparatus. In Western Europe, on the other hand, a well-developed civil society meant that power had a different shape: the shape of bourgeois hegemony, which could not be so easily overcome, because it built on consent to a much higher degree than the coercive Russian regime (cf. Cox, 1983, Anderson, 2017, pp. 21ff). From this, Gramsci draws various lessons regarding the concept of hegemony, which are both of a practical and of a theoretical nature.

For Gramsci, politics in industrialized Western societies is mostly about the necessity to engineer consent among as many people as possible. Hegemony can thus be understood as a strategic praxis of leadership based on coalition-building between a ruling group and potentially several subaltern groups which necessarily involves a certain degree of compromise (cf. Gramsci, 1972, p. 161, p. 182). This implies that the ruling group has to make real sacrifices for the benefit of the subaltern groups over which it exercises hegemony. In other words, hegemony is not based on some kind of manipulation or the false consciousness of subaltern groups, but on a certain degree of inclusion of their experiences, ideologies and material interests (cf. Opratko, 2012, p. 43). As Gramsci (1972, p. 161) emphasizes, such compromises can never really endanger the material base of the ruling group's power, for a truly hegemonic group dominates economically as well as ideologically. But such compromises must nevertheless be significant enough to make it attractive for

subaltern groups to join the hegemonic coalition. This does not mean that hegemony has no element of coercion, but coercion is applied only by way of exception, for example when the material power base of the ruling group is threatened. In most other cases, hegemony is flexible enough to deal with opposition “like a pillow: it absorbs blows and sooner or later the would-be assailant will find it comfortable to rest upon” (Cox, 1983, p. 173).

Furthermore, Gramsci (1972, p. 244) defines the state as “the entire complex of practical and theoretical activities with which the ruling class not only justifies and maintains its dominance, but manages to win the active consent of those over whom it rules” (Gramsci, 1972, p. 244). Schools are among the institutions of the state and civil society which Gramsci (1983, p. 83) considers especially vital with regard to this aim. For the same reason, they are parts of a battlefield. This is because groups that are not included in the hegemonic coalition, and that aim at establishing counter-hegemony, must also try to convince as many people as possible of their potential role as future leaders of an alternative coalition. Civil society is therefore characterized by a constant more or less visible struggle for hegemony and counter-hegemony resulting in temporary, unstable equilibria.

Ideologies play an important role in this struggle. Gramsci (1972, pp. 375ff, pp. 406f) discusses both the origin of the concept of ideology and its contortions. Even though ideology in “the worst sense of the word” is understood to mean a “dogmatic system of eternal and absolute truths”, Gramsci mostly does not use the term this way, but uses it more matter-of-factly to refer to any system of ideas (Gramsci, 1972, p. 407).<sup>3</sup> In Gramscian theory, ideological and material factors are always considered together and in relation to each other. They can never be reduced to each other but have independent force. As a result, history is never predetermined, and mechanistic, deterministic conceptions of history are fruitless. Furthermore, Gramsci (1972, pp. 376f) says as follows:

“One must [...] distinguish between historically organic ideologies, those, that is, which are necessary to a given structure, and ideologies that are arbitrary, rationalistic, or “willed”. To the extent that ideologies are historically necessary they have a validity which is “psychological”; they “organise” human masses, and create the terrain on which men move, acquire consciousness of their position, struggle, etc. To the extent that they are arbitrary they only create individual “movements”, polemics and so on (though even these are not completely useless, since they function like an error which by contrasting with truth, demonstrates it).”

In other words, all ideology is to some extent historically relevant, but only a few ideologies acquire the historical role of uniting people behind a common goal and leading to change. As this quote also indicates, Gramsci’s theory emphasizes the importance of agency. Human

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<sup>3</sup> As discussed by Knight (2006), most political scientists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century have agreed that ideology refers to a more or less coherent set of ideas. This “core definition” test would be passed by Gramsci too.

beings moving consciously around the ideological and material terrain make history. In particular, Gramsci (1972, pp. 5ff) holds that intellectuals play a major role in the struggle over hegemony (cf. Opratko, 2012, pp. 48ff). Each time and each class produce new “organic intellectuals”, defined as organizers of social groups as well as organizers of society, who develop the necessary body of thought to legitimize their group’s claims (Gramsci, 1972, pp.6ff). Intellectuals, according to Gramsci (1972, pp. 5ff), create consciousness and ideology. In the struggle for hegemony, a group needs to either win over the intellectuals of other groups or produce its own intellectuals. From a Gramscian perspective, the experts interviewed for this study (cf. Chapter 3) can for example be considered organic intellectuals involved in the struggle over comprehensive schooling. In Chapters 5 and 6, the ideological arguments coming to expression in these struggles are analyzed in detail and in relation to the historical actors who championed them.

Andy Green (2013) has applied a Gramscian approach to the study of the origins of national education systems and the role of the state in this process, with a focus on England, France, Prussia, the United States of America and East Asia. Green (2013, p. 297) defines national education systems as “systems of formal schooling at least partly funded and supervised by the state which provided universal education for all children of school age in a given nation”. Green’s main hypothesis is that the uneven development of national education systems during the 19th century was related to the different ways in which modern states were built and consolidated. State formation, for Green (2013, p. 83), “includes not only the construction of the political and administrative apparatus of government [...], but also the formation of ideologies and collective beliefs which legitimate state power and underpin concepts of nationhood”. Where state formation occurred as an “intense” process, national education systems were formed earlier and faster, because their development was linked directly to the nature of the state:

“The major impetus for the creation of national education systems lay in the need to provide the state with trained administrators, engineers and military personnel; to spread dominant national cultures and inculcate popular ideologies of nationhood; and so to forge the political and cultural unity of burgeoning nation states and cement the ideological hegemony of their dominant classes.” (Green, 2013, p. 298)

Green (2013, p. 299) names several factors that contributed to this intense process of state formation, such as external military threats or territorial conflicts, major internal transformations resulting from revolution or newly achieved national independence, and economic underdevelopment, which in some cases led to far-reaching state reforms. Green’s theory is meant to apply primarily to “early periods of nation-building” as well as “periods of political reconstruction after crises”, for example after the Second World War (Green, 2013, p.4). In Chapter 4 of this thesis, it becomes apparent that state- and nation-building indeed

played an important role as one of several factors in the historical development of both the Norwegian and the German school system.

In general, Green's work as well as Gramscian theory suggest that it is worthwhile to pay close attention to the ideological justifications political actors employ in the struggle for and against various policies.<sup>4</sup> Not only the contents of the ideologies are of interest, but also the strategies of coalition-making aimed at including elements of subordinate groups' views. Such an analysis should be based on the understanding that politically relevant ideologies, that are not mere "individual fancies", always interact with material conditions (Gramsci, 1972, p. 377). A Gramscian analysis of ideology can therefore be combined with an analysis of the role of economic and institutional factors inspired by power resources theory and historical institutionalism.

## 2.2 Concepts from power resources theory and historical institutionalism

In his discussion of "models of capitalist variety", Wolfgang Streeck (2010, pp. 17ff) distinguishes between the power resource model and the historical-institutionalist model as two different approaches that attempt to explain political development in various capitalist countries. The power resource model is described by Streeck (2010) as based on the assumption that the origins of capitalist variety are political, that organized labor is the main hegemonic actor in historical development and that politics and legislation are the main source of economic order. The historical-institutionalist model, on the other hand, is said to conceptualize the source of variety as mainly institutional, while the source of economic order is considered to be path-dependent institution-building. Hegemonic actors in this model are, more generally, organized interests (Streeck, 2010, p. 18). Sweden and Germany are the main examples. While the distinction between these two theoretical models is useful for some purposes, e.g. to distinguish between strands of literature, it is argued here that it is of minor importance for the present study. Some of the early works of power resources theorists have been criticized for focusing too exclusively on the role of the labor movement and for ignoring the idea that "preferences and actions of a party may be conditional on the institutional and partisan environment" (Häusermann et al, 2013, p. 229). However, power resources theory can be extended to focus on other collective actors besides organized labor and incorporate an understanding of the interaction between political, institutional, cultural and economic factors and their temporal development. On the other hand, early historical institutionalist works have been criticized for lacking a theory of action, which is why Busemeyer (2014, p. 38) suggests combining them "with well-established actor-centered theories, such as power resources or partisan theory". In the following discussion, work by Walter Korpi and Kathleen Thelen will serve to illustrate that this is very well possible and that the line between these two models is not so distinct.

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<sup>4</sup> See also Archer (1979, 1986) for a discussion of the role of ideology as one important factor among several for the outcome of education reforms.



Power resources theorists such as Walter Korpi (1974, 1978, 1983, 1985), John D. Stephens (1979) and Gøsta Esping-Andersen (1985, 1990) argue that different forms of welfare state development result from the varying distribution of power resources between socioeconomic classes and class fractions. In addition, they look at variations in the structure of class coalitions in different countries to explain the outcomes of social struggles. A central assumption of the power resources approach is that “employers and other interest groups that control major economic resources are likely to prefer to situate distributive processes in the context of markets, where economic assets constitute strategic resources and [...] tend to outflank labor power” (Korpi, 2006, p. 173). In response, those who have no large amounts of capital at their disposal need to organize themselves into political parties and unions, which aim at influencing the outcome of these market processes. Such parties and unions have sought to remove some activities and policies from the market in order to achieve a certain degree of social citizenship and de commodification (Korpi, 2006; cf. Esping-Andersen, 1990, p. 35ff).

Traditionally, this strand of literature did not pay much attention to the education system. However, the concept of social citizenship was first defined by T. H. Marshall (1950, p. 11) as “the whole range from the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security to the right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilized being according to the standards prevailing in the society”. Marshall (1950, p. 11, pp. 25f) also held that “[t]he institutions most closely connected with [social citizenship] are the educational system and the social services” and argued that the first step towards the establishment of social rights in the 20<sup>th</sup> century was the expansion of public elementary education in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In line with Marshall’s thinking, the educational expansion in the decades after World War Two, which took place in many countries and included various types of comprehensive school reforms and prolonged obligatory schooling, can also be considered an extension of social citizenship. Furthermore, education reforms are related to issues of social protection, economic performance and distribution. For this reason, it is fortunate that the education system has received increased attention in recent years in comparative welfare state literature inspired by power resource theory and historical institutionalism (cf. Busemeyer, 2014, 2015; Edelstein/Nikolai, 2013; Iversen/Stephens, 2008; Sass, 2015; Thelen, 2004; Wiborg, 2009; Willemse/de Beer, 2012).

The present study focuses on political struggles over various aspects of comprehensive schooling between collective actors such as political parties, unions, teacher and parent organizations and churches. This choice of actors was not made a priori but was based on an initial analysis of the empirical evidence which suggested that these actors are the most relevant ones in the conflicts in question. In the analysis, the collective actors are identified as protagonists, consenters or antagonists of specific school reforms. Protagonists are defined by Korpi (2006, p. 182) as “agenda setters” in the extension of “social citizenship rights”.

Consenters are actors who either decide to switch from opposition to consent “for fear of voter reactions” or who “attempt to modify policies to accord with their second-best or even lower levels of policy preferences and, if successful, can consent to a revised proposal” (Korpi, 2006, p. 182). In other words, consenters are willing to compromise. Finally, antagonists are actors who oppose a specific policy throughout the policy-making process. It is important to remember that protagonists of one specific policy, for example comprehensive schooling, may be consenters, or even antagonists, as far as another policy is concerned, for example decentralized countryside schooling.

Furthermore, to understand why some actors are more successful than others in asserting their political program it is helpful to consider the distribution of power resources between them. Korpi (1985, p. 33) defines power resources “as the attributes (capacities or means) of actors (individuals or collectivities), which enable them to reward or to punish other actors”. This means that power resources are defined in a relational way and are relevant even when not activated. In sections 5.1 and 5.3, the material power resources of the collective actors included in this study are examined with a focus on financial resources, membership numbers or election results, with the aim to assess the relevance of the distribution of such material power resources in the outcomes of political conflict.

Korpi (1985) also holds that indirect power strategies help managers of power resources avoid the actual mobilization and application of their resources, which would incur costs and increase uncertainty. One such strategy would be an attempt to influence ideologies and beliefs of other actors. In this context, Korpi (1985, p. 34) speaks of normative power resources which “involve the allocation or manipulation of symbolic rewards and deprivations [and] generate positive orientations among those subject to them”. He assumes that normative power resources are derived or “ultimately based on resources which provide the capability to apply coercive or remunerative sanctions” (1985, p. 34). Normative power resources have lower costs than coercive power resources: “Attempts to develop and to spread ideologies and to cultivate legitimacy can be regarded as conversion techniques for decreasing the costs of power” (Korpi, 1985, p. 39). While the term “normative power resources” is not employed in this study, it does examine the role of ideology, as discussed in more detail above.

Another strategy discussed by Korpi is the attempt to influence the creation and shape of institutions. Institutions are conceptualized by Korpi (1985, p. 38) as “residues of previous activations of power resources, often in the context of manifest conflicts which for the time being have been settled through various types of compromises”. Similarly, Thelen (1999, p. 388) also defines institutions as “enduring legacies of political struggles”. Korpi (1985, p. 38) assumes that “distribution of power resources between the parties is reflected and ‘built into’ these institutions and structures and that the parties may thus have unequal gains from their operation”. Thelen (1999, p. 394) also holds that institutions “are not neutral coordinating

mechanisms but in fact reflect, and also reproduce and magnify, particular patterns of power distribution in politics” (Thelen, 1999, p. 394). Another important insight from Thelen (2003, p. 216) is that “sometimes power begets power and institutions reinforce and magnify the position of their creators; but sometimes institutions provide interesting and unintended opportunities for marginal groups to exercise leverage well beyond their apparently meager power resources”. In line with these arguments, the structure of the school system is considered a residue of previous manifest conflicts and compromises in this study.

Historical institutionalist contributions have also emphasized the importance of critical junctures, meaning periods that are particularly consequential as their events “set countries along different developmental paths” (Thelen, 1999, p. 388). While Mahoney (2000, p. 507) defines path dependence as a characterization of “event chains that have deterministic properties”, Thelen (1999) emphasizes, more convincingly, that the concept merely suggests considering the feedback effects of existing institutions when trying to understand actors’ political choices and possibilities. For example, comprehensive schooling and multi-tier parallel secondary schooling have different distributional effects by contributing unequally to the reproduction of social inequality and by privileging some social groups – such as different categories of teachers – over others. It can also be assumed that comprehensive and parallel schooling create unequal incentive structures for collective actors, influencing their interests as well as possibilities. Despite this, political development always remains open to a certain degree. As Thelen (2003, p. 220) puts it:

“[I]t is hard to think of a single case in which institutions are completely “up for grabs” even in what may look like a critical juncture situation, nor one in which they are unalterably locked in in any meaningful sense subsequent to these critical junctures. Rather, most empirical studies [...] paint a picture in which politics (and institutions) evolve in ways that – even if not predictable *ex ante* – nonetheless follow a particular logic that makes sense only against the backdrop of the institutional context in which the “next steps” are inevitably negotiated.”

In Chapters 4 and 5 of the present study, the long-term institutional development of the Norwegian and the Prussian/North Rhine-Westphalian school systems is outlined. Based on this historical analysis, critical junctures, long-term trends and potential feedback effects are identified and discussed in sections 4.2 and 5.2.

In power resources theory, it is assumed that collective actors such as political parties “perform the crucial mediating role” with respect to the political articulation of class interests (Huber/Stephens, 2001, p. 17). Korpi (2006, p. 174) defines class broadly as “categories of individuals who share relatively similar positions, or situations, in labor markets and in employment relations”. Employers, employees and the self-employed make up the broadest of such categories or socioeconomic classes, within which several subcategories can be

distinguished. Korpi (2006, p. 174) further contends that it is an empirical question to what extent such categories of similarly placed individuals organize themselves through collective action or develop group identification. It is not possible to conduct a detailed analysis of the economic class structure of Norwegian and German society in this study. However, in Chapters 4 and 5, some important socioeconomic differences between the two societies become apparent. In addition, as discussed in more detail in sections 5.1 and 5.3, in many cases members of the collective actors included in this analysis do share relatively similar social and economic positions. However, as Korpi (2006, p. 173) points out:

“Socioeconomic class constitutes [only] one of the multiple lines of potential cleavages (including such others as religion, ethnicity, occupation, and economic sectors) around which collective action in distributive conflicts can be mobilized. The extent to which crosscutting cleavages are mobilized is affected by structural factors, but distributive strife is also focused on influencing the relative importance of these competing lines of cleavages.”

For example, as pointed out by Esping-Andersen (1990), the coalition between the Scandinavian farmers and the labor movement was central in the development of Scandinavian welfare states. The historical development of some of the continental welfare states, such as Germany, is on the other hand strongly related to the strength of Christian democratic parties and the Catholic Church (cf. Huber/Stephens, 2001, p.16ff; Manow/van Kersbergen, 2007; below). For this reason, it would be too simplistic to assume that specific collective actors, such as right-wing or left-wing parties, always represent specific class interests in a clear way. They also have to position themselves in relation to other, crosscutting cleavages, and in some cases incorporate cross-class alliances. This complex role of crosscutting cleavages is discussed in more detail in the next section.

### 2.3 Rokkanian theory on cleavage structures and party systems – applied to Norway and Rhineland-Westphalia/Prussia

Stein Rokkan’s (2000) extensive work includes a focus on the genesis of nation states, democratization, mass politics and party systems. Over time, he turned increasingly to historical-comparative, sociological analysis (cf. Flora, 2000; Mjøset, 2000). In the words of Charles Tilly (1984), Rokkan’s comparisons are of an “encompassing” character: The historical cases of Rokkan’s analyses are instances of an interdependent whole, namely European development since the late Middle Ages (Flora, 2000, p. 26). Because of their interconnectedness, they must be explained in relation to each other. Rokkan’s most important concepts, contained for example in his theories on democratization processes and cleavage structures, are dynamic. Rokkan assumes that social structures, such as cleavage structures, are a result of historical development and can only be understood historically. His theory conceptualizes historical development in various territorial areas as related to common, large,

historical phenomena, such as the Reformation, or national or industrial revolutions. Like Gramsci, Rokkan focuses not only on economic development, but also assigns an important role to culture (Flora, 2000, p. 54, 69). He distinguishes between political systems such as city states, empires or nation states, cultural systems, such as religions or other cultural expressions, and economic systems, such as trade networks and economies (Flora, 2000, p. 23). All these dimensions are interwoven in his theories and typologies. As Mjøset (2000, pp. 392f) points out, “Rokkan imagined a balance between generalization and contextual relevance”, which Merton (1968) termed “middle-range theory”. Mjøset (2000, p. 393) suggests that Rokkan’s work can equally be considered an example of “thick descriptions” or “grounded theory” (cf. Geertz, 1973, Gläser/Strauss, 1999). The most important argument for this is that “grounded theory develops theory through intense and hard work with data”, which aptly describes Rokkan’s work (Mjøset, 2000, p. 393). Rokkan did not attempt to develop a general or universal theory but continually added new models and maps to his work which he deemed useful for a specific “explanatory task” and which can be considered “condensations of comparative knowledge” (Mjøset, 2000, pp. 392, 395). As a result, Rokkan’s work still serves as a source of inspiration and orientation and offers various possibilities for extension, such as in the comparative-historical analysis of the development of education systems undertaken in the present study (cf. Mjøset, 2000, p. 392).

An important insight from Rokkan (2000, p. 334) is that political conflicts can result from many different interactions in a social structure, but that only a few of them will actually lead to political polarization and thereby to *cleavages*. A cleavage is a “fundamental opposition within a territorial population” which is characterized by comparable importance and durability compared to other sources of conflict (Flora, 2000, p. 20). There are always several lines of cleavage. None of these should be analyzed on its own since territorial areas are characterized by a particular set of interdependencies and relationships between different cleavages (Rokkan, 2000, p. 371; Lipset/Rokkan, 1967). Rokkan uses the term “cleavage structure” to describe a combination of various cleavages characterizing the social structure and political system of a territorial area (Flora, 2000, pp. 20, 53f). His (2000, pp. 334f) aim is to examine various possible sources of cleavages and analyze which of these have been empirically relevant or prevalent in different cases. He identifies several *critical historical junctures* which have resulted in political cleavages and, ultimately, party structures (Rokkan, 2000, pp. 366ff). While some of these critical junctures are revolutions or civil wars, others, such as the development of industrial capitalism, are rather long-term processes (Flora, 2000, p. 56). It is important to note that early cleavages influence the development of later ones and the extent to which various potential cleavages come to expression in different territorial areas.

The first critical juncture considered by Rokkan (2000, pp. 366ff) is the Reformation and the Thirty Years’ War. This juncture split Europe into a Protestant north, a belt of religiously

mixed areas of Catholic and Protestants, and the counter-reformation areas in the east and south. While Norway and the German state of Prussia belong to the Protestant north, the Rhineland and Westphalia are religiously mixed areas. At this point, we can already find the first origins of the center-periphery cleavage and the state-church cleavage, which were both influenced by processes of territorial consolidation, nation-building and the Reformation. However, Rokkan assumes that these cleavages were strengthened considerably by the second critical juncture, namely the national revolution following the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars. This juncture led to different cleavage structures in the three areas.

The Protestant north – such as Norway – was characterized by territorial-cultural, or center-periphery cleavages, between farmers, peripheral ethnic groups, and urban outsiders on the one hand and the established, urban bureaucracy of the state administration and church on the other hand (Rokkan, 2000, p. 367; 1966). However, the state-church cleavage was not that strong because Protestant state churches were integrated into nation-building processes. There were dissenting groups of Protestant minorities but in most cases they were integrated into the peripheral movements. Neither these dissenting groups nor the Protestant state churches fought the state's attempts to control the education system, which is one of the most important elements in the national revolution, according to Rokkan (2000, pp. 347, 368). When universal elementary schooling was introduced gradually from around the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards, the churches in the Lutheran areas merely became assistants of the state. They “had no reason to oppose such measures” (Rokkan, 2000, p. 346; Lipset/Rokkan, 1967, p. 15). In the Norwegian case, the strong center-periphery cleavage led to the establishment of the Liberal Party in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, which was a broad movement of cultural opposition to urban elites (Rokkan, 2000, p. 452; 1966).

In the Catholic south, on the other hand, a cleavage between secularizing forces and defenders of Catholic privileges emerged as a result of the national revolution. The religiously mixed areas saw the rise of two movements; peripheral movements of Protestant dissidents, and movements of Catholic minorities, which often developed into Christian or Catholic political parties. This led to the development of a strong state-church cleavage and bitter conflicts, especially about education. Christian or Catholic movements comprised many organizations, including unions, sports clubs, newspapers and so forth (Rokkan, 2000, p. 346). In the Rhineland and Westphalia, the Catholic Centre Party and the Catholic Church's conflict with the Protestant Prussian state were the main expressions of this cleavage. The ultramontane Centre Party was founded to defend the Catholic religion and Catholic influence on education and developed into a mass party supported by many Catholic workers, once universal franchise was introduced.

The industrial revolution is the third critical juncture identified by Rokkan (2000), adding new cleavages to the existing ones. In the Protestant north, an urban-rural cleavage resulted from

industrial development, dividing producers of primary goods in the countryside and businessmen and the burgeoning middle classes in the cities. In some cases, it led to the founding of agrarian parties, such as in Norway. Here, the agrarian Centre Party and the Christian Democrats broke out of the formerly broad periphery-coalition within the Liberal Party (Rokkan, 2000, p. 452). In other countries with strong center-periphery and urban-rural cleavages, agrarian parties also emerged but this was more likely in areas where industrial centers were weak and where most farmers were free and socially independent of large-scale land owners (Rokkan, 2000, p. 402). In economies dominated by large-scale landed property, such as Prussia or the United Kingdom, agrarian interests were instead integrated into broad, conservative political alliances. The dominant position of landowners made it easier for them to control the rural population, so agrarian parties did not materialize (cf. Flora, 2000, pp. 62f). In religiously mixed areas, such as the Rhineland and Westphalia, Catholic mass parties organized Catholic farmers and aggregated agrarian interests. Political Catholicism tended to superpose the center-periphery and later the urban-rural cleavage, so agrarian parties rarely developed in regions with strong Catholic parties (Rokkan, 2000, p. 371).

Besides the urban-rural cleavage, the industrial revolution also created an economic class cleavage between workers and employees on the one hand and business owners on the other. As Rokkan (2000, p. 350) points out, conflicts between agrarian and urban interests on the commodity market did not produce political parties everywhere – only in those cases where cultural oppositions reinforced economic ones. However, conflicts on the labor market resulted in party cleavages and the founding of labor parties almost everywhere, and thus brought European party systems closer to each other. There was, however, great variation in Europe regarding the degree of openness of established political parties vis-à-vis the growing labor movements. While elites in Scandinavia and the United Kingdom were comparably pragmatic, cleavages on the continent, including Germany, were deeper, and labor parties and unions were often oppressed. As a result, Rokkan (2000, p. 351) holds, they became in some cases “social ghetto parties”, isolating themselves from the national culture and cultivating their own ideology.

The labor movements were also often characterized by internal splits, related to conflicting values of nationhood and international solidarity. This internal cleavage of working class movements between communist and socialist currents was intensified by the final critical juncture, which Rokkan terms the “international revolution”, in the wake of the Russian Revolution (Rokkan, 2000, pp. 386f). Rokkan (2000, pp. 403ff) argues that the most highly unified and domesticated labor movements developed in those Protestant countries with the most problem-free history of nation-building, namely the United Kingdom, Denmark and Sweden. Catholic-dominated countries with a short and difficult history of nation-building, such as Spain, France or Italy, on the other hand, had deeply split labor movements. The German and Austrian labor movements developed a counter-culture against the national

elites, and in particular the German labor movement was deeply split after 1918. The German Reich was a late-comer in terms of nation-building and territorial and religious conflicts were unsolved when the labor movement entered the stage. Norway, with its history of colonization by Danes and Swedes, also had deeper internal conflicts within the labor movement than its neighbors, at least during the 1920s, when the Norwegian Labor Party became radicalized. All in all, Rokkan (2000, p. 407) concludes, the Russian Revolution had the strongest effects in countries where the internal cleavage was the largest during the fight for national sovereignty. The less resolved conflicts over national identity were, the larger the chance for a radicalization and fragmentation of the working class was. In Catholic regions, there seems to have been more fragmentation in the labor movement where state-church conflicts remained unsolved, such as in Prussia (Rokkan, 2000, pp. 409f).

Table 2.1 provides an overview of the cleavage structures in Norway and the Prussian provinces of Rhineland and Westphalia as they developed up until around 1945. As discussed, the state-church cleavage in Norway was weak due to the Protestant state church. In Prussia and especially in its western provinces of Rhineland and Westphalia, the state-church cleavage was very strong. The center-periphery and rural-urban cleavages were strong in Norway, which is also related to its being a small country. Norwegian elites were oriented toward external centers, on which they depended, but which brought them into conflict with nationalist counter-elites (Rokkan, 2000, p. 391). One can argue that there was a certain center-periphery cleavage between the local elites of the Rhineland and Westphalia and the Prussian state's elites. The rural-urban cleavage within Rhineland and Westphalia was, however, not that strong, since these were densely populated, industrialized areas with only a few rural spots. In Prussia as a whole, this cleavage was stronger since the Prussian East included many rural, underindustrialized areas. The worker-owner or class cleavage was important both in Norway and Prussia and Rhineland/Westphalia. By around the First World War, strong, radical labor movements had developed in both places. Soon, the Norwegian Labor Party became the most highly influential collective actor in Norwegian party politics. The Prussian labor movement, on the other hand, was politically oppressed during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and in some cases conflicts turned into the beginnings of civil war. In other words, this cleavage came to expression in different ways. Finally, the communist-socialist cleavage was strong in both cases, as both labor movements were internally split. An important difference, however, is that the Norwegian Labor Party of the 1920s represented the radical current, and even joined the Comintern, which led to the short-term founding of a moderate, minority social democratic party. A rather weak Communist Party was founded later. In the German Labor Party on the other hand, the split was different. Here, the mother party represented the moderate, social democratic current, while minorities were excluded or left the party to form radical or communist alternative parties.



All in all, the resulting party system in the Norwegian case was an opposition of the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party in the early phase, based mostly on the center-periphery cleavage, while in a later phase the Labor Party, the agrarian Centre Party, the Christian Democrats, and the Communist Party developed. With the growth of the Labor Party, the class cleavage became more dominant (Rokkan, 2000, p. 372; 1966). In 1961, a new Socialist Left Party was founded, so that internal splits of the labor movement also remained relevant. In the German case, the parties which developed during the 1860s and 1870s were social liberal and national liberal parties, conservative parties, the Catholic Centre Party and the Labor Party. After the Second World War, the party system changed and shrank, so that only the Liberal Party, the Christian Democratic Union and the Labor Party remained relevant. The disappearance of the Centre Party during the 1960s and the polarization between the Labor Party and the conservative Christian Democratic Union indicate that the cleavage structure was now dominated by the class cleavage to a higher degree than by the formerly dominant state-church cleavage. However, a religious element remained, as the Christian Democratic Union, especially in North Rhine-Westphalia, was dominated by Catholics. The communist-socialist cleavage also remained particularly relevant in Germany due to the country's separation into a communist East and a capitalist West. Even though communist groups in the West were small and politically not very influential, the labor movement was split into an anticommunist, moderate or right-wing current and a current of radical leftist reformers, who had to deal with anticommunist accusations (cf. Chapter 6.4). This was also to a high degree a generational split.

Finally, one important cleavage is hardly discussed by Rokkan: the gender cleavage between men and women. This is curious as gender obviously plays a role in the political process (cf. Raaum, 2005). His lack of attention to the question might be due to the fact the women did not found separate parties so this cleavage did not come to expression in the party system but only through women's organizations within and outside of parties and through women's unions.<sup>5</sup> Alternatively, it might be due to a general "blindness" within social science regarding the sociopolitical and historical role the women's movement has played and its interlinkages with other movements. For example, Rokkan (1966, pp. 77f) mentions the Norwegian language movement, the movement of religious protest against the Lutheran church, the Folk High School movement and teetotal organizations as part of the "common platform" and "temporary alliance" characterizing the Liberal Party. Clearly, the first Norwegian women's movement would have deserved to be mentioned here as well, as it was also well-connected to the liberal movement (Therborn, 2004, p. 82).

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<sup>5</sup> Today, however, feminist parties have been established in Sweden and Norway; and some electoral success has been achieved in Sweden. They are open to people of all genders. In Iceland, women's lists also played a significant role in the 1980s (Raaum, 2005).

**Table 2.1: Importance of various cleavages in Norway and Rhineland/Westphalia prior to 1945**

Cleavage	Resulting from...	Importance in Norway	Importance in Rhineland / Westphalia
State-church	Reformation and Thirty Years' War; national revolution	Low	High
Center-periphery	Reformation and Thirty Years' War; national revolution	High	Medium
Rural-urban	Industrial revolution	High	Low
Worker-owner	Industrial revolution	High	High
Communist-socialist	International revolution	High (esp. during 1920s)	High
Not discussed by Rokkan: Men-women	Patriarchy / re-stabilized by industrial revolution	Medium	Low

Like many other social groups, women in Northern and Western Europe began organizing themselves in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and fought for the right to vote, for education, for non-patriarchal family legislation and the like. As mentioned, they were partly supported by liberals, and later by the growing labor movement, but in some cases they nonetheless felt the need to organize themselves separately, as did for example female teachers in Norway as well as in Germany. As Rokkan (1966, pp. 89f) mentions, gaining women's votes was at first no easy task for the Labor Party. This indicates that there is a separate, crosscutting cleavage at work here which should be included in an analysis of cleavage structures.<sup>6</sup> In this study, the particular effects of this cleavage on education politics are therefore also examined. It is assumed that the gender cleavage came to expression more

<sup>6</sup> Aardal and Valen (1989, pp. 250ff) at least discuss whether gender should be considered a "new" political cleavage. Their analysis of Norwegian women's voting preferences in the 1970s and 1980s shows that young women especially were more likely to vote for the Labor Party or the Socialist Left Party, while older women were more likely to vote for the Christian Democrats. Class background and position along a left-right axis were, however, more decisive for voting decisions of women than gender. This last finding is not surprising and does not justify their conclusion that gender is not a relevant political cleavage. Besides, examining the gender cleavage as something "new" is a somewhat ahistorical starting point.

clearly in Norway than in Prussia/NRW because women's rights were enforced in Scandinavia significantly earlier than in the rest of Europe (cf. Therborn, 2004, pp. 79ff). According to Therborn (2004, pp. 71f), "[t]he further south and east one ventured from northwest Europe, including within Europe itself, the more rigid were the patriarchal rules one would find". This is not the place to analyze in detail potential reasons for this pattern. One possibility is, however, that women on the Scandinavian periphery, who were farmers' or fishermen's wives, in some cases enjoyed comparable independence, if only because their husbands were absent for long periods of the year. The Rhineland and Westphalia were also much more industrialized regions than Norway, so it must be assumed that larger numbers of women were exploited as cheap labor in factories. The Protestant state churches in Scandinavia accepted the state's right to regulate family matters, which was not the case with the Catholic Church on the continent (Therborn, 2004, p. 78). All in all, Prussia was characterized by a more stable and broad conservative alliance which opposed the extension of women's rights and which split the women's movement internally, so the influence of the women's movement remained comparably low. It should also be noted that, while proletarianization and urbanization in some parts of Europe had "seriously disrupted the socio-sexual order" during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, later "[s]uccessful industrialization provided an economic basis for a re-stabilization" of patriarchal rules (Therborn, 2004, p. 301).

While Rokkan focuses mostly on the party system as an expression of cleavage structures, he was aware that other collective actors could and should be included in the analysis as well. His concept of a two-tier system of decision-making entails that, besides the elective-legislative channel, there is a corporative-functional channel of influence. Within the elective-legislative channel one person has one vote, and citizens can choose to support and mobilize moral ties to various parties, or withdraw their loyalty either from parties or the entire system. However, the corporative-functional channel gives additional influence to owners of unequally distributed resources such as goods, labor or investments. Through this channel, owners of such resources can choose to mobilize, control or withdraw specific resources, which will force the government to take their interests into account. The state then links both channels together (Flora, 2000, pp. 71ff). In one famous passage from his work on Norway, Rokkan (1966, p. 106) remarks as follows:

"Votes count in the choice of governing personnel but other resources decide the actual policies pursued by the authorities. The extension of the franchise to all adults and the maintenance of a strict majoritarian rule of decision-making in the legislature made it possible for a movement of the hitherto underprivileged to rise to power. But the parallel growth of a vast network of interest organizations and other corporate bodies made it impossible to rule by any simple "50 percent plus" principle. To understand the strategies and counterstrategies of government and opposition we have to analyze the bargaining processes between the giant alliances of such associations

and corporations. The vote potential constitutes only one among many different power resources brought to bear in these bargaining processes: what really counts is the capacity to hurt or to halt a system of highly interdependent activities.”

Examples of collective actors Rokkan (1966) considers in his study of the Norwegian case are unions, farmers’ and fishermen’s organizations and employer organizations. All of these have specific “weapons at their disposal”: the “capacity to call strikes”, the “ability to withhold needed primary goods” and the “power to call off investment plans, to withhold skills, and to channel their initiatives to areas beyond the control of the unions and the national government” (Rokkan, 1966, p. 106f). Just like Korpi (1985), Rokkan (1966, p. 107) points out that those weapons need not actually be put into use but have a deterrent effect in the bargaining process. The mass media is another important communication channel in the struggle for influence among such collective actors. In his last working years, Rokkan outlined a research program focused on mobilization networks and relationships between parties, associations, corporations and media, but due to his early death he did undertake any further studies on this topic (Flora, 2000, p. 74).

#### 2.4 Summing up: theoretical framework of this study

The theoretical approaches discussed in this chapter, which all influenced the final shape of this study, share many commonalities. First, they emphasize the importance of historical, often also comparative analysis. In order to understand current social phenomena, they suggest that one should examine their historical roots, with a particular focus on critical junctures that were especially formative in shaping current society’s institutions. For this reason, the present study focuses on the 1950s to 1970s, when the Norwegian and German school systems were radically reformed and important legacies were left.

The works discussed here also emphasize that historical analysis should not be mechanistic or deterministic but conceptualize social development as dynamic and open. Furthermore, they emphasize the interplay of different social forces and their constant struggle, and thus all represent variants of social power or conflict theory (cf. Brint, 2006, pp. 15ff). Among the theoretical starting points of this study were also other variants of social power theories, such as the work by Vester (2008), which is inspired by Weber (1980) and Bourdieu (1982), or the work by Bowles and Gintis (1976). In this tradition, it is generally assumed that powerful groups can and do influence the structure and functioning of institutions, such as schools, in their own interests (cf. Brint, 2006, pp. 13ff). However, a problem with some of these theoretical approaches, as well as with functionalist approaches to the study of education systems, is that they sometimes employ a “reproduction perspective”, in which the education system is viewed as mainly reproducing external social structures (Sakslind, 2002, p. 128). Archer (1983, 1989) has rightly criticized this perspective because it is somehow assumed that dominant social forces can always directly intervene inside the education system in order

to ensure their position, and that the power structures of society and in the education system are the same. Due to this assumption, the political and social processes and conflicts which “translate” power structures in society into school structures and curricula are not studied sufficiently (cf. Saksliind 2002, p. 128).

The theoretical approaches presented in this chapter allow this trap to be avoided because they emphasize that political struggles are open-ended and need to be studied in detail. To use the words of Korpi (1985, p. 39), it is assumed in all of these theories that “politics can be expected to matter; e.g. for the distributive processes in society”. Similarly, Green (2013, pp. 87ff) emphasizes that functionalist or reductionist Marxist analyses of the state are too simplistic. The state – and this includes state institutions such as schools – is not exclusively a tool of society’s most powerful groups. As Gramsci (1972) has already argued so forcefully, the state is instead contested terrain, where powerful groups constantly need to engineer consent in order to uphold their hegemony. In addition, the importance of cross-class coalition-making is emphasized in the works of all the authors discussed here. With respect to school politics, this implies that one should not simply assume that the interests of the powerful are translated more or less one-to-one into the structure of the school system. Rather, one needs to study how exactly various actors attempt to influence the structure of the system, how they legitimate it, which kinds of coalitions they aim at and how successful they are in reaching their aims.

There are, of course, also differences between the theoretical approaches presented here. These differences are not fundamental in the sense of opposing, but rather a result of varying emphases. All the approaches discussed here combine to some extent an analysis of material, ideological and institutional factors. Several of the approaches also underline the importance of agency. However, they highlight different aspects and thereby all contribute something valuable to the analysis. From power resource theory, the present study takes especially the emphasis on political actors, and the idea that their role as protagonists, consenters, or antagonists of reforms, their practical activities, strategies, and not least their material power resources need to be studied. From historical institutionalist work, the study takes the understanding that institutions such as school systems have feedback effects, which means they can be a force of their own and should be analyzed temporally, with a focus on critical junctures as well as long-term continuities. From Gramscian theory, the study takes the emphasis on ideology as an important element in the struggle for hegemony. As Cox (1983, p. 164) points out, one of the advantages of Gramsci’s concept of hegemony is that it frees “the concept of power (and of hegemony as one form of power) from a tie to historically specific social classes and gives it a wider applicability to relations of dominance and subordination”. For this reason, it can be applied to relations not only between classes, but also between other social groups taking part in political struggles. This is important because, as pointed out by

Korpi (cf. above), oppositions resulting from the economic class structure of society are only one of several possible lines of conflict which can lead to political mobilization.

This leads to the fourth major influence on the shape of this study – Rokkanian cleavage theory. Among the authors discussed here, Rokkan most explicitly combines economic, cultural, political and institutional factors in his work and ties them all together in his concept of cleavages. To understand the dynamics of school politics, this concept has emerged as particularly useful because the various cleavages discussed above all come to expression in some way in school politics. As discussed in Chapter 5, the main opposition regarding comprehensive schooling, differentiation and grading can in both cases in this study be made out between the social democrats on the one hand, and conservatives or Christian democrats on the other. These conflicts are therefore first and foremost an expression of the class cleavage. In addition, conflicts about religious education (an expression of the state-church cleavage and, in the Norwegian case, also the center-periphery cleavage), conflicts about centralization and countryside schooling and the Norwegian language struggle (expressions of the center-periphery and the urban-rural cleavage, and in Germany also the state-church cleavage), conflicts related to German anticommunism (an expression of the communist-socialist cleavage) and conflicts related to coeducation and female teachers' rights (an expression of the gender cleavage) are analyzed in this study. How these conflicts and cleavages have interacted with the conflicts over comprehensive schooling, differentiation and grading, and how this stabilized different kinds of cross-class alliances, is explored in more detail in Chapter 6.

Rokkan's work, although based on a multitude of more micro- or meso-sociological and historical studies, is also the most macro-sociological of the approaches discussed here. The present study is not situated on the same high level of abstraction and synthesis but rather aims at expanding our knowledge on the subject of school reforms by studying two specific cases. Further studies of the kind are necessary so that future attempts at generalizations regarding the development of school systems can be grounded in historical-comparative work.

To sum up, the main theoretical argument of this thesis – which evolved over time in the course of this work – is that the development of the school system should be seen and analyzed as a historical process formed by struggles over hegemony between various actors, resulting from several political cleavages. For the cases analyzed here, it appears that even though the class cleavage is particularly dominant, also state-church, urban-rural, center-periphery, communist-socialist and gender cleavages played an important role, in particular for the kinds of political alliances that developed. Furthermore, it is argued that analyses of such struggles should take into account material, ideological and institutional factors. Finally, it is important to remember that the outcome of decisive battles at critical junctures is always open despite a certain amount of path-dependence, for different types of compromises are

always possible. It is up to historical actors to make the most of their historical potential. How, and how successfully they have attempted to do so, is the topic of the empirical chapters of this study.

### 3 Research design and methodology

In this chapter, the research design and methodology of the study are presented and discussed. First, it is clarified why a comparative and case-oriented approach was chosen. The study is characterized with a view to what kind of comparison this is. Second, the case selection is discussed in detail. This is followed by a presentation of the sources used in this study, namely various written primary and secondary sources and expert interviews. Challenges related to the use of various sources, as well as their explanatory potential, are examined. The particular qualities of expert interviews, methodological considerations related to the development of the interview guide and the interview process itself, and potential advantages and disadvantages of expert interviews, are discussed. The experts interviewed for this study are also introduced. Finally, the different elements of the research design are summed up at the end.

#### 3.1 Comparative-historical approach of the study

The comparative-historical method has its roots in the work of the classics, starting with Adam Smith, and continuing with authors such as Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, Max Weber and Alexis de Tocqueville. Due to the temporary dominance of structural functionalism and the growing enthusiasm for statistical analysis, comparative-historical work later lost ground for a while. However, by the 1970s and 1980s a new comparative-historical research tradition had been established based on the works of, among others, Karl Polanyi, Barrington Moore Jr., Theda Skocpol, Reinhard Bendix and Charles Tilly (Lange, 2013, pp. 22ff). As Lange (2013, p. 34) points out, while the roots of the comparative-historical method are sociological, “these early researchers almost always analyzed politics and, therefore, bridged the gap between sociology and political science”. According to Streeck (2015, p. 266), modern comparative-historical analysis is also characterized by “a historically specific, twentieth-century, nonteleological way of viewing the world that has left behind earlier notions of predetermined evolutionary development”. Today, political scientists and sociologists alike employ the comparative-historical perspective, as well as a few historians, anthropologists and economists. However, there are disciplinary differences with regard to the use of qualitative and quantitative methods and the ideographic or nomothetic orientation (Lange, 2013, pp. 35f). In political science, there has been a greater emphasis on aiming at generalization, on applying a somewhat “quantitatized” language to qualitative methods, and on systematizing the methodological approach (cf. George/Bennett, 2005; Goertz, 2006; King et al, 1994). While the debates among political scientists are interesting, the research design of this study is based more on contributions by sociologists and historians, such as Ragin (1987, 1992), Ragin and Amoroso (2011), Lange (2013), Abrams (1982), Olsen (1994) or Haupt and Kocka (2009).



As Ragin (1987, pp. 3ff) argues, comparative social science is not so much defined by a specific type of data, but more by its distinctive goals. According to Ragin (1987, p. 5), “[w]hat distinguishes comparative social science is its use of attributes of macrosocial units in explanatory statements. This special usage is intimately linked to the twin goals of comparative social science – both to explain and to interpret macrosocial variation.” Of course, other types of social science can also be comparative in a broad sense; in fact, most social analysis involves some kind of comparison. But for the purposes of this study, Ragin’s discussion of the specific goals and advantages of comparative case-oriented research focusing on macrosocial units is useful. According to Ragin (1987, p. 15), the comparative approach is particularly suited to investigating “combinations of conditions (that is, to investigate situations as wholes)”, something which is hard to do with a quantitative, variable-oriented approach. Also, “the comparative method forces the investigator to become familiar with the cases relevant to the analysis” and thereby takes historical specificity seriously (Ragin, 1987, p. 16). Complexity has precedence over generality and causes are assessed in relation to context. For this reason, the number of cases is usually rather low.

Furthermore, the case-oriented method makes both historical interpretation and causal analysis possible (Ragin, 1987, pp. 34ff). However, generalizations drawn from case-oriented studies are limited and “sensitive to context” (Ragin, 1987, p. 35). While some comparative-historical works emphasize the particularities of their cases and downplay the goal of causal analysis to the advantage of the goal of historical interpretation, other works emphasize similarities and give precedence to causal generalizations. However, “[r]egardless of which goal may take precedence, the underlying logic of case-oriented comparisons is roughly the same” (Ragin, 1987, pp. 35f). This logic is based loosely on Mill’s (1981 [1843]) methods of agreement and of difference: either the researcher investigates several positive cases of a historical phenomenon and compares them with the aim to identify causal factors present in all of them, so that other potential causal factors can be eliminated, or the researcher compares cases which are as similar to each other as possible except for the occurrence of the specific phenomenon to be explained – that is, positive and negative cases – in order to assess which differences between these cases could have caused the differing historical outcome (cf. George/Bennett, 2005, pp. 153ff; Skocpol/Somers, 1980). The present study falls into the second category. However, in practice it is of course hard to apply Mill’s methods straightforwardly in comparative-historical analysis, because historical outcomes tend to have multiple and conjunctural causes, and because experimental design is not possible – except for the possibility of mere thought experiments. Also, historical-comparative researchers must consider the possibilities of “causal equivalence” and “illusory commonality”, meaning that different factors might lead to the same or a similar outcome, and that perceived commonalities might differ enormously with regard to their effects (Ragin, 1987, p. 48). Clearly, historical comparison is a complex process. Often, historical comparativists

accommodate the problem of multiple causation by developing a new understanding of the phenomenon in question, i.e. by differentiating between subtypes (Ragin, 1987, p. 44).

The comparative element of the approach is also usually combined with thorough within-case analysis, often in the form of causal narratives focusing on the characteristics and temporal development of the individual cases (Lange, 2013, pp. 43ff). Lange (2013, pp. 96ff) terms this research design “process-oriented narrative comparison”. As Olsen (1994, p. 76) points out, the relation between narrative and theory should be dialectical. In-depth, case-oriented historical comparison involves going back and forth between theory and data, or, as Ragin and Amoroso (2011, pp. 57ff) put it, between “analytic frames” derived from theory and “images” derived from empirical evidence. Such a constant dialogue between ideas and evidence has been the aim of this study (cf. Ragin 1987, 1992). Thus, this historical comparison is not based on fixed hypotheses to be tested and potentially rejected; rather, the data and various theoretical perspectives were explored at the same time in order to decide which concepts and analytic dimensions could guide and structure the comparison in a sensible way (cf. Chapter 2).

Similar arguments are presented by Haupt and Kocka (2009, pp. 2ff). According to them, “[i]n comparative history, two or more historical phenomena are systematically studied for similarities and differences in order to contribute to their better description, explanation, and interpretation” (Haupt/Kocka, 2009, p. 2). Furthermore, historical comparisons can serve several methodological functions: they can make it possible to discover new research questions and problems which might not have emerged in non-comparative research. They can contribute to historical explanation, either by calling into question pseudo-explanations or locally specific explanations, or by transferring explanations from one context to another and thereby developing or checking generalizations. On the other hand, they can also make historical particularities more clearly visible. Finally, comparisons “can help to de-familiarize the familiar” by “de-provincializing historical observation” and widening the researcher’s view (Haupt/Kocka, 2009, p. 4; Kocka, 2003).

Despite these advantages of the historical-comparative approach, many historians have been skeptical of it (cf. Melve, 2009; Welskopp, 2010). Among the reasons for this skepticism, according to Haupt and Kocka (2009, pp. 12ff), is historians’ wish to stay close to their sources – ideally primary sources. In large-scale historical comparisons, secondary sources must be used, which involves a danger of reproducing a biased view of the historical phenomena under consideration (cf. below). Also, historians tend to “assume that individual components of reality cannot be understood outside of their connection with other components of this reality” (Haupt/Kocka, 2009, p. 13). Isolating single factors from their context for the benefit of abstraction and generalization is thus viewed critically by many.

Haupt and Kocka (2009, p. 15) therefore characterize historical comparisons which try to minimize these tensions as follows:

“Historical comparisons tend to limit themselves to only a few cases, often just two or three. They are usually situated on an intermediate level of abstraction and go by the rule: as much abstraction as necessary, as much concretion and contextuality as possible. They usually place more value on contrasts than on generalizations and are more interested in the differences than the commonalities of the comparative objects. They strive to include changes in time and dynamics, whether by selecting processes as objects of comparison, by classifying non-processual comparative findings in terms of before and after, or by complementing comparison with other approaches. Finally, it is typical of historical comparisons that they frequently attempt to link structural-processual analysis with the reconstruction of experiences, perceptions and actions.”

Even though the present study is the work of a historical sociologist, not of a historian, this quote sums up well the aim of this study. In Ragin’s (1987) terminology, it is a typical example of a “case-oriented comparison”, focusing on the particularities of the two cases in order to interpret and understand the different historical outcomes. As it is a historical comparison of only two cases, which are analyzed symmetrically and in-depth, the potential to generalize beyond the cases in question is obviously limited. At best, the study can point in the direction of potentially important factors, the effects of which could be examined with regard to other cases in future work. Nonetheless, the analysis does of course involve selection, abstraction, interpretation and the development of causal arguments; in fact, it is believed by the author that this is unavoidable (cf. Jenkins, 2003). Furthermore, this study has political processes as its object, and thus strives to analyze the development as it occurs over time and avoid a static view. Finally, the reconstruction and analysis of political processes involves a focus on actors’ resources, activities and perceptions. The use of expert interviews as sources in addition to various primary and secondary sources (cf. below) helps to combine such an actor-centered analysis with a macro-sociological and historical perspective.

Of course, it may also have been possible to examine comprehensive school reforms with a variable-oriented approach, e.g. by examining correlations between comprehensive school reforms and various variables such as educational spending, the partisan composition of governments or demographic variables. This would, however, not have allowed considering various causes of such reforms in relation to each other, in relation to context and with a focus on actors’ motivations and strategies. The case-oriented approach also makes it easier to accommodate the fact that the two cases in this study are not entirely independent. As Osterhammel (2009, p. 44) points out, some degree of historical entanglement is present “everywhere in modern history”. Even if nation states remain important units of analysis, “exchanges, flows, and streams” between them, as well as cultural plurality within them, must

be considered (Osterhammel, 2009, p. 47). Assuming that “certain traits of [...] nation-states are explicable only with reference to other traits of [...] nation-states” entails the risk of ignoring “international, trans-national or global structures and processes that [...] nation-states have been embedded in” (Korsnes, 2014, p. 13). In the case of school politics, such methodological nationalism must be avoided, as transnational transfers and debates play an important role in this field. As Osterhammel (2009, p. 48) points out, such transfers should be studied in relation to “identifiable actors and institutions”. In this study, examples of transnational transfers or relationships in the data were continuously sought for. In Germany, it was and still is not uncommon to refer to the Nordic countries in debates about comprehensive education. In Norway, German educational debates have also long had a cultural impact. Finally, Tilly (1984, pp. 125ff) has coined the term “encompassing comparison” to describe comparisons which consider their cases to be instances or locations of an interconnected whole. Stein Rokkan’s work, which has inspired this study on a theoretical level, is considered an example of such an encompassing comparison by Tilly (1984). The present study is not encompassing in Tilly’s (1984) exact sense, but it does take into account that transnational, macro-historical trends have influenced both cases in this study in different ways, due to their different positioning in Europe’s and the world’s geographical, economic, social and cultural landscape. According to Rokkan (2000), this has resulted in different cleavage structures, which make up important dimensions, or “analytic frames”, for the historical comparison conducted here (cf. Chapter 2, Ragin/Amoroso, 2011, pp. 57ff).

### 3.2 Case selection

For a study focusing on comprehensive school reform processes, many different cases could potentially have been selected. First, the number of cases in this study is confined to two because thorough, within-case analysis of both cases is the aim. As outlined above, this entails a decision to focus on concretion and historical specificity, with the aim of generating new insights about processes which have not often been studied comparatively. In future work, it might be possible to extend the number of cases in order to examine to what degree the causal arguments and interpretations developed in this study might apply in other contexts.

Furthermore, it would have been possible to follow the logic of Mill’s method of agreement by comparing school reforms in countries which have developed highly comprehensive public school systems, such as Norway and Sweden. The historical development in these two geographical areas is highly entangled. Norway was the first European country to introduce five years of comprehensive schooling in 1896 and seven years of comprehensive schooling in 1920, while Sweden was the first country to begin the introduction of nine years of comprehensive schooling in 1950 – a time when Norwegian society was still grappling with the challenge of rebuilding the nation after war and German occupation (cf. Sejersted, 2011, pp. 56ff, pp. 267ff). Sweden is often considered a “typical” case in the set of Nordic countries

and is often used as a representative example in studies of welfare state development. The Norwegian development has not received equal amounts of attention in comparative-historical analyses. However, it could be argued that Norway is in some respects culturally more similar to Germany than Sweden is; and Norwegian and German educational, social and economic development has long been entangled as well (cf. above, Chapter 4). Furthermore, in recent decades the Swedish comprehensive education system has been partly dismantled by far-reaching neoliberal reforms. The Norwegian system, on the other hand, has been comparably resistant (Volckmar, 2010, 2016). For all these reasons, the Norwegian youth school reform process of 1954 to 1979 was chosen as one of the cases for this study. Another reason is of a more practical nature: data availability was greatest for the Norwegian case, as the research was conducted at the University of Bergen. Many primary and secondary sources were available in Norwegian only so their content has not been accessible to a wider audience before. This study therefore focuses on a less well-known case to contribute new insights. Because of the close relationship between political developments in Norway and Sweden, also in comprehensive school reforms, Swedish developments are briefly mentioned and related to Norwegian developments at some points in this study.

Another alternative, still abiding by the method of agreement, would have been to compare the development in various West German federal states, which all developed some form of a multi-tier, parallel school system. Such comparisons of cases with similar historical outcomes could also lead to interesting insights. For this study, however, it was decided to contrast a positive with a negative case, as it is believed that such different cases shed light on each other in more fruitful and interesting ways than cases with similar outcomes. In particular, a core motivation for this study was a wish to develop a better understanding of the German development by comparing it with a very different case. The case selection thus serves to contrast the two historical developments and outcomes.

Norway and Germany represent “maximally different cases” with respect to the degree of comprehensiveness of their school structure (cf. Skocpol/Somers, 1980, p. 179). At the same time, however, of the sets of countries with and without comprehensive lower secondary schooling, Norway and Germany can be considered “most similar” cases. Of course, this does not mean that they differ “in only one independent variable”, as George and Bennett (2005, p. 252) seem to think necessary. Arguably, there are not many, if any, countries in the world that are so similar that they differ only in one important respect. But Norway and Germany can be considered similar in a global perspective with regard to their culture, language, religion and economic and social development. They have similar electoral systems, based on proportional representation, and their party systems are also similar, even if the Norwegian system has a larger number of parties. In education, both countries are dominated by public, free education even at post-secondary level. In other words, private schooling has traditionally been relatively uncommon, even though it has gained ground in recent years. Both countries have

institutionalized vocational training systems, though they differ in form. In higher education, both countries have instituted a certain hierarchy between universities and colleges but there are no “elite institutions”, unlike in some other Western countries. Nonetheless, there are many important differences between the two countries, apart from their being “extreme cases” of comprehensive and non-comprehensive education. There are enormous geographic and demographic differences. Norway has a population of a little over five million people, while Germany’s population is over 82 million people.

Germany is a federal republic and school political authority is located at the federal state level of government. All federal states have their own parliaments where school policies are decided. As mentioned, the development of the school structure has been similar in all of the West German federal states, and even the federal states which belonged to the former German Democratic Republic have reintroduced a multi-tier school structure, including the *Gymnasium*, since reunification (Herrlitz et al, 2009, pp. 238ff). Differences remain but the most important school regulations are coordinated between the ministers of education of the federal states. Although it could be valuable to study the development of school politics in all the German federal states, this would have overburdened the present research project (see however Helbig/Nikolai, 2015). For these reasons, one particular federal state had to be chosen for detailed analysis, namely the federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW). Besides NRW, potential candidates for case studies could especially have been the federal states of Hessen and Berlin, which are considered forerunners as far as comprehensive school reforms are concerned. Hessen also experienced particularly tough conflicts over the issue. However, NRW is larger than both of these federal states – especially Berlin, which as a city federal state is not particularly representative. NRW was also among the federal states which introduced integrated comprehensive schools at a relatively early point and in significant numbers. NRW was governed by a coalition of social democrats and liberals from 1966 and the social democrats remained influential there for several decades. NRW’s reformers also went further than those in any other federal state by restricting the number of ability levels in the integrated comprehensive school to two. In other federal states, there were three or four ability levels in this school type. Furthermore, NRW is the most highly populated of the 16 federal states and today over 23 percent of German students attending general schools go to school there (Federal Statistical Office, 2018, own calculations). When Germany was divided, NRW’s share of the total West German population was even greater. What happens in NRW is therefore of vital importance for the rest of Germany. To name one example, the successful campaign of 1978 against the planned cooperative school reform, for which approximately 3.6 million signatures were collected in NRW, must be assumed to have had an impact on school politics in other federal states (cf. Chapter 5.4). Finally, NRW is an interesting case because its population is divided into Protestants and Catholics, with a slight majority of Catholics, which has led to additional conflicts over school politics. Of course, political

processes within NRW are influenced by political processes in the rest of the republic and by the national government. Many of the actors that are central to this study are organized on a nationwide level. These relationships are taken into account in the study and the national development is outlined in Chapter 4 as important contextual information; however, data collection focuses on NRW.

The aim of the study has been to focus on the reform cycle of the post-war decades. After several months of work on the empirical data, the specific time period of the study was set to 1954 to 1979. This was for the following reasons. In the immediate aftermath of the war, both countries underwent a period of reconstruction and reconsolidation. In Norway, the idea of nine-year comprehensive schooling gained ground in the early 1950s, but the actual reform period only began in June 1954 with the “law on experiments in the school” (*lov om forsøk i skolen*). This marks the beginning of the Norwegian case study. The end point, in the Norwegian case, is the final debate about permanent ability grouping in the Norwegian parliament of May 11, 1979. At this point directives were passed, which finalized the decision that no permanent ability grouping should take place up to the ninth grade. In NRW, on the other hand, the period of reconstruction took longer, since large parts of the infrastructure, including school buildings, had been destroyed in the war. The post-war years were a time of restoration, also ideologically. However, the “framework plan for the remodeling and standardization of the general school system” of 1959 marks an important turning point in German school political discussions (cf. Herrlitz et al, 2009, p. 166). Debates about structural reforms began and gradually comprehensive schooling came on the agenda. Developments prior to 1959 will therefore only be considered in relation to the conflict about denominational schooling, which lasted throughout the 1950s and early 1960s, until a compromise was reached in 1966. The end point, in the case of NRW, is the successful popular campaign against the cooperative school reform of 1978, which took comprehensive school reforms off the political agenda for decades to come.

### 3.3 Written sources

This study builds on primary and secondary source analysis and on qualitative expert interviews (cf. below). Written primary sources included in the analysis include official political documents, e.g. (proposed) laws and publications of parliament, as well as documents published by the collective actors involved, such as publications by teachers’ associations and political programs from around 1954 to 1979. For Germany, the national and regional election programs of the Social Democratic Party (SPD), the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and the Liberal Party (FDP) were included. The SPD’s national programs were downloaded from the archive of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. Of the SPD’s regional programs, the archive unfortunately only included three (1962, 1975, 1980), which could be obtained via the Bergen University library. The CDU’s national programs were downloaded from the archive of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation and the regional programs were kindly

supplied by email by the archive. The FDP's national and regional programs were obtained from the Archive of Liberalism by the Friedrich Naumann Foundation. In addition, publications which summarize and document the most important school political positions of the parties over time were included, such as publications by the SPD executive board (SPD, 1975, 1979), a publication by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation focusing on the CDU's education policies from 1945 to 2011 (Gauger, 2011), as well as a report by an internal commission of the FDP in NRW from 1979, taking stock of liberal education politics in the previous decades (F.D.P. Landesverband NRW, 1979). In the Norwegian case, the programs of the Conservative Party (*Høyre*), the Labor Party (*AP*), the Socialist Left Party (*SF/later SV*), the Christian Democrats (*KrF*), the Liberal Party (*Venstre*), and the Centre Party (*SP*) were included. These programs were downloaded from the archive of party-political documents of the Norwegian Social Science Data Services. Political programs were not analyzed in their entirety but only with regard to their school political content.

However, although political programs can be informative, so too is what actors say in public debates and which strategies they decide to apply in dealing with competing political forces. It is important to remember that political programs are written for voters before election. They do not always give a clear idea of which positions and demands are most important for the politicians of a party when it comes to the practical political process, which usually involves some degree of compromise. Therefore, parliamentary debates in the Norwegian parliament (*Storting*) and the parliament (*Landtag*) of NRW have been analyzed, also from the period 1954 to 1979. Here, a choice was made to focus on those debates taking place in relation to the most important law proposals and parliamentary commission reports. All parliamentary debates are available online on the websites of the parliaments. Both the Norwegian and the NRW archives allow for document searches by topic. Documents related to school politics were examined and the most relevant debates and documents were downloaded. Secondary sources, such as Telhaug (1969) and Düding (2008), where parliamentary documents have been analyzed in detail, also helped identify particularly important debates. A list of debates, law proposals and parliamentary commission reports which were used in the analysis can be found at the end of this work.

The study also builds on a large amount of written secondary sources. Those sources are in some cases historical and sociological analyses of school politics, and in other cases analyses of the general political and social-historical developments in Norway and NRW during the post-war decades. Examples of relevant secondary sources include Telhaug and Mediås (2003), Herrlitz et al (2009) and Düding (2008), but there are many more, as can be seen from the list of references. The advantage of secondary sources is that they allow the researcher to develop a better overview of topics and processes which are too broad to be studied by primary sources alone. Also, the previous work of other social scientists often contributes interesting insights, on which further research can potentially build. Nonetheless, relying



exclusively on secondary sources entails the risk of missing relevant points, which have not received the attention of previous researchers. Since secondary sources sometimes offer very different accounts of a particular process, cherry-picking can also be a problem (cf. Lange, 2013, p. 144). It is therefore important to combine different kinds of secondary sources and be aware of potential bias, presentism or other potential influences on the account given (Thies, 2002).

Using primary sources is often portrayed as a solution to potential problems of data quality in comparative-historical analysis (cf. Lange, 2013, pp. 146ff). As Jenkins (2003, pp. 57ff) points out, one should be wary of fetishizing primary sources, as they do not constitute evidence per se, but only traces of the past, which become evidence once they are integrated into an interpretation by the historical researcher. The use of primary sources does not necessarily mean that an analysis becomes more genuine or objective because the use of such sources can never be entirely independent of the present discourse the researcher is a part of. As Jenkins (2003, p. 60) points out, “the past’s hold on history is really the historian’s hold on history”. Despite this, primary sources can diminish potential bias resulting from the use of secondary sources alone and help discover new insights or factors which have previously been overlooked. For this study, a combination of primary and secondary sources was therefore considered most useful. Also, sources stemming from all sides of the school political debate are taken into account to ensure that all relevant perspectives are included. Reform antagonists, consenters and protagonists have all produced a large range of political as well as scientific literature on the topic. For all sources, the context in which they were produced was taken into consideration, as was for which audiences they were written and which instrumental motivations might have been at play (cf. Bennett/Checkel, 2015, p. 24f).

In some cases, the distinction between secondary and primary sources is hard to draw. This is especially true of publications dating from the period under investigation here, which not only analyzed but also potentially influenced the political process in question. Examples of such sources are Telhaug (1969), Langslet (1977) and Sander et al (1969). Also, the experts interviewed provided the author with additional primary and secondary sources, such as newspaper articles, research articles or books they had written, material from election campaigns, journals of their organizations and the like. This study thus builds on a wealth of material. Not all of the material which was read and collected by the author is quoted in this study but it all contributed to a better understanding of the reform processes in both cases. Finally, it should be noted that all quotes in the present study which stem from sources written in Norwegian and German were translated by the author and later professionally proofread.

### 3.4 Expert interviews

In addition to written sources, qualitative expert interviews are important primary sources in this study. Interview partners have been active in education politics in the 1950s, 1960s, or

1970s and see themselves as – in some cases: former – representatives of certain collective actors or movements. The expert interviews were conducted in line with methodological considerations by Gläser and Laudel (2010). In their view, studies which make use of expert interviews aim at reconstructing and understanding social situations and processes (Gläser/Laudel, 2010, p. 12f). Interview partners can be considered experts if they possess specific knowledge related to their individual position in and perspective of a social process. Expert interviewing can therefore be defined as a method which aims at making this knowledge accessible. It is important to note that the experts themselves are not the objects of research, but rather witnesses of the processes constituting the research object – in this case, school reform processes. Experts' personal opinions, thoughts and feelings are of interest only if they influence the account given and the political process itself. Expert interviews therefore differ from other qualitative interviews in that the research aim, the purpose of the interview and the role of the interview partner are fundamentally different (Gläser/Laudel, 2010, p. 13).

Interviews are processes of communication where communication partners have fixed roles and time is limited. Often, the involved persons are strangers beforehand, and most of the time they approach the interview from a completely different context: while the interviewer has formulated his or her questions in a scientific context, the interview partner is positioned in a different life world, subject to a different language, different perceptions and actions. A mistake often made by researchers is simply to pass on the research question to the interview partner, in a way which is inadequate for the interview partners' cultural context. This can lead to a situation where the interview partner will not give the kind of information necessary to reconstruct the process under investigation but merely give his or her personal opinion on the process and its causal mechanisms (Gläser/Laudel, 2010, pp. 111ff; cf. below). When interviewing people who know a lot about social science, it is also possible that they might ask straightforwardly about the researchers' hypotheses and research question. This happened a few times during this research project. In these cases, it was attempted to fend off talk about this until after the interview, so that interview partners' answers would not be colored by this, and time was saved for the interview itself (Aberbach/Rockman, 2002, p. 674).

It is difficult to translate one's research question into questions for the interview. Gläser and Laudel (2010, pp. 90ff) therefore suggest developing a list of key questions first, which specify what kind of information is necessary to be able to answer the research question. This was done in this research project as an intermediate step to improve operationalization. Based on these key questions, interview questions were then devised. Furthermore, in accordance with suggestions by Gläser and Laudel (2010, p. 144), all questions were phrased word for word, as this allows for thinking about the phrasing and ensures that all interview partners will be asked more or less the same things.

A guided interview approach was chosen. This implies that the interviewer moved freely between questions and added additional questions during the interview, if this seemed necessary to elicit additional, and in some cases previously unknown, information. The interview guide mainly served the purpose of ensuring that all relevant parts of the political process were covered (Gläser/Laudel, 2010, pp. 42f). Furthermore, an attempt was made to ensure that the guided interviews complied with four requirements: firstly, they needed to have a range which was broad enough to allow interview partners to react in non-anticipated ways. Different perspectives were included and interview partners were encouraged to give complex accounts. Secondly, they had to allow specifications directly related to the experience of the particular interview partner and his or her individual perceptions. Thirdly, they had to allow depth and encourage interview partners to describe the emotional, cognitive and cultural meaning of social situations in detail. Finally, the personal context of interview partners was covered in enough detail to enable later interpretations of the interview partner's reactions (Gläser/Laudel, 2010, p. 116).

As the aim of the research project was to reconstruct events of the past, it did not seem advisable to jump between time periods during the interview. A chronological approach was therefore chosen. At the same time, retrospective rationalization was taken into account. By this, Gläser and Laudel (2010, p. 147) mean that the interview partner might be rationalizing events of the past, which might lead him or her to describe causal mechanisms which did not really exist at the time. Sometimes attempts were thus made to return to the same events several times during the interview so that different contexts could shed new light on them and expose retrospective rationalization processes (Gläser/Laudel, 2010, p. 147). Also, one needs to be aware of the possibility that interview partners may be exaggerating or leaving out important information. This was countered by trying out different kinds of questions about an issue, aiming to encourage the interview partners to speak about other potential perspectives, and of course by thorough preparation (Berry, 2002, p. 681). Finally, "platform questions" consisting of several sentences were sometimes used to give enough historical background to make clear what the following questions would touch on (Gläser/Laudel, 2010, pp. 122ff). This had the advantage that interview partners were reminded of the time sequences of the events they had witnessed. In several cases, they realized that they were remembering events in the wrong order or not at all and were surprised to find out that their memories were "deceiving" them. As the political processes under consideration took place a rather long time ago, it was of course to be expected that some historical events had been forgotten or remembered wrongly by some experts. However, this was not a serious problem in this project as the historical "facts" in terms of the dates of certain events could easily be reconstructed with the aid of written sources. The main aim of the interviews was to gain insights into the strategies and ideologies of the main political actors and of the political atmosphere and power dynamics of the time. This was achieved, even if the historical details

mentioned by the experts were not always correct. Many experts were nonetheless surprised to find how much they did remember from the time in question. In the course of the interview, many of them came up with additional memories and stories to tell.

In a few cases, the experts “tested” the interviewer’s knowledge by asking questions back and in this case it was a great advantage to have come well-prepared. In the other cases, thorough preparation also paid off, as it allowed the experts’ accounts to be understood, asking precise follow-up questions about specific events and identifying potential historical “mistakes” in their memories. As Leech (2002, p. 665) points out, when doing expert interviews, it is important to “seem professional and generally knowledgeable, but less knowledgeable than the interview partner on the particular topic of the interview”. In this way, the interview partner will not feel he or she is wasting their time, and will be encouraged to give complex answers, while feeling at ease. The interviewer also attempted to make a generally interested and friendly impression, which may have contributed to the mostly very pleasant, long conversations. In general, platform questions and the chronological order of the interview worked well in that the interview partners talked and remembered various events as they had taken place over time.

The interviews usually began with questions regarding the personal background and career of the interview partner; this often led to long answers so the interviews started well. This is probably related to a general advantage when doing elite or expert interviews, namely that such people will generally have a healthy self-confidence and enjoy talking about themselves and their views (Aberbach/Rockman, 2002, p. 675). One minor challenge was related to the decision of when to probe, in particular when interview partners brought up unexpected topics, and when to move on to the next question instead, with limited interviewing time in mind (Berry, 2002, p. 681). In some of the early interviews, opportunities for probing were sometimes not made use of, which became clear when reading the transcripts afterwards. In one case, a follow-up phone call helped to include a particular topic which had been left out of the interview. In the later interviews, probing was used more often which probably contributed to the longer interviewing time of the German interviewees. Another challenge was to gently bring interview partners back to the subject of interest, if they veered off to other topics. This was particularly risky, as they sometimes veered off to topics which turned out to be interesting and relevant. Most of the time, especially in later interviews, the applied strategy was therefore just to let the interview partners talk and to return to the original question later. This was possible only because, in most cases, the interview partners had enough time for long interviews.

Most interview partners were retired and thus not as busy as they had been in their more active days, even though some of them were still quite active in politics or science. This also meant that gaining access was easily achieved in this study, even though it is a common

problem when doing interviews with elites, who have restricted amounts of time (Goldstein, 2002). When doing research about political conflicts, access may also be difficult because interview partners may not trust the researcher to give an unbiased or fair account of their points of view, because they suspect that the researcher belongs to the other political camp (Woliver, 2002). As school politics are still highly contested, at least in Germany, this was a possibility. It turned out, however, to be a much smaller problem than anticipated. Potential interview partners' contact details could in most cases be found easily online and most of them readily agreed to be interviewed. In the four cases when the potential interview partners contacted refused to be interviewed, this was due to illness and old age. Even though many of the interview partners still cared deeply about school politics and politics in general, they did not seem to be worried whether the researcher shared their point of view. They were used to political disagreement and enjoyed articulating their opinions, as well as reflecting on the interesting time which the 1950s to the 1970s had been for them.

The interviews contributed important insights to the analysis which could not have been gathered by using written sources exclusively. Examples are the experts' stories about internal conflicts and relationships within their organizations, or between their organization and other organizations. Such conflicts and informal meetings are not always recorded in writing. In some cases, the experts only decided to speak openly about particular conflicts or animosities because they had happened so long ago that discretion no longer seemed necessary. The experts also gave interesting characterizations of other politicians or activists. Speaking to them was inspirational in a general sense as they all had interesting experiences and knowledge to share. The transcripts of these interviews make up interesting primary sources for historical analysis of the time period and could be reused in future research projects. Field notes were taken after each interview, noting the time, place and general circumstances of the interview and any first insights gained from it. Excerpts from these field notes are not quoted in this study but they contain interesting background information. All in all, cooperation with the interviewed experts went very well and they supplied information generously, often also suggesting other people who could be interviewed. Several of the interviewed experts stayed in touch later on and shared additional insights, useful literature and ideas.

The interview guide was slightly adapted for each interview with regard to the personal role the expert had played in the school reform process and as a representative of a particular collective actor. An example of an interview guide used in this study is included in the Appendix. Table 3.1 gives an overview of the Norwegian and German experts who were interviewed and introduces them. Interview partners were chosen in such a way as to ensure that as many perspectives as possible would be covered. Lists of members of the educational committees in the two parliaments were used to gain an initial overview of potential interview partners. If the former committee members from a certain party were not living or reachable, other high-ranking politicians from the same party, who had been involved in school politics

to some degree, were contacted. Also, relevant teacher organizations were contacted and asked for help in finding interview partners who had been active in the organization at the time in question. Finally, a few educational researchers who have studied comprehensive school reforms and their effects, and who also to a certain degree played a political role in the reform processes, were interviewed.

**Table 3.1: Introduction of the experts who were interviewed for this study, in alphabetical order**

Introduction of interview partners	
Norwegian interview partners	
Jakob Aano	Leading member of the Stavanger section of the Association of Norwegian Secondary School Teachers 1955-1958, principal of a Christian private school 1959-1963, principal of a Christian school in Tanzania 1959-1963, member of parliament for the Christian Democrats 1965-1985, member of the Church and Education Committee 1965-1977, vice-chairman of the Association for a Christian School (today Christian Pedagogical Forum) 1967-1972.
Ivar Bjørndal	Secondary school teacher and school inspector for middle schools and upper secondary schools, county school inspector in Østfold County 1971-1977, director of Østfold University College 1977-1981 and 1990-1992, director of the Council for Secondary Education 1981-1990, education director in Østfold County 1992-1998, member of the Labor Party and the Association of Norwegian Secondary School Teachers.
Gudmund Hernes	Leader of Labor Party's student union in Oslo 1963, PhD in sociology USA 1970, professor in Bergen and Oslo 1971-1990, Minister of Education, Research and Church Affairs for the Labor Party 1990-1995, Minister of Health and Social Affairs 1995-1997, Director of UNESCO's International Institute of Educational Planning in Paris 1999-2005, currently researcher at Fafo Institute and professor at BI Norwegian Business School.
Kjell Horn	Primary school teacher, youth school teacher and principal, teaching inspector, led experiments with student and school democracy during the 1960s, consultant of the Primary School Committee 1972-1975, one of the founders and later critics of the Norwegian Humanist Association, supporter of ethics education in primary school, active in the Communist Workers' Party (AKP) and the Norwegian Teachers' Association during the 1970s, excluded from Labor Party/Socialist Student Union 1958.
Unni Johannessen	Primary school teacher and youth school teacher, member of the Female Teachers' Association first, joined the Norwegian Teachers' Association later, in which her husband Trond Johannessen was chairman; was interviewed briefly by phone.
Theo Koritzinsky	Leader of the Socialist People's Party's youth organization 1965-1966, lecturer in political science in Oslo 1969-1975, leader of the Socialist Left Party in Oslo 1970-1971, lecturer and later assistant professor at Sagene teacher training college and Oslo college 1975-2010, national leader of the Socialist Left Party 1983-1987, representative of the Socialist Left Party in parliament 1985-1993, chairman of the Church and Education Committee 1989-1993.
Lars Roar Langset	Editor of the conservative journal <i>Minerva</i> 1957-1968, represented the Conservative Party in parliament 1969-1989, member of the Church and Education Committee 1969-1973, 1987-1989, and chairman 1973-1980, Minister of Culture and Research 1981-1986, member of Riksmåal Society for the Preservation of Traditional Standard Norwegian, member of the Norwegian language council 1972-1976, president of the

	Norwegian Academy for Language and Literature 1995-2011.
<b>Kari Lie</b>	Primary school teacher, member of Oslo's council of the Female Teachers' Association 1964-1974, chairwoman of the organization in Oslo 1970-1974 (the Oslo chapter remained independent from 1966-1968, when the two primary school teachers' associations merged, but joined the Norwegian Teachers' Association as a separate chapter in 1968), secretary of the Norwegian Teachers' Association 1972-1975, vice-chairwoman for two years, chairwoman 1978-1985, no party member.
<b>Tore Lindbekk</b>	Chairman of the Norwegian Student Society ( <i>Det Norske Studentersamfund</i> ) 1962, editor of the conservative quarterly journal <i>Minerva</i> 1962-1967, professor of sociology at the University of Trondheim from 1969, later also dean of his faculty, active in the Conservative Party as vice-chairman of Trondheim <i>Høyre</i> 1972, member of Trondheim City Council 1976-1983, member of Sør-Trøndelag County Council, has focused on education and science sociology in his work.
<b>Per Lønning</b>	Ordained 1951, PhDs in theology and history of political thought, secondary school teacher Oslo teaching school 1954-1964, member of parliament and member of parliamentary Church and Education Committee for the Conservative Party 1959-1965, chairman of Oslo School Committee 1960-1963, member of planning committee for the youth school in Oslo 1960-1961, board member and chairman of conservative journal <i>Minerva</i> 1957-1964, chairman of the Norwegian Church's Priests' Association 1962-1964, bishop of Borg 1969-1975, professor in Oslo and Strasbourg, bishop of Bjørgvin 1987-1994.
<b>Per Arne Sæther</b>	Secondary school teacher at <i>realskole/gymnas</i> and youth schools 1973-1987, workplace representative of the Association of Norwegian Secondary School Teachers ( <i>Norsk Lektorlag, from 1983 NUFU/Norwegian Educational Association</i> ) 1974-1982, local union leader and vice chairman of the county executive committee in Vestfold 1976-1981, chairman of the Norwegian Educational Association's county branch in Vestfold 1982-1984, member of the organization's advisory committee for the youth school 1981-1983, member of central executive committee 1984-1986, senior union consultant 1988-2013, no party member.
<b>Torild Skard</b>	Leader of Socialist Students' Union 1959, excluded from the Labor Party in 1959, member of Socialist People's Party (SF) from 1961, represented the Socialist Left Party (SV) in parliament 1973-1977 and as deputy 1965-1969, first female president of one of the parliament's chambers, later high-ranking positions in the United Nations, active in the Norwegian women's movement through her party and as leader of the Norwegian Association for Women's Rights 2006-2014.
<b>Hans Olav Tungesvik</b>	Physician and psychiatrist, chairman of the Student Language Association ( <i>Studentmållaget</i> ) 1959, board member of the Norwegian Language Society 1962-1965 and chairman 1965-1970, ran for parliament for the Liberal Party in 1971, later member of the Christian Democrats and parliamentary representative 1977-1985, member of the Church and Education Committee 1977-1981 and chairman 1981-1983, later director of psychiatric clinic in Skånevik.
<b>German interview partners</b>	
<b>Anke Brunn</b>	Member of Social Democratic Party (SPD) since 1967, research assistant in Cologne 1966-1975, member of NRW parliament for SPD 1970-1981 and 1985-2010, member of Berlin parliament 1981-1983, NRW Minister for Science and Research 1985-1998, Chairwoman and vice-chairwoman of the Commission for Educational Planning comprising representatives of the national and federal governments ( <i>Bund-Länder-Kommission für Bildungsplanung</i> ) 1985-1998, member of association for the integrated comprehensive school ( <i>Gemeinnützige Gesellschaft Gesamtschule</i> ).
<b>Ilse Brusis</b>	Primary school/lower secondary school teacher 1960-1969, later vice principal of a <i>Hauptschule</i> , leader of a teacher seminar, school inspector, member of the SPD since 1969, member of the Education and Science Workers' Union ( <i>GEW</i> ) 1960-1995 and

	chairwoman of the NRW chapter of the union 1975-1981, member of the national board of the Federation of German Trade Unions 1982-1990, various ministerial posts in the NRW government 1990-2000.
Uwe Franke	<i>Hauptschule</i> teacher from 1969 in Hamm, joined the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and its youth organization 1962, today still a member of the party's social wage-earner current, joined the teachers' Association of Education and Upbringing ( <i>Verband Bildung und Erziehung, VBE</i> ) in 1970 (when it had just been founded based on Catholic and Protestant teachers' associations), NRW chairman of the Association 1980-1995, still active in the VBE.
Reinhard Grätz	Floor tiler and engineer, member of SPD from 1957, Chairman of young socialists in Wuppertal 1968-1973, member of the board of the SPD Wuppertal 1972-1994 and of the board of the SPD region Niederrhein 1974-1988, spokesman for education and media of the SPD's NRW board 1975-1994, member of NRW parliament for SPD 1970-2000, member of Parliamentary Committee for Schooling and Culture (later Schooling and Further Education) 1970-1985 and its chairman 1975-1985.
Wolfgang Heinz	Journalist, member of the Liberal Party (FDP) since 1964, chairman of the FDP Rhein-Sieg-Kreis 1968, chairman of the FDP Cologne 1974-1978, member of the Education and Science Workers' Union ( <i>GEW</i> ) from 1972, member of parliament for the FDP 1970-1980, spokesman of the parliamentary group for education politics 1970-1975, member of the Parliamentary Committee for Schooling and Culture 1970-1975 and deputy member 1975-1980, parliamentary secretary of the FDP parliamentary group 1973-1980.
Jürgen Hinrichs	Secondary school teacher ( <i>Gymnasium</i> ) of German and history, member of the FDP since 1955, member of the secondary school teachers' association ( <i>Philologenverband</i> ) from 1964 to 1975, active in municipal politics in Herford from 1969-1975, member of the NRW parliament for the FDP 1975-1980, member of the Parliamentary Committee for Schooling and Culture 1975-1980 and educational political spokesman of the parliamentary group 1975-1980.
Burkhard Hirsch	Lawyer, FDP politician, involved in the debate on the cooperative school as NRW Minister of the Interior 1975-1980, was interviewed in brief by phone
Walter Hupperth	Secondary school teacher at the <i>Freiherr-vom-Stein-Gymnasium</i> in Cologne-Leverkusen from 1965 onwards, PhD in classic philology, member of the Association of Philologists ( <i>Philologenverband, DPhV</i> ) and active there from the 1960s onwards, for example as representative on the personnel board of the <i>Gymnasium</i> at district level, chairman of the board from 1984 to 1999, sympathizes with the CDU, was interviewed with his former colleague, Hiltrud Meyer-Engelen.
Wilhelm Lenz	PhD in philology 1949, managing director of the Association of Public Employees ( <i>Deutscher Beamtenbund NRW, dbb</i> ) 1953-1984, member of the CDU since 1946, chairman of the CDU Cologne 1963-1972, member of the NRW Presidium of the CDU 1962-1977, representative of the CDU in the NRW parliament from 1958 to 1980, chairman of the CDU's parliamentary group from 1962-1970, President of the NRW parliament 1970-1980.
Hiltrud Meyer-Engelen	Secondary school teacher at the <i>Freiherr-vom-Stein-Gymnasium</i> in Cologne-Leverkusen from 1968, principal of this school from 1991 to 2004, member of the Association of Philologists ( <i>Philologenverband, DPhV</i> ) and active there, sympathizes with CDU, was interviewed with her former colleague, Walter Hupperth.
Anne Ratzki	Secondary school teacher, taught at a <i>Gymnasium</i> during 1960s, became principal from 1970-1995 at a <i>Gymnasium</i> in Cologne-Holweide which was turned into an integrated comprehensive school in 1975, led experiments with mixed-ability groups at her school, head of department for integrated comprehensive schools at the municipal government of Cologne 1995-1999, founder of the Institute for Teamwork in 1996, active in the Education and Science Workers' Union ( <i>GEW</i> ) since 1969, member of the SPD.
Hans-G.	Studied sociology during the 1960s, active in SPD's student organization <i>SHB</i> with a



**Rolff**

focus on education politics, 1966/1967 assistant for education politics at the Federation of German Trade Unions in NRW, 1967-1970 consultant and planning responsible for the Berlin school senator, professor for school pedagogy in Dortmund since 1970, founder of the Institute for School Development Research at the University of Dortmund 1973, member of Education and Science Workers' Union (*GEW*), SPD, GGG.

Former politicians of most political parties were interviewed, with the exception of the Norwegian Centre Party, the right-wing Norwegian Progress Party, the communist parties of both countries and the Catholic Centre Party in NRW. In the case of the communist parties and the Catholic Centre Party, the reason was that these parties lost political importance in the course of the 1950s and 1960s. The Progress Party, on the other hand, was founded in 1973 and was thus not very influential regarding the reforms begun in 1954. The Norwegian Centre Party did, however, play an important role so it was unfortunate not to have interviewed one of its politicians. The main reason was that none of the main former politicians of the party involved in education was easily available for interviewing. The total data material collected seemed sufficient to make up for this lack. For NRW, it was a challenge to find Christian democratic school politicians and other reform antagonists from the time, as most of them had already passed away or were too ill to be interviewed. For this reason, the number of clear-cut reform antagonists among the German experts is rather low. Only Wilhelm Lenz, Walter Hupperth and Hiltrud Meyer-Engelen argued against comprehensive schooling in all its forms. Several other experts, such as the former FDP politicians, were slightly ambivalent, for example in that they supported the integrated comprehensive school but not an abolition of the *Gymnasium*. However, there are many written sources available expressing the views of reform antagonists. Also, the high-ranking former CDU politician Wilhelm Lenz was interviewed, which was very helpful to cover the CDU's position. In addition, representatives of various teachers' organizations were interviewed. It was not possible in all cases to interview persons who had held high-ranking positions in their organizations. Some experts had been more active on a regional or local level. But this also provided relevant information. One example is the interview with Anne Ratzki who was principal of an integrated comprehensive school and active in the reform movement. This interview provided interesting insights as to how the reforms were conducted on the ground. The same is true of the interview with Ivar Bjørndal, who had an important position within the Norwegian school bureaucracy. In this way, many perspectives came together in the various interviews. Unfortunately, several of the interviewed experts passed away before the study was completed so it was particularly fortunate to have had the opportunity to speak with them.

The Norwegian interviews, which were conducted first, took on average 128 minutes. All in all, 1542 minutes with Norwegian interview material were recorded from 12 individual expert interviews. In Germany, ten interviews were conducted with 11 experts. The recorded German interviews took on average 158 minutes, giving 1581 minutes of recorded interview

time in total. The longer average time is in part due to two very long interviews with Reinhard Grätz and Uwe Franke, which took about four and five hours respectively. In addition, two shorter telephone interviews were conducted, one in Germany and one in Norway, but these were not recorded and only notes were taken. This applies to the interview with Burkhard Hirsch, who was interviewed on the phone in a 15-minute conversation, and to the interview with Unni Johannsen, who was interviewed on the phone in a 37-minute conversation.

Finally, some words on ethical considerations are in order. Ethical problems can occur in any research project. As a rule, researchers must make sure that participants in their study are not harmed by the study in any way. The principle of informed consent is therefore of vital importance. It serves to make sure that informants are aware of any risks undertaken by them, if they participate, and to create trust between researcher and informant. Informed consent also reduces the researcher's legal liability, but of course ethical difficulties remain. In this study, ethical guidelines adopted by Norwegian and German social science ethics boards were followed closely. One particular challenge was related to the fact that the interview partners were not anonymized, since most of them had led public political lives and held important positions, which would have made them easily identifiable had one attempted anonymization. Even if it had been possible, anonymization would not have been desirable, as it would have erased the particular role interview partners played in their various organizations and in the political process. Also, interview transcripts of this study were not destroyed at the end of the project but will continue to be saved on the researcher's computer. These were important conditions for which informed consent needed to be obtained. The study was notified to the Data Protection Official of the Norwegian Social Science Data Services and recommendations from this authority were closely followed. The informed consent document was based on the example document of the Data Protection Official. Participants were able to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason. Also, the Data Protection Official suggested that informants should have the possibility to read either the entire interview transcript or those excerpts of it which are quoted in the study prior to publication. For this reason, most informants were supplied with copies of the interview transcripts. In a few cases, they preferred only to read over and check excerpts used in the study. None of the experts had a problem with being quoted personally, presumably because most of them were used to contact with journalists. Finally, all interview partners were sent a copy of the finished thesis. As Woliver (2002, p. 678) points out, this "is more than a courtesy". Without the interview partners, this project would not have been of the same quality, so they deserve the utmost respect and thanks for their participation.

### 3.6 Summing up: the research design of this study

Overall, many different types of sources come together in the comparative-historical research design of this study. The combination of the many different primary sources, secondary sources and expert interviews allowed the two cases to be approached from different angles

and perspectives. Any potential weaknesses of individual sources may have been made up for by the broad variety of sources covered in total. The content of the empirical material was analyzed qualitatively. Following suggestions by Hatch (2002, pp. 149ff), data analysis was begun early so that it could inform further data gathering. First of all, the data material was read many times in the course of the research, which already involved a certain amount of analysis. In accordance with the case-oriented research strategy, the analysis consisted of deductive as well as inductive steps. According to Hatch (2002, pp. 161ff), “inductive analysis” can be defined as “a search for patterns of meaning in data so that general statements about phenomena under investigation can be made”. Such patterns of meaning were indeed searched for in the data. However, the analysis also made use of elements of what Hatch (2002, pp. 152ff) terms “typological analysis”, since theoretical considerations informed the search.

For example, the project began with a focus on collective actors, their material resources and ideology (cf. Chapter 2). These concepts were derived from various power or conflict theories and they suggested looking for specific collective actors in the empirical material, examining whether any actors were “missing” in the respective other case and analyzing actors’ strategies, organizational resources and ideological legitimations. However, reading the primary data and working with various secondary sources made it clear that these dimensions, though important, were not sufficient analytic frames to guide the entire comparison. Collective actors needed to be distinguished with respect to their position towards various policies, and their position in various alliances and oppositional camps. Were they protagonists, consenters or antagonists (cf. Chapter 2)? More importantly, it became clear that an exclusive focus on comprehensive school reforms would make it impossible to understand the development of political alliances and oppositions. The data indicated that some of the collective actors in Norway simply did not care about comprehensive schooling as much as they cared about a number of other issues, such as the centralization of schooling or Christian schooling. Theory by Stein Rokkan (2000) helped to understand these findings. This again inspired a new search in the German data: were these issues of relevance there too? Were there other crosscutting political issues which affected political alliances for and against comprehensive schooling? In this way, a great advantage of the comparative approach could be made use of, namely its capacity to point towards new perspectives which would not have come up had the analysis been based exclusively on German data material. Thus, the constant dialogue between theory and data proved fruitful.

Expert interviews and party programs were analyzed with the aid of the computer program, NVivo, which greatly facilitated the analytical process. For example, it helped gain a good overview of the entire data combined in the project file, sort this material in relation to the various topics discussed in it and extract particularly relevant quotations from the sources. Categories of coding were created in the program based on the main analytical frames guiding

the analysis. The secondary sources made use of in this study were of course not analyzed with the help of NVivo, as it would be virtually impossible and unproductive to combine them all in a project file. The parliamentary debates consisted of too many pages to allow an in-depth analysis in NVivo. Instead, they were read several times both before and during the writing process and particularly relevant passages were marked with the program, Adobe Acrobat.

As becomes apparent in the following, not all data sources are equally prominent in all analytical chapters of this thesis. Secondary sources were used extensively for Chapter 4, in addition to some parliamentary debates and quantitative data. Chapters 5 and 6, on the other hand, are based to a higher degree on the qualitative content of primary sources, especially party programs, expert interviews and parliamentary debates. For the analysis of material power resources, quantitative data from primary and secondary sources were also included. All in all, it is believed that this combination of various types of data and analytical strategies was most productive to approach the research question at hand.



## 4 The long-term institutional development of the two school systems

This chapter provides a historical-sociological analysis of the development of schooling in Norway and Germany from the early beginning until around 1980. The aim of the chapter is to identify long-term trends as well as periods of change and critical junctures in the long-term development. Furthermore, the chapter puts the post-war reform period into historical context. It is shown that the historical conditions for post-war reformers were in many ways different in the two cases, but that the development also exhibits striking similarities. As discussed in Chapter 2, various political cleavages are taken into account in this study. This chapter therefore sheds light on the development of urban-rural and state-church divisions, as well as class and gender divisions. Furthermore, the historical narrative traces the development of the institutional framework of organized schooling. The main focus lies on general primary and lower secondary education, which means that the development of upper secondary, post-secondary and vocational education is not discussed in detail. The chapter builds on historical-sociological secondary sources and primary sources and contains some descriptive statistics on population development, population density, elections and religion.

### 4.1 The development of the Norwegian school system until the 1980s

In the following, the development of the Norwegian school system is traced back to its historical roots. It becomes apparent how the school as an institution was part of Norwegian nation- and state-building and how various reform phases led to a continuous increase in the comprehensiveness of the Norwegian school system. These reform phases were connected to periods of educational expansion and there were recurrent debates about the school as an instrument of social integration, involving a wide variety of actors.

#### 4.1.1 The early beginning

In pre-Christian times, Nordic children learned what they needed to know through imitation and practice. The introduction of Christianity from the year 995 onwards implied a cultural shift, in that norms of behavior changed and written doctrines became more important (Myhre, 1971, pp. 7ff). The church expected parents to teach their children the most important Christian prayers and ceremonies. There was also a need for priests and cathedral and monastery schools developed. The oldest cathedral schools in Norway were situated in Nidaros, Bergen and Oslo and date back to approximately the 12<sup>th</sup> century (Myhre, 1971, p. 10). From 1380 until 1814, Norway was in a union with Denmark and Copenhagen became the cultural center. In 1479, a university was founded there, which became the main destination of Norwegian students going abroad (Myhre, 1971, p. 11). From the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Hanseatic League dominated Norwegian trade, and some Norwegian students traveled to the University of Rostock, founded in 1419 (Myhre, 1971, p. 11). The first Norwegian university was founded no earlier than 1811, when Norwegian intellectuals

had grown exceedingly irritated at having to go to Copenhagen to study (Tønnessen, 2011, p. 23).

In 1536, the Reformation was introduced in Denmark-Norway by King Christian III, with the help of the German reformer, Johannes Bugenhagen. The Church Ordinance of 1537 modeled the Danish-Norwegian church on the church of Lutheran Saxony (Mediås, 2010, p. 9). It contained provisions for how parishes were to organize the Christian education of children, and for the cathedral and Latin schools. From 1629, the Lutheran catechism was supposed to be taught by the sextons and priests to all children in the parishes on one day a week, if necessary on weekday afternoons and outside the church (Mediås, 2010, p. 9). Gradually, confirmation became the rite of passage for 12-year-olds, who were tested in their knowledge of the catechism and then allowed to take communion for the first time (Mediås, 2010, p. 10). Latin schools (*latinskole*) were founded in all cities. From 1650 onwards, students at the University of Copenhagen had to pass an entrance examination, the *examen artium* (Myhre, 1971, p. 17). From the 1600s and 1700s onwards, a new middle class of merchants involved in mining, trading, saw mills and later also industry developed. New values and life forms took shape. The “discovery of childhood” took place in this milieu, which was also related to the new division of labor between the sexes, with the mother becoming exclusively responsible for the home and children (Tønnessen, 2011, p. 21).

There was one other form of organized training besides the Latin schools, which took place in Norway from the late Middle Ages onwards, namely the vocational training of the guilds. Apprentices had to go through a tough training period before they could become journeymen and start traveling for a few years. After that, they could become master craftsmen if the older members of the guild let them pass the examination. According to Tønnessen (2011, p. 16f.), *latinskoler* and the apprenticeship system of the guilds had several commonalities: the teachers were mainly practitioners and teaching was only a secondary function of their role; both forms of education were characterized by physical brutality; and in Norway, they were “provincial versions of European models”. “At the outer edge of Christianity, our forefathers here in the country tried to keep up as well as they could, both in European intellectual trends and in the skilled crafts” (Tønnessen, 2011, p. 17).

In 1702, the German priest, theologian and educationalist, August Hermann Francke, published his *Short and Simple Instruction How Poor Children are to be Guided to True Piety and Christian Wisdom*. According to Myhre (1971, p. 19), this can be considered “pietism’s pedagogical program”. Francke was the founder of an orphanage and a school for poor children, several middle schools, a Latin school, a printing office and other institutions in the city of Halle. He had a strong belief in the power of religious education and practice to create truly pious, honest and diligent individuals. The pietistic ideology, with its strong emphasis on

pedagogical activity, obedience and devoutness, was also a reaction to the horrors caused by the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648).

Pietism had a strong influence on Denmark-Norway's culture and on the creation of the public primary school system in the 18th century (Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, pp. 36ff). With the ordinance on confirmation from 1736, a three-month Christian education as preparation for confirmation became obligatory for all children. Erik Pontoppidan, preacher at the court of Christian VI and leading Nordic pietist, composed a textbook (*Sandhed til Gudfrygtighed*) with 759 questions and answers; it explained Luther's catechism and was used especially in Norwegian schools for the next 150 years. In 1739, the Danish-Norwegian King Kristian VI (1730-1746) issued an ordinance on schools in the countryside (*allmueskole*). This ordinance stipulated that all children between seven and ten to 12 years of age should go to school for at least three months of the year. A certain amount of schooling was now considered necessary for children of all backgrounds for the first time. However, the parishes were supposed to finance this obligatory schooling themselves. The ordinance also established that bishops should have central authority over the schools, while local priests should closely supervise teachers through regular school inspections. In 1741, the ordinances were slightly moderated and were now considered to be mere recommendations. School boards, consisting of the four most capable men of the parish, as well as the local police chief, the priest and his chaplains, were established for the first time. These were to have responsibility for the financing of the schools in the parish and the employment of teachers. The power thus given to some laymen was, however, used mainly in an "obstructive" way, if it was used at all, according to Telhaug and Mediås (2003, p. 51). The laymen did not have the same interest in the creation of obligatory schooling as their monarchical government and church officials. This might be related to the content of schooling, which might not have seemed useful to the farmers in the countryside. Throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> and well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the only subject taught to the majority of students was Christianity, meaning the memorization of scripture, prayers and reading (Tveit, 1991, pp. 95ff). The pietist *allmueskole* built on the idea that the population in its majority was "lazy and stupid" (Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, p. 36). The children had to be taught to be submissive and good, obedient Christians and subordinates. The *allmueskole* teachers were among the poorest of the population. As Tønnessen (2011, p. 23) points out, the *allmueskole* can in some ways be considered to be an oppressive institution, since it was forced on the population from above and was meant to teach the common people respect for the church and king. However, the reforms did lead to the eradication of illiteracy by around 1800.

Besides the *allmueskole*, Latin schools were further developed as a type of school for the elites. These had their origins in the cathedral schools and originally prepared students for church services, but gradually also for civil service (Mediås, 2010, p. 12). By another ordinance in 1739, the number of Norwegian Latin schools was lowered, and the remaining



schools now required prior knowledge from applicants. Poor children could be enrolled only if they showed extraordinary talent (Mediås, 2010, p. 12). The contrast to the rural schools was thus accentuated and social differences were perpetuated (Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, p. 40; Myhre, 1971, pp. 22ff). In addition, *realskoler* or *borgerskoler* were founded as a new type of secondary middle school with a modern curriculum, inspired in part by the ideas of the Enlightenment (Myhre, 1971, p.27). These schools were driven mainly by representatives of the new class of merchants. They wanted their children to have a different, more useful kind of education than the Latin schools could offer. The new middle schools taught not only religion and reading, but also arithmetic, history, geography and drawing. These subjects were also open to girls. Boys received additional education in subjects such as German, English, French, mathematics, book-keeping, letter-writing, navigation or declamation. Everything was taught in Norwegian and although religion was still one of the subjects, the schools were administered by the middle classes themselves, not by the church. By the early 1800s, these schools had three times as many students as the Latin schools. However, the *borgerskole* was heavily influenced by the example of the *latinskole* in the sense that teaching methods were severe and there were frequent beatings (Tønnessen, 2011, p. 21f).

In 1775, the requirement for a prior knowledge of Latin was abolished again in an otherwise conservative re-regulation of the Latin schools (ibid.; Mediås, 2010, p. 12). The struggle between supporters of a traditional and a more modern curriculum led to further changes. In 1809, a regulation on higher schools in Denmark and Norway introduced mathematics, modern languages and natural sciences to the curriculum of all secondary schools and made it possible to combine middle schools and Latin schools so students who did not intend to go to university could receive a higher education without Latin (Myhre, 1971, p. 28f). In this period, Norwegianness was not a topic in the schools. The textbooks were all written in either Danish or German. Telhaug and Mediås (2003, p. 52) therefore claim that “Norwegian schools during pietism belonged to a uniform Christian-Latin European culture”.

#### 4.1.2 The school as a nation-building institution during the 19<sup>th</sup> century

As a result of the Napoleonic wars, Denmark was forced to cede Norway to Sweden in 1814. This was unpopular among the Norwegian elites. A group of 112 Norwegian civil servants, businessmen, farmers and a few aristocrats was elected in the parishes and assembled on April 10, 1814 to draft a Norwegian constitution. On May 17, 1814, the constitution was signed.<sup>7</sup> It granted all male farmers, civil servants and the small urban middle classes voting rights for the Norwegian parliament. However, the majority of the population consisted of poor crofters, farmhands and the lumpenproletariat (Bull 1969, pp. 32ff). The constitutional assembly elected the Danish prince, Christian Frederik, as king and Norway’s independence was declared. However, Sweden attacked Norway in the summer, and after a short period of

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<sup>7</sup> This is still the date of the Norwegian national holiday, which is widely celebrated, in particular in schools. These yearly celebrations became common from the 1830s on.

fighting, the union with Sweden and the Swedish king had to be accepted by the Norwegian government. While Sweden dominated the foreign politics of the union, Norway was relatively independent in domestic policy. In 1821, all privileges were taken from the very small Norwegian aristocracy (Bull, 1969, p. 9). In 1833, farmers obtained a near majority in the Norwegian parliament for the first time; from 1836/37, municipal government was democratized.

**Table 4.1: Population in Norway, 1735-2015**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Population</b>
<b>1735</b>	616 109
<b>1800</b>	881 499
<b>1850</b>	1 384 149
<b>1900</b>	2 217 971
<b>1920</b>	2 616 274
<b>1940</b>	2 963 909
<b>1950</b>	3 249 954
<b>1955</b>	3 410 726
<b>1960</b>	3 567 707
<b>1965</b>	3 708 609
<b>1970</b>	3 863 221
<b>1975</b>	3 997 525
<b>1980</b>	4 078 900
<b>2000</b>	4 478 497
<b>2015</b>	5 165 802

*Source: SSB.*

Despite these democratic developments, pietism in education remained largely hegemonic until around the 1840s (Tveit, 1991, p. 113; Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, p. 54). In 1827, writing and numeracy became obligatory subjects. Little by little, the state also took more responsibility for teachers' education and pensions. From 1827, all dioceses had to establish seminaries for teachers. From 1816, school boards were democratized to some extent, meaning that lay members were now elected by the male citizens of the parish. In 1827, school boards were organized more strictly and yearly meetings, budgets and book-keeping were mandatory. However, local priests remained chairmen of the school boards until 1889 (Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, pp. 54f).

From the middle of the century onwards, great changes were taking place. In the years 1848 to 1851, a militant mass movement of workers, crofters, journeymen and servants was formed for the first time, but this *Thraniter* movement, named after its leader, Marcus Thrane, was broken up (Bull, 1960, pp. 26ff). From around 1860, industrialization set in and the middle

classes grew. A liberal movement began to develop opposed to the old regime of senior civil servants and the union with Sweden. The movement, composed of businessmen, farmers and other groups, was named *Venstre*, literally “the Left”, due to its seating on the left-side of parliament. It was kept together mainly by a shared desire for national independence (Sejersted, 2011, p. 52). In 1883/1884, the Liberal Party (*Venstre*) was officially founded and remained dominant in Norwegian politics for many decades. After the elections of 1882, the liberals formed a clear majority in parliament and, as the result of a long struggle against civil servants and the Swedish king; they came to power in 1884. This year therefore marks the introduction of parliamentarianism in Norway. In the same year, the Conservative Party (*Høyre*, literally “the Right”) was founded, mainly by conservative civil servants. From the 1870s on, unions also sprang up in various trades, especially in Oslo. In 1887, the Norwegian Labor Party (*Arbeiderpartiet*) was founded, followed by the foundation of the Norwegian Federation of Trade Unions (*Landsorganisasjonen*) in 1899. In 1903, the first four representatives of the Labor Party were voted into parliament by the population of the Northern provinces Finnmark and Troms (Bull, 1969, p. 70).

The ethnic community of the Norwegian people became a major topic. Important historical figures such as the farmer’s son, Ivar Aasen, argued that the rural Norwegian culture and language represented the true Norwegian soul, while the culture of the cities was claimed to be Danish by origin and therefore somewhat fake and elitist. The Norwegian past should be studied to cultivate a true Norwegian identity. From the 1840s to the 1870s, Aasen and others developed a new written language form based on Norwegian dialects and Old Norwegian; it was called *landsmål* (later called *nynorsk* (New Norwegian)). However, other figures, such as Marcus Jacob Monrad and Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, did not think that two cultures existed in Norway; culture was of a transnational nature that had come to Norway through the urban elites and it was unnecessary to focus on the Norwegian past to such a high degree. Bjørnson suggested naming the Norwegian variety of Danish *riksmål* (later *bokmål* (Book Language)) (Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, p. 57). In 1885, the Norwegian parliament passed a resolution according to which the new *landsmål* should be put on a par with traditional *riksmål* as an official written language in schools and within the state. From 1892, both written forms of Norwegian were allowed as teaching languages in the people’s school (*folkeskole*) and it was stipulated that children should learn to read both. The local school boards were responsible for choosing between them. By 1900, around 250 school districts, especially in central, western and some parts of northern Norway, had introduced *landsmål* as their main written form used in schools (Haugland et al, 2002, pp. 87f). The supporters of *landsmål/nynorsk* founded a national organization, the Norwegian Language Society (*Noregs Mållag*), in 1906. In 1907, the Riksmåls Society (The Society for the Preservation of Traditional Standard Norwegian, *Riksmålsforbundet*) was founded with Bjørnson as the first leader.

During the 1850s and 1860s, a new educational reform movement developed and was influenced by ideas from the Enlightenment tradition and romantic idealism, again originating from Germany and Denmark. The optimistic view of man expressed in the Enlightenment philosophy, which claimed that children were born innocent with an innate desire to learn, replaced more pessimistic notions associated with pietism (Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, pp. 55f). The position of primary school teachers was strengthened. Teacher seminaries were set up and the newly qualified teachers quickly replaced many of the older ones. Wages increased. Some countryside teachers also received a piece of land next to their home. Often, teachers became sextons at the same time, improving their financial situation further (Tønnessen, 2011, p. 35f). Primary school teachers started organizing themselves in associations and argued against the strong influence of the church. Ole Vig, a primary school teacher and editor of the journals *Den norske Folkeskole* (The Norwegian People's School) and *Folkevennen* (Friend of the People), also suggested that history should become an obligatory subject (Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, p. 58f).

The gradual democratization of Norwegian society meant that the population no longer consisted of mere subordinates, but of citizens, who had to be educated to be able to perform their roles as responsible members of society (Dale, 2008, pp. 47f; Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, pp. 59ff). It now became more usual to argue that schooling should also prepare one for life, instead of just turning children into good Christians. With the law on the *allmueskole* in the countryside (*lov om allmueskolen på landet*) from 1860, history and geography became part of the curriculum. The laws on the *folkeskole* (people's school) from 1889 continued this trend by turning history, geography and natural science into separate obligatory subjects, and by increasing considerably the number of hours of schooling. From 1889 onwards, school directors (*skoledirektorene*), whose position had been created in 1860, became the only supervisory authority for the schools of their county (*fylke*). Bishops and the presidents of the dioceses (*stiftsamtmenn*) no longer had a say. School directors were required to have practical experience as teachers and many of them were active politicians, often involved in the major movements of the time: the temperance movement and the *Nynorsk* language movement. Their job was to make sure that schools in the county followed the regulations (Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, pp. 85ff). The municipalities gained more influence in employing teachers, setting the curricula and other administrative matters at schools. The replacement of the term *allmueskole* with the term *folkeskole* represented new ideas, both politically and pedagogically. From now on, schooling should also contribute to creating national identity, culture and pride. Elementary schooling should be for all people (Mediås, 2010, p. 28). New, Norwegian textbooks were published, such as P.A. Jensen's *Læsebog for Folkeskolen og Folkehjemmet* in 1863 and Nordahl Rolfsen's *Læsebog for Folkeskolen* in 1892. They remained in use until the 1960s (Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, pp. 59ff).

Overall, teachers and laymen acquired increased influence from 1850 onwards, while the influence of the church weakened. State regulation grew slowly but steadily and the state took over more of the financing of local schools and teacher training. Historical, linguistic and literary knowledge now became hegemonic, since this kind of knowledge was related to the national-democratic project of shaping Norway as a nation. Christianity remained an important subject, but teachers slowly replaced theologians in central positions in the education system (Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, pp. 78ff). Primary school teachers founded the Norwegian Teachers' Association (*Norges lærerforening*) in 1892 (Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, pp. 78ff). In 1902, teacher seminaries were renamed teacher schools (*lærerskolen*) and teachers' education was increased to three years (Mediås, 2010, p. 39, Tønnessen, 2011, p.37). Secondary school teachers, especially philologists and some natural scientists, also founded an organization in 1892, *Filologenes og realistenes landsforening* (the Association of Philologists and Natural Scientists). At this time, there were around 200 secondary school teachers in Norway (Lindbekk, 1960, cited in Grove/Michelsen, 2014, p. 322). Their position was not as prestigious as the position of the other classic professions (law, medicine, theology and the military), but they did belong to the upper class of civil servants, were highly educated and paid well. They also had some political influence through the Educational Council (*Undervisningsrådet*) which was founded in 1898 and consisted of secondary school teachers who were supposed to monitor the secondary school sector (Grove/Michelsen, 2014, pp. 312ff).

#### 4.1.3 The school as a tool for social integration and educational expansion during the 19<sup>th</sup> century

Besides contributing to the creation of a Norwegian identity and nation, education now also became a means for equalization and social integration, at least within the cities. There, three parallel school types had developed up to the 1850s and 1860s. First, the *allmueskole*, also called *fattigskole* (poor school), which had only 12 hours of schooling per week and only taught Christianity, reading, writing and numeracy to about 70-80 percent of each age-group. Second, the *borgerskole/real skole*, which had 30 hours of schooling and which taught modern languages, history, geography and natural science in addition to the subjects taught in the *allmueskole*. Third, the *lærde skole/latinskole*, which taught Latin, Greek and sometimes Hebrew, leading to university; it also had 30 hours of schooling per week. Fees had to be paid for the *borgerskole* and *latinskole*. This system was differentiated by social status and class and came under strong criticism in the 1840s and 1850s. In 1869, parliament attempted to create a universal three-year comprehensive primary school for the first time, but the law (*lov om offentlige skoler for den høiere Almendannelse*) did not have the intended effect. The reason was that the quality of the *allmueskole* was so low that the upper class could not imagine sending their children there (Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, pp. 68ff). However, this quality improved considerably in the ensuing decades. New and better school buildings were built. In

the cities, large schools with separate classes for age groups became usual and afternoon-schooling or shift-schooling disappeared. The *allmueskoleloven* from 1860 stipulated that all school districts with at least 30 children of school-age had to build permanent school buildings, leading to the construction of several thousand small schoolhouses all around the country. However, until the 1930s some children in Norway still only received irregular schooling in schools, which did not have permanent school buildings but moved from village to village (*omgangsskoler*) (Tønnessen, 2011, p. 34). This was due to Norway's sparse population in some areas (cf. Table 4.2).

In 1896, the law on higher schooling (*lov om den høyere skole*) stipulated that a four-year middle school and a three-year high school (*gymnaset*) should build consecutively on the first five years of the *folkeskole*, which lasted seven years. The first five years of the *folkeskole* thus became comprehensive, with the exception of private preparatory classes. The middle school was no longer stratified into different tracks. This meant that the *borgerskole* and the *latinskole* merged into one school type at the lower secondary level, now called *høyere skole* (higher school), which was more influenced by the middle schools than by the Latin schools. The upper secondary level, *gymnaset*, consisted of a natural science track, a linguistic-historical track and a linguistic-historical track with Latin. The Latin school only survived as a track at the *gymnas*, and even this Latin track was under considerable political pressure from the Liberal Party and the teachers at the *folkeskole*. They did not consider Latin a necessary component of higher education. The Conservative Party and the teachers of the *gymnas* only just managed to protect the track from abolition in 1896. The lower secondary level on the other hand, i.e. the middle school, remained popular, especially among the middle classes and the daughters of the upper class of civil servants. The new secondary schools were influenced by the pedagogical reform movements of the time but retained the Latin school tradition of severity and discipline. However, beating was forbidden in the *gymnas* and for girls at the *middelskole* in 1896 (Tønnessen, 2011, pp. 48f). At the same time, the secondary schools, the *middelskole* and the *gymnas*, became schools for both boys and girls (Mediås, 2010, p. 33, Seidenfaden, 1977, pp. 2ff).

Telhaug (1974, cf. Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, pp. 69ff) analyzes the development of comprehensive schooling from 1865 to 1896. He mentions four main motives, the last two of which he underlines as especially important. Firstly, comparisons with Switzerland and the United States served as inspiration for a new kind of democratic school adjusted to modern needs. Secondly, comprehensive schooling was simply less costly than parallel schooling, especially for small municipalities. Finances were the main reason why some municipalities implemented comprehensive primary schools even before it was stipulated by law. Thirdly, the pedagogical argument was that comprehensive schooling in the first five years would increase the general quality of schooling at the *allmueskole/folkeskole*. What it would do to the quality of the *middelskole* was not a key element in the discussion. The focus lay on the

quality of education for the lowest layers of society. It was assumed that the influx of children from the upper and middle class would increase school quality, since these children were more often good students, who could serve as inspiration for the other students and the teachers. In addition, all social classes would now have an interest in the quality of the *folkeskole*; they would start to regard it as “their school” and would therefore be more willing to contribute to it and support it politically. It was also argued that parallel schools for young children were simply meaningless, since choosing a vocation could not be done that early. Children’s schools should therefore not be vocational but should only supply the general schooling all children needed. Fourth, there was a social argument prevalent in the debate, which focused on the class differences in Norwegian society and the effects of such. Supporters of the comprehensive school argued that separate schools for different social classes led to a lack of respect, understanding and knowledge between classes. This “class hate” was also seen as a threat to national unity and solidarity (Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, p. 77). Besides, only differences stemming from innate abilities were deemed legitimate by the critics of the school system. Social mobility had to be increased, also to mobilize the hidden talents of the population, which would benefit the nation as a whole. Parallel schools were seen as a disincentive for poorer students to aim for higher education, so free places for poor students in higher schools could not function as a solution. Instead, the different school types had to be organically interconnected. Later separation was deemed necessary for talent and ability to have a decisive influence on one’s choice of education. However, adversaries of school reforms also argued based on social class, but from a more moralizing perspective. They assumed that poverty was at least partly related to bad morals, worrying that children from “bad homes” would have a bad influence on the children of the upper and middle classes. They also argued that class differences would become even more visible once children of different classes attended school together.

Besides the increased emphasis on education for the lower classes, there was also a trend towards opening secondary schooling up for girls and women. In 1874, Charlotte Lund was the first girl to pass the middle school exam in Stavanger. In 1878, girls’ access to this exam was regularized. From 1882, women were allowed to take the *examen artium* and attend university and from 1884, coeducation in the middle schools was made possible (Mediås, 2010, p. 32). Female teachers could be employed as assistants in primary schools from 1860, and from 1872, they could take female teacher exams. After 1889/1890, teacher seminaries were opened to women and they could be employed as regular teachers in the *folkeskole* (Mediås, 2010, p. 32). In contrast to the male teachers, many of the female teachers had their social backgrounds from the upper classes, meaning civil service or urban business families (Rovde, 2014, p. 351; Tønnessen, 2011, p. 36).

It should also be mentioned that special schools were introduced for disabled and neglected children, who were not to be integrated in the *allmueskole/folkeskole*. The first school for deaf

children was founded in 1825, and the first one for blind children in 1867, both in Trondheim. These were inspired by older schools of the same type in other European countries. In 1881 a law on *abnormskoler* (“abnormal” schools) was passed. For neglected children, *skolehjem* (school homes) were founded, which were much debated due to their brutal conditions (Tønnessen, 2011, pp. 46f). These schools also served to make the *folkeskole* more acceptable to the upper classes, since they excluded some of the most difficult students from general schooling.

Finally, two more school types were introduced. Specific to the Nordic context is the tradition of the *folkehøyskole* (people’s high school). Those schools were founded in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and were meant to be an alternative to the book-learning of the Latin schools. They gave a general introduction to the national intellectual traditions but also offered practical training. Teenagers who had completed *allmueskole/folkeskole* could attend the *folkehøyskole*, usually for half a year. Many of these schools were based on national, farmer-romantic ideals, some were administered by Christian organizations, and some were administered by politically conservative groups. Around the turn of the century, another school type developed, called *framhaldsskole* in the countryside and *fortsettelseskole* (continuation school) in the cities. These schools were supposed to give teenagers who had finished *folkeskole* another option to prolong their education and taught both practical skills and general civic knowledge. Many female teachers supported this school type as an ideal secondary school for girls. In contrast to the *folkehøyskole*, these schools were not boarding schools and they were also less ideological (Tønnessen, 2011, pp. 50f).

#### 4.1.4 Liberal reforms and social democracy’s rise to power after 1905

In 1905, the union between Sweden and Norway was dissolved and Norway became fully independent. The early 20<sup>th</sup> century was characterized by a range of important reforms implemented by the Liberal Party government. State support for union unemployment insurance was introduced in 1906 and a health insurance law was passed in 1909 (Bjørnson, 2003, pp. 48ff). Child labor had been made illegal in 1892 – an important development considering that 65 percent of the boys and 33 percent of the girls attending the *allmueskole* in the large cities still had paid work in the 1870s, and especially the girls also had to work at home (Tønnessen, 2011, p. 32). In 1913, women gained the right to vote, which men had had since 1898 (Bull, 1960, p. 16). In 1919, the eight-hour working day was introduced. The Liberal Party was still the largest one in parliament, but in 1912 the Labor Party received 26.5 percent of votes and became the second largest party. During the First World War, Norway stayed neutral, but many Norwegian sailors lost their lives during the German submarine war. From the 1920s, an economic crisis set in and unemployment grew. The labor movement became more radical. From 1919 to 1923, the Labor Party even joined the Comintern. A minority of the Labor Party broke out in 1923 and founded a small Communist Party. In 1920, the Farmers’ Party (today *Senterpartiet*, the Centre Party) was founded, creating additional



competition for the Liberal Party (Sejersted, 2011, p. 80). A time of political instability was ushered in, with shifting Liberal Party and Conservative Party governments. In 1933, the Christian Democrats was founded as an additional party competing for the former voters of the Liberal Party. In the early 1930s, the Labor Party oriented its strategy more clearly towards parliamentary power. In 1935, the Labor Party and the Farmers' Party formed a coalition government for the first time, which was based on an agreement including agricultural subsidies and investments to increase employment. This government remained formally in office until 1945. However, Norway was occupied by Nazi Germany in 1940. The five years (1935-1940) of the first stable social-democratic government in Norway can be considered a transitional period from the old Liberal Party regime to the new social democratic order. The economic crisis led to the loss of legitimacy of the principle of free markets and to the increased legitimacy of state intervention (Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, pp. 95ff). This also came to expression in school politics, where the state continued to increase its influence.

In 1911, a committee (*enhetskolekomiteen*) was put in place by the government to consider potential comprehensive school reforms, aiming at a better interconnection between primary and secondary schooling. In 1913, the committee presented its proposal. The committee was not in agreement regarding the actual meaning of the term comprehensive school (*enhetskole*). The majority of the committee was of the opinion that comprehensive schooling entailed all children having the possibility to proceed to a secondary school after their primary education. The minority contended that the competition between the *folkeskole* and the *middelskole* in grade six and seven would have to be abolished in order to achieve fully comprehensive schooling throughout the *folkeskole*. In their view, parallel schooling was incompatible with comprehensive schooling. The majority further suggested that if one should introduce a model with seven years of *folkeskole* followed by two years of *middelskole*, the curriculum of the *folkeskole* would have to be improved, notably with the introduction of a foreign language in grade six and seven. The minority preferred a model with seven years of *folkeskole* followed by three years of *middelskole* (Dokka, 1988, pp. 115ff; Mediås, 2010, pp. 35f). In the following years, this was discussed further. The law on rural people's schools was slightly changed in 1915 and the law on city people's schools in 1917. The minimum number of weeks of schooling was increased (Mediås, 2010, p. 36). Furthermore, the laws now stipulated that teaching should be conducted in the natural spoken language of the students, meaning in the local dialect, and introduced local elections to choose the language standard within a school district (Almenningen, 2002a, p. 102).

The Labor Party especially became more active in education politics in the period between the two world wars. Schools were now seen as a way to change society and socialists and liberals cooperated in their attempt to prolong comprehensive schooling. However, there were two currents in Norwegian social democracy: the Gjøstein current was concerned with opening up

the school system for the children of the working class and considered comprehensive schooling a step towards overcoming class divisions in education. Already in 1904, O.G. Gjøsteen had suggested a ten-year comprehensive school. The other current, represented by Edvard Bull, was skeptical of the existing educational traditions and aimed at a more practical, alternative education, which should serve to create solidarity and be closer to the workers' own culture (Slagstad, 2001, pp. 388f; Tønnessen, 2011, p. 57). The Bull current dominated prior to the Second World War. However, the Labor Party representative Johan Gjøstein (1866-1935), O.G. Gjøsteen's brother, managed in 1920 to convince the Norwegian parliament to give financing only to lower secondary schools, which built upon seven years of *folkeskole*. This decision, which was taken against the votes of the Conservative Party and sections of the Liberals, effectively prolonged comprehensive schooling by another two years, with the exception of a few private schools (Slagstad, 2001, p. 389). The parliamentary decision did not contain any details concerning the length of the *middelskole*. In most municipalities, the *middelskole* now lasted three years but a proposal for a shortening to two years was also debated (Dokka, 1988, pp. 120ff; Mediås, 2010, p. 37). Seven years of comprehensive schooling were thus introduced in Norway at a very early point in history compared to other Western countries.

In 1920, a new parliamentary school commission was formed which was short-lived. It had been put in place by a conservative government, and as a result, parliament refused to finance its work. In 1922, a new commission was created, this time with fewer conservative and more leftist members. This commission produced several important proposals in the years from 1922 to 1927, which laid the ground for the laws of the 1930s. The most important suggestion regarding comprehensive schooling was to reshape the secondary schools by introducing a three-year *realskole* and a five-year *gymnas*, building on the comprehensive seven-year *folkeskole*. The two first years of *realskole* and *gymnas* should be combined, while the third year of *realskole* should be more practically oriented (Myhre, 1971, p. 96).

#### 4.1.5 The reform movement of the 1930s

A new commission of representatives of the teachers' organizations was put in place in 1931 and produced a number of alternative suggestions. However, the suggestion of the school commission from 1922-1927 was followed up, and in 1935 a law on higher schooling (*lov om høiere almenkoler*) was passed (Myhre, 1971, p. 97). The law regularized the seven-year *folkeskole* as the basis of the whole system. Some secondary school teachers (*lektorer/adjunkter*) had wished for earlier differentiation after the fifth or sixth grade but did not succeed (Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, p. 122). The middle school was now officially called *realskole*, not *middelskole* or *borgerskole*, and had its own final examination, but also led to upper secondary schooling in the *gymnas*. Creating secondary schools with common *realskole* and *gymnas* classes was made possible. Two-, three- and four-year *realskoler* existed, as well as five- and six-year *gymnas*. Most municipalities, however, introduced five-year secondary

schooling, consisting of two common years in *realskole* and *gymnas*, and then a more practical third *realskole* year, or three academically oriented *gymnas* years. In the cities, a nine-year comprehensive school was thus beginning to take shape, but in the countryside the two-year continuation school (*framhaldsskole*) still existed as a parallel school type. After the first year of the continuation school, it was also possible to switch to a four-year *gymnas* (Seidenfaden, 1977, p. 8).

**Table 4.2: Norwegian resident population in densely and sparsely populated areas and per km<sup>2</sup>, 1845-1970**

Year	Total	Densely populated areas	Sparsely populated areas	Population in urban municipalities	Percentage of population in densely populated areas <sup>1)</sup>	Population per km <sup>2</sup> <sup>2)</sup>
1845	1 328 471	206 338	1 122 133	161 875	15.6	4.3
1855	1 490 047	252 308	1 237 739	197 815	16.9	4.8
1865	1 701 756	333 485	1 368 271	266 292	19.6	5.5
1875	1 806 900	440 273	1 366 627	326 420	24.4	5.9
1890	2 000 917	625 417	1 375 500	474 129	31.3	6.5
1900	2 240 032	800 198	1 439 834	627 650	35.7	7.3
1910	2 391 782	921 382	1 470 400	689 228	38.5	7.7
1920	2 649 775	1 200 020	1 449 755	785 404	45.3	8.6
1930	2 814 194	1 330 217	1 483 977	800 514	47.3	9.1
1946	3 156 950	1 581 901	1 575 049	884 097	50.1	10.2
1950	3 278 546	1 711 628	1 566 918	1 054 820	52.2	10.6
1960	3 591 234	2 052 634	1 538 600	1 152 377	57.2	11.6
1970	3 874 133	2 554 913	1 319 220	1 641 315	65.9	12.6

<sup>1)</sup> Densely populated areas comprise urban municipalities as well as densely populated areas in rural municipalities. “The definition of a densely populated area has varied from time to time [...]. In the censuses 1960 and 1970 a densely populated area was defined as a population cluster with at least 200 resident persons, where the distance between the houses generally did not exceed 50 metres.” (SSB, 1978, p. 22)

<sup>2)</sup> Svalbard and Jan Mayen not included.

Source: SSB, 1978, p. 33

In 1936, separate laws regarding the primary schools in the countryside and the cities were passed (*landsskuleloven* and *lov om folkeskolen i kjøpstædene*). These laws introduced stricter rules regarding the division of age groups into separate grades, minimum standards with respect to the curriculum, teaching and results and a higher number of school hours. Centralization of schools, in order to create larger schools with the separation of age groups,

became an important aim. The number of schools without any division into separate age groups was lowered from 1060 to 601 between 1935/36 and 1945 (Myhre, 1971, p. 100). This development created some opposition, which is related to Norway's geographical conditions (Seidenfaden, 1977, p. 10; cf. Table 4.2). The total number of school hours in the course of seven years was set to around 4000 hours in the countryside and around 6400 hours in the cities (Myhre, 1971, pp. 100f). English was taught mainly in the cities, and only by way of exception in the rural schools (Seidenfaden, 1977, p. 11).

The new laws no longer contained paragraphs on the continuation schools (*framhaldsskole*). Instead, a separate law on these was prepared in 1939 but could not be passed before the Nazi occupation. It was eventually passed in 1946 and amended in 1955 so that the number of hours taught equaled that of the *realskoler*. There were one-year and two-year continuation schools (Myhre, 1971, p. 103). Telhaug (1969, pp. 22ff) describes the situation resulting from the laws of 1935, 1936 and 1946. The seven-year *folkeskole* had weak differentiation in some subjects with respect to the gender of the students and for the subject of English. Otherwise, all students were taught together. From grade eight, however, the organizational differentiation was stronger: 20-30 percent of the age group went on to attend the *realskole*, while 50 percent attended the *framhaldsskole*. In some municipalities, the first year of the *framhaldsskole* was made obligatory for students who did not attend other secondary schools.

From 1935, a new planning committee (*plankomité*) consisting of representatives of the primary and the secondary school sector worked on a range of pedagogical questions. This committee was strongly influenced by the new pedagogical ideas of the time. The same was true of the committee put in place to devise a new general curriculum (*normalplankomiteen*) from 1936-1939. A central figure in these committees was the teacher, Anna Sethne. Sethne had been one of the founders of the Female Teachers' Association (*Norges Lærerinneforbund*) in 1912, and its leader from 1919 to 1938. She led a large number of school experiments at her *folkeskole* in Oslo. Sethne and other reformers of the time were influenced by the ideas of the German *Arbeitsschule* movement. To them, there should be practical activity, individualized teaching as well as teamwork in the school. The children's interests should be taken into account and different subjects should be taught together. The new curriculum from 1939 explicitly mentioned that teaching should be based on *Arbeitsschule* principles (Myhre, 1971, pp. 95ff). Use of grades was greatly reduced and grades were abolished entirely in the first three years of the *folkeskole* (Tønnessen/Telhaug, 1996). The aim became to foster intrinsic motivation and individual development. However, the freedom of the individual was meant to be combined with greater standardization. Minimum requirements were introduced, specifying what could be expected of an average student in each grade (Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, pp. 18f).

The success of the *Arbeitsschule* ideas was related to the development of psychology, and in particular psychoanalysis, which decisively influenced the debates at the times. Freud's discovery of the unconscious, the claim that childhood experiences influenced human beings' development and the idea that repressed drives could lead to mental illness all led to huge debate. Pedagogy now became more oriented towards psychology, and especially developed a much stronger focus on the children, their innate drive to learn, their needs, development and so on. While the liberal reformers of the earlier period had focused on the importance of an inspiring, narrating teacher, the new pedagogy thought, on the contrary, that there was too much receptive and reproductive activity in the schools (Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, pp. 104ff). However, democratic, civil education was not a declared aim, notwithstanding fascism's growth on the continent. Instead, instrumental motives dominated, which led to a strengthening of subjects such as physical education, needlework or housekeeping, which were taught only to girls. Traditional subjects also became more focused on practical skills – for example, Norwegian lessons should first make children capable of speaking, reading and writing correctly and there was less focus on the transmission of Norwegian culture (Telhaug/Mediås, pp. 111ff).

The curriculum of 1939 was also in accordance with a positivistic approach to science and was the only curriculum in Norwegian history so far to be written almost like a science report, including footnotes with references to pedagogical and psychological studies. The requirements for encyclopedic knowledge were relaxed, which was legitimized with studies showing that most facts learned in school were not remembered later. This was opposed by the school directors, who clung to the ideas of the old Liberal Party regime, where historical, factual knowledge had been valued highly. In addition, some of the more traditional, liberal school reformers, who cared about ethical and political justifications more than quantitative measurements, criticized the positivistic approach. But they no longer had much influence over the production of school ideology and laws (Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, pp. 125ff). The curriculum was also made binding for the schools of all municipalities, meaning that they could no longer decide freely how many hours to allocate to the different subjects. The great variation that had developed during the period of Liberal Party government was now regarded as undesirable. The municipalities also had to report to the school directors, who received the power for the first time to sanction municipal decisions. The municipalities lost some influence. However, paragraph 9c of the law from 1936 made it possible for them to start their own experimental, reform activities after consultation with the Ministry (Telhaug/Meidås, 2003, pp. 132ff).

Teacher education was also reformed further. In 1930, the colleges for primary school teachers were prolonged to four years, but two-year courses were introduced for students who had finished *gymnas*. From 1938, these two-year courses were divided into a general track and an English track, with the aim to educate more English teachers for the *folkeskole*. Exams

in pedagogy were also introduced, both for primary and secondary school teachers (Mediås, 2010, p. 40). As already mentioned, female primary school teachers organized themselves separately in 1912 and fought for better wages and better education for girls. Besides Anne Sethne, Anna Rogstad was an important figure here. Rogstad was the first female member of the Norwegian parliament in 1911 and was vice chairwoman of the *folkeskole* teachers' association, *Norges Lærereforening*, from 1892 to 1907. However, the female teachers did not feel that they received enough support from their male colleagues in their struggle for equal wages and career opportunities, which led to the founding of a separate organization (Hagemann, 1992, pp. 135ff; Tønnessen, 2011, p. 37). The division was also based on the fact that male teachers dominated in the countryside, whereas female teachers dominated in the city's *folkeskole* (Rovde, 2014, pp. 351ff). In 1939, the secondary school teachers renamed their organization *Norsk Lektorlag* (Mediås, 2010, p. 41). This was based on the development in teacher training at university level. In 1920, the title *lektor* had been introduced for those university graduates who had passed the higher university exams, which had been regulated in 1905. The lower exams led to the title *adjunkt*. A lack of teachers in the middle schools led to rising numbers of such *adjunkt* teachers and, accordingly, to rising heterogeneity among the members of *Norsk Lektorlag*. From 1947, the association opened up to all teachers teaching at secondary schools – a pragmatic decision related to the competition with primary school teachers, who were taking over more and more of lower secondary education (Grove/Michelsen, 2014, pp. 316ff, Seip, 1990, Slagstad, 2000, p. 56f).

In 1937, a language reform was also passed by the Labor Party, the Centre Party and the Liberal Party, but against the votes of the Conservative Party and of a few Christian democrats; this brought the two written language standards closer to each other (Ramsdal, 1979, pp. 17ff). The official aim of the Labor Party and the center parties was now to work for the long-term merging of the two standards into a common standard, known as *sammorsk*, which should be based on people's actual way of speaking. There was, however, no agreement about this within the language movement and lively debates continued. The reform also introduced a distinction between language forms mandated for schoolbooks, and "side" forms, which students were allowed to use even though they were not used in the schoolbooks (Allmenningen, 2002a, p. 120). This led to an increase in school districts using *nynorsk*. By 1944, 34.1 percent of Norwegian schools were teaching according to the *nynorsk* standard – the highest percentage ever (Allmenningen, 2002b, p. 125).

Overall, the reforms show that for the Labor Party and Farmers' Party government formed in 1935, national integration through social means was an aim in school politics too. The leaders of the primary school teachers' organizations became central advisors to the Ministry and were among the architects of the new curriculum and laws. But the political program was not a radical rupture since it was mainly focused on the methods of work and evaluation within the schools. The Labor Party did not attempt to take Christian education out of schools, as

social democrats previously had imagined, and they did not attempt to pass a law applying simultaneously to city and rural schools. Their measures were not seriously contested (Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, p. 111). Nonetheless, the central state took over more and more of the education sector. The amount of financing from the central government kept rising. The laws of 1936 stipulated that central government should finance 50 to 80 percent of teachers' wages. In exchange, the government claimed increased influence over the school system. The abolition of private teachers' colleges was an important aim of the labor movement, also because many of them were run by Christian organizations. In 1938, only one private teachers' college remained (Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, pp. 120f). There was also an increase in public schooling and a relative decrease in private schools. Around 1900, eight percent of the students went to private schools. In 1940, it was less than one percent (Tønnessen, 2011, p. 54; cf. Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, p. 121).

#### 4.1.6 Occupation, recovery, and warming up for new reforms – the 1940s

During the German occupation from 1940 to 1945, the reform processes were disrupted. The country was now governed by German Nazis, such as the Reich Commissioner Josef Terboven, who was originally from Essen in North Rhine-Westphalia, as well as by a fascist minority of Norwegians (Olstad, 2010, p. 111). In 1942, Vidkun Quisling, the leader of the Norwegian fascist party *Nasjonal Samling*, became prime minister. All other parties had been forbidden. Before the war, the party had only a few hundred members, but in 1943 it had 34,400 (Olstad, 2010, p. 116). The ideology of the party was just as racist and anti-Semitic as the German NSDAP's. In 1942, 1536 Jews were registered in all of Norway and arrested in the fall. 772 Norwegian Jews were sent to German concentration camps, of whom only 34 survived. When Germans gave the order to arrest Jews, Norwegian policemen and taxi drivers contributed to its implementation (Olstad, 2010, pp. 132f). There were about 2100 Jews in Norway before the occupation; some made it across the border to Sweden, often helped by fellow Norwegians. Many Norwegians also participated in different kinds of resistance activities. For example, it is estimated that 12,000 to 15,000 people took part in distributing illegal newspapers, and 3000 to 4000 were arrested for this. 62 were executed and 150 died in prison. Resistance organizations such as *Hjemmefronten*, *XU*, *Milorg*, *Special Operations Executive* and not least communist resistance groups played important roles. Many civic organizations, such as the sports organizations, as well as the state church refused to cooperate with the Nazi regime. The establishment of an obligatory Nazi youth organization was prevented by 30,000 to 35,000 parents sending letters of refusal and protest (Olstad, 2010, pp. 119ff). Teachers also played an important part in the resistance. In 1942, the *Gleichschaltung* (forced political alignment) of teacher organizations and the introduction of a national youth service led to massive parent and teacher protests and arrests. The Quisling government's attempt to introduce a Nazi teachers' organization had to be given up. From

1941, German replaced English as the foreign language taught in the two last years of the *folkeskole* (Dokka, 1988, pp. 149ff; Mediås, 2010, p. 42).

When the war was over, Norwegians' relationship with Germany had obviously suffered massive damage. The group which suffered most from this during the post-war period were probably the 10,000 to 12,000 children, who had been fathered in Norway by German soldiers during the occupation, and their mothers. Attempts were made to send them to Germany or Australia to get rid of this "unwanted reminder" of the occupation. Some Norwegian women married Germans and moved to Germany. The ones who stayed were subject to harsh discrimination in some cases. This chapter of Norwegian history has received serious attention only since around the 1990s (Olstad, 2010, p. 135).

After the war, a new group of young Labor Party leaders came to office under Prime Minister Einar Gerhardsen. They started their work with considerable optimism and boldness. The common program signed by all parties after the war (*Fellesprogrammet*) underlined the importance of cooperation and national integration. Industrialization became a major goal, as well as economic growth and equal opportunities, rights and security for everyone. In the beginning, the new government aimed at strong regulation of the economy, but opposition from the right of the political spectrum and from international bodies such as the OECD contributed to moderation later. However, the state remained strong. Central administration grew. Corporatist channels became important. There was a strong belief in positivistic science, which the social democrats intended to use as an important pillar in their politics. The laymen, who had received more influence during the hegemonic period of the Liberal Party, had to make room for the professional judgments of the scientific community. Within the administration, lawyers lost some of their influence to political economists, whose influence grew stronger than in most other countries (Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, pp. 138ff).

The debate on the school structure started again immediately after the war. The common program of 1945 stated among other things that the whole education system should be coordinated so that all elements should interlock naturally (Mediås, 2010, p. 42). This was also related to the developments abroad. In 1944, the British Butler Act introduced compulsory schooling for the entire group of five- to 15-year-olds. The French Paul Langevin Commission in 1947 discussed the introduction of compulsory schooling up to age 19, with a comprehensive middle school. In Sweden, a school commission founded in 1946 suggested in 1948 to create a nine-year comprehensive school, the introduction of which was decided by the Swedish parliament in 1950 (Telhaug, 1969, pp. 23f). Norwegian Labor Party politician, Helge Sivertsen, who was state secretary at the Ministry of Education from 1947 to 1956 and Minister of Education from 1960 to 1965, was present at the Swedish parliament during this debate (Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, p. 175).



In 1947, a commission (*Samordningsnemnda for skoleverket*) was put in place to discuss the internal coordination of the education system, on the basis of the old laws (Telhaug, 1969, pp. 24ff). The first Minister of Education after the war, Kåre Fostervoll from the Labor Party, was none too keen on far-reaching changes in the school structure. His successor Lars Moen, who was Minister until 1953, also belonged to the “old school” of the Labor Party and supported the reforms of the 1930s (Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, p. 147). However, the commission suggested in 1949 to make the first year of the *framhaldsskole* obligatory. Another early reform proposal in Norway came from two higher school principals, Steen and Øverås, who suggested shortening the comprehensive primary school to six years, which then would be followed by two parallel school types, namely a three-year middle school, leading to higher education, and a two-year obligatory continuation school. Obligatory schooling would thus be prolonged by one year but organizational differentiation would start earlier (Telhaug, 1969, p. 25).

#### 4.1.7 Setting the course for the youth school – the 1950s

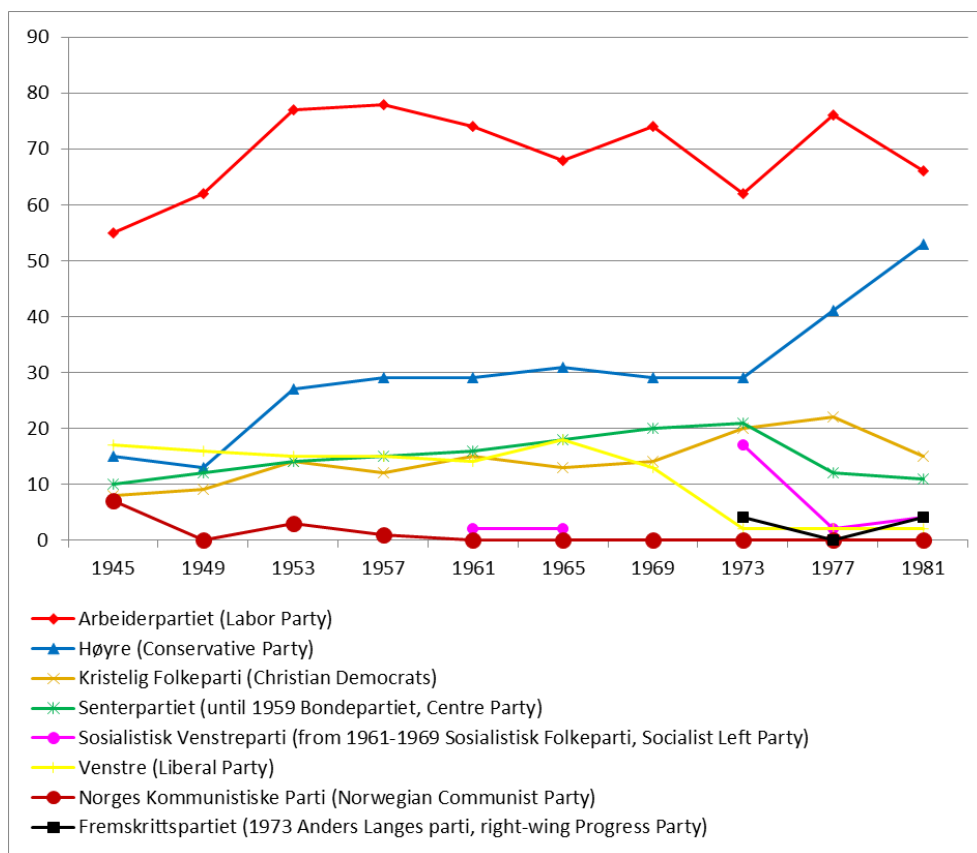
This was not what the Ministry of Education and Church had in mind. From 1951 on, the minister publicly supported a reform of the middle schools, involving a weakening of organizational differentiation. In 1952, the commission of 1947 published its last report (*Sammenfatning og utsyn*), in which it drafted for the first time the possibility of creating a new type of lower secondary school – a middle school with internal parallel tracks for vocational and theoretical education (*linjedelt ungdomsskole*). However, the report was not clear with respect to the fate of the older school types. But one of the commissions’ members, principal Heli, made it clear that he was of the opinion that these old school types should be replaced (Telhaug, 1969, p. 27).

By 1952-53, the Labor Party officially started working for such a new, internally tracked youth school (*ungdomsskole*). Its program from 1953 said that the short-term goal was to strengthen the *folkeskole* in the countryside as well as the *framhaldsskole*, so that eight years of education would become the rule in all municipalities. The next step would be to create a new comprehensive youth school to replace the old school types of *framhaldsskole* and *realskole*. To facilitate this, municipalities should build common school buildings for different school types. This stance was backed up both by economic, practical arguments and by pedagogical ones. The economic argument was related to the small population of some municipalities, as well as the tendency of overcrowded *realskoler* in the cities. In Oslo, 56 percent of the age group chose the *realskole*, and in some parts of Oslo up to 80 to 90 percent did so. It was also said that the most important educational choice should be made later in life, in order to lower the amount of social reproduction. It was hoped that a prolonged comprehensive school would lead to the higher recognition of vocational tracks and that a transformation of economic class differences into educational class differences could be prevented (Telhaug, 1969, pp. 28ff).

In 1953, Birger Bergersen became Minister of Education. He had been ambassador in Sweden and had witnessed the reform movement there. From this point on, the ministry began arguing for a comprehensive school policy, as expressed in its white paper on measures to strengthen the school system (*St. meld. nr. 9 (1954), Om tiltak til styrking av skoleverket*). According to Telhaug (1969, p. 30), the motives of the ministry were mainly economic and practical. Many of the *realskoler* were too small, and thereby bound up too many resources. Of course, several municipalities could unite their *realskoler* but that increased the problem of long distances to school for many children. *Framhaldsskolen* also required many resources, if it were ever to become a real alternative to *realskolen*. An integration of both schools would therefore be economically efficient. This was also related to the growing need of school buildings, resulting from the strong growth in student numbers.

In the spring of 1954, the ministry proposed the law on experiments in the school (*lov om forsøk i skolen*) which was passed after very little debate in June 1954. Conservative Party representatives made some minor suggestions for changes, but when these failed, the law was passed unanimously (*Forhandlinger i Odelstinget, June 17, 1954, pp. 173f, Forhandlinger i Lagtinget, June 22, 1954, pp. 75ff*). It instituted the Experimental Council (*Forskningsrådet*) which was meant to coordinate school experiments conducted in line with the law. Existing school laws and regulations could be deviated from as long as experiments were pedagogically well-founded and of interest (Mediås, 2010, p. 43). It was also stipulated that the Council should inform parliament about the experiments regularly. The law gave the ministry decision-making power as far as all school experiments were concerned. Far-reaching competencies were thus transferred from parliament to the ministry (Slagstad, 2001, pp. 379ff; Telhaug, 1969, p. 32).

Figure 4.1: Parties' number of seats in the Norwegian national parliament, 1945-1981



Source: SSB.

In the fall of 1954, the white paper mentioned above (*St. meld. nr. 9*) was discussed in parliament. Telhaug (1969, p. 32) points out that “the relations between the minister and the political opposition were still characterized by an amount of cordiality one would normally not associate with parliamentary debates”. The chairman of the Church and Education Committee in parliament, Smitt Ingebretsen, an influential member of the Conservative Party and the editor of the newspaper *Aftenposten*, called the Minister of Education a “wise man” and thought it meant much “to be able to dream together”. The minister in turn found listening to the opposition’s speakers “encouraging and stimulating” (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, October 12, 1954, p. 2249, pp. 2265f*). However, the parliamentary committee’s comment on the law proposal was not a clear statement for a new *ungdomsskole*, only for experiments. In the debate, some members of the Labor Party argued for a new *ungdomsskole*, but the details of such a school were not discussed. Telhaug (1969, p. 33) is of the opinion that parliament’s position was rather hesitant. Most representatives were worried primarily about the bad

condition of the *folkeskole*, especially in some areas of the countryside. Parliament was not equally unhappy with the old school types of *realskole* and *framhaldsskole*. The Labor Party's member, Johan Karlsen from South-Trøndelag, defended the reputation of his district's *framhaldsskole*, and *realskoler* were also mentioned, if not as often, as valuable parts of the municipal school structure (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, October 12, 1954*). Nonetheless, the Minister, Birger Bergensen, as well as state secretary, Helge Sivertsen, were enthusiastic about reforms (Telhaug, 1969, pp. 33ff).

In 1955, the first three experimental youth schools with two internal tracks (*linjedelt ungdomsskole*) were founded in the municipalities of Malm (in the county of Nord-Trøndelag), Sykkylven and Ørsta (in the county of Møre og Romsdal). In 1957, experiments began in seven more counties, in 1958 in another six and in 1959 in the last twelve (Telhaug, 1969, p. 36). One problem, however, was that the ninth school year was not obligatory, so many students in the experimental schools dropped out. The Experimental Council therefore suggested to parliament that experiments should be started with nine years of obligatory schooling (Myhre, 1971, p. 113). The various school laws were also changed in 1955 so that the amount of schooling in the countryside was increased further (Mediås, 2010, p. 44). The aim was to raise the standards of the rural schools to those of the city schools. School districts were merged and larger central schools were built: "A nice, new central school became a palpable symbol of the optimism about the future of the times" (Tønnessen, 2011, p. 65). While discussions resulted from those changes in many municipalities, the idea of centralization did not face heavy criticism until the 1960s (cf. Chapter 6.2.1). By then, however, much centralization had already taken place (Tønnessen, 2011, p. 66).

In 1958, the Ministry of Education proposed a new *folkeskole* law (*Ot. Prp. Nr. 30 (1958), Lov om folkeskolen*). In contrast to the experimental law of 1954, this proposal caused a lot of debate and split both the educational parliamentary committee and parliament itself. However, all members of the committee agreed that the law should apply to city and rural schools equally. This point was not greatly contested. The law on the people's school from 1959 (*lov om folkeskolen*), which resulted from the proposition and was passed in March 1959, regulated city and countryside primary schools in the same way and in the same law for the first time. The law made it possible for municipalities to introduce nine years of obligatory schooling, after consultation with the local school board and the ministry. The most highly contested point was whether the old school types, *realskole* and *framhaldsskole*, should be allowed to participate in the experiments with nine-year obligatory schooling. This issue divided parliament (cf. Telhaug, 1969, pp. 55ff). The opposition parties, meaning the Conservative Party, the Christian Democrats, the Centre Party and the Liberal Party, wanted to include the old school types in the experiments with nine-year obligatory schooling, but the Labor Party did not. The Labor Party had seven representatives on the parliamentary education committee, while the opposition parties had six. In the committee's statement on

the proposition (*Innstilling fra kirke- og undervisningskomiteen om lov om folkeskolen, 1959*), the division came to expression clearly. The Labor Party majority advocated nine-year comprehensive schooling without any reservations and wished for a final decision to be made concerning this. The oppositional minority, however, suggested that the municipalities themselves should choose whether to introduce nine-year obligatory schooling through the new *ungdomsskole* or the old school types. The debates on March 13, 1959 in the two chambers of the Norwegian parliament were lively (cf. *Forhandlinger i Lagtinget, March 13, 1959* and *Forhandlinger i Odelstinget, March 5, 1959*). Labor Party representatives pointed to the weaknesses of the *realskole*, which they considered to be overcrowded and lead to exclusion, and of the *framhaldsskole*, which they considered to be lacking quality. Trygve Bull, member of the parliamentary education committee for the Labor Party, expressed clearly that, in his eyes and in those of the Labor Party majority, the comprehensive principle itself was not to be subjected to experiments. Only the inner life of the school, its internal differentiation, pedagogy and so forth should be developed further through continuous experimental activity. Bull said:

“What the majority wishes is to set a binding aim for the further development of the general children and youth school in our country. Without such a binding aim the development of the school system – and thereunder not least the building of schoolhouses all around in villages and cities – can come to pass under coincidental and shifting principles, and there will be a high degree of danger for significant false investments. The majority wants it to be asserted clearly and unambiguously that the social comprehensive school principle, which has been the basis of our seven-year *folkeskole* soon for 40 years, will in the future also be extended to the two following years.” (Trygve Bull, in *Forhandlinger i Lagtinget, March 13, 1959, p.3*)

Clearly, the Labor Party cannot be accused of making a secret of its ambitions. The aim was to set the course for further reforms and to exclude any possibility of survival for the old school types. The opposition defended the old school types to a certain degree. They did not strongly disagree with the comprehensive principle and in fact said that they considered it probable that this principle should form the basis of future lower secondary schooling (cf. Telhaug, 1969, p. 56). But they asked for a more “elastic” regulation, making it possible for municipalities to offer nine-year obligatory schooling in the old school types at least during a “transitional period” (*Innstilling fra kirke- og undervisningskomiteen om lov om folkeskolen, 1959, p. 11*). They also criticized the fact that experiments with the new tracked youth school had just begun and there was not yet enough knowledge to judge whether they had been successful. They were supported in their skepticism by the Association of Norwegian Secondary School Teachers (*Norsk Lektorlag*) that had objected forcefully not only to the law proposal itself but also to the way it had been prepared, namely without any extensive involvement of any actors outside the ministry. There had been no commission to prepare the

law, as had been usual earlier. The teachers' organizations had not been asked to make suggestions (Telhaug, 1969, pp. 53f; cf. Chapter 6 for a more detailed analysis of the opposition's arguments).

Despite the opposition's caveats, the law was passed. From this point on, any municipality, which wanted to introduce nine-year obligatory schooling, had to do so by introducing the *ungdomsskole* as a new school type. Usually, the *ungdomsskole* would last three years, and the *folkeskole* would therefore be shortened to six years, but a seven-year *folkeskole* and a two-year *ungdomsskole* were also possible. For those municipalities, which already had well-developed *realskoler*, parliament made it possible to introduce a non-obligatory tenth school year. The elections of the school boards became more democratic and the church lost influence, as teachers and the local priest were no longer automatically represented. The priest was allowed to take part in and comment on religious education but no more than that. The school board received responsibility for all the schools of the municipality. It became obligatory to appoint school inspectors in every municipality, who had to be teachers, preferably with higher education and practical experience. Many of those inspectors had to work under poor conditions, but nevertheless their position constituted an important link between the different levels of governance. They followed up local school reforms and experiments and made sure that regulations were abided by. Most of the inspectors had their backgrounds in primary schooling. Finally, the state gave additional funds to countryside municipalities in order to make it possible for them to increase the length of schooling to the minimum level of the city schools (Mediås, 2010, p. 44; Myhre, 1971, pp. 114f, Telhaug, 1969, p. 62; Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, pp. 196ff). On the regional level, the state's educational strategy was backed up by the school directors, who had held an important position since 1889. From 1964, all Norwegian administrative districts (*fylker*) had their own school directors' offices. The new school directors were less politically active than the generation before but had more pedagogical competence. They were strongly involved in the introduction of nine-year obligatory schooling in their respective administrative districts by assisting the municipalities in the planning procedure, offering advice, organizing meetings and so on. The new law also gave them even more decision-making power (Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, pp. 190ff).

#### 4.1.8 Experimenting away organizational differentiation – the 1960s

To begin with, the new *ungdomsskole* was divided into vocational/practical and academic tracks resembling the older school types, as mentioned earlier. The tracks began in the second year of the *ungdomsskole*, most of the time in the eighth grade, and were distinguished in the beginning mainly by whether learning a foreign language was obligatory. During the last year, the students following the practical track had fewer hours of mathematics, social sciences and natural sciences and instead could choose from the subjects shop-floor work, homemaking, office work, agriculture or fishing and seafaring (Telhaug, 1969, p. 68). The experimental

curriculum from 1960 also included ability grouping through *kursplaner* (course plans). In Norwegian, mathematics and English there were three ability levels, while there were two in German and natural sciences. The curriculum suggested there should be ability grouping from the first year of the *ungdomsskole*, the seventh grade – in other words, at an earlier point than had been usual in the old seven-year *folkeskole*. In a long parliamentary debate on June 8, 1961, it became clear that the parliamentary majority did not want this. The Labor Party representatives, but also the representatives of the center parties, thought that there should be no ability grouping in the first year of the *ungdomsskole*, except in the subject of English, and tracking should generally be more flexible. Only the Conservative Party had not taken a position for or against tracking and ability grouping in the seventh grade and wanted experiments with different models of tracking to continue (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, June 8, 1961, Forsøksvirksomheten i skoleverket*).

In addition, the intentions of the Experimental Council to distribute students onto tracks by way of testing were not supported by Labor or Conservative politicians. There should be a free choice of tracks and ability groups. Parliament made it clear that it did not trust the pedagogical expertise and governance of the school of the Experimental Council. It was also thought the Council had assumed too many powers (cf. Telhaug, 1969, pp. 73ff, Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, pp. 188ff). Helge Sivertsen, Minister of Education from 1960 to 1965, gave parliament and teachers' associations back some influence by appointing several parliamentary commissions in the following years. In 1961, the *Folkeskole* Council was created as an advisory body to the Ministry and in 1964 the *Gymnas* Council was put in place as a substitute for the earlier Educational Council (*Undervisningsrådet*). Both councils were responsible for managing their respective schools' exams and for advising the Ministry on various issues related to the two school types (Mediås, 2010, p. 44, Myhre, 1971, p. 144, 152). In 1962, Sivertsen appointed the Gjeldsvik Committee, which was supposed to work on questions related to upper secondary schooling in the *gymnas*. In 1963, the *Folkeskole* Committee was set up with school director, Kristin Ørbeck Sørheim, as chairwoman and started to work on a law proposal which would end the experimental phase of the introduction of the *ungdomsskole* (Telhaug, 1969, p. 122). Finally, Sivertsen appointed the Steen Committee or School Committee of 1965, which was to develop a new plan for the reorganization of all upper secondary education (Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, p. 189).

Throughout the 1960s, experiments with different curricula, tracking, the introduction of a tenth grade and ability grouping continued and were widely discussed (Seidenfaden, 1977, pp. 18-26). One important aspect of this was related to the evaluation of students and to the question of which combinations of tracks, course plans and subjects would be necessary to qualify for upper secondary schooling at the *gymnas*. In 1962, the Experimental Council's suggestion that students should be assessed in relation to their ability group became part of the regulation on grading. This meant that the same grades from different ability groups were not

worth the same. In the following years, it became clear that entry into the *gymnas* required students to have been members of the highest ability groups in Norwegian, English, German and mathematics. Also, students could not have the worst grade in any subject on their final school certificate from the *ungdomsskole*. If these requirements were not met, entry examinations could be held at the *gymnas*. Other upper secondary schools, such as schools for nurses or technicians, developed similar entry requirements (Telhaug, 1969, pp. 87ff).

The Experimental Council published a number of revised versions of the experimental curriculum from 1960. These were known as the blue plan (1963), the red plan (1964) and the green plan (1965). In each of these plans, organizational differentiation was decreased further. In the blue plan, tracking was essentially abolished. The number of obligatory, common subjects for all students rose. Differentiation was now more flexible and based on different choices of elective subjects. It was made possible for all students, no matter what their elective subjects, to choose the highest ability groups in mathematics, English and Norwegian (Myhre, 1971, p. 119; Telhaug, 1969, pp. 91ff). The majority in parliament supported this development, as became clear in a new parliamentary debate in May 1963 (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, May 21, 1963*; cf. Telhaug 1969, pp. 101ff). In the red plan from 1964 and the green plan from 1965, the number of obligatory subjects was increased further (Myhre, 1971, pp. 120f). English now became an obligatory subject for all students. In the plan of 1965, practical subjects such as typing, manual training and gymnastics received more hours in the eighth grade, while esthetic subjects such as music, as well as social and natural sciences, received fewer (Telhaug, 1969, pp. 106ff).

From 1965, the Experimental Council started experimenting with *sammenholdte klasser* (literally “kept-together classes”) without ability grouping in Norwegian and, from 1968, in mathematics. The trend was one towards diminishing organizational differentiation and instead using pedagogical differentiation within the classroom. This was justified in part by studies showing that students in different ability groups did not always differ very much in actual ability. The best students in the lowest ability groups were often better than the worst students in the highest group. The groups were not homogenous (Dokka, 1986, pp. 119ff; Telhaug, 1969, p. 118). This seemed unfair to many members of parliament, as became apparent in a further parliamentary debate in June 1965 (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, June 8, 1965*). The Experimental Council therefore conducted experiments with *fellesevaluering* (common evaluation) for all students independent of ability groups in order to avoid a lock-in effect whereby choosing lower ability groups would prohibit students from entering the *gymnas*, even if they were more able than students who had chosen a higher group. This new form of evaluation independent of ability group was not supported by the *Gymnas* Council, the *Folkeskole* Council or other professional councils heard by the ministry. Also, Hans-Jørgen Dokka, pedagogue at the University of Oslo and school expert, argued that the choice was either between abolishing ability groups or keeping to relative evaluation, as evaluation



independent of ability groups would undermine students' motivation and was unjustifiable pedagogically (Dokka, 1966, Telhaug, 1969, pp. 117ff). Another important trend was that the percentage of the age group choosing the highest ability groups kept rising in the course of the 1960s, especially in the cities. Well over 50 percent chose the highest ability groups in Norwegian, English and mathematics, and by 1967 over 70 percent chose German (Telhaug 1969, p. 144). This was important as German was required for entry into the *gymnas*.

From 1965 to 1971, a government of the four "non-socialist parties", as the Conservative Party, the Centre Party, the Liberal Party and the Christian Democrats sometimes call themselves, took over with Per Borten from the Centre Party as prime minister. The victory of this coalition was in part a result of a massive struggle over Christian education, which led to the collection of over 700,000 signatures for a strengthening of the subject (cf. Chapter 6.1.1). However, no far-reaching reorientation of politics resulted from this, as many social democratic reform proposals were followed up. But the climate in society nonetheless changed. A new generation questioned the instrumental thinking of the Gerhardsen era, with its belief in progress, growth and effective production. Ecological, feminist and Marxist perspectives gained a new foothold. Individual psychological explanations were challenged by more sociological ways of thinking. Ideas of multiculturalism and individualism were directed against the standardization of the old, mono-cultural society. Figures such as Hans Skjervheim, Jürgen Habermas and Erling Lars Dale argued for dialogue and a dialectical view of pedagogy and attacked the positivism of the old times. Paulo Freire's book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* was influential. Ottar Brox's text about the situation in northern Norway was another important document of the times and expressed the rebellion of the local level against standardization from above. Karl Jan Soldad's *The Lofoten Project* is an example of how the needs of local communities with respect to schooling were also discussed to a higher degree than before (Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, pp. 205ff). In 1961, a group of former left-wing members of the Labor Party had founded the Socialist People's Party (*Sosialistisk Folkeparti*) which resulted mainly from internal struggles within the Labor Party over NATO membership and atomic weapons' policy.

In June 1965, the *Folkeskole* Committee presented its 286 page-long report about the forthcoming new school law, in which it drafted reasons for and against various forms of differentiation and evaluation (*Innstilling frå Folkeskolekomiteén av 1963 (1965)*, cf. Telhaug, 1969, pp. 122ff). In the spring of 1967, Minister of Education Kjell Bondevik from the Christian Democrats presented the law proposal to regulate the new nine-year comprehensive school (*Ot. Prp. Nr. 59, 1966-67, lov om grunnskolen*). The Minister himself was of the opinion that "one would not have received a strongly differing proposal from another government" (quoted in Telhaug, 1969, p. 129). The law was meant to end the experimental phase and regularize the new school type, the *ungdomsskole*. But the law proposal did not offer any solution to the widely discussed problems of differentiation, ability grouping and

evaluation. The Ministry was hesitant (cf. Telhaug, 1969, p. 129). A new commission was appointed, *Normalplanutvalget*, with the pedagogue Hans-Jørgen Dokka as chairman. This commission had to discuss the question of differentiation again and found itself in a “painful dilemma” (Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, p. 234). In its reports from 1970, the abolition of ability groups was suggested, but there was uncertainty about alternatives. It was said that the focus had to lie more on the individual student and that group homogenization would probably not solve the problem. However, heterogeneous classes without any organizational differentiation depended on smaller class sizes, new teaching material and the possibility of dividing students up in groups more flexibly (Dokka, 1986, pp. 119ff).

After another long parliamentary debate in April 1969, the new law was passed. The only two representatives who voted against the law were from the Socialist People’s Party. Spokesman Finn Gustavsen explained that his party could not support the law as it did not contain the necessary far-reaching changes. For example, he considered the Norwegian school to be too centralized, not democratic enough and too strongly based on exams. In his view, schools thus supported a “competition and career mentality” (*Forhandlinger i stortinget, April 21, 1969*, p. 288). He also did not support the strong focus on Christian education. The first paragraph of the law (*formålsparagrafen*), which states the school’s major aims, had been a source of massive conflict and debate revolving around the relation between church, parents’ beliefs and the school. In the end, however, a compromise was reached which was supported by all parties, except the socialists (Tønnessen, 2011, pp. 72f; cf. Chapter 6.1.1).

The question of differentiation was largely avoided. Kjeld Langeland, representative of the Conservative Party, explained in the parliamentary debate that the parliamentary committee had not taken a stand as to which form of differentiation was preferred, because it was still too early to make a decision. Experiments with various possibilities had not come far enough (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, April 21, 1969, p. 256*). However, several representatives pointed out that the trend seemed to be in the direction of abolishing ability grouping, and that this would make smaller class sizes necessary. With the law of 1969, the term *folkeskole* (people’s school) was replaced by the more modern term *grunnskole* (primary school), which comprised both the *barneskole* (children’s school) and the *ungdomsskole* (youth school). It is interesting to note that grades seven to nine, which in international discussions are considered to be lower secondary schooling, in Norway were now considered a part of primary schooling. The law obligated all municipalities to introduce the *ungdomsskole* by 1975 at the latest (Mediås, 2010, p. 45).

#### 4.1.9 Increasing oppositions in various fields from the late 1960s to the early 1980s

In 1971, the non-leftist government collapsed as a result of internal disagreement about membership of the European Community. During the 1960s, parliament had decided to apply for membership several times but had not been admitted. In 1970, it was decided re-apply, but

the government was split over the issue. While the Conservative Party supported membership, the Centre Party was against, and the Liberal Party and the Christian Democrats were split. The Labor Party again took over government. In April 1972, the Labor Party's Congress and the Norwegian Federation of Trade Unions both decided to support membership under the conditions, which had been negotiated. However, 53.5 percent of the voters voted against membership in a referendum in September 1972. This was a major defeat for the Labor Party and all other supporters of membership. The defeat resulted from a broad alliance between farmers' organizations and other organizations representing the Norwegian periphery, the radical left and its youth movement (Olstad, 2010, pp. 184ff, Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, p. 209). The Labor Party government left office. The defeat also led to the split of the Liberal Party into two parties in November 1972, which lasted until 1988 and weakened the Liberals for many years to come. The Socialist People's Party, that had lost its two representatives in parliament in the elections of 1969, built new alliances in the course of the struggle over European Community membership and in 1973, a Socialist Electoral Alliance secured nine seats in parliament. From 1976, the party was called the Socialist Left Party (*Sosialistisk Venstre*). In addition, a Marxist-Leninist Communist Party (*AKP-ml*) was founded in 1973. Its Red Electoral Alliance (*Rød Valgallianse*, from 2007 the new party *Rødt*) did not receive many votes in national elections, but its communist activists played an active role in the public debates and in teachers' organizations. The 1970s were also the time of beginning immigration to Norway and of radical reform proposals in economic and industrial relations policy (Sass, 2014b, pp. 109ff; Sejersted, 2011, pp. 334ff, pp. 400ff). From 1972 to 1973, the center parties created a short-lived government, followed by new Labor Party governments from 1973 to 1981.

During the 1970s, a major conflict took place at the pedagogical research institute in Oslo (*Pedagogisk forskningsinstitutt*) between the old positivist professors and a new generation of critical anti-positivists. It lasted throughout the 1970s and led to the opposition establishing their own research institutes in Lillehammer and Tromsø. The Experimental Council's funds increased from about four million kroner in 1965 to 46 million kroner in 1973, indicating that the number of experiments had reached an all-time high. Critical pedagogy was tested out in many ways. The curriculum from 1974 (*Mønsterplanen for grunnskolen, M74*) reflected the new radicalism in that it included for the first time chapters on gender equality, special needs education and the rights of the Sami population (Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, p. 220).

This curriculum no longer contained ability grouping. In 1972, a decision had been taken to end ability grouping from 1975 onwards (Mediås, 2010, p. 47; *Imst. S. nr. 287 (1971-72)*). In 1979, the Ministry of Education issued new directives, stating that organizational differentiation, now defined as permanent ability grouping over a longer period, was not permissible. Grouping students was now only allowed on a short-term basis and for specific topics within the subjects (*St. meld. Nr. 34 (1978-79), p. 11*). These directives were approved

by the parliamentary majority of the Labor Party and the Socialist Left Party. The Liberal Party did not take a clear stand, but in the parliamentary debate on May 11, 1979, the liberal MP, Odd Einar Dørum, seemed to sympathize with the Labor Party's view that ability grouping was a thing of the past. However, the Conservative Party, the Christian Democrats and the Centre Party disagreed. Their representatives had a majority on the Parliamentary Education Committee and expressed their discontent with the new directives. Representatives of the Christian Democrats and the Centre Party emphasized especially that local conditions should decide which form of differentiation should be chosen in a school and that abolishing all organizational differentiation did not seem right. The Conservative Party now attacked the Labor Party's school politics in harsher words than in earlier debates, and the Labor Party's representatives responded forcefully (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, May 11, 1979*). Nonetheless, the directives were passed. Due to this decision, a long-term development from parallel school types to tracked lower secondary schooling, to ability grouping, and finally to the abolition of all organizational differentiation came to an end.

Some other important debates and developments of the 1960s and 1970s should be mentioned. The debate on grading is one of them. As mentioned above, the curriculum of 1939, which could first be applied properly only after the war, no longer allowed for grades in the first three years of the *folkeskole*. From 1962, grades in the fourth grade were also abolished (Tønnessen/Telhaug, 1996, p. 23; *St. meld. nr. 42 (1964-65)*, p. 15f). In September 1972, the Ministry of Education appointed an Evaluation Committee (*Evalueringsutvalget for skoleverket*) to examine all questions related to the evaluation of students in the general school system. In the same year, grades were abolished throughout the six-year children's school, following a suggestion of the *Normalplanutvalg* (Mediås, 2010, p. 46; Myhre, 1971, p. 140). As this was achieved without major debate, many supporters of the reforms, such as the members of the Primary School Committee and the Experimental Council, as well as many school politicians within the Labor Party, had anticipated that the next step would be to abolish grades in the youth school. On February 26, 1974, the Ministry, led at this point by the Labor politician, Bjartmar Gjerde, issued regulations according to which grades in the youth school would now be restricted to Norwegian, English and Mathematics. This led to broad protests. Not only parents and students expressed their disapproval with the aid of petitions and demonstrations; teachers' organizations, including the Norwegian Teachers' Association, were also against the new regulations. The Norwegian Teachers' Association had previously signaled that they supported a reduction in grading in the youth school but there was conflict about this within the organization itself (cf. Chapter 5). In April, the Conservative Party, the Christian Democrats, the Centre Party and even the Socialist Electoral Alliance issued statements claiming that the new regulations should be withdrawn and that no new regulations should be issued before the reports of the Evaluation Committee had been published and discussed (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, May 8, 1974*, p. 3126). On May 8, 1974,

the regulations were debated in parliament, and the minister, Bjartmar Gjerde, conceded that he would repeal them, even though his parties' representatives clearly still supported abolishing grades.

Later the same year, the Evaluation Committee published its first report, where the majority of the committee suggested that grades should be abolished in the *ungdomsskole* as well. The minority agreed with abolishing grades in the children's school but thought that *ungdomsskole* students should be given grades if they wanted to. Another minority even wanted to abolish grades in upper secondary schools (*NOU 1974: 42 (1974) Karakterer, eksamen, kompetanse m.v. i skoleverket, Eva I*). In its second report from 1978, the Committee suggested that entry to the *gymnas* should become independent of grades (*NOU 1978: 2 (1978) Vurdering, kompetanse og inntak i skoleverket, Eva II*). These reports created much debate. Over 2600 comments were sent in during the official hearing of the documents from the Evaluation Committee. Two-thirds of those were negative about abolishing grades in the *ungdomsskole*. Eventually, the Labor Party gave up the project and the topic disappeared from the political agenda (cf. Chapter 5; Tønnessen, 2011, pp. 79ff; Tønnessen/Telhaug, 1996, p. 26). However, the new radical thinking of the 1970s contributed to the establishment of student boards, parent boards and cooperation boards in primary schools. It also led to the construction of "open schools" with architecture supposed to be conducive to both group work and individual work (Tønnessen, 2011, p. 80).

Another important debate was related to the status of private schools. This had long been an issue of conflict between the Labor Party and the non-leftist parties, especially the Christian Democrats. Under the Christian Democrats' Minister of Education Kjell Bondevik, a commission had been appointed in 1966 to prepare regulations on the funding of private schools. Before this, private schools had either not received any support from the state or had received shifting financial support depending on changing directives (Myhre, 1971, pp. 156ff). The law on private schools, which was passed in 1970, specified that private schools could receive state support if they wished to experiment or permanently teach based on alternative pedagogical ideas than those applied in the public schools, if they were based on a particular religious or ethical worldview, or if they filled a quantitative need which was not covered by public schools (Myhre, 1971, p. 158). The law thus gave greater security to private schools (cf. Chapter 6.1.1).

Another important post-war debate concerning the content of schooling pertained to the written language standard used in school. As mentioned earlier, two language standards, *nynorsk* (New Norwegian) and *bokmål* (literally "book language"), had developed since the 1840s, and the *nynorsk* standard had been introduced as the main teaching language in more and more school districts across the country. From 1945 onwards, *nynorsk* began to lose ground, partly due to increasing centralization and urbanization. As the number of school

districts was reduced, the typically small, rural *nynorsk* districts were merged with larger districts. In the resulting local elections about the language standard, *bokmål* was often reintroduced. In addition, there was a lack of *nynorsk* schoolbooks (Allmenningen, 2002b, pp. 130ff). In the course of the 1950s to 1970s, the idea of a common standard written form was given up but language remained a highly contested topic in school politics (cf. Chapter 6.3).

The first revision of the 1969 *grunnskole* law was related to the inclusion of disabled children in the comprehensive system of primary education. During the 1950s and 1960s, more special schools for such children had been built. However, calculations showed that the demand for such schools would grow further. It became more usual to claim that children with special needs should be integrated into the comprehensive system for as long as possible. Again, the Labor Party pushed for integration, while the Conservative Party, the Christian Democrats and the Centre Party were more skeptical (Dalen, 2006, p. 46). In 1976, the law on special schools from 1951 was integrated into the *grunnskole* law on primary schooling. It was decided that financing should “follow the student” and that special schools should continue to exist as centers of competency in the municipalities (Haug 1999, pp. 137ff, Tønnessen, 2011, p. 69).

Finally, when the structure of the primary schools had been largely decided, upper secondary education also became subject to reforms in the 1960s and especially the 1970s. In 1967, the Gjeldsvik Committee published its report regarding the reform of the *gymnas* and suggested that tracking at *gymnas* level should be replaced with a core of comprehensive education and elective subjects (Mediås, 2010, p. 53; Telhaug, 1979). Besides the *gymnas*, there was a large variety of other secondary schools for 16- to 19-year-olds, which had no real connection to each other. Some were vocational, some more generally academic. They were anchored in very different kinds of networks. As mentioned already, the Steen Committee worked on this question between 1967 and 1970. In 1974, a law on secondary schooling (*lov om videregående opplæring*) was passed, which turned all former separate school types into different branches of upper secondary schooling. Debates took place both over the name of these schools and over whether upper secondary schools should consist of several branches or just one. The term “middle school” was rejected since vocational schools were meant to provide final education in many cases. The Conservative Party and the Socialist Left Party both vetoed the government’s suggestion to call all secondary schools *gymnas*, though for different reasons. Finally, the term “secondary education” (*videregående opplæring*) was chosen. The Labor Party wanted the principle of comprehensive schooling to apply also to upper secondary schools, which for them meant that several branches should be combined in one school. The Conservative Party was more in favor of schools with only one branch, meaning that general academic schools (*gymnas*) and vocational schools (*yrkesskoler*) should continue to co-exist separately. The teachers of both school types did not really support a merger, since *gymnas* teachers often felt their competencies were not valued highly enough,

whereas the vocational school teachers defended their practical competencies against such claims. In the end, the counties (*fylker*) received the responsibility to decide whether upper secondary schooling should be organized based on the comprehensive principle or in the form of parallel schools. In most cases, schools with both general and vocational branches became usual. From the late 1960s onwards, pedagogical experiments were conducted also at upper secondary level, first in the privately organized *Forsøksgymnas* and later in public upper secondary schools (Tønnessen, 2011, pp. 89ff).

Due to the law on teacher education of 1973, teacher education was extended to three years for all graduates of upper secondary education. Teacher training schools were turned into pedagogical colleges and integrated into a system of district colleges, which had been founded in 1969 in various small towns around the country with the aim of decentralizing higher education (Mediås, 2010, p. 56). New universities had also been founded in Bergen in 1946 and in Trondheim and Tromsø in 1968. In 1966, the organizations of male and female primary school teachers, as well as two smaller organizations, merged again to form the Norwegian Teachers' Association (*Norsk Lærerlag*), thereby overcoming the gendered division of primary teachers' organizations dating from 1912 (Mediås, 2010, p. 58f).

Conservative currents among teachers, the population and politicians had turned the phrase "peace in the school" (*ro i skolen*) into a new motto. It was said that reforms had taken place long enough; what was needed now was a period of consolidation and restoration (cf. Langslet, 1977). The political programs of the parties in the late 1970s reflected this (Kjøl/Telhaug, 1999, p. 104). In the 1980s, the conservatives managed to get the upper hand. A Conservative Party minority government came to office after the 1981 elections. The quality of education became a major topic, as conservatives thought that the comprehensive school reforms and the curriculum from 1974 had weakened educational standards. The Experimental Council was disbanded in 1984. The Council had long been an irritation to the conservatives, since it helped put the Labor Party's politics into practice and had also grown very large during the 1970s. Further changes in the school systems were now supposed to be based on decentralized, locally led development (Tønnessen, 2011, pp. 81ff).

It would be wrong to say that reforms and experiments came to a complete halt at this point. Reforms slowed down and the new regulations of the 1980s were focused on the content of schooling more than on the outer structure of the system. However, during the 1990s, the comprehensive reform ideas were taken up again by the Labor Party's Minister of Education, Gudmund Hernes. Under Hernes' leadership, the comprehensive primary school was extended by another year by lowering the age of school enrolment from seven to six years and thereby extending the children's school to seven years again. Upper secondary education was also reformed further. However, at this point, the historical narrative of this Chapter will come to a close. The final words shall be given to the Labor Party representative, Einar Førde,

Minister of Education from October 1979 to October 1981, who pointed out the following in the final parliamentary debate on organizational differentiation in May 1979:

“This demand for ‘peace in the school’ apparently has a totally debilitating effect on the ability for thinking of the conservatives. If it is so that they are unhappy with the situation of today, they must of course reform themselves out of it – unless they are so naive as to believe that there is a way back to what was, back to the *framhaldsskole* and the *realskole* [...]. But they can hardly be so naive. This way back is of course as closed as the way back to the Garden of Eden. The social unrest and the unrest in the school which would arise if one attempted to turn back to the systems we have left behind would be unrest of a wholly different character and of a wholly different seriousness than the unrest which is now used as an excuse for not doing anything about what one doesn’t like.” (Einar Førde, in *Forhandlinger i Stortinget, May 11, 1979, p. 3378*)

#### 4.2 Norway: summary and identification of trends and critical junctures

The discussion above shows that the development of the Norwegian comprehensive primary school was closely connected to the development of the Norwegian state and nation and that social considerations played an important role, at least from the 1860s. The social motive became more and more dominant over time but was also related to nation building: the important aim was to unite different classes in a common school for everyone. From the start, the urban elites’ interest in having access to a high-status secondary school for their children came into conflict with the interests of liberal nation-builders, and later social democrats, to forge a united, enlightened people and overcome class differences. For example, the fact that Latin almost disappeared from the curriculum as early as 1896 illustrates that conservative urban elites had only a weak influence on school reform processes even at that early stage.

Over time, the trend towards the comprehensivization of primary and later also lower secondary and upper secondary schooling was never reversed but continued steadily. It is interesting to note that phases of reform alternated with phases of at least seeming constancy with fascinating regularity. However, the system was never entirely stable; even during less reform-oriented times, education debates continued and the ground was laid for the next cycle of reform. In general, each comprehensive school reform had feedback effects on later reform debates, for example by strengthening the position of primary school teachers, by increasing the quality of rural schooling especially or by disseminating ideological arguments in favor of comprehensivization.

After several decades of reform debates, the first attempt to create a three-year comprehensive primary school was made in 1869. In 1896, five years of comprehensive primary schooling became a reality for the vast majority of children. In 1920, seven years of comprehensive schooling were the result of the success of the Labor Party representative, Gjøstein, in



convincing parliament not to finance secondary schools that started earlier than in the eighth grade. This decision about financing had the character of a critical juncture because it effectively set the course for future events. The decision was formalized in the laws of the 1930s, which came about also as a result of the *Arbeitsschule* movement. In 1959, the Labor Party's majority decision not to include the old school types in experiments with nine-year obligatory schooling must be considered another especially important critical juncture. Until then, the *realskole* had been the school type, which most "naturally" led to the *gymnas* and to university for the children – and especially the sons – of the urban upper classes. The decision of 1959 effectively meant that this school type would be abolished. Again, financial incentives resulting from this decision played an important role because rural municipalities especially needed money for their schools, which they could only get if they introduced the new youth school. The decision therefore strongly influenced the development of the 1960s, and laid the ground for the law of 1969, which finalized the introduction of nine-year obligatory, comprehensive schooling. It thus had important feedback effects. Nevertheless, the decision of 1959 did not necessarily imply that organizational differentiation in the new type of school would be reduced as consistently as was the case during the 1960s and 1970s. The fact that this process advanced the way it did, without major opposition at least until the late 1970s, would seem to warrant a more detailed analysis of this reform period. The legacies of the period continued to shape the Norwegian school system up to the present day, which is why the period as a whole can also be considered a critical juncture. From the second half of the 1970s, conservative resistance grew stronger again. The 1980s were again a decade of constancy, rather than reform, in the education system. For this reason, Chapters 5 and 6 systematically analyze the period from the late 1950s to 1979.

In addition to being a story of continued comprehensivization, the development of the Norwegian school system is also a story of secularization. The influence of the church on the school diminished continuously. Many functions, which had previously been performed by the church, were taken over by the growing state bureaucracy. While this was supported by large sections of the political spectrum, there was also a certain amount of resistance. In addition, urbanization and centralization were important trends influencing the development of the school system. The enormous urban-rural differences in Norway did not disappear, but the quality of rural schools slowly increased in line with the peripheral movement's and the labor movement's goals. At the same time, centralization of the state bureaucracy continued to cause conflicts, which also came to expression in the language struggle. Finally, the education system was continuously opened up to the female half of the population from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards. How all these trends and the connected political cleavages made their presence felt in the period from the late 1950s to the 1970s, and how this was related to the trend towards comprehensivization, is subject to more detailed analysis in Chapter 6.

### 4.3 The development of the German school system until the 1980s

Analogous to the discussion above of the Norwegian development, this section discusses the historical development of schooling in Prussia and Germany/NRW from the early beginnings up to the early 1980s. It is shown that school reforms have long been a topic of great debate in Germany. Even though there were repeated reform periods of educational expansion, these were often followed by periods of educational restriction. Also, the development of the school system was mainly characterized by a trend towards hierarchical differentiation into parallel school types. Many actors were involved in the heated conflicts regarding access to different kinds of education for different parts of the population. While class background was one of the most hotly debated factors, gender and denomination were also issues of conflict, involving not only the political parties, but also the churches, teachers' organizations and so forth.

#### 4.3.1 The early beginning

The geographical area of today's German federal state of NRW has been through many shifting historical phases. In early times, Celtic and Germanic tribes lived there. In the Gallic War (58-51 B.C.), Caesar's troops took over the area left of the Rhine river, and from the 1<sup>st</sup> century the Romans began constructing cities there (Nonn, 2009, p. 13). Latin was the official language of the Roman Empire and from the 4<sup>th</sup> century, Christianity became its state religion (Nonn, 2009, p. 20). In the middle of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, Roman rule in the area broke down and the Franks took over. The ancient tradition of city schools, which the Romans had brought, perished with the end of the empire (Friedeburg, 1992, p. 15). In the following centuries, the impressive Roman infrastructure eroded and the population shrank. Besides the Franks, the Saxons resided in parts of today's Westphalia. While the Franks had been Christians since the 6<sup>th</sup> century, the Saxons had not. Charlemagne, who resided in the city of Aachen most of the time, eventually conquered the Saxons and initiated a long period of Christianization. After the division of the Carolingian Empire, the entire region became a part of the Kingdom of the Eastern Franks. In the following centuries, the region became more and more politically fragmented. Many territories of the region, especially in today's Westphalia, were ruled by the church, while others, especially in the Rhineland, were various dukedoms. Cologne, Aachen and Dortmund became free cities (Nonn, 2009, pp. 17ff). Especially Cologne became the center of the region's trade and the city's tradesmen were also involved in the founding of the Hanse. Over one hundred cities in the area were connected to this trade network which was influential until the 16<sup>th</sup> century (Nonn, 2009, p. 32).

In 1388, a university was founded in Cologne, which remained the only university in the region until the 17<sup>th</sup> century when universities were founded in Paderborn and Duisburg. In the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, the universities of Münster and Bonn followed (Nonn, 2009, p. 34). Monastery and cathedral Latin schools played an important role as centers of scholarship even before the first universities were founded. From the 14<sup>th</sup> century, private schools teaching

reading, writing and numeracy in German developed. Nonetheless, a knowledge of Latin remained crucial for careers not only in the church, but also in administration, trade, legal relations and, of course, in the schools themselves. The early Latin schools were also open to poor children but offered only limited possibilities for social ascent, as sons of farmers and craftsmen tended to fill up the ranks of the lower clergy, teachers and scribes, while higher positions in the clergy were reserved for the aristocracy (Friedeburg, 1992, pp. 16ff).

The Reformation weakened the rulers of the church territories, even though it was adopted only in the diocese of Minden and in the small county of Lippe (Nonn, 2009, p. 26). It also entailed a growing interest in and need for the capacity to read, and thereby contributed to the development of elementary schooling in the countryside – not only in Protestant, but after the counter-reformation, also in Catholic areas. In earlier times, the priest had been responsible for the Christian education of rural children. Sextons now received the role of teachers and elementary schools developed. These schools were entirely different from the urban Latin schools and private schools. Latin schools, with their classic curriculum, which from the 16<sup>th</sup> century also included Greek, became more clearly linked to the status claims of the upper status groups. Social background thereby became more important for access to higher schooling (Friedeburg, 1992, pp. 22ff). As the territories in the area of today's NRW were so numerous, it would be difficult to trace the development of early schooling in all of them. It is, however, important to point out that, in most cases, the territorial rulers could not count on a high degree of educational enthusiasm in the general population. Many parents could not afford the tuition fees and the farmers' children were needed as workers. The new primary schools were therefore mainly a tool for stabilizing and enforcing the rulers' claims to centralized power and were mostly forced onto the population from above. They were an element of state-building (Friedeburg, 1992, pp. 29ff). This also holds true for the development of higher schooling which was linked more clearly to the interests and functions of the state. One element of this tendency is the introduction of state exams, for example for lawyers in 1755 in Prussia. State exams had feedback effects on secondary schools, in particular through the introduction of the Prussian *Abitur* exam in 1788 (Herrlitz et al, 2009, pp. 33f).

During the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, most of the region was controlled in some way either by the Catholic dynasty of the Wittelsbachs or by the Protestant dynasty of the Hohenzollern; the latter had its center of power in Brandenburg and Eastern Prussia. After the French Revolution, the French army took over the region left of the Rhine river. From 1810, also parts of Westphalia were governed by members of Napoleon's family (Nonn, 2009, pp. 17ff). The French Revolution, with its declaration of freedom, equality and fraternity, marked an important change also in pedagogical debates. In 1792, Condorcet suggested introducing a ladder-system of schooling, with an obligatory four-year primary school followed by middle schools and higher schools for especially gifted children, supported with scholarships for the

poor. All tuition fees should be abolished. At the same time, liberal ideals suggested that public education should remain as independent of the state administration as possible to guarantee that short-term political interests would not interfere with scientific progress (Friedeburg, 1992, p. 54). Later, Jacobin plans to introduce obligatory boarding schools in order to secure equality of opportunity were more radical. In Prussia, liberal reformers of the time, such as Wilhelm von Humboldt and Johann Wilhelm Sövern, shared the belief in a ladder-system of education and thought that the state's influence should be minimized. Humboldt was appointed leader of the section for culture and public education in the Prussian government in 1809, a position from which he resigned around a year later, when realizing that his intended reforms were not entirely in line with the Prussian state's interest. Reform ideas also lost ground in France once Robespierre had been ousted from power (Herrlitz et al, 2003, p. 11; Friedeburg, 1992, pp. 53ff).

Prussia had slowly expanded its territories in the region of today's NRW, and after the Congress of Vienna, the Rhineland and Westphalia became Prussian provinces (Nonn, 2009, pp. 17ff). However, the French attempts to modernize the region had lasting influence – for example, a variant of the French Civil Code remained in effect in the Rhineland until 1900 (Elkar, 1995, p. 63; Nonn, 2009, pp. 57f). In the following, this chapter will focus on the development of schooling in Prussia up to 1945 and then in today's federal state of NRW, founded in 1946.

#### 4.3.2 Schooling as an element of state-building or as a social right? Conflicts and reforms in early 19<sup>th</sup> century Prussia

The defeat by Napoleon's army in 1806/07 led to a series of reforms in the Prussian state. The aim was controlled modernization from above, in order to achieve what France had achieved through violent upheavals (Herrlitz et al, 2009, p. 29). During this early phase of capitalist development, feudal fetters still stood in the way of economic development and leading Prussian politicians wanted to get rid of them. Agrarian and trade reforms played a major role in this process. About 75 to 80 percent of the Prussian population were peasants. With the edicts of October 1807 and of November 1810, hereditary serfdom (*Erbuntertänigkeit/Realleibeigenschaft*) was abolished. The edicts were sabotaged by the feudal lords, and in 1816 they were replaced by a new declaration, involving much worse conditions for the farmers. As a result of these reforms, farmers in eastern Germany lost much land to Prussian lords. In addition, the commons were privatized and 86 percent of this land was given to the lords. In the East Prussian provinces, the aristocratic *Junkers* remained the main landowners and retained many of their legal privileges until the Weimar Republic (Herrlitz et al, 2009, pp. 23f). Some large farms existed also in Westphalia, but in the Rhineland they were the exception. Compared to Prussia as a whole, Westphalia and the Rhineland had a very low percentage of barren land and a high percentage of cultivated land in 1815. The French had already abolished hereditary serfdom in some areas but had not had

much success in modernizing the underdeveloped agricultural sector (Elkar, 1995, pp. 28ff). The Prussian agricultural reforms contributed to a striking increase in crop yields in Westphalia and the Rhineland during the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Elkar, 1995, pp. 36ff).

**Table 4.3: Population in the area of today's NRW, 1816-2013**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Population</b>
<b>1816</b>	3 057 000
<b>1864</b>	5 150 000
<b>1910</b>	9 574 716
<b>1925</b>	10 964 398
<b>1939</b>	11 935 336
<b>1950</b>	13 197 008
<b>1958</b>	15 459 265
<b>1960</b>	15 852 476
<b>1965</b>	16 735 736
<b>1970</b>	17 004 851
<b>1975</b>	17 129 615
<b>1980</b>	17 058 193
<b>1990</b>	17 319 651
<b>2000</b>	18 009 865
<b>2014</b>	17 638 098

*Sources: Statistisches Reichsamt, 1914, S.2 (data of 1816 and 1864, numbers include the governmental districts of Trier and Koblenz, which do not belong to NRW today), Statistisches Reichsamt, 1930, S.6 (data of 1910 and 1925, own calculations), IT.NRW (data of 1939 and 1950 censuses), Statistisches Bundesamt (data from 1958-2014)*

In addition, freedom of trade was introduced through several edicts in 1810 and 1811. The monopoly of the guilds was abolished, as well as the privileges of craftsmen in the cities. Membership of guilds became voluntary. While freedom of trade was slightly restricted again after the failed revolution of 1848, economic liberalism finally prevailed during the 1860s. The social results of these reforms were threefold. Firstly, the population started growing significantly (cf. Table 4.3). Secondly, the early capitalist industry could not absorb the growing masses of landless laborers. This led, thirdly, to the proletarianization of the rural and urban lower strata and to the increasing relevance of what became known as “the social question” (Herrlitz et al, 2009, pp. 25f).

**Table 4.4: German population in rural and urban municipalities (in percent) and per km<sup>2</sup>, 1875-2000**

Year	Area	Rural municipalities (fewer than 2000 people)	Urban municipalities, total (more than 2000 people)	2000-5000	5000-20000	20000-100000	100000 and more	Population per km <sup>2</sup>
1875	Westphalia	46.7	53.3	27.5	16.7	9.1		94.3
	Rhineland	39.7	60.3	17.8	21.6	20.9		141
	German Reich	61	39	12.6	12.0	14.4		79.2
1910	Westphalia	19.8	80.2	16.8	23.8	27.1	12.6	202.3
	Rhineland	20.8	79.2	11.8	17.7	16.9	32.9	266.3
	German Reich	40.0	60.0	11.2	14.1	13.4	21.3	124.2
1925	Westphalia	16.5	83.5	13.8	21	31.2	17.6	236.7
	Rhineland	18	82	11	15	14.8	41.2	297.2
	German Reich	35.6	64.4	10.8	13.1	13.7	26.8	134.3
1939	Westphalia	14.3	85.7				30.5	257.7
	Rhine Province	15.5	84.5				49.4	311.2
	German Reich	30.9	69.1				29	132.1
1955/54	NRW	8.6	91.4	9.3	17.8	21.3	43	420
	Federal Republic	26.1	73.9	12.9	16.2	15.6	29.2	201
1970	NRW	2.8	97.2	4.3	18.1	32.1	42.6	497
	Federal Republic	18.4	81.6	11.2	19.1	18.7	32.6	244
2000	NRW	0	100	0.1	12.9	41.2	45.8	528
	Federal Republic (without Eastern states)	5.3	94.7	8.6	26.5	27.7	32	270

Sources: Statistisches Reichsamt, 1880 (p. 1, 6), 1914 (p. 4-6), 1930 (p. 5-9), 1942 (p. 8, 23), Statistisches Bundesamt, 1954 (p. 31, 34-38), 1971 (p. 34), 1980 (p. 51), 2002 (p. 46, 57)

The principle of equality before the law, which was expressed in these reforms, had its educational equivalent in the neo-humanist reformers' idea of a principle of general human education (*allgemeine Menschenbildung*). Several educational reforms in early 19<sup>th</sup> century Prussia actually took place before Westphalia and the Rhineland became Prussian provinces, from 1809 to 1814. Prussian politicians attempted to mobilize the population against the French occupying force by promising new opportunities for participation in the future Prussian state, also in exchange for the collection of new taxes, which were needed to consolidate the tight budget (Herrlitz et al, 2009, pp. 29f). From 1819, the political climate became more hostile to liberal reform proposals, and reforms after this point served more

conservative aims (see below, cf. Hohendahl, 1982, p. 252). Herrlitz et al (2009, pp. 33ff) identify three main tendencies in the educational reforms in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The first is the linkage of higher education to the interests and functions of the state, as mentioned above. In 1810, Humboldt introduced the philosophical state exam (*pro facultate docendi*) for secondary school teachers. The philosophical faculties at the Prussian universities thus became the professional faculties for secondary teaching degrees on a par with the traditional faculties. In 1817, regulated, separate and hierarchically ordered career paths based on varying educational qualifications were introduced within the state bureaucracy (*Laufbahnwesen*).

The second main tendency of the reforms was the increased institutional separation of elementary and secondary schooling. Despite the liberal reformers' plan to create a ladder-system of education, the opposite development took place. In 1810, 91 Latin schools, which were now called *Gymnasien*, were officially recognized as higher schools – among a mass of different institutions of varying quality. In 1834, the *Abitur* exam was made obligatory to become a senior civil servant. On the one hand, the old status privileges of the nobility were thereby restricted; on the other hand, the regulation had a social closure effect on the sons of the lower classes. Social exclusivity was also necessary to convince the nobility to send their sons to public higher schools and was expressed through an extraordinary focus on classical languages, which made up at least 40 percent of the curriculum. At the same time, the meritocratic ideology legitimated the system. One more reason for this development, and the failure of the liberal reform intentions, was that the state did not have enough money to create a ladder-system without the support of the landed nobility. A tax reform was impeded by the massive opposition of this class. The Süvern reform proposal of 1819 (see below) thus failed, since landed property owners did not want to pay for rural primary schools. The existing 17,635 rural schools remained unaffected by the reforms (Herrlitz et al, 2003, pp. 36ff).

The third element of the reform was the development of separate status groups among teachers. Primary school teachers (*Volksschullehrer*) received a two- to three-year education from the teacher seminaries, for which final exams were introduced in 1826. The seminaries were strictly controlled and the curricula were limited. Secondary school teachers on the other hand studied at a university for at least three years and developed into a respected group of civil servants. The two groups were far removed from each other socially (Herrlitz et al, 2009, pp. 40ff). While primary school teachers' wages went up considerably in the following decades, food prices rose even more quickly, so in effect real wages went down. As a result, many primary school teachers could only survive by working as organists or the like in churches and by payment in kind (Herrlitz et al, 2009, pp. 54f).

The liberal Prussian reformer, Johann Wilhelm Süvern, introduced a far-reaching reform proposal in 1819. It aimed at dividing the school system up into a primary stage, a lower and

an upper secondary stage, which should be linked to each other in a ladder-system. All public schools should primarily impart general education and should not prepare directly for any line of work. Infusing Prussian youth with a “devout love for king and state” should be the aim of all public education (Süvern, 1819, p. 21). Süvern assumed that the primary stage would be sufficient for the educational needs of the lower classes in both the cities and the countryside. The lower secondary stage would lead up to a point where youths would either start training in a trade or continue their academic education in upper secondary schooling at a *Gymnasium* (Süvern, 1819, p. 22). However, after 1819, the idea of general humanist education was replaced again by the idea of the natural inequality of status education (Herrlitz et al, 2009, p. 61). Ludolph von Beckedorff, who took over the primary school department (*Volksschulreferat*) at the Prussian Ministry of Culture in 1820, criticized Süvern’s reform proposals. According to him, it was wrong to assume that all human beings were the same and should therefore, in principle, compete on the same basis in the school system and learn the same things. Separate schools were needed for children of peasants, townspeople (*Bürger*) and scholars (*Gelehrte*). These status groups, he claimed, were “different, but equally honorable” (Schweim, 1966, pp. 229). Pretending anything else would only create discontent in society, and – although it might suit Republics with democratic constitutions – it would be especially incompatible with monarchical institutions. All children should be taught the same in terms of religion and morals but not in terms of competencies and knowledge (Schweim, 1966, pp. 222ff). In other words, Beckedorff argued that political and social stability could only be safeguarded if educational opportunities remained restricted.

Despite the change in the political climate after 1819, the primary school system continued to expand. Teacher seminaries were greatly expanded under Beckedorff’s leadership. Compulsory schooling was enforced gradually in the different Prussian provinces. Even though various regulations of the 18th century had already postulated compulsory schooling, these had been declarations of intent rather than binding regulations (Herrlitz et al, 2003, pp. 49ff, Nonn, 2009, pp. 42f). In the countryside, compulsory schooling was often only enforced if children were not needed as agricultural laborers. According to Prussian school statistics, about 60 percent of the approximately 2.2 million children between six and 14 years of age were enrolled in public schools in 1816. In the province of Saxony, the number was 85 percent, in Westphalia 69 percent, in the Rhine province about 50 percent, and in the eastern province of Posen only 22 percent. By 1846, considerable progress had been made especially in the Rhine province, where the school enrolment rate was now 86 percent, which placed the province right behind Saxony, where school enrolment was now 95 percent. The Rhine province thereby emerged from one of the laggards into one of the leaders. In Westphalia, school enrolment went up to 84 percent, and even in Posen it went up to around 70 percent (Dieterici, 1848, p. 47). This development laid the ground for Prussia’s much acclaimed leading role in schooling during this period, since these enrolment rates were higher than in



many other Western countries (Herrlitz et al, 2009, pp. 50f, see however critical remarks in Leschinsky/Roeder, 1983, p. 139). This was clearly a source of pride for the Prussian administration. In the statistics of 1848, the following claim was made:

“One of the most important affairs of all Christian states is the care of the governments for public education; for the dissemination of general knowledge all the way to the lowest classes of citizens is the appropriate means to awaken respect for the laws and acceptance of the regulations of the state power for the security, convenience and comforts of life of their subjects. [...] What has happened in this regard since the reorganization of the state in the year 1814 has in all states of Europe and America found deserved appreciation, and not rarely has it happened that many of these states have secured for themselves closer insight into the inner organization of this school system to use it as a model for similar institutions [...]” (Dieterici, 1848, p. 33)

However, conditions, especially in the countryside, remained relatively backwards, and child labor was usual. In this early capitalist phase, low wages and low productivity contributed to tough conditions for working class children. 15-hour workdays at factories were not rare. The bureaucrats at the Ministry of Culture, such as Beckedorff, did not principally oppose child labor, even though they did not support its most brutal forms. They were mainly worried about introducing a few hours of religious and basic elementary education into the workday. The industrial development during the second half of the 19th century finally made child labor in factories redundant but it continued to be a problem in the countryside (Herrlitz et al, 2009, p. 52; Kuhlemann, 1991, p. 182).

Another issue was financing schools. Around 1848, the state only covered about five percent of school budgets. The main financial burden was shouldered by municipal entities (*Schulsozietäten*), consisting of all local inhabitants with an income, who received no relevant influence in return for their forced contributions, as well as, in many cases, by the parishes (Kuhlemann, 1991, p. 181, Leschinsky/Roeder, 1983, pp. 125f). Parents also had to pay tuition fees. In the countryside, school boards were primarily an instrument of power of the manorial lords, who did not have to contribute to the financing of schooling. As a result, there was an urban-rural division in Prussian schooling and the primary schools in the countryside were often underfinanced (Herrlitz et al, 2009, p. 53). Due to swift population growth, the number of students more than doubled between 1816 and 1846, but the number of teachers only rose by 40 percent, so that the teacher-pupil ratio went from 1:54 to 1:80 (Dieterici, 1848, pp. 36f). At this point, it should also be remarked that municipal government was undemocratic in all of Prussia until 1918, but in the Rhineland voting rights on the municipal level were even more restricted than in the other provinces. According to the compromise of the Prussian state with the upper business classes in the Rhineland, which was achieved through a new regulation in 1853, only around five percent of the population had voting rights

(Nonn, 2009, p. 56). Nonetheless, some of the mayors in the region did act as modernizers and attempted various social reforms (Reulecke, 1995, pp. 85f). The cities also developed their school systems rather independently (Kuhlemann, 1991, p. 181).

Despite the conservative politics of the Prussian administration and monarchical government, liberal ideas remained alive among the primary school teachers. They began organizing themselves in the late 18th century. Around 1840, a radicalization took place, and teachers started discussing pedagogical and political questions. This was frowned upon by the Prussian Ministry of Culture. Indeed, the leaders of this new teacher movement, such as Friedrich Adolph Diesterweg, seemed to assume that their educational program could change society and free the people (Herrlitz et al, 2009, pp. 55ff). The revolution of March 1848 gave new impetus to the movement. Protestant liberals as well as early socialists had already had their political center in Cologne for a while (Elkar, 1995, pp. 64f). On March 3, 1848, 5000 people gathered in front of Cologne city hall, asking for civil liberties as well as for the “complete education of all children at the public’s expense” and other social aims (Elkar, 1995, p. 69). This was too far-reaching even for the liberals of Cologne and the movement radicalized itself. Many cities in the region became staging grounds for violent conflicts akin to a civil war and, ultimately, the Prussian military brutally put down the revolution (Elkar, 1995, pp. 69ff). In the aftermath of the revolution, Prussia introduced universal suffrage, but under a three-class system of voting, so that conservatives and the upper classes were privileged by the system (Mann, 1973, p. 260). The Prussian *Abgeordnetenhaus* (lower house) was elected by this system until 1918, while the upper *Herrenhaus* was not elected but was dominated by aristocratic members, appointed by the king or by various bodies such as larger cities, associations of landed property owners, Protestant chapters or universities.

In April 1848, 500 Prussian teachers met in Berlin and passed a resolution. In September 1848, the General German Teachers’ Association (*Allgemeiner Deutscher Lehrerverein*) constituted itself in Eisenach. One of the teachers’ aims was a ladder-system of education, in which the *Volksschule* would be the first link, and would be administrated by “school men” only, both through a new, national Ministry of Education and through regional school councils. While the ministry was supposed to regulate all higher schools, they thought that the municipalities’ school boards should have a say as far as the employment of teachers and the administration of the *Volksschule* were concerned. They were against tuition fees, against private schools but for the opening of higher schools to the sons of the lower classes. They also asked for better wages, working conditions, education and social security for teachers. Finally, they thought that school inspectors should be teachers, and that clergymen should no longer have the right to supervise the schools (Herrlitz et al, 2003, pp. 22f; Tymister, 1965, pp.31f). The Prussian Ministry did not immediately react to this, but from December 1848, when the tide was turning in its favor, it tightened the reins. In February 1849, the new leader of the *Volksschule* department, Ferdinand Stiehl, summoned all principals of the Prussian

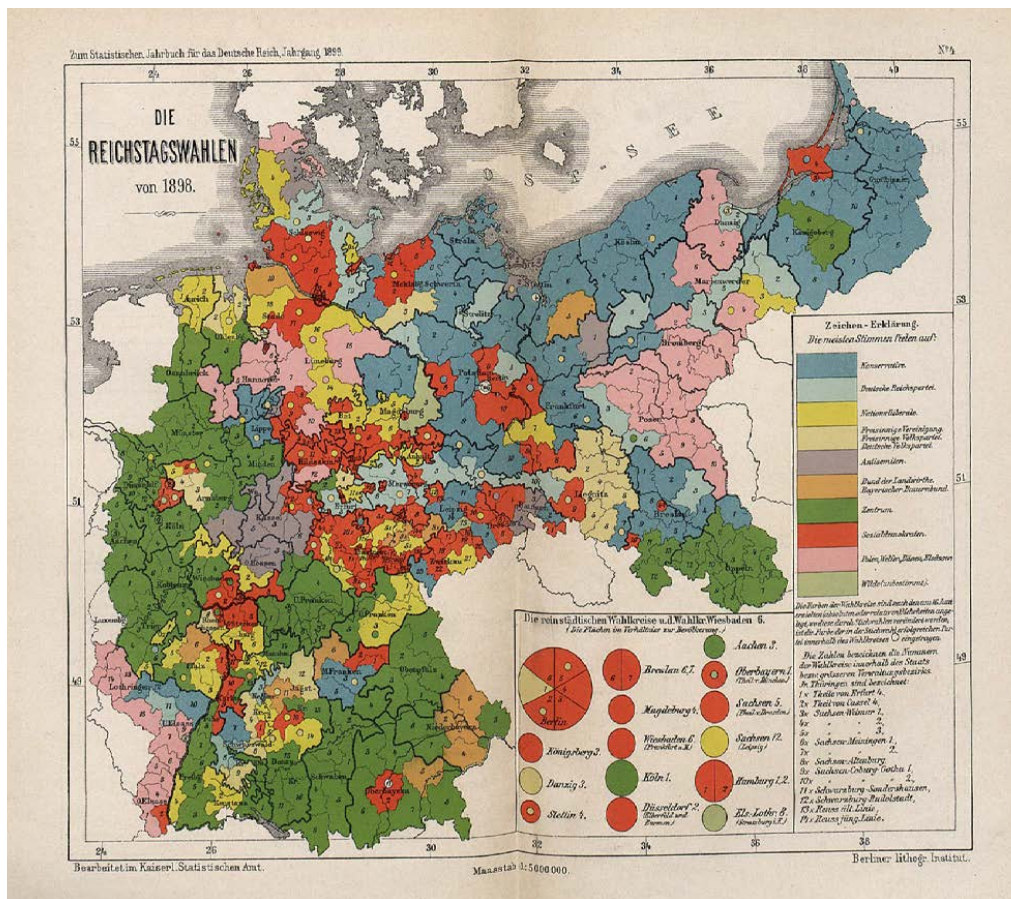
teacher seminaries to Berlin. The emperor, Frederick William IV, participated in this conference and blamed the teachers for the entire revolution, accusing them of having “turned the hearts of his subjects away from him” (Herrlitz et al, 2009, p. 58). In 1854, the Prussian Ministry issued the Stiehl regulations. These aimed at putting a stop to teachers’ organizations and demands for reform. Teacher seminaries were strictly regulated, the reading of classical literature, even in one’s spare time, was forbidden, and teaching any “abstractions” or “pedagogy” and so forth were banned. According to Stiehl (1855, p. 57, quoted in Herrlitz et al, 2009, pp. 60f), the main focus of the primary school should be to socialize the children into “1. Evangelical Christians, 2. Subjects of his Majesty of Prussia, [...], and 3.] townspeople, peasants or soldiers”.

#### 4.3.3 The cultural struggle and its effect on school politics

Stiehl’s usage of the term “Evangelical Christians” points in the direction of an important conflict between the Prussian government and its western provinces of Westphalia and Rhineland. The majority of the population in these provinces was in fact Catholic, while Prussian civil servants were mainly Protestants (cf. Table 4.5, Reulecke, 1995, p. 111). The Prussian state had earlier been defined as a Protestant state, but the Constitution of 1850 guaranteed freedom of religion as an attempt to pacify the Catholics of the western provinces. However, during the 1870s, the conflicts between the Prussian state and the Catholic Church, as well as between Protestants and Catholics in general, culminated in the *Kulturkampf* (cultural struggle) (Mann, 1973, pp. 441ff; Nonn, 2009, pp. 60f). To understand the background of this struggle, it must first be mentioned that the German Reich had been formed in 1871 under the leadership of Otto von Bismarck, confidant of King Wilhelm I. Bismarck was Prussian prime minister from 1862 until 1890, and Reich chancellor from 1871 until 1890. Bismarck’s social background on his father’s side was from the *Junker* class. He was Protestant and politically conservative. The German Reich was a federal state, dominated by its largest member, Prussia. All men over 25, who were not in active military service, bankrupt, recipients of poor relief or under tutelage, received the right to vote for the new parliament of the German Reich, the *Reichstag*, which only had limited authority. It was a majority voting system. In 1870, the Catholic and ultramontane *Zentrum* (Centre Party) had been founded. The ideology of this party had both conservative and socialist elements – it was a workers’ party to some extent, while at the same time it defended the traditional rights of the Catholic Church (Mann, 1973, pp. 421ff). Reich Chancellor Bismarck, supported by conservatives and nationalist liberals, fought the Catholic Church and its party fiercely for about ten years. Among other things, he abolished the Jesuit order, closed down church seminaries, and deposed the bishops of Cologne, Paderborn and Münster from office. In school politics, he aimed at introducing state supervision of schooling with the school supervision law of 1872 (*Schulaufsichtsgesetz*). In the Prussian East, where many Catholic Poles lived, and in the Catholic Rhineland, many Catholic clergymen were deposed from

office as school inspectors and replaced by secular inspectors. In 1876, a regulation was passed according to which Christian education in schools could only be taught by state-licensed teachers or by priests who did not oppose the state's educational aims. As a result, several thousand priests lost their right to teach Christian education. Another important area of struggle was denominational schooling, which Bismarck wanted to overcome by introducing *Simultanschulen* (simultaneous schools), in which children of different denominations were taught together. These attempts were hugely unpopular with the churches and the Centre Party. They were also unsuccessful: between 1886 and 1906, 90 percent of

Figure 4.2: Results of the elections to the German Reichstag in 1898, showing the largest parties in the elective districts (Green: Centre Party, Red: Social Democrats, Blue: Conservatives, Light Blue: conservative German Reich Party, Yellow: National Liberals, Light Yellow: various social liberals, Purple: Anti-Semites, Pink: various parties of local ethnic minorities, Orange: farmers' associations)



Source: Statistisches Reichsam, 1899.

Catholic children and 95 percent of Protestant children were still taught in the religiously bound *Volksschulen* of their own denomination (*Bekennnisschulen*). School supervision remained largely in the hands of clergymen and was in general regulated inconsistently until 1918 so various overlaps and struggles of competencies resulted on the local level (Kuhlemann, 1991, pp. 184).

**Table 4.5: Percentages of Protestants and Roman-Catholics in the North Rhine-Westphalian population, 1871-1987**

Year	Area	Protestants	Roman-Catholics
1871	Westphalia	45.4	53.5
	Rhineland	25.3	73.4
1910	Westphalia	47.2	51.4
	Rhineland	29.5	69.0
1925	Westphalia	47.3	49.8
	Rhineland	30.1	66.8
	Prussia	65.0	31.3
	The German Reich	64.1	32.4
1950	NRW	41.4	54.8
	Federal Republic	51.2	45.2
1961	NRW	42.8	52.1
	Federal Republic	50.5	44.1
1970	NRW	41.9	52.5
	Federal Republic	49.0	44.6
1987	NRW	35.2	49.4
	Federal Republic	41.9	42.9

Sources: *Statistisches Reichsamt*, 1880 (p. 13), 1914 (p. 9), 1930 (p. 16); *Statistisches Bundesamt*, 1954 (p. 43), 1970 (p. 39), 1980 (p. 62), 2000 (p. 61).

Overall, the effect of the cultural struggle was the opposite of what was intended: the Catholic milieu was welded together more strongly, and the majority of the Catholic population stood behind the *Zentrum* (Nipperdey, 1991, pp. 439ff; Nonn, 2009, p. 61; Reulecke, 1995, p. 112). In fact, the *Zentrum* received the most votes of all parties in Westphalia and the Rhineland until 1933 (cf. Figure 4.2; Nonn, 2009, p. 60). In 1878, Bismarck relented, and in the following years, many anti-Catholic regulations were withdrawn. During the 1880s and 1890s, several Catholic as well as Protestant mass organizations were founded and the relations between the denominations continued to be characterized by mistrust (Reulecke, 1995, pp. 113ff; Tymister, 1965). In 1889, the Catholic Teachers' Association (*Katholischer Lehrerverband*) was founded in Bochum (Bölling, 1978, pp. 33ff; Tymister, 1965). Female Catholic teachers founded their own organization based in the Rhineland, Westphalia and

Hessen-Nassau in 1885. In 1890, it was extended to become a general association of German Catholic Female Teachers (*Verein katholischer deutscher Lehrerinnen*), which – though small – still exists today (Tymister, 1965, pp. 141ff).

From the 1840s, heavy industry began to be concentrated in the Ruhr region, based on coalmines, steel production and so forth. The Rhineland and Westphalia developed into two of the most industrialized and urbanized Prussian provinces, though they still did contain some backward regions (cf. Table 4.4; Nonn, 2009, pp. 47ff; Reulecke, 1995, p. 87). Until the 1890s, socialist ideas gained little ground in the region, except for some early workers' organizations in Cologne, Düsseldorf, and around Solingen, Remscheid and Wuppertal from the 1860s. In the Ruhr region, most workers preferred the Catholic and Protestant social associations (Reulecke, 1995, p. 103). In 1875, the Socialist Workers' Party was founded in Gotha and united formerly separate organizations (Walter, 2011, p. 13f). Bismarck's antisocialist law from 1878, which criminalized social democratic organizations until 1890, weakened the new party's electoral chances, but could not destroy it (Mann, 1973, p. 444ff). From 1890, the party called itself *Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands* (SPD, Social Democratic Party of Germany) and started to grow. By 1912, it had become the largest political party in Germany, receiving 34.5 percent of the vote in the *Reichstag* elections, compared to 25.9 percent for the various liberals, 12.2 percent for the conservatives and 16.4 percent for the Centre Party (Walter, 2011, p. 27). Membership of the party grew from around 200,000 in 1900 to almost a million in 1914. The party was strongest in the northern cities and in some central industrial areas, but weak in the east and south, and also in Westphalia and the Rhineland (Walter, 2011, p. 28, 38). The social democrats managed to beat the Centre Party in two of the eight districts of Westphalia and the Rhineland in the 1912 elections, namely in Minden and Arnsberg, and almost caught up with it in Düsseldorf (Reulecke, 1995, p. 117). But the Centre Party remained strong in the region. The social democrats did not manage to organize many of the Catholic workers, the female workers in the local textile companies and the workers in more rural areas (Walter, 2011, p. 38).

#### 4.3.4 Opposing ideas of education in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century

Education was important for the social democrats and they organized party schools for their officials (Walter, 2011, p. 35). While the reform of the school system was not the first priority of the party, it did use the term “comprehensive school” (*Einheitsschule*) from 1903 on. Especially Heinrich Schulze, member of the *Reichstag* and primary school teacher from Bremen, developed social democracy's school program. This program, published in an extended version in 1911, suggested pre-schools for all four- to seven-year-olds, followed by a comprehensive school for the eight- to 14-year-olds. It also suggested abolishing private primary schools. The program clearly stated that a three- or four-year comprehensive school would not be sufficient because it would be “doubly hard and bitter” for the talented children of the proletariat to have to watch the “untalented son of the rich soap trader” go to a higher

school, while being excluded themselves due to the insufficient “capital endowment of their fathers” at an age when they had just begun to develop a love for learning (Schulze, 1911, p. 29). Social liberals and the liberally influenced *Volksschule* teachers’ movement also supported the idea of comprehensive schooling and fought for the abolition of private and public preparatory primary schools for the children of the upper classes (Kuhlemann, 1991, p. 191). However, the monarchical government was also aware of the importance of schooling. Documentation of this is the emperor’s *Allerhöchste Ordre* (Highest Order) of May 1, 1889, where Wilhelm II assigns the school the role of securing power by instilling in his subjects the proper inclinations towards church, fatherland, state and society and against socialism and communism. Socialist ideas should be refuted and statistical facts should be used to prove to students that the situation of the working classes had constantly improved under monarchical protection. Bismarck similarly suggested the development of a political-monarchical catechism, which students would have to memorize analogously to the Christian one (Herrlitz et al, 2009, pp. 112).

Besides debates about reforming primary schooling, there were also debates about the various higher school types and their relation to each other during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In particular, there was a massive struggle over the introduction of modern, realist higher education. *Realschulen* (realist schools) had first been recognized by the Prussian state during the 1830s. According to the rules of 1832, graduates of the *Realschule* were entitled to one-year voluntary military service, as well as entering the trades of building, forestry or the postal service (Herrlitz et al, 2009, pp. 63ff). After the revolution, the *Realschulen* were considered a “tool of destructive liberalism” by parts of the bureaucracy and their graduates lost the entitlement to enter the building trade (Wiese, 1886, p. 214, quoted in Herrlitz et al, 2009, p. 64). However, the *Realschule* had many advocates as well, in particular from the economic section of the middle and upper classes (*Wirtschaftsbürgertum*). Their representatives pointed out that a better knowledge of realist subjects as well as modern languages was desirable for state representatives in times of increasing international trade and imperialist wars. At the technical colleges, the graduates of the humanist *Gymnasium* showed deficits in natural sciences and mathematics, which also placed pressure for modernization on the system. From 1859 onwards, the nine-year *Realschule 1. Ordnung* (from 1882 called *Realgymnasium*) was legally recognized and its curricula were standardized. The *Realschule* could still not award the entitlement to enter one of the professional faculties. Until the 1880s, the humanist *Gymnasium*, which was supported especially by the academic elite and higher civil servants (*Bildungsbürgertum*), kept its leading position and 60 to 70 percent of higher school students attended this school type. Of the 350 Prussian cities with higher schools, only 102 offered a choice between realist and humanist education. A *Realschule* without Latin was hardly recognized as a higher school at all, so most *Realschulen* included Latin in their curricula (Herrlitz et al, 2009, pp. 63ff). Ringer (1979, p. 21) explains why Latin was so important:



“What mattered [...], was precisely that Latin was not a practical skill, a specialized expertise. For the ability to do without any particular competence was clearly honorific. It suggested the power to direct others, as against having to be useful and usable oneself. It evoked aristocratic leisure, as against the need to work. It demonstrated a certain independence from market considerations, a quality shared by most members of the pre-industrial and non-entrepreneurial elites: gentlemen, officials, clergymen, teachers and members of the liberal professions. [...] This social advantage became associated with the cultural ideal of the educated man as rationally autonomous, self-directed, unspecialized, fully human.”

Only the capacity to speak Latin would give one “the feeling of belonging to the recognized educated class”, as one deputy put it on March 17, 1882 in the Prussian House of Deputies (*Stenographische Berichte*, 1882, quoted in Herrlitz et al, 2009, p. 64). This dominance of classical education also meant that horizontal segmentation – meaning that the sons of the economic elites would attend the *Realgymnasium* or *Oberrealschule*, while the sons of the educational elites would attend the *Gymnasium* – was only visible in cities like Minden or Duisburg, where both options were available (Albisetti/Lundgreen, 1991, p. 249; cf. Ringer, 1979, pp. 29ff, pp. 75ff).

The traditional elites of the landed nobility, senior civil servants (*Staatsbeamtentum*) and traditional academic professions were opposed to any opening up of the higher education system because there would be increased competition for entrance to privileged careers. An “academic proletariat” might emerge (Albisetti/Lundgreen, 1991, pp. 229ff; Herrlitz et al, 2008, p. 80f). During the 1880s, the expansion of the education system was channeled by the development of new school types for the middle classes, in particular by the expansion of Latin-free *Realschulen* and *Oberrealschulen*. Despite this, a wave of educational expansion took place from about the 1890s until the 1930s, interrupted only by the First World War. The percentage of 11- to 19-year old boys attending higher schools went up from around five percent to over ten percent (Nath, 2001, p. 28). A compromise was finally reached between the supporters of realist and classical education. In 1900, *Realgymnasien*, *Oberrealschulen* and *humanistische Gymnasien* were put on equal terms, meaning that their final *Abitur* exams now all granted the same entitlements. The political conciliation of business tycoons and the landed nobility (*Sammlungspolitik*) facilitated this compromise. The imperialist reorientation of the state necessitated a consolidation of the dominant classes (Herrlitz et al, 2009, p. 77). Technical colleges (*technische Hochschulen*) were also put on a par with the universities in 1899. In 1902, a diploma for engineers in state service was introduced and realist education became more highly integrated into the state career system (Herrlitz et al, 2009, pp. 74ff). As a result of these reforms, a differentiated system of parallel school types developed, which functioned both as a system of entitlements (*Berechtigungssystem*), which legitimated and reproduced class society, and as a system of qualification (*Qualifikationssystem*), which



taught the necessary skills for the different sectors of state service, the military and private industry. In particular, the Latin-free *Realschule* both opened up and restricted educational opportunities for the lower middle classes (Herrlitz et al, 2009, p. 79f). After the compromise of 1900, the humanist *Gymnasium* lost its leading position, and its share of higher boys' schools dropped from 59 percent in 1900 to 39 percent in 1918, and 29 percent at the end of the Weimar Republic. The share of the *Realgymnasium*, on the other hand, increased significantly. About one-third of the students at these various higher school types came from private and public preparatory primary schools (*Vorschulen*), while the rest had been prepared at various lower school types funded by the cities or had received private schooling at home (Albisetti/Lundgreen, 1991, p. 246).

Teachers' organizations were founded and primary school expansion continued. Between 1871 and 1914, the number of primary school teachers doubled to 190,000, while the number of students only grew half as fast. On the curriculum, religious education was reduced to one to two hours per week in 1871, and subjects such as history, geography and natural sciences were increased (Herrlitz et al, 2009, p. 104ff). However, the amount of teaching in realist subjects and the content of the subjects of German and history varied greatly at the local level, depending for example on financing, materials and varying textbooks, the level of education and the political orientation of the teachers (Kuhlemann, 1991, pp. 203ff). In 1871, the *Deutscher Lehrerverein* (DLV, the German Teachers' Association) was founded as a primary school teachers' organization with growing importance. By 1914, it organized three-fourths of the male primary school teachers in the German Reich, with 131,748 members (Bölling, 1978, p. 36). The association was non-denominational but Catholic teachers did not feel adequately represented by its liberal political stance. Catholic primary school teachers had begun organizing themselves separately since the 1860s, especially in the Rhineland and Westphalia (cf. above). Secondary school teachers had begun to organize themselves in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1883 and 1884, associations of philologists were founded in the Rhineland and Westphalia, and by 1885 associations in the various Prussian provinces cooperated through a standing conference (Fluck, 2003, p. 35). In 1903, a Reich-wide association of academically educated teachers (*Vereinsverband akademisch gebildeter Lehrer Deutschlands*, from 1921 *Deutscher Philologenverband*) was founded, and fought for the equalization of their status group with other higher civil servants, especially judges (Fluck, 2003, pp. 44ff).

In 1890, Helene Lange was one of the founders of the *Allgemeiner Deutscher Lehrerinnenverein*, an organization of middle and upper class female teachers dominated mostly by Protestant liberal women, which had about 16,000 members in 1900 (Herrlitz et al, 2009, p. 92). The organization differed from the other teachers' organizations in that it organized both primary and secondary school teachers. From 1918, more and more female primary school teachers chose to join the German Teachers' Association instead (Bölling, 1978, pp. 16, 38f). While Lange propagated a comparably conservative idea of women's

education based on women's special role in the home, there were also more radical women's groups asking for full equality of educational opportunities for women and also suggesting coeducation (Kraul, 1991). From the late 1880s until 1908, more than 30 educational institutions were founded by the women's movement in the German Reich to prepare girls for the *Abitur* exam as external examinees. The Prussian Ministry of Education, on the other hand, tried as long as possible to exclude women from the *Abitur* and university studies. Despite some regulations in 1894, which led to a higher number of female teachers in the higher girls' schools and regulated female teachers' education, the general strategy was to ignore the requests of the women's movement. In 1908, a regulated school path to the *Abitur* was finally created for girls. The ten-year higher girls' school was now termed *Lyzeum* and prepared girls either for an upper secondary education as teachers, for general "women's education" at a *Frauenschule* (women's school) or for a three-year preparatory course for the *Abitur* exam. However, restrictions remained as women could still not enter the majority of administrative state careers (Herrlitz et al, 2009, pp. 83ff). The introduction of a branch of study preparing women for the *Abitur* exam was only possible if the same institution also offered a *Frauenschule*. Many schools could not afford to offer all branches; as a result, only 3.6 percent of the students at the *Lyzeum* was taken up in the branches preparing girls for university in 1912 (Kraul, 1991, p. 289). The content of education in the girls' schools was less oriented towards formal qualifications and focused more on ethical education or *Herzensbildung* (nobleness of heart), on conversational skills and practical skills such as needlework (Kraul, 1991, p. 291).

Between 1886 and 1911, the number of schools with separate grades for age groups expanded greatly, but in the countryside, 39 percent of the *Volksschulen* still had only one grade in 1911, compared with eight percent in the cities. During the same period, public expenses for elementary schooling increased greatly (Herrlitz et al, 2009, p. 105). The amount covered by the state rose from five percent in 1871 to over 50 percent during the 1890s. Especially in the countryside, the state now covered a much greater part of the expenses. Municipalities also included schooling in their municipal budgets more often. By 1906, around 75 percent of the Prussian cities did so. Compulsory schooling was finally enforced even in the countryside. From the 1880s, the Prussian state also attempted to combat the differences between school quality in the cities and in the countryside by introducing maximum requirements for class size, namely 80 students per class. Nonetheless, large differences remained, also between various rural areas. In the rural East Westphalian district of Minden, one teacher still had to teach between 120 and 200 children in 71 percent of the primary schools in 1883, while the number was 80 to 120 in the other 29 percent of cases. The local elites were not willing to pay for better primary schooling. However, conditions were also difficult in some industrialized areas, where swift population growth entailed problems with financing and large class sizes. For example, the districts of Düsseldorf and Cologne in the Rhineland belonged to those areas

of Prussia where the maximum number of students was exceeded most frequently (Kuhlemann, 1991, pp. 195ff). A “school compromise” between the conservatives, the national liberals and the Centre Party in 1906 ended the exemption of landed property owners from paying for school financing (Kuhlemann, 1991, p. 181). *Volksschule* teachers’ wages increased substantially, even though massive differences remained between male and female and rural and urban teachers (Herrlitz et al, 2009, p. 106). The seminary curricula were upgraded little by little. In 1885 and 1890, primary teachers’ pensions and survivors’ pensions were regulated so elementary school teachers could now be considered a “consolidated stratum of lower civil servants” (Nipperdey, 1991, p. 543; Herrlitz et al, 2009, p. 106).

Besides the *Volksschule* and the higher institutions of the (*Ober-*)*Realschule*, *Realgymnasium*, and *Gymnasium*, two others school types were developed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century: the *Mittelschule* (middle school) and the *allgemeine Fortbildungsschule* (general further education school). The *Mittelschule* was an extended form of the *Volksschule* and was considered to offer a sufficient education for lower white-collar employees. From 1872, *Volksschulen* with at least five ascending grades, a maximum of 50 students per class and an obligatory foreign language were officially recognized as *Mittelschulen*. The middle school was the only school type in Prussia of which many were private. Especially the private middle schools often offered several foreign languages, in some cases even Latin and Greek. It was also possible to continue with higher education after completing the middle school, though the majority of the students did not do so. The middle schools, however, did not award any of the higher school’s qualifications, such as the privilege of one-year military service. Due to this, the number of middle schools remained low and the majority of students were girls, since girls did not have other opportunities for higher education until higher girls’ schools were recognized in 1908. Between 1886 and 1906, the percentage of students at middle schools in the countryside was about four to five percent of that of the *Volksschule*, while in the cities it was about 13 to 14 percent. In the Rhineland and Westphalia the numbers were lower, presumably because middle schools were rarer in growing industrial cities such as Dortmund, Essen, Krefeld, Duisburg, Koblenz and Cologne, which preferred to invest in the *Volksschule* instead. The state did not cover any of the financing of the middle schools (Herrlitz et al, 2009, p. 109; Kuhlemann, 1991, pp. 188ff, pp. 199ff).

The *allgemeine Fortbildungsschule* was primarily an attempt to get 14- to 18-year-old working class youths off the streets and away from the influence of social democracy. Georg Kerschensteiner, pedagogue and school reformer, argued that social democracy could be weakened by offering the most talented sons of the lower classes further education and that the state’s interests could best be served this way (Kerschensteiner, 1901). Nonetheless, some social democrats also considered these schools to be progressive experiments (Kuhlemann, 1991, p. 191). Kerschensteiner later contributed to the development of this school type into *Berufsschulen* (vocational schools) and contributed to the development of the *Arbeitsschule*

principles. Not only should the *Arbeitschule* include practical training in activities such as cooking, gardening and technical work; students should also be encouraged to think for themselves and be active and creative learners, instead of the subjects of military drills. In other words, towards the end of the German Reich, many new ideas came into circulation (Kuhlemann, 1991, pp. 191f).

#### 4.3.5 Attempts at reform during the weak Weimar Republic

Although no battles took place in the Rhineland and Westphalia, the First World War greatly affected the region. The region's industry played a central role in the war economy and military production grew massively. The economy became more concentrated and employer associations were strengthened. For the first time, workers were recognized as negotiating partners and received co-determination rights. From 1916/1917, food shortages worsened and the urban population especially suffered greatly. "Hunger demonstrations" became more frequent and from January 1918, protestors demanded an end to the war. Nonetheless, the majority of the population was characterized by apathy more than by a wish for revolution. Even the region's social democrats were mostly concerned with restoring public order (Brunn, 1995, pp. 130ff). However, the social democrats, whose majority had supported the war credits financing Germany's participation in the First World War, were now split. Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Liebknecht and others had founded the Spartacus League in 1916 and were imprisoned until the end of the war. In 1917, a group of social democrats, who had been expelled from the SPD, founded the Independent Social Democratic Party (cf. Walter, 2011, pp. 46ff; Wehler, 2003, pp. 110ff).

The November Revolution of 1918 was initiated by the mutiny of the seamen of the German navy who refused to enter into a final battle. This mutiny soon spread throughout the German Reich. On November 9, 1918, a Republic was declared by the social democrat, Philip Scheidemann. From November 10, 1918 until February 11, 1919, Germany was governed by the Council of People's Deputies (*Rat der Volksbeauftragten*), consisting of politicians of both social democratic parties and supported by the workers', soldiers' and farmers' councils (Wehler, 2003, pp. 190ff). Civil rights were introduced, and in the elections for the constitutional assembly in January 1919, women were allowed to vote for the first time. The SPD won the elections and a coalition government consisting of the SPD, the second-largest Centre Party and the social liberal German Democratic Party (DDP) was created. The social democrat, Friedrich Ebert, became Reich president until 1925. From the outset, however, the Weimar Republic was destabilized by the fact that the power base of the old elites in the economy, the state administration, the military, the churches and the education system remained largely intact. The split in the workers' organizations into a reformist camp oriented towards parliamentary power and coalitions with the liberals and a revolutionary camp continued to make itself felt (Herrlitz et al, 2009, p. 117). In December 1918, the Communist Party (KPD) was formed by the Spartacus League and others. In January, Liebknecht and

Luxemburg were murdered by paramilitary groups. In the following years, class conflicts escalated also in the Rhineland and Westphalia. Hundreds of thousands of workers turned their backs on the SPD and joined one of the other, more radical socialist, communist or syndicalist organizations. There were massive wild strikes (Bluhm, 2014). The failed, conservative Kapp Putsch of 1920 led first to a general strike, and then to the Ruhr Uprising. 80,000 to 100,000 men formed what was dubbed the Red Ruhr Army, which fought for the socialization of the mines and for economic and social equality. The group controlled the entire Ruhr region for some time, until the military and paramilitary groups put down the uprising (Brunn, 1995, pp. 141ff, Wehler, 2003, pp. 397ff).

In accordance with the peace Treaty of Versailles, the French had occupied the Rhineland, even though it remained a part of the new German state. All regulations had to be sanctioned by the occupying forces. In 1923, French and Belgian forces occupied the Ruhr area as well in an attempt to force Germany to pay higher reparations. Massive work stoppages in the area contributed to the development of hyperinflation. The French also supported separatist groups in the Rhineland, which declared a Rhine Republic in many cities in the fall of 1923. However, the French lost the support of their allies for such attempts. The Dawes Plan of 1924 brought stability through a new reparation payment plan. The occupying forces withdrew from the Ruhr area. What remained was widespread hatred of the French, nationalist sentiments and massive discrimination of the “Rhine bastards” – the children of French soldiers (Brunn, 1995, pp. 142ff).

The administrative elites of the education system retained their positions without any major difficulty. Most civil servants of Imperial Germany kept their posts; very few of the leading civil servants in the Prussian Ministry of Culture and the consultants and school inspectors (*Schulräte*) were social democrats. The most important progressive reforms of the Weimar Republic were completed during the first half of 1920, since the elections of June 1920 weakened social democracy and the liberal parties. Originally, the SPD stood for the separation of church and school, the introduction of a comprehensive school with a minimum of eight years and the abolition of private schools and tuition fees. After negotiations with the other parties, only a fraction of this could be included in the articles pertaining to schools in the new Constitution, and even this minimal program was not entirely put into practice (Herrlitz et al, 2009, pp. 118ff). Another reason for this was that the new state retained its federal shape and the federal governments considered themselves responsible for educational politics. Accordingly, any far-reaching reform plan was hampered by disagreements between the federal governments with their varying political coalitions (Zymek, 1989, p. 162).

An important milestone, however, was the primary school law (*Grundschulgesetz*) of April 1920 which abolished public preparatory primary schools from 1924/25 and private ones from 1929/30 and introduced the four-year obligatory primary school for all. The law was passed

with the votes of all parties, except for the conservative German National People's Party. In a way, the comprehensive primary school was the educational equivalent of universal franchise (Zymek, 1989, p. 165). In the following years, however, opponents of comprehensive primary schooling fought for various exemptions. The public preparatory schools were disbanded until 1923/24 but the conservative parties attempted to impede the abolition of private preparatory schools by claiming compensation for their teachers and funding bodies. As a result, private preparatory schools existed much longer but their number of students was halved in the second half of the 1920s. Exemptions were also possible in cases of illness so conservative parents could in some cases organize private schooling for groups of children. In 1925, the law was changed so that "particularly capable children" could begin their secondary education after just three years of primary school. These exemptions were fought, especially by the SPD, the DDP and the German Teachers' Association. The Centre Party did not fight the four-year primary school but nor did it support it very strongly (Bölling, 1978, pp. 138f). Despite these exemptions, the transition from primary to secondary school became slightly more meritocratic and formalized during the Weimar era (Herrlitz et al, 2009, pp. 118ff). This was due to the fact that the law was applied rather strictly by the school administrations of the Reich and the federal states. By 1931, 95.8 percent of higher school students had completed public primary school. In 1936, the National Socialists eventually eliminated the last of the private preparatory institutions (Zymek, 1989, p. 168, 194).

Besides the struggle over comprehensive primary schooling, there was a huge conflict about the abolition of denominational primary schools. According to Herrlitz et al (2009, p. 126) this conflict, which lasted for many years, "surmounted any other school-political conflicts in intensity and extent". Their interpretation of the conflict is that it was essentially about educational restriction, since religious indoctrination in the *Volksschule* traditionally served the purpose of controlling the mass of the population. For this reason, the labor movement and parts of the liberal DDP and the teachers' movement asked for a secularization of the *Volksschule*. On the secondary level of schooling, religion did not play such a large role. The clergy's right to supervise the people's schools was finally abolished, which was welcomed especially by the German Teachers' Association, but the separation of school and church was not achieved. The Weimar school compromise entailed that a *Simultanschule*, a school for children of both denominations with no denominational separation of teachers and comprehensive instruction except for in the subject religion, should become the rule, while denominational schools would still be possible as an exception. The SPD opposed the *Simultanschule* and preferred a complete secularization of the *Volksschule* but had to make do with the possibility of establishing secularized *Weltanschauungsschulen* (worldview schools) as another exemption sanctioned by the Constitution. The Catholic Centre party, Catholic and Protestant parents' associations, the conservative parties and the churches opposed the abolition of denominational schools. Catholic teachers were also partly opposed to the

abolition of denominational schooling. The right-wing, conservative *Deutschnationale Volkspartei* (German National People's Party) and the nationalist liberal *Deutsche Volkspartei* (German People's Party), which had both been formed at the beginning of the Weimar Republic based on earlier conservative and nationalist liberal parties, attempted several times to pass a law which would make denominational schools the rule again, and the *Simultanschule* the exception. Even though these attempts were unsuccessful, the ongoing conflict led to the preservation of the status quo and the *Simultanschule* was not introduced on a general level (Herrlitz et al, 2009, pp. 126f; cf. Bölling, 1978, pp. 137ff).

Teacher training was also widely discussed. In Prussia, primary school teachers were now educated at Pedagogical Academies (*Pädagogische Akademien*) which were based on the *Abitur* exam and lasted two years. This was an upgrade compared to the old teacher seminaries but it was not intended to match the university education of secondary school teachers. Since many of the potential students did not have the *Abitur*, preparatory schools were created to lead from the seven-year *Volksschule* to the *Abitur* in a six-year course. In addition, the *Deutsche Oberschule* was created as a nine-year secondary school to help secure new recruits for the teaching profession. The number of these schools was low, however (Herrlitz et al, 2009, p. 124ff). For the German Teachers' Association and its Prussian branch, these reforms were not sufficient – they asked for a three-year college education followed by a year of practical training (Bölling, 1978, p. 180). The secondary school teachers' association, called *Deutscher Philologenverband* from 1921, was politically closer to the conservative parties and opposed an equalization of the education and status of primary and secondary school teachers. The philologists did not support comprehensive schooling either and defended the special role of the *Gymnasium* (Fluck, 2003, pp. 62ff).

Furthermore, the middle school system was consolidated, first in the Weimar Republic and then under the National Socialist regime. In March 1931, the *Mittlere Reife* was introduced as a school-leaving certificate after the tenth school year. The background of this was that the one-year voluntary military service had been abolished. Formerly, this privilege had been reserved for graduates of the lower secondary stage of *Oberrealschulen*, *Realgymnasien* and humanist *Gymnasien*. Through regulations from 1910 and 1925, *Mittelschulen* had received the possibility to upgrade their courses in such a way as to offer their graduates the possibility of gaining this entitlement as well. From 1931, all graduates of the *Mittelschule* received the *Mittlere Reife* as an alternative, less valuable entitlement, with relevance for entrance to middle positions in administration, trade and industry (Herrlitz et al, 2009, pp. 127ff). With the National Socialist regulation of 1938 on the reorganization of the middle school system, various forms of middle schools were subsumed under two remaining types: the six-year Prussian middle school and a four-year upper middle school building on the sixth grade of the *Volksschule* (Zymek, 1989, pp. 197ff).

During the Weimar Republic, higher education became in some ways more accessible to children of the lower classes and women. In Prussia, girls' education was reformed further in 1923 with the introduction of the *Oberlyzeum* as a new form of upper secondary education for girls. Most forms of upper secondary education for women were now transformed so that a much higher percentage of female students could take the *Abitur* exam. By 1931, one-fourth of the Prussian *Abitur* graduates were female (Zymek, 1989, p. 172). Differentiation into more and more separate higher school types continued among the boys' schools. With the *Gymnasium*, the *Realgymnasium*, the *Reformgymnasium*, the *Reformrealgymnasium* of the new and old type, the *Oberrealschule* and the *Deutsche Oberschule* in two different forms, the number of school types was now confusing, even for contemporaries. In addition, all these school types existed either as nine-year full institutions or as six-year short versions, preparing for upper secondary schooling elsewhere. The differences between the curricula of these schools were not always that large. The main difference was which languages were taught for how many hours and in which order. One result of these chaotic conditions was that mixed forms, which combined the curricula of different types of higher schools in the first years, became more common, as many municipalities could not offer all these types at the same time (Zymek, 1989, pp. 172f). Because of decreasing birth rates during the war and the 1920s, and because of increasing unemployment, the relative share of a cohort attending higher schools increased significantly (Zymek, 1989, p. 176, p. 187).

#### 4.3.6 The Third Reich and Nazi politics of educational restriction

However, during the economic crisis, the educational expansion became viewed as a threat by the traditional educated groups (*Bildungsbürgertum*) and as a disappointment by those members of the new middle classes who had hoped for better labor market opportunities. The Pedagogical Academies had only produced around 500 graduates after Prussia had closed down the old teacher seminaries in 1922. This was a major problem, since the profession of primary school teacher normally absorbed as many recruits as all of the other academic professions together (Herrlitz et al, 2009, pp. 130, 137). Towards the end of the Weimar Republic, Chancellor Brüning's emergency decrees and austerity measures led to a deterioration in teachers' socioeconomic conditions. Unemployment among young primary school teachers grew and wages decreased by up to 28.8 percent for primary school teachers without permanent positions (Bölling, 1978, p. 200). Teachers' attitudes began to turn against the democratic state. Like other white collar and middle class groups, they were overrepresented in membership of the NSDAP even before 1933, unlike the working class population, which was underrepresented (Bölling, 1978, p. 204). When the Nazis came to power in 1933, there was not much opposition to forcible coordination (*Gleichschaltung*) of teachers' organizations and to ideological indoctrination in the schools. In January 1933, about five percent of the entire teachers' workforce – 13,000 teachers in total – were members of the NSDAP. In May 1933, the share was already 25 percent. Within the cultural ministries



and the school administration, the National Socialists made sure to secure their position. In Prussia, 46 of 137 higher school inspectors (*Oberschulräte*) and 115 of 527 lower school inspectors were fired straightaway. There was now a lack of teachers and this legitimized undoing the Weimar reforms of primary school teacher training. The Pedagogical Academies were shut down and teacher educational institutions (*Lehrerbildungsanstalten*) of five years for *Volksschule* graduates, one year for *Abitur* graduates and three years for middle school graduates were created. These were boarding schools characterized by strict discipline and ideological indoctrination (Herrlitz et al, 2009, pp. 145ff).

The National Socialist regime pursued an authoritarian “crisis strategy” in education politics, which had taken shape during the last phase of the Weimar Republic. In 1933, the law against overcrowding of the German schools and colleges (*Gesetz gegen die Überfüllung der deutschen Schulen und Hochschulen*) was passed. The number of university students had already begun to decrease because of increasing economic hardship, so that the law’s quotas did not come into effect in 1934. However, the law excluded Jewish *Abitur* graduates from the universities and limited women’s share of university entrants to ten percent (Zymek, 1989, pp. 188f). In May 1934, a national Ministry of Science, Upbringing and Popular Education (*Wissenschaft, Erziehung und Volksbildung*) was created (Zymek, 1989, pp. 191f). In 1938, the *Reichsschulpflichtgesetz* made schooling obligatory from age six to 18 – first in the *Volksschule*, then in vocational schools (*Berufsschule*). In 1938/39, new curricula turned the *Oberschule* into the main secondary school type and shortened it to eight years but left the humanist *Gymnasium* intact as a special type. In addition, special National Socialist schools were created to produce the future cadres for the party and state administration (*Nationalpolitische Erziehungsanstalten* in 1933 and *Adolf-Hitler-Schulen* in 1936) (Herrlitz et al, 2009, p. 148).

In accordance with the National Socialist concordat with the Vatican of 1933, denominational schooling was at first left intact, despite previous National Socialist declarations to abolish it. However, religious education in the schools was restricted in various ways, the clergy’s influence was curtailed, and by 1941, most denominational schools had been turned into *Gemeinschaftsschulen* (common schools) for both denominations. The abolition of private schools was another element of these politics against the churches’ influence (Zymek, 1989, pp. 200f).

Despite the National Socialist claim that education should become independent of social background, the opposite was the case as a result of National Socialist politics. This was also due to the lack of a logical school-political conception and the chaotic distribution of competencies. National Socialists were often hostile to the traditional, middle and upper class ideas of schooling and education. They considered the school system less relevant compared to ideal-typical forms of National Socialist indoctrination, such as paramilitary camp life and

out-of-school instruction (Herrlitz et al, 2009, p. 153). Young people were socialized into Nazi ideology through the activities of the Hitler Youth, the Union of German Girls, National Socialist sports associations and so forth. All parties besides the NSDAP, as well as unions, employers' associations and teachers' associations, were forbidden and replaced with National Socialist surrogates such as the National Socialist Teachers' Union (*Nationalsozialistischer Lehrerbund*), which organized 220,000 teachers, or 95 percent of the teaching workforce, by December 1933 (Brunn, 1995, p. 166; Müller-Rolli, 1989, p. 253).

The access of Jewish children to general schools was gradually restricted and they were excluded from public education. Between 1925 and 1933, around 65,000 German Jews had already emigrated. By 1933, around 500,000 Jews (0.8 percent of the population) lived in Germany, of whom 160,000 lived in Berlin. After the pogroms of November 9/10, 1938, Jewish emigration accelerated and the number of Jewish schoolchildren shrank by two-thirds within a year. Deportations of Jewish teachers began in November 1938. Around 12,000 Jewish children were evacuated at the last minute, mainly to England and Palestine. Deportations of Jewish families began. From July 1942, all remaining Jewish schools were shut down (Herrlitz et al, 2009, pp. 149ff; Zymek, 1989, pp. 199f). This is not the place to analyze the horrors of National Socialist ideology, with the deportations, concentration camps and mass murder committed both in Germany and in the occupied areas, especially in Poland and the Soviet Union. Let it just be said that the genocide of around 6 million Jews, which took place in these darkest of years, goes far beyond the imaginable – and yet it is part of German history.

The growth of the arms industry became the main driving force of the German economy from 1936 onwards. The industrial areas of Berlin and central Germany profited most from the arms boom, while Rhineland and Westphalia lost some economic importance. After exports collapsed in 1937, the industry of the Rhineland and Westphalia also depended on arms production (Brunn, 1995, p. 168). There was a small amount of courageous resistance shown by the members of the Communist Party, by various leftist socialists and, in some cases, by social democrats and by representatives of the Catholic and Protestant churches. Especially the Catholic milieu was comparably resistant to National Socialist propaganda, which is the main reason why the NSDAP received “only” 26.2 percent in today's NRW in the elections of 1932, as opposed to 37.4 percent in the Reich as a whole. After January 30, 1933, brutal persecution and the murder of communists, social democrats, unionists and some leftist members of the Centre Party began, and by 1936, resistance was almost entirely broken. Most people adjusted to the regime (Brunn, 1995, pp. 163ff; Nonn, 2009, p. 66).

Besides Jews and political adversaries of the Nazis, several other groups suffered greatly. The war economy depended to a high degree on foreign workers, many of whom were prisoners of war. Especially prisoners from Poland and the Soviet Union were treated badly and many died

(Brunn, 1995, p.175). Other groups, who were persecuted and often murdered, were the Sinti and Roma, disabled people, mentally ill people and homosexuals. From May 1942, the Rhineland and Westphalia were hit by the bombing war more than before and now the entire civilian population suffered the consequences of the choices made by voters and German elites in 1932/33. On April 17, 1945, German troops in the Ruhr area eventually gave up their last resistance and the National Socialist regime in Rhineland and Westphalia broke down (Brunn, 1995, p. 174f). By now, about 50 percent of housing had been destroyed in cities with over 300,000 inhabitants, with 19 percent destroyed in less urbanized areas. In Cologne and Dortmund, the percentage of destroyed housing was 70 and 75 percent respectively. Some cities in the region were almost completely destroyed (Brunn, 1995, p. 178).

#### 4.3.7 A period of restoration – the first post-war decade

Even though most people's first reaction to the end of the war was relief, the initial post-war years were hard. There was not enough housing, food or building material. There was also a great lack of usable schools and qualified, politically trustworthy teachers. Millions of refugees, who had lost their homes within the Rhineland and Westphalia, or who came from the former East German provinces, were looking for shelter. In 1946 and 1947, the number of calories provided by the official food allowance sank under 1,000 calories per day. Children developed deficiencies. International donations for free school meals helped. In 1946, every twelfth born child died. People turned to the black market and traveled to the countryside in search for food (Brunn, 1995, pp. 176ff; Nonn, 2009, pp. 72ff). Most people were not interested in politics during the post-war years and were not inclined to acknowledge any guilt for what had happened. Instead, they focused on their private lives and on working hard to achieve higher living standards. Denazification attempts were conducted in such a pragmatic and mild way that the vast majority of former NSDAP members remained unaffected. The British appointed new mayors, districts presidents and so forth who had had nothing to do with the NSDAP. Nonetheless, many civil servants of the Nazi regime kept their jobs on all levels of the political administration (Brunn, 1995, pp. 176ff).

On August 23, 1946, the federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia was founded by a British ordinance. It comprised Westphalia and the northern part of the Rhineland, which were part of the British occupation zone; in January 1947, the small Lippe region was added. This was not in line with French wishes to separate the entire region from the German state in order to prevent its industrial weight ever re-contributing to German dominance. The onset of the Cold War led British and American governments to think that it was more important to prevent Germans from "turning communist" (Nonn, 2009, p. 71). Until the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951, French worries were instead accommodated by way of the Ruhr Agreement, which granted the Allies the right to control production and distribution of coal and steel in the area (Brunn, 1995, p. 188).

Despite the public's lack of interest, parties and associations began to reform from 1945. The Social Democratic Party (SPD), the Centre Party and the Communist Party (KPD) were re-founded. The Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and the liberal Free Democratic Party (FDP) were newly founded parties, both aiming to unite formerly separate political currents of the Weimar era. The FDP aimed at uniting groups of national and social liberals. The founders of the CDU wanted to overcome the denominational divide and organize both Catholics and Protestants. Nonetheless, most members were Catholics.

After the first federal state elections in 1947, Karl Arnold from the CDU, a former Centre Party member, became *Ministerpräsident* of NRW, meaning head of government of the federal state (Brunn, 1995, pp. 188ff). Arnold remained in this position until 1956. At first, he governed in a coalition including the Centre Party, the SPD and, until 1948, even the KPD. From 1950 to 1956, the CDU formed a coalition with the Centre Party, which from 1954 to 1956 also included the FDP. Arnold was a representative of the wage-earner current of the CDU. His government supported codetermination based on parity in the mining industry, which was introduced in NRW in 1947, and placed great emphasis on social housing policy. Several times under Arnold's government, attempts were made to socialize the mining industry and undertake a land reform. First, such attempts were stopped by British vetoes and later by the opposition of the national government (Nonn, 2009, pp. 81ff). Arnold actually preferred a coalition with the SPD to a coalition with the FDP, but due to different opinions with regard to denominational schooling, the early coalition with the SPD broke down. Later on, a CDU-SPD coalition in NRW was impeded by disagreements on the national level – in particular, the SPD opposed the Western orientation of the national government (Düding, 2008, pp. 291, 313; Nonn, 2009, pp. 84f). Arnold also attempted unsuccessfully to unite the new Christian party, the CDU, with the Centre Party, which stood more to the left in terms of social politics. However, by 1958, the Centre Party had lost all importance in national politics, as well as its last seats in the NRW parliament (Düding, 2008, pp. 202ff, pp. 303ff, p. 433).

The Communist Party also disappeared from NRW's parliament in 1954. With the intensification of the Cold War, relations between communists and non-communists had worsened considerably. The party was forbidden by the Federal Constitutional Court in 1956 (Düding, 2008, pp. 334ff). Later a new Communist Party, the DKP, was founded, but it never managed to secure any seats in parliament. Especially during the 1970s and 80s, however, its members played a relevant role in some political organizations, for example in the Education and Science Workers' Union (*GEW*), founded in 1948. The Education and Science Workers' Union belongs to the German Confederation of Trade Unions and organizes everyone working in the education system, including pre-school and higher education. However, most of the early members of the Education and Science Workers' Union were *Volksschule* teachers. The organization of *Gymnasium* teachers, the Association of Philologists, was also re-founded in 1947 (Fluck, 2003, pp. 148f).

In terms of school politics, there were some reform initiatives right after the war, but the late 1940s and 1950s were mainly a time of restoration. In 1945, the SPD and KPD published a common declaration for a comprehensive public school system, for the separation of church and school and for a new type of democratic teacher. The newly founded CDU also included supporters of comprehensive schooling. In 1947, the Allied Control Council published Directive No. 54, which was inspired by the American Zook Commission and suggested a democratic reform program, including the introduction of a ladder-system of education with comprehensive schooling on the lower secondary level and better civic education (*Alliierte Kontrollbehörde*, 1947). This was based on the Zook Commission's criticism of the division between general elementary education in the *Volksschule* and elitist secondary education, which was partly blamed for Germans' predispositions for the National Socialist ideology (Herrlitz et al, 2009, p. 158f).

Between 1947 and 1948, several German federal states attempted to reform the school system in various ways. A prolongation of the primary school to six years was suggested by a Christian democratic minister in Württemberg-Baden and implemented in Hamburg, Bremen and Schleswig-Holstein by social democratic ministers – it was later withdrawn by conservative-liberal governments. In Hessen and Niedersachsen, there were plans for different versions of comprehensive schools, and in Berlin, a 12-year comprehensive school was suggested. However, the reformers were mainly remnants of the pre-war reform coalition and had been scattered by emigration, oppression and war. They did not have sufficient backing within the administration, among teachers or parents. The division of Germany into the Soviet occupation zone and the Western zones, and the intensification of the East/West conflict weakened them further. The Allies chose to rely on those forces, which supported capitalism, and social democrats and communists started to distance themselves from each other. As a result of all these factors, the Weimar school system was restored. The Düsseldorf Agreement of 1955 confirmed this development. In this agreement, the Ministers of Education of the federal states agreed that all school-leaving certificates would be recognized in all of Germany and they agreed other measures aimed at standardization. No far-reaching changes were made and it was stated clearly that experiments would not be allowed to threaten the parallel structure of the school system (Friedeburg, 1992, pp. 321ff, Furck, 1998a, p. 248; Herrlitz et al, 2009, pp. 160f).

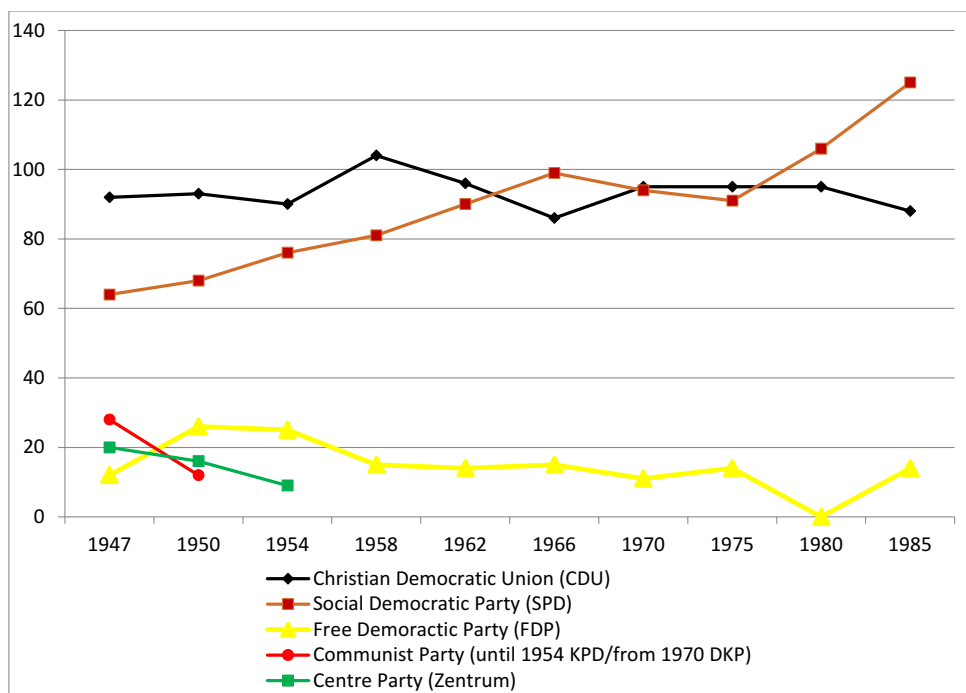
The denominational separation of teacher training and primary schooling remained the most highly contested topic in school politics during the 1950s and continued to be debated during the following decades (cf. Chapter 6.1.2). When the NRW Constitution was passed in 1950, denominational schooling was restored, after a lengthy and emotional debate. In the end, the SPD, the FDP and the KPD voted against the constitution, mostly because of the school articles (Düding, 2008, pp. 267ff). Also in the federal states of Bavaria, Rhineland-Pfalz, Lower Saxony and Saarland, denominational schooling was reintroduced temporarily in the

post-war years (Furck, 1998b, p. 284). In general, the churches, which could claim some moral authority since they had not been entirely corrupted by National Socialism, played an important role in legitimizing the anti-reform stance of the 1950s. The secularization of the *Volksschule*, as well as attempts to integrate the school system, were labeled equally “un-Christian” as the Nazi reform proposals. The concept of the comprehensive school was also associated with communism and thus delegitimized from the 1950s on (cf. Chapter 6.4). Political camps developed, with the CDU, the churches, business associations, representatives of higher education, the Association of Philologists, as well as the smaller *Realschullehrerverband* – an organization of middle school teachers – on the one side, and the Allies, the SPD, the communists, the Education and Science Workers’ Union and many *Volksschule* teachers on the other (Furck, 1998a, p. 249; Herrlitz et al, 2009, p. 158ff).

#### 4.3.8 Opening up new debates – the late 1950s and early 1960s

In NRW, the late 1950s witnessed careful attempts by social democrats and liberals to put educational expansion on the agenda. In 1958, a short-lived SPD-FDP government passed a law on the administration of schools (*Schulverwaltungsgesetz*). An early version of this law had already been prepared under the Arnold government (Düding, 2008, p. 398). The law did not question the parallel school system, but quite to the contrary defined the various parallel school types and regulated the discretionary powers of the different administrative levels. However, it also gave students minor participatory rights for the first time. Furthermore, it specified that representatives of the churches should only have an advisory function on the local school boards, which they still have today (Fälker, 1984, pp. 114f). Another important development of the 1950s was that tuition fees were gradually abolished. This law had also been passed in the last days of the Arnold government, in January 1956, with pressure from the SPD. Other school political measures of the first SPD-FDP government were investments in new school buildings, school experiments with the introduction of a ninth grade at the *Volksschule*, and the prolongation of *Volksschule* teacher training from four to six semesters, during which they studied at the re-founded Pedagogical Academies (Düding, 2008, p. 398). However, primary school teacher education was shortened again to five semesters by the next majority government of the CDU – this was opposed especially by the small parliamentary group of the FDP. The FDP also opposed a law on private schooling, which was passed in 1961 by the CDU majority, and which specified that the mostly Catholic private schools would only have to finance between two to six percent of their costs. The NRW liberals were against privatization as well as the religious orientation of the school system (Düding, 2008, p. 459; cf. Chapter 6.1.2).

Figure 4.3: Parties' number of seats in the parliament of NRW, 1947-1985



Source: Düding (2008, p. 775), Zicht and Cantow (1999)

On the national level, a more far-reaching reform debate was re-opened by a publication of the German Committee for the Education and School System (*Deutscher Ausschuss für das Erziehungs- und Bildungswesen*), an unsalaried advisory body, which had been put in place in 1953 by the Ministry of the Interior and the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the federal states. In 1959, this body published a recommendation called “Framework plan for the remodeling and standardization of the general school system” (*Rahmenplan zur Umgestaltung und Vereinheitlichung des allgemein bildenden Schulwesens*), which marks a turning point in the school political discussions (Herrlitz et al, 2009, p. 166). The document did not question the existence of parallel secondary school types but it did suggest that major reforms would be necessary. In particular, it suggested the upgrading of the upper grades of the *Volksschule*, now termed *Hauptschule*, by introducing a ninth and later tenth school year, an obligatory foreign language, new subjects and internal differentiation in important subjects. It also suggested the introduction of a two-year transition stage after the first four years of schooling in the lower *Volksschule*, termed *Grundschule*. This transition stage in grades five and six should serve to prolong the period of decision-making for one of the secondary school types (Deutscher Ausschuss, 1964). This idea provoked the resistance of philologists and business associations.

The CDU was hesitant, while the SPD, the FDP and the *Volksschule* teachers were supportive (Herrlitz et al, 2009, p. 168).

It was now asserted more frequently that the education system did not produce enough qualified labor for the needs of the modern economy. In 1963, the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the federal states estimated that by 1970 there would be a lack of 50,000 teachers, if the trends of the 1950s continued (Herrlitz et al, 2009, p. 168, 172). Georg Picht (1964) coined the phrase the “German educational catastrophe”. In the first half of the 1960s, new data on educational attainment in the German population were produced and backed up reform proposals. Studies showed that girls, residents of the countryside, Catholics and working class children were underrepresented at higher secondary schools and universities. For example, working class children made up only five percent of university students, despite working class families making up 50 percent of the economically active population (Herrlitz et al, 2009, p. 173). The idea of equality of opportunity gained ground among liberals and social democrats alike.

In October 1964, the Düsseldorf Agreement on school system standardization between the federal states was renegotiated. The result was the Hamburg Agreement. This agreement stipulated nine years of obligatory schooling and allowed ten years of obligatory schooling as a possibility. It also suggested the introduction of the *Hauptschule* – meaning the upper stage of the *Volksschule* – as a secondary school type besides the *Realschule* and *Gymnasium*, as well as a two-year transition stage in grades five and six, which should be common for all schools. However, these were discretionary clauses. Upper secondary courses, preparing *Realschule* and *Hauptschule* graduates for the *Abitur*, were regulated. It was agreed that the first foreign language in the *Gymnasium* should be taught from the fifth grade and should be either Latin or a living language, followed by a second foreign language from the seventh grade and a third from the ninth grade. A foreign language, usually English, was also introduced to the curriculum of the *Volksschule*. Pedagogical experiments with new school structures were explicitly allowed, as long as they were approved by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the federal states (cf. Friedeburg, 1992, p. 349). The *Ministerpräsidenten* of the federal states governed by the CDU also signed this document, which must be considered an indication of the general drive towards reform.

Educational planning was intensified. In 1965, the German Educational Council (*Deutscher Bildungsrat*) was founded as the successor of the above-mentioned German Committee. It was comprised of an educational commission consisting mainly of scientists, and an administrative commission, which was meant to include school administration and educational politicians in the Council’s work. The Council published several important reports, studies and recommendations (see for example *Deutscher Bildungsrat*, 1969, 1973, 1975). In 1970, an administrative Commission for Educational Planning comprising



representatives of the national and federal governments (*Bund-Länder-Kommission für Bildungsplanung*) was also created to coordinate education politics, with the specific aim of developing a general plan for the German education system (*Bund-Länder-Kommission für Bildungsplanung*, 1973).

In NRW, as in all of Germany, there was now a political aim to increase the number of *Abitur* graduates by increasing permeability, at first without changing the fundamental structure of the system. During the first half of the 1960s, the CDU government created several new paths to the *Abitur* exam, for example by extending evening schooling and upper secondary schooling for *Realschule* graduates, and by increasing the number of middle and higher schools (cf. Ministry of Culture of NRW, 1965, 1967). This was not subject to much public debate (Fälker, 1984, p. 101f). In 1962, Paul Mikat from the CDU became Minister of Education in the CDU-FDP coalition. He was young and energetic. Even though he supported the parallel structure of the school system in principle, he was more inclined to reforms than his predecessor, Werner Schütz, and also supported experiments with tracked comprehensive schools (cf. Ministry of Culture of NRW, 1965; Mikat, 1966, p. 38). For his program, he did not always have the support of more conservative CDU representatives. This was recognized by Heinz Kühn, Fritz Holthoff and Johannes Rau who were the leading spokesmen of the NRW-SPD in school politics during this period. The SPD, which had gone through a period of renewal both ideologically and with respect to its leading personnel, now pushed for various reforms (Düding, 2008, pp. 461ff, p. 489). Topics of debate included the founding of a larger number of higher secondary schools in rural areas, the introduction of French as a second foreign language instead of Latin and the education of disabled children. Coeducation was also introduced step-by-step and without heated debate, but with the resistance of the Catholic Church (Düding, 2008, pp. 491f; Fälker, 1984, p. 98, cf. section 6.5.2).

The centralization of especially the higher grades of the *Volksschulen* in the countryside was another topic social democrats cared strongly about (*Landtag NRW, April 2, 1963*). Even though NRW was comparatively densely populated and not among the federal states with the largest rural-urban differences, as Education Minister Mikat pointed out in a parliamentary debate, there were still many *Volksschulen* in the countryside which were too small to divide students up into more than one, two or three age groups. These schools, termed “dwarf schools” by the SPD, were defended by the CDU (*Landtag NRW, May 14, 1963*, cf. Chapter 6.2.2).

The obligatory schooling law passed in June 1966 (*Schulpflichtgesetz*) regulated the gradual introduction of nine years of obligatory schooling in line with the Hamburg Agreement. Obligatory schooling now applied to disabled children as well. The law also introduced the institutional distinction between the four-year primary school (*Grundschule*) and the five-year upper stage of the *Volksschule*, now called *Hauptschule* (Fälker, 1984, p. 75, 114). However,

the *Hauptschule* was not yet introduced as a separate secondary school type but remained attached to the *Grundschule*. This was opposed by the SPD. Social democrats were also unhappy that the law did not specify how the financial burdens of the extension of special schooling should be distributed and voted against the law because it was not far-reaching enough (*Landtag NRW, May 11, 1966; Landtag NRW, May 25, 1966*). Another social democratic initiative was more successful and taken up by the government. This was the suggestion to introduce the free supply of educational aids such as schoolbooks to students at public schools (*Lernmittelfreiheit*). A compromise between the SPD's wish to implement this immediately and the government's wish to implement it step-by-step was reached and educational aids were supplied free from April 1, 1966, though during the first year only to families with three or more children (Düding, 2008, p. 495; Fälker, 1984, p. 112).

A final topic of debate during this last CDU-led government was *Volksschule* teacher training. In 1962, the Pedagogical Academies were renamed Pedagogical Colleges. Both the FDP and SPD had long supported the scientification of these colleges. In July 1963, the SPD suggested that Pedagogical Colleges should offer academic degrees, be linked institutionally to the universities, be allowed to award doctoral degrees and should be opened up to members of the other denomination – *Volksschule* teacher training was separated by denomination, in line with the school articles of the NRW constitution. These last suggestions were not included in the teacher training law (*Lehrerausbildungsgesetz*) of May 1965 but the colleges were now considered higher, scientific educational establishments (Düding, 2008, pp. 495f). While the Association of Philologists was against the scientification of *Volksschule* teacher training and supported denominational separation, the Education and Science Workers' Union fought for an equalization of all teaching professions by suggesting eight semesters of study for *Volksschule* and *Realschule* teachers alike and a prolongation of the probationary teaching period from one to two years, also for *Volksschule* teachers (Fälker, 1984, p. 118).

#### 4.3.9 The decade of reforms – 1966 to 1976

In the NRW elections of July 1966, the SPD received 49.5 percent and almost secured an absolute majority. The SPD had gained votes especially in the Ruhr area, which at this point was in the grip of the first severe crisis of the coal industry. The SPD had also gained votes in Catholic areas. A part of the Catholic population, as well as more women and white-collar workers, had shifted their preferences from the CDU to the SPD. Finally, the SPD was strong in the large cities (Düding, 2008, pp. 512ff). The coal crisis had started in 1957 when the national government had decided to decontrol coal prices and abolish tariffs on heating oil. In the Ruhr area, a long-lasting period of decline had begun, as many coalmines went bankrupt. By 1966, almost half of the workers in the coal industry had lost their jobs (Nonn, 2009, p. 95). The situation was temporarily stabilized by massive subsidies from the national and federal state governments, especially after the SPD came to power both in NRW and nationally in 1966. The Rhine region around the small German capital, Bonn, as well as the

large cities of Cologne and Düsseldorf, now became the economically leading region of NRW and the economy also kept growing in more peripheral regions. The service sector expanded, more women and foreign workers entered the labor market and real wages increased. Even though NRW was not among the centers of the student revolts of 1968, political and generational conflicts deepened there too (Briesen, 1995, pp. 221ff, pp. 238ff).

Heinz Kühn attempted, at first through secret talks with the leader of the CDU's parliamentary group, Wilhelm Lenz, to create a SPD-CDU coalition but the parliamentary group of the SPD preferred a coalition with the FDP, which was formed in December 1966 (Düding, 2008, pp. 520ff). The following decade was one of reforms. One of the most important examples was the reform of the *Volksschule*. Again, denominational separation was at the heart of the debate. Also in Lower Saxony, Rhineland-Pfalz, Saarland and Bavaria, reforms to abolish denominational schooling were underway (Friedeburg, 1992, pp. 355ff). Through lengthy negotiations with the CDU, a compromise was reached in June 1967 and the respective laws were passed in February 1968 (cf. section 6.1.2). The *Hauptschule* was now decoupled entirely from the primary school and became mainly non-denominational. Teacher training for *Hauptschule* and primary school teachers was finally decoupled from denomination in 1969.

In 1964, the creation of a comprehensive, horizontally organized ladder-system of education had been included in the SPD's national program. The Educational-Political Guidelines (*Bildungspolitische Leitsätze*) of the SPD suggested that the introduction of a two-year transition stage in grades five and six and increased permeability between the existing school types were steps in the right direction. In the long term, all school types should be integrated into one organizational unit (*Vorstand der SPD*, 1964, pp. 12ff). The public debate about the "integrated comprehensive school" (*integrierte Gesamtschule*) first kicked off, however, towards the end of the 1960s. In January 1969, the German Educational Council published a recommendation for school experiments with such school types, which should integrate and overcome the parallel school system with the help of internal differentiation through ability grouping (Deutscher Bildungsrat, 1969). Around the same time, the Kühn government decreed the establishment of the first seven such experimental schools in NRW. These were located in Dortmund, Fröndenberg, Gelsenkirchen, Kamen, Kierspe, Oberhausen and Münster. In November 1969, the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the federal states agreed on an experimental program with 40 such schools throughout the Federal Republic (Düding, 1998, p. 113). In 1970, the German Educational Council published the Structural Plan for the Education System (*Deutscher Bildungsrat*, 1973, cf. Herrlitz et al, 2009, pp. 175ff), where it suggested a ladder-system of education. The system should start with pre-school education and continue with a four-year primary school, followed by a lower and upper secondary stage. The fifth and sixth grades, it was suggested, should be an orientation stage. Pre-school and primary education were meant to mainly

compensate for family- and class-specific deficits, while differentiation based on interests and abilities should start at the lower secondary stage. However, this differentiation should be accomplished without separate, parallel school types and should instead be based on different possibilities for elective courses and combinations. General education should be scientifically oriented, i.e. the traditional division between practical-theoretical and theoretical-scientific education should be overcome. Finally, the upper secondary stage should integrate general and vocational education. This last suggestion was blocked by business representatives who did not want to lose influence over vocational education and were worried that apprentices would transfer to the general educational system (Herrlitz, 2009, p. 177).

In 1970, the Kühn government published a program for NRW, which listed a range of reforms it intended to implement from 1971 to 1975 (*Nordrhein-Westfalen-Programm 1975*). This program included the establishment of 30 integrated comprehensive schools as a short-term aim. This aim was not reached, but by 1975 16 more such schools had been founded. In the long term, the program announced that comprehensive education should be introduced on a general level, if experiments were favorable. In the elections of June 1970, both the SPD and FDP lost votes, while the CDU received the most votes, if only by a small margin. Nonetheless, the social-liberal coalition continued. Both in the SPD's and in the FDP's parliamentary group, there were now a significant number of comparably young and leftist representatives who cared greatly about education. In the coalition agreement, the intended intensification of comprehensive school experiments was stated clearly. At this point, most members of the SPD's parliamentary group, and a substantial proportion of the FDP's parliamentary group, expected that the integrated comprehensive school would be the school of the future, which would replace the older school types. For this reason, teachers' education was reformed. Teachers would no longer be educated for specific school types, but instead for different levels of schooling, meaning primary, lower secondary and upper secondary level. The Kühn government was not enthusiastic about this reform but the SPD's parliamentary group pushed strongly for it until it was eventually passed in October 1974. The reform also introduced practical training to the early stages of teachers' education, with comprehensive teacher seminars instead of seminars separated by school type. The Education and Science Workers' Union's attempt to move the pay group of primary school teachers upwards was unsuccessful, however (Düding, 1998, pp. 113ff; Düding, 2008, pp. 620ff, 656ff).

There were also far-reaching reforms of tertiary education, which had begun during the last Arnold government and were expanded under the SPD's leadership. In 1970, a Ministry of Research was established. Higher technical and engineering schools were upgraded to higher colleges (*Fachhochschulen*). In 1972, five such colleges were merged with Pedagogical Colleges into integrated comprehensive colleges (*Gesamthochschulen*), evidence that the comprehensive idea was making itself felt even on this level of the education system. Universities were founded first in Bochum, then in Dortmund, Bielefeld and Düsseldorf. A

correspondence university was founded in Hagen. Further education for adults also became a topic, and the SPD's parliamentary group, in particular the young SPD politician, Reinhard Grätz, pushed through a law which obliged all municipalities with more than 40,000 inhabitants to establish adult education centers (*Volkshochschulen*) (Düding, 2008, pp. 642ff, pp. 660ff; Nomm, 2009, pp. 103f).

Towards the elections of 1975, the comprehensive reform project increasingly turned into an "apple of discord" between the SPD and FDP on the one hand, and the CDU opposition on the other (Düding, 1998, p. 116). In 1971, even the CDU had proposed a motion in the NRW parliament suggesting the introduction of "cooperative comprehensive schools", where parallel school types should be combined as tracks (*Landtag NRW, November 15, 1971; Landtag NRW, February 19, 1975*). In September 1973, CDU representatives even suggested the general introduction of cooperative comprehensive schooling by August 1, 1974 (*Landtag NRW, September 13, 1973*). This was an attempt to show a willingness for reform and undermine the more far-reaching idea of integrated comprehensive schooling (cf. section 5.4.6; Blumenthal, 1988, pp. 105f). At the same time, opposition to reforms grew. After several years of negotiations, the Commission for Educational Planning published the General Education Plan in 1973. While the national government and the six SPD-led federal states wanted to introduce comprehensive education until the tenth grade, the five CDU-led federal states expressed dissenting opinions with respect to the introduction of integrated comprehensive schools and the orientation stage in grade five and six (*Bund-Länder-Kommission für Bildungsplanung, 1973, p. 16; Friedeburg, 1992, pp. 404ff; Herrlitz et al, 2009, pp. 177f*).

In May 1974, the NRW government proposed a motion according to which the integrated comprehensive school would lose its experimental status and become a regular school type (*Regelschule*). The motion was quite far-reaching and suggested that the parallel structure of the school system should be abolished in favor of a horizontal ladder-system. The two-year orientation stage in grades five and six should become the rule and be independent of school type (*Landtag NRW, May 7, 1974*). However, in response to negative reactions from teachers' and parents' associations as well as the CDU, the FDP suggested several changes within the parliamentary committee responsible. As a result, the orientation stage disappeared from the law proposal. The SPD abstained from this change. Furthermore, with the consent of the SPD, the integrated comprehensive school was not turned into a regular school type but kept its experimental status. The suggestion that the school system's parallel structure should be overcome was also removed from the legal text (*Landtag NRW, February 19, 1975*). Even though the FDP had adopted the Stuttgart Guidelines in 1972, an educational political program that included the idea of comprehensive schooling in "open schools", this was not a theme in the ensuing electoral campaign. However, the FDP representative, Wolfgang Heinz,

declared that it was the FDP's aim to introduce the orientation stage during the next electoral period (Blumenthal, 1988, p. 65; *F.D.P.-Bundesgeschäftsstelle*, 1972).

#### 4.3.10 Conservative backlash against comprehensive schooling and consolidation of achieved reforms – the late 1970s and 1980s

In the NRW elections of May 1975, the FDP received 6.7 percent of the vote, which meant an increase of 1.2 percent, while the SPD decreased its share by one percent to 45.1 percent. The CDU again became the largest party with 47.1 percent of the votes. The social liberal coalition continued. The new coalition agreement did not contain any far-reaching suggestions in terms of school politics. School experiments with comprehensive schools would be continued with the earlier planned number of 30 schools (Blumenthal, 1988, p. 16; Düding, 1998, p. 117). After the election, *Ministerpräsident* Kühn made it clear that “secur[ing] the initiated reforms” now had priority over new, far-reaching ones (*Landtag NRW, June 4, 1975, p. 14ff*). This was related to the economic development after the oil price shock. Unemployment was rising. In the Ruhr area, a severe crisis was under way in the steel industry (Briesen, 1995, pp. 244ff).

Neither Kühn nor the leader of the FDP's parliamentary group, Horst-Ludwig Riemer, prioritized comprehensive schooling. In both parties, however, the elections had brought several young, leftist politicians into parliament. When the government abstained from any new initiative in school politics, the parliamentary groups took the matter in hand (cf. Düding, 1998, pp. 117ff). Especially Hans Schwier, educational political spokesman of the SPD's parliamentary group, and Friedrich Wilhelm Fernau, educational political consultant of the SPD's parliamentary group, played a vital role in preparing a new law proposal for the introduction of “cooperative schools”, which they first published in March 1976 in the journal of the Education and Science Workers' Union. A cooperative school was defined as a school lasting from the fifth to the tenth grade and consisted of a comprehensive orientation stage in grades five and six, followed by parallel tracks based on the traditional *Hauptschule*, *Realschule* and *Gymnasium* school types. An upper secondary stage leading to the *Abitur* exam could be added. The school should consist of at least four but usually of six to nine parallel classes for each age group. Later, the concept was revised. A cooperative school could now also consist of only two tracks so that rural areas with only two existing school types could implement it more easily (Blumenthal, 1988, pp. 19f). Only after the national elections of October 1976, which Helmut Schmidt's social liberal government won by a small margin, was the law proposal broached in the NRW parliament (*Landtag NRW, November 25, 1976*).

On December 10, 1976, the Association of Philologists NRW decided at an extraordinary meeting to start a campaign against the introduction of the cooperative school. In January 1977, the campaign began. Leaflets were circulated, letters of protest were written and

debates and protest meetings were organized. The leader of the CDU opposition, Heinrich Köppler, decided that the CDU would “spearhead the movement in solidarity”, and support it financially (cited in Rösner, 1981, p. 116). The campaign was also supported by several conservative teachers’ and parents’ organizations, namely the *Realschule* teachers’ organization (*Realschullehrerverband*), the parents’ association of the *Gymnasium* (*Landeselternschaft der Gymnasien in Nordrhein-Westfalen*) and the *Realschule* (*Verband der Elternschaften Deutscher Realschulen*), the Association of Catholic German Female Teachers and a Catholic parents’ association, the Association for Freedom of Research (*Bund Freiheit der Wissenschaft*) and the parents’ associations *Elternverein Nordrhein-Westfalen*, *Landesschulpflegschaft Nordrhein-Westfalen* and *Arbeitsgemeinschaft von Schulpflegschaften im Regierungsbezirk Münster*. In September 1977, these organizations formed the group Citizens’ Action for a Petition for a Referendum against the Cooperative School (*Bürgeraktion Volksbegehren gegen die kooperative Schule*) (Blumenthal, 1988, p. 135). There were only three relevant teachers’ and parents’ associations which did not support the movement (cf. Blumenthal, 1988, p. 135): Firstly, there was the Education and Science Workers’ Union, which continued to campaign for the integrated comprehensive school and therefore thought that the cooperative school was not sufficient. Then, there was also the parents’ association of the integrated comprehensive schools (*Landeselternrat der Gesamtschulen in Nordrhein-Westfalen*). Finally, the Association of Education and Upbringing (*Verband Bildung und Erziehung, VBE*) had been founded in 1970, building on the previously separate Catholic and Protestant *Volksschule* teachers’ associations. The Association of Education and Upbringing had as its main aim the upgrading of the *Hauptschule* through an integration of the *Hauptschule* and *Realschule* and was neither a strong supporter nor opponent of integrated comprehensive schooling in the *Gesamtschule* (*Verband Bildung und Erziehung*, 1978; 1991, p. 66).

*Ministerpräsident* Kühn and FDP leader, Riemer, had already distanced themselves from the reform project in newspaper interviews in early February 1977. This had led to conflicts between the parliamentary groups and their leaders. In the following months, both the SPD and the FDP had attempted to mobilize support for the cooperative school by producing leaflets and organizing meetings. In March 1977, the SPD and FDP had lost the federal state elections in Hessen where the introduction of the comprehensive orientation stage had been debated fiercely. The reformers were now on the defensive. In an attempt to calm the opposition, the law proposal was changed so that the orientation stage would no longer have to be comprehensive but could be tracked. It was underlined that municipal school authorities were not obliged to introduce the cooperative school, but that it was merely a legal offer (*Angebotsschule*). In addition, the schools were now supposed to be smaller, with a maximum of eight parallel classes for each age group, and had to include an upper secondary stage leading to the *Abitur*. None of this helped win over the CDU, whose leader, Köppler, wanted

to defeat the government on this issue. The CDU's motions of the early 1970s, which suggested the introduction of a version of the cooperative school, were off the table. In October 1977, the law was passed against the continued opposition of the CDU.

From February 16, 1978, to March 1, 1978, the Citizens' Action movement collected 3,636.932 signatures, which was equivalent to about 29.8 percent of the population of NRW eligible to vote. The 20 percent quorum had thereby been exceeded by almost ten percent. Especially in rural areas, many people had signed for a referendum on the law (Rösner, 1981, p. 172). When the result of the petition was made public, Kühn quickly backed down. The coalition committee, consisting of the leading men of the parliamentary groups, decided only a day later that the law would be repealed. There would be no referendum. The parliamentary groups had no choice but to agree. The cooperative school was taken off the agenda (cf. Düding, 1998, pp. 123f; Seifert, 2013, pp. 317ff).

This important event marks the end point of this study. It had become clear that the integrated comprehensive school would not be introduced on a general level, since not even the cooperative school had survived the political process. Nonetheless, by the NRW elections of 1980, the social liberal coalition had recovered from the defeat. Already in March 1978, the new chairman of the NRW-SPD and Minister of Research, Johannes Rau, declared in a letter to all SPD officials of the federal state that the new school-political aim would be to turn the integrated comprehensive school into a regular school type in addition to the other school types (Düding, 1998, p. 125). In September 1978, Rau was elected *Ministerpräsident*. In 1980, the SPD secured 48.4 percent of the vote, against 43.2 percent for the CDU, 4.9 percent for the FDP and 3 percent for the new Green Party. One reason for the result was growing tension in international politics. It was in part a vote for Chancellor Helmut Schmidt (Düding, 2008, pp. 749). In addition, the CDU's candidate, Köppler, had died suddenly during the campaign and had been replaced by a weaker candidate. As the FDP had not made it over the barring clause, the SPD now had an absolute majority of seats. In July 1981, they turned the integrated comprehensive school into a regular school type, regulated by the federal states' laws in line with the other parallel school types. The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the federal states agreed in May 1982 to accept the school-leaving certificates of each other's comprehensive schools. Up to 1987, 49 more integrated comprehensive schools were founded in NRW (Blumenthal, 1988, pp. 371ff). During the late 1970s and the 1980s, ten years of obligatory schooling were also introduced in NRW and reforms of tertiary education continued (Düding, 1998, p. 38). The SPD's school-political strategy was now – and still is – to introduce comprehensive schooling in a bottom-up way, through decisions by municipalities, and with the local support of parental groups. Leading SPD politicians never again openly articulated the aim of abolishing all parallel school types, including the *Gymnasium* (cf. Düding, 1998, p. 175f).



#### 4.4 Germany: summary and identification of trends and critical junctures

The development of the school system in Prussia, and later in Germany/NRW, was characterized by contradictory trends of expansion and hierarchical differentiation. Over time, a growing percentage of the young age cohort was included, first in primary, and later in secondary education. From around the year 1800 to the year 2000, phases of educational expansion alternated with surprising regularity with phases of stagnation (cf. Herrlitz et al, 2009, pp. 251ff; Nath, 2001; Titze, 2004).

The idea that schooling should be a social right of all human beings had long been circulating in liberal and social democratic circles. A connection of all school types in a ladder-system, which would allow all talented students to have access to higher schooling, was demanded during more reform-oriented times. Nevertheless, the Prussian state was only willing to expand schooling in a way, which would serve its state-building strategy during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. That meant that primary schooling for the masses was greatly expanded but remained far removed from higher schooling for the privileged few, which was linked to the state bureaucracy. Even though middle and higher school types with more realist curricula developed, they did not become a link between these two worlds of education. Instead, the idea that different groups of the population should have different types of education fitting their respective “destinies” and “character” remained hegemonic, leading to the development of an highly differentiated system of parallel school types. This comes to expression not only in the debates about schooling for different classes and class fractions but also in the struggles over denominational schooling, in which the Catholic Church played a major role, or in the struggles over women’s access to education (cf. Chapter 6).

During the Weimar Republic, the Third Reich and in the post-war Federal Republic, parallel schooling also remained the norm. Conflicts over access to and the content of education often led to additional differentiation through the introduction of new parallel school types, followed by various compromises regarding the qualifications awarded by these school types and the interlinkages between them. Such reforms had feedback effects on both an ideological and a material level. For example, in many cases the establishment of parallel school types channeled the educational ambitions of various groups away from the most privileged school type, the (originally humanist) *Gymnasium*. In addition, the privileges of *Gymnasium* teachers were consolidated over time, and the many parallel school types were mirrored in a wide variety of teachers’ organizations. When the number of parallel school types became too big to handle and altered political conditions demanded it, parallel school types were sometimes merged. Examples include reforms of realist and classical higher education during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, reforms of girls’ education and later the introduction of coeducation, and the reform of denominational schooling in the 1960s (cf. for the two latter cases, Chapter 6). Plans for complete comprehensivization existed but seldom reached further than the planning or experimentation stage.

The important exception is the introduction of the four-year comprehensive primary school in 1920; this was pushed through during a short time window of social democratic leadership in the early Weimar Republic and qualifies as a critical juncture. The comprehensive primary school compromise illustrates that attempts at comprehensivization were not necessarily doomed to fail in German politics. Also around 1970, reformers of the time had the impression that they would be politically strong enough to prolong comprehensive schooling. Especially the period from the late 1960s to the early 1970s has the character of a critical juncture because, during this time, even the CDU would have been at least potentially willing to support an introduction of a tracked (“cooperative”) comprehensive school. In addition, during this period the barriers between education for the lower, middle and upper classes were broken down to a greater extent than in previous phases of expansion, because at least a significant percentage of working class youths accessed the higher schools. In sheer numbers, the educational expansion of this time far exceeded any previous development (cf. Nath, 2001). At the same time, urban-rural, gender and denominational inequalities also decreased. The church gradually lost influence and it became less acceptable to divide students based on their backgrounds. These findings also seem to warrant a more detailed analysis of this reform period. Why the trend towards comprehensivization turned out not to be strong enough, so that the “solution” again became the establishment of an additional parallel school type, is analyzed in more detail in the following chapters.

#### 4.5 Comparison: long-term institutional development and post-war reform period

Based on the above, it can be concluded that the long-term institutional development of the school systems in both cases exhibited trends, which can be traced back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These trends were of a different character, however, even though similarities and ideological transfers between the two cases also become apparent in the historical material. The post-war reform period was, in other words, not a radical new beginning but embedded in long-term processes. At the same time, the post-war reform period marks a turning point because the educational expansion in both cases accelerated to a degree unknown in the past and the amount of social change was enormous. The period constitutes a critical juncture during which new compromises between different actors were negotiated. Even though it needs to be taken into account that the historical conditions of the post-war political struggles were unequal in the two cases, their outcome was of course not predetermined by effects of path-dependence. In the following, these findings are discussed in more detail.

In Germany, the political situation at the end of the Second World War is sometimes referred to as the *Stunde Null* (zero hour). The term implies that, at that moment, a completely new Germany was born; a democratic, yet stable nation which had little in common with its historical forerunners. Also in Norway, the immediate post-war period was dominated by the motto that one would now be “building the country” to create a new and better nation. Even though it is understandable that contemporaries had a need for such images, it is of course

clear that nothing social is ever built up from scratch. In fact, the institutional development of the school system in both cases continued to follow well-trodden paths. As discussed in sections 4.2 and 4.4, long-term trends can be distinguished in both cases, which continued to come to expression in the post-war reform period. In Norway, the trend towards comprehensivization dates back well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as do the ideological arguments for and against comprehensive schooling. The idea that the school system should contribute to lessening social inequality had long been shared not only by social democracy but also by liberals and by the organizations of primary school teachers. Also in 19<sup>th</sup> century Prussia, and later in the Weimar Republic, debates for or against comprehensive schooling had taken place, and also here liberals, social democrats and primary school teachers had been the main bearers of reform ideas. However, the dominant trend in the German case is the trend towards differentiation into hierarchically ordered parallel school types. There were long traditions for educational segregation based on class, and the conservative idea of elite schooling stood strong. School political conflicts were often solved by introducing new school types, or by developing new compromises regarding the qualifications awarded by different school types. Besides their respective trends towards comprehensivization and differentiation through parallel schooling, both countries had experienced previous periods of educational expansion. Over time, more and more youths were included in the higher education system in both cases. This trend continued, however, much more strongly, especially during the 1960s and 1970s. In Norway, the trends towards comprehensivization and educational expansion reinforced each other; in Germany, meanwhile, the post-war expansion took place through the parallel school system. The expansion of the *Realschule* and *Gymnasium*, the upgrading of the *Hauptschule* and the introduction of the integrated comprehensive school were elements of expansion in NRW.

In this way, both cases followed their respective paths. This development can be seen as an expression of a certain degree of long-term path-dependence resulting in part from the feedback effects of previous reforms. Once the five-year and later seven-year comprehensive school had been introduced in Norway, for example, school reformers had a positive example to refer to. They could argue that comprehensive schooling saved resources in poor rural municipalities, that it increased social integration and did not lower the quality of schooling. Anybody who somehow had a stake in the comprehensive primary school would be at least a little inclined to agree with them. Over time, large parts of the population got used to comprehensive schooling and internalized the ideological justifications for it. Reformers could also build on the organizational power of, for example, the primary school teachers who were strengthened as a group by previous comprehensive school reforms. In NRW, on the other hand, antagonists of comprehensive school reforms could argue that experiences of parallel schooling – which were abundant in German history – proved that the quality of schooling was best when children were divided up into (seemingly) homogeneous groups.

They could also point to the long history of the *Gymnasium* in order to underline why this school type could not under any circumstance be abolished. For large parts of the population, the abolition of the *Gymnasium* was basically unthinkable. In line with this strong position of the *Gymnasium*, the teachers of this school type were a major actor in school politics. They remained privileged compared to other categories of teachers with regard to their pay and working conditions.

In addition, the crisis of the 1930s, the Second World War and the Nazi regime affected both countries, though in different ways. In Norway, social democrats had been in power since the 1930s. Nazism had come to Norway through the German occupation but teachers had been among the most outspoken opponents of Nazi ideology. In Germany, teachers had belonged to the most outspoken supporters of Nazism. Biological theories of endowment and “race” had in their most extreme version justified the exclusion and then the mass murder of Jewish students. In both countries, potential reformers, having survived Nazi persecution and returning from exile, tried to build on their pre-war reform efforts. But the reformers’ position was more difficult in Germany. While both countries had to be rebuilt after the war, the physical destruction of infrastructure, including housing and school buildings, was more extreme in Germany. During the 1950s, the German public and population were still in a way in a state of shock and denial. Reforms were suggested by the Allies, and cautious reform debates began, but rebuilding the infrastructure and solving the immediate concerns of the population, such as housing needs, were prioritized. In Norway, on the other hand, the Nazi occupation had, if anything, a boosting effect on school reforms. One of the reforms’ aims was to become as unlike Nazi Germany as possible. As the former socialist politician, Torild Skard, explained in the expert interview:

“People wanted to rebuild Norway after the war. And much of this rebuilding was focused on the school system, because they had experienced that Nazism entailed an ideology [...] and the question was how one could prevent people from becoming Nazis. We had the pro-Nazi party NS [National Unification] in Norway and traitors to the nation... and schooling and education had to be very important answers, so that people should become democratic with equal status and rights and not Nazi. So there was broad consensus about expanding the school system.”

In other words, the situation of school reformers in post-war Germany and Norway was quite unequal at the beginning of the reform period. Nevertheless, one should not simply assume that path-dependent trends necessarily had to continue in the post-war reform period. Pre-war history also includes institutional developments pointing in other directions. In Norway, the *realskole* had a long history and was still a respected school type in the 1950s, with influential political supporters. German history also provides examples of comprehensivization and equalization, such as the decision of 1900 to put different types of *Gymnasien* and

*Oberrealschulen* on a par with each other, and more notably the introduction of the four-year comprehensive primary school in 1920.

Furthermore, even though the main trends differed, the post-war reform periods in Norway and Germany also exhibit some striking similarities. For example, there was – at least for a while – a broad consensus that the school system would have to be expanded, which in both cases included significant parts of the more conservative political spectrum. The disagreement was not so much about whether, but about how the expansion should be accomplished. In both cases, the main comprehensive school reforms were conducted under the leadership of social democratic governments. In the course of the 1970s, increased conservative opposition to this course made itself felt in both cases. Eventually, the social democratic governments decided to relinquish some of their former, most far-reaching reform ideas. In Norway, this applied to the abolition of grading in the youth school. In NRW, it applied to the potential introduction of cooperative schools, as well as to the abolition of the parallel school system in principle. In addition, in both cases, the institutional development of the school system always involved some degree of conflict and compromise, the exact nature of which could not be known at the beginning of each reform period. During the post-war reform period, the amount of social change was enormous in both cases. For political actors of the time, it was impossible to predict all potential consequences of their actions in this instable political environment. Nevertheless, they had to make choices. It is possible that different choices than the ones they made would have resulted in different kinds of compromises, which could have led to a somewhat more similar political development. The period was a critical juncture with an open ending.

It should also be noted that the two cases are not independent; ideological transfers took place between them that could possibly have brought the two school systems closer together. For example, the Norwegian term *enhetsskole* (comprehensive school) originates from the German term *Einheitsschule*, of which Norwegian politicians were aware (cf. *Forhandlinger i Odelstinget, March 5, 1959, Lov om folkeskolen, p. 46*). The German *Arbeitsschule* movement influenced Norwegian reform debates, especially during the 1930s. In general, reform ideas originating in Germany were widely discussed in Norway and some of them can be said to have been more influential there than in Germany. This is especially true of the reform phases before the Second World War. After the war, West German influence on the Norwegian youth school reforms was limited, even though Norwegian school politicians remained well-informed regarding the German school development, both in West and in East Germany (cf. *Innstilling frå Folkeskolekomitéen av 1963 (1965), pp. 92ff*). German reform protagonists, meanwhile, looked to Norway and used Norwegian (or other Scandinavian) examples as arguments for reform, especially in the post-war period (cf. for example Ögren/Opitz, 1968).

There are additional trends in both cases which date back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, most notably trends towards urbanization, centralization, secularization and the increasing inclusion of girls and women in the school system. Here, too, the institutional development during the post-war reform period followed paths, which were to a certain degree shaped by earlier decades' events. Again, the Norwegian and NRW/German paths were both similar and different. For example, there was clearly a development towards secularization in both cases, but the Catholic Church had long struggled much harder against it than the Norwegian Protestant state church. Urbanization and centralization also applied to very different situations in sparsely populated Norway and the densely populated provinces of Rhineland and Westphalia, and later NRW. Peripheral rural movements in Norway had long represented a significant proportion of the Norwegian population and offered various possibilities for identification, such as in the language struggle. No comparably independent rural movements can be distinguished in NRW. While both countries had women's movements fighting for access to education from the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards, the Norwegian women's movement was both stronger and more successful from an early date (cf. Chapter 6.5). And even though the political left was split in both countries, the communist-socialist cleavage was more relevant in Germany due to its internal division after the war, but also because it has a history of more pronounced political oppression of the far left. In this way, the political conflicts examined in Chapter 6 were also continued expressions of older trends. Nevertheless, here too the exact outcome of such conflicts depended on actors' strategies and behavior and was thus, to a certain degree, open. The fact that a certain amount of path-dependence can be detected in the two cases' trajectories does not mean that the post-war development was in any way predetermined.



## 5 Struggles over school types, differentiation and grades

In this chapter, the two cases are analyzed in detail with respect to conflicts about the introduction or abolition of specific school types, organizational differentiation in the schools and grades. The Norwegian case is analyzed first and the German case second. In the first step, an overview of the political playing fields is developed. Many of the relevant actors in post-war school politics have already been introduced in the previous chapter. In the present chapter, these actors are identified as protagonists, consenters or antagonists of comprehensive school reforms and their role is discussed in more detail. In order to gain an idea of these actors' material power resources, quantitative data about collective actors' membership, electoral successes and financial resources are provided. In addition, expert interviews are used to develop an overview of the most relevant school political players in these conflicts, their interrelations and their relative strength and weakness. Towards the end of the sections about the political playing fields, some examples are also given of the actors' practical activities that aimed at influencing school politics.

In the next step, collective actors' ideologies are analyzed with a focus on important concepts, legitimations and their meaning in the different contexts. Ideological conflicts within the political camps and the degree of ideological unity or division are also examined. For the Norwegian case, this is undertaken with respect to the introduction of the Norwegian youth school and the Norwegian struggle over grades. For the German case, the analysis is focused on the introduction of the integrated comprehensive school and the attempted introduction of the cooperative school in the federal state of NRW. These cases have been chosen because they were among the most highly contested and significant attempted or achieved school reforms at the time. In addition, structuring the analysis in this way follows the temporal development. The conflict over grading in Norway and the conflict over the cooperative school in NRW came at a later point than the debates about the youth school and the integrated comprehensive school. The political dynamics were not the same but significant differences can be detected, indicating that the antagonists of comprehensive school reforms became politically stronger during the period examined here.

The final part of this chapter summarizes and compares the two cases. Overall, it is shown that the main line of conflict regarding the issues at hand runs between the political left and the political right in both countries, with various center parties placing themselves in between. In Rokkan's terms, such struggles over various aspects of comprehensive schooling are primarily an expression of the class cleavage, while the conflicts which are analyzed in the next chapter are expressions of various crosscutting cleavages. At the same time, the comparison of the political playing fields and the ideological arguments of the major actors shows that the cross-class coalitions in the two cases were different. In Germany, the



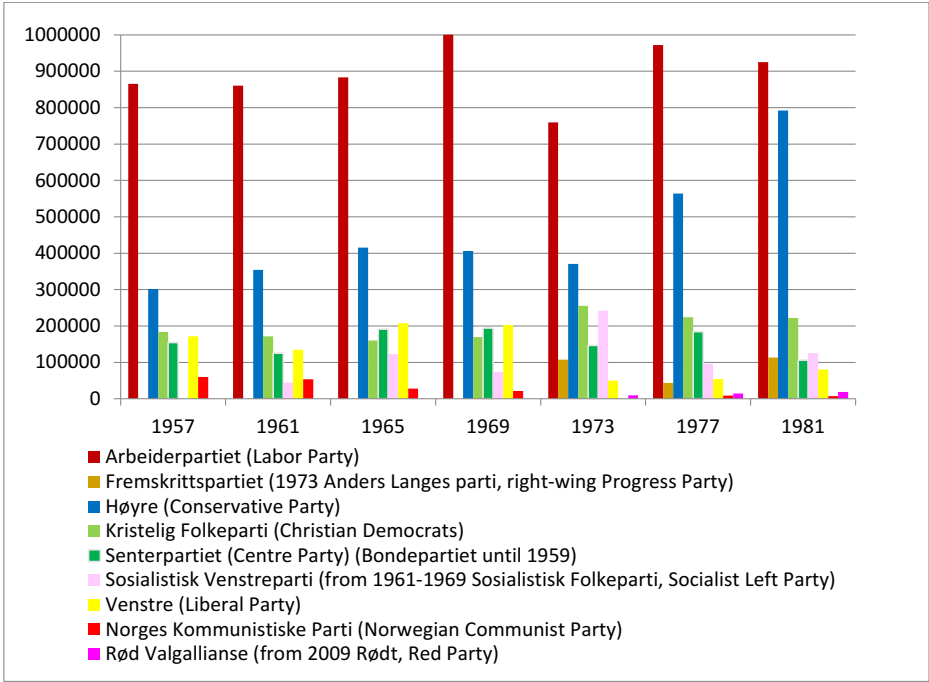
conservative alliance against comprehensive school reforms comprised some parts of the population, such as the rural population that, from a purely material perspective, could have profited from such reforms. In Norway, the rural population, represented mostly by the center parties, consented to comprehensive school reforms. It is argued towards the end of this chapter that this difference can partly be explained by differences between the hegemonic ideologies. Furthermore, the German reform protagonists had less material power resources than their Norwegian counterparts and were not united ideologically. In Norway, the reform antagonists were split. These splits have played an important role.

### 5.1 The Norwegian playing field: protagonists, consenters, antagonists

As shown also in Chapter 4, the Liberal Party (*Venstre*) had originally been the strongest protagonist for comprehensive schooling in Norway. In 1896 and 1920, this party still played a major role in Norwegian politics and contributed to the early comprehensive school reforms which were passed in Norway at the time. The early Liberal Party organized mainly farmers and members of the urban and especially rural middle classes, but also had a radical current which cooperated with liberal unions (Mjeldheim, 1978, pp. 271ff; Mjeldheim, 1984, pp. 358ff). Thus, many liberals had a certain degree of understanding for the demands of the developing working class. Under Liberal Party leadership, the ground for various welfare state institutions was laid, even though – or because – liberals disliked the idea of class struggle (Mjeldheim, 1984, pp. 358ff; Sejersted, 2011, p. 153; Bjørnson, 2003, p. 67). In 1920, however, Labor Party representatives had already begun to take over the Liberal Party's position for comprehensive education, making it their own and shaping it in social democratic ways. By 1954, the Labor Party was by far the strongest force in Norwegian politics and also the main protagonist of comprehensive schooling. As shown in Figure 5.1, the Conservative Party by itself – without coalition partners – posed no serious competition to the Labor Party in national elections, at least until the late 1970s. The Labor Party united many different parts of the population. Among its voters were the vast majority of workers, large sections of the urban middle classes, including especially public but also private employees, and also fishermen and farmers in the countryside – especially in the northern Norway – and even a proportion of the self-employed (Svåsand, 1985, p. 182ff; Valen, 1981, pp. 104ff). The Labor Party was equally successful among women as among men but much more successful among those with shorter educations than among those with longer educations (Svåsand, 1985, p. 181, p. 188; Valen, 1981, pp.28f, p.119). In 1977, the Labor Party's voters had on average 8.8 years of education – less than the average education of the voters of all other Norwegian parties (Valen, 1981, p.119). The strength of the Labor Party in the countryside is reflected in its good results in municipal elections. For example, in 1963, 242 of a total of 525 Norwegian mayors were members of the Labor Party, compared to 31 conservative mayors, 58 liberal mayors, 87 mayors belonging to the Centre Party and 20 mayors belonging to the Christian Democrats (Svåsand, 1992, p. 742). Not least, the Labor Party was strongly affiliated with the

Norwegian trade unions which represented a large part of the population, both in typical industrial and working-class jobs and later also in white-collar occupations (cf. Sass, 2012). In 1954, around 43 percent of all wage earners were members of trade unions belonging to the social-democratic Federation of Trade Unions (*Landsorganisasjonen, LO*). In 1965, the number was 40.4 percent and by 1980, it had decreased to around 38 percent (Stokke, 2000, p. 17). In addition, eight percent of wage earners were members of other trade unions in 1950 and this number grew continually in the following decades (Stokke, 2000, p. 17). Among these non-social democratic trade unions were the largest teachers' unions, whose role is discussed in more detail below.

**Figure 5.1: Parties' number of votes in Norwegian national elections, 1957-1981**



Source: SSB.

The Norwegian Conservative Party (*Høyre*) has its roots in the conservative state bureaucracy of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and in the economic, urban upper class (Kaartvedt, 1984, p. 392; Svåsand, 1994b, pp. 169ff). After the Second World War, it represented primarily urban middle and upper class voters working in the private sector and many self-employed people. The share of workers among its voters was as low as five or six percent until 1973. It grew from the late 1970s onwards, mostly among non-unionized workers with roots in middle class families (Svåsand, 1994b, pp. 215f). As illustrated by the low number of mayors referred to above, the Conservative Party was rather weak in peripheral, rural areas. It also did more poorly in municipal elections than in national elections, partly because its party organization was weak,

especially up to the 1970s (Svåsand, 1994b, p. 145). Men were more likely to vote for the Conservative Party than women and those with long educations were much more likely to vote for the Conservative Party than those with short ones (Svåsand, 1994b, p. 215; 1985, p. 188). On average, the Conservative Party's voters had 10.8 years of education in 1977 so its voters were the most educated of all political parties, with the exception of the Socialist Left Party (Valen, 1981, p. 119). It is especially striking how successful the Conservative Party was among those with high incomes. In 1977, 48 percent of those with a yearly income above 100,000 kroner voted Conservative (Valen, 1981, p. 114). From the 1970s, the Conservative Party managed at least temporarily to attract voters from the new middle classes and parts of the working classes and the rural population by projecting "an image of expanding the role of the welfare state" (Svåsand, 1992, p. 733). Nevertheless, the parliamentary group of the party was far from representative of society at large in that each representative after the Second World War had completed upper secondary schooling. For most of the time, around two-thirds of the representatives had completed a university education (Svåsand, 1994b, p. 166).

The emergence of the right-wing Progress Party (*FrP*, called Anders Lange's Party until 1977) in the 1970s posed an increasing problem for the conservatives. The Progress Party was founded in 1973 and consisted at the outset of so few members that it had little influence on the school reforms begun in 1954. Its role will therefore not be analyzed in great detail below. However, from the late 1970s, it became a relevant voice of the far-right in Norwegian politics. Also in school politics, it was a clear antagonist of social democratic policies. Before the emergence of the Progress Party, the Conservative Party was the party most skeptical of comprehensive education and sections of the party were clearly antagonistic to it. However, the party was split on the issue so some currents of the party should be labeled consenters rather than antagonists (cf. below, section 5.2.5).

The center of Norwegian politics consisting of the Liberal Party, the Christian Democrats (KrF) and the Centre Party (SP) played an important role, as the Labor minority governments needed the center's support on various issues. At the same time, the center parties were the only potential coalition parties for the Conservative Party before the advent of the Progress Party. However, as Svåsand (1992, p. 734) points out, "[t]o the Christian People's Party [Christian Democrats] the conservatives have appeared too secular and to the Center Party they have appeared excessively dominated by urban interests". As a result, center-right coalitions have tended to be instable. With respect to the geographical and social background of their voters and members, the Christian Democrats and the Centre Party were similar. Both were particularly strong in the rural periphery (Svåsand, 1985, pp. 80ff, ppp. 122ff). The average incomes and the average lengths of education of the two parties' voters were comparably low (Valen, 1981, pp. 114ff). The Christian Democrats received votes from all social classes, including a share of working class and farmers' votes. Women were more likely to vote for them than men. In particular, voters who belonged to the language

movement or the teetotal movement and regular church-goers were likely to vote for the Christian Democrats (Svåsand, 1994b, pp. 223f). The Centre Party, on the other hand, was supported especially by a large percentage of farmers and fishermen but also received small but stable percentages of the votes of other social classes (Svåsand, 1985, pp. 182ff). As far as comprehensive school reforms were concerned, the Christian Democrats and the Centre Party should be labeled consenters, rather than antagonists, even though they did share some of the Conservative Party's skepticism.

The Liberal Party had long been a protagonist of comprehensive schooling. From the 1950s, at least some individual representatives of the party could still be classified as such. Others were skeptical of aspects of the reforms, but in general, the party mostly consented to them. It should be noted that the party had lost much of its previous importance and was split and weakened further due to the struggle over membership of the European Community in 1972. The Liberal Party also received votes from various social classes and had its roots in the periphery; on average, however, its voter base was more highly educated and had a significantly higher income than the voter base of the other center parties (Svåsand, 1985, pp. 84ff; Valen, 1981, pp. 114ff).

As discussed in more detail in Chapter 6, the center parties had other school political concerns, which they considered more important than the expansion of obligatory, comprehensive schooling. Therefore, they were willing to compromise and often did not prioritize discussing the details of comprehensive education. On one issue, however, the Centre Party, the Christian Democrats and the Liberal Party clearly agreed with the Conservative Party, i.e. on whether grades in the youth school should be abolished. Almost no politicians of these parties supported this. The debate about the grading system in the late 1970s led to a higher degree of antagonism than the structural reforms of the youth school (cf. below).

On the political left of the Labor Party, the small Socialist People's Party, founded in 1961, can be labeled a protagonist of comprehensive schooling, even if this was not among the priorities of this party. Rather, the main concern of the party was foreign politics which was also the main issue of conflict with the Labor Party. Nonetheless, the Socialist People's Party and its successors, the Socialist Electoral Alliance and the Socialist Left Party, were allies of the Labor Party in school politics. In 1977, the voters of the Socialist Left Party had the highest average education (11.2 years) but also the lowest average yearly income of all Norwegian parties. Both these findings are partly because a high percentage of the Socialist Left Party's voters were under 30 years old (Svåsand, 1985, p. 180, pp. 187f; Valen, 1981, p. 119).

The Norwegian Communist Party did not play a significant role in national Norwegian politics after the 1950s but as long as it did, it supported comprehensive schooling. Similarly,

the Red Electoral Alliance, today just called Red, has been rather small most of the time, despite recent electoral successes in some municipalities. Due to their smallness, the Red Party and the Communist Party will not feature greatly in the analysis below. However, the Red Party's predecessor, the Workers' Communist Party (*Arbeidernes Kommunistparti, AKP*), will be mentioned a few times. This party was founded in 1973 and resulted from a split between the Socialist People's Party and its youth organization in 1969. It can be argued that members of the Workers' Communist Party, and other individual leftist intellectuals, have played a role in the school-political debates through their activities in teachers' unions.

**Table 5.1: Composition of Norwegian governments and Ministers of Education, 1951-1983**

Years	Composition of Government	Minister of Education
1951-1955	Labor Party	Lars Magnus Moen (1951-1953) Birger M. Bergersen (1953-1955), both Labor Party
1955-1963	Labor Party	Birger M. Bergersen (1955-1960), Helge Sivertsen (1960-1963), both Labor Party
August 28 <sup>th</sup> – Sept. 25 <sup>th</sup> 1963	Conservative Party (held post of Prime Minister), Liberal Party, Centre Party, Christian Democrats	Olav Kortner, Liberal Party
1963-1965	Labor Party	Helge Sivertsen, Labor Party
1965-1971	Centre Party (held post of Prime Minister), Conservative Party, Christian Democrats, Liberal Party	Kjell Bondevik, Christian Democrats
1971-1972	Labor Party	Bjartmar Alv Gjerde, Labor Party
1972-1973	Christian Democrats (held post of Prime Minister), Liberal Party, Centre Party	Anton Skulberg, Centre Party
1973-1976	Labor Party	Bjartmar Alv Gjerde, Labor Party
1976-1981	Labor Party	Kjølv Egeland (1976-1979), Einar Førde (1979-1981), both Labor Party
1981-1983	Conservative Party	Tore Austad, Conservative Party

Source: *Mediås, 2010, p. 67*

In terms of forming governments, the Labor Party was the most dominant party throughout the period. Until 1961, it had an absolute majority in parliament. Even afterwards, most

Ministers of Education were members of the Labor Party (cf. Table 5.1). The only relevant exceptions were the period from 1965 to 1971, when Kjell Bondevik from the Christian Democrats was Minister of Education in a coalition of the center parties and the Conservative Party, and the period of 1972-1973 during a short-lived government of center parties, when Anton Skulberg from the Centre Party was Minister of Education. At no time during the period in question was there a conservative Minister of Education, or a conservative Prime Minister – except for a very brief period in 1963. Only in 1981 did the Conservative Party form a minority government by itself for the first time. To understand the necessity of coalition-building in Norwegian politics, it should be added that most Norwegian governments after 1961 were minority governments, with the exception of the government of the Conservative Party and center parties in 1965-1971.

**Table 5.2: Party membership in Norway over time**

Year	Labor Party	Conser- vative Party	Liberal Party	Centre Party	Christian Democrats	Socialist People's Party/Socialist Left Party	Progress Party
1960	165,096	96,931		61,000 (a)	30,346 (a)		
1970	155,254	110,241	13,220 (b)	70,000	41,137 (b)		
1980	153,507	152,185	12,007	53,517	69,697	10,000 (c)	10,000 (c)

(a) Figure for 1961; (b) Figure for 1972; (c) Figure for 1979

Source: Svåsand 1992, pp. 744ff

**Table 5.3: Numbers of paid staff of Norwegian parties over time**

Years	Labor Party	Conser- vative Party	Liberal Party	Centre Party	Christian Democrats	Socialist People's Party/Socialist Left Party	Progress Party
1961-65	53	74	12				
1969-73	55	113	10	26	38		
1977-81	92	131	9	36	55	20	1

Numbers include paid staff in the central organization, the subnational organization, the parliamentary group, youth organizations and women's organizations of the parties

Source: Svåsand 1992, pp. 750ff, own calculations

In membership, the Labor Party had most power resources at the beginning of the reform period but the membership of the Conservative Party and the Christian Democrats grew

during the 1970s (cf. Table 5.2). In 1961, 7.04 percent of the electorate were members of the Labor Party, 4.17 percent were members of the Conservative Party, 2.61 percent were members of the Centre Party, 1.3 percent were members of the Christian Democrats and 0.43 percent were members of the Liberal Party (Katz et al, 1992, p. 343). By 1981, a slightly higher percentage of the electorate were members of the Conservative Party than of the Labor Party (Katz et al, 1992, p. 343). In addition, the Conservative Party employed a higher number of paid staff at all times (cf. Table 5.3). This is related to the Conservative Party's finances (cf. Table 5.4). Before 1970, parties received no state subvention so their main income consisted of membership fees, donations and lotteries (Svåsand, 1994a, p. 324). As implied by the column labelled 'Other' in Table 5.4 below, the Conservative Party received higher donations than the Labor Party or any other party throughout the period. The Labor Party depended on state subventions to a much higher degree (Svåsand, 1994a, p. 324). One can therefore conclude, despite the great electoral successes of the Labor Party, that the Conservative Party was an important political player with considerable material power resources compared to other political parties.

**Table 5.4: Income of party head offices in Norway over time (in NOK)**

Labor Party			Conservative Party (a)			
Years	Income from members and branches	State subvention	Other	Income from members and branches	State subvention	Other
1961-1964	416,164		1,518,798			2,700,328
1969-1972	624,211	4,034,333	2,394,296		1,696,933	3,787,058
1977-1980	852,147	8,425,274	3,697,211		4,786,782	7,693,671

Liberal Party			Centre Party			
Years	Income from members and branches	State subvention	Other	Income from members and branches	State subvention	Other
1961-1964	29,839		298,680			
1969-1972	136,605	727,725	427,228			
1977-1980	90,220	635,180	544,863	1,354,925	1,885,856	3,578,016

Christian Democrats			Socialist People's Party/Socialist Left Party			
Years	Income from members and branches	State subvention	Other	Income from members and branches	State subvention	Other
1961-1964						
1969-1972	125,275	754,993	399,898			
1977-1980	283,850	2,559,530	1,070,861	291,458	1,099,067	868,035

(a) Conservative membership fees are divided between municipal and provincial branches so the central organization does not receive any share of them.

Source: Svåsand 1992, pp. 774f

As mentioned above, the main teachers' unions were not affiliated with the social-democratic Federation of Trade Unions but the Norwegian Teachers' Association (*Norsk Lærerlag*) was an advocate of comprehensive schooling and youth school reform and thus an important ally of the Labor Party. The only exception was the debate about grades in the late 1970s – on this issue, the Norwegian Teachers' Association was split; it did not support abolishing grades in the youth school, unlike radical leftist reformers. In terms of membership numbers, this organization was clearly the most important teachers' organization (cf. Table 5.5). In the words of the secondary school teachers' representative, Per Arne Sæther, the Association of Norwegian Secondary School Teachers (*Norsk Lektorlag*) was the Norwegian Teachers' Association's "little brother", though he also pointed out that his organization (from 1983 called NUFO, Norwegian Educational Association) had dominated at the level of upper secondary schooling. In the course of the educational expansion, both organizations grew but the primary school teachers consolidated their leading position in membership. This was aided by their merger with the Female Teachers' Association (*Norges Lærerinneforbund*) in 1966 and, of course, not least by the introduction of the youth school which meant that primary school teachers moved upwards in the school system. In the previous academic middle school (*realskole*), university-educated secondary school teachers had dominated. They now had to share this space with a growing number of primary school teachers from teacher training colleges. For this reason, the Association of Norwegian Secondary School Teachers was not one of the protagonists of comprehensive education on the youth school level. Secondary school teachers worried about the academic quality of lower and upper secondary education and about their own positions in it. Many of them were clearly antagonistic to the reforms (cf. Lauglo, 1972). However, their organization criticized many aspects of the reforms but never organized broad opposition. For this reason, it cannot be labeled a clear political antagonist (cf. below).



**Table 5.5: Membership numbers of the main Norwegian teachers' organizations**

Year	Norwegian Teachers' Association (Norges Lærerlag; Norsk Lærerlag from 1966)	Association of Norwegian Secondary School Teachers (Norsk Lektorlag)	Female Teachers' Association (Norges Lærerinneforbund)
1955	9511	2580	2099
1960	11650	3430	2996
1964	14188	3798	2687
1966	15962	4281	2564
1967	19313	4443	
1970	23519	5264	
1974	31711	6764	
1979	43803	10934	

Sources: Annual reports of Norges Lærerlag / Norsk Lærerlag 1954-1979, Den Høgre Skolen 1954-1974, Skoleforum 1980, annual reports of Norges Lærerinneforbund 1956-1966

In financial resources, the Norwegian Teachers' Association was also the largest (cf. Table 5.6 below). Besides its income from membership fees it had funds, such as *Fondet til særlige tiltak* (the Fund for special measures) which was used for legal assistance for members and otherwise lent much of its capital to the organization's credit bank. In 1965, the fund's capital stood at 2,422,490 NOK. In addition, there were some smaller funds, such as a pension fund. The Norwegian Teachers' Association also ran and partly financed a press office (*Norsk Pedagogisk Pressekontor*) which published a number of journals and had income from these through subscriptions and advertisements. The Female Teachers' Association (*Norges Lærerinnelag*) also had some funds but these were small compared to the other organizations' which was presumably one of the reasons why the organization merged with the larger Norwegian Teachers' Association in 1966.

The Association of Norwegian Secondary School Teachers had a rather large fund (*Norsk Lektorlagets Fond*) whose capital account stood at 2,173,070 NOK in 1965 – in other words, it was almost as large as the main fund of the Norwegian Teachers' Association in the same year (cf. above). The organization's total budget was smaller but in 1979 it made up more than half of the Norwegian Teachers' Association's budget, despite the fact that there were approximately four times as many primary school teachers. This is quite impressive. The organization also published a journal entitled *Den Høgre Skolen* (The Secondary School) until 1976 which then changed its title to *Skoleforum* (School Forum). The name change was a recognition of the fact that more and more members of the organization were teaching in the

youth school which was now considered a part of primary school. In 1947, *Norsk Lektorlag* had begun to welcome all teachers into its ranks who were teaching at middle schools, independent of their education (Grove/Michelsen, 2014, pp. 316ff). Strictly speaking, it was therefore no longer an organization solely of secondary school teachers. The organizational competition with the Norwegian Teachers' Association continued to be fierce on the youth school level.

**Table 5.6: Total size of budget of teachers' organizations and amount of membership fees over time, rounded figures, in NOK**

Year	Norwegian Teachers' Association ( <i>Norges Lærerlag; Norsk Lærerlag from 1966</i> )		Association of Norwegian Secondary School Teachers ( <i>Norsk Lektorlag</i> )		Female Teachers' Association ( <i>Norges Lærerinneforbund</i> )	
	Total budget	Membership fees	Total budget	Membership fees	Total budget	Membership fees
1956	631 640	606 840	276 600	244 780	185 310	134 500
1961	1 022 280	940 300	610 610	539 950	175 760	161 850
1966	3 104 090	2 633 180	1 181 240	966 100	305 030	208 260
1967	3 702 000	3 103 530	1 284 990	1 002 150		
1969	5 238 030	4 384 190	1 625 480	1 251 880		
1974	7 022 290	5 838 760	3 441 370	2 675 650		
1979	17 007 680	17 346 550	9 114 150	7 217 170		

Sources: Annual reports of *Norges Lærerinneforbund 1956-1966*, annual reports of *Norges / Norsk Lærerlag 1956-1980*, *Den Høgre Skolen 1956-1975*, *Skoleforum 1980*

In the expert interviews conducted for this study, all experts were asked towards the end, which organizations they thought had been the most influential and successful in shaping school politics over time and which organizations had cooperated with each other the most. Many of them thought that education had been an important topic for all the political parties and many other organizations and that all parties had contributed to the final shape of the reforms. Nonetheless, most were of the opinion that the Labor Party had been the most influential party, at least until the 1970s. As the conservative politician, Lars Roar Langslet, put it, the Labor Party “had its hegemonic period after the war” and by the time a notable opposition had developed “the big structural reforms were finished”. Many experts also pointed out the important role the teachers' organizations had played. As the secondary school teacher, Ivar Bjørndal, said, “in Norway it is almost impossible in the long run to be Minister of Education without having the teachers' organizations on board”. Especially the Norwegian Teachers' Association was deemed by many to have been the most important supporter of

comprehensive schooling policies and more influential than the Association of Norwegian Secondary School Teachers. In the words of the primary school teacher, Kjell Horn:

“Trond Johannessen was leader of the Norwegian Teachers’ Association for many, many years. And I remember, when I was down at the ministry and had meetings there and he... he came and went and his way of speaking with the ministry’s people... there was such mutual understanding, such fraternization, such harmony that it was... I thought, damn, here comes a union man who really should have these people as his counterparts in negotiations but they were so heartily in agreement about the development of the Norwegian school in the direction we have looked at that it was really... so there is no question that the Teachers’ Association was a supporter of the ministry.”

Kari Lie, active in the Female Teachers’ Association from 1964 and chairwoman of the Norwegian Teachers’ Association from 1978, who worked closely with Trond Johannessen during the 1970s, also confirmed that from her point of view it was most important to have good contact with the parties who controlled the Ministry of Education. As we have seen, most of the time, this was the Labor Party (cf. Table 5.1). She also sympathized politically with the Labor Party, despite that fact that some people, for example the conservative politician, Lars Roar Langslet, assumed that she had voted for the Conservative Party. Furthermore, she considered cooperation with the social-democratic Federation of Trade Unions to have been of central importance for her organization, under both Trond Johannessen’s and her own leadership. Only by cooperating closely with this large organization could primary school teachers achieve good results in negotiations with the state.

Despite the good relations between the Labor Party and the Norwegian Teachers’ Association, the primary school teachers sometimes resorted to striking against the government’s policies. While they sympathized with much of the Labor Party’s politics, they nonetheless considered the government to be their counterpart in negotiations and organized opposition when they deemed it necessary. The Association of Norwegian Secondary School Teachers also turned into “more of a union” during the 1970s and 1980s, according to Per Arne Sæther, and strikes were a real possibility when it came to salary negotiations. This resulted in large-scale strikes in 1980 and 1986. He also mentioned that some more conservative members were not too eager to strike but that they did not organize opposition to strikes once they had been decided on. However, the teachers did not strike against structural reforms but only as a result of conflicts regarding financial issues such as salaries, the number of lessons to be taught and so forth.

According to Lars Roar Langslet, the Conservative Party also had amicable relations with the Norwegian Teachers’ Association, even though he considered it to have been politically “more diffuse” than the Association of Norwegian Secondary School Teachers:

“There were of course varying political positions within the Association of Norwegian Secondary School Teachers and the Norwegian Teachers’ Association but we had better contact with the Association of Norwegian Secondary School Teachers on many issues in the Conservative Party. Kaltenborn, who was chairman of the association for a time [from 1965 to 1971], was also active as conservative politician. But it wasn’t as if we brought our heads together and collectively agreed about this or that; it wasn’t that kind of cooperation.”

Other experts made similar statements. Even though the major teachers’ organizations generally leaned in different directions politically, experts warned against concluding that their political positioning was always clear. All three major teachers’ associations attempted to remain politically independent and, as large organizations, they were characterized by internal disagreements as well. A significant number of the secondary school teachers had conservative inclinations and a significant number of primary school teachers leaned towards social democracy. But many teachers were also active in other political parties. In both associations, there were still a number of liberal teachers. The Liberal Party had long been known as “the teachers’ party”. Both within the Association of Norwegian Secondary School Teachers and within the Norwegian Teachers’ Association, there were also small but very active minorities of socialist and communist teachers. During the 1970s, many of them were members of the Workers’ Communist Party (*AKP*) but also earlier there had been active socialists among the secondary school teachers, such as the politician, Trygve Bull. Kjell Horn, who was one of the active *AKP* members within the Norwegian Teachers’ Association in the 1970s, described in the interview how the organized activity of the communists led to a general rise in activity and sparked off debates within the organization, also inspiring the more conservative members to become involved and mobilize opposition. Per Arne Sæther, who was active in the Association of Norwegian Secondary School Teachers, also shared several anecdotes about *AKP* members developing significant influence on several levels within the organization. With regard to comprehensive schooling, there is, however, no doubt that this was mainly “the Norwegian Teachers’ Association’s project [...] not the project of the Association of Norwegian Secondary School Teachers”, as the conservative Per Lønning put it.

In addition to parties and teachers’ organizations, there were several other collective actors who played a role in school politics. For example, the Christian democrat, Jakob Aano, replied the following when asked which organizations had been most successful in shaping Norwegian school politics: “Well, it has long been the church based on the basic relation between the Constitution and religion. It has had to give way more and more to strong powers [...] but I think through these debates we have reached some formulations which we should be able to stick to in the future.”

This was a typical answer in the sense that many experts replied to this question with an evaluation of the influence of the organization closest to their heart – in Aano’s case, the church – and only in a second step compared this to other actors’ influence. As discussed in more detail in section 6.1.1, it is correct that the Protestant Norwegian church and its lay organizations played a significant role in the aspects of the school-political debates to which Aano refers above, namely debates about Christian education and private schooling. In the debates about comprehensive schooling, the Norwegian church, however, did not play a significant role, as it did not declare itself strongly for or against comprehensive schooling. The same is true of various initiatives by parents and associations involved in the Norwegian language struggle. These actors’ impact is discussed in more detail in section 6.3. The employers’ organizations and the social-democratic Federation of Trade Unions could also have been potential candidates but data indicate that they were mostly involved in debates about upper secondary and vocational education and had little to say about the prolongation of comprehensive education to nine years. They were not mentioned by any of the experts, except by the social democratic politician and sociologist, Gudmund Hernes, who mentioned them only to say that he did not believe that they had had any significant influence over or interest in the youth school debates. Finally, there were various school political councils which can be considered relevant collective actors, especially the Experimental Council (*Forsøksrådet*) and various levels of the state administration involved in the daily organization of the school system. The Experimental Council was a clear protagonist of comprehensive school reforms, even if it was formally independent of party politics. Another important body was the Primary School Committee (*Grunnskolerådet*) which advised the ministry on reforms regarding primary schools. Within the administration, school directors also played an important role as facilitators of the reforms (Telhaug/Mediås, 2003, pp. 190ff).

All these actors tried to influence school politics in some way and their activities were often similar. Many of the former politicians interviewed spoke of how much traveling they had done and how many party meetings and conferences they had attended. In addition, it was important to win people’s “hearts and minds”, as Gudmund Hernes put it. When asked how to achieve this, he explained:

“Well, publications, debates, discussions. And Norway is such a quarrelsome country, [...] so there are many debates and speeches all around. With the minister in front, who travels around and missionizes and speaks about why we are going to do it this way. And then there are the teachers’ organizations which have their meetings and conferences and all that, where one as minister is often invited to justify and defend what has been decided.”

Within parliament, the politicians participated in regular meetings not only of their own parliamentary groups but also in common meetings of all groups. According to Jakob Aano,

during his time in parliament there was a special meeting room for such gatherings. They helped gain an idea of the kind of criticism that might come from the opposition and how the various coalition parties could react to it. One can imagine that this was particularly important during the coalition of the conservatives and the center parties. The Labor Party minority governments after 1961 also had to ensure they would have a majority in parliament.

The interviewed experts also all agreed that cooperation with the media had been important. Many mentioned that they had written press releases and organized press conferences. In addition, the representatives of the teachers' associations spent much energy and many resources on writing comments for the various hearings. In fact, Kari Lie thought that the number of hearings had increased to such an extent over time that it became a rather laborious duty to comment on everything. In her opinion, direct meetings with the ministry and the parliamentary education committee had been more useful to achieve concrete results. Per Arne Sæther, on the other hand, thought that the hearing statements were important, since they laid out the organization's politics and thus also served to inform members about what the organization thought about various issues. Kari Lie also mentioned that the hearing statements were sent out to the regional and local levels of the organization. Nonetheless, Sæther also pointed out that some people in his organization thought that hearings were not as relevant as personal meetings, the media and informal contacts. Both Kari Lie and Per Arne Sæther mentioned that the usual procedure with respect to meetings with politicians was to invite oneself to meetings at the ministry or with the parliamentary education committee. For example, Kari Lie simply called the chairman of the parliamentary education committee on the phone and suggested that her association should come by to present their views on this or that. And they were welcome to do so. Finally, resolutions and petitions were sometimes employed in Norwegian school politics. However, no examples of this could be found in relation with the structural reforms. Rather, these measures were employed by antagonists of other school-political policies, such as language policies and especially decisions related to Christian education (cf. Chapter 6).

## 5.2 Ideologies regarding school types, differentiation and grades in Norway

A detailed overview of the youth school reform process has already been given in Chapter 4 (pp. 74ff). In short, the introduction of a new school type and the extension of obligatory schooling to nine years was first debated in the early 1950s. In 1954, the law on experiments was passed unanimously, while in 1959 parliament was split over the issue whether the old school types should be allowed to participate in the experiments with the introduction of nine-year obligatory schooling. School politics of the early 1960s was characterized by debates about organizational differentiation and the two tracks of the early youth school were replaced with a system of ability grouping and elective subjects. In 1969, the primary school law was passed which finalized the introduction of the new school type but did not contain specific rules for differentiation. With the curriculum of 1974, ability grouping was, however, given

up and from 1979, the directives of the Ministry of Education stated clearly that permanent ability grouping was unlawful until the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, in all subjects. Children were now taught in classes that were “kept together” (*sammenholdte klasser*), based on the idea of pedagogical differentiation within the classroom. Grouping was only allowed on a short-term basis. Finally, during the 1970s it was also discussed whether grades in the youth school should be abolished. This was suggested by the Labor Party and by the Evaluation Committee which had been put in place in 1972. After a fierce public debate, however, the abolition of grading in the youth school was relinquished.

In the following, the kinds of arguments and concepts that were used by the different collective actors in these debates are analyzed in more detail, as is how unified or divided they were over the issues at hand. First, the protagonists’ ideological arguments are discussed with respect to the youth school reform, including debates about its content and organizational differentiation. The analysis then focuses on debates about the grading system. In the next step, the consenter’s and finally the antagonist’s views on these issues are explored. As will be shown, the youth school reform and the debate on grading are related but they are discussed separately to show the slight differences in the ideological camps which developed. In addition, the pinnacle of the grading debate took place later than the youth school reform. The analysis is based on party programs, experts’ assessments, parliamentary debates and some other sources.

### 5.2.1 Ideology of Norwegian protagonists – the youth school reform

As mentioned in Chapter 4 (p. 74), the introduction of the new youth school was first suggested in the early 1950s by a commission (*Samordningsnemnda*) which had been put in place in 1947 to discuss the internal coordination of the education system (Telhaug, 1969, pp. 24ff). In its last report in 1952, the commission stated:

“No other institution has meant as much as the people’s school in terms of the equalization of status and class differences within the Norwegian people and to create togetherness and comradeship between children of different layers of society. [...] The important social and national factor which the community in the children’s school has been should be strengthened by letting this community continue during the time of youth which is so decisive for the attitude towards life.” (*Samordningsnemnda for skoleverket, Sammenfatning og utsyn*, 1952, quoted in Telhaug, 1969, p. 26)

The social perspective of the commission is clear. This social argument also dominated the Labor Party’s line of reasoning throughout the period. As was shown in Chapter 4, the Labor Party could not be accused of making a secret of its ambitions. In its party program for 1958-1961, it was stated:

“The Labor Party is of the opinion that the future expansion of schooling shall aim at an expansion of the primary school to a nine-year general comprehensive school which will become obligatory for everyone. The nine-year comprehensive school must be organized in such a way that the upper grades of the primary school become a youth school which will replace *framhaldsskole* and *realskole*. [...] The Labor Party wants to erase the class division which is rooted in unequal educational opportunities.”

This focus on equal educational opportunities for all, independent of economic, social and geographical background, and the general support for educational expansion was strong also in later Labor Party programs of the reform period. The ambition to overcome the parallel middle school system was rooted in the conviction that it was necessary to achieve social levelling in society and break down educational middle, upper class and urban privileges. Of course, such privileges had not been very exclusive in Norway to start with, compared to other countries, but they were nonetheless real (cf. Aubert et al, 1960). The old school types were indeed associated with different degrees of status and were attended by students with different class backgrounds (cf. Lindbekk, 1968, 1973, pp. 88ff; *Innstilling frå Folkeskolekomiteén av 1963 (1965), p. 129*). This inequality was unacceptable in the eyes of the Labor Party and other school reform protagonists. In the words of the Labor Party politician and sociologist, Gudmund Hernes:

“It was the underlying philosophy, well, that if you want tolerance and this type of mutual respect, [...] then they must learn to mix with one another. And you learn that at school. The school is the arena for this. So that was [...] an important part of the reason that one did not want to preserve the old class structure which came to expression through the school structure but change the school structure to create a different society. So you can say that it was an entirely different view of the school. [It was a change from using] the school to preserve what is, with school types for different classes, now I’m saying it pointedly, to a situation where you are [...] using the school to create a more equal society.”

In addition, Labor Party representatives often argued that the comprehensive school was also the most practical choice with respect to Norway’s geographical conditions. Especially in the countryside, it was pointed out, for example in the parliamentary debates on the people’s school law of March 13, 1959, that parallel schooling was “costly, irrational and unfortunate in many ways” (Labor Party representative, Anders Sæterøy, *Forhandlinger i Lagtinget, March 13, 1959, p. 21*). The comprehensive school, on the other hand, would make much more “elastic” solutions possible. The Labor Party thus used pragmatic arguments for the comprehensive school whenever it seemed useful. In the eyes of their political opponents, it was, however, clear that the Labor Party was concerned primarily with creating more equality. For example, the conservative politician, Per Lønning, who participated in the



debates of 1959, described the Labor Party's arguments in the following way in the expert interview:

"This comprehensive school was to a great extent an ideology. And a philosophy of equality which lay behind it. And I don't know how many times we heard that all children are actually good at school. If only they get to do the right subjects. All children are equally intelligent, if only we discover where they have their needs. So when the new people's school law was debated, there was no limit to the praise heard from the Labor Party but also partly from the so-called center parties and how there was now a new dawn for the Norwegian school, because now students should be allowed to become clever, all of them."

Lønning's remark points to the issue reformers grappled with in the following years, after the introduction of the youth school had been decided on in principle, namely organizational differentiation within the new school type. It should first be remarked that this is not a topic that received much attention in any of the parties' programs. Only in a few cases is it possible to trace in the party programs the historical development from parallel schooling, to tracking, to ability grouping and finally to the abolition of any permanent organizational differentiation in the youth school. This in itself shows that the details of comprehensive education were not among the most highly contested topics in Norwegian politics at the time. However, there are some passages in the party programs of the reform protagonists which indicate how the trend towards less organizational differentiation was justified. As it says in the Labor Party's program of 1962-1965:

"The school needs to take care of every single student and help them based on their own needs. On the youth school level, students should have the possibility to choose between several tracks or subjects. The school should advise and offer orientation about the possibilities."

By 1969, the new principle program of the Labor Party stated:

"The division into different school types and tracks is to be replaced by a comprehensive school in which a wide range of learning opportunities is given which to the highest possible degree are adjusted to individual wishes and needs. Standard demands which turn individual students into losers must be given up."

In other words, organizational differentiation was seen more critically at this point and its most extreme form, tracking, was no longer supported. The Socialist People's Party had stated already in its working program of 1965: "Children and youth schools should be organized so that they serve to equalize social class divisions. The school classes must be kept together most of the time, with the highest possible amount of differentiation within the class." The

skepticism of ability grouping was made even clearer in the Socialist People's Party's program for 1969-1973:

“Ability group choice and other measures which operate in a discriminatory way or create artificial divisions between the students must be counteracted. Therefore, one must keep the classes together, individualize teaching and give students wide freedom to choose assignments, courses, subjects. The precondition is a lower number of students in the class and better school material.”

It should also be noted that the last representative of the Norwegian Communist Party in parliament from 1958 to 1961, Emil Løvlien, had opposed any kind of tracking in the youth school in the parliamentary debate on the people's school law of 1959. He also demanded that all students who finished the nine-year comprehensive school should be eligible for theoretical and vocational upper secondary education, thus anticipating the problems differentiation would create in the course of the experimental process (*Forhandlingene i Odelstinget, March 5, 1959, p. 66*).

In the expert interviews, it was confirmed that in the eyes of the protagonists of the reforms, the main problem with ability grouping was that it reproduced the same social inequalities that had characterized the old school types and the early, tracked youth school. In particular, many thought that it led to a stigmatization of the few students who ended up in the lowest ability groups. Since the choice was made by parents, and since upper secondary schools expected students to have attended the highest ability groups, children from the upper and middle classes were overrepresented in the higher ability groups compared to working class children. This impression was also supported by social scientific research of the time, such as the work of the sociologist and conservative politician, Tore Lindbekk (1968, 1973), or the publications of the Experimental Council (cf. Telhaug, 1969, pp. 143f). In addition, small rural youth schools simply did not have sufficient numbers of students to implement ability grouping (Telhaug, 1969, p. 143). Thus, the system became untenable for various reasons.

With respect to educational content and pedagogical approaches, the protagonists of comprehensive schooling also aimed at overcoming class divisions, for example by making students feel more comfortable at school. As stated in the Labor Party's program for 1974-1977:

“One can measure whether the school is successful only by whether students and teachers feel comfortable and experience pleasure in working. [...] unhealthy competition must be combatted. The school must not consolidate contemporary societal weaknesses but must give students a foundation for contributing to a better society.

The Labor Party advocates:

- A far-reaching reform of school content based on the goals of equality, freedom, democracy and solidarity. [...] School content and ways of working must not mirror contemporary societal class divisions and the low status of some occupations and activities. There must be a reevaluation of vocational education and manual labor.”

As expressed above, the Labor Party not only emphasized the need to create a society of social equals but also considered it necessary, as a part of this project, to increase the status of practical and vocational education. This was made even clearer in the debates about upper secondary education. In its program for 1966-1969, the Labor Party stated that “Practical and theoretical education must be deemed to be of equal value. There must be realistic possibilities for transferring between different kinds of [upper secondary] schools. The school system must not create social divisions as a result of differences in education.”

This remark also points to a concern which was shared by many leftwing reformers at the time, namely the idea that the realization of equal opportunities in education, termed meritocracy by the British sociologist Michael Young, could lead to a new type of social stratification based on genetic intellectual abilities. Young’s satirical essay “The Rise of the Meritocracy” of 1958 envisaged just that. In the interviews, this essay was mentioned by the socialist, Torild Skard:

“This book made a very strong impression on me [...]. You would get a new upper class of all those who had merit, who were intelligent and received education and you would have an underclass with little talent. And that was a much more terrible class division than the one we had which was based on different economic conditions, where you had intelligent people both at the top and at the bottom. Since you had intelligent people both at the top and bottom, both classes could speak for themselves, further their cause, fight for something. They had talent and capacity, right? But if all those on the bottom were incompetent... what were they supposed to do?”

However, social scientists at the time were quick to renounce the idea that equality of opportunity had in fact been achieved. In an influential paper of 1973, the sociologist and social democrat, Gudmund Hernes, made it clear that meritocracy in Young’s sense was an illusion (cf. Hernes, 1973, pp. 4ff). In 1978, the Labor Party’s program asserted that the various social-democratic school reforms had not in fact entirely removed old class divisions based on economic and social background and that social inequality was still being reproduced in the education system, if not as strongly as before. For this reason, it was asserted, students who had problems completing the youth school needed special attention and support. Instead of further structural reforms, developing the school’s content and teaching methods was suggested to achieve (even) more equality. The main ideological priority of the Norwegian Labor Party regarding school politics was still to argue against the reproduction of

inequality within the education system and for additional support, especially for the weakest students.

The debate about the value of theoretical and practical education is also significant because it points towards an ideological division, not only between protagonists and antagonists of the reforms but also among the leftist reformers themselves, about what kind of school the youth school should be. The pedagogical approaches of primary and secondary school teachers had traditionally differed which was related to their different social and educational backgrounds. In the youth school, both groups of teachers were represented, in addition to teachers with vocational backgrounds. A debate ensued about teaching methods and the meaning of “good quality teaching”. The primary school teachers, who supported the reforms, often felt that the secondary school teachers looked down on them and acted like “an upper caste”, as Kari Lie put it. In the opinion of many primary school teachers, good quality teaching should involve cooperation between teachers of different subjects and modern teaching methods. They valued pedagogy more than academic expertise in single subjects. As is shown in more detail below, the secondary school teachers and the Conservative Party were more concerned about what they deemed important academic standards that needed to be upheld in the new school type.

However, there was also disagreement within the left about the meaning of a “good” education. In the interviews, this was expressed most clearly by the former communist, *AKP* activist and primary school teacher, Kjell Horn. He recounted that he had supported the reforms at the time, only to realize later that the youth school had become “a diluted *realskole*”, oriented much too much on theoretical book-learning and neglecting the valuable experiences of the practical education and the alternative teaching methods of the *framhaldsskole*. He chose strong words:

“I consider this to be high-class treason. The Labor Party wanted to lift its own class from a proletarian state over to a more middle class and bourgeois stratum. And they thought they could lift everyone with this school reform. So they threw it all together in a soup. [...] A merger never happens between two fully equal parts. There is always a strong and a somewhat less strong part which are merged and we know that it is always the strong part’s traditions, attitudes, history, ideology and so forth which are victorious after a while. And this happened here. [...] The old *framhaldsskole* teachers who had vocational backgrounds with further pedagogical training disappeared from the system. Only whole and half academics remained as teachers, who could barely communicate with children from the working class. [...] That old class pride which Labor Party people were supposed to have, they gave it up.”

This is, of course, a statement most Labor Party politicians at the time and other supporters of the reforms would not have agreed with, even though some of them might have agreed that

the teaching methods of the old *framhaldsskole* should have been preserved better. Both Torild Skard and Theo Koritzinsky, who have represented the Socialist People's Party/Socialist Left Party in parliament, mentioned in the expert interview the importance of vocational education and of teaching methods adapted to different types of learners. Within the Labor Party, the former Minister of Education Kåre Fostervoll was one of the very few people who opposed the abolition of the *realskole* with the argument that an upgrading of the *framhaldsskole* as a full-value alternative would be a better choice (Marmøy, 1968, p. 51). This position was no longer influential in the labor movement after the Second World War but it still existed. In the words of the social democrat and school administrator, Ivar Bjørndal, "as long as there has been vocational education in the schools, there have been some who thought that there was too much theory, no matter how little theory there was". This is still an issue of debate within the Norwegian left and not likely to be resolved any time soon.

It is, however, not the aim of this thesis to determine to what degree the Labor Party actually represented working class interests through its school reforms and to what degree radical leftist criticism of the failure to increase the status of vocational education or adapt teaching methods to working class children's needs is justified. The important insight developed here is instead that the Labor Party politicians who were architects of these reforms strongly believed that they were working for an equal society and against class divisions. They all agreed that this was necessary and that the school should be used as a tool in this process. Many of the Labor Party politicians of the time had working class backgrounds themselves and had thus experienced firsthand what it meant to be excluded from secondary and higher education for financial reasons and to live lives of hard physical labor. To them, education really mattered. In the words of the Labor Party politician and sociologist, Gudmund Hernes, the Labor movement was also a "movement for enlightenment", with the aim of giving all people, no matter their background, "the possibility to enter another world" – the world of learning and education.

In its political practice, the Labor Party used a variety of instrumental activities to create support for and implement the reforms. The introduction of the Experimental Council in 1954 was a very important step. The impact of this body can be documented by the large amount of reports produced by the Council, and by the growing number of experiments. The increasing unpopularity of the Council among the conservatives and center parties in the late 1970s is further evidence of its importance. In the words of the conservative politician, Lars Roar Langslet: "It was increasingly the case that the Experimental Council was in practice the extended arm of the Labor Party's school politicians. [They] tried out what they were ordered to try out and in such a way that the conclusion was supposed to be that it was excellent."

Of course, other experts did not entirely agree with this assessment, partly because not all the leading figures of the Experimental Council were social democrats. But the members of the

Experimental Council were enthusiastic about reforms so most experts agreed that the Experimental Council had acted as an agent on behalf of the Labor Party's reform goals. Also other school-political councils, such as the Primary School Committee, functioned in practice and to a high degree as supporters of the Labor Ministry of Education's politics. They communicated the aims and practical steps of the reforms to the school administration and to the public and at the same time delivered ideological legitimations. The school directors and county school inspectors played a similar role. As Ivar Bjørndal, county school inspector in Østfold during the 1970s and Labor Party member, explained:

“It was my responsibility as county school inspector [...] and [later] as director of the council for secondary education to have many meetings and conferences all around the country, where we especially turned to the teachers and leaders. This was because it was our responsibility to communicate an understanding of these reforms and of what the parliament and Norwegian authorities wished to achieve with them. [...] So one might say that those of us who had those leading roles were influencing agents on behalf of parliamentary decisions and the regulations the government devised. I myself, while I had these responsibilities, had regular contact with the teachers' organizations to carry on a dialogue with them the whole time and to try and give them all the information I had which could be of further relevance.”

The precondition for this strategy to work was that the members of the relevant councils and the people filling the important positions in the school administration largely sympathized with the reform aims. The powerful position of the Labor Party allowed it to fill many positions with supporters. Many positions were also filled with people who had received teacher training and who were thus well qualified to cultivate good relations with the teachers' organizations. Gudmund Hernes made another interesting remark regarding the importance of outside agents:

“There were capable entrepreneurs, school entrepreneurs, outside. There was one [...] who was virtually ‘commanded’ to go to [the northern county of] Finnmark. I think he became school director there. [...] To do what had to be done. They wanted to include several counties [...] in the reforms. And he did things like this: when they were going to start some building, there was a conflict in the village about whether the chapel or the school should be built first. So he had them built together and put a gate in one of the rooms, so when you opened it, it was a chapel, almost a church, and when you closed it [it was a school]. Arthur Gjermundsen was his name.”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Arthur Gjermundsen was indeed convinced by the Labor Party Minister of Education, Helge Sivertsen, to become school director in Finnmark from 1956 to 1963. He organized the expansion of nine-year obligatory schooling there. This was particularly difficult since Finnmark had been heavily damaged during the war. See interviews with Gjermundsen conducted by Norwegian public television in 1996 (NRK, 1996).

While the Labor Party made use of councils and administration in many ways, they did not always stick to the Norwegian tradition of preparing political changes with the help of commissions, councils and long hearing procedures. In particular, the crucial law of 1959 was prepared exclusively by the ministry, not by a school commission as – the antagonists claimed – had been usual in earlier times. At the time, this instrumental strategy created a lot of opposition, especially from the conservatives and secondary school teachers. As the Labor Party politician and chairman of the parliamentary education committee at the time, Håkon Johnsen, complained, the antagonists “used resolutions, meetings and printing ink to create a sensation” about the fact that they had not been heard during the preparation of the law (*Forhandlinger i Odelstinget, March 5, 1959, p. 5*). The conservative, Per Lønning, explained why: “It is my strong conviction that, if we had received the comments of the experts and had the public debate before the government committed itself, it would have been possible to take into account much more of the justified critique and the worthy correctives [...]” (*Forhandlinger i Odelstinget, March 5, 1959, p. 11*).

The Labor Party representatives, meanwhile, were not shy about praising the benefits of what Lønning termed the “shock method” (*Forhandlinger i Odelstinget, March 5, 1959, p. 12*). They pointed out that many important decisions in Norwegian school history had in fact been taken without or despite the reports of commissions. In particular, several of them mentioned the decision of 1920 to give state funding only to higher schools building on the seven-year comprehensive *folkeskole*. This decision had been taken by the social democratic and liberal majority in parliament before the reports of the then school commission had been finished and against the complaints of the conservative opposition that such a decision was not well-prepared (*Forhandlinger i Odelstinget, March 5, 1959, p. 49*). Then as now, according to the social democrats, their strategy could be justified by the fact that comprehensive schooling policies were based on political, not merely pedagogical decisions, and that the conservatives were merely trying to slow reforms down and ultimately prevent them by insisting on thorough preparation.

### 5.2.2 Ideology of Norwegian protagonists – the grading system

There was another school-political issue which was debated even within the political left and which protagonists eventually had to relinquish: whether there should be grades and exams in the new youth school (cf. Chapter 4, pp. 85ff). In the Labor Party’s programs, it was stated on several occasions from 1969 onwards that the new nine-year comprehensive school should be “free of exams”. The Socialist Left Party demanded in their electoral program of 1977 that “formal evaluations in the form of grades on the final leaving certificate [should be] abolished in primary school”. However, the Labor Party’s leadership was apparently out of touch with its political base on this issue, as it had to discover through the fierce debates about grading during the second half of the 1970s.

There had not been much public debate about the abolition of grades in the children's school. This had been suggested by the *Normalplanutvalget* committee of 1967 and had been included in regulations by the ministry in November 1972. With respect to grading in the youth school, there had been one parliamentary debate about grades in relation to ability grouping in 1965, in which the Labor Party's Minister of Education Helge Sivertsen indicated that he thought that while one "can probably not yet go over to a completely exam-free school, [...] we can reduce the number of subjects in which there are exams" and thus reduce the psychological stress related to exams and grading (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, June 8, 1965, p. 3689*). In line with this thinking, one of Sivertsen's successors, the Labor Party Minister of Education Bjartmar Gjerde, issued regulations in 1974 which aimed at restricting the use of grading in the youth school to the subjects of Norwegian, English and mathematics. These regulations came out shortly before the first report of the Evaluation Committee which had been put in place in 1972. This led to protests and to a parliamentary debate on May 8, 1974. In this debate, several of the Labor Party's representatives attacked the grading system with a large variety of arguments (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, May 8, 1974, pp. 3120ff*). It was pointed out that grading destroyed students' motivation for learning and that it was unfair to judge students not based on their effort but based on their necessarily varying initial preconditions. It was also said that grades did not convey a nuanced picture of students' abilities and effort but instead led to an overly high focus on simple and inadequate measurements. Furthermore, it was pointed out that the same performance could be graded differently depending on the composition of the class, since the students' performances were compared with each other, not with their earlier personal achievements. This also meant to these Labor representatives that whether a student would be admitted to upper secondary schooling was to a high degree the result of luck, but with major repercussions for students' lives. Grading, to the Labor Party, was also harmful with respect to the aim that students should feel safe and respected at school. Nonetheless, several of the Labor Party's representatives conceded that, at this point, it would be necessary to give in to the protests of parents, students, teachers' associations and the other political parties. They could, however, not understand these protests and considered them an expression of conservatism.

Surprisingly, even the Socialist Electoral Alliance's representative, Otto Hauglin, an academic himself, agreed that the new regulations on the reduction of grading should be repealed and no further decisions should be made until the reports of the Evaluation Committee had been published. Referring to his own experience with teaching, he also indicated that he viewed critically the replacement of grades with written reports of the students' achievements, as it would potentially lead to even more arbitrariness and injustice. Nonetheless, Hauglin also expressed his wish to abolish grades at some future point and thus distanced himself from the conservative position, though he did not say how grades could be replaced. For this, Hauglin



was attacked by the Labor Party politician, Einar Førde, who accused him of doing “ideological somersaults”. Furthermore, Førde stated:

“[A] grading system and competition socialize [people] into the status quo. To all the radical people who now defend the grading system, I’d like to say: haven’t they considered that one of the most important conditions for the capitalist competition society to work is that one manages to convey this to the school in the form of grades? The grading system splits the students and they can then be catalogued as good and bad. [...] It produces losers. The grading system is the currency of the capitalist education system.” (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, May 8, 1974, p. 3133*)

In addition, Førde, like many other Labor Party representatives, could not understand why the opposition assumed that it would be better for weaker students if there were grades in practical and theoretical subjects. He pointed out that the usual “pattern” was that students who were weak in typical “book subjects” also were weak in “practical subjects” and that he doubted that anyone could acquire self-confidence based on grades in manual training or physical education. “We have a book school and it’s the grades in the book subjects which count in this school”, he declared (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, May 8, 1974, p. 3133*).

Despite the broad opposition and the fact that even the political left was split on the issue, the majority of the Evaluation Committee concluded in its first report in 1974 that grades should be abolished in the youth school (*NOU 1974: 42 (1974) Karakterer, eksamen, kompetanse m.v. i skoleverket, Eva I*). However, at this point, the Labor Party Minister, Bjartmar Gjerde, had already begun to backpedal. Kjell Horn described this in the following way:

“There had been put in place this Evaluation Committee which concluded that grading should not be used in an obligatory primary school. And I was sent around the country as consultant of the Primary School Committee to argue for this system on the behalf of the [...] ministry. I myself thought that I was doing a rather good job but apparently not good enough because this reform had no enthusiasm among the Norwegian people. Then one day, Gjerde comes to my office and stares at something. He is not looking at me but past me. And then he asks me what I am doing and I tell him and he says “Yes, but grading, that is not a topic for the Labor Party any longer”, he said. Oh dear!”

Kjell Horn was among the leftists who regretted that the Labor Party had given up on this issue. Ivar Bjørndal, however, a Labor Party member himself, considered the abolition of grading to have been a hopeless undertaking, promoted mainly by leftist reformers. His personal opinion was that grading was necessary in the youth school as a control mechanism and with regard to qualifying and selecting students for the next educational step, upper secondary education. In line with other experts’ assessments, he also pointed out that the abolition of grading had no far-reaching support from the various organizational levels of the Labor Party, let alone from the other parties or teachers’ organizations. In contrast to its unity

on the general youth school reform, the Labor Party was split over the abolition of grading and had to deal with much stronger opposition.

### 5.2.3 Ideology of Norwegian consenters – the youth school reform

The Centre Party, the Christian Democrats and the Liberal Party agreed with the protagonists of comprehensive education that, in principle, schooling should be independent of background and should help lessen social inequality. For example, the Centre Party's principle program of 1965 stated that education was considered a "human right" which should be independent of "place of living, occupation, economic background or social status". For this reason, the party always supported the introduction of nine-year obligatory schooling in principle but with the reservation that students who had difficulty adjusting would be offered some alternative during the 9<sup>th</sup> school year. To understand this, it is important to consider that nine years of schooling had not been common among the rural population, where teenagers often started working on the farms or fishing boats quite early on. Even though the youth school was perceived as a great educational improvement by the majority of the rural population, there was probably also a small amount of skepticism towards nine-year obligatory schooling among the center parties' voters. The Centre Party also underlined, for example in its program of 1961, that the expansion of schooling needed to be of an "elastic" nature in line with the differing conditions in different parts of the country. For this reason it was suggested that a parliamentary school commission should investigate "the many difficult questions which arise in relation to the introduction of the obligatory nine-year school *in the entire country*" (emphasis added). As indicated by this quote, the Centre Party's main priority in school politics was not to call into question comprehensive schooling as such, but rather make sure rural interests would be considered (cf. section 6.2.1). Interestingly, the Centre Party's political programs from 1957 to 1977 contained no reference to forms of organizational differentiation – besides general claims that educational conditions should be equally good for children with "theoretical or practical" abilities, or that education should be "adapted to abilities and interests". Discussing the details of differentiation was not a priority of the party.

Similarly, the programs of the Christian Democrats at the time contain only general statements that educational possibilities should be equal for everyone and independent of geographical and economic conditions, without any reference to parallel schooling, tracking or ability grouping. It is also interesting to note that the Christian Democrats expressed a strong dislike for what they considered "class egoism" and considered it necessary, in their program of 1957, to "work for a political line across all class and group oppositions". Like the Centre Party, the Christian Democrats did not object to nine-year obligatory schooling. The only critical remark they made in their program of 1957 regarding this expansion was that "religious education must be considered" (cf. section 6.1.1). Also, they thought that it should be made easier for youths to be exempt from the 9<sup>th</sup> and, in special cases, also the 8<sup>th</sup> obligatory school year, in order to "receive vocational education or go out into working life",

as it was formulated in the Christian Democratic program for 1973 to 1977. By 1977, the Christian Democrats' program also stated that after this "strong reform period", there was now "a need for more rest, tradition and stability, partly so that the reforms can be tried in practice". This was presumably meant as a particular criticism of the Experimental Council which had become unpopular among Christian Democrats, Centre Party politicians and conservatives by this time and was accused of organizing too many expensive experiments over the heads of the population and of undercommunicating the results of experiments (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, April 17, 1975; Forhandlinger i Stortinget, April 20, 1978*).

Finally, the programs of the Liberal Party from 1957 to 1977 were of striking similarity to the two other center parties' programs on educational issues. Here as well, there were no specific references to forms of organizational differentiation. It was recognized that nine years of obligatory schooling might create difficulties for some students who instead needed to "be provided with work or alternative educational programs" (program of 1977-1981). Finally, the Liberal Party was also primarily concerned about "economically weak municipalities" which should be given "state support so that they complete the expansion in reasonable time" (program of 1965-1969). Another similarity is that, like the Christian Democrats, the Liberal Party considered itself "unbound by class and group interests" and claimed in its program of 1977-1981 that because of this "the Liberal Party can contribute to evening out oppositions in society and will in all justified conflicts of interests stand on the side of the weak and oppressed". The center parties shared the aim of the Labor Party of evening out inequalities in education and they agreed that the status of vocational education needed to be increased. However, they did not consider class as a category of central importance to their identity and political program.

In the parliamentary debates on these issues, the Centre Party's representatives, the Liberals and the Christian Democrats mostly did not take a very clear stance. In 1959, they voted with the Conservative Party against the law on the people's school, arguing that municipalities needed more freedom with respect to the introduction of nine-year obligatory schooling and that the old school types should be included in the experiments. However, the reasons for their skepticism were different from the Conservative Party's (cf. below). For example, the Centre Party representative, Inge Einarsen Bartnes, stated in the parliamentary debate of March 13, 1959 that the main reason for his "mixed feelings" about the law was his worry whether there would be sufficient financial means for rural municipalities to execute the provisions of the law (*Forhandlinger i Lagtinget, March 13, 1959, p. 9*). The Christian Democratic representative, Erling Wikborg, agreed that those municipalities with the worst financial conditions had to "come first in line" but also pointed out that one of the things about this reform which appealed to him most was that "we shall achieve greater equality at the outset". In fact, he considered it "an unquestionable advantage that one, for so many years, will attend school with other youths who have completely different preconditions than oneself"

(*Forhandlinger i Lagtinget, March 13, 1959, p. 18*). However, he also warned that the tracks of the new youth school might not, in effect, come to be considered of equal value – a prophesy which later became the reason for the abolition of tracking.

The Liberal Party also voted against the people's school law of 1959 and supported the parliamentary education committee's minority, who had suggested that nine years of obligatory schooling could also be introduced based on the old school types of *framhaldsskole* and *realskole*. The Liberal Party representative, Sivert Todal, specified however that from his point of view this merely meant that comprehensive schooling in grades eight and nine should be introduced more "gradually" so that the municipalities which had not even managed to comply with the people's school law of 1936 would have sufficient time and flexibility during a "transitional period" (*Forhandlinger i Lagtinget, March 13, 1959, p. 16*). His fellow party member, Bert Røiseland, warned against forcing municipalities to teach all tracks in the same building, as this could potentially lead to "forced centralization" (*Forhandlinger i Lagtinget, March 13, 1959, p. 26*). According to the expert, Hans Olav Tungesvik, there was also a certain "nostalgia" within the center parties regarding the abolition of the *realskole*, since this school type had produced such good results in some places. However, many rural municipalities did not have *realskoler*. Even where they did exist, only a small percentage of rural age cohorts attended them. The main worry of the center parties was thus not the abolition of the *realskole*; rather, they worried whether the rural municipalities would have sufficient means and flexibility to manage the transition to nine-year obligatory schooling.

In the debates about tracking and ability grouping during the 1960s, the representatives of the center parties agreed most of the time with the Labor Party that these forms of organizational differentiation were producing unfair results. In 1961, the Labor Party representatives in parliament and on the parliamentary education committee were supported by the representatives of the center parties in repudiating any tracking or ability grouping in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, except for the subject of English (cf. Telhaug, 1969, pp. 73ff). Again, one of the arguments used, for example by the Centre Party representative, Einar Hovdhaugen, was that later differentiation in the new youth school would allow greater "elasticity" for rural municipalities (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, June 8, 1961, p. 3479*). This was also related to the debate on whether the youth school should build on the 6<sup>th</sup> or the 7<sup>th</sup> year of the children's school. The Labor Party, with the support of the conservative school politician, Fredriksfryd (cf. below), favored a 6+3 structure, while the rest of the conservative and center representatives on the parliamentary education committee thought that both a 6+3- and a 7+2 structure should remain possible. Abolishing tracking in the 7<sup>th</sup> year would make this easier, the representatives of the center parties argued. Hovdhaugen also warned that "it would be a disaster if one's IQ should be a criterion for the choice of track" and suggested that experiments with ability grouping should be expanded in order to overcome the problems with current forms of differentiation. It was important to the Centre Party that differentiation

would not produce “losers” and lead to student apathy (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, June 8, 1961, p. 3480*). Similarly, the Christian Democrat, Hans Karolus Ommedal, expressed his concerns that ability grouping might lead to disorder in the school and pointed to the small rural schools as good examples of how the common teaching of all students in the classroom could be accomplished (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, June 8, 1961, p. 3487*). In the next major debate on these issues in 1963, he suggested that it would be valuable to “give up part of the tracking principle to the advantage of the comprehensive principle” and Hovdhaugen agreed that a combination of ability grouping and differentiation within the classroom would presumably be the best solution for the future (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, May 21, 1963, p. 3317, p. 3323*). Similarly, the Liberal Party representative, Torkell Tende, pointed out that tracking had meant “only the choice of *framhaldsskole-realskole* in a new version”; to him it seemed advisable to keep classes together, even after the 7<sup>th</sup> school year, with the help of an individual “differentiation in pace” (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, May 21, 1963, p. 3350*).

In the major debates of 1965 and 1969, it became clear that the parliamentary representatives of the center parties had now become even more critical of ability grouping. In particular, they disliked the fact that grades in the different ability groups were not worth the same and that this created unfairness with respect to selection for upper secondary schooling. They also considered ability groups to have a stigmatizing and harmful effect. As the Centre Party representative, Einar Hovdhaugen, put it:

“I’d like to underline that the nine-year school should be a comprehensive school. We are creating divisions here which in my opinion are unfortunate. Those who choose a lower ability group almost have a duty to be a little stupid.” (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, June 8, 1965, p. 3703*)

Overall, the representatives of the center parties, however, did not have very strong opinions about differentiation and used most of their speaking time during the various parliamentary debates on education during the 1960s to address other issues closer to their hearts (cf. Chapter 6). They had clearly accepted the fact that the new school type would now replace the old parallel school types and rarely referred to earlier disagreements on this issue. On the contrary, when the center parties were governing in a coalition with the Conservative Party from 1965 to 1971, this coalition was responsible for preparing and passing the new primary school law which obliged all municipalities to introduce the youth school by 1975. The differentiation problem was ‘solved’ within the coalition simply by not taking any further decisions on it. In the debate of 1969 on the primary school law, there are a few indications that the center parties were more open to an abolition of ability grouping than the Conservative Party. For example, the Liberal Party representative, Olav Kortner, criticized the Conservative Party’s representative, Kjeld Langeland, for his choice of words. Langeland had spoken of “so-called social reasons” in relation to parents’ choice of ability group. Kortner did

not like the tone of this. His opinion was that ability grouping was creating “considerable social problems” and that it was necessary to “intensify experiments [...] to find more socially beneficial forms [of differentiation], for example forms of *sammenholdte klasser* [classes that were kept together]” (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, April 21, 1969, p. 262*). However, the abolition of ability grouping was first decided when the Labor Party returned to government.

In the interviews, the experts who had been active in the center parties at the time were asked why their parties did not attempt to reverse the comprehensive school reforms when in government but instead continued on the path which had been laid out by the Labor Party. To this, Hans Olav Tungesvik – then a member of the Liberal Party and later a member of the Christian Democrats – replied:

“My impression is that the whole thinking about expanded obligatory schooling [...], this idea of equality, the idea to give equal choices to all, it wasn’t just social democrats and the Labor Party that supported this. It was an idea which had broad support, to contribute to greater equality and greater opportunities for all. So I think there was a consensus in Norwegian politics that we should give better choices to our young people and equal choices. But we were somewhat divided with respect to the degree to which one should offer specialized choices. And the Conservative Party [...], how should I put this? They have always gone further than the others in individualization. Giving individualized choices, or small groups... They have always been most concerned about giving choices which fit and not least giving choices to the most able. So there’s somewhat more of an elitist line of thought there than in the other parties. On this issue I believe that all the center parties, the Christian Democrats, Centre Party and Liberal Party, have a line of thought which is more closely related to the line of thought of the Labor Party.”

Other experts, such as the Christian Democrat, Jakob Aano, agreed that the conservative/center parties’ government of 1965 to 1971 was mostly a time of continuity in school politics. The Christian Democratic Minister of Education, Kjell Bondevik, supported the introduction of the youth school. With the exception of the law on private schooling which was passed under his leadership, he had no interest in any far-reaching changes of the school structure, first developed by the Labor Party governments (cf. Chapter 6.1.1).

In the course of the 1970s, however, the opposition between the social democrats and conservatives became more visible and forced the center parties to take a stand, for example on the grading issue (cf. below) and again on differentiation. In 1972, the entire parliamentary committee agreed with the suggestion of the committee of 1967 (*Normalplanutvalget*), the Primary School Committee and the ministry to abolish the current ability grouping system (*Innst. S. nr. 287 (1971-72)*). This decision came into effect in 1975 with the new curriculum (*Mønsterplanen for grunnskolen, M74*). As discussed above, the main reason for this was that

the system was not working as intended but producing obvious unfairness in the opinion of almost everyone. However, the parliamentary committee's statement of 1972 also contained the following sentences:

“The committee would, however, like to assert that the primary school will need various forms of organizational differentiation also in the years to come. In the long term, it should be a goal that the individual school can develop the form of differentiation which fits best to local conditions.” (*Innst. S. nr. 287 (1971-72)*, p. 547)

These sentences were quoted several times by the center parties' and conservative representatives in the final parliamentary debate on organizational differentiation on May 11, 1979 (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, May 11, 1979*) and in the related statement of the parliamentary education committee (*Innst. S. nr. 215 (1978-79)*, p. 4). In this debate, the Centre Party and the Christian Democrats sided clearly with the Conservative Party, while the Liberal Party had more sympathy with the Labor Party. The background of the debate was that the exact rules regarding organizational differentiation had been unclear since 1972, as became apparent also through questions directed to the Minister of Education in parliament (*Stortingstidende (1976/1977)*, pp. 2100f, *Stortingstidende, (1977/1978)*, pp. 2694ff). For this reason, the ministry had issued new regulations stating more clearly than before that long-term ability grouping, understood as grouping throughout the course of a whole year, was not allowed (*St. meld. Nr. 34 (1978-79)*, p. 11). Even though the Centre Party and Christian Democrats had agreed in the 1960s and early 1970s that the ability group system was unfair and untenable, they now defended the local schools' freedom with respect to organizational differentiation, including ability grouping. For example, the Christian Democrat, Olav Djupvik, attacked the Labor Party for turning pedagogical questions into “ideological questions” in accordance with its “misunderstood equality ideology”:

“If forms of instruction can no longer, without ideological concerns, vary based on what schools and the home at any time consider best for the individual student, we cannot, in my opinion, claim for ourselves to be fighting for equality. We have then accepted that certain forms of instruction are discriminatory. And that is an expression of a discriminatory attitude.” (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, May 11, 1979*, p. 3364)

To this, the Labor Party representative, Kirsti Grøndahl, replied:

“Mr. Djupvik talked much about the Labor Party's “misunderstood equality ideology”. The mistake is not that the Labor Party has a misunderstood equality ideology. The mistake is that Djupvik has misunderstood the Labor Party's equality ideology. My speech also included a very negative remark about homogenous achievement groups, Mr. Djupvik said, and that is indeed true. [...] We want to do something about this and it is of course nice that Mr. Djupvik has also understood that what we are against is something negative.” (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, May 11, 1979*, p. 3382)

Clearly, there was little sympathy between the Christian Democrats and the Labor Party at this point. However, it should also be remarked that the debate was dominated primarily by the antagonism between the Labor Party and the Conservative Party, whereas most representatives of the center parties did not choose equally strong words. For example, the Centre Party representative, Leiv Blakset, pointed out that he would like to “strongly underline” that it was right to focus on creating the best conditions, especially “for the weakest students”, though this should not mean neglecting the most able (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, May 11, 1979, p. 3368*). His fellow party member, Johan Syrstad, regretted that the debate had been dominated by “buzzwords” and that the participants had “gone into the trenches”. He also thought that the Labor Party’s position was not in fact so far removed from his own, since one agreed on the most important point: to give “considerable local freedom to the individual school”. He thought that it was a better idea to “let those who deal with the problems of daily life” make the decisions, instead of introducing “new, centrally issued regulations” (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, May 11, 1979, p. 3381*).

Finally, the Liberal Party was comparatively weak at the time and thus not represented on the parliamentary education committee. The Liberal Party representative, Odd Einar Dørum, made it clear, however, that his party sympathized more with the point of view of the Labor Party, even though he thought it difficult to detect “great oppositions” in the parliamentary committee’s report:

“Both groups agree and the Liberal Party supports this view that grouping shall be based on local conditions and that one should use common sense in this regard. Furthermore, the Labor Party says that one wants to avoid long-term grouping. This is a view I share [...]. [...] We supported the abolition of the ability group system and we want to assert that this is a definite position. We are happy to state that we cannot see – if we base ourselves on the words which have been chosen here – that there is anyone who wants to return to the ability group system.” (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, May 11, 1979, p. 3376*)

Dørum thus pointed to a difficulty faced by the opponents of the new regulations. It was hard to argue for organizational differentiation against the accusations of the Labor Party and the Socialist Left Party that one wanted to reintroduce the ability group system through the back door. This system had become so utterly unpopular that nobody wanted to be associated with it. In the expert interviews, Hans Olav Tunesvik remarked for example that both of the parties he had been active in, the Liberal Party and the Christian Democrats, had had a positive attitude towards “a certain degree of differentiation and grouping” but had thought that the ability group system had been “exaggerated”. In his words, the unequal distribution of abilities and talents was “given by nature” and it was therefore necessary to “find a place in the middle”. He was of the opinion that today’s Norwegian school had done just that and that



one had successfully avoided extremes in either direction. This is interesting, since today's Norwegian children and youth schools still do not differentiate greatly on a permanent basis, with the exception of special schooling programs conducted within the regular schools. Nonetheless, from Tungesvik's point of view, the center parties' common sense had prevailed.

Similarly, the Christian democrat, Jakob Aano, also stated that he had never understood why "everyone was supposed to learn everything in all nine years" and that a certain degree of differentiation was necessary to ensure that students who had chosen practical subjects would be qualified for subsequent vocational education. He also pointed out that the main reason why the Christian Democrats had cooperated somewhat more with the Conservative Party than with the Labor Party was that the Christian democrats and conservatives, at least back then, shared conservative value convictions relating, for example, to the importance of Christian values, ethical values and human rights. However, in his view this only applied to the current supporting "conservative values" in the Conservative Party, not to the economically liberal current which he thought had become stronger later on. He also distanced himself from the right-wing Progress Party's economic liberalism. Generally, he thought that the Christian Democrats were more concerned than the Norwegian political right with ensuring sure that "society must govern" and "set boundaries" for the market, so that the weakest would be protected.

#### 5.2.4 Ideology of Norwegian consenters – the grading system

The debates on grading of the 1970s also illustrate that ideological differences were becoming sharper over time. Both the Christian Democrats and the Centre Party included the necessity of grading in the youth school in their political programs of 1977, at least "until better ways of evaluation can be found". The Christian Democrats, however, added that "the school's evaluation should also refer to the students' ability for cooperation, effort and willingness to work". The Liberal Party's programs of 1973 and 1977 did not state clearly whether grades should be kept, but the program of 1973 suggested introducing "forms of evaluation which reward the effort and will to work of the individual, not just abilities and predispositions". In 1977, it was added that evaluations should also reward the capacity to work with others.

In 1972, a united parliamentary education committee had agreed to the appointment of the Evaluation Committee, stating that "today's regulation with final exams and grades based on the achieved results has inherent weaknesses" (*Innst. S. nr. 287 (1971-72), p. 548*). It was said that grading was little motivating for the weakest students and that it could lead to an overly strong focus of the school's work on achieving good exam results. However, the parliamentary committee also warned against replacing final exams with cumulative evaluations, since it was not advisable to turn "each school day [into] an exam" (*Innst. S. nr. 287 (1971-72), p. 548*). Furthermore, the parliamentary committee suggested that the

Evaluation Committee should consider whether a reduction in grading to cover only a few subjects could potentially lead to an overly strong focus on these subjects, to the detriment of others. When the Labor Party Minister of Education Bjartmar Gjerde published regulations reducing grading in the youth school to only three subjects – Norwegian, English and mathematics – in February 1974 (cf. above), the representatives of the three center parties on the parliamentary education committee were displeased. The Centre Party representative, Ola O. Røssum, interpellated the Minister, asking why such regulations had been published without waiting for the report of the Evaluation Committee. This led to a parliamentary debate, in which it became clear that the center parties stood closer to the Conservative Party than to the Labor Party regarding the question of grading. However, Røssum started out by declaring that he agreed that “the school must not needlessly contribute to and strengthen career chasing and demands for achievement” and that it was therefore sensible to have abolished grades in the children’s school (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, May 8, 1974, pp. 3120ff*). But he deemed it impossible to abolish grades in the youth school as long as upper secondary schooling had not been expanded sufficiently to grant access to everyone. Røssum’s fellow party member, Ambjørn Sælthun, however, declared his skepticism to replacing grading with written evaluations in the children’s school, warning that the school should not “evaluate the child” but “evaluate the work the child does in school” (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, May 8, 1974, p. 3131*).

The Christian democrat Kjell Magne Bondevik agreed that while the intention might have been good, the new regulations were “a pedagogical and political mistake”. Like Røssum, he thought that the abolition of grades in the children’s school had been sensible but that selection for upper secondary schooling necessitated grading in the youth school, at least for the time being. “Nuanced evaluations” could possibly be added to or replace grades at some future point, “when there is a basis for it”. He also agreed with Røssum that giving grades in only three “theoretical” subjects would make life even harder for those students “with practical abilities”. Furthermore, he reacted strongly to the accusations of the Labor Party that had been calling the opposition to the reduction of grading an expression of “conservative currents in the population”. Interestingly, he did not want to be identified with the label “conservative” and thought that the Labor Party was flattering itself by labeling the reduction of grading “a radical reform” (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, May 8, 1974, pp. 3128f*). Finally, also the Liberal Party representative, Hans Hammond Rossbach, a secondary school teacher himself, agreed that abolishing grades in the youth school was a bad idea, since necessary conditions for such a step were not met. Furthermore, he pointed out that both the students and the teachers’ associations were opposed to the new regulations (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, May 8, 1974, pp. 3134*).

He thus pointed to a “sore point” for the Labor Party. As was lamented by several of the Labor Party’s speakers in the debate, the Norwegian Teachers’ Association had not taken a

clear stand on grading. In earlier statements, the organization had suggested that grading in the youth school should be reduced to the subjects of Norwegian, mathematics and English and had generally supported the reduction of grades to “a minimum”. But in March 1974, the primary school teachers sent a letter to the ministry complaining that they had not been heard and stating that they opposed the reduction of grading (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, May 8, 1974, pp. 3135*). During the official hearing of the first report of the Evaluation Committee, they also indicated that they disagreed with the Committee’s proposals, even though they showed a willingness to discuss the grading system based on further experiments and research (Tønnessen/Telhaug, 1996, p. 28). The reason for this was that the Norwegian Teachers’ Association was split over grading in the youth school. As Kari Lie, at this point secretary of the Norwegian Teachers’ Association, stated: “there were several people on the national board who thought I was hopeless for wanting to keep grades in the system”. According to Lie, one reason for this disagreement was that some teachers, including herself, found it difficult in practice to produce written evaluations of students’ achievements instead of grades. They had had no practice in this. Her personal experience was that such evaluations could be more harmful than a bad grade. In her opinion, the main supporters of the abolition of grading were “progressive pedagogues” who wanted to “get rid of the old stuff” and “think ahead”. She herself was not this radical. However, she did support the increased focus on following up students and parents with the help of regular meetings where evaluations could be given orally.

### 5.2.5 Ideology of Norwegian antagonists – the youth school reform

In the 1950s and early 1960s, the Conservative Party did not have a very clear oppositional profile in school politics, even if it was the party which had the sharpest critics. In 1954, the party consented to the introduction of the Experimental Council and to experiments with a new school type, without voicing any major criticism (*Forhandlinger i Odelstinget, June 17, 1954, Forhandlinger i Lagtinget, June 22, 1954*). The main reason for this, according to the conservative politicians Per Lønning and Lars Roar Langslet and other interviewed experts, was that the Conservative Party was split on the issue. One of its leading school politicians, Erling Fredriksfryd, largely consented to the youth school reforms. Fredriksfryd was a primary school teacher and parliamentary representative of the Conservative Party from 1945 to 1965. From 1958 to 1965, he was chairman of the parliamentary education committee. In 1957, Fredriksfryd had been chairman of a commission within the Conservative Party which had drafted the Party’s school-political program. The program he stood for was summarized as follows in the Conservative Party’s electoral program of 1957:

“The Conservative Party wants to realize eight years of obligatory schooling for everyone as soon as possible. The organization of the school must be reorganized so that we obtain a six-year primary school and a three-year middle school. Obligatory schooling will comprise the primary school and the two first years of the middle

school. The third middle school year shall be voluntary for the time being and give access to upper secondary education [*gymnas*] (3-years). [...]

Within the new middle school, it must be possible to differentiate based on predispositions, abilities and future choice of profession through careful tracking which does not weaken the general education an obligatory school first and foremost must preserve. Such tracking must also aim at adjusting youths to their home environment and the main local line of business. In this way, the middle school can be developed differently in different places and thereby more easily be adjusted to local economic, geographical and social conditions. In this way, the Conservative Party wants to actively advocate the creation of equal conditions of education for all youths, without regard to one's place of residence and economic living conditions.”

In contrast to the center parties, the Conservative Party thus included specific suggestions regarding the form of the future school in its program. Fredriksfryd also published two brochures which explained the details (Fredriksfryd, 1960, 1965). Notably, the middle school envisaged by Fredriksfryd was meant to replace the parallel school types of the *realskole* and the *framhaldsskole*. However, there was no consensus within the Conservative Party about this (cf. below). Compared to the Labor Party's program at the time, the conservatives' program was also less radical, since the party suggested eight years of obligatory schooling instead of nine. When it became clear in 1958/59 that all other parties supported nine years of obligatory schooling, this was taken out of the program and the conservatives became supporters of nine years of obligatory schooling as well.

Besides Fredriksfryd, there were two other conservative politicians on the parliamentary education committee at the time of the debates about the new people's school law of 1959, namely Per Lønning and Hartvig Caspar Christie. Christie was parliamentary representative of the Conservative Party from 1950 to 1959 and Lønning from 1958 to 1965. According to Lønning, Christie “represented the absolute oppositional extreme” compared to Fredriksfryd and, as a result, “one noticed rather quickly that there developed a certain opposition within the conservative group of the committee”. As Lønning also pointed out in the interview, Christie and he both had academic degrees, in contrast to Fredriksfryd. Lønning even had two doctoral degrees, for which he was much respected. When the conservative parliamentary group prepared the parliamentary debate about the people's school law, it was decided that Lønning should be the main speaker of the party on this issue. Lønning described this in the following way:

“Fredriksfryd was good at hiding his disappointment. But he did consider himself to be the Conservative Party's number one school politician. And I had no experience as a primary school teacher. [...] There were many in the Conservative Party's group at the time who thought it was very nice that they had me who represented [...] the

young people and the future but who at the same time was critical of the social democratic Swedish school politics [...]. [...] They thought that it was very good to have me on that committee to keep the committee's chairman somewhat in check. And, to put it this way [...], he was of average intellectual ability. And he wasn't the kind who... even if he also spoke a few times in this people's school debate... he was not very skeptical of the law proposal [...]. So he learned very quickly that he shouldn't get into a discussion with me because he had nothing to win on that and above all he didn't have the support of the majority of the Conservative Party's group to stir up such a war on his own. They trusted that [...] I would represent faith in the individual and critical moderation.”

In fact, in the debates of 1959, Lønning and especially Christie showed skepticism of the comprehensive principle. Christie stated that the term “comprehensive school” had become “a propagandistic buzzword which is therefore little suited for a school program” (*Forhandling i Odelstinget, March 5, 1959, p. 46*). In his opinion, the *realskole* had been a good school which could not be blamed for its own overcrowding by people who did not belong there. Instead, the alternative schools – meaning of course especially the *framhaldsskole* – had not been good enough and needed to be improved, not abolished. Lønning suggested that there had to be room for future school structures which differed from the “dogmatic comprehensive school scheme” of the Labor Party and warned that the danger lay in “overemphasizing unity and thereby elevating the holy general average to the main norm” (*Forhandling i Odelstinget, March 5, 1959, pp. 14f*). Therefore, differentiation in the youth school was essential in his eyes. Nonetheless, Lønning stated:

“Personally I expect [...] that the so-called comprehensive school will potentially offer us a more richly differentiated school type with greater possibilities to preserve the individual student's abilities and dispositions than the school types we have today. I expect this but I don't see a reason to turn an assumption into a norm for future development. I expect this, not least because the Swedish development has shown that certain political tendencies to underline the principle of equality and uniformity to the detriment of the individual's individuality are pushed into the background by everyday life itself after a while.” (*Forhandling i Odelstinget, March 5, 1959, p. 15*)

In the expert interview, Lønning also specified that he supported the tracked comprehensive youth school because he believed that “tracking could point towards a type of differentiation where the intellectual, [...] theoretical track's advantage is underlined anew”. Presumably for this reason, Lønning supported Fredriksfryd in adding a special remark to the parliamentary education committee's report regarding the law. Here, the two of them indicated that they expected the tracked comprehensive school to become “the school type on which it will [...] be advisable to build obligatory primary education” in the future but that they thought that for

the time-being it should also be permissible to experiment based on the old school types (*Innst. O. II. (1959), p. 11*). Christie did not support this remark. In contrast to Christie's and Lønning's antagonism, Fredriksfryd underlined the many basic agreements between all committee members in the parliamentary debate and pointed out that, in his view, many disagreements were merely a matter of nuances (*Forhandlinger i Odelstinget, March 5, 1959, p. 61*).

This split did not go unnoticed by the Labor Party. In the parliamentary debate of 1961, the Labor Party politician, Håkon Johnsen, secretary of the parliamentary education committee, complained that the Conservative Party's school program of 1957 had not included tracking in the seventh school year. Now, the Conservative Party was the only party which wanted to continue experiments with tracking also in the seventh year, arguing that it was necessary to adapt schooling to individuals' abilities. Johnsen pointed out that, in 1957, Erling Fredriksfryd had been responsible for the development of the Conservative Party's school political program:

“Since then, Mr. Fredriksfryd has been shoved aside and Mr. Lønning, who has a completely different view regarding these issues, acts now as the Conservative Party's speaker in these questions. I must therefore ask: is this just the result of an ambitious young man's sharp elbows, or is it so that the Conservative Party has changed its view on these issues since 1957?” (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, June 8, 1961, p. 3475*)

Over 50 years later, Lønning mentioned this remark in the interview as an example of how the Labor Party attempted to split the opposition parties. Of course, Fredriksfryd was not happy about the situation; nor did he give up his stance for the nine-year comprehensive school. In fact, in his brochure of 1965, he wrote:

“A claim which is made repeatedly by certain parties is that the new school structure has led to a lowering of standards. Such a claim should be refuted once and for all. It only serves to confuse people's view of the Conservative Party's school politics and to make many think that the Conservative Party essentially does not have a stable policy. The claim is probably based on an aversion to the elimination of the old *realskole* exam. [...] The *realskole* is still by some incorrectly considered as higher education. The new times have, however, made it clear that this [level of schooling] will only be a basic educational level in the future which everyone [...] must receive.” (Fredriksfryd, 1965, pp. 6f)

This was a rather clear criticism of his fellow party members. However, over time, antagonistic voices became louder within the Conservative Party. By 1963, the conservatives had given up their adherence to tracking which was now out of date from the point of view of most other actors but they were still concerned about finding alternative ways of differentiation and suggested expanding experiments with ability grouping. As Per Lønning

put it in the parliamentary debate of May 1963, the abolition of tracking should not lead to the abolition of all differentiation (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, May 21, 1963, pp. 3312ff*, cf. Telhaug, 1969, pp. 101ff). To this, the Labor Party's spokesman, Trygve Bull, replied that Lønning and he apparently had different opinions regarding the possibility of pedagogical differentiation within the classroom (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, May 21, 1963, pp. 3315f*).

In its political programs, the Conservative Party continued to make much more detailed suggestions than the center parties regarding the development of schooling and differentiation. In 1965, the program stated that the great pressure on the schools "must not lead to a lowering of standards". The program also warned that some duties could only be fulfilled by the home and that one must avoid "creating ideas about society taking over the home's responsibilities". Furthermore, it stated that differentiation was necessary and that experiments with various forms of differentiation should be expanded to overcome problems with the current system. In 1969, similar formulations, including even a reference to the *realskole*, were included:

"The problem of differentiation must be solved through systematic and widespread experiments. Curricula must not be determined before the results of experiments have been thoroughly analyzed. [...] Those students who aim at upper secondary theoretical education must receive schooling on the same level as in the former *realskole*."

In 1973, the program claimed that the individual school should have the responsibility for choosing the best form of differentiation. In 1977, the program opposed pedagogical differentiation within the classroom:

"With today's scarce resources, a rigorous implementation of the principle of classes that are 'kept together' means that one shoves a regard for students' needs into the background. The Conservative Party thinks that it is necessary to develop satisfying forms of organizational differentiation, while keeping the class as a social unit."

Presumably, Fredriksfryd would have opposed this development towards more skeptical formulations and would have disliked a reference to the old school type of the *realskole*. However, from 1965 he was no longer a parliamentary representative. Instead, he had become a school director in the county of Østfold. According to Ivar Bjørndal, who was county school inspector there around the same time, it was said by some that the Labor Party gave this position to Fredriksfryd as a reward for his cooperative attitude. Be that as it may – in any case, the cooperative spirit was wearing off, especially during the 1970s, and the conservatives' school-political profile became less "arbitrary and changing", as the conservative sociologist, Tore Lindbekk, put it in the expert interview. Also Lars Roar Langslet, chairman of the parliamentary education committee from 1973 to 1980 and parliamentary representative of the Conservative Party from 1969 to 1989, stated in his book

of 1977 that “[t]he atmosphere has become skeptical. The barometer stands on unstable, sporadically jumping towards stormy” (Langslet, 1977, p. 10).

In the expert interview, Langslet described this development over time:

“I would say that within the Conservative Party there was a steadily growing feeling that our people who were working with school politics were too evasive and nice and just following along. And that it was important to set in place a corrective to this pedagogy of reform that was a victorious current across the board. [...] But [...] I believe that it was an area of consensus in many ways, school politics, in this phase. And this probably also had something to do with there not being any consciousness among school politicians on the top level within the Conservative Party that it was necessary to develop oppositional politics, it was just easier to follow along and “strew sand” over what was coming from the so-called experts. [...] It became much more intensified when Lønning came in and since... when I came in, this gradually became an area of confrontation within politics during the 70es. And there were a few primary concerns over which the Conservative Party gained a strong profile and which gave us the feeling that the Labor Party’s school politics were on the retreat.”

One of the primary concerns he refers to here is the grading debate (cf. below). Also regarding differentiation, Langslet’s book can serve to illustrate that skepticism was growing. The book focused on criticizing the Labor Party’s school politics on all levels. Langslet did not question the nine-year comprehensive school as such and showed some sympathy for the aim of developing a spirit of community between all youths, independent of social background. But he also wrote:

“I myself supported the ‘farewell’ to the ability group system and don’t want to deny my responsibility for this. But I must admit that I have become doubtful whether this was right. I think the ability group system was, pedagogically, a good solution for the question of differentiation and presumably better than the new regulation with classes that are ‘kept together’ [...] is likely to become.” (Langslet, 1977, p. 56)

Furthermore, he did not support special schools for especially able children, as they existed in some other countries, since such a structure could “justly be branded as an attempt to create ‘apartheid’ in the school” (Langslet, 1977, p. 62). In this, he was referring to a criticism of the conservative views which had been voiced by the Labor politician, Reiulf Steen (cf. below). Nonetheless, he criticized that the ablest students had been neglected by social democratic school politics and claimed that social democrats had no respect for inequalities, but instead aimed exclusively at erasing or hiding them (Langslet, 1977, pp. 34ff, 61f). He also pointed out that, while much could be done to give disadvantaged children better chances, political measures “can under no circumstances go so far that all important inequalities disappear” (Langslet, 1977, p. 39). This “pessimistic insight”, he claimed, was hard for socialist school



politicians to accept (Langslet, 1977, p. 39). In a way, this remark is an acknowledgement of what the socialist politician, Theo Koritzinsky, had to say about conservative school politics, namely that even though the conservatives would never have said that they supported differentiation with the aim of reproducing class differences, “they know full well that this is what can happen... and for them it’s not a problem; that’s how it is; that’s life; that’s how we are made”. Behind this, as Koritzinsky pointed out, are very different views of humanity and of what stimulates and motivates human beings: in the view of the conservatives, competition and placing human beings in hierarchies are important mechanisms and “the best must receive rewards” especially, as Koritzinsky put it. Langslet, on the other hand, accused the socialists that to them “competition in itself [was] an evil which mirrors the basic inhumanity of the capitalist system” (Langslet, 1977, p. 40). In the interview, Langslet dubbed social democratic school politics “a sentimental school ideology”, aimed at turning the school into a counterpart of the “abominable capitalist society outside, where demands for performance at work are made and where there is competition and all kinds of ugliness”.

In the final parliamentary debate on permanent ability grouping in May 1979, the Conservative Party’s representatives also criticized what they considered the Labor Party’s “equality ideology” in school politics. The conservative politician, Håkon Randal, now member of the parliamentary education committee, thought that the abolition of ability grouping would certainly lead to a “lowering of standards” and that it violated the school law (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, May 11, 1979, p. 3360*). His fellow party member, Tore Austad, considered it a “great and very deplorable step backwards” to make ability grouping throughout a school year unlawful (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, May 11, 1979, p. 3367*). Another conservative member of the parliamentary education committee, Karen Sogn, complained about the Labor Party’s “hysterical reaction” to the Conservative Party’s support for more far-reaching organizational differentiation. She quoted the Labor Party politician, Reiulf Steen, who had accused the conservatives of supporting “apartheid in the school” and of working for an “elite school”. This, to her, was proof that the Labor Party was elevating “ideological considerations” above what was best for the individual student (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, May 11, 1979, pp. 3373f*). The conservatives also demanded that the Experimental Council be abolished, that structural reforms had to end, and that one should now focus on improving the quality of teaching, among other things by introducing stricter demands regarding the academic content of schooling (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, May 11, 1979; Langslet, 1977*).

When the conservatives regained power in 1981, they did abolish the Experimental Council and changed the curricula. However, they did not attempt any far-reaching reversal of the structural reforms. According to Langslet, the main reason for this was “that one was fed up with reforms” and that the school now deserved “a quieter period where one should instead make the best out of the existing system”. Furthermore, he pointed out that “we weren’t a

majority government, so we had to take into consideration whether this could receive support in parliament and such a total reversal would presumably have been a utopian project”.

It should also be pointed out that by the late 1970s, the conservatives had received competition from the right, namely the Progress Party. At the time, the party was still small but it clearly represented a more radical right-wing current. In its program of 1977, it was stated:

“The school needs clear rules of discipline and the teachers must be given the necessary authority to keep discipline in the classroom. Grades are given in all subjects and for orderliness and behavior. [...] Teaching should not be designed so as to take into consideration only the weakest students in theoretical subjects. The school should not be an “equalizing institution”. We must accept that people are different. [...] Obligatory schooling should be reduced from nine to seven years so that the eighth and ninth year of the youth school become voluntary.”

It is probable that the emergence of such a clearly antagonistic voice also contributed to the conservatives’ need to strengthen their own profile in school politics.

Finally, the Association of Norwegian Secondary School Teachers also had antagonistic currents. The association shared the Conservative Party’s view of differentiation, especially during the 1950s, and defended the role of the *realskole* as preparation for upper secondary schooling in the *gymnas*. In 1956, the association’s yearly convention passed a statement, where the *realskole* as a school type was defended and it was warned against any lowering of the *realskole*’s standard (Marmøy, 1968, pp. 49ff). In 1959, the association complained about not having been heard during the preparation of the people’s school law and asked for the law proposal to be withdrawn (Marmøy, 1968, pp. 56ff; Telhaug, 1969, p. 53). In particular, it argued that the law proposal was not well prepared, that it anticipated the results of unfinished experiments and that it gave the ministry too extensive powers (Marmøy, 1968, p. 59). Within the organization, the reforms were critically discussed especially on the local level, where antagonistic voices could be heard in many places (Marmøy, 1968, pp. 54ff). Per Arne Sæther, former representative of the association (which from 1983 was called *NUFO*, Norwegian Educational Association), pointed out that the term “comprehensive school” was generally not used very much among the secondary school teachers and that it was a more common term in the papers of the Norwegian Teachers’ Association. However, he also stated that “that doesn’t mean that one didn’t gradually come to support a common school”. Furthermore, he summed up the development within the association in the following way:

“We have never been [...] for permanent grouping, in any case not after the ability group system was abolished [...]. We have been for classes that are “kept together”, so to speak. Even if there have been some debates about it. And during the 70s and 80s,

there was some debate about it within the association but the official position one ended up with was that of classes that were ‘kept-together.’”

The expert, Ivar Bjørndal, agreed that for the Association of Norwegian Secondary School Teachers, the most important issue was the preservation of academic standards, in addition to the question of who should be teaching in the new school type. If the teachers no longer had to be university-educated, this could, in the eyes of the association, lead to a lowering of standards and also endanger their existence as a professional association. Indeed, as has been shown above, in terms of membership the Norwegian Teachers’ Association clearly profited more from the reforms. Nonetheless, as Bjørndal agreed, “it is not correct to say that the Association of Norwegian Secondary School Teachers fought against all reforms; they didn’t do that”. Jakob Aano, who was also active in the Association of Norwegian Secondary School Teachers, made similar remarks. According to him, there was no doubt that the organization had been skeptical towards the school reforms, mainly because they were worried about the academic content and quality of schooling. As he pointed out, the *realskole* had historically been reserved for “an elite” and had prepared for university education, so that it meant a great change when this level of schooling became more inclusive and adapted to weaker students. As indicated by a survey of 1153 *gymnas* teachers in 1969, this change was hard to accept for many of them. Over 40 percent of the interviewed teachers agreed fully or mostly with the statement that “the decision to introduce the nine-year school was taken because the many people who disagreed, mostly did not dare to publicly oppose the political buzzwords which were used” (Lauglo, 1972, p. 9). In addition, almost 70 percent of the interviewed *gymnas* teachers agreed fully or mostly that nine years of obligatory schooling were too much and 57 percent agreed fully or mostly that one should have expanded the old school forms of the *framhaldsskole* and *realskole* instead of introducing the youth school (Lauglo, 1972, p. 10). However, the secondary school teachers eventually adapted to the new conditions and did not organize any opposition when the law of 1969 was passed.

#### 5.2.6 Ideology of Norwegian antagonists – the grading system

In the grading debate, the conservatives were more united than in the general debate about the youth school reform. There was never any doubt that they opposed the abolition of grading, first in the children’s school and later in the youth school. This opposition can be traced throughout the period. Already in 1961, Per Lønning lamented the reduction of grading in the first years of the *folkeskole* which had followed from the implementation of the curricula of 1939:

“I believe that our school politics have taken an unfortunate course in the most recent years by abolishing the grading book in the *småskolen* [the first three, later four years of primary school]. One has thereby eliminated an important link between the home and the school and one actually scares the children by turning the grading book into

something very grave and very dangerous which lurks at the end of the path, instead of letting it be a natural companion which never determines anything definitely but which continuously stimulates [children] to make fresh efforts.” (*Forhandling i Stortinget, June 8, 1961, p. 3474*)

In the debate of 1965, which was focused mostly on problems with the ability group system, Lønning also made it clear that in his view “old-fashioned grading” was the most preferable form of evaluation. He opposed both a reduction in the number of subjects in which grades would be given and a reduction in the grading scale as such, arguing that such a reduction would lead to a loss of “stimulation”. Getting “a clear message about where one stands” was important for human beings, Lønning argued. Furthermore, he opposed the idea that written evaluations should also include information about personal character traits, such as the ability to cooperate or adjust to shifting circumstances. This would lead to “less justice and less mercy”, he claimed, thus ignoring however that the Experimental Council had underlined that such additional information should be given mainly to report positive traits of students which did not come to expression through grades (*St. meld. Nr. 42 (1964-1965), p. 17*). Grades should evaluate “actual achievements” only, he concluded (*Forhandling i Stortinget, June 8, 1965, pp. 3697f*).

As noted earlier, the grading question received more public attention during the late 1960s and early 1970s. In 1969, the program of the Conservative Party included the following sentence: “Exams are kept and the grading system is set up so as to give the most correct expression of students’ abilities and knowledge.” In contrast to the programs of the center parties, there was no reference in the conservatives’ program about the evaluation of effort, the ability to cooperate and so forth. In 1973, the program still suggested that exams should be kept but included a sentence on the necessity to grade all students according to the same standards, independent of the form of differentiation within the school, “so that the individual student is not hindered in his later choice of school or profession”. This referred to the problems encountered with separate evaluations for different ability groups (cf. above). As Lars Roar Langslet (1977, p. 56) also suggested, the conservatives now hoped that ability grouping could be continued as long as all groups were graded according to the same academic standards. The program of 1977 also mentioned that students and parents were entitled to “information about the individual student’s academic development through a measuring scale as objective as possible”. With respect to selection for upper secondary schooling, the program of 1977 emphasized that the Conservative Party opposed both admission based on lottery systems or on waiting time. The conservatives accepted that additional points could be given for age and work experience but maintained that academic predispositions should be the most important criteria.

In the parliamentary debate on grading in May 1974, the conservative speakers made it clear that their party was opposed to the new regulations reducing grading to three subjects only. Lars Roar Langslet expressed this in the following way:

“The Conservative Party disagrees in principle with the abolition of grades and exams in the primary school. The old system was far from perfect but there have also been made great exaggerations in referring to the hunt for grades and exam pressure. A mentality of unhealthy competition must of course be dealt with but it is not unhealthy that the school stimulates students to achieve something, to reach towards a goal. [...] I think this answers a human need. The ‘loser’ problem at school has to be tackled in a positive way [...]. We won’t solve this by taking away the measuring scales.”  
(*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, May 8, 1974, p. 3126*)

Similar to Lønning in 1965, he also argued that written evaluations could lead to more arbitrariness and be more harmful than grades. Furthermore, he pointed to the great opposition which had formed among teachers, parents and students and warned that those who “sow wind [...] reap storm” (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, May 8, 1974, p. 3126*). In his book, Langslet (1977, p. 47) also quoted a Gallup poll according to which 89 percent of Labor Party members supported grades in the youth school, against only 9 percent who wanted them abolished. In the expert interview, he added that during this phase he had met “central people in the Labor Party who were quite crestfallen about how these school reformers had harried [them]”. Clearly, it must have given the conservatives some pleasure in the late 1970s to have the public majority finally on their side regarding this important school-political issue, forcing the Labor Party to retreat.

However, the conservatives were not completely unaffected ideologically by the public discussion about the detrimental effects of grades. While Lønning had supported grades throughout the children’s school in 1961, Langslet (1977, p. 51) wrote in 1977:

“On the children’s level, it is possible to bring forward a just defense for the abolition of grades: the grading system implies – whether one likes it or not – the increased conspicuousness of the competitive element which again directs one’s attention towards later schooling and work. Strong human reasons suggest that this element should not be emphasized at too early a stage of schooling. That does not mean, however, that it doesn’t have clear eligibility at the final stage of the primary school [meaning the youth school].”

This is a nice example of how the conservatives moderated and adapted their views over time in line with the dominating view in society and the political landscape.

Finally, the Association of Norwegian Secondary School Teachers was also critical of the abolition of grades and argued, according to Per Arne Sæther, that grades functioned

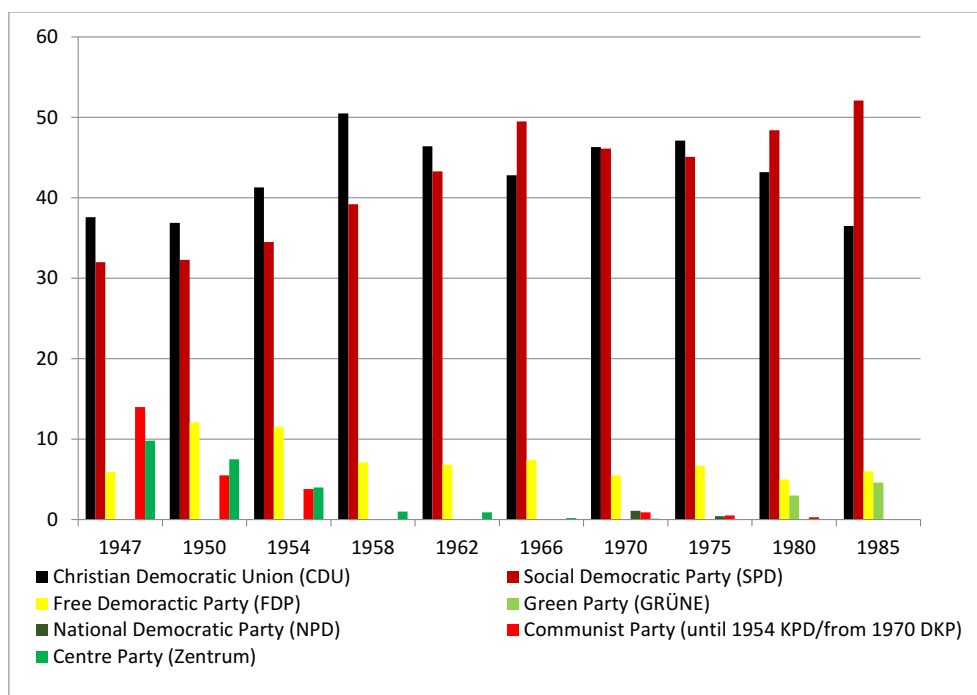
particularly well for less motivated students. This was an unusual point of view, even back then. Furthermore, Sæther pointed out as follows:

“It was argued that grades are actually important and contribute to reducing class divisions, because it was no longer one’s finances and background which counted but one’s abilities. [...] Except that we know today that social differences are mirrored in results. But it’s still in a way correct that you can work yourself upwards if you do a good job and get a good result.”

### 5.3 The German playing field: protagonists, consenters, antagonists

As has been demonstrated in Chapter 4, the most important protagonist of the post-war comprehensive school reforms in Germany as a whole, and in the federal state NRW, was, of the political parties, the Social Democratic Party (SPD). With liberal political forces, social democrats had already fought for the public comprehensive primary school in 1920. In its early history, the SPD had been very strong in terms of membership and voters; in 1913/14, it had almost one million members and was the largest party in the German Reichstag (Walter, 2011, pp. 27f). However, in the following decades, the SPD was considerably weakened, first by various splits and then by the Nazi dictatorship. In the post-war decades, the SPD still had more members than the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) but membership only approached a million again in 1975 (cf. Table 5.7). Especially after 1969, when Willy Brandt became the first SPD Chancellor in a government with the Liberal Party (FDP), membership numbers increased considerably.

**Figure 5.2: Percentages of various parties in federal state elections in NRW, 1947-1985**



Source: Düding (2008, p. 775), Zicht and Cantow (1999)

At the same time, the members of the SPD became younger and more academic. In 1972, one-third of the members belonged to the age group of 16 to 24-year-olds. From a party dominated by workers, the SPD turned into a party of public employees, teachers and social workers

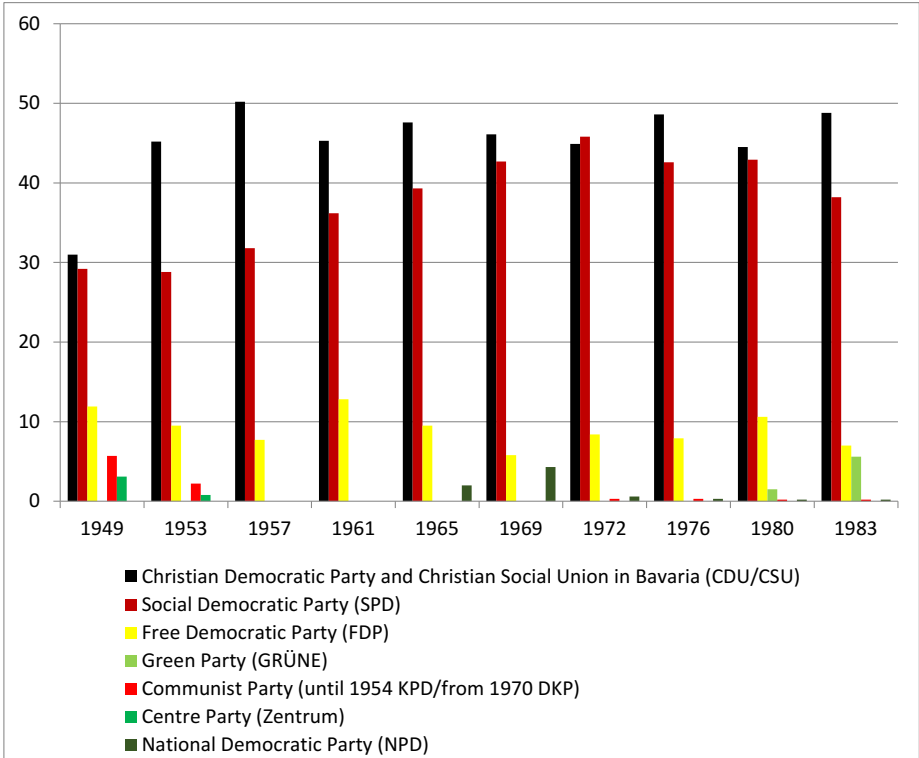
(Walter, 2011, pp. 178f). This was also reflected in the background of its representatives in the NRW parliament. In the first post-war parliament, 78 percent of the SPD representatives had only attended the people's school, against 7.8 percent who had completed the *Abitur* exam. By 1966, only 46.4 percent were people's school graduates, while 41.4 percent had completed the *Abitur* (Düding, 2008, p. 516). Among the members of the SPD, the share of *Abitur* graduates was not as high. In 1977, it was 15 percent, while 22 percent had acquired the school-leaving certificate of the *Realschule* or equivalent. 49 percent of the SPD's members had finished a vocational education and 13 percent had only finished the people's school without any further education in 1977. Furthermore, in 1977, 53 percent of the SPD's members were Protestant and only 28 percent Catholic (Haungs, 1983, p. 36). The German Confederation of Trade Unions (DGB), founded in 1949, backed the SPD to a high degree. Despite the DGB's formal independence of party politics, the trade unions were dominated by social democrats. The DGB unions organized a little more than 30 percent of German wage earners during the 1960s and 1970s (Ebbinghaus, 2002, p. 9). In 1977, 50 percent of the SPD's members were union members (Haungs, 1983, p. 36). Among the trade unions organized within the DGB, the Education and Science Workers' Union (*Gewerkschaft Erziehung und Wissenschaft, GEW*) is of particular importance here since it was an important ally of the reform protagonists within the SPD. It was the only teachers' organization that was affiliated with the DGB (cf. below). Both within the Education and Science Workers' Union and within the SPD, there were political currents which were more or less convinced of the necessity to struggle for comprehensive schooling. As is shown in more detail in below, the social democrats were not entirely united in their support for comprehensive school reforms.

The CDU on the other hand was antagonistic to comprehensive school reforms almost the entire period. Only for a very short time, namely around 1969 to 1972, was there a certain amount of open-mindedness within the CDU to comprehensive school reforms, as is shown in more detail below. As discussed previously (cf. Chapter 4, p. 117), the CDU had been founded in the post-war years with the aim to unite Christians across the denominations. In NRW, it stepped into the footsteps of the Catholic Centre Party which had long been dominant there but which disappeared from the NRW parliament in 1958 and was mostly absorbed into the CDU. Especially in the Rhineland, some of the founding members of the CDU were quite leftist and even ideas of Christian socialism circulated. However, Konrad Adenauer, soon to be one of the leading figures of the party, fought such ideas effectively (Düding, 2008, pp. 41ff). In 1920, the CDU's predecessor, the Centre Party, had consented to the primary school reform, without, however, caring very much about the issue. What really mattered to the Centre Party was the preservation of denominational schooling. Also after the war, this remained one of the most important school-political aims of the CDU in NRW (cf. section 6.1.2). As already mentioned, the CDU had less material power resources than the SPD in membership numbers but in election results the party was more successful, at least in



the first post-war decades (cf. Table 5.10, Figures 5.2 and 5.3). So far, only in two national elections, namely those of 1972 and 1998, has the SPD managed to receive significantly more votes than the CDU (cf. Figure 5.3). As can be seen from Figures 5.2 and 5.3, the SPD had better election results in NRW than nationally, especially in later decades. But at least until the mid-1960s, the CDU was the dominant political party here too.

**Figure 5.3: Percentages of various parties in German national elections, 1949-1983**



Source: Zicht (1999)

In the 1970s, CDU membership was dominated by white-collar employees and the self-employed. These groups also made up the majority of the CDU’s representatives in the NRW parliament (Düding, 2008, p. 519). While the CDU also organized workers, they made up only around 11 percent of its membership in 1980 compared to around 28 percent of the SPD’s membership in 1978 (von Beyme, 1985, pp. 214f). Especially the self-employed were represented to a much higher degree by the CDU than by the SPD (von Beyme, 1985, pp. 214f). In 1971, 73 percent of the CDU membership was Catholic and only 25 percent Protestant. However, among church-going Protestants, the CDU was more successful than the SPD (Haungs, 1983, p. 23). 17 percent of the CDU’s members were union members (Haungs,

1983, p. 36). Women were more likely to vote CDU than men and the CDU had a slightly higher percentage of female members than the SPD (Haungs, 1983, p. 22, p. 36).

**Table 5.7: Party membership in Germany over time**

Year	CDU	CDU NRW (b)	SPD	SPD NRW (c)	FDP	FDP NRW
1960	248,484 (a)	103,506	649,578	169,601		
1965						14,032
1970	329,239	121,899	820,202	224,279	56,531	18,515
1975	590,482		998,471	293,761	74,032	
1980	693,320	260,444	986,872	293,738	84,208	26,546

(a) Figure from 1962

(b) Figures are sums of the party chapters of CDU Rheinland and Westfalen-Lippe, figure for 1960 is from 1962, figure for 1980 is from November 1979

(c) Figures are sums of the party chapters of SPD Mittelrhein, Niederrhein, Westliches-Westfalen, Ostwestfalen-Lippe; figures always from the last calendar day of the previous year

Sources: Poguntke/Boll, 1992, p.332; *Jahrbücher der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands 1958/1959, 1968/1969, 1975-77, 1979-1981*; *Archiv des Liberalismus, Bestand Druckschriften*; *Archiv für Christlich-Demokratische Politik (ACDP), Pressedokumentation*; own calculations

**Table 5.8: Numbers of paid staff of German parties over time**

Year	CDU			SPD			FDP		
	Central	Subnational	Parliamentary	Central	Subnat.	Parl.	Central	Subn.	Parl.
1962/63		224			288				
1970	150		344			282			37
1975	229		434		330	334			92
1980	218	256 (a)	651	67	348	567			105

(a) Figure from 1982

Figures include part-time and full-time positions in the central and subnational administrations and the parliamentary groups of the parties.

Source: Poguntke/Boll, 1992, pp.338ff

The educational attainment of CDU members and members of parliament was also a little higher than that of SPD members. In 1947, 47.8 percent of the CDU's representatives in the NRW parliament had only attended the people's school, and by 1966, this share had dropped to 25.6 percent (Düding, 2008, p. 516). In 1971, 19 percent of CDU members on the national level had completed the *Abitur* and by 1977, the percentage was 28 percent. Furthermore, in 1977, 25 percent of the party's members had acquired the *Realschule* leaving certificate or equivalent, 37 percent had finished vocational education after the people's school and only 9 percent had only attended the people's school (Haungs, 1983, p. 36). However, the

educational attainment of CDU voters was considerably lower than among its members (Haungs, 1983, p. 37). Comparing the membership numbers of SPD and CDU in NRW and their national membership also shows that the CDU had a comparably strong membership base in NRW. It can be assumed that this is related to the strength of its predecessor, the Centre Party and to the importance of political Catholicism in this region. In addition, the CDU was more successful than the SPD in the countryside, especially in Catholic dominated areas. In such areas and in small and middle-sized towns also workers, especially qualified workers, tended to vote CDU (Haungs, 1983, pp. 22f). In 1961, 0.66 percent of the national electorate were members of the CDU compared to 1.72 percent that were members of the SPD. By 1976, these numbers had increased to 1.55 percent for the CDU and 2.43 percent for the SPD (Katz et al, 1992, p. 341).

**Table 5.9: Income of party head offices in Germany over time (in DM)**

CDU				
Years	Income from members, MPs and office holders (b)	State subvention (a)	Donations	Other
1960		2,180,000		
1970	2,324,785	2,657,574	2,644,748	12
1975	7,934,605	15,245,339	6,139,106	0
1980	10,358,376	18,202,951	11,365,298	0

SPD				
Years	Income from members, MPs and office holders (c)	State subvention (a)	Donations	Other
1960	3,644,895	1,127,979	38,340	196,668
1970	4,672,499	4,148,133	1,719,069	0
1975	7,301,798	23,366,687	5,626,055	0
1980	10,843,156	27,232,888	943,856	0

FDP				
Years	Income from members, MPs and office holders (d)	State subvention (a)	Donations	Other
1960		410,000		
1970	1,028	560,819	1,014,656	213,596
1975	2,445	4,258,316	4,736,834	23,430
1980	8,839	9,097,138	4,125,650	299,153

(a) 1960: Direct state subsidies to parties, from 1967 to 1983 only elections subsidies

(b) Income of central party from membership fees and assignments from office holders of central party, federal ancillary organizations, lower-level organizations

(c) 1960: Transfers from regional organizations, special transfers, assignments from office holders;

*1970/1975/1980 income of central party from membership fees and assignments from office holders*  
*(d) Only membership fees from FDP members living abroad. No assignments from office holders.*

*Source: Poguntke/Boll, 1992, pp.378ff*

The third relevant political party in the German national and federal parliaments was the Liberal Party (FDP). Even though it was considerably smaller measured in membership and election results, it played an important role as a potential coalition partner for the CDU and SPD alike. In the late 1970s, the members of the FDP were mainly white-collar employees, and some civil servants and self-employed, while the share of workers was as low as five percent (von Beyme, 1985, p. 213). The FDP's parliamentary representatives in NRW were highly educated compared to the CDU's and especially the SPD's: in the first post-war parliament, only 16.7 percent had not continued their education after the people's school and this share dropped to zero by 1966. The majority of FDP representatives were self-employed in most of the election periods before 1980 (Düding, 2008, p. 516, pp. 519f). The FDP's members made up 0.19 percent of the national electorate in 1976 (Katz et al, 1992, p. 341). In NRW, the early FDP did not have a clear political profile but from 1950 the party opened up to a large number of former NSDAP officials, some of whom had excellent links with industrial leaders. Even though the FDP became more social liberal in the course of the 1960s and 1970s, national liberal and even a nationalist influence remained significant in NRW until 1970 (Düding, 2008, pp. 50ff, pp. 295ff, pp. 626ff). With regard to comprehensive school reforms, the FDP was not united either. Especially representatives of the social liberal currents of the party can be labeled protagonists of comprehensive schooling and the NRW parliamentary group consented for a while to this choice of policy. When the opposition from the CDU and other actors increased, antagonism increased within the FDP, too (cf. below).

With respect to party finances, it needs to be remarked that the figures in Tables 5.8 and 5.9 should not be over-interpreted, as numbers vary from year to year. They are also not very reliable, for parties have "considerable discretion" regarding the interpretation of column headings in their financial reports (Poguntke/Boll, 1992, p. 319). On average, however, they show that the CDU and in some cases the FDP received more donations than the SPD. This should not be surprising, considering that the CDU and FDP had better links with business leaders. The CDU's comfortable finances are also mirrored in the fact that its parliamentary groups employed more people (cf. Table 5.8). Due to the SPD's strong membership base and stable election results, its financial resources were nonetheless not that much smaller.

The comparably strong position of the CDU and its Bavarian sister party, the CSU, especially in the first post-war decades, can also be seen in the composition of governments both on the national and the federal state level (cf. Table 5.10). In contrast to Norway, majority governments were the rule. The CDU/CSU governed on the national level until 1966, first in coalitions with various smaller, conservative and nationalist parties which lost their political

importance during the 1950s and early 1960s, then only with the liberal FDP. The SPD joined the national government for the first time in 1966, in a grand coalition with the CDU/CSU.

**Table 5.10: German and NRW governments and Ministers of Education over time**

Years	Composition of National Government	Minister of Education	Years	Composition of NRW Government	Minister of Education
1949-1963	CDU (Chancellor Konrad Adenauer), with various small parties, from 1961 only with CSU and FDP	No such ministry	1950-1954	CDU ( <i>Ministerpräsident</i> Karl Arnold), Centre Party	Christine Teusch (CDU)
1963-1966	CDU (Chancellor Ludwig Erhard), CSU, FDP	No such ministry	1954-1956	CDU ( <i>Ministerpräsident</i> Karl Arnold), FDP, Centre Party	Werner Schütz (CDU)
1966-1969	CDU (Chancellor Kurt Georg Kiesinger), CSU, SPD	No such ministry	1956-1958	SPD ( <i>Ministerpräsident</i> Fritz Steinhoff), FDP, Centre Party	Paul Luchtenberg (FDP)
1969-1974	SPD (Chancellor Willy Brandt), FDP	Hans Leussink (no party affiliation) 1969-1972, Klaus von Dohnanyi (SPD) 1972-1974	1958-1962	CDU ( <i>Ministerpräsident</i> Franz Meyers)	Werner Schütz (CDU)
1974-1982	SPD (Chancellor Helmut Schmidt), FDP	Helmut Rohde (SPD) 1974-1978, Jürgen Schmude (SPD) 1978-1982	1962-1966	CDU ( <i>Ministerpräsident</i> Franz Meyers), FDP	Paul Mikat (CDU)
			1966-1978	SPD ( <i>Ministerpräsident</i> Heinz Kühn), FDP	Fritz Holthoff (SPD) 1966-1970; Jürgen Girsensohn (SPD) 1970-1983
			1978-1998	SPD ( <i>Ministerpräsident</i> Johannes Rau), with FDP, from 1980 SPD majority	Jürgen Girsensohn (SPD) 1970-1983; Hans Schwier (SPD) 1983-1995

The SPD's first appearance in a post-war national government was not a great shift in direction. The coalition was led by the former NSDAP member Kurt Georg Kiesinger and stood for rather authoritarian politics, such as the controversial emergency acts. The extra-parliamentarian opposition this created nonetheless strengthened the SPD and by 1969, the balance of power had changed to the extent that Willy Brandt became the first SPD Chancellor, forming a government with the FDP. From 1974 until 1982, this coalition was

continued under Helmut Schmidt (SPD). Only under Brandt's leadership did comprehensive education reforms become a topic on the national level of politics and a national Ministry of Education was created.

In NRW, the SPD governed for the first time with the FDP from 1956 to 1958. This was, however, mostly a result of conflicts between the CDU and FDP on the national level. The CDU had wanted to introduce a majority voting system which would have privileged larger parties and endangered the FDP. Adenauer finally took this off the agenda when the FDP entered a coalition with the SPD in the most populous federal state of NRW (Düding, 2008, pp. 364ff). In 1958, the CDU, however, secured the absolute majority in the NRW elections and governed for another eight years. NRW first became a "red" federal state in 1966, when the tide turned in the SPD's favor and NRW became a stronghold of the SPD for many decades to come.

Besides the Education and Science Workers' Union mentioned above, there were several other teachers' organizations which played a relevant role in the reform processes. The most important reform antagonist among the teachers' organizations was the Association of Philologists (*Deutscher Philologenverband, DPhV*) which organized teachers of the prestigious *Gymnasium*. They were allied with the smaller *Verband Deutscher Realschullehrer*, an association of middle school teachers, who also opposed comprehensive schooling. In addition, the small Association of Catholic German Female Teachers (*VkdL*) was a part of the antagonistic teachers' alliance. The interviewed experts, however, pointed out that the association of middle school teachers and the association of Catholic female teachers were much less relevant politically compared to the Association of Philologists or the Education and Science Workers' Union. For this reason, it has been decided to focus on these two major associations as the main poles of the teachers' organizations (see, however, section 6.5.2 on the role of the Catholic female teachers). Both of them have regional chapters in NRW.

In addition, a third teachers' association is included in a more detailed analysis, namely the Association of Education and Upbringing (*Verband Bildung und Erziehung, VBE*). This association was founded in 1970, based on the earlier separated Catholic and Protestant *Volksschule* teachers' associations (the *Verband der Katholischen Lehrerschaft Deutschlands, VKLD* and the *Bund Evangelischer Lehrer*). In NRW, the Catholic teachers' associations had long been strong and much more significant politically than the Protestant teachers' associations (Pöggeler, 1977). The background for the existence of denominational teachers' associations was denominational schooling (cf. section 6.1.2) and the fact that the Pedagogical Colleges of NRW which educated people's school teachers were separated into Catholic and Protestant institutions until 1969. From 1958, the Catholic and Protestant teachers cooperated in the elections for the Employee Boards at a municipal and federal state level which had been

introduced by the NRW government. In 1958, their lists received around 55 percent of the votes at the various administrative levels, with around 44 percent for its competitor, the Education and Science Workers' Union (Groß-Albenhausen/Hitpaß, 1993, p. 85). Also in later years, the Association of Education and Upbringing was often the most successful teachers' association in NRW in the federal Employee Board elections (*Hauptpersonalratswahlen*) on the primary school and *Hauptschule* level, though the competition with the Education and Science Workers' Union was very close (*Verband Bildung und Erziehung*, 1980, pp. 111ff). With respect to comprehensive schooling, the Association of Education and Upbringing and its preceding organizations can be labeled consenters rather than antagonists. They were worried primarily about the quality of teaching in the *Volksschule/Hauptschule* and from an early date supported a merger of the *Hauptschule* with the *Realschule* in order to upgrade the curriculum and social status of their school type. They did not support the integrated comprehensive school in the same way as some social democratic and socialist teachers did but neither did they oppose it (cf. below). The Association of Education and Upbringing and its Catholic predecessor *VKLD* had significantly more members than the Association of Philologists. On the national level, Pöggeler (1977, p. 367) claims that the male and female Catholic teachers' associations together had about 60,000 members in 1960, while the Association of Philologists had about 22,000. Nonetheless, most interviewed experts agreed that the Association of Philologists had been more influential politically.

**Table 5.11: Membership numbers of the main teachers' organizations in NRW, 1960-1980**

Year	Education and Science Workers' Union NRW	Association of Philologists NRW	Association of Education and Upbringing NRW
1960	13855		
1970	22416		
1975	29901		9284
1976	33206		
1980		4334	12764

Sources: *Verband Bildung und Erziehung*, 1980, p. 123, information obtained from Bettina Beefink, GEW NRW, and Uta Brockmann, *Philologen-Verband NRW*

As in Norway, all teachers' organizations were formally independent of party politics. Due to its membership of the DGB, the Education and Science Workers' Union was nonetheless closely connected to the SPD (cf. above). A poll of members revealed in 1970 that 62 percent of the respondents considered the SPD to be the most "likable" party, compared to 16 percent that preferred the CDU/CSU and seven percent that preferred the FDP (Kopitzsch, 1983, p. 296; Körfggen, 1986, p. 187). In addition, there were also more radical currents of various

communist and socialist groupings in the union, who not only opposed the SPD's politics but often also each other's standpoints (cf. section 6.4). These internal divisions characterized and weakened the union. Another serious problem of the Education and Science Workers' Union – and in a way of the other teachers' organizations – was and still is that the majority of teachers in Germany have the status of civil servants (*Beamte*) who are not allowed to strike. For this reason, the union's left wing, dubbed the “dogmatics” by the former chairwoman of the Education and Science Workers' Union NRW, Ilse Brusis, often suggested organizing demonstrations to show discontent with some of the NRW government's policies. In Brusis's opinion, this tool was used much too often, so some of the union's demonstrations ended up being so small that they illustrated the weakness of the union more than its strength. However, as she explained in the interview, her internal opponents thought that her dislike of frequent demonstrations was due to her solidarity with the SPD government and thus criticized her for not mobilizing members sufficiently.

For the regional level, membership numbers of the Education and Science Workers' Union could only be obtained until 1976, but show clearly that it was the largest teacher organization in NRW in terms of membership (cf. Figure 5.11). In 1960, the union had around 81,000 members nationally and it grew to around 120,000 members in 1970 and to 192,962 members in 1979 (Kopitzsch, 1983, p. 295; GEW NRW, 1980, p. 53). In 1970, three-quarters of the members were Protestants, with only 16 percent Catholics. Most members worked in large or small cities, with only 21 percent in the countryside. NRW members made up 19 percent of the national membership which is lower than could be expected considering that NRW comprised around one-third of the West German population (Kopitzsch, 1983, p. 295; Körfgen, 1986, p. 186). It is possible that this is related to the low number of Catholic teachers in the union, who presumably preferred the Association of Education and Upbringing. The union organized teachers of all school types, but in 1970, the majority were primary school teachers (23 percent) and *Hauptschule* teachers (49 percent). Only 11 percent were teachers at a *Realschule*, six percent were teachers at a special school and four percent were *Gymnasium* teachers (Körfgen, 1986, p. 186). As Brusis pointed out, the union also organized university staff and university students, whom she considered to have been “a revolutionary group” and members of the union mainly for ideological reasons. In 1970, university staff made up three percent of the union's membership (Körfgen, 1986, p. 186). The idea of the comprehensive school was supported especially by younger members and by university staff (Körfgen, 1986, p. 187). The older members and the leadership of the union on the national level remained skeptical for longer (Körfgen, 1986, pp. 137ff; cf. below). At least from the 1970s, the Education and Science Workers' Union can, however, clearly be placed on the political left of the SPD and should be considered one of the most important protagonists for comprehensive schooling.



The Association of Philologists, on the other hand, was politically closer to the CDU which should not be taken to mean that the association was always content with the CDU's politics. It had good connections with the ranks of CDU politicians and must be deemed to have been rather successful in its opposition to comprehensive schooling (cf. below). Nonetheless, it also organized teachers who were members of the SPD or FDP. In fact, the expert Anne Ratzki was of the opinion that having been "a member of the SPD and the Association of Philologists was the best career base" in NRW. Many other experts agreed that the Association of Philologists was a representative of "societal power" (Anke Brunn, SPD politician) which organized the "leading people" (Jürgen Hinrichs, former FDP politician). The social democrat and school reformer, Hans-G. Rolff, was of the opinion that even though the Association of Philologists was smaller than the two other major teachers' organizations in membership, it had the most political influence, because it had the support of the CDU and the media and represented the "ruling groups". The exact membership numbers of the Association of Philologists were not published at the time so it is unclear how many members they actually had. Rösner (1981, p. 136) estimates that the NRW section had about 11,000 members in 1977. However, several interviewed experts believed that the actual membership number was probably significantly lower and that the Association of Philologists kept this secret for political reasons. Indeed, the current staff of the Association of Philologists in NRW informed the author of this study by email that the NRW section had only 4,334 members in 1980 (cf. Table 5.11). Numbers from earlier times were impossible to come by. In any case, this number is surprisingly low.

The representative of the Association of Philologists, Walter Hupperth, confirmed that the relation between his association and the CDU had been close during the struggles over the integrated and the cooperative comprehensive school. When asked which organization had been most successful in influencing education politics in NRW, he and his former colleague, Hiltrud Meyer-Engelen, who had been principal of a *Gymnasium*, had the following exchange:

“Walter Hupperth: I would have no hesitation in saying...

Hiltrud Meyer-Engelen: I would say the 'red brothers'.

*Interviewer: What did you want to say first?*

Walter Hupperth: Well, I am quite satisfied with what the association has achieved for us.

Hiltrud Meyer-Engelen: But I would say that we of course had to fight back primarily. So I would say that the SPD incited the battle. One cannot hide that this is the case.

*Interviewer: But you think that your association has also achieved a great deal?*

Both: Yes.”

Due to its historical background in the religious teachers’ organizations, the Association of Education and Upbringing was also more closely connected to the CDU than to the SPD but it did harbor SPD politicians too, such as NRW’s Minister of Education from 1966 to 1970, Fritz Holthoff. Over time, the Association of Education and Upbringing “emancipated” itself increasingly from the CDU, as its representative Uwe Franke explained in the expert interview. The social status and practical concerns of the former people’s school teachers, who made up the majority of the Association of Education and Upbringing, were quite different from the interests of the *Gymnasium* teachers. The two associations did not see eye to eye in many school-political questions. As Uwe Franke also stated in the expert interview, cooperation between them was “as among relatives over the same inheritance”. Nonetheless, they were both members of the Association of Public Employees (*Deutscher Beamtenbund*), a federation of non-social democratic public employees’ organizations. The Association of Public Employees mostly refrained from taking part in the school-political debates and left this to the teachers’ organizations because the differences of opinion between them were so great. The former CDU politician, Wilhelm Lenz, who was also managing director of the Association of Public Employees in NRW (*Deutscher Beamtenbund NRW, dbb*) from 1953 to 1984, made some interesting remarks with respect to this. He confirmed that the two major teachers’ organizations within the Association of Public Employees were not always in agreement and explained that he had to use his connections to both to mediate between them and especially to talk “some sense” into the representatives of the Association of Education and Upbringing. Furthermore, in his view, the Association of Education and Upbringing had played a similar role for the CDU as the Education and Science Workers’ Union had played for the SPD:

“The comprehensive school was militantly supported by the Education and Science Workers’ Union. The Education and Science Workers’ Union influenced the SPD but within the SPD it wasn’t that well liked. “Those are nutjobs” and so forth. For us that was at times the Association of Education and Upbringing. However – how should I put this? – [they did] more objective work. And you could talk to them.”

The expert Uwe Franke confirmed that Wilhelm Lenz had done a good job in trying to keep the peace within the Association of Public Employees by forcing representatives of the two teachers’ organizations to cooperate through various working teams and talking to each other: “He often made Peter Heesen [representative of the Association of Philologists in NRW] and I come to his office and then the door was closed and we had to somehow feud with each other.”

The former FDP politician Jürgen Hinrichs and several other experts were also of the opinion that the Association of Education and Upbringing had been less ideological and therefore

“easier to talk to” than the two other major organizations. Hinrichs furthermore thought that the FDP had stood closest to the Association of Education and Upbringing of the teachers’ associations, while the Association of Philologists had been the main cooperation partner of the CDU. Again, however, these relations should not be overemphasized because all teachers’ organizations tried to build connections into all political parties and influence the direction of politics according to their own interests, independent of party affiliation.

Besides the teachers’ organizations and the political parties, there were a number of other organizations involved in school politics in NRW. The Organization Comprehensive School (*Gemeinnützige Gesellschaft Gesamtschule, GGG*) organized reform protagonists, both on the national and the federal state level. It was founded in 1969 in Dortmund, NRW and played a relevant role as a network of reform-oriented teachers, parents, social scientists and politicians. Its main political aim was and still is the development of comprehensive schooling in Germany. In 1972, it merged with the NRW Working Group for Comprehensive Schooling (*Arbeitskreis Gesamtschulen in Nordrhein-Westfalen*) and subsequently developed regional chapters in all federal states. By 1980, it had around 4000 members (Lohmann, 2016, p. 2). On the national level, reform protagonists – especially social scientists, pedagogues and politicians – also exchanged opinions through the German Educational Council (*Deutscher Bildungsrat*), founded in 1965. This can be considered the political equivalent of the Experimental Council in Norway.

On the other side of the conflict, a very important antagonistic collective actor during the 1970s was the NRW movement against the cooperative school. In addition to the antagonistic actors mentioned above, it also included the Parents’ Associations of the *Gymnasium* (*Landeselternschaft der Gymnasien in Nordrhein-Westfalen*) and the *Realschule* (*Verband der Elternschaften Deutscher Realschulen*), a Catholic parents’ association, the Association for Freedom of Research (*Bund Freiheit der Wissenschaft*) and the parents’ associations *Elternverein Nordrhein-Westfalen*, *Landesschulpflegschaft Nordrhein-Westfalen* and *Arbeitsgemeinschaft von Schulpflegschaften im Regierungsbezirk Münster*. In terms of material resources, this movement was well endowed with funds it received from the CDU and it obviously received widespread support from parents and teachers, since it managed to collect over 3.6 million signatures against the cooperative school reform in 1978 (cf. Chapter 4, pp. 127ff).

Finally, the Catholic and the Protestant Church also played a role in school politics in NRW to a higher degree than they do today. Especially the Catholic Church was a fierce opponent of common schooling for children of different denominations (cf. section 6.1.2). Comprehensive school reforms were less important for the churches but they tended to oppose them. Already in 1960, the Catholic bishops of NRW warned Catholic teachers in an episcopal letter against supporting the Education and Science Workers’ Union which they considered to be a

dangerous opponent (Körffgen, 1986, p. 126). Also during the campaign against the cooperative school, it became clear that especially the Catholic Church and to a lesser degree the Protestant Church belonged to the antagonistic camp (cf. Chapter 5.4.6).

Among the collective actors who could not be included in detailed analysis in this study are the employers' organizations and the chambers of commerce. They certainly played a role in education politics but more in vocational education than in general education. Of course, the debates about vocational and general education are related since the protagonists of comprehensive schooling also often supported an integration of the upper secondary grades of the *Gymnasium* and the vocational schools. Restrictions in time and capacity made it impossible to explore this relation in more detail in this study (cf. section 7.3).

The activities of the actors aimed at influencing school politics were similar in many ways. Many of the experts interviewed for this study were involved in the production of publications of various sorts or research on school politics, or like H. G. Rolff, they designed local school development plans. They also traveled far and wide around Germany in order to attend frequent meetings and debates. As the former SPD politician Reinhard Grätz pointed out in the expert interview, public meetings played a much bigger role than today and meetings about school politics easily attracted large audiences of one thousand people or more. Cooperation with the media was also important, though the media landscape was not as developed as today. However, several experts were of the opinion that the public relations of the protagonists of comprehensive and cooperative schooling had not been organized and managed very professionally and that the antagonists had been better positioned in this regard. Also, the former FDP politician Jürgen Hinrichs complained that much of the media had had a negative attitude to, for example, the cooperative school reform which made it harder for reform protagonists to have their views covered by the press. For the party politicians but also for the representatives of the teachers' organizations, it was clear that the most influential actors were the parliamentary groups, not the parties as such. For this reason, everybody outside parliament aimed at establishing good connections to parliamentary representatives. Within parliament, one could influence events best by proposing motions which would then be publicly discussed. In addition, the teachers' organization of course participated in hearings in parliament. The fact that they could not strike (cf. above) made informal contact with parliamentary representatives even more important. Finally, the movement against the cooperative school brought all these activities together during its collection of millions of signatures which again illustrates that the antagonists were well organized.

#### 5.4 Ideologies regarding school types and differentiation in Germany

In Chapter 4, a detailed account of the post-war educational reforms in NRW has already been given (cf. pp. 119ff). To sum up, the initial post-war years were a time of restoration and the most highly contested topic was denominational schooling (cf. section 6.1.2). In 1959, the

framework plan for the remodeling and standardization of the general school system, published by the German Committee for the Education and School System, sparked off new reform discussions. Nonetheless, it took until the second half of the 1960s for the integrated comprehensive school to become a major topic of debate. In 1966, the last conservative government of NRW introduced nine years of obligatory schooling, independently of other school reforms and without major conflict. In 1969, the first seven integrated comprehensive schools were founded in NRW and by 1975, another 16 such schools followed. Within these schools, organizational differentiation by ability grouping was the rule. In the course of the 1970s, the opposition to the integrated comprehensive school grew and the aim that this school type should replace all the older parallel school types was gradually given up. In the second half of the 1970s, the NRW government attempted to introduce the cooperative school as an additional school type which was a combination of the school types of the *Hauptschule*, *Realschule* and *Gymnasium* with comprehensive schooling in grades five and six followed by three tracks. Even this rather modest reform led to massive conflicts and to the collection of 3.6 million signatures against it. As a result, the government withdrew the law. The integrated comprehensive school became an additional school type besides the older ones and eventually lost its experimental status in 1981.

In the following, the arguments of the major collective actors in these debates are analyzed, as well as their degree of internal unity with respect to these issues. The debates about the integrated comprehensive school and the cooperative school are of course related, since the cooperative school was in a way a “light” version of comprehensive schooling designed to accomplish at least a first step in the direction of a comprehensive school system. In accordance with the chronological development and to show the slight differences between these two related struggles, they are discussed one after the other. As for the Norwegian case, the analysis focuses on the protagonists of the reforms first, followed by an analysis of the consenters’ and the antagonists’ views. Again, the analysis is based on party programs, experts’ assessments, parliamentary debates and a variety of other sources.

#### 5.4.1 Ideology of German protagonists – the integrated comprehensive school

German social democrats first included the integrated comprehensive school as a school type in their program in 1964. Nonetheless, the necessity to create equal chances in the school system was mentioned in the earlier party programs of the SPD as well. As the SPD politician Reinhard Grätz put it, the working classes’ “hunger for education” had always been one of the basic concerns of the party. In his view, it had been the “historical role” of the SPD to struggle for access to education and there had been a lot of “heart blood” connected to this – a German term for passion. For example, the Godesberg program of the SPD from 1959 stated that “all privileges in access to educational institutions must be eliminated” and that “for any able person the way to secondary schools and educational institutions must be open”. The

Godesberg program also demanded ten years of obligatory schooling. In its program for the federal state elections in NRW in 1962, the SPD stated:

“To pave all ways for all children so that they can let their strengths unfold and develop their dispositions without restrictions, for the good and for the use of humanity and for their happiness – is this not a task which would be worth the strongest commitment? This is not an illusion; this task can be solved! Neither the father’s wallet nor the social standing of the family, neither the large or small number of children nor the denomination or the belonging to a group of the people – nothing should stand debilitatingly in the way, when the aim is to let unfold and develop the gifts and abilities of the young person.”

The program also pointed out that the SPD had long pushed for the abolition of tuition fees, which the NRW CDU had finally agreed to in 1955. This was justified as follows:

“We consider a social separation of school and university students immoral. All strata of our people have contributed to the building of the temple of our culture and therefore it should be a moral duty that everyone also receives access to it. Only in this way can we achieve reconciliation in our people.”

Furthermore, the program informed voters that the NRW SPD had made a motion in 1959 in response to the framework plan (*Rahmenplan*) which had been published by the German Committee for the Education and School System. In particular, they had suggested the introduction of an “orientation stage” for all children in grades five and six which would prepare them for the suitable school type they would attend from grade seven. Interestingly, this was not presented as a step towards comprehensive schooling but instead it was argued that the orientation stage could prevent a “draining” of the people’s school and an overcrowding of higher schools “with students who are unfit for scientific work”. Extending comprehensive schooling by two years was thus presented as a measure that would strengthen selection at a later point. Apparently, the strategy was to use the CDU’s own arguments against them, followed by a complaint that the CDU had rejected the motion.

In addition, it was argued that investments in and reforms of the school system were necessary for the sake of the economy which depended on well-qualified workers. This economic and capitalist-competitive motive reappeared in later debates about comprehensive schooling. Reform protagonists regularly pointed out that the Federal Republic was lagging behind the majority of Western countries and behind the German Democratic Republic in terms of educational achievement in the population. However, it was clear that the social motive was the first priority. In the expert interviews, the SPD politician Anke Brunn summarized this motive as follows:

“The most important argument for the integrated comprehensive school was really that the children were separated too early on to different educational paths and that permeability was necessary which simply wasn’t sufficiently given in the earlier, pillared school system. And that one could thus support children more individually. That was the idea, while the classical pillared German education system [...] was a system of exclusion and allocation of social chances, or the rejection of social chances, you might also say. [...] And this idea of ascent through education and qualification through education and a future through education, this idea had to correspond with an education system which supports and doesn’t exclude. That was the most important idea.”

In 1964, the SPD published its “Educational-Political Guidelines” (*Bildungspolitische Leitsätze*) which more boldly than before suggested replacing the vertical separation of school types with a horizontal school system of consecutive levels of education and which employed the term “comprehensive school” (*Gesamtschule*) for the first time. The social democrats now suggested a six-year primary level of schooling followed by a four-year middle level and a three-year upper level of schooling. For the middle level, they envisaged a common core of teaching for all students in addition to differentiated teaching in courses and ability groups. They considered the introduction of the orientation stage and the creation of possibilities of transition between the traditional school types to be first steps in the right direction.

From this point on and until 1980, the SPD included the replacement of the traditional school types by the integrated comprehensive school as a long-term aim in its programs. Around 1970, also the liberal FDP supported a development in this direction (cf. below). Before the elections of 1970, the social-liberal federal state government published a program (*Nordrhein-Westfalen Programm 1975*), in which the political plans for the next five years were outlined in detail. With respect to comprehensive schooling, the program stated in a surprisingly optimistic way:

“The federal state government observes with interest the strong support of the public, namely of the municipal authorities and of the parents, regarding the establishment of comprehensive schools. Although the federal state government has not yet decided to introduce the comprehensive school on a general level in the entire federal state, it evaluates very positively – also based on foreign experiences – the general idea of the comprehensive school which is hardly contested today. The federal state government will make the final decision based on the experiences with the school experiment of the ‘comprehensive school’. Until 1975, 30 such school experiments shall be undertaken or begun.”

The program also included calculations estimating how many comprehensive schools could be founded in the various municipalities of the federal state, with the aim of showing that

rural areas also had a sufficient population density to allow the establishment of large comprehensive schools with eight parallel classes. It specified that the minimum would be four parallel classes. The reduction of educational inequality between urban and rural areas was explicitly mentioned as an argument for comprehensive schools, in addition to the typical arguments that children from different social strata should learn to cooperate and that all students' achievements should be increased through an increased "joy in learning" and a later selection. It should, however, be remarked that the program also included suggestions to increase the number of *Gymnasium* schools and to further expand the *Hauptschule* with a tenth school year. This was not considered as standing in the way of a more far-reaching structural reform in the future, in which all school types would be combined. Quite to the contrary, especially the upgrading of the *Hauptschule* in terms of curricula, financial resources and the length of schooling was important for social democrats. In 1969, the education-political committee of the SPD (*Bildungspolitischer Ausschuss*) warned in a paper entitled "Model for a Democratic School System" that the *Hauptschule* was about to become a "rest school" with low social standing, attended only by socially disadvantaged youths. It was pointed out that the *Hauptschulen* would have to be of good enough quality to ensure that they could be transformed into comprehensive schools later on (*ENTWURF: Modell für ein demokratisches Bildungswesen*, 1969, p. 47).

At this time point, the reform protagonists strongly believed that a general introduction of the comprehensive school in NRW was possible. All interviewed experts, who supported comprehensive schooling at the time, confirmed this in the interviews. Around 1970, the atmosphere was generally very optimistic. It seemed as though, with thorough planning, most political goals would be achievable. Over time, the formulations in the SPD's programs, however, indicate that the atmosphere changed. In the SPD's program for the NRW elections of 1975, it was remarked for example:

"Reforms need time. Especially the big reforms which make up a great deal of leeway. There are no reforms without difficulties and problems. But the problems are not as bad as the injustices of yesterday. As anyone should know: these are the problems that arise because something is changing for the better.

Therefore, we warn against those who want to use the unavoidable difficulties of today to stop the reforms or even reverse them in order to reintroduce the old privileges and injustices. What has been achieved, more and better education for all, especially for our children, must be safeguarded and expanded."

The "problems" referred to in this passage were manifold. For example, reform opponents accused the experimental integrated comprehensive schools, which had been founded in NRW from 1969 onwards, of underperforming in terms of the academic achievement of their students. The experimental schools also struggled with a variety of challenges, such as the



lack of suitable school material, curricula and buildings, or the lack of experience of teachers with comprehensive teaching. In many instances, the teachers who were involved in the development of these schools had to start from nothing. Anne Ratzki, former principal of one of the first integrated comprehensive schools in NRW, described this as follows in the interview:

“It was very hard. [...] There was nothing, no books, no nothing. There were the children, very different children. [...] And these first teachers came from all kinds of schools. They had to get to know these children, how to talk to them. They had to develop teaching units which were responsive to these different children. That was a lot of work. [...] Relationships and marriages fell apart because they were so focused on it. [...] And it wasn’t appreciated by the ministry. [...] Whenever something didn’t work well, they were terribly sanctioned but it wasn’t ever appreciated. And when you work and work without appreciation and from above... [...] you even had to defend yourself for the work you were doing. [...] So I think for some, frustration began to set in.”

With this in mind, it is understandable that reform protagonists found it difficult to counter the attacks related to the academic underperformance of the new schools. As Ratzki also pointed out, the opponents were comparing “apples with pears”, since the social background of the children in the integrated comprehensive schools was very different from the social background of the children in the *Gymnasium*, which continued to be the first choice for upper class and upper middle class parents.

One ideological strategy applied to counter the criticism which, however, was controversial among the reform protagonists, was to embrace the opponents’ rhetoric of “achievement”. For example, the school reformer and social scientist, H.G. Rolff, published a book on comprehensive schooling with two other reform supporters in 1967 which they entitled *The Democratic Achievement School (Die demokratische Leistungsschule)*. As Rolff explained in the interview:

“Funny title and it was attacked massively by those on the far left because of the idea of achievement.

*Interviewer: Why did you choose this term?*

Well. Also partly strategically and partly out of conviction. The comprehensive school was always accused of a deterioration of standards and so forth... Also because of that, we termed it Achievement School. And also because I was convinced of it. The school should enable students to learn, to achieve something.”

From 1980, the SPD NRW’s election program no longer suggested replacing the traditional school types with comprehensive schooling in the long term, even though the program of

1980 still supported the comprehensive school in principle and summed up some of the most important arguments:

“The conflict between social democrats and conservatives for free decision-making by parents and equal chances for all children, against paternalism and the preservation of privileges, becomes apparent in the question of the comprehensive school.

The SPD will expand the comprehensive school besides the existing school types as a school supply with equal rights. This means: we will establish comprehensive schools wherever parents wish to send their children to comprehensive schools.

We consider the comprehensive school to be the school type which is most likely to do justice to the challenges of modern society and in which equality of opportunity and the best possible support, a humane atmosphere and all-round education, can best be achieved. In education politics, the following applies for us social democrats: support instead of sorting. Against the comprehensive school, the conservatives have placed the allocation of educational opportunities dependent on social background and the income of parents.”

Again, the reform protagonists attempted to use the opponents’ arguments by turning them around. As is shown in more detail below, the conservative opposition insisted on the idea that parents should have the right to decide on the school type they wanted for their children. Reform protagonists therefore claimed that parents actually had more decision-making power within the integrated comprehensive school, since it offered more varied possibilities than the traditional school types in terms of ability grouping and kept various educational paths open for longer. In the interviews, several experts pointed out that this had been a useful argument since parents often worried about which school type they should choose. Especially for lower class parents, it was also important that the integrated comprehensive schools of NRW were all-day schools, so that students were taken care of during the afternoon and received help with their homework at school. For those upper and middle class parents who were certain that their offspring would pass the *Abitur* exam at a *Gymnasium*, these arguments, however, made little difference.

The NRW chapter of the Education and Science Workers’ Union (*GEW*) included the integrated comprehensive school in its program in 1965 and the national Education and Science Workers’ Union eventually passed a motion on it in 1968. It was not the first union to do so – in fact, the industrial union of metalworkers (*IG Metall*) and even the German Confederation of Trade Unions (DGB) as a whole had passed motions in support of the integrated comprehensive school before the Education and Science Workers’ Union (Kopitzsch, 1983, p. 221, p. 269). As is discussed in more detail below, the reasons for this were various internal splits within the union. Nonetheless, the Education and Science Workers’ Union had long argued for an extension of comprehensive schooling, with similar

arguments as the SPD. In 1960, the union had published its “Bremen Plan” (*Bremer Plan*), in which it had suggested an extension of comprehensive schooling by two years. The idea was that all children should attend grades five and six together and that there should be ability grouping in foreign languages and mathematics on this level. From grades seven to ten, schooling should be organized in three tracks based on the earlier traditional school types. This envisaged school reform was justified as follows:

“The school of a modern society as a society of free and equal people should be realized through a dynamic, unified ladder-system of schooling. [...] The school of the modern society should be a school of social justice, in which there is equality for all at the start, in which all normal children, by staying together until the end of the sixth grade, gain real experiences of companionship, before differences in ability and diligence have a separating effect.” (*Bremer Plan of 1960*, quoted in Kopitzsch, 1983, p. 172).

The Bremen Plan, however, led to fierce reactions from conservatives, and especially from the Catholic Church, because it also envisaged a secularization of the school system. The plan was said to be indistinguishable from the communist school program of the German Democratic Republic (cf. section 6.4; Kopitzsch, 1983, pp. 190). It also led to controversial debates within the Education and Science Workers’ Union, mostly because of the denominational issues, and soon disappeared from the agenda. In the following years, the union’s national chairman, Heinrich Rodenstein, preferred to speak of “educational centers” in which traditional school types should be combined to increase permeability (Kopitzsch, 1983, p. 230). Nevertheless, protagonists of comprehensive schooling within the Education and Science Workers’ Union pushed for a clearer positioning of the union. For example, the Berlin school senator and social democrat, Carl-Heinz Evers, made a speech at a national union congress in 1966, in which he pointed out that the Federal Republic was missing the general European trend towards comprehensive education and urged the Education and Science Workers’ Union to develop its Bremen Plan further in this direction (Kopitzsch, 1983, p. 228). In the expert interview, Ilse Brusis described how young teachers in the union, to whom she belonged at the time, also decided to struggle for the integrated comprehensive school within the union in the second half of the 1960s:

“The Federal Committee of Young Teachers of the Education and Science Workers’ Union organized a national conference each year. [...] We came together to meet for three days. [...] So we sat together once again to plan this national conference [...]. Which topic should we choose? [...] Then someone said: the students must be taught together for longer than four years. This separation after four years is nonsense. They don’t have it in Great Britain, they don’t have it in France, they don’t have it in the Scandinavian countries, why do they have it here? Here, we still had a ‘status school’

in the primary schools in the 1920s; the rich go here, the others go there. This was overcome with the primary school and should now finally be continued after the Second World War. The development has become stuck!

This inspired us all that we should now demand and discuss this. And we did. Of course, word got round in the union; they want to discuss the *Einheitsschule* [comprehensive school]. So we said deliberately, ‘We don’t call it *Einheitsschule*, *Einheitsschule* sounds too much like the GDR, we call it *Gesamtschule*.’ There was restlessness among the old, what are the young doing here? We organized our national conference and the chairman, Professor Rodenstein, came [...] to give us a piece of his mind. If we passed this, the entire Education and Science Workers’ Union would fall apart. The philologists could not be kept in the union, they would leave the Education and Science Workers’ Union straightaway and the middle school teachers probably would as well and then the vocational teachers and then the entire union would be ruined.”

The separation of teachers between the school types created internal divisions within the Education and Science Workers’ Union which made it difficult to develop a common position. As shown above (p. 193), the union aimed at organizing everyone in the education sector but had trouble convincing large numbers of *Gymnasium* and *Realschule* teachers to join. Also Anne Ratzki, who has been active in the Education and Science Workers’ Union for decades, confirmed in the interview that, in some cases, even the *Hauptschule* teachers within the union were against integrated comprehensive schools on the local level, if the introduction of such a school implied that their own school would be shut. These difficulties persisted after the integrated comprehensive school had been included in the union’s official program. In other words, even though the Education and Science Workers’ Union was a protagonist for comprehensive schooling, at least from the late 1960s, it was not entirely united on the issue.

Within the SPD, too, the major difficulty of the reform protagonists was that the party was split. As the SPD politician, Anke Brunn, pointed out for example, many “progressively oriented teachers” were organized in the SPD and supported the reforms. But among the “traditional companies” of the wage earners in the party, as she termed them, the interest in long debates of education politics was not as pronounced. Furthermore, the SPD as a party often suggested far-reaching reforms at its national and regional congresses and at least the young, leftwing members of the parliamentary groups supported these decisions. The NRW government, however, which was supposed to put these ideas into practice, was not necessarily equally enthusiastic. During the entire period examined here, some leading social democrats with important positions in the NRW government did not support the introduction of the integrated comprehensive school wholeheartedly. This holds true for example of the *Ministerpräsident* Heinz Kühn. Several experts, who have known and worked with Kühn

personally, confirmed that he did not prioritize comprehensive schooling because he wanted to avoid conflicts around these questions and because, to him, it was sufficient that the *Gymnasium* would be opened up to children from the working class.

The NRW Minister of Education from 1966 to 1970, Fritz Holthoff, was also among the delayers of comprehensive school reforms within the SPD. The social democratic school reformer and social scientist, H.-G. Rolff, was of the opinion that the lack of support from Holthoff had been crucial, since Holthoff was Minister of Education in the largest federal state at a very important time point. As Rolff stated in the interview:

“We wanted the integrated comprehensive school as the nation-wide regular school, my senator [Carl-Heinz Evers, school senator of Berlin] and the Minister. [...] That was Ernst Schütte, Minister of Education in Hessen before Friedeburg. We also had quite good influence within the SPD. [...] All of us wanted the comprehensive school with blanket coverage [*flächendeckend*, meaning without any parallel schools]. And this chap Holthoff, Minister of Education in NRW, was our biggest opponent. It wasn't the CDU, it wasn't the FDP, they also wanted experimental programs and all kinds of things but the people's school teacher, Holthoff, who became Minister of Education here and who in our opinion had an inferiority complex because he hadn't studied properly but only gone to a Pedagogical Academy and didn't have a[n] [academic] title. He wanted to defend and preserve the three-tiered school system.”

Reinhard Grätz, one of the youngest SPD representatives in the NRW parliament from 1970, was less critical about Holthoff's role. In his view, Holthoff had cared too much about the quality of education and of working class children's access to good education to be labeled a “right-winger”. Nevertheless, Grätz agreed that Holthoff had not been one of the protagonists of comprehensive schooling within the party. Holthoff was not a member of the Education and Science Workers' Union but of the less radical Association of Education and Upbringing. He belonged to the older generation and was skeptical towards the radical rhetoric of the party's younger, more anti-capitalistic current, of whom Rolff was a representative. For this reason, he was also skeptical towards the comprehensive schooling movement. Much of Holthoff's writing was dedicated to his conflict with the “New Left” which he accused for example of turning the comprehensive school into a school “which institutionalizes class struggle and class hate” (Holthoff, 1975, p. 16). Holthoff did support a “convergence of school types” into a “general school” with the aim of achieving “social integration” but thought that such a development should be conducted “patiently and with convincing words” (Holthoff, 1975, p. 16).

Grätz generally confirmed in the expert interview that the SPD in NRW was far from united on comprehensive education. In fact, when Grätz was voted into the NRW parliament for the first time in 1970, he replaced a much less reform-inclined SPD politician from his hometown

of Wuppertal, Walter Jahnke. Jahnke had been chair of the SPD parliamentary group's working group for cultural issues, where the SPD members of the cultural commission of the NRW parliament met regularly. He was a *Realschule* teacher and not supportive of the integrated comprehensive school. Two other SPD education politicians, Hans-Joachim Bargmann and Hans-Günther Toetemeyer, opposed Jahnke in this working group. They were both reform-oriented, leading representatives of the teachers' organization within the SPD (*Arbeitsgemeinschaft sozialdemokratischer Lehrer*). As Grätz described it in the interview:

“When I shyly appeared for the first time there [in the SPD parliamentary group's working group for cultural issues], after the first invitation, I was received by these two, Bargmann, Toetemeyer, like a demi-God. This is that boy who made it against that Walter Jahnke [laughs]. That was such a relief to them that Walter wasn't there anymore as a delayer of education politics.”

However, he also mentioned that another “delayer” stayed in the working group, namely Walter Jahnke's old friend, Friedhelm Simelka. But according to Grätz, Simelka's opposition was not as tough as Jahnke's had been. In general, the conditions within the NRW SPD were more favorable for reform in the early 1970s, since several reform-oriented, young people – such as Grätz and Brunn, two of the experts interviewed for this study – had replaced older SPD politicians in the NRW parliament (cf. Düding, 2008, p. 631). Also, the reform supporter, Jürgen Girgensohn, became Minister of Education in NRW from 1970. Several experts, however, agreed that even though Girgensohn had personally been convinced of the integrated comprehensive school, he had not been a strong figure politically and had not had the support of all his employees in the ministry.

This is probably correct because even during the short window of opportunity in the early 1970s, the reformers in NRW did not act particularly boldly. In May 1974, the government had brought forward a law proposal which aimed at turning the comprehensive school into a regular school type and included a sentence stating that the parallel structure of the school system would be abolished in favor of a horizontal ladder system. In addition, the proposal suggested the introduction of an orientation stage in grades five and six, which should be independent of school types; in other words: a prolongation of comprehensive schooling by two years (*Landtag NRW, May 7, 1974*). When the proposal was debated for the first time, Minister of Education Girgensohn specified that the proposal was not meant to abolish the old school types or introduce the comprehensive school straightaway, but should merely lay the ground for a long-term reform of the school system in this direction. In his view, it was probable that the introduction of fully comprehensive schooling would first be accomplished in the course of one generation (*Landtag NRW, July 11, 1974, p. 4436*). “I don't want integration at any price!”, Girgensohn declared, in response to attacks by the CDU opposition (*Landtag NRW, July 11, 1974, p. 4466*).

But even this modest law proposal soon seemed too radical, so that all far-reaching propositions were removed from it in early 1975. Protests from parents' and teachers' associations within NRW, and the result of the federal elections in Hessen in 1974,<sup>9</sup> presumably contributed to a demoralization and a new intensification of the internal split of the SPD. There was also a change of mind within the NRW FDP (cf. below). In what remained of the law proposal after the debate in the parliamentary education committee, the comprehensive school was continued with experimental status only and the orientation stage was not mentioned at all. The reference to the long-term integration of all school types was also removed (*Landtag NRW, February 19, 1975*). In the final parliamentary debate about this law proposal on February 27, 1975, the Minister of Education Girgensohn was the only SPD speaker who – with characteristic honesty – openly admitted that he was unhappy with these decisions (*Landtag NRW, February 27, 1975, pp. 5271ff*). *Ministerpräsident* Kühn on the other hand stated that, to him, the comprehensive school was the most desirable school type of the future but that opponents of such reforms should not be overruled but instead persuaded. When the leader of the CDU opposition, Heinrich Köppler, attacked him for the first part of his statement, he also stated explicitly that in his view, the comprehensive school was still in a state of experimentation and that it was not the SPD's aim to introduce this school type as a regular one immediately. He even spoke against an extension of the number of experimental schools (*Landtag NRW, February 27, 1975, p. 5268, p. 5270*).

The NRW elections of 1975, and the national elections of 1976, showed again that the SPD was losing ground to the CDU. In his first government policy statement after the election of 1975, Kühn pointed out that slowing economic growth meant that public revenue would diminish. He declared that the first aim of the government would therefore be to “secure the initiated reforms”. He further expressed that educational reforms would be an important element of the government's politics but should be continued in a “sober-minded” way. The development of curricula and further teacher training should take precedence over organizational reforms (*Landtag NRW, June 4, 1975, p. 14ff*). One can therefore say that the window of opportunity was closed at this point. Reform protagonists were pushed yet again into a more defensive position.

In 1979, the Working Group for Education within the SPD (*Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Bildung, AfB*, formerly the Teachers' Association within the SPD) passed a motion entitled “Ways towards a humane school – the reform must go on”. Already on the first page, the paper complained as follows:

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<sup>9</sup> In Hessen, one of the most important reform supporters within the SPD, Ludwig von Friedeburg, had been Minister of Education from 1969 to 1974 and had attempted to introduce various comprehensive school reforms. These encountered enormous opposition. Even though the SPD and FDP could continue their federal government after the elections of 1974, the CDU had become the strongest party. Friedeburg was forced to resign by the coalition partner, FDP (cf. Friedeburg, 1992, p. 459).

“At the moment, social-liberal federal state governments and the national government are reacting to the partly self-inflicted decline of the education reform with a haphazard retreat from the pressure of employer’s associations and the CDU/CSU (for example, [regarding the] vocational education fee). The CDU/CSU is attempting to bring about the downfall of previously achieved approaches to education reform (for example, the integrated comprehensive schools) with an ideological drumfire without precedent. In this, the CDU/CSU does not care about the cause but only about the question of political power. The most important leverage of the CDU/CSU is the federal state election campaigns, whose focus is the destruction of education-political reforms.”

The paper then continued to make far-reaching suggestions both for structural reforms and for an “inner reform” of the school and it was clear in its critique of capitalism as a system. One must assume that less reform-oriented social democrats were tired of education debates at this point, so the paper made little difference for internal party dynamics. The SPD retreated to the position that comprehensive schools would only be established when and where parents asked for it (cf. quote above, pp. 202f). While this strategy did lead to a new wave of comprehensive school establishments in NRW in the early 1980s, it implied that the aim of introducing truly comprehensive education for all children had been relinquished.

#### 5.4.2 Ideology of German protagonists – the cooperative school

The law proposal of 1976 for the cooperative school was in itself an expression of the SPD’s retreat towards a more defensive, modest stance in education politics. As discussed in more detail in Chapter 4 (cf. pp. 127ff), the cooperative school was merely a combination of tracks based on the three traditional school types of the *Hauptschule*, *Realschule* and the *Gymnasium* under one roof. It was therefore not really a comprehensive school. Although the first proposal envisaged that all children would be taught together at least during the fifth and sixth grades, this provision was taken out of the law proposal once massive opposition began to make itself felt. In addition, the cooperative school was never meant to replace all other school types but was suggested merely as an alternative, especially for rural areas which, in this way, could offer several school types in one school. It was in other words a modest project.

The architects of this law proposal were Hans Schwier, educational political spokesman of the SPD parliamentary group and, in particular, Friedrich Wilhelm Fernau, educational political consultant of the SPD parliamentary group. The former SPD politician, Reinhard Grätz, made some interesting remarks in the interview regarding Fernau’s role. Apparently, Fernau had hoped for a career in the Ministry of Education, where he had previously been employed but did not get along with Minister Girgensohn. For this reason, he began to work for the parliamentary group. In Grätz’s view, one of the reasons why Fernau developed the law



proposal for the cooperative school was to make up for his thwarted ambitions at the ministry. He wanted to be involved in school politics, was frustrated about Girgensohn and found a “willing partner” in Hans Schwier, as Grätz put it. In addition, Fernau’s other motive was presumably his personal conviction that the cooperative school would solve the problems which would arise once the number of students started decreasing. In 1976, the top of the “student mountain” had been reached but it was foreseeable that, due to demographic developments, the number of secondary school students would start to decline very soon. There were thus good practical reasons for making it easier for municipalities to combine several school types in one. But Grätz also thought that Fernau had not been very good at “perceiving the voice of the people” and had not sensed the political development his proposal would provoke.

*Ministerpräsident* Kühn, on the other hand, was deemed by several experts to have had very good political intuition and he was not eager to introduce the law proposal, sensing that it would mean trouble. He did not even like the name, *Koop-Schule*, because the term “coop” connoted to some the “coop grocery cooperative” which had a bad reputation for its management practices at the time. Nevertheless, the government eventually gave in to the SPD parliamentary group. In November 1976, the proposal was debated in parliament for the first time (*Landtag NRW, November 25, 1976*). In this debate, the spokesman of the SPD, Schwier, appealed to the CDU:

“Is the CDU degrading itself to being the spokesman for archconservative groups, who reject the mere possibility of going to school with *Hauptschule* and *Realschule* students as unbearable? Is the clientele which you believe yourselves to be representing so rooted in thinking about status that it refuses to share the teachers’ common-room with *Realschule* and *Hauptschule* teachers? [...] If you cannot counter our initiative with any objective form of reasoning, your [...] refusal can only stem from ideology, the ideology of separation and selection. Don’t make yourselves, against your previous insights, the standard bearer of school-political ignorance! The ideology which considers school education safeguarded only through separation and selection, must be termed apartheid. But, ladies and gentlemen, you and we know that the times of apartheid are over.” (*Landtag NRW, November 25, 1976, p. 1808*)

Otherwise, most speakers of the SPD argued strategically. They pointed out that the demographic development would soon put schools in the countryside under pressure. This problem could be solved by cooperative schools. Furthermore, they heavily criticized the CDU for not supporting the proposal even though it was very similar to a law proposal for cooperative schools which the CDU had made in 1971. They quoted from the CDU’s party programs in an attempt to show that cooperation between the existing school types was exactly what the CDU normally claimed to support. As in the debate about comprehensive

schooling, they argued that the cooperative school would lead to a larger number of choices for parents, not fewer. They also emphasized that the cooperative school would neither delay nor accelerate the introduction of integrated comprehensive schooling but that it was an entirely independent reform. The CDU's claim that the cooperative school was a step towards the introduction of the integrated comprehensive school was thus said to be false by the SPD speakers.

However, Minister of Education Jürgen Girgensohn was the exception: he expressed openly – as he had done for years (cf. Blumenthal, 1988, p. 13) – that in his view, a cooperative school could in fact only be a “transitional stage” on the way towards the general introduction of the integrated comprehensive school. This was directed at the comprehensive schooling “purists”, for example in the Education and Science Workers' Union and the leftist currents of the SPD, who thought that the reform proposal was a bad idea. In contrast to the CDU, these groups believed that the cooperative school would not further but rather hinder or delay more far-reaching reforms (*Landtag NRW, November 25, 1976, pp. 1826ff*). Girgensohn was later heavily criticized for this statement in a meeting of his parliamentary group, and by one of the speakers of the FDP, Wolfgang Heinz (Düding, 1998, p. 119; *Landtag NRW, November 25, 1976, p. 1831*). The reason was that his statement was considered to have been strategically unhelpful. The other speakers had attempted to make it harder for the CDU to argue that the government intended to abolish the *Gymnasium* through the back door. During the debate, the conservative speakers rejoiced in Girgensohn's “honesty” and accused the other speakers of the SPD to be lying about their true political aims. In the following months, the opposition used Girgensohn's statement as “proof” of “the true meaning” of this reform.

In part, their criticism was true: Schwier, his consultant Fernau and other supporters of the reform considered the proposal a kind of “last chance” to take at least a small step in the direction of comprehensive schooling (cf. Blumenthal, 1988, p. 18, below). As the SPD politician Anke Brunn explained in the interview, their idea was that this law proposal would allow to “somehow, in part, carry along the supporters of the old system”. This applied also to the supporters of the old system in their own ranks. According to the school reformer and social scientist, H.-G. Rolff, a SPD member himself, Schwier believed that an abolition of the *Gymnasium* and a general introduction of the integrated comprehensive school would no longer have been enforceable even within the SPD and he chose to suggest the cooperative school in order to achieve at least something. Rolff described in the interview how he came to understand this during his meetings with SPD representatives. For example, he was invited to a meeting with Schwier and Fernau with other educational scientists in October 1976, where the law proposal for the cooperative school was discussed. Later, he spoke twice at the hearings of parliament regarding the law. He also spoke to Schwier on several other occasions, when Schwier came to his research institute for consultations. He was shocked by remarks made by social democrats during these unofficial talks:

“The social democrats told us, why should we support the abolition of the *Gymnasium* now, when for the first time in history our children are attending the *Gymnasium*?”

*Interviewer: That's what they said?*

Yes. Not publicly during the hearings, in the preliminary talks. That was the tipping point. [...] There was a crazy expansion during the 1960s and 1970s and, in fact, these parliamentary representatives now had their children in the *Gymnasium* and they had not attended the *Gymnasium* themselves. So they did indeed think like that. One can just about understand it but, as a politician, one shouldn't only be responsible for one's own children but for society. [...] That was the time when I thought, 'now the window is closed'. That was it now. [...] It was socially selfish, not social democratic.”

*Ministerpräsident* Kühn, who had not been convinced from the outset, distanced himself from the law proposal on February 8, 1977. In a newspaper interview, he stated that one should not “force anything on the parents”. He pointed out that while he supported the proposal “in principle”, it been prepared by the parliamentary groups, “not by the government” (Blumenthal, 1988, p. 33). In the course of February and March 1977, the campaign against the proposal gathered momentum and there were large demonstrations in many of NRW's large cities. In the course of April and May 1977, the proposal was changed in various ways. Most of the changes were minor and served mainly to assure people that the proposal would not come into conflict with constitutional law (Blumenthal, 1988, pp. 48ff; cf. below). In June 1977, the aging Kühn was replaced as chairman of the NRW SPD by the young Johannes Rau, a reform supporter. At the same party congress, several motions were passed which emphasized that the cooperative school would only be a first step towards comprehensive schooling, which repudiated tracking in grades five and six and so forth. Also, the SPD had begun to react to the opposition's campaign by planning their own campaign and publishing leaflets and suchlike. However, it was not enough. Even though the law was passed on October 26, 1977, by the parliamentary groups of the SPD and FDP, opposition continued and in February/March 1978, 3,636,000 signatures were collected against the law (cf. below).

In this struggle, the internal division of the SPD remained a major problem, as several experts agreed during the interviews for this study. Girgensohn was right to believe that not only the CDU and the SPD's more right-wing skeptics of reform, but also leftist comprehensive schooling “purists” within the SPD's ranks and within the Education and Science Workers' Union, would have to be won over to the proposal. Enthusiasm for the cooperative school was not great among them either. For example, Anne Ratzki, principal of one of the first integrated comprehensive schools, and member of the SPD, Education and Science Workers' Union and GGG, described in the interview how shocked she was to find that a new school reform was planned while “their” school had not even left the experimental state:

“It was a SPD damp squib. [...] We were appalled. We had the integrated comprehensive school as a concept. And now a new concept turned up [...]. [...] We were absolutely against it. We really saw the integrated comprehensive school going down the drain, if it were instituted.

*Interviewer: By “we”, you mean the Education and Science Workers’ Union or the GGG?*

Education and Science Workers’ Union, GGG, the local SPD and so forth.”

Even though many supporters of the integrated comprehensive school – including Ratzki – ended up campaigning against the referendum, they were not wholly motivated. As the former chairwoman of the Education and Science Workers’ Union NRW, Ilse Brusis, put it in the interview, they thought that the cooperative school was “neither fish nor fowl” and very difficult to defend. They were worried that this half-baked reform would discredit the integrated comprehensive school and make it harder to move forward in this direction. On the other hand, many of them hoped that it could perhaps be a first step, though a very modest one. When massive conservative opposition arose, they were forced to take a stand but many did so half-heartedly. After the battle was lost, the law was repealed by Kühn, who did so “not unwillingly”, as the former SPD politician Reinhard Grätz put it, “since the cabinet overall didn’t think much of it”. The reformer Anne Ratzki summed up how supporters of comprehensive schooling analyzed the defeat:

“But it [the counter-campaign] was no use. Then this referendum ended negatively. Yes, and what really irritated us – and that was what we had foreseen – was that it damaged the integrated comprehensive school, because the SPD always said afterwards, ‘the comprehensive school isn’t enforceable’.”

#### 5.4.3 Ideology of German consenters – the integrated comprehensive school

During the period examined here, the FDP was the only small, center party in the German party landscape with representation in parliament. It defined itself as a “non-ideological party” which had the role of forcing the other parties to “liberalize” their positions and prevent extremes towards both the left and right (*Program for the NRW elections of 1970*). At the same time, the party itself was characterized by enormous internal oppositions. The national and even nationalist liberal current of the FDP was particularly strong in NRW until 1970, when its leading representatives eventually left the party and joined the CDU instead (cf. Düding, 2008, pp. 626ff).<sup>10</sup> After this current’s dissolution in 1970, the two major remaining currents were economic and social liberals. The social liberal current grew stronger

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<sup>10</sup> For the FDP-SPD coalition of the time, this had significant consequences: its majority dropped from 105 to 102 seats of the 200 seats in the NRW parliament (cf. Düding, 2008, pp. 626ff). As Wolfgang Heinz explained in the expert interview, the remaining eight FDP representatives had to show extraordinary discipline whenever there were important votes: he did not accept any excuse for being absent other than “one’s own funeral”.

during the 1960s and early 1970s and some of its representatives can be labeled protagonists of comprehensive schooling policies. Prominent examples on the national level are Ralf Dahrendorf (1965) and Hildegard Hamm-Brücher (1976) who both supported education reforms and wrote extensively on the topic. Also in the NRW parliament, representatives of the social liberal current, such as Wolfgang Heinz, cooperated with reform-oriented social democrats in order to put comprehensive schooling on the agenda. The economic liberal current, on the other hand, consented to comprehensive school reforms for a while, leaving this field to the social liberals within the party. As time went by and opposition became more pronounced, economic liberals, however, became more antagonistic.

In the early party programs of the FDP, one can find only general formulations stating that access to higher education should be opened to “talented people from the employed population” and should not be prevented by “economic reasons” (national program of 1961). In its program for the national elections of 1969, the FDP first introduced its concept of the “Open School” (*Offene Schule*). The Open School was the liberal version of the integrated comprehensive school and differed from the social democratic concept mainly in its more pronounced focus on internal differentiation. Dahrendorf’s slogan “education is a civil right” was also adopted by the party in 1969. The NRW FDP stated in its program for the NRW elections of 1970:

“A state is only democratic if it offers its citizens actual equality of opportunity. The right to equal life chances is a supreme civil right for the FDP. Until a thorough educational reform in the form of the Open School has been realized, the life chances of our children will not be equal. Each child must have the opportunity to receive an education appropriate to their abilities, independent of social background.”

In the same program, the NRW FDP also supported the continuation and expansion of experiments with comprehensive schools in NRW. The program stated explicitly that all former school types should eventually be combined in the Open School which should be divided into a kindergarten level, a primary school level, a lower secondary level and an upper secondary level. The program also advocated a “flexible course system” within the Open School and individual support for all students.

In 1972, the FDP published its “Stuttgart Guidelines for Liberal Education Politics” (*Stuttgarter Leitlinien*) in which it outlined its positions in education politics in more detail. This document took a stand for far-reaching comprehensive school reforms through the introduction of the Open School. This was justified as follows:

“The creation of equal educational opportunities is the basis of a social democracy. In any present and future society, there will be inequalities conditioned by the social environment. Also in a socially just society, there will be children who receive less stimulation and support from their family upbringing than others. For a state education

system, this entails the permanent obligation to support disadvantaged children especially so that they can exercise their democratic rights and possibilities for action in the same way as others. [...] Disadvantaged learners shall be supported in every way through social integration, through increased and focused tuition, through smaller learning groups, through special learning courses and other didactic measures. The equalization of chances must not, however, be attained by impeding the development of other learners. The right to free education and to the development of one's personality must not be violated through any form of forced leveling." (*Stuttgarter Leitlinien*, p. 9)

The two last sentences can be interpreted as a small concession to reform skeptics within the party. Overall, the document was nonetheless mostly shaped by social liberal ideas. The former NRW FDP politicians interviewed for this study, Wolfgang Heinz and Jürgen Hinrichs, disagreed somewhat with regard to how much support the Stuttgart Guidelines had had in the party. Jürgen Hinrichs thought that the FDP as a whole never really supported the abolition of the *Gymnasium* and that the Stuttgart Guidelines in practice had little influence and were little discussed. In general, he claimed that education politicians and their reform ideas had not been particularly popular within the FDP. Hinrichs had a background as a *Gymnasium* teacher and was initially skeptical of comprehensive school reforms, though Heinz and other reformers slowly managed to convince him to support the cooperative school. However, he never became as convinced as Heinz, who he claimed had stood further to the left than the vast majority of FDP politicians. Wolfgang Heinz, who had indeed been one of the most pronounced reform supporters in the NRW FDP, thought that the Guidelines had had the support of a comfortable majority – and in fact, there must have been a majority in the FDP's national committee (*Bundeshauptausschuss*) when it passed the Guidelines on March 18, 1972. For Heinz, this was an example of the FDP's modernization process during this period which he thought came to expression in the party's stance on education reform, the reform of codetermination and the policy towards the East (*Ostpolitik*). However, Heinz agreed that the Stuttgart Guidelines had lost their relevance already by 1976, when the cooperative school came on the agenda. One can conclude that both of them were right. The FDP's education politics were a constant balancing act: social liberals pushed for reform and were held back by the numerous more conservative FDP members and politicians who found the abolition of the *Gymnasium* – which in most cases was the school type they had attended themselves – unthinkable.

The growth of general skepticism over time was mirrored in the FDP's party programs. In the NRW program for the elections of 1975, it was stated:

“The FDP fights for the promotion of individual abilities, inclinations and achievements. Therefore, it advocates a school system with equal opportunities which

includes the weak and disabled in the same way as the especially talented.

Parents and students must also be allowed to decide themselves which educational path to choose.

The FDP turns against all those who wish to preserve the established at any cost, even if it has long been worn out; who exaggerate the risk of school experiments, because they find equality of opportunity inconvenient. Who play on any resentment, in order to destroy the necessary freedom to test innovations, against their better knowledge and to the detriment of our children. Who by their excessive criticism bring unrest into schools in an irresponsible way.

However, the FDP also disagrees with those who want progress at any price, who create only reluctance to much needed improvements of our school system with their hasty and half-baked experiments.”

Furthermore, the same program also stated that any changes in the school system, such as comprehensive school reforms, would have to be thoroughly tested before they could be declared mandatory by lawmakers. School reformers should exercise patience, it was said, and only after scientific evaluation should any decisions be made: “The NRW FDP does not support overly hasty changes – as in other federal states.” This was presumably a reference to the federal state of Hessen where the SPD-FDP coalition’s school reforms had created massive debate. The Hessen FDP had distanced itself from its earlier policies during the election campaign of 1974 and had even forced its coalition partner, the SPD, to pressure former Minister of Education Friedeburg to resign (cf. Friedeburg, 1992, p. 459; cf. footnote 9 above).

The sentence was also a justification of the fact that the FDP’s parliamentary group had refused to introduce the orientation stage in grades five and six on a general basis before the elections and institute comprehensive schools as an additional regular school type. Even though the SPD had also concluded that the original motion was too far-reaching, it still wanted to implement the orientation stage straightaway (cf. above). This was prevented by the FDP. Instead, a law was passed in February 1974 which merely continued the experimental status of the comprehensive schools and which did not mention the orientation stage (cf. above; *Landtag NRW, February 19, 1975*). In the final parliamentary debate regarding this law, the speaker of the FDP, Wolfgang Heinz, justified this decision primarily by time pressures, since the legislative period was almost over. He stated:

“[...] a legal regulation of the school type-independent orientation state – which we too consider absolutely essential – requires the closest examination and coordination with all those involved. This is not possible now. Therefore, we will propose this motion in the next legislative period.” (*Landtag NRW, February 27, 1975, p. 5266*)

He also declared that an attempt to pass the orientation stage in the course of only one or two months would have been met by the opposition with “prevarications and purposeful misrepresentations” in order to create an “adrenalized atmosphere” which would have increased the risk of error in the decision-making process (*Landtag NRW, February 27, 1975, p. 5265*). Furthermore, he underlined that a six-year primary school would be a better solution from his point of view but that the FDP had not received support from the other parliamentary groups regarding this suggestion. The CDU opposition met Heinz with derision. CDU representatives interrupted him with shouting, calling him a “pushover” and ridiculing the FDP’s change of mind as a “dancing procession” (*Landtag NRW, February 27, 1975, p. 5265*). At various instances during the debate, CDU speakers attributed the “zigzagging” of the coalition, and especially of the FDP, to the elections in Hessen (*Landtag NRW, February 27, 1975, p. 5249, p. 5252*). In response to this, Heinz pointed out that he had already made some critical remarks regarding the introduction of the orientation stage and of the comprehensive school as a regular school type in the first debate of the law in July 1974 (*Landtag NRW, February 27, 1975, p. 5261*). Indeed, he had emphasized during the parliamentary debate on July 11, 1974 that experiments with the comprehensive school needed to be finished before the school type could be definitely regulated by law. He had also pointed out that his personal opinion in 1970 had been that it was unnecessary to conduct additional experiments in NRW since there were sufficient experiences with comprehensive schools in other places (cf. Heinz, 1970). However, “since the decision back then was not taken to my way of thinking”, he felt compelled to warn that the law would not allow establishing additional comprehensive schools before the experiments were finished. It is probable that this remark served mostly to please his more skeptical fellow party representatives (*Landtag NRW, July 11, 1974, p. 4456*).

Unfortunately, Wolfgang Heinz could not remember in detail in the expert interview the internal discussions that presumably preceded the FDP’s decision to back out of most of the original motion’s content. Nor could Jürgen Hinrichs. In his parliamentary speech of February 27, 1975, Heinz also said that he would have preferred it if there had been sufficient time to introduce the orientation stage before the elections (*Landtag NRW, February 27, 1975, p. 5265*). His personal conviction is certainly believable – after all, he was still a supporter of comprehensive schooling when interviewed in 2015. It is, however, also probable that opposition and skepticism were increasing within the FDP at this point. This became even more apparent after the elections of 1975, when the debate about the cooperative school began.

By 1980, the FDP had officially abandoned its concept of the Open School. Like the SPD, it now argued that parents’ wishes needed to be respected and that changes should not be forced through against the affected parties. In the program for the NRW elections of 1980, the party guaranteed that it would not attempt to abolish any of the older school types:



“The FDP will maintain and develop further the traditional school types [...]. It considers the comprehensive school a desirable extension of the existing school offer and an important additional step towards the reduction of the inequality of opportunity in the education system. Therefore, the comprehensive school must receive an equal chance. This implies freeing it from the qualification of its experimental status. Comprehensive schools will be established, where sufficient demand is expressed by parents’ wishes. [...] When comprehensive schools are established, it must be ensured that traditional school types will still be offered. All school types must exist at a reasonable distance.”

It is questionable whether a far-reaching comprehensive school reform along the lines of the concept of the Open School would have been supported at any point by the FDP as a whole. The influence of the reform protagonists within the FDP was even weaker than within the SPD and skepticism grew stronger even earlier. Most FDP politicians continuously emphasized that no decisions could be taken without thorough experiments. The positions of the social liberals were also not as radical as those of more leftwing reformers. For example, they supported a higher degree of organizational differentiation within comprehensive schools and some of them did not think that the *Gymnasium* should be abolished at all. They also disliked it that some radical socialist reformers had a tendency to portray the comprehensive school as a society-changing, anti-capitalist agent. For them, it was more about giving children equal chances than about changing the economic system. During the early 1970s, the general spirit for reform was still so strong that economic liberals might have consented to more far-reaching reforms if the SPD had made this a condition for the coalition. After the elections of 1975, a general introduction of the comprehensive school was, however, definitely off the agenda. In the coalition agreement of 1975, the FDP asserted that the comprehensive school would be continued as an experiment only, with a maximum number of 30 schools in the federal state (Blumenthal, 1988, p. 18).

Among the collective actors examined in more detail in this study, the Association of Education and Upbringing can also be considered a consenter to comprehensive school reforms (cf. above). By several experts it was deemed to have been “less influential than the Education and Science Workers’ Union and the Association of Philologists but [...] more pleasant, because they weren’t spoiling for a fight” (Jürgen Hinrichs, FDP politician). It represented mostly teachers of the *Hauptschule*, who struggled for an upgrading of their school’s curricula and status, and for equal treatment between the different groups of teachers. To a certain degree, the Association of Education and Upbringing supported a “convergence of school types”, as its member and the NRW Minister of Education before 1970, Fritz Holthoff, formulated it and in particular a convergence of the *Hauptschule* and *Realschule* (Holthoff, 1975, p. 16; cf. above). At the same time, the Association of Education and Upbringing was skeptical of the socialist political goals of many representatives of the

comprehensive school movement. As Uwe Franke, long-term member and former NRW chairman of the Association of Education and Upbringing, explained in the expert interview:

“I think that [...] the term ‘comprehensive school’ was sociopolitically overburdened in the early 1970s. There were too many very different opinions about what the comprehensive school was. At least in this class struggle which was declared by big intellectual groups in the 60s and 70s, it was used also as a term which made conservatives and moderates think: this is a school of ‘reeducation’. It turned away from its original idea of the comprehensive school [*Einheitsschule*] of the 1920s or the American High School and Secondary School [...]. And through its supporters, especially in the Hessen area but also in the Bremen area and in Berlin and Hamburg to my knowledge, it turned into a school of a sociopolitical counter-concept. [...]

*Interviewer: You already told me on the phone that the Association of Education and Upbringing was somewhat split back then.*

Yes. There were... For example, Albert Balduin [chairman of the NRW chapter of the Association at the time] was a supporter of the comprehensive school as a common school for everyone. [...] The big answer from the Association of Philologists and strong social groups was: the *Gymnasium* is the guarantee for a holistic, humanist education. And if that no longer happens, the Christian occident [...] will perish. [...] So there are very different interests regarding the comprehensive school. And with its political supporters and in part its scientific supporters, like Friedeburg, Hessen and others, it just overshot the social consensus. And was an easy target to be discredited.”

In this conflict, the Association of Education and Upbringing had to balance its positions carefully. Since it had its roots in the Protestant and especially the Catholic teachers’ associations, it had traditionally had a close link to the CDU and the churches. Over time, it slowly emancipated itself, as the merger in 1970, which was opposed by the Catholic Church, shows. In the early 1970s, the Association lost quite a few, mostly Catholic members, many of whom claimed that they were no longer in agreement with the basic views of the Association in education politics and that they disagreed with the merger in principle (Bongard, 2012, pp. 11f). At the same time, a number of more conservative social democrats left the Education and Science Workers’ Union and joined the Association of Education and Upbringing, especially during the second half of the 1970s. As a result, the Association was detached “from this pre-political area of haze of one party and its social environment”, namely the CDU, and now stood “on its own feet” (Uwe Franke, former chairman of the Association and leftwing CDU member, in the expert interview). Nevertheless, many of the CDU’s municipal politicians and some CDU parliamentary representatives were still members of the Association of Education and Upbringing during the 1970s. As the CDU politician Wilhelm Lenz pointed out in the expert interview, the Association of Education and

Upbringing in a way played a similar role for the CDU as the Education and Science Workers' Union played for the SPD – namely the role of a somewhat irritating nagger (cf. quote above, p. 195). In the conflicts over comprehensive schooling, the Association did attempt to influence the CDU – and the other parties – to support careful reforms, for example through the publication of many pedagogical texts. However, it never took as firm a stand as the pronounced comprehensive school protagonists and did not consider itself a part of the radical comprehensive school movement.

#### 5.4.4 Ideology of German consenters – the cooperative school

In the second half of the 1970s, the term “cooperative school” came to the foreground, also within the FDP. According to the former FDP politician Wolfgang Heinz, this term was “on the one hand a tactical approach of the reform critics and opponents and, on the other hand, the attempt to preserve the three-pillared system in some way in school centers and stabilize it”. The coalition agreement of 1975 stated that in school centers, the comprehensive orientation stage and the three parallel school types would be combined into a cooperative school with cooperative school management (Blumenthal, 1988, p. 16). The former FDP politician, Jürgen Hinrichs, remembered this in the following way in the expert interview:

“But it was the case that in 1975, when we [discussed] the cooperative school for the first time in the federal state board [of the FDP]... when we dealt with it... the FDP has long thought that it could prevent the comprehensive school in this way. I don't know, did Wolfgang Heinz tell you anything about this?”

*Interviewer: Please go ahead and tell me how you... so the FDP thought so?*

The FDP thought so.

*Interviewer: So it was somehow the lesser evil or...?*

That's right. Yes. I can still remember, the cooperative school was in the coalition agreement.

*Interviewer: Yes, yes.*

Well. This is how I remember it. Then we dealt with the cooperative school in the federal state board of the FDP – I was member of the federal state board as party district chairman – and I was still somewhat skeptical in the federal state board. And then they told me in the federal state board, don't get upset, as principal of the cooperative school one always takes a *Gymnasium* man. So I said, well ok, in that case the Association of Philologists will also be reassured and then I could agree to this, too. I was still influenced by the thinking of the Association of Philologists then.”

It is remarkable that even Hinrichs, who later became one of the most dedicated supporters of the cooperative school within the FDP, had such doubts to begin with. In the expert interview,

he explained that especially the usefulness of the cooperative school for less populated areas of the federal state – like his own municipality in eastern Westphalia – persuaded him. Moreover, since the cooperative school was part of the government’s program, he considered it his duty as a “loyal party soldier” to defend it.

In the first parliamentary debate on the law proposal for the introduction of the cooperative school, Hinrichs argued for it by pointing out that it would reduce costs and ensure the educational supply in rural areas at a time of declining birth rates (*Landtag NRW, November 25, 1976, p. 1819*). Like many of the SPD’s speakers, he also criticized the CDU for the inconsistency of its school politics. The perceived opportunism of the CDU remained an important – and, as it seems, rather ineffectual – argument through the debate. Hinrichs’ fellow party member Heinz, on the other hand, used a considerable amount of his speaking time to criticize the social democratic Minister of Education Girgensohn for having claimed earlier in the debate that the cooperative school should be a first step towards the comprehensive school. Such a “personal statement of faith” was not backed by the liberal parliamentary group and the coalition agreement, Heinz argued (*Landtag NRW, November 25, 1976, p. 1831*). Even though Heinz was a supporter of comprehensive schooling, it seems again that he had to speak for the skeptics in his parliamentary group, who disliked Girgensohn’s open-hearted support of the comprehensive school.

Not all leading FDP representatives shared Hinrichs’s sentiment of loyalty regarding the government’s school politics. From the outset of the public debate about the cooperative school during the winter of 1976, there was a sizable amount of internal criticism and disagreement. Many formerly rather uninterested economic liberals had had a rude awakening resulting from the growing opposition from conservative parental groups and the Association of Philologists (cf. below). They now gave voice to their concerns. On January 21, 1977, the NRW FDP’s chairman and NRW Minister for Economic Affairs, Horst-Ludwig Riemer, proposed a motion at a meeting of the FDP’s parliamentary group which was entitled “Reservations against the Cooperative School”. Riemer was an economic liberal. He expressed worries which were shared by leading national FDP politicians, such as Hans-Dietrich Genscher, that NRW was about to “turn into a second Hessen” (Blumenthal, 1988, p. 70). Many critical and supportive letters to the FDP’s office in Düsseldorf during the first weeks of 1977 document the massive split within the party over the issue (Blumenthal, 1988, p. 70).

On February 4, 1977, Riemer gave a press interview in which he openly criticized his own parliamentary group for isolating itself from the party as a whole. Immediately, the parliamentary group gathered for an emergency meeting. Riemer did not take part due to illness but managed to temporarily calm down his upset colleagues by assuring them in writing that he would go along with their decision to support the cooperative school (Blumenthal, 1988, p. 71). On February 10, 1977, the FDP parliamentary group met with the

FDP federal state board in order to discuss the issue. Blumenthal (1988, p. 69ff) has studied internal documents of the FDP in detail and refers to an internal discussion paper written by the skeptics on the federal state board. Here, they criticized various tactical mistakes, such as an underestimation of the opposition by parents and the CDU, unnecessary time pressures and insufficient preparation and discussion of the law proposal within the FDP. They also disagreed in principle with the reformers in the parliamentary group, for example with regard to the school type-independent, comprehensive orientation stage, which they only wanted to experiment with, instead of implementing it straightaway. At the meeting, the internal party opponents did not come to any real agreement. It was only decided that the further treatment of the law proposal should not be subject to time pressure and that one would aim at a thorough debate and explanation of the law proposal within one's own ranks and the population as a whole (Blumenthal, 1988, pp. 72ff).

In the following months, the internal split of the FDP was deepened. For example, the chairmen of the FDP chapters of Düsseldorf and Cologne publicly opposed the reform in press interviews (Blumenthal, 1988, p. 75). In the words of the former FDP politician Jürgen Hinrichs, especially the FDP chapter in Düsseldorf represented a “big mafia against the cooperative school”. At the FDP's NRW party conference in late April 1977, and at a meeting of the FDP federal state committee (*Landeshauptausschuss*) on June 4, 1977, the Düsseldorf district president, Achim Rohde,<sup>11</sup> was one of the most outspoken critics and prepared motions which aimed at averting the passing of the law. The meeting in June was crucial, since a final decision had to be taken: would the FDP support the law proposal or not? The chairman, Riemer, had now eventually decided that there was “no way back”, even though he was still worried about the forthcoming referendum and potential negative effects on the elections of 1980 (quoted in Blumenthal, 1988, p. 87). Presumably, he had understood that he could not go against the wishes of the majority of his parliamentary group. In the end, a decision was made to support the law proposal but against the opposition of a sizable number of critics (Blumenthal, 1988, pp. 86ff).

In the second parliamentary debate on the law proposal, the liberal speakers continued to support the reform and ignored the split in their own party (*Landtag NRW, June 29, 1977; Landtag NRW, October 26, 1977*). The young representative, Silke Gerigk-Groht, who with Heinz and Hinrichs was responsible for education politics within the FDP parliamentary group and, like them, represented the social liberal current, attacked the CDU most pointedly:

“During the discussions, the demand for ‘rest on the school front’ has come up again and again. And those who want rest on the school front create regression and then it indeed becomes difficult to realize the postulates of the federal state constitution which still assign us [the duty] to realize the best possible education for everyone. [...]”

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<sup>11</sup> From 1985, Rohde became a leading figure in the NRW parliament which moved the NRW FDP considerably to the right. He was a representative of the economic and national liberal current.

I find it particularly regretful that the *Hauptschule* student is always used throughout this discussion; one couldn't expect him to learn with other students. [...] One simply suspects that what is playing a role here is instead the motive that the other students can't be expected to learn with *Hauptschule* students. [...] Here there are people, who are defending a certain position. [...] I'd like to know what is more important, the protection of some people, who have succeeded, or the realization of the federal state constitution and its principles!" (*Landtag NRW, June 29, 1977, pp. 2926f*)

In the last debate before the law was finally passed, the chairman of the FDP parliamentary group, Hans Koch, underlined that the FDP had not been a "pushover" and had never considered abandoning the law proposal (*Landtag NRW, October 26, 1977, p. 3257*). This statement might have been true of the parliamentary group but certainly not of the party as a whole. Koch also criticized the Catholic bishops of NRW for interfering in the debate with an episcopal letter which, in his view, claimed impartiality but in fact coincided with CDU remarks and contained "a total of 20 factual errors" (*Landtag NRW, October 26, 1977, p. 3278*). He regretted that "the money of the CDU and the 'non-blessing' [or 'bane'] of the ministerial church [were coming together] against the educational-political initiatives of the SPD/FDP coalition" as they had before (a reference to the debate about denominational schooling in the 1960s) (*Landtag NRW, October 26, 1977, p. 3278*; cf. section 6.1.2). He also declared:

"The *Gymnasium* has received its greatest importance in the history of the federal state during the last two legislative periods and we want to preserve the *Gymnasium's* educational supply with this law proposal. Those who accuse us of wanting to smash the *Gymnasium* are disabused of this notion by these facts or disqualify themselves as intentional propagandists." (*Landtag NRW, October 26, 1977, p. 3260*)

In a special issue of the NRW FDP's newspaper, *Forum liberal*, of February 1978, it was emphasized that one was not attempting to abolish the *Gymnasium* and it was even stated that "the FDP and SPD support a pillared school system" (F.D.P. Landesverband NRW/Wolfgang-Döring-Stiftung, 1978, p. 2). The former FDP politician Jürgen Hinrichs nevertheless regretted in the expert interview that one had not managed to get the message across sufficiently and thought that one should have emphasized even more clearly that the *Gymnasium* was not threatened. The former FDP politician and Minister of the Interior in NRW from 1975 to 1980, Burkhard Hirsch, also said in a telephone interview that it had not been the aim of the law to abolish the *Gymnasium* and that the opposition to the cooperative school had therefore been completely unnecessary in his view.

Overall, one can say that the FDP's positioning during this debate was not always clear. One can find quotes by FDP politicians, who pointedly attack conservative reactions to social liberal school reforms and who argue in various ways for comprehensive and cooperative

schooling. One can also find many quotes containing qualifications, skepticism and very cautious interpretations of what could have been far-reaching political goals. Of course, the FDP parliamentary group did ultimately vote for the introduction of the cooperative school. During the campaign for the referendum, people like Heinz and Hinrichs traveled all around NRW to take part in debates about the law and often had to suffer massive criticism and attacks. The FDP also published some information about the law, though not very much compared to the huge efforts of opponents (cf. Blumentahl, 1988, pp. 94ff, pp. 337ff). However, FDP chapters in various municipalities of NRW remained skeptical towards the law throughout. Some FDP representatives, like the speakers of the FDP chapter in Düsseldorf, continued to voice their opposition publicly. The then Federal President Walter Scheel, a FDP politician originally from NRW, even announced that he would take part in the referendum against the law (Blumenthal, 1988, pp. 346f). There is no doubt that “the reform momentum which was characteristic of the second half of the sixties and the early seventies for the SPD and FDP alike was strongly diminished, if not evaporated” in the FDP at this point, as Wolfgang Heinz put it in the expert interview. After the referendum, the NRW FDP appointed a commission which was tasked with taking stock of the FDP’s education politics. In the commission’s report, the contradictory positions become apparent in so far as the document contains references to the radical Stuttgart Guidelines of 1972 and clear affirmations of the pillared school structure. Apparently, there was not even consensus regarding whether the integrated comprehensive school should finally become a regular school form (F.D.P. Landesverband NRW, 1979, p. 28, pp. 51f). The internal oppositions of the FDP presumably contributed to its electoral losses in the elections of 1980, when it fell below the five-percent hurdle and dropped out of parliament for the next five years.

For the Association of Education and Upbringing, the conflict over the cooperative school was also a challenge to its internal unity. Its leading members opposed the referendum and had nothing against the reform, but as the former chairman of the Association, Uwe Franke, explained, they could hardly bind their members to this position:

“We had the great idea; we organize completely different events during this time, to bind our colleagues to primary school events, *Hauptschule* events and so forth. We just create antipoles. Not just paralysis but we emphasize other things, so that our association would not break apart. You have to see that, too. [Our association was] latently Catholic, [had a] CDU background, [which was] still strong in municipal politics, especially among principals. On the other hand [we wanted] to do everything with the social democratic government, so that the *Hauptschule* was developed.”

Franke also emphasized that the high turnout for the referendum was an expression of general uneasiness resulting from far-reaching social changes, not only in the school system. The student movement of the late 1960s, equality of (legal) treatment for women, a loss of power of the churches – these were all examples named by Franke which unsettled many members

of his organization too: “There was a great social struggle where a great deal was lumped together which very much constituted a test of the internal unity of our association.” As with the conflicts over comprehensive schooling, the Association of Education and Upbringing therefore attempted to stay out of the conflict.

#### 5.4.5 Ideology of German antagonists – the integrated comprehensive school

The most important antagonists of comprehensive school reforms in Germany and NRW were the CDU and, of the teachers’ associations, the Association of Philologists. In addition, several smaller conservative teachers’ organizations, parental organizations and the Catholic Church became active, especially in the conflict over the cooperative school (cf. below). In the following, it is shown how the CDU and philologists justified their support for the pillared school system and their opposition to comprehensive education. Furthermore, an important insight is that there was a short time window from about 1970 to 1972, during which the antagonism of the CDU was less pronounced and it supported more far-reaching comprehensive school reforms.

First, a remark about the general class character of the CDU as a party is in order. In this thesis, it is claimed that debates about comprehensive education were largely an expression of the class cleavage. However, many CDU representatives at the time and presumably today would probably not agree with this. This is related to the fact that the CDU never defined itself as a “class party”. In fact, in its Düsseldorf Declaration of 1965, the CDU declared that it had “overcome the classes in the Federal Republic”, that it was not bearing any “dusty ideologies along” with it and that it was “the party of cooperation and reconciliation”. Also in later programs, this harmonious self-definition of the party was underlined. In its principle program of 1978, entitled “Freedom, Solidarity, Justice”, the party emphasized that the “time of class struggles [...] is over”. In its program for the national elections of 1980, it stated:

“The union of the CDU and the CSU [the CDU’s Bavarian sister party] has achieved the overcoming of oppositions which through centuries of German history had split the denominations, the religions and the social groups. [...] In the social market economy which we have secured for our country [...], everybody has his place: employees and businessmen, craftsmen and the self-employed, tradespeople, farmers and public employees. It is inherent to socialism, as an ideology of envy, to antagonize groups, to dig trenches, to create and foster oppositions. We on the other hand are convinced that only the cooperation of many individuals will serve the welfare of the whole.”

It is important to keep in mind that the CDU represented – and still represents – all the different groups of the population mentioned above and that these groups had different educational traditions. For example, the children of farmers, craftsmen or other middle and lower middle class self-employed people often attended the *Hauptschule*, or possibly the *Realschule*, but not as often the *Gymnasium*. These people were not necessarily interested in a



*Gymnasium* education for their children either, for example if the plan was for the children to take over the parental business. Often, it was sufficient for them for their children to receive a better education than they had themselves. On the other hand, the CDU also represented upper class groups, such as businessmen or well-educated public employees, for whom the *Gymnasium* was a bastion to be defended. Uwe Franke, CDU member since 1962, pointed out in the expert interview that this upper class current was strengthened further during the early 1970s, when several former national liberal FDP politicians joined the CDU.

The CDU therefore had to make sure that its arguments regarding education would convince all of these groups. The overall mantra became that the school system should cater to everyone's needs by offering different educational paths to different people, in a way that should serve everyone equally well. More precisely, the CDU combined several main arguments for the pillared structure: on the one hand, CDU politicians often referred to the "occupational structure" which necessitated differentiated education to prepare children for different positions in society. This was as close as the CDU came to acknowledging the different class character of the school types but, of course, without using the term class. In this context, CDU politicians liked to emphasize that while all children, their educational paths and their later occupations were, of course, "worth the same", one needed to respect that people were different. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it was still acceptable for German conservatives to say openly that different status groups or classes needed different educations and that the lower classes should not learn too much so that they would not become dissatisfied with their position. The 20<sup>th</sup> century version of this argument was the reference to the occupational structure. However, the 1960s' new interest in equality of opportunity affected the rhetoric and, to a certain degree, the convictions of CDU representatives. The second main justification was thus that abilities, not social background, should decide which school type a child would attend and that permeability between the school types should be ensured so that "late comers" among children would have the chance to correct their path at a later point. It was claimed that abilities could usually be determined at an early age and that most children were either practically endowed, practically-theoretically endowed or theoretically endowed – a "structure of endowment" that conveniently corresponded with the three-pillared education system.

The CDU never acknowledged openly that upper and middle class children especially profit from the pillared structure of the school system but claimed, quite to the contrary, that *Hauptschule* students particularly needed special support which they could only get in a good *Hauptschule*. In fact, the CDU often portrayed itself as the only party which really cared about the *Hauptschule* (cf. below). At the same time, it was the standard-bearer of academic standards in the *Gymnasium* and of an elitist line of thought claiming that high-achievers needed most support in order to be prepared for the most responsible positions in society. With regard to the integrated comprehensive school, the CDU most often stuck to the strategic

argument that such a school type could not be introduced as long as “thorough experiments” had not been finished. It also attacked the integrated comprehensive schools for their large size, lower academic standards and for their tendency to produce conflict and social tension. Finally, CDU politicians referred throughout the debate to parents’ freedom to decide which education was best for their children. This argument was presumably especially useful because it could convince lower middle class and upper class parents alike. Neither group wanted the state to interfere too much in the upbringing of their children, potentially with detrimental effects on their children’s life chances. The regular use of the term “socialist comprehensive school” (*sozialistische Einheitsschule*) added to this fear (cf. section 6.4).

In the programs of the CDU during the period examined, these basic arguments come up repeatedly. However, the dynamics in the general education debate also come to expression in the different wordings of the programs over time. In November 1964, the CDU organized a culture-political congress in Hamburg, at which new political guidelines for “education in the modern world” were passed. Here, the CDU stated, “the German education system must be shaped so that everyone, who is ready and capable, is offered his chance”. It supported the increased “permeability” of the school system through the introduction of new, preparatory forms of the *Gymnasium* and *Realschule* [*Aufbauschulen*] which should aim at recruiting able students from the people’s school. “In our education system, there must be no ‘one-way streets’”, the guidelines said explicitly. In NRW, the young CDU politician, Paul Mikat, Minister of Education in the last CDU-led government from 1962 to 1966, took these remarks seriously. Under his leadership, the educational expansion in NRW began, for example with the introduction of preparatory forms of the *Realschule* and *Gymnasium* for people’s school graduates, with the expansion of *Realschule* and *Gymnasium* especially in the countryside, or with the introduction of alternative upper secondary paths to college education (Düding, 2008, pp. 488ff; Fälzer, 1984, p. 101f). The former CDU politician, Wilhelm Lenz, described Mikat as a “highlight” of the NRW CDU in the expert interview and mentioned that Mikat “would have been willing to do more” if the Minister of Finance had not continuously restrained him. In other words, the early educational expansion was not without support from the CDU, or at least from some of its representatives. Nevertheless, the political guidelines of 1964 also emphasized that the nine-year *Gymnasium* should remain the rule because a shortening of the *Gymnasium* would endanger academic standards. A comprehensive school (termed *Einheitsschule*) was considered unsuitable for the aim of supporting all talents in the population. The paper also opposed an obligatory orientation stage in grades five and six.

In its Deidesheimer Guidelines of 1969 (*Deidesheimer Leitsätze*), the CDU again outlined its education-political program. Education was now termed a “basic right”. “Equality of opportunity in the access to educational institutions” was considered “a condition for a democratic social order, in which achievement decides over the social standing of the individual”. The program demanded a “tracked achievement school” (*gegliederte*

*Leistungsschule*) with “differentiated, permeable” educational paths, namely, on the secondary level, the five-year *Hauptschule*, the six-year *Realschule* and the nine or eight-year *Gymnasium*. The tracked structure was justified both with differing “abilities and inclinations of the individual” and with the “varied educational requirements of society”. The program furthermore suggested that curricula in grades five and six should be adjusted to each other so it would be possible to correct the choice of educational path during that time. In other words, the CDU now supported a weakened version of the orientation stage favored by the SPD and FDP. The program also supported the introduction of ten years of obligatory schooling “in the medium term”.

From 1970 until 1972, the CDU published a range of comparatively reform-oriented documents regarding education. In 1970, the NRW CDU published its program for the federal state elections. Here, the NRW CDU demanded a “sensible integration of all educational institutions” and that principles of “permeability and differentiation” should be equally ranked. It also demanded ten years of obligatory education and teacher training oriented towards levels of schooling rather than school types. However, as the program also stated, “intellectually gifted [students] need to be particularly supported”. Furthermore, the program emphasized that “objectively equal educational chances” should become “subjectively” accessible and that better educational counselling was necessary. In 1971, the national CDU published a new program for schooling and university education (*Schul- und Hochschulreformprogramm der CDU*) and in 1972, CDU politicians, including several Ministers of Education, published a paper entitled “Education Politics on Clear Paths – a Program of CDU/CSU Priorities”. In the 1971 program, the CDU demanded the introduction of organizational differentiation within all school types and a reform of curricula so all schools would teach “common core obligatory subjects” and permeability would be increased. The *numerus clausus* which restricted access to universities was termed “the main nuisance in education politics” – a remarkable position for the CDU. The 1971 program even stated that “the new secondary level overcomes the three-pillared structure through a clearly arranged, permeable combination of schools [*Schulverbund*].”

The documents from 1971 and 1972 also supported a reform of teacher training oriented towards levels of schooling rather than school types and the introduction of an orientation stage in grades five and six. As the paper from 1972 explained: “The orientation stage consists of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> school year. It makes up a pedagogical unit. Organizationally, it can both be assigned to the various school types (*Hauptschule*, *Realschule* or *Gymnasium*) or be independent of school type.”

In NRW, the CDU parliamentary group prepared a motion in 1971 which suggested experiments with “cooperative comprehensive schools”; this was meant as a more strictly tracked alternative to the integrated comprehensive school but it was emphasized that this school type should be “more than an additive combination of the *Hauptschule*, *Realschule* and

*Gymnasium*”, that it should have a shared headship and enable students to switch between the tracks if necessary (*Landtag NRW, November 15, 1971*). In 1973, the CDU representative, Karl Nagel, even suggested a general introduction of such cooperative comprehensive schools (cf. below).

In the expert interview, the former CDU politician, Wilhelm Lenz, was asked whether the reform spirit had to a certain degree affected the CDU in NRW in the early 1970s. He replied:

“Yes. The reason for that was that the old generation of parliamentary representatives was gone. The successors were young people. People [...] who had nothing to do with the Weimar time or Nazi [time] or suchlike. They were more open to such thoughts. And to some extent there was also the opinion; we must not eternally keep saying “no” in questions of schooling.”

The CDU’s cautious willingness for reform was thus due to strategic reasons and to the personal conviction of a few individual reform-oriented education politicians within it. By 1975, however, there was not much left of this willingness for reform. The CDU’s program for the NRW elections in 1975 stated:

“As long as scientifically evaluated school experiments do not necessitate a different judgment, a school structured into school types and permeable across levels of schooling does best justice to inclinations and abilities; it corresponds with different structures of endowment. This school imparts fairness of opportunity and offers parents and students possibilities and decision-making support when choosing the right educational path. Thus, a CDU federal state government will develop the *Hauptschule*, *Realschule* and *Gymnasium* as equally valuable schools with a varied educational supply, with qualified, equally valuable leaving certificates, in an organizational form adapted to the regional and social structure of an area, in manageable sizes.”

The CDU had now replaced the term “equality of opportunity” (*Chancengleichheit*) with the term “fairness of opportunity” (*Chancengerechtigkeit*). This was a conscious attempt to underline that inequality in itself was not a problem, as long as everybody received a fair chance and a suitable, but not equal, education. The party had also given up its previous support for ten years of obligatory schooling and had gone back to the position that nine years of obligatory schooling were enough. The universities’ *numerus clausus* was no longer considered a problem; on the contrary, it was asserted that selection based on achievement was necessary. Experiments with integrated comprehensive schools, it was stated, would only be supported by the CDU if “they are necessary to develop new pedagogical and school-organizational insights, if they are continuously scientifically controlled, [...] and if alternatives are provided in a reasonable way”. A comprehensive orientation stage was now definitely rejected and it was instead suggested that curricula in grades five and six should be

coordinated across school types. The program of 1975 declared furthermore that the “neglected *Hauptschule*” would be developed into an “attractive alternative to the *Realschule* and *Gymnasium*”. At this point, it had become obvious that the *Hauptschule* was losing more and more students because of educational expansion and that it was turning into a social “rest school” – a development for which the CDU held the federal state government of NRW responsible.

Uwe Franke, representative of the Association of Education and Upbringing and thus a representative of the *Hauptschule* teachers, and leftwing CDU member, remarked about his party:

“The CDU really believed this for a long time because its providers of meaning of the Adenauer Foundation or the Görres Society [...] and others kept telling them about it, hammering home the theories of endowment, with the practically endowed, the theoretically endowed and the practically-theoretically endowed. It’s music to one’s ears if you can work with it in social politics, in politics of the interior and of education at the same time. One wouldn’t question it. So some of the statements, and I must also presume this with regard to the members of the Association of Education and Upbringing within the CDU, [...] that they really meant the *Hauptschule* must be strengthened. But what they offered to strengthen the *Hauptschule* [...] they never really fulfilled it stringently. Instead, strengthening the *Hauptschule* in fact always meant the possibility in the background; we need the *Hauptschule* so that the *Gymnasium* can continue to develop. This is above all the main motive of the past 20, 25 years. We need a system of juridical downschooling [*Abschulung*, meaning that students, for example at the *Gymnasium*, could be downgraded to lower school types].”

Franke is correct in pointing out that the possibility of “downschooling” students in the pillared system was and still is an important element in conservative thinking about schooling. Without the *Hauptschule* as the lowest school type which is compelled to accept all students, there can be no “higher” schooling for the supposedly “practically-theoretically endowed” in the *Realschule* and especially for the “theoretically-endowed” in the *Gymnasium*. Within a truly comprehensive school, “downschooling” is impossible and those deemed “unfit for theoretical work” cannot be excluded. From a conservative point of view, this was a problem.

Furthermore, the reference to biologically determined ability or endowment structures concealed the underlying class differences. In fact, the culture-political program of the CDU from 1976 asserted explicitly: “The *Gymnasium* of today is no longer a stratum-specific school; it is accessible for students from all strata who can meet the demands of an increasingly higher level of abstraction.” While this was to a certain extent true – educational expansion had indeed opened the *Gymnasium* to increasing numbers of working class and

middle class children – social background still played a decisive role. CDU politicians were aware of this but did not consider it a big problem. On the contrary, in many cases they adhered to an elitist ideology, according to which it was necessary to prepare high-achievers for elite positions from an early age. In the expert interview, the CDU politician Wilhelm Lenz stated:

“I thought this was all nonsense. This idea that one needs to keep the children together longer so that the children from the working strata, from the strata who are strangers to education, will be carried along by the better ones. So we keep them together longer. I never thought anything of that because we need young people in Germany [...] who are capable, who are first class. We don’t need windbags, we’ve got enough of those, we don’t need average. [...] I think that one should support the high-achievers primarily. And then the mass of the children remains [...] who are in the *Hauptschule*. So we must support the *Hauptschule* primarily.”

Furthermore, Lenz explained:

“I always opposed this orientation stage [...] because... The SPD says, [...], we are all one family. We get up at 6 in the morning, at 8:30 we meet to march to work, from the cradle to the grave. I don’t want that. I don’t want to stick the people together who will have leading positions later as grown-ups with students who don’t enjoy school. You cannot make these [students] change. If the parental home doesn’t encourage the children to go to school, to do their school work, to aim at goals, it is useless. That was my innermost conviction. No. We don’t need this orientation stage.”

Lenz also mentioned that there were internal CDU debates about the standing of the *Hauptschule*. Some of his fellow party members, like the parliamentary representative, Peter Giesen, cared more about the *Hauptschule* than others did and convinced Lenz to support their struggle for better financing of this school type and better salaries for its teachers. This was in a way an inner-party class compromise which kept representatives of the typical *Hauptschule* clientele in line while giving *Gymnasium* supporters a convenient justification for the pillared school structure. As long as all school types were valued and sufficiently financed and permeability between them was ensured, a united CDU saw no need for further reform. A nice example is a remark made by the CDU representative and *Hauptschule* teacher, Albert Pürsten, in the NRW parliament where he mentioned that two of his daughters had attended the *Hauptschule* but had attained the school-leaving certificate of the *Realschule* [the *Mittlere Reife*]. To him, this was proof that comprehensive school reforms were simply not necessary because permeability of the school system had already been achieved (*Landtag NRW, July 11, 1974, p. 4461*). However, this inner-party compromise served the *Gymnasium* supporters much better than the *Hauptschule* supporters, who in the following decades witnessed the continuing decline of this school type. Wilhelm Lenz stated in the expert

interview that he thought today that the *Hauptschule* was a failed school type and that he had been wrong in opposing the combination of *Hauptschule* and *Realschule* into one, as suggested by the Association of Education and Upbringing. At the time, he had supported a separate *Realschule*, again because he thought that high-achievers should be separated from the mass of the students in the *Hauptschule*. Finally, it should also be remarked that what the CDU suggested in order to “strengthen” the *Hauptschule* was actually a reduction in educational demands in this school type. *Hauptschule* students, it was claimed, were not capable of fulfilling “excessive demands of abstraction” and should instead receive a more practical – but of course “equally valuable” – education (*Landtag NRW, May 5, 1976*, cf. footnote 12 below). The fact that “a certain social destiny inevitably leads to the *Hauptschule* and to a particular occupational [...] world”, as the young FDP representative Silke Geringk-Groht put in in a debate on the CDU’s suggestions for the *Hauptschule*, was continuously ignored in the publications of the CDU about this topic (*Landtag NRW, May 3, 1979, p. 7056*). This is unsurprising – acknowledging this would have meant saying openly that the lower classes were incapable of “abstraction” and should receive only practical education. This remained the implicit meaning of CDU politics for the *Hauptschule*.

In its programs from 1976 onwards, the CDU increased its criticism of the integrated comprehensive schools and continuously refused to turn them into a regular school type. The comprehensive schools were termed “mass schools” which had a “leveling” effect, while producing “increased social tensions” due to the “great differences in ability, interests and achievements” – one could also say: social background – of its students (Program of the CDU NRW for the elections of 1980). Furthermore, the CDU NRW re-used the reference to parental rights and to anti-communist feelings in the program for the elections of 1980:

“Parents are only seemingly involved in the decision-making about the educational path of their children. In reality, the school is given too much power over young people’s life courses. The SPD wants to achieve a basic change in the order of society with the general introduction of the comprehensive school with blanket coverage. This political concept to assert an ideologically constricted idea of man is cloaked in external advantages (generous school buildings, increased use of teachers, higher financial support, all-day schooling). This is supposed to manipulate parents’ will. An introduction of the comprehensive school as a regular school type would – especially in times of decreasing numbers of students – endanger the current pillared school system.”

Overall, the CDU’s opposition to comprehensive schooling was rather successful. Especially in the second half of the 1970s, the political atmosphere had shifted in the CDU’s favor. The CDU could, however, not prevent the integrated comprehensive school becoming a regular school type in 1981. It remained a popular school choice in NRW, especially among lower and lower middle class groups (cf. Köller, 2008, pp. 459ff).

The Association of Philologists employed many of the same arguments as the CDU with respect to comprehensive schooling. They did not mind so much the early educational expansion, for example through preparatory forms of the *Gymnasium* and *Realschule* [*Aufbauschulen*], even though they did occasionally complain about the deteriorating “quality” of their students. However, as their former representative, Walter Hupperth, claimed in the expert interview; “as long as one left us in peace with our *Gymnasium*, everything was okay”. The comprehensive school was perceived as a much more serious threat, since its most outspoken protagonists openly suggested that the traditional school types should be abolished. For this reason, the philologists struggled against all forms of comprehensive schooling in all ways possible. The orientation stage was perceived as a shortening of the *Gymnasium* by two years and was thus rejected. Like the CDU, the philologists supported a certain degree of “permeability” of school types but emphasized that the early selection of students after the fourth grade was in most cases correct. In NRW, the impressive political influence of the philologists became apparent especially in the conflict over the cooperative school (cf. below).

In 1964, the Association of Philologists published its Göttingen Resolutions, opposing comprehensive schooling with the following:

“The differentiation of modern working life demands a richly structured school system [...]. [...] An increasing differentiation of tasks, [...] and a structure of the school system which corresponds to this differentiation, make the principle of equal rights possible in the first place. A leveling comprehensive school [*nivellierende Einheitsschule*] cannot do justice to the state of society today or in the future. Just as those who are endowed below average need special support, those who are endowed above average are also eligible to be supported as early and as much as possible. Support which starts too late impedes the development of endowments and sentences those who are endowed above average to boredom and thus to the degeneration of their innate possibilities. At the same time, the human development and educational support of the more weakly endowed are impeded [...]. For this reason, a pillared general and vocational school system is indispensable.” (*Göttinger Beschlüsse*, quoted in Fluck, 2003, p. 207)

In the same document, the Association of Philologists supported an educational expansion based on preparatory forms of the *Gymnasium* and *Realschule* [*Aufbauschulen* /*Aufbauklassen*]. It also emphasized parents’ rights to decide about the education of their children. Permeability between the school types was supported to a certain degree but not “at any time point” since this would lead to “a lowering of achievements”. In particular, it was stated:



“The *Gymnasium* needs to stick to the principle of achievement; because for every nation the endowments are its most valuable property. An efficient economy is not for example imaginable without a great number of personalities who are scientifically qualified and qualified in character.” (*Göttinger Beschlüsse*, quoted in Fluck, 2003, pp. 209f)

In other words, the philologists viewed the *Gymnasium* as the school of the future elites and therefore as particularly important. On June 14, 1966, the NRW section of the Association of Philologists organized a large rally in Essen to protest against the new trends in education politics. Fluck (2003, p. 215) claims that there were about four thousand *Gymnasium* teachers present. The chairman of the NRW section, Clemens Christians, argued at the rally that it was wrong to assign the *Gymnasium* the achievement of equality of opportunity. Equality of opportunity could only be achieved through additional support in pre-school, he claimed (quoted in Fluck, 2003, p. 215). Fluck (2003, p. 216) also quotes Vice-Chairwoman Hanna-Renate Laurien who later became Minister of Education in the Rhineland-Palatinate for the CDU. She said:

“The modern society is democratically structured and structured by achievement. In it, everyone shall receive their optimal chance, in it, citizens’ rights are in principle equal but it is not for this reason a society of people with equal status. What holds true in general for society must also hold true in the pedagogical area: special achievements, special requirements must be valued; egalitarian, leveling conceptions are not democratic – as they are sometimes presented – but are ideologies.”

Laurien’s quote is a nice example of a rhetorical strategy often applied to dismiss one’s opponents’ points of view as “ideological”, while portraying one’s own ideology as “democratic” and legitimate. It also shows that the ideology of the philologists was similar to that of many CDU politicians’ in that they agreed that the school system could and should not even out all inequalities. As Walter Hupperth, who has long been active in the Association of Philologists, remarked in the expert interview with respect to the main argument of the protagonists of comprehensive schooling:

“It was said, we must straighten out social disadvantage with this. *D’accord*, but it is necessary that when I say [that a student is] capable of studying, he actually is capable of studying [at a university]. And if he doesn’t succeed, I have [...] compassion and I say, if you had come from a proper parental home, you would probably have made it further. But I think it is an illusion to assume that all disadvantages which result from a bad parental home can be made up for so that they will no longer make a difference.”

Walter Hupperth and his former colleague, Hiltrud Meyer-Engelen, also stated in the expert interview that the special role of the *Gymnasium* was to prepare students for university education, develop their exploratory spirit and offer a more abstract, advanced education than

the other school types. The *Gymnasium* should create “critical, thinking people”. At the same time, they emphasized that the teachers of the *Hauptschule* were doing “excellent work” and that they had always found it unfortunate that the school-leaving certificates of the *Hauptschule* or the *Realschule* were not as respected as the *Abitur* exam. *Hauptschule* teachers, like Uwe Franke of the Association of Education and Upbringing, or Ilse Brusis of the Education and Science Workers’ Union, would probably have responded to these remarks with a certain amount of irritation or derision. After all, the Association of Philologists has always opposed equally long training and equally high salaries for all groups of teachers and has continuously underlined the special expertise of the *Gymnasium* teachers and this school type (cf. Fluck, 2003). Like the CDU, the Association of Philologists nevertheless needed to voice support for the *Hauptschule* to legitimize their support for the pillared structure as a whole. In contrast to the CDU, the Association of Philologists did not have to include internal *Hauptschule* supporters so its official statements could focus even more strongly on the special importance of supporting high-achievers and future elites. Presumably for the same reason, the CDU was not always perceived as a stable ally by the Association of Philologists. Especially in the early 1970s, the CDU was “very unsettled and split into different education-political directions”, the philologists’ representative, Fluck (2003, p. 228), claims and could not be depended upon. The Association of Philologists had no such periods of insecurity but was constantly strongly antagonistic to comprehensive school reforms.

#### 5.4.6 Ideology of German antagonists – the cooperative school

In the debates about the cooperative school from 1975 onwards, SPD and FDP politicians quoted the reform-oriented CDU texts from 1970 to 1973 repeatedly (cf. above). Especially the motion the NRW CDU had prepared in 1971, in which it had suggested experiments with “cooperative comprehensive schools”, received much attention (*Landtag NRW, November 15, 1971*). In 1973, the CDU representative Karl Nagel, a *Hauptschule* teacher, had even suggested in the parliamentary education committee that the cooperative comprehensive school, as designed by the CDU, could be introduced on a general basis and with blanket coverage from August 1, 1974, without any further experiments. He explicitly stated that while the school experiments with integrated comprehensive schools only encompassed a small percentage of students, the CDU proposal of 1971 had been intended to “initiate a reform of the entire lower secondary level [grades five to ten]” (*Landtag NRW, September 13, 1973, p. 9*). This is quite remarkable, for if SPD and FDP would have gone along with this suggestion, the *Gymnasium* would in fact have been abolished as a separate school type.

The SPD’s education politicians, however, favored the more far-reaching integrated comprehensive school. They considered the CDU proposal a continuation of the traditional school system with “the fig leaf of so-called cooperation”, especially since the CDU proposal envisaged a differentiated, not an integrated, orientation stage (Heinz Schwier, SPD representative, in the meeting of the parliamentary education committee, *Landtag NRW*,

September 13, 1973, p. 11). As discussed above, it was only after the elections of 1975 that they chose to suggest the introduction of a “cooperative school”. This must have seemed like a realizable compromise. In the law proposal, they chose words very similar to the ones the CDU had written in its motion in 1971 (cf. *Landtag NRW, November 15, 1971, November 9, 1976, November 25, 1976*).

Remarks by CDU politicians during the parliamentary education committee’s meeting in September 1973, and in the debates of 1976 and 1977, indicate that their short-term support for cooperative schooling had been motivated by several worries. When the CDU motion for cooperative comprehensive schools was debated in the parliamentary education committee on September 13, 1973, the crisis of the *Hauptschule* was also discussed. This crisis was generally attributed to the steadily growing percentage of students who attended the *Realschule* and especially the *Gymnasium*. A speaker of the Ministry of Education remarked, “with respect to the question whether the cooperative school could reduce the run on the *Gymnasium*”, one needed to take into account that parents had the constitutional right to choose the school type for their children (*Landtag NRW, September 13, 1973, p. 11*). CDU representative Nagel responded that it was necessary to channel the “streams of students”, or else one would have to restrict parental rights of choice or introduce additional admission exams at the universities at some point (*Landtag NRW, September 13, 1973, p. 12*). In other words, at least one motivation of the CDU architects of the cooperative comprehensive school concept of 1971 seems to have been to re-channel a greater number of students back to the *Hauptschule* school type (or – in this concept – track) and away from the prestigious *Abitur* exam and university entry.

Furthermore, Karl Nagel and other CDU representatives claimed in the first parliamentary debate on the cooperative school in November 1976 that the CDU’s model of the cooperative comprehensive school had been completely different from the SPD-FDP-coalition’s model, because the orientation stage in grades five and six had been connected to the traditional school types and had not been school-form independent. Nagel also said:

“In 1971, we wanted a school experiment with the ‘cooperative comprehensive school’ with an experimental program restricted in number. [...] When you, through the school structure law [*Schulstrukturgesetz*] [...], in practice wanted to introduce the integrated comprehensive school, we would *rather* [emphasis added] have been willing to introduce our model ‘cooperative school’.” (*Landtag NRW, November 25, 1976, p. 1812*)

In other words, Nagel admitted that his suggestion in 1973 to introduce cooperative schools on a general level had been strategically motivated, aiming to prevent a general introduction of integrated comprehensive schools. In the rest of his speech, he remarked that the *Hauptschule* needed to be reformed before it could be included in any kind of cooperative

school and that a reform at this point would only be more detrimental for *Hauptschule* students. The CDU was not “in principle against a cooperative school”, he claimed, but what was really needed was an increased focus on the pedagogical work in the *Hauptschule* which he accused the governing coalition of ignoring completely (*Landtag NRW, November 25, 1976, pp. 1812ff*). It must be assumed that Nagel, as a *Hauptschule* teacher, genuinely cared about this school type.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, the CDU’s focus on the *Hauptschule* still served primarily as a legitimization of the pillared school structure.

Compared to other CDU politicians, Nagel was comparatively open to reforms in the direction of cooperative schooling but this was not the dominating attitude in the CDU at this point. When the law proposal was debated in parliament for the second time in June 1977, this became even more apparent. The leader of the CDU’s parliamentary group, Heinrich Köppler, had now sensed that there was a possibility “to create a furor in the majority of the population” if one opposed all further organizational reforms in principle (Wilhelm Lenz, former CDU politician, in the expert interview). In the debate, Köppler emphasized that “the people in the country finally want some rest”. He criticized the coalition for wanting to have their way, no matter what, and for ignoring the “reactions in the population”. Like several of his party members, he also pointed to the internal split of both the SPD and FDP and mocked *Ministerpräsident* Heinz Kühn and his FDP deputy, Horst-Ludwig Riemer, for carrying out a reform they did not really support. The CDU, he claimed, cared more about “the content of schooling than [about] its organization”. It would stand by the side of students, parents and teachers against this “so-called cooperative school” (*Landtag NRW, June 29, 1977, pp. 2894ff*).

Köppler’s reference to the reaction in the population was not without reason. In the meantime, the Association of Philologists and its close ally, the Parents’ Association of the *Gymnasium* (*Landeselternschaft der Gymnasien in Nordrhein-Westfalen*), had formed a broad coalition against the law proposal, where they were the leading actors. This coalition also comprised the *Realschule* Teachers’ Organization (*Realschullehrerverband*), the Parents’ Association of the *Realschule* (*Verband der Elternschaften Deutscher Realschulen*), the Catholic female teachers’ association and a Catholic parents’ association, the Association for Freedom of Research (*Bund Freiheit der Wissenschaft*) and the parents’ associations *Elternverein Nordrhein-Westfalen*, *Landesschulpflegschaft Nordrhein-Westfalen* and *Arbeitsgemeinschaft*

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<sup>12</sup> In May 1976, the CDU parliamentary group had proposed a motion entitled “Reform of the *Hauptschule*” (*Landtag NRW, May 5, 1976, Drucksache 8/965*). Here, it had asked for a reduction in educational demands in the *Hauptschule* and stated that it was “unpedagogical and inhumane” to confront *Hauptschule* students with “excessive demands of abstraction”. After several years of debate within the parliamentary education committee, this motion actually led to a compromise between the three parliamentary groups. A common motion for the strengthening of the *Hauptschule* was passed. However, this catalogue of 15 points did not include the CDU’s demand to reduce educational demands in the *Hauptschule* but focused on additional financial and other forms of support for the *Hauptschule* which the parliamentary groups could agree on (*Landtag NRW, April 2, 1979, Drucksache 8/4355; Landtag NRW, May 3, 1979*).

von *Schulpflegschaften im Regierungsbezirk Münster*. From January 1978, also a Protestant parents' association (*Evangelische Elterninitiative*) joined (cf. Rösner, 1981, pp. 135ff; Seifert, 2013, pp. 196ff). From January 1977, the Association of Philologists had begun a campaign involving the organization of protest meetings, the circulation of leaflets and so forth. They had no trouble mobilizing large numbers of people onto the streets. It had also become publicly known that this movement would potentially organize a petition for a referendum against the law. In September 1977, the Citizen Action Group for a Petition for a Referendum against the Cooperative School (*Bürgeraktion Volksbegehren gegen die kooperative Schule*) was officially founded. The CDU supported the movement with considerable financial means, a total of 1.6 million marks (Rösner, 1981, p. 137). From February 16, 1978, to March 1, 1978, the Citizen Action movement collected 3,636,932 signatures which was equivalent to about 29.8 percent of the population eligible to vote in NRW. As discussed above, *Ministerpräsident* Kühn and his cabinet quickly decided to repeal the law as a result.

Rösner (1981, pp. 168ff; pp. 216f) sums up the most important arguments of the Citizen Action movement which united the different actors of this coalition. Firstly, the organizers of the petition argued against a “leveling of achievement” and accused the cooperative school of being the first step towards the general introduction of integrated comprehensive schools. The term “socialist comprehensive school” [*sozialistische Einheitsschule*] was widely used in the debate as a “warfare agent” (Wilhelm Lenz, CDU politician, in the expert interview; cf. section 6.4). Secondly, they argued that the cooperative school would destroy the traditional school types, especially the *Gymnasium*. The experts interviewed for this study remembered, for example, how supporters of the petition had hung up posters in front of schools, warning parents that “this school will be closed”. In most cases, such claims were without reason. It was up to the municipalities whether they wanted to found cooperative schools and many industrial municipalities – including many SPD-led municipalities – had already indicated that they had no need for this school type (Rösner, 1981, p. 152f). The scenario that masses of *Gymnasium* schools would be replaced by cooperative schools was thus extremely exaggerated. But the campaign, which was well organized by local committees all over the federal state, called forth strong emotions among parents, students and teachers alike. Thirdly but less prominently, the Citizen Action movement argued that the cooperative school entailed discrimination against the *Hauptschule* which would not receive the necessary support. As discussed above, this argument served mainly to legitimize the pillared structure as a whole which becomes apparent in that most active members of the Citizen Action movement were not themselves *Hauptschule* clientele (cf. Rösner, 1981, p. 166). The support of the pillared structure was again justified with the theory of “endowment”, according to which “intelligence is up to 80% hereditary and only up to 20% related to the environment” (propaganda material by the Citizen Action movement, quoted in Rösner, 1981, p. 170). The

pillared system supposedly corresponded with the distribution of “practical” and “theoretical” endowments among students. Finally, the movement emphasized parental rights of choice and claimed that these were removed in the cooperative school.

As discussed above, the protagonists of the cooperative school reform often argued that this school type would secure the supply of education in the countryside. The opponents of the cooperative school did not have a united response to this. Some of them simply denied that the demographic development was a problem, while others argued that the cooperative school would not solve it (cf. Rösner, 1981, p. 168). In fact, a few local CDU politicians in rural municipalities, who were worried that their *Realschule* or *Gymnasium* would have to close because of the declining birth rates, decided to support the cooperative school (cf. Rösner, 1981, p. 139). However, these were a small minority, whose utterances played little role. As Rösner (1981, p. 226) convincingly analyzes it, the petition received most signatures in typical CDU municipalities, meaning especially in rural, Catholic-dominated areas. In other words, one of the most important arguments of the cooperative school protagonists was mostly ineffectual. Wilhelm Lenz, former CDU politician, explained this as follows in the expert interview:

*“Interviewer: Especially the population in the countryside seems not to have been convinced by this argument that the cooperative school would secure a better supply of education in the countryside. That was an argument, wasn’t it?”*

Lenz: An important argument. And here and there in Westphalia in the rural areas, it was said underground, everything that comes from the SPD is bad and we won’t have anything to do with it. We don’t want the SPD.”

In some cases, it appears that it was this simple and therefore fairly easy for the CDU to mobilize a large number of their sympathizers and voters for the petition. In addition, the activities of the CDU and of the Citizen Action movement were supported by the churches, especially by the Catholic Church. Both high-ranking Catholic office-bearers in NRW and organizations of Catholic laymen, such as the Association of Catholic German Female Teachers and Catholic parents’ association, belonged to the most outspoken opponents of the cooperative school. They argued both against the “destruction” of the *Gymnasium* and of the Catholic *Hauptschule* (Seifert, 2013, pp. 245ff). As discussed in detail in section 6.1.2, some denominational *Hauptschule* schools remained, mostly Catholic ones, after the compromise of 1968 regarding the question of denominational schooling. The *Realschule* and *Gymnasium* were non-denominational. The introduction of a comprehensive two-year orientation stage in the cooperative school was therefore interpreted as an attack on denominational schooling in grades five and six and a violation of parents’ constitutional rights to choose denominational schooling for their children. Moreover, educational reforms provoked general anti-state and anti-reform reflexes of the Catholic Church with old historical roots back to the cultural

struggle under Bismarck (cf. section 4.3.3). In September 1977, the five Catholic bishops of NRW published an episcopal letter against the cooperative school which was read aloud in all churches and published as a leaflet. The bishops warned against a “comprehensive school [*Einheitsschule*] which could become an instrument of social change with ideological characteristics” and underlined that the population had had enough of reforms (quoted in Seifert, 2013, p. 254). In some cases, priests even distributed the signature lists for the petition from their parsonages and preached against the cooperative school during their services. There were also reports of Catholic nuns who mobilized patients in Catholic hospitals and retirement homes to sign against the cooperative school (Seifert, 2013, pp. 259f). In comparison, the Protestant Church did not play an equally important role. Some of its high-ranking office-bearers in NRW refused to take a clear stance against the reform. Nevertheless, in the course of the debate also the Protestant Church became more antagonistic, especially the organizations of its laymen (Seifert, 2013, pp. 262ff).

Overall, the massive antagonism to the cooperative school reform was carried by a broad, conservative alliance, representing both upper and upper middle class groups of public employees, businesspeople and the self-employed and rural, Catholic, middle class voters. If one considers the law proposal for the cooperative school out of its historical context, the opposition it aroused seems very much out of proportion, since the changes suggested by the law were so modest. However, the arguments employed by cooperative schooling antagonists show that they were really fighting a much larger battle, namely a general fight against the leftwing spirit of reform which had dominated during the late 1960s and early 1970s. They attempted successfully to reinstall the ideological hegemony of conservative arguments against social equality in education politics. This hegemony had always been strong among parts of the CDU’s clientele and prevented significant groups of the population, especially in more rural areas, from even considering whether this school reform could serve their interests. Nevertheless, the reform spirit had made some inroads into the CDU. This temporary insecurity and the destabilization of the hegemonic balance were now overcome. This was also related to the economic crisis which reached NRW in the second half of the 1970s and which added to the feeling of threat among more conservative groups of the population. While a compromise between the SPD-FDP government and its CDU opposition might still have been possible in 1971 or 1973, this option was definitely off the table by 1975. As the former CDU politician Wilhelm Lenz correctly analyzed in the expert interview, the result of the struggle over the cooperative school was “quite a defeat for the SPD and FDP, also psychologically”. The hegemonic balance in education politics shifted permanently in favor of the political right.

### 5.5 Summary and comparison – the class cleavage

To sum up, this chapter shows that actors were divided over comprehensive schooling along the left/right axis in both Norway and Germany. It can thus be claimed that the conflicts were

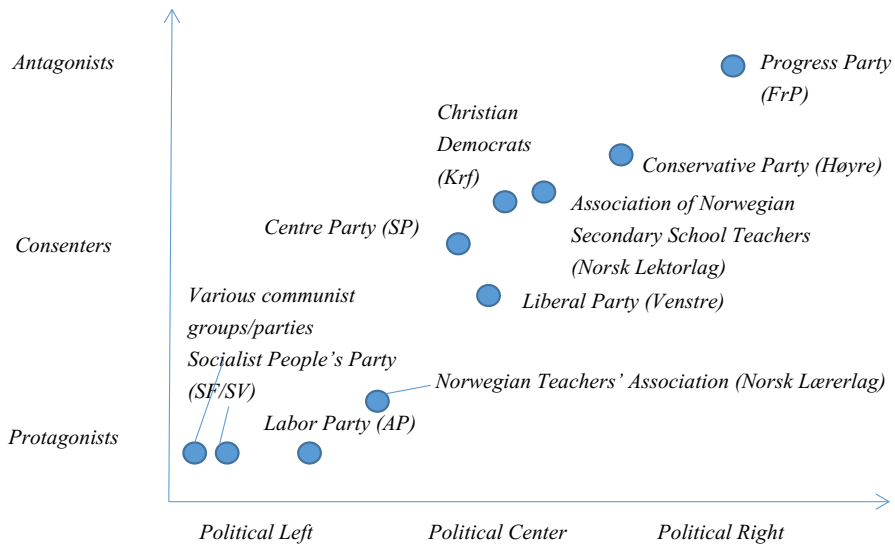
an expression of the class cleavage. Reform protagonists in Norway were in a stronger position in terms of material power resources than reform protagonists in Germany/NRW, both in the political parties and in the teachers' organizations. Nevertheless, NRW reform protagonists also had considerable resources. The fact that they failed to introduce fully comprehensive lower secondary schooling can thus not be attributed to a lack of material power resources alone. Furthermore, some of the groups represented by the German CDU are similar to groups represented by the political center in Norway in social terms. In the one case, these groups opposed comprehensive school reforms, while in the other they supported or at least consented to them. This difference cannot be understood by examining only material interests and resources. For this reason, the ideological arguments of the various actors with regard to comprehensive schooling have been examined in detail. Similarities can be found in the empirical material of this study between the arguments of the left and the right in both cases. However, it becomes clear that ideas about biological endowments and elite schooling were stronger in Germany, while social integration was valued more highly in Norway. In addition, the ideological unity of the reform protagonists was weaker in the North Rhine-Westphalian/German case. In the Norwegian case, it was the other way around; the reform antagonists were split. These internal splits are important factors for the historical outcome. In the following, these findings are discussed in more detail. First, the post-war school-political playing fields in Norway and NRW are compared. Important differences and similarities in the political positioning and social base of the political parties are identified. In the second step, ideological arguments are compared and it is shown that different kinds of arguments became hegemonic in the two cases.

### 5.5.1 Similar yet different playing fields

Based on the discussion in sections 5.1 and 5.3, it can be said that there were both relevant similarities and differences between the social characteristics of the actors taking part in the struggles over comprehensive education and between their possession of material power resources. First of all, it needs to be pointed out that even though the Norwegian population is much smaller than the German one or even the population of NRW, it has produced a higher number of political parties. In addition, a much higher percentage of the electorate were members of political parties in Norway. At the time of the first national election of the 1960s, 15.5 percent of the Norwegian electorate were party members, compared to 2.5 percent of the West German electorate. By the last election in the 1980s, West German party membership had increased to 4.2 percent of the electorate, while Norwegian party membership had slightly decreased to 13.5 percent of the electorate (Katz et al, 1992, p. 334). Potential reasons for this difference cannot be discussed here but it can be assumed that the comparatively high involvement of the Norwegian population in political activities facilitated the introduction and social anchoring of the youth school, once the main elements of reform had been decided with the consent of the center parties.

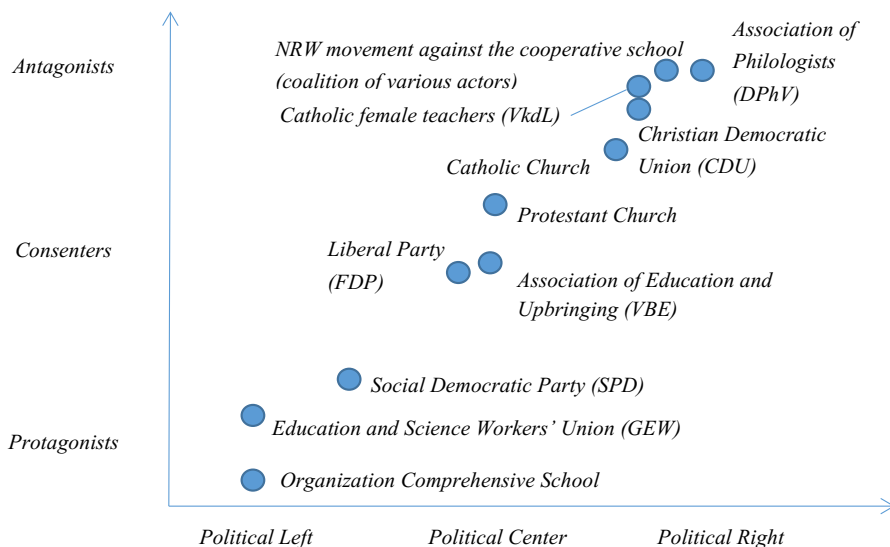


**Figure 5.4: Protagonists, consenters and antagonists of comprehensive school reforms along the political left-right axis in Norway**



Figures 5.4 and 5.5 below show the most important collective actors involved in the struggles over comprehensive schooling and their positioning along the political left-right axis in the two countries. The Norwegian Labor Party was a more pronounced protagonist of comprehensive schooling than its German counterpart, the SPD, and positioned itself further to the left in ideology (cf. below). In terms of material power resources, both labor parties were strong but the election results of the Norwegian Labor Party were more impressive. Even though it governed for the most part through minority governments, it was by far the most powerful political force in Norway. In NRW and Germany as a whole, the balance of power between the social democrats and Christian democrats, measured in elections results but also in financial resources, was not as clear but, overall, the CDU must be deemed to have been slightly more influential. In NRW, this is especially true of the 1950s and early 1960s. Furthermore, the Norwegian Conservative Party was not only less influential politically but also a less pronounced antagonist to comprehensive schooling than its German counterpart.

**Figure 5.5: Protagonists, consenters and antagonists of comprehensive school reforms along the political left-right axis in Germany**



The political center played a more important and complex role in Norway, where the Christian Democrats, the Centre Party and the Liberal Party all struggled for votes from rural, religious, working and middle class groups. For both the Labor Party and the Conservative Party, alliances with the center were a precondition for successful policy-making. Importantly, the Labor Party successfully became a cross-class party, including sections of the rural, the working class and middle class population. This facilitated cooperation with the center parties. Norway's Conservative Party, on the other hand, organized very few workers compared to the German CDU and to other Norwegian parties and its MPs were exclusively from the middle and upper classes. They were socially and culturally far removed from many of the members and voters of the center parties. For example, rather than within the Conservative Party, Christian workers and farmers more often organized themselves in the party of the Norwegian Christian Democrats that did not have a clear class profile but that was anchored in the rural periphery. The membership of the Centre Party and the Norwegian Liberal Party was also more diverse in terms of class background than that of the Conservative Party and anchored mostly in the rural periphery. Through cooperation between the parties of the political center and the left, these parts of the population were thus often included in temporary coalitions with the Labor Party. This is also true of the comprehensive school reforms of the 1960s and 1970s which the Norwegian center parties mostly consented to. These politics of coalition making are discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

In Germany, the liberal FDP also played an important role as “kingmaker” or “majority engineer” for both the social and the Christian democrats. Like the Norwegian center parties, the German FDP consented to comprehensive school reforms, at least at the beginning of the reform period. But the social profile of the FDP was more dominated by upper class groups than that of the political center in Norway. Many of the social groups organized by the center parties in Norway were found within the ranks of the Christian democrats in Germany. This is true, for example, of farmers and the rural population in general, religious groups (in Germany, in particular Catholics, including Catholic workers) and for various sections of the middle classes. Of course, the German social democrats and liberals also attempted to organize these sections of the population but they did it less successfully than the CDU. Finally, the CDU had many female voters, while the Conservative Party in Norway had significantly more men than women among its voters. The opposite was the case for the Norwegian Christian Democrats, whose voters were more often female. This difference is probably related to the fact that churchgoers in Germany more often voted for the CDU and were more often female. Churchgoers in Norway, on the other hand, who were also often female, more often voted for the Christian Democrats.

With respect to the teachers’ organizations, the balance of power was also very different in the two countries. While the Association of Philologists (*DPhV*) was undoubtedly most influential in Germany and in an alliance with the CDU, the Norwegian Teachers’ Association (*Norsk Lærerlag*) had most influence in Norway and was allied with the Labor Party. The Association of Norwegian Secondary School Teachers (*Norsk Lektorlag*) was less antagonistic to comprehensive school reforms than its German counterpart, the Association of Philologists. The German situation was complicated by the fact that primary and lower secondary school teachers were split into various organizations, namely the leftwing Education and Science Workers’ Union (*GEW*), the moderate Association of Education and Upbringing (*VBE*) – which was based on formerly separate Protestant and Catholic teachers’ organizations – and the small but not irrelevant Association of Catholic German Female Teachers (*VkdL*). The *VBE* was originally closest to the CDU, due to its roots in the Catholic people’s school-teacher movement, but in line with its political development during the 1970s, it is shown more in the center in Figure 5.5. In Norway, the primary school teachers were less split politically. The only relevant split was between organizations for men and women but these merged in 1966. It is interesting to note that membership numbers were not very important as explanatory factors in the German case, as the Association of Philologists had fewest members among the teachers’ organizations. However, the fact that the Association of Philologists kept its exact membership numbers a secret at the time illustrates that the philologists apparently believed that it would have diminished their influence if their actual size had been generally known.

Overall, some of the groups who consented to comprehensive school reforms in Norway, such as the rural population, many devout Christians and various middle class groups, opposed comprehensive school reforms in Germany. Furthermore, primary school teachers, who played an important role as reform protagonists in Norway, were less united in Germany. Only some of their organizations were reform protagonists, while others, like the *VBE*, were consenters or even antagonists, like the *VkdL*. This cannot be explained exclusively by analyzing these groups' material interests. For example, lower and middle class Catholics living in the more rural areas of NRW could have profited from comprehensive school reforms in the same way as the rural population of Norway. The fact that they preferred the parallel school system therefore merits a more detailed analysis, including an analysis of the ideology which bound them to the CDU and its school politics.

It is also interesting to note that the conservative parties of both countries received much more donations than their social democratic opponents and thus had significant financial resources, especially considered in relation to their membership numbers. However, it seems that the amount of financial resources was not necessarily one of the most important determinants of political power. For example, the Norwegian Conservative Party was well endowed with funds but the electoral successes of the social democrats illustrate that ideological hegemony was more on their side. On the other hand, the German and North Rhine Westphalian social democrats were not poor but had significant incomes due to their comparably high membership numbers. The fact that they did not manage to achieve a compromise more favorable to their program in school politics can therefore not be explained by a lack of financial resources. Rather, looking at the parties' financial resources makes one wonder why the SPD did not invest more money in campaigns for comprehensive schooling, especially once the CDU had decided to finance the movement against the cooperative school generously. This is also an important argument for examining ideological arguments and ideological unity or division in detail.

### 5.5.2 Ideological similarities and differences

It is argued here that the struggles over the youth school reform, the abolition of grading in the youth school in Norway and the introduction of the integrated and the cooperative comprehensive schools in NRW were expressions of the class cleavage. Both in Norway and Germany/NRW, a left-right opposition can easily be distinguished regarding these issues (cf. Figures 5.4 and 5.5 above). As discussed in the previous sections, social democracy was the major protagonist for reform in both countries and the main argument of the reform protagonists was social. They aimed at creating more equality, equal chances and at giving the children of the working class access to education. Many of the leading social democrats themselves came from those parts of the population which had long been excluded from upper secondary and higher education and they considered it their historical role to make sure that the people's thirst for education could be quenched.

Moreover, especially within the Norwegian left, hierarchies and competition in school were seen as negative and as a precondition for capitalist society. The reform of the school system was directly associated with the goal of overcoming the class society. In Germany, the left's skepticism towards competition in school and educational and social hierarchies was not as outspoken and the ideological emphasis was more on equality of opportunity than on social leveling. As we have seen, some social democrats thought that the opening of the *Gymnasium* to children from the working class was sufficient and did not question the hierarchy of educational institutions – and, one might argue, thus also of classes – as forcefully as Norwegian social democrats did. A radical equalization of students' school careers up to the tenth grade was harder to imagine in the more hierarchical, German class society, where school-leaving certificates have long been tightly interwoven with labor market opportunities. Ideas of biological endowment and achievement were very strong and influenced social democrats' thinking to a higher degree than in Norway. More leftist reformers, for example in the ranks of the Education and Science Workers' Union or the Organization Comprehensive School, were closer to the Norwegian left's ideology. Also, the more leftist parts of the reform movement were not so keen on the introduction of cooperative schooling; they preferred the model of the integrated comprehensive school. The fact that German reform protagonists were split over such central aspects of school politics meant that they could not act as one in struggles with reform antagonists, at least not wholeheartedly. This weakened them considerably. In Norway, such a split first came about in the grading debate of the 1970s, when the Norwegian Teachers' Association and parts of the Labor Party politically abandoned the more radical representatives of the reform movement, who wanted to abolish grading in the youth school. Before that, Norwegian reform protagonists were united to a high degree behind their aims to introduce nine years of comprehensive education and decrease the amount of organizational differentiation in primary and youth schools.

Social democrats in both countries emphasized the value of practical and vocational education and the necessity to upgrade the status of such knowledge. For this reason, the German social democrats supported the reform of the *Hauptschule* and the introduction of the ninth and later tenth obligatory school year. Protagonists of comprehensive schooling went along with these reforms because they believed them to be a prerequisite for the later introduction of comprehensive schools. They failed, however, to connect the *Hauptschule* reform and the introduction of nine years of obligatory schooling directly with comprehensive school reforms, as the Labor Party in Norway did. The connection of the introduction of nine-year obligatory schooling with the introduction of the youth school in Norway was decisive for the success of the reform because it made it attractive to the center parties (cf. below). Social democrats in both countries also emphasized that school reforms should serve to increase children's pleasure in learning and that mixing students socially was valuable in itself to foster understanding and respect among people of different class backgrounds. When children

felt respected and at ease at school, they would learn more. These arguments became hegemonic in Norway but not in Germany.

The antagonists of comprehensive school reforms were in both cases mostly representatives of the upper and middle classes and organized mainly within the conservative parties or secondary school teachers' organizations. In Germany, parental organizations also played a role in the movement against the cooperative school. One of their most important arguments was in both cases that a certain amount of differentiation was necessary in order to make sure that the ablest students received sufficient support. In addition, the conservative mantra in both countries was that academic standards must be upheld and that achievement should be the most important criterion for the school. Hierarchies and competition were seen as positive, motivating and necessary for selection with regard to upper secondary schooling. Organizational differentiation either into school types or ability groups was considered especially important in order to foster future elites, who had to be well educated. This argument was, however, much more influential in Germany. Few, if any, conservative Norwegian politicians would have voiced this as clearly as German Christian democratic politicians and especially the Association of Philologists did. Furthermore, in both countries, individual freedom of choice by parents was an important element of antagonists' ideology but, again, this argument played a more significant role in Germany. It was argued that the state should not decide over parents' heads which education was best for their children.

In general, German conservatives often and successfully repeated their ideological conviction that it was the state's role to provide schooling of "equal value" but with "different content" for different groups of the population so everyone would be well served. An important element of this ideological strategy was the insistence on the importance of creating a better *Hauptschule* so that the "run" on higher schooling would slow down and the system of "downschooling" could continue to function. The development of the *Hauptschule* into a "rest school" for the lower classes could then be portrayed not as a result of parallel schooling during times of educational expansion but as negligence of the *Hauptschule* by social democracy. Antagonists' support for the *Realschule* can also be explained in this way as the *Realschule* channeled significant parts of the middle classes away from the prestigious *Gymnasium*, while offering them a respected path of education. For the CDU's representatives, who came from rural areas within NRW, the expansion of the *Realschule* and *Gymnasium* in these areas and the upgrading of the *Hauptschule* were important. Like the Norwegian center parties, they wanted good educational provisions in the countryside; however, they felt that this could be achieved without comprehensive schooling. The CDU's emphasis on the importance of the *Hauptschule* is thus also evidence of an internal class compromise.

In Norway, this alternative solution was no longer a political possibility after the Labor Party’s decision in 1959 that the old school types could not participate in the experiments and would be abolished. Nevertheless, the conservative MP, Christie, argued in the Norwegian debate of 1959 that the Norwegian *framhaldsskole* should have been developed into a better alternative to the *realskole*, instead of merging the two school types (cf. p. 174). This indicates that Norwegian conservatives could potentially have made use of similar arguments, if the parallel school system had persisted. However, as discussed in section 5.2.5, the Norwegian Conservative Party was highly split over the introduction of the youth school. Especially its leading school politician, Fredriksfryd, consented to the Labor Party’s school politics to a high degree, while other leading MPs, such as Christie or Lønning, held more antagonistic views on the subject. As for the German social democrats, this lack of internal unity was a major problem and prevented Norwegian conservatives from developing a strong, antagonistic voice, at least until the 1970s.

**Table 5.12: Similarities between the ideological arguments**

Important ideological arguments in both cases were...	
Equality vs.	freedom of choice / parental rights
Social leveling vs.	the rearing of elites / support for high-achievers / schooling with different content but of equal value for unequal groups of students
Upgrading of practical/vocational education vs.	academic standards
Community of joyful learners vs.	competitive achievement

Furthermore, in both cases, conservatives were aware to a certain extent of the reproduction of class differences in the school system but mostly did not acknowledge this openly. From time to time, they would point out that it was simply impossible to erase all inequality. Thus, they acknowledged implicitly that class differences persisted and that different educational paths were actually not of “equal value” but associated with unequal life chances. Especially in Germany, conservatives sometimes also explicitly stated that children from lower class backgrounds were better served attending a lower secondary school type, because their chances of success in the *Gymnasium* were marginal. They did not consider this a great problem but an almost natural consequence of social inequality. As long as particularly talented or motivated individuals could make their way upwards in the system by way of exception, they did not think that the system was unfair. Furthermore, class differences in educational attainment were concealed with theories of biological endowment in both countries, though more so in Germany. Such theories, according to which children are either

theoretically or practically endowed, were referred to by both the left and the right, but more often by the right. The idea that students should be taught in homogenous ability groups was much more hegemonic in Germany. A counter-strategy applied by reform protagonists in both countries was to make use of social scientific research showing that social background, not biological endowment, was still the most important determinant of students' educational paths. In response, German reform antagonists especially would refer either to more favorable research or simply push the issue aside as not very relevant.

**Table 5.13: Differences between the hegemonic ideological arguments**

Hegemonic ideological arguments... ...in Norway	...and Germany
Mixing students with different social backgrounds and abilities is valuable for the development of comradeship and community as well as learning.	Children should be taught in homogenous ability groups of practically, theoretically or practically-theoretically endowed children. Low achievers and high achievers must be separated to facilitate learning.
Excessive differentiation, such as parallel schooling, tracking or ability grouping, will lead to a reproduction of class inequalities. Elite schooling and separation based on social background is unjust. In primary and youth schools, all children should therefore be kept together.	The <i>Gymnasium</i> should continue to be the most important path to the <i>Abitur</i> exam and the school type of high achievers and future elites. In principle, it should be open to all talented students but many students from “bad parental homes” will be better served by attending one of the lower secondary schools.
Too much competition will produce “losers” and have a demotivating effect. Pleasure in learning must be safeguarded.	Competition in hierarchies, based on achievement, serves to motivate students and is necessary for selection.

In Germany, the hegemony of the antagonists also came to expression in the way the protagonists argued: instead of focusing on their own arguments, they often attempted to turn round the arguments of the opposite camp, regarding, for example, parents' freedom of choice or the idea of achievement (cf. section 5.4.1). In German society, these ideas were so strong that it was hard to dismiss them entirely. In the debate about cooperative schooling, some social democrats did not even consider it wise to say in parliament that they saw the cooperative school as a step towards comprehensive schooling but pretended that it was an entirely “neutral” reform. Their ideological strategies were mostly rather defensive. In Norway, on the other hand, the conservatives, not the social democrats, had to adapt their arguments to an entirely different hegemonic consensus. As a result, their arguments come



across as a strongly extenuated version of the German antagonists' arguments. This was not exclusively a result of strategic decisions but also a result of their views of the structure of the school system which, in fact, were much less radical compared to the opinions of German Christian democrats. The hegemonic consensus also influenced Norwegian conservatives' convictions. In the Norwegian context, suggesting a school system like the German one would have seemed absurd and unjust – and presumably also politically suicidal – to everyone, including the conservatives.<sup>13</sup>

Experiments also played an unequal role in the two cases. In Norway, the decision of 1959 to experiment exclusively within the framework of the youth school and exclude the old school types from experiments with nine-year obligatory schooling is exemplary. Experiments, planned in such a way, served to set the course while legitimizing reforms. Nobody could really argue against experiments which is why it was so fatal for the antagonists of the reforms that the old school types were excluded. Had they not been, experiments might have served to slow down change. As it was, however, they served rather to speed up the reform process. This was also related to the financial incentives which the Labor government gave to municipalities which implemented the reforms. These were considerable and made it unattractive, especially for poorer rural municipalities, not to participate in the introduction of the youth school.

In NRW, on the other hand, experiments were designed in a way which slowed the reform process because they prevented final political decision-making. Antagonists of the reforms argued continuously that experiments should be evaluated in more detail before any decisions could be made. As the former CDU politician, Wilhelm Lenz, openly declared in the expert interview, this was primarily a strategic argument: “It was in a way cheating: the CDU couldn't come up with anything other than experiments.” Experiments thus played a dual role, with very different results in the two cases.

As we have seen, in Norway, the social argument was more hegemonic and also convinced the center parties to support comprehensive school reforms to a large degree. This compromise, and at least temporary alliance between the center parties and the Labor Party in school politics, should be viewed as a kind of class compromise. Rural, lower and middle class groups became a part of a broad alliance, also including primary school teachers. The Conservative Party did not manage to build up significant opposition through most of the period. However, this changed to a certain degree in the second half of the 1970s which, in

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<sup>13</sup> This was also illustrated by remarks by Norwegian conservatives in the expert interviews. They showed polite interest in the structure of the German school system and indicated that Norway could perhaps have something to learn here. At the same time, they made it clear that even though they supported a higher degree of organizational differentiation, dividing students at the ages of ten or 11 was not what they wanted and seemed rather extreme to them. The German CDU politician, Wilhelm Lenz, on the other hand remarked how reform protagonists had always pointed to Norway and Sweden as positive examples and how he had been “quite disappointed” when he first visited Sweden in person.

the Norwegian case, comes to expression in the grading debate. Suddenly, public opinion was more on the side of the conservatives and the center parties moved closer to them in school politics. This is probably related to the global economic development. The times of seemingly never-ending growth and optimism were coming to an end and the middle class and rural groups represented by the political center moved closer to the right.

Also in NRW, such a reversal in the political trend took place at around the same time which came to expression in the conflict over the cooperative school. The short-term openness to reform of the CDU was over and a broad conservative alliance was formed against the reform politics of the social-liberal government. However, the German reforms had begun later and thus not come as far. Also, as we have seen, German reform protagonists were more divided than their Norwegian counterparts and had never managed to muster sufficient support among various social groups, such as farmers, the rural and religious population, teachers – philologists, but also Catholic and some Protestant primary and lower secondary school teachers – and upper class groups. Large parts of these groups were united under the umbrella of the CDU and held together by conservative and religious convictions (cf. Chapter 6). This broad cross-class alliance within the CDU represented a serious obstacle to social democratic school politics.

The end of the reform trend was in both cases also marked by a shift from outer structural reforms to “the inner reform” of the schools (as it was termed in Germany) which came to the fore in the late 1970s. It was said by both protagonists and antagonists that it was now time to focus on the content of schooling more than previously. Especially reform antagonists criticized the overly strong focus on structural reforms. Reform protagonists shifted their focus mainly because they felt that the structural reforms were no longer going anywhere and hoped that “inner reforms” would offer new possibilities for change. In both cases, the most radical reformers were disappointed that the social democratic governments had given up the most far-reaching reform ideas.



## 6 Crosscutting struggles

In the last chapter, the focus lay on struggles over various aspects of comprehensive schooling – the main topic of this thesis. However, the outcomes of such struggles resulting from the class cleavage can be better understood by considering that there are also other, related, crosscutting struggles taking place in school politics which influence the development of cross-class alliances and conflicts. These crosscutting struggles are expressions of crosscutting political cleavages, such as the state-church cleavage, the rural-urban and center-periphery cleavages, the communist-socialist cleavage and the gender cleavage. This chapter therefore begins with an analysis of the Norwegian debates about Christian education and Christian private schooling and then of the German debates about denominational schooling and Christian private schooling. In the German case, these struggles can be considered primarily as an expression of the state-church cleavage, while it is shown for the Norwegian case that the urban-rural and center-periphery cleavages were additional driving forces. In the next step, debates about centralization in the school system are analyzed. Not surprisingly, Norway's geographical conditions meant that this was a contested topic. Also in NRW, there was a certain amount of urban-rural disagreement about this. The third section deals with the Norwegian language struggle in school politics which was a third line of conflict related to urban-rural and center-periphery cleavages and, in part, the class cleavage. In the fourth section, German anti-communism and the communist-socialist cleavage in German school politics are analyzed. Finally, struggles related to gender as a factor in school politics are examined in the last section for both the Norwegian and the German cases. For all these crosscutting struggles, it is discussed how they influenced the development of coalitions and divisions between major collective actors and how this affected the potential to implement comprehensive school reforms. In particular, it is argued that the strong center-periphery and rural-urban cleavages in Norway facilitated coalitions between the center and the Labor Party in school politics. In NRW, on the other hand, the strong state-church cleavage and the strong communist-socialist cleavage stood in the way of similar coalitions and instead stabilized the internal class coalition of the CDU. In addition, the gender cleavage had similar effects. The sections all begin with an introduction of the most important collective actors and their role in the specific conflicts, followed by more detailed chronological analysis. The chapter is based on various primary sources, such as parliamentary debates and party programs, and other documents of the time. In addition, it uses secondary sources and expert interviews.

### 6.1 Struggles over religion

In both cases of this study, the role of religion was one of the most highly contested issues in school politics. Large amounts of energy, resources and a broad variety of ideological arguments were employed in order to argue for or against the influence of the Christian

churches. For some actors, this was by far the most important topic, overshadowing everything else. In the following, the Norwegian case is analyzed first, then the German case.

### 6.1.1 The Norwegian debate about Christian education, the Christian preamble of the school law and Christian private schools

Of all the Norwegian parties, the Christian Democrats were undoubtedly the strongest antagonists of the de-Christianization of the school. Since the party's foundation in 1933, they have defended the influence of the Norwegian Church on schooling, most often struggling to uphold at least the status quo. In their party programs, the Christian Democrats emphasized the importance of Christian education in the school throughout the period under investigation here. For them, this is a crucial issue related to their main political aim: to protect what they consider traditional Christian moral values. From the outset, the party has received support from pietistic Christians in the west of Norway, the Home Mission milieu and similar. The party has thus been anchored in Christian laymen and the rural population to a much higher degree than the Conservative Party which also represented parts of the Norwegian Church, but more the upper ranks of the clergy concentrated in the cities and integrated into the state (Svåsand, 1994b, pp. 177ff).

Despite the Christian Democrats' efforts, secularization of the school progressed over time, promoted by social democrats and socialists and, in some periods, by currents within the Liberal Party (cf. Chapter 4). However, the Labor Party did not include secularization as an explicit aim in its programs between 1958 and 1978. In fact, in most programs there were no references at all to Christian education or to the role of Christianity in the school. The only exception was the program of 1969, to which a special supplement was added at the very end:

“The Norwegian Labor Party wishes for a society with freedom of belief and tolerance – with the same respect for those who have and for those who do not have a religious faith. [...] According to Christian morals, a good society must be based on the commandment of charity. The Labor Party sees a clear connection between the Christian message and societal politics built on solidarity. A society built on equality, equal human value and safety, responsible cooperation and peace in the world is in accordance with the principle of charity. The Labor Party sees Christianity as an essential part of the cultural heritage in our country and the generation which is growing up must receive knowledge about this through the school's education. The Labor Party will continue to unite everybody around its basic view, across differences in beliefs and worldviews.”

This is a good example of how the Labor Party maneuvered on this issue. While it organized many atheists and agnostics, there were also a large number of Christians in its ranks, who even had their own Christian networks within the party. Of course, some social democrats wanted a fully secular school but many also wanted to keep a modernized form of Christian

education because of its ethical value (Tønnessen, 2011, p. 73). Even in the Socialist Left Party, some high-ranking representatives were outspoken Christians, notably the school politician, Otto Hauglin. Nonetheless, social democrats and socialists largely agreed that schooling was primarily the responsibility of the state, not of the church, and that children should be taught about other religions as well (Korseberg, 2016, pp. 155ff). This basic consensus dominated their politics.

The Centre Party supported the Christian Democrats to a certain degree in the struggle against secularization and included the importance of Christian education in most of its programs from 1957 to 1977. Christianity was an important part of the party's political identity which is not surprising considering the party had its strongholds in the countryside. But the issue was not as pivotal for Centre Party politicians as for Christian Democrats. The same is true of the Conservative Party. This party also included various remarks about the importance of Christian education in its programs at the time but without insisting in the same way as the Christian Democrats that the entire content of schooling had to be in line with and based on the Christian faith. The Liberal Party of the post-war period can be placed somewhere in between. Even though it defended the church's role in school to a certain degree, it also contained currents which regarded this with more skepticism. In its programs, it emphasized the importance of the subject of Christian education. From the late 1960s, the programs, however, also emphasized that people should be able to choose their worldview independently and that it was therefore necessary to educate students about other religions and worldviews as well.

Besides the political parties, there were several other organizations involved in the conflicts. A number of Christian organizations and institutions supported and, in some cases, pressured the Christian Democrats with regard to the defense of Christian influence, such as the Church Educational Centre (*Institutt for Kristen Oppseding, IKO*), the Association for a Christian school (*Landslaget for kristen skole*) or the Synod of the Church of Norway (*bispemøtet*). In addition, the various missionary societies, such as the Inner Mission Society and the Norwegian Lutheran Mission Society played a role. The Association for a Christian school was founded in 1963 and was based on the former Norwegian Christian Teachers' Association (*Norges Kristelige Lærerforbund*) which had been founded in 1909. It organized Christian teachers and Christians studying to become teachers. According to the organization's website, the 1970s and 1980s were its "heyday", with around 4000 members, 26 student groups and 56 local chapters (KPF 2016).<sup>14</sup> The Church Educational Centre was founded in 1945 and is owned by the diocesan councils, the Synod of the Church of Norway, the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church and several other Christian organizations. The main aim of the Centre is and has been to contribute to the strengthening of Christian education in

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<sup>14</sup> In 1988, the organization was renamed the Christian Pedagogical Forum and was opened to anyone interested in supporting its aims; it is no longer a teachers' organization.

the school, to which end it has for example produced teaching materials through its own publishing house since 1952 (IKO 2016). Finally, the Norwegian Humanist Association (*Human-Etisk Forbund*) is situated on the other side of the conflict. This association was founded in 1956, aiming to offer an alternative for anyone who wished for a non-religious civil confirmation ceremony and humanist community, working for the separation of church and state and contributing to secularization in the Norwegian school and society. The Norwegian Humanist Association began growing, especially from the late 1970s, and had around 30,000 members in 1986 (HEF 2016).<sup>15</sup>

The following will address the various struggles over Christian influence on education chronologically, focusing mostly on the ideological arguments and strategies at play. In particular, the conflicts related to the people's school law of 1959, the conflict over the number of hours taught of Christian education during the 1960s, the debates about the primary school law of 1969 and the conflict over Christian private schooling are focused on in turn.

The people's school law of 1959 was not only contested because it limited experiments to the new youth school and excluded the old school types. In addition, it created opposition because it curtailed the rights of the Church of Norway in various ways. In the parliamentary debates about the law, especially the representatives of the Christian Democrats underlined their many worries and they were supported in part by the representatives of the Conservative Party, the Centre Party and the Liberal Party (*Forhandlinger i Odelstinget, March 5 and 6, 1959, Forhandlinger i Lagtinget, March 13, 1959*). The preamble of the law (*formålsparagraf*) had been changed in ways which some representatives found unfortunate, even though the parliamentary education committee had eventually agreed on a formulation. The paragraph still contained a reference to "Christian and moral education" but this had been moved to the second sentence. The first sentence now merely stated that it was the school's role to contribute, in cooperation with the home, to the development of students into good people in society. The Centre Party representative, Trond Halvorsen Wirstad, pointed out that this little change in itself might not have worried him. However, the fact that it was accompanied by many other small though significant changes in his opinion created the impression that Christian education was in danger (*Forhandlinger i Odelstinget, March 5 and 6, 1959, p. 80*). In the sixth paragraph of the law, the subject of Christian education was now listed in third place – after Norwegian and mathematics – among the subjects that were to be taught at school, even though it had been listed in first place in the earlier law. All non-Labor Party representatives in the parliamentary education committee objected to this and suggested an alternative phrasing of the paragraph which listed Christian education first. In addition, they added a sentence to the paragraph stating that each school day should start and end with a hymn or prayer. Their proposition was, however, rejected by the Labor Party majority in

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<sup>15</sup> Today, the Norwegian Humanist Association has over 85,000 members, making it the largest humanist association worldwide in relation to population size.

parliament (*Forhandlinger i Odelstinget, March 5 and 6, 1959*, p. 111). As the Labor Party representative Rakel Seweriin pointed out, the majority thought that “prayer and hymns at school should happen where they are natural, for those they are natural for and among those age groups it comes naturally to”. No gym teacher or physics teacher should be forced to begin the day with a hymn or prayer. Generally, such Christian elements of education should not be a result of a “decree” but one should consider their role in more detail during the work on the future curriculum. Furthermore, Seweriin accused the opposition of conducting a “superficial [...] struggle about the placement of a single word in a list” and of overreacting (*Forhandlinger i Odelstinget, March 5 and 6, 1959*, pp. 106f). In general, the Labor Party representatives downplayed all changes as barely relevant and the idea that one wanted to weaken Christian education was dismissed repeatedly. Clearly, it would not have served the Labor Party well to say outright that secularization was the aim. Instead, one made use of practical reasoning, for example by pointing to the fact that the school laws of the 19<sup>th</sup> century had also listed the subject of reading before the subject of religion, since being able to read was necessary for all further learning (*Forhandlinger i Odelstinget, March 5 and 6, 1959*, pp. 102).

Another contested issue was whether the bishops of the Church of Norway should have the right to comment on the curriculum for Christian education. Again, the minority in the parliamentary education committee, consisting of the three Conservative Party representatives Fredriksfryd, Lønning and Christie, and of the three center party representatives Hordvik (Liberal Party), Hovdhaugen (Centre Party) and Ommedal (Christian Democrats), suggested including this right of the bishops explicitly in paragraph seven of the law which dealt with curricula. To this, the Labor Party representatives replied that it was unnecessary to include in the law text something so “self-evident” and that “experts” would of course be consulted about Christian education in the same way as for any other school subject once the new curricula had been designed (*Innst. O. II. (1959)*, p. 9; *Forhandlinger i Odelstinget, March 5 and 6, 1959*, p. 113). However, the minority of the committee at least succeeded in convincing all but one of the Labor Party representatives on the committee to include a sentence in the paragraph about the content of Christian education which was based on the former people’s school law for the rural schools (*Innst. O. II. (1959)*, p. 9). Most of the Labor Party representatives did not consider this to be particularly relevant and thus apparently considered it strategically wiser to give in on this point, not least since there was much opposition making itself felt. For example, the minister, Birger Bergersen, mentioned that he had received “masses of anonymous letters” regarding Christian education and that he felt that he was being “strongly attacked on this point, in my opinion completely without reason”. He still found it unnecessary to include specifications about the content of Christian education in a law, instead of in the curriculum, but considered that this concession to the opposition would at least not do any harm (*Forhandlinger i Odelstinget, March 5 and 6, 1959*, pp. 113f).



As a result, the Liberal Party representative, Olav Hordvik, could claim that “the biggest and most dangerous simplification suggested by the ministry” had now luckily been avoided and it had been asserted that “Christianity will have its central place as before in the Norwegian people’s school” (*Forhandlinger i Odelstinget, March 5 and 6, 1959, p. 18*). The Christian Democrat Hans Ommedal was not as enthusiastic and concluded thus:

“The church has to a high degree been sidelined and this has created unrest, as we know. The letter from the bishops and the many hundred letters to the parliamentary committee are evidence of this unrest. The bishops are excluded from supervision and have a diminished position on the school boards and there is little left of the right of supervision the church possessed through bishops and local priests in accordance with the old law.” (*Forhandlinger i Odelstinget, March 5 and 6, 1959, p. 37*)

He thus referred to the fact that the local priests, who had been appointed to the school boards by the bishops, had lost their voting rights and were now only allowed to comment on issues which had to do with the subject of Christian education. The center parties’ and conservative’s representatives on the parliamentary education committee had accepted the loss of voting rights but had suggested that the priests should retain the right to comment on all issues broached at the school board meetings (*Innst. O. II. (1959), p. 15*). They argued for this by pointing out that the priests’ responsibility was to ensure that Christian values came to expression throughout daily school life, not exclusively in the subject of Christian education. In the parliamentary debate, however, the Christian Democratic representative, Kjell Bondevik, put to the vote a proposal according to which the priests would also retain full voting rights. In his opinion, the priests had played such an important role in the Norwegian school historically that it would be democratic to continue to preserve this role for them in the future too (*Forhandlinger i Odelstinget, March 5 and 6, 1959, p. 142*). The conservative representative, Per Lønning, was not pleased with Bondevik’s move. He personally believed that it would make life easier for the priests not to have to vote on potentially political decisions on the school boards. He also considered it strategically unwise to split the four non-socialist parties on this issue and direct attention away from, in his eyes, the crucial point that the priest should be allowed to express his opinion on all matters. The Liberal Party representative, Olav Hordvik, agreed that decision-making power should be given exclusively to elected representatives of the people and thus did not support Bondevik’s proposal. Bondevik reacted irritably, saying that he apparently had “a stronger belief in theologians than Mr. Lønning” which was ironic since Lønning was a theologian himself. Lønning replied that in his view Bondevik had a more “romantic” view of the practical working conditions and responsibilities of the priests on school boards (*Forhandlinger i Odelstinget, March 5 and 6, 1959, pp. 144ff*). These were not the words of close allies. When the paragraph regarding the school board was voted on, Bondevik’s proposal received 14 votes; five votes more than the nine votes presumably coming from his own party. It is probable that the five additional votes

came from the Centre Party. Lønning's proposal, which was in line with the suggestion of the center parties' and conservative representatives in the parliamentary education committee, received most of the non-Labor Party votes but, again, the Labor Party majority asserted itself.

In the following years, the Christian milieu followed the development of curricula closely and the number of hours devoted to Christian education became the subject of massive debate. This conflict was complicated by the fact that the number of hours taught in the old people's school had varied considerably from municipality to municipality, depending among other things on the municipalities' finances. Especially the urban municipalities could afford to dedicate more hours to Christian education, because the total number of hours taught was higher there. In some of the rural municipalities in western Norway, Christian education had also received rather high numbers of hours in the people's school, namely up to three hours weekly. However, in poor rural municipalities this often implied that other subjects received less time (cf. comment by Minister Helge Sivertsen, *Forhandlinger i Stortinget*, June 8, 1965, p. 3724). In 1959, new minimum standards were devised for municipalities that wanted to participate in the experiments with nine-year obligatory schooling. On the children's level of the new nine-year school, that is during the first six years, the minimum amount of weekly hours taught was first set at 135 hours in total.<sup>16</sup> The minimum standard for Christian education was set at 1.5 hours per week for the first three school years and at two hours in the next four years. Grades eight and nine should have one hour weekly (*Forsøksrådet for skoleverket*, 1960, pp. 9f). In 1963, the plans were changed. The minimum number of weekly hours taught was lowered to 123 on the children's level, due mainly to a lack of teachers.<sup>17</sup> The minimum for Christian education was increased slightly to 1.5 hours weekly in the first three years and two hours weekly for grades four to nine (*Forsøksrådet for skoleverket*, 1964, pp. 18f).

For some of the poorer rural communities, especially in western Norway, which could not afford to increase the total number of hours taught above 123 on the children's level, this implied that they were forced to reduce the number of hours taught in Christian education if they wanted to join the experiments with nine-year obligatory schooling. Many of them wanted to join due to the generous financial incentives connected to the introduction of the youth school. Therefore, this regulation created growing opposition. Because of these debates, the ministry decided in 1964 to make the rules more flexible and allow municipalities which followed the minimum standard to redistribute up to three hours between the subjects in order to strengthen Christian education. In addition, municipalities which had earlier had a higher

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<sup>16</sup> During the first three years, the minimum standard was 15 hours taught per week and during the next three years 30 hours per week. This adds up to 135 hours (*Forsøksrådet for skoleverket*, 1960, p. 9).

<sup>17</sup> During the first three years, the minimum standard was still 15 hours taught per week, whereas for grades four and five the minimum standard was lowered to 24 hours per week. Grade six should still receive 30 hours of schooling per week (*Forsøksrådet for skoleverket*, 1964, p. 18).

number of hours taught in Christian education were allowed to apply to the ministry to increase the total number of hours taught so they could reestablish their previous level (*Rundskriv nr. 13 (1964)*, published in *Innst. S. nr. 233 (1964-65)*, pp. 539f).

This concession, however, did not have the intended effect of calming the Christian groups and rural municipalities. On the contrary, the debate became more heated and the issue became highly politicized in the months preceding the elections of 1965. In January 1965, a group of mayors and other local politicians of various parties from the western county of Hordaland sent a letter to parliament, asking whether it agreed that around 70 percent of the Hordaland school boards had to apply to the ministry to keep their previous number of hours taught in Christian education (*Innst. S. nr. 234 (1946-65)*). In the following months, the Norwegian Association of Farmers' Women (*Norges Bondekvinnelag*) and the Norwegian Association of Housewives (*Norges Humorforbund*) complained about the reduction in hours taught in Christian education. Furthermore, in March 1965, around 8000 teachers signed a letter of protest. The grand finale was the collection of 725,614 signatures between March and June 1965, delivered to parliament on June 8, 1965. The People's Action for Christian Education (*folkeaksjon for kristendomsfaget*) had been initiated by a group of leading men in the organizations of Christian laymen, such as the principal of the Christian *gymnas* in Oslo, Hans Bovim, the conservative theology professor, Carl Fredrik Wisløff, the writer and chairman of the executive board of the Inner Mission Society, Fredrik Wisløff, and the general secretary of the Norwegian Lutheran Mission Society, Tormod Vågen. A committee was created which organized the practical implementation of the campaign and which was led by Bjarne Stoveland, who had a leading position in the Inner Mission Society.<sup>18</sup> The committee was based in Oslo but all of Norway was divided up into 30 districts, where local committees were founded to organize the collection of signatures (Kvalbein, 1965, p. 171). The text to be signed read as follows:

“Our society is undergoing a process of change which seems to confront us with a new era in the history of mankind. Automation and increased free time will shape the development and create new societal conditions that we do not yet know.

Into this unknown future we shall send our children, who are the most precious thing we own. And it is our responsibility to make sure that the generation growing up in this new era can find an anchoring in Christian belief and morals.

In this regard, Christian education at school is of decisive importance. Education has its base in the rights of parents. The school has thus been given a great responsibility in helping to educate the young on behalf of parents.

The preamble of the school law underlines that the school shall give children a

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<sup>18</sup> This background information was obtained through personal contact by email with Jon Kvalbein, who was one of the youngest members of the committee behind the campaign and was active in Oslo's Christian Students' Association at the time (cf. Kvalbein 1965). Strangely, the campaign has not been analyzed in great detail in Norwegian school history or sociology so far.

Christian and moral education. Christian education is therefore a key subject at school and needs a number of hours taught which corresponds to the subject's importance. Christian education must not only be rebuilt but expanded and strengthened. We view with concern and worry that the transition to experiments with nine-year schooling will lead to a strong reduction in the number of hours taught weekly in Christian education in many municipalities. This is happening despite the fact that it was said in the parliamentary debate of the law of 1959 that Christian education should preserve its status. As the matter is once again being debated in parliament, we kindly ask the honored parliament to support the following:

1. No municipality must be forced to reduce the weekly number of hours taught in Christian education.
2. All school boards must have the possibility to receive approval for three hours of Christian education per week during the first seven school years, even if they do not increase the normal teaching time at school. In the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades, there should be two hours of Christian education per week.
3. The minimum number of hours taught of Christian education should be 21 hours in the course of 9 school years, for example two weekly hours during the three first and three last years and three hours in the three years in between." (quoted in Kvalbein, 1965, pp. 171f)

Among the very first signatories one may find all the Norwegian bishops and many other prominent figures. The number of signatures approached approximately 26 percent of the population over 16 years (*SSB*, 2014, p. 52, own calculation). Never before or since has any petition in Norway received a comparable number of signatures.

On the day the signatures were delivered to parliament, an important school-political debate was taking place there and the conflict over Christian education led to some fierce verbal exchanges. The Labor Party representatives were of the opinion that the regulation of 1964 had taken all justified criticism into account and that the campaign was thus expressing its criticism at least one year too late. The clear reason for this, it was said, was that the real intention was to influence the elections of 1965. In the debate, several Labor Party representatives also accused the organizers of the campaign of misinforming and pressuring people into signing. It was said that rumors had been spread according to which the Labor Party wanted to force municipalities to reduce the number of hours taught or even abolish Christian education. Furthermore, it was asked how exactly the supporters of the campaign wanted to increase the number of hours taught in Christian education without increasing the total number of hours taught. The implication was that other important subjects would suffer due to Christian overzealousness. Overall, the campaign was deemed by social democrats to be an organized political campaign against the Labor Party and one that was supported

especially by the Christian Democrats (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, June 8, 1965*). The two Socialist People's Party representatives supported the Labor Party in this debate, going slightly further than the social democrats in their criticism of the Christian groups. The socialist Finn Gustavsen not only stated that he considered the mixing of religion and politics to be "one of the worst things I can imagine" but also pointed out that high-ranking representatives of the Church of Norway publicly condemned pacifism and sanctioned the state's right to "kill and go to war". He concluded: "When these are the official morals of the Norwegian Church, it won't help to double the number of hours taught in religious education" (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, June 8, 1965, p. 3748*).

The conservative representative, Per Lønning, showed some understanding for the social democrats' discontent regarding the timing of the campaign and admitted that he personally did not think that the Labor Party aimed at weakening Christian education. However, there were other strong forces at work, he maintained, presumably referring to the more radical left and the Norwegian Humanist Association. He also underlined that, in his opinion, the Labor Party itself was responsible for stirring up fears in the population and for not taking these fears seriously enough. He showed some sympathy for the petition, without subscribing fully to all its demands and suggested that it was "about time to reach a depoliticization of these issues of conflict" (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, June 8, 1965, pp. 3701*). The Centre Party representative, Hovdhaugen, also chose his words carefully, saying that it would "probably be a gain if the minimum hours taught in the subject were increased somewhat, for example to two hours weekly in all grades", but also pointing out that much had been corrected by the regulations of 1964. He also claimed that the issue was problematic due to its relation with the aim of comprehensive schooling:

"With regard to the freedom of choice of the school boards within the framework of the minimum curriculum, one is faced with the fact that we shall achieve a nine-year comprehensive school for the whole country, with the same competency and the same exam demands. It is clear that too great a freedom of choice for the school boards within the framework of the minimum curriculum can come into conflict with this principle of comprehensive education. With good will, I nonetheless believe that the question can be solved satisfactorily." (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, June 8, 1965, pp. 3705*)

The Christian Democrats' representatives, on the other hand, defended themselves against the social democrats' criticism by underlining that the campaign was by no means a campaign of their party alone and that it was not even a political one; it was a campaign based on justified concerns about the weakening of Christian education. Financially weak municipalities would not have the means to increase the number of hours taught above the minimum level and would thus not be able to retain their earlier levels of three hours weekly, even under the new

regulations of 1964. The Christian democrat, Hans Ommedal, pointed out that municipalities that had been allowed to increase the numbers of hours taught in Christian education nonetheless were on a par with other municipalities in terms of “school quality”. He considered it a democratic loss not to allow local school boards to decide independently about curricula and the numbers of hours taught (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, June 8, 1965, p. 3710*).

It is probable that the petition contributed to the result of the elections of 1965 and to the forming of the non-Labor government. However, the support of the campaign by the Christian Democrats presumably also contributed to the strong reactions to the Christian democrat, Kjell Bondevik, becoming Minister of Church and Education. Jakob Aano, who became parliamentary representative of the Christian Democrats in 1965, describes in his memoirs how shocked he was at the extreme antipathy Bondevik and his party engendered in much of the media. The Christian Democrats were seen as a narrow-minded party which was hostile to culture such as theatre, ballet and dancing and it was warned that Bondevik would ruin Norway’s cultural scene. Indeed, Christian Democrats had previously argued against including dancing on the curriculum and against giving subventions to the national ballet or regional theatres (electoral program of 1961, Aano, 1991, pp. 81ff). The party was not united on these issues. There was a radical Christian current which considered such forms of culture sinful and there were people, like Aano, who were concerned about turning the Christian Democrats into a reliable party of government capable of democratic tolerance and cooperation (cf. Aano, 1991, pp. 81ff).

In Aano’s opinion, Bondevik proved to his critics in the following years, and especially during the preparation of the primary school law of 1969, that he was not merely a marionette of the Christian organizations but capable of showing “independent political expertise” (Aano, 1991, p. 123). The minimum number of hours taught in Christian education was raised to only two per week for all grades, despite the fact that the Christian organizations had demanded a higher minimum number. This was in line with the suggestion of the People’s School Committee of 1963 which had been put in place by the Labor Party and delivered its report shortly after the parliamentary debate of June 1965 (*Innstilling frå Folkeskolekomiteén av 1963 (1965), p. 165*). The local school boards were, however, also allowed to choose the maximum number, three hours weekly, though only at the children’s school level. This had become easier since the total number of hours taught had been rising continuously across the country. The new minimum standard was set to 126 instead of 123 hours for the children’s school level, giving three additional hours which could be used for Christian education, if the local school boards chose to do so (cf. *Ot. Prp. Nr. 59 (1966-67), pp. 24f*).

Furthermore, the parliamentary education committee eventually decided unanimously that teachers of Christian education no longer had to be members of the Church of Norway or a Lutheran free church. Bondevik’s ministry had originally suggested that dissenters could be

allowed to teach Christian education by way of exemption. The committee, however, feared that such an arrangement could lead to conflicts. It pointed out that membership of the state church was not a guarantee of good teaching in Christian education and that any teacher would be bound by laws, curricula and his or her own conscience. In accordance with the committee's suggestion, parliament decided that all teachers could now teach Christian education, as long as this was done in accordance with Lutheran beliefs. The Christian Democrat on the parliamentary education committee, Jakob Aano, also supported this decision. But the decision provoked opposition from the Synod and from the Church Educational Centre (Aano, 1991, p. 126).

In addition, the parliamentary education committee had also made it clear that it did not agree with the ministry regarding whether Christian education in school should be considered a part of the church's baptismal education (*dåpsopplæring*), as it had been traditionally. In the text accompanying the law proposal, Bondevik's ministry had stated that one reason why Christian education had to be taught in line with Lutheran beliefs was that it also served the aim of educating members of the church in their faith (*Innst. O. XIV (1968-69), p. 30*). The Labor Party representatives on the committee were prepared to turn this into a big issue and some representatives of the center parties were also unhappy with this formulation. After negotiations between the Christian democrat Jakob Aano, the liberal Olav Kortner, the social democrat Rolf Fjeldvær and the conservative Kjell Langeland, the committee agreed to point out that it was primarily the church's opinion that Christian education was part of its baptismal education (Aano, 1991, p. 125; Korseberg, 2016, p. 163). Furthermore, it was pointed out in the committee's report that "the church itself has the responsibility to give baptismal education in the ecclesiastical sense" (*Innst. O. XIV (1968-69), p. 32*). In Aano's memoirs, it does not become clear whether he was aware of the great change he had thus agreed to: the church's representatives had lost the right to consider Christian education somehow part of "their" baptismal education. The bishops and the Christian organizations were not pleased.

Nonetheless, Bondevik and the conservative-center party government reversed several of the critical points discussed in 1959. In paragraph seven of the law, on curricula, Christian education was now mentioned in first place again, before all other subjects. Local priests also regained the right to take part in all school board meetings and express their opinion on all topics, not only Christian education. However, they did not regain voting rights (*Besl. O. nr. 33 (1968-69)*). Once again there was a massive debate about the preamble. Here, the non-Labor government made sure that "Christian and moral education" was again mentioned in the first sentence. What created most opposition from the Labor Party was, however, the formulation suggested by the ministry, according to which the primary school should provide Christian education "with the home". This was interpreted as Bondevik wanting to impose on parents the obligation to raise children in the Christian faith. According to Jakob Aano, this

had not been the Christian Democrats' intention and one was merely discussing formulations, not meanings (Aano, 1991, 121ff). The Labor Party, on the other hand, considered it a great victory that the sentence was changed by the parliamentary education committee; it now stated that the primary school should "in understanding and cooperation with the home, assist in giving students Christian and moral education". In addition, a sentence was added according to which the school should also "further freedom of thought and tolerance" (*Besl. O. nr. 33 (1968-69), p. 63*). According to Aano, the Christian Democrats had no problem agreeing to this, since they did not consider Christian education to be in opposition to these aims (Aano, 1991, p. 127). For the Labor Party, it was meant to counterbalance the emphasis on Christian education.

A split within the four-party government made itself felt with respect to one final issue regarding the law of 1969. Paragraph seven still contained instructions for the content of Christian education. Furthermore, as with the law of 1959, it contained a sentence according to which students should also be taught about other religions. Here, the five Labor Party and the two Liberal Party representatives on the parliamentary education committee had suggested adding that the school should inform about other worldviews as well, not just other religions. The six representatives of the Conservative Party, the Centre Party and the Christian Democrats did not agree with this suggestion and argued that the term "worldview" was too imprecise to be included in the law. However, the Labor Party and the Liberal Party voted for the amendment and thus knowledge of different worldviews was now included in the law text (*Besl. O. nr. 33 (1968-69), p. 64; Innst. O. XIV (1968-69), p. 19*). Presumably, the Norwegian Humanist Association supported this change. Nonetheless, supporters of the separation of state and church criticized the law and some considered the new preamble to be "schizophrenic" for suggesting Christian education and freedom of thought at the same time (Aano, 1991, pp. 128f). The Socialist People's Party representatives voted against the law, partly because they thought that the preamble was an "unbearable" compromise (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, April 21, 1969, p. 284*).

The religious element also played an important role in the debates about and preparation for the law on private schooling in 1970. In 1965, all four new governing parties had included in their political programs some kind of reference to the importance of financing private schooling. When Bondevik became Minister of Education, he appointed a private school commission, *Privatskoleutvalget*, which was meant to conduct a general survey of private schools in Norway and prepare a potentially regular financing scheme for these schools. The background for this was that the Labor Party had generally intended the school system to be public and had thus not financed private schools on a general basis, but only by application and from year to year. The few private schools which existed in Norway at the time thus had shifting and precarious financial conditions. In 1966/67, there were 34 private people's schools in Norway, with 1889 students. Of these, five were run by Adventists, 11 by the free



Evangelical-Lutheran Church Society, six by various other free churches, five by the Catholic Church, two were Rudolf Steiner schools, one was for deaf children, one only had one grade and one was the result of a local struggle to keep the school in the village (*Innstilling IV fra Privatskoleutvalget (1968)*). Among the general secondary schools, there were four private *gymnas* (upper secondary schools) with a total of 1386 students; of these, however, only two had the right to hold exams, namely the Christian *gymnas* in Oslo run by four major Norwegian mission societies and *Tyrifjord høyere skole* run by the Adventists. In addition, there were 11 small private *realskoler* but since this school type would be abolished in the course of the reforms, it was clear in 1967 that they would disappear (*Innstilling I fra Privatskoleutvalget (1967)*).

In the first report of the private school commission, some major disagreements can be identified between the opponents and supporters of private schooling which came to expression in the parliamentary debates of the 1960s and in the discussion within the committee itself. For example, it is pointed out in the report that both camps made use of the concepts of “democracy” and “tolerance” to support their point of view, but in different ways (*Innstilling I fra Privatskoleutvalget (1967)*). For the Labor Party, a school system based on democracy and tolerance was one where all children were taught together, independent of their social, religious and economic background. Religious private schools were seen as a means for “an intolerant parental generation [...] to educate their children to become as intolerant as themselves” (*Forhandlinger i Odelstinget Nr. 7, February 17, 1970, p. 56*). For the non-Labor camp, on the other hand, respect for the rights of minorities and of parents in general to educate their children in the belief of their choice was an expression of democratic tolerance. Interestingly, they also argued that private schools should receive state support so that they would not have to take tuition fees from students and thus become “exclusive schools for the financially well-off” (*Innstilling I fra Privatskoleutvalget (1967), pp. 17ff, p. 69*). This opposition had old roots.

It should, however, also be noted that the four governing parties were not entirely in agreement regarding how generous and far-reaching the new private school law should be. Especially the Conservative Party emphasized in its program of 1965 that it was “the parents’ right and responsibility to choose education for their children” and that “full access” to private schools was therefore necessary. The Centre Party’s position, on the other hand, was not as categorical. The principle program of 1965 stated that “free-standing schools have a right to live in a democratic society” and “can fill a place in an otherwise well-constructed school system”. The next sentence said that the Centre Party wanted to regulate by law the relationship between the state and “private secondary schools”. In 1973, the Centre Party’s program specified that “private educational institutions have a supplemental responsibility in a school system which must be mainly public”. The Liberal Party was even more specific in its demands made of private schools, saying in its program of 1965 that private schools

“which work in accordance with curricula and school laws which comply with the demands for teacher training and facilities in the school and which cover a need, [will be] given state support in line with permanent regulations”. Finally, the principle program of the Christian Democrats of 1965 stated that “private, unpolitical, secondary schools which work in accordance with the preamble of our school laws must receive state support”. This formulation was tailored to apply especially to the Christian *realskole* in Sand and the Christian *gymnas* in Oslo. The Christian Democrats, however, realized that they could hardly make a law which would apply to these two schools only and that they needed to think through the issue on a more general basis. In particular, it became clear that primary people’s schools and vocational schools also had to be taken into consideration (Aano, 1991, pp. 138ff).

The preparation of the law took a rather long time, both because the ministry was waiting for the reports of the private school committee which would lead to a better overview and because there was considerable uncertainty about the exact conditions under which schools would qualify for state funding (cf. Aano, 1991, pp. 143ff). In April 1969, Bondevik’s ministry finally presented a law proposal (*Ot. prp. Nr. 61 (1968-69)*). The Labor Party representatives on the parliamentary education committee opposed the law throughout the process and, in June 1969, they successfully prevented the government passing the law before the elections (*Innst. O. nr. 107 (1968-69)*, cf. Aano, 1991, p. 147). However, the non-Labor government won the elections by a small margin and the coalition continued with a majority of only two instead of the earlier ten representatives. This meant that it was crucial for the center parties and the Conservative Party to come to an agreement regarding the exact formulation of the law. This was difficult, in particular because of the reservations of the liberal member on the parliamentary education committee, Olav Kortner, who was in charge of preparing the committee’s report in response to Bondevik’s law proposal. Kortner was skeptical and was pressured by a current within his party which opposed private schooling (cf. Aano, 1991, p. 145). He pushed through a number of changes before he finally agreed to support the law.

First, he insisted that the law had to include specifications as to which kinds of private schools could apply for state funding. A sentence was added to the first paragraph, according to which private schools had to either be based on alternative pedagogical ideas they wished to experiment with or teach by, or be based on religious or ethical grounds, or fill a quantitative need for schooling in order to qualify. Furthermore, specifications were included according to which private schools would not be allowed to pay their teachers more or less, or have smaller class sizes, than public schools. Private schools which received funding were also obliged to send in lists of students to the ministry each year, with the aim of ensuring that the school was open to everyone and that no selection was taking place based on social, religious or economic grounds. Finally, a process of authorization was specified, according to which

schools had to apply to the ministry which would decide on a case-by-case basis, after hearing the municipal school boards and school directors in the case of primary schools, the county school boards in the case of secondary schools and the national school councils for the respective school types, or in the case of experimental schools, the Experimental Council (*Innst. O. VII. (1969-70)*).

In the parliamentary debate on the law proposal, the liberal, Olav Kortner, made it clear that he was not a supporter of private schools in general. He underlined, as had been pointed out in the parliamentary committee's report, that no international agreement existed that would oblige Norway to give economic support to private schools. This argument had been made by the ministry but Kortner rejected it. The only obligation was to allow private schools in principle which had always been the case. Thus, he concluded, one had to make a "political choice" regarding whether one should let the few private schools "starve to death" or help them with public resources (*Forhandlinger i Odelstinget Nr. 7, February 17, 1970, p. 49*). He eventually gave his consent to the law, but only conditionally:

"We have made it clear that we cannot support private schools of any kind. We don't want new class divisions in the people. The law must not include private schools which are created openly or under camouflage in order to select students, for example on social grounds or with the purpose of being an intellectual elite school." (*Forhandlinger i Odelstinget Nr. 7, February 17, 1970, p. 50*)

Furthermore, he pointed out that while he respected the rights of parents, these rights were weak compared to the right of the child to learn and make a free choice. He also expressed the hope that, in the future, "all religious and ethical societies [...] will understand the value of the public school and will discontinue private group schools" (*Forhandlinger i Odelstinget Nr. 7, February 17, 1970, p. 51*). He ended by saying that, while Norway had the resources to allow this relatively small number of private schools to exist, the most important aim was now to focus on the further expansion of the public school system and make sure that this system would receive the necessary resources and would not be undermined (*Forhandlinger i Odelstinget Nr. 7, February 17, 1970, p. 53*).

The Labor Party representatives regretted Kortner's choice to support the law and continued to warn that private schools would indeed undermine the public, comprehensive system. Resources were needed in the public system rather than in the old-fashioned, religious private schools which "pedagogically represent [...] our grandparents' time", as the Labor Party representative, Rolf Fjeldvær, put it (*Forhandlinger i Odelstinget Nr. 7, February 17, 1970, p. 54*). They also ridiculed the governing parties for allegedly wanting to give security to private schools while supporting the further expansion of the public school system; did they not see the contradictoriness in this (*Forhandlinger i Odelstinget Nr. 7, February 17, 1970, p. 57, 62*)? The Christian milieu was not completely satisfied with the law either, considering it too

strict and accusing the non-Labor members of the parliamentary education committee of not struggling hard enough for this cause (cf. Aano, 1991, p. 149, *Forhandlinger i Odelstinget Nr. 7, February 17, 1970, p. 55*).

Overall, the debates about the position of Christian education in the laws of 1959 and 1969, and the debates on private schooling, do not give the impression of an ideologically united non-Labor block. Especially the Liberal Party represented an element of uncertainty for non-Labor majorities. There were also at some points tensions between the Conservative Party and the Christian Democrats, related to the cultural differences between these parties' urban, rural and class bases. For the Christian Democrats, the religious character of schooling was clearly most important, while the conservatives were more liberal culturally and economically. This finding was also supported by the expert interviews, in which the former Christian democratic representatives, Jakob Aano and Hans Olav Tungesvik, both underlined that they did not support the Conservative Party's intention to allow private schooling without conditions and thus unleash commercial interests in the education sector. The conservative Per Lønning, on the other hand, pointed out that for the Christian Democrats, Christian education had been a much more "personal" issue, while a "rather big current within the Conservative Party had an almost exclusively culturally religious orientation", meaning that many conservatives found Christian education important for cultural reasons but not as a form of preaching the gospel. Finally, the Centre Party cared about the expansion and quality of schooling in the countryside and in some cases valued this goal more highly than, for example, the number of hours of Christian education taught. Thus, the Labor Party had various opportunities to either cooperate with one of the center parties, such as the Liberal Party, make small concessions, as in the debate on Christian education, or ridicule and attempt to split and weaken the non-Labor camp ideologically. With these kinds of strategies, the Labor Party did not succeed in preventing Christian groups from asserting their interests in all regards. But the social democrats succeeded in defending the comprehensive principle against any serious threat from this fold. Despite the struggle over Christian education, curricula became more and more similar across the country and the final version of the private school law was restrictive enough to prevent a steep increase in private schools, at least during the period in question.

### 6.1.2 The debate on denominational schooling, the introduction of the *Hauptschule* and private schools in NRW

In NRW, Christian education was also among the most highly contested topics in education politics in the post-war decades. This is especially true of the 1950s and 1960s, when the conflict over denominational schooling dominated school politics in the federal state. As discussed in section 4.3.3, this conflict had old roots, dating back to debates about denominational schooling during the Weimar Republic, to the cultural struggle under Bismarck and even further all the way back to the Thirty Years' War and the Reformation (cf. Erlinghagen, 1972, pp. 69ff). The people's school had had a denominational character – and

in Prussia, this meant for the most part a Protestant character – for several centuries. For example, in 1926/27, 23,313 of the 33,523 Prussian people’s schools were Protestant schools, with 8823 Catholic schools and only 1392 common schools for both denominations. In the Rhine province and in the province of Westphalia, there was, however, a majority of Catholic people’s schools even then (*Statistisches Reichsamt*, 1930, p. 449). In contrast to the Protestant Church, the Catholic Church played the role of an opponent to the Prussian state. Catholics developed a tight fabric of organizations in response to the state’s attacks on the Church’s influence during the cultural struggle (cf. section 4.3.3). The post-war conflicts cannot be understood without this historical background.

In Rokkan’s terms, the post-war conflict over denominational schooling was a continued expression of the state-church cleavage that had two faces: on the one hand, the Catholic Church especially wanted to ensure that its members would be educated in the Catholic identity from an early age, so that their loyalty to the Church and to the various Catholic organizations would be ensured. On the other hand, both Catholics and Protestants wanted to combat the general secularization of society. However, the first motive was more important for the debates about denominational schooling. In the area of NRW, this conflict was especially sharp, due to the religious mix of its population and the comparatively high proportion of Catholics. Before the war, the Catholic Centre Party had been the main supporter of denominational schooling, besides the Catholic Church. This role had now been taken over by the CDU which in NRW was still predominantly Catholic, even though it united Catholics and Protestants in principle. Until 1958, when it lost its last seats in the NRW parliament, the Centre Party also remained a fervent supporter of denominational schools. The Protestant Church, on the other hand, relinquished its adherence to denominational schooling and instead supported Christian common schools. It thus played a less prominent role in these conflicts.

In other federal states, where the CDU organized a higher share of Protestants or where the tradition for denominational schooling was not as strong, the conflict was of less importance. For this reason, the CDU’s national programs did not contain many comments on the issue. For example, the party’s Berlin program of 1968 only stated that “besides Christian common schools, denominational schools and non-confessional [*bekennnisfreie*] schools can be made legally and materially possible where parents in sufficient numbers wish it for their children”. The federal state chapters of the party developed independent policies on the issue. The CDU in NRW did not produce any written programs before 1970, at which point the conflict had largely been settled. The high importance of this issue for the party in NRW during the 1950s and 1960s comes to expression in the massive battles fought over the school articles of the NRW Constitution, and over later school reforms and laws. However, the CDU in NRW was not entirely united on this issue and, over time, the supporters of denominational schooling became fewer.

On the other side of the conflict, social democrats and liberals had long argued against the denominational separation of students in the people's school. Especially the Education and Science Workers' Union (*GEW*) and the teachers' organization within the SPD opposed denominational schooling. Even though some social democrats and liberals supported a wholly secularized school, most of them eventually accepted in principle the Christian character of the public school but insisted that children of both denominations should be taught together in "Christian common schools" (*Christliche Gemeinschaftsschule*). For example, the SPD included a lengthy discussion of the problems of denominational schooling in its national education political guidelines of 1964 which ended with the following paragraphs:

"For national-political and pedagogical reasons, the Social Democratic Party advocates the common school, because it conveys the experience of the rich diversity of social forces and best ensures an upbringing which furthers constitutional, free and social democracy.

The Social Democratic Party respects the decision of parents, who give priority to an education defined in particular by their belief or worldview. The federal structure of the Federal Republic allows for practical solutions which take into account the different developments in the individual federal states.

Common, denominational and worldview schools must comply with the stated requirements of a well-regulated school operation [*geordneter Schulbetrieb*].

Social democrats trust that all parents will be successfully convinced of the preferability of a common school for all children, in which religious education according to the denomination of the children is provided for."

Similarly, the FDP wrote in their program for the NRW federal state elections of 1962:

"Youth shall be educated in a sense of community and in respect for the convictions of others. For this reason, the Free Democrats advocate the Christian common school. For the sake of freedom of conscience, the FDP respects the wish of parents for the denominational school. This must, however, not lead to a burden of conscience for denominational minorities or to the development of [small] dwarf schools."

In addition to the issue of denominational schooling, the financing of the mostly Christian private schools was also discussed. Social democrats and liberals agreed that too generous financing of such schools would endanger the public system. The CDU, on the other hand, emphasized in most of its education-political documents that parents should have the possibility to choose a private school for their children and that private schools should therefore receive the same amount of financing as public schools. Its program of 1964, "Education in a Modern World", also stated that in private schools, "any selection of students

based on the property or income of the parents is to be precluded". This condition for private schooling was, however, included even in the German Constitution.

**Table 6.1: Number of Catholic, Protestant and common people's schools in NRW, 1953-1969**

Year	Catholic people's schools	Protestant people's schools	Common people's schools
1953	3519 (5 private)	1694 (4 private)	823 (none private)
1959	3651	1802	884
1963	3705	1846	925
1965	3732	1835	943
1967	3439 (4 private)	1492 (3 private)	1136 (5 private)
1969 <sup>1)</sup>	256 (3 private)	38 (none private)	47 (1 private)
	Catholic primary schools	Protestant primary schools	Common primary schools
1969	1593 (none private)	362 (1 private)	1688 (4 private)
	Catholic Hauptschulen	Protestant Hauptschulen	Common Hauptschulen
1969	75 (none private)	1 (1 private)	1387 (1 private)

Source: Statistisches Landesamt Nordrhein-Westfalen, 1954, 1960, 1964, 1966, 1968, 1970

<sup>1)</sup> These were people's schools which had not yet been divided into primary schools and Hauptschulen in accordance with the Hauptschule reform of 1967/68.

As shown in Table 6.1, there were 3651 Catholic people's schools in NRW in 1959 but only 1694 Protestant people's schools and 823 common schools for both denominations. The number of private schools among them was low. Most denominational people's schools were public schools. In the 823 common people's schools, only 13.8 percent of the students were Catholic, the rest were Protestant (*Statistisches Landesamt Nordrhein-Westfalen*, 1960, p. 49). This illustrates that denominational schooling was much more important for the Catholic parts of the population than for the Protestant ones. The teachers of the people's school were educated in denominationally separate teacher-training colleges. After the compromise of 1967/1968 (cf. below), the upper stages of the former people's school, now termed the *Hauptschule*, became mostly non-denominational, while denominational schooling was continued in many public primary schools (cf. Table 6.1). Today, this issue is still relevant in school politics in NRW, as there is still a sizable proportion of denominational primary schools.

The debates about private schooling were secondary but related to the conflict over denominational schooling. As we have seen, the main conflict pertained to the denominational character of the people's school, which was mostly public (cf. Table 6.1). The middle and

higher schools of the *Realschule* and the *Gymnasium* had never been denominational, with the exception of the private middle and higher schools. Private middle and higher schools were mostly Catholic and mostly for girls. For example, in 1959, 76.7 percent of the private middle school students and 81.4 percent of the private higher school students were Catholics, with 23 percent and 17.4 percent respectively Protestants. In the public middle and higher schools, there was a slight majority of Protestants. In total, around nine percent of middle school students and 18 percent of higher school students attended private schools. The clear majority of these were girls (*Statistisches Landesamt Nordrhein-Westfalen*, 1960, pp. 49f, own calculations). In 1967, 50 of NRW's 452 *Realschulen* and 114 of NRW's 570 *Gymnasien* were private. The proportion of girls in the private *Realschulen* was about 75 percent and in the private *Gymnasien* about 69 percent (*Statistisches Landesamt Nordrhein-Westfalen*, 1968, p. 57, own calculations). In 1980/1981, there were 43 private *Realschulen*, of which 34 were Catholic and seven Protestant, and 103 private *Gymnasien*, of which 85 were Catholic and 14 Protestant. There were also a few Rudolf Steiner schools but it was clear that the main operator of private higher schools was the Catholic Church (Lemper/Westphalen, 1982, pp. 207ff).

In the following, the conflicts over denominational schooling and over private schooling in NRW are discussed chronologically in more detail. Even though there were also some conflicts over the Church's influence on the content of religious education and over the approval of teachers of this subject, these issues were less debated. Due to limits of time and space, they are not discussed any further here (see, however, Heumann, 1989, pp. 234ff, pp. 326ff). The role played by vocational and special private schools is not discussed in detail either, even though many of the regulations for private higher schools applied to them as well.

The post-war conflict over denominational schooling began almost immediately after the war with the reopening and the reorganization of people's schools. Denominational schooling had been abolished by the Nazis. In response to massive pressure by the Catholic Church, the British military government decided in 1946 to hold a referendum among parents about the re-establishment of denominational schools. Especially the Catholic population voted for such a reintroduction which was in part a result of a massive campaign by the Catholic Church. In some cases, children of parents, who voted against denominational schooling, were even threatened with being excluded from the local school (Eich, 1987, p. 81). In the following years, denominational schooling was largely reintroduced. This led in some cases to the founding of small people's schools with only one class for all age groups (Düding, 2008, p. 268).

Private schools had also been closed down during the Nazi dictatorship. Catholic Church officials and CDU politicians began immediately after the war to lobby for the re-establishment, financing and legal protection of Catholic private schools (Heumann, 1989, pp.



74ff). They based their demands on the situation of private schools in the Weimar Republic. The Weimar Constitution had permitted private schools in principle but their approval by the state had been conditional on the qualifications of their teachers and on the demand that selecting students based on parents' income was not encouraged. Furthermore, private denominational schools had only been permitted where public denominational schools were not available, or had to be based on a special pedagogical interest (Article 147 of the Weimar Constitution, quoted in Heumann, 1989, p. 75). Many private schools had received subsidies from the federal states of Rhineland and Westphalia or from cities and municipalities. However, this was not legally regulated. The supporters of private schooling now demanded binding regulations for the public financial support of private schools. They argued that private schools eased the financial burden on state coffers and therefore deserved financing. In their view, the demand that private school teachers should be equally qualified and as socially protected as public school teachers necessitated financial support by the public. From 1945/1946, private schools received funding based on agreements between church officials and representatives of the school administration which were, however, not legally formalized (Heumann, 1989, pp. 100ff).

In 1950, the conflict first culminated in connection with the passing of the NRW Constitution. Against the votes of the SPD and FDP, the CDU stipulated the denominational character of the people's school in the school articles of the Constitution. Formally, denominational schools (*Bekennnisschulen*), common schools for children of different denominations (*Gemeinschaftsschulen*) and schools based on other worldviews (*Weltanschauungsschulen*) were equally recognized by the Constitution. In practice, the number of denominational schools was much higher than the number of common schools and worldview schools did not materialize at all (cf. Table 6.1). Importantly, Article 12 of the new Constitution also stated explicitly that small, one-class people's schools complied with the requirements of a "well-regulated school operation" [*geordneter Schulbetrieb*]. The SPD had fiercely opposed this, as social democrats did not think that these "dwarf schools" were capable of offering quality schooling. They had originally demanded that only eight-class people's schools – with separate classes for all eight age groups – should be considered "well-regulated school operations" and had offered, as a potential compromise, that six-class people's schools could be defined as such. The FDP also opposed denominational "dwarf schools". But the CDU and Centre Party insisted on including a sentence in the Constitution which legitimized the existence of the more than 750 mostly denominational one-class people's schools in the federal state and at the same time made it possible to establish additional one-class denominational schools in denominationally mixed areas and in the countryside (Düding, 2008, p. 271).

The NRW SPD had moderated its position compared to the Weimar years and suggested now that all schools should become not simply common but Christian common schools. Some

leading social democrats, such as the young Heinz Kühn, argued that common Christian ethics and the tolerance between the two Christian denominations should come to expression in the school. Among social democratic teachers and more leftist SPD members, who preferred a complete secularization of the people's school, this attempt to build a bridge with the CDU was unpopular. It was also unsuccessful, as the CDU was not willing to compromise on the issue and refused to add the label "Christian" to the term "common school" in the Constitution. For the NRW CDU of the immediate post-war years, the most important aim was to secure the continued dominance of denominational schools. Christian common schools were not considered sufficiently Christian or Catholic (Düding, 2008, pp. 267ff; Eich, 1987, pp.171ff). It should, however, be noted that the CDU supported Christian common schools in other federal states and that several Protestant CDU representatives in NRW also did so.

Article 8 of the NRW Constitution, which regulated private schools, also created debate. It referred to Article 7, Paragraphs 4 and 5, of the German national Constitution (Basic Law) which had been passed the year before. These paragraphs stipulated that private schools which functioned as a replacement for public schools needed public approval. This would be granted if the schools' learning aims and teachers' scientific qualifications were equal those of the public schools and as long as a separation of students based on income was not encouraged. In addition, the economic and legal situation of teachers needed to be better secured. Furthermore, private people's schools could only be permitted, if they had a special pedagogical approach, or based on parental request. If parents requested a private common school, a private denominational school or a private worldview school, a precondition was that such a people's school was not available in the municipality as a public school (Article 7, Basic Law). All parties, except the Communist Party which opposed private schools in principle, supported the inclusion of these regulations in the NRW Constitution. However, the CDU and the Centre Party wanted a more private-school friendly regulation. Against the votes of the other parties, Article 8 of the NRW Constitution also stipulated that private schools had the same "authorities" (*Berechtigungen*) as public schools and were entitled to the public financial support which was necessary to fulfill their duties. The SPD and FDP had suggested unsuccessfully that the role and financing of private schools should be regulated by a separate law (Eich, 1987, pp. 181ff; Lemper/Westphalen, 1982, pp. 88ff). The conflict over the school articles of the Constitution was so serious that the SPD, FDP and Communist Party voted against the Constitution and advised the population to do the same. Nevertheless, the following referendum resulted in a clear majority for the Constitution, due not least to the efforts of the Catholic Church and, in part, the Protestant Church, to mobilize their members to vote yes (Eich, 1987, pp. 194ff).

The debate continued with the *Schulordnungsgesetz* (Law on the Regulation of Schools) of 1952 (cf. Düding, 2008, pp. 331ff; Eich, 1987, pp. 214ff; Fälker, 1984, p. 113). This law interpreted the schooling articles of the Constitution in such a way that denominational

schooling was strengthened further. Again, the CDU's and the Centre Party's positions prevailed. The teacher workforce at denominational schools now had to belong almost entirely to the relevant denomination. The financing and founding of private schools were also regulated in a more private-school friendly way. Regulations following the law clarified the details. Private schools needed to finance 15 percent of their costs. But this contribution could be reduced to 7.5 percent, or even waived completely, if the operator of the school had little income, provided school buildings, or employed teachers who did not receive full wages for their services – e.g. members of Catholic orders (cf. Eich, 1987, pp. 259ff; Lemper/Westphalen, 1982, pp. 101ff). The SPD attempted unsuccessfully to make it harder to transform non-denominational schools into denominational ones and both the SPD and FDP suggested to no avail that schools with denominational minorities of a certain size should be transformed into common schools automatically. They saw the law as an additional step towards the “confessionalization” [*Konfessionalisierung*] and fragmentation of the school system. The Education and Science Workers' Union also opposed the law as an attempt to “abolish the state school” (Eich, 1987, p. 226). Catholic Church officials had direct influence on the law text and regulations, to the extent that even the small Protestant minority in the CDU parliamentary group was somewhat dismayed. Even though not all of the Catholic Church's wishes were taken into account, Catholic Church officials were rather satisfied with the law (Eich, 1987, p. 221, p. 258). The main argument of the supporters of the law was the reference to parents' rights to choose a denominational education for their children. Both the support for public denominational people's schools and for private denominational higher schools was justified in this way.

The short-lived SPD-FDP government of 1956 to 1958 did not attempt to pass a new *Schulordnungsgesetz* in order to reverse the regulations on denominational schooling and “dwarf schools” because social democrats and liberals had included a Centre Party minister in their coalition. The support of the Centre Party had been conditional on the acceptance of the status quo with respect to denominational schooling (Düding, 2008, p. 392, p. 395). This heterogeneous coalition could therefore not make any far-reaching changes. It passed a law on school financing (*Schulfinanzgesetz*) but the SPD decided, with the support of the FDP and against the votes of CDU and Centre Party, that this law should apply exclusively to public schools. Presumably, this was a tactical move to avoid a new struggle over denominational and private schools before the elections. In the discussions regarding school financing, it had become clear that the SPD and FDP favored higher contributions by private school operators, while the CDU and Centre Party defended the existing regulations (Eich, 1987, pp. 266f).

Also during the CDU's next period of government from 1958 to 1966, no further changes in the regulations on denominational schooling were made. However, in 1961, the CDU government passed a law on the financing of private schools (*Ersatzschulfinanzgesetz*). This law was controversially discussed in parliament and by the public (cf. *Landtag NRW, October*

18, 1960; *Landtag NRW, June 20, 1961*). It stipulated that private school operators would still have to finance about 15 percent of their costs but this percentage was reduced across the board by seven percentage points for the provision of school buildings and by an additional two percentage points for the provision of other school facilities. As discussed above, such reductions had also been possible with the former regulations but had been subject to individual examinations. All private schools now enjoyed these lump-sum reductions. As a result, they only had to finance six percent of their costs and this could be reduced even further to two percent if the school operator faced a difficult financial situation. However, it was no longer permitted to waive completely the school operator's contribution. The CDU Minister of Education Werner Schütz defended these rules in the following way: on the practical level, he argued that the old rules were basically being kept intact but just simplified. A lump-sum reduction in the contribution of all private schools was necessary because a large number of schools could not afford to finance 15 percent of their costs. Furthermore, the minister defended private schools in principle, arguing that they were an expression of "the spirit of freedom" and a "truly democratic institution" (*Landtag NRW, October 18, 1960, p. 1696*). Banning private schools would in his view be an expression of "totalitarian state thinking, such as we have experienced it in the so-called Third Reich and today in the Soviet zone and in the countries of the Eastern Bloc" (*Landtag NRW, October 18, 1960, pp. 1696f*).<sup>19</sup> He also emphasized that it was understood that the school administration would make sure that parents' income would not play a role in the composition of private schools' student bodies (*Landtag NRW, October 18, 1960, pp. 1696*).

The law was greatly opposed by the SPD and FDP. Both parties feared that the public school system would be endangered and that the denominational division of the school system would be increased, especially on the middle and higher school level. In the first parliamentary debate on the law, the SPD's speaker, Johannes Rau, criticized the fact that school operators now only had to contribute their ideology, while the state would contribute the financing. He also warned that the law would open up opportunities for non-religious, economically oriented private school operators, especially in the area of vocational education (*Landtag NRW, October 18, 1960, p. 1700*). The Liberal Party representative, Liselotte Funcke, pointed to the extreme dominance of the Catholic Church in the area of higher private schooling. She criticized the tendency that increased confessionalization and the increased privatization of the school system would make it harder for children belonging to local denominational minorities to attend a school of their choice and would potentially force them to attend Catholic institutions. This applied especially to girls, for whom public higher schools were not

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<sup>19</sup> Schütz had previously stood out with a remark at a meeting of the CDU's youth organization that the political parties should keep their "dirty hands" away from the school's affairs. For this, he had been heavily criticized by the Liberal Party (*Landtag NRW, May 12, 1959*; cf. Düding, 2008, p. 459).

always available (*Landtag NRW, October 18, 1960, pp. 1702f*). These protests were fruitless and the law was passed and remained unchanged for many decades.<sup>20</sup>

In its program for the elections of 1962, the NRW SPD commented:

“Regarding the question of public support for private replacement schools [*private Ersatzschulen*] which has [...] been a matter of debate for years, the CDU majority in the federal state parliament has enforced, against the massive opposition of the SPD and FDP, a final regulation which is without precedent in the Federal Republic and in Western Europe: the law on the financing of private schools passed in July 1961 secures private schools a public subsidy of up to 98% of their total costs. As a result of this law, the SPD parliamentary group fears further fragmentation and confessionalization of our school system – and now, after the fragmentation of the people’s schools as a result of the first school law [of 1952], also in higher schooling. The low contribution of, in some cases, only 2% is [...] too great an incentive for private school operators to found new private schools in considerable numbers. Especially in smaller municipalities which do not find it easy to keep a higher school, there is the danger of a ‘clearance sale’ of the public school system. Even now, every fifth higher school student in NRW attends a private school. In all the discussions, the speakers of the SPD parliamentary group have made it clear that they support private schools as a supplement to the public school system but reject any one-sided, preferential treatment of the private schools through full public financing.”

Similarly, the NRW FDP made the following demands in its program for the NRW elections of 1962: “The public financing of private schools [should be limited], to preserve their character and avoid any erosion of the public school system; [there must be] an end to the increasing confessionalization of the school system [...]”<sup>21</sup>

It should be remarked that the far-reaching erosion of the public school system which the SPD and FDP feared because of the law of 1961 did not take place, at least not within general higher schooling. The number of private *Realschulen* and *Gymnasien* even decreased a little (cf. numbers quoted above, p. 273). Even though NRW had private school friendly regulations, the conditions formulated in the Constitution apparently had a debilitating effect, especially with regard to non-religious private school operators.

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<sup>20</sup> In 1981, the SPD attempted to increase the contributions of private school operators from six to ten percent (Lemper/Westphalen, 1981, pp. 238ff). This revision of the law on the financing of private schools was, however, deemed unconstitutional by the NRW constitutional court which the CDU had appealed to. The respective paragraph of the law thus remained unchanged until 2005, when the law was incorporated into a broader general school law.

<sup>21</sup> Later, the FDP changed its position regarding private schools and became a more active supporter of them. In its program for the NRW elections of 1980, it stated that a “free society needs free schools in private operation” which should serve to develop new forms of learning and which should be publicly financed and supported. However, it still emphasized that the common school should be the rule and that private schools should be open to anyone independent of denomination and should not discriminate.

By the time the SPD and FDP regained power in December 1966, conditions were more favorable for a reform of denominational schooling. In 1966, the last CDU government had introduced nine years of obligatory schooling and defined the upper grades of the people's school as a new secondary school, the *Hauptschule*. However, the primary school and the *Hauptschule* were still one administrative unit and still denominational. According to a poll of January 1967, 65 percent of practicing Catholics and 85 percent of practicing Protestants in NRW now supported common schools for both denominations (Düding, 2008, p. 559). Processes of secularization within the population were beginning to make themselves felt. The reform of the people's school became one of the greatest reform projects of the social democratic-liberal government. The reform entailed a change of the school articles in the Constitution and therefore depended on the CDU's approval. The compromise came about against the massive opposition of the Catholic Church and its bishops who thought that the Concordat of the Vatican with the German Reich from 1933 forbade a weakening of denominational schooling and who even threatened to found a new Catholic party. The main argument of the bishops was still that parents should have the right to choose denominational schooling for their children. The Protestant Church, on the other hand, accepted the reform (Düding, 2008, pp. 557, 560ff). The people's school was now finally split up into a four-year primary school (*Grundschule*) and a five-year secondary school (*Hauptschule*). The primary school would still be denominationally based but the newly founded *Hauptschule* was to become independent of denomination. However, denominational *Hauptschulen* could still be founded either as private schools with funding from the federal state, or as public schools, if a majority of parents asked for this – as long as a non-denominational *Hauptschule* was geographically reachable and as long as the school was big enough to ensure separate grades for all age groups (Düding, 2008, pp. 555ff).

This compromise was a result of lengthy negotiations between the SPD and CDU (cf. Düding, 2008, pp. 555ff). For the CDU, Wilhelm Lenz, who was interviewed for this study, was one of the main negotiators. He summed up the conflict as follows:

“In the discussion, the SPD emphasized greatly that we were always supporters of a common school, we have never liked the denominational school and we want a new regulation and so on. The CDU was undecided. The CDU was largely a supporter of the denominational school, though this was a Catholic issue. The Protestants said, basically we don't want to fight over this. Basically we [...] support a Christian common school. We don't want any more conflicts with Catholics against Protestants which was very much in the background in the Weimar period.”

Lenz was a Catholic but said openly in the interview that the Catholic Church had been a much more difficult partner for him in this process than the Protestants. He described how the five bishops of NRW had pressured him, especially the bishop of the Catholic diocese of

Aachen. The bishops demanded to “define the position of the CDU” on this matter. However, a generational shift was taking place in the CDU at the time. Lenz belonged to the younger of the CDU politicians, who had joined the party after the war and who thought that the opposition between Catholics and Protestants should be a thing of the past. In this spirit, the CDU had been founded as a denominational union. In Lenz’s words, he did not want another “cultural struggle”. Some of the older CDU politicians, who had defended denominational schooling during the Weimar period when they had been Centre Party representatives, did not agree. As Lenz explained:

“I was aware that the position of the old – I would say – within the CDU, for denominational schools, meaning Catholic religious education, Catholic masses and so on, educating children into Catholics... that was somehow after the Second World War [...] over. And people [...] didn’t really care [anymore] about all of this.”

For this reason, Lenz and the CDU committee which supported him during the negotiations (which also included the former Minister of Education, Paul Mikat, another young and comparatively reform-oriented CDU politician) resisted pressure by the Catholic Church. In the negotiations, they developed the compromise described above which left some loopholes for a small number of Catholic *Hauptschulen* and which retained denominational schooling on the primary school level. The majority of the CDU representatives eventually accepted this. With this compromise, the conflict over denominational schooling was mostly put to rest though it never vanished entirely, since the public school system of NRW was never fully secularized.

In 1969, teacher training at the Pedagogical Colleges was also decoupled from denomination. The CDU accepted a change in laws and the Constitution in return for several concessions. The Catholic Church was given decisive influence on the appointment of professors of and lecturers in theology and each Pedagogical College needed to appoint at least two Catholic theological professors. The Catholic Church was also granted the right to establish institutions for further teacher training which teachers could attend voluntarily (Düding, 2008, pp. 580ff).

Overall, this conflict demanded much time and energy from all the school-political actors in NRW during the 1950s and 1960s. Before the compromise of 1967/68, there was simply no room for debates about comprehensive schooling because the school was not even comprehensive with regard to denomination. In addition, the conflict stabilized the alliance between the CDU and the Catholic Church. Even though the Catholic Church was not satisfied with the compromise, the CDU remained the only political party which saw itself as a representative of the Catholic Church’s interests in school politics. The compromise which was reached is an expression of this. The CDU also ensured that NRW regulations were designed in a private-school friendly way which was important for Catholic private schools. In general, Catholic Church officials could count on a steady stream of information and stable

cooperation from the CDU. In return, the Catholic Church did much to mobilize its members to support the CDU. This is one of the explanations for the CDU's highly integrative character with regard to the social background of its members and voters.

On the other hand, the conflict also created and stabilized an alliance between the SPD and FDP in NRW school politics. Despite the strong influence of economic liberals in the FDP, the FDP opposed not only denominational but also private schooling during the first post-war decades. The main explanation for this is that private schools in NRW were mostly Catholic and that the FDP opposed the far-reaching influence of the Catholic Church on the political development in NRW. The FDP first adopted a more private-school friendly position when the conflict over denominational schooling had been put to rest (cf. footnote 21 above). One can say that both the SPD and the FDP stood more on the side of the state in the state-church conflicts.

## 6.2 Struggles over centralization

As demonstrated in Chapter 4, Norway and NRW differ greatly with regard to population density and geographical conditions. In 1960, an average of 11.6 people per km<sup>2</sup> lived in Norway. About 57 percent of the Norwegian population lived in densely populated areas, meaning a population cluster with at least 200 residents and fewer than 50 meters' distance between the houses (cf. Table 4.2). In NRW, an average of 420 people lived per km<sup>2</sup> in 1955 and over 91 percent lived in urban municipalities with more than 2000 inhabitants (cf. Table 4.4). These enormous differences meant that Norwegian school reformers had to deal with a very different kind of challenge with regard to the centralization of schooling and the quality of rural schooling. Nonetheless, centralization was an issue in North Rhine Westphalian politics as well, since there were a few rural municipalities in NRW in which the small, village people's school had been the norm. In the following, the two cases are analyzed in turn.

### 6.2.1 The centralization debate in Norway

As discussed previously, all three center parties had their strongholds in the countryside. In particular, this applies to the Centre Party which aimed from the start to represent farmers primarily. In fact, it was called the Farmers' Party until 1959, when the name was changed in an effort to represent other groups of the (rural) population too. Decentralization and the economic and cultural strengthening of Norway's rural areas have been the party's main political goals ever since its foundation in 1920. Schooling plays an important role in such a program, since schools in small rural communities often function as cultural centers, allowing opportunities for exchange and thus generally increasing the quality of life of the local population. Local schools are also of interest for the local economy since they serve to educate future local employees. In its political programs of 1957 to 1977, the Centre Party therefore repeatedly emphasized the importance of a "decentralized school system". It



opposed the development towards increasingly larger schools and insisted that no rural municipality should be forced to close down its primary school against the population's will. At the same time, it supported the improvement of schooling in the countryside as such and insisted that rural municipalities had to receive as much financial support as possible so that schooling conditions would be equalized across the country. While the Centre Party's programs were most detailed and extensive with regard to these issues, the two other center parties also supported decentralization, largely for the same reasons.

However, this should not be taken to mean that the other parties openly dismissed such arguments. On the contrary, the programs of the Labor Party, the Socialist People's Party/Socialist Left Party and the Conservative Party also included references to the necessity to improve schooling, especially in the poorest rural municipalities. The Socialist People's Party was also especially clear in its rejection of too much centralization, stating for example in its working program of 1965 that "the first years of the children's school [*småskolen*] should be located so close to the home that transport by car is avoided". Neither the Labor nor the Conservative Party included equally categorical formulations in their programs but they too showed an understanding of the needs of the countryside. For the Labor Party, the most important aim was better schooling for working class and rural youths and thus increased investment in rural municipalities, especially at the level of the children's and youth school. The Conservative Party instead focused in its programs of 1961 and 1965 on the importance of expanding upper secondary schooling in the countryside. They demanded that no municipality should be forced to close down its *gymnas* due to centralization at this level of schooling. Especially from the 1970s, the Conservative Party and the Labor Party also emphasized the importance of increased decentralization – but of course, by this time, the major changes had already taken place. In the following, the conflicts related to centralization are analyzed chronologically, beginning with the law of 1959, followed by the continuous debates of the issue during the 1960s, the changes made to the law of 1969 and the increased emphasis on decentralization in the 1970s.

Much centralization of the school system had already occurred before the introduction of the youth school, based on the laws of the 1930s. Social democrats had aimed at equalizing schooling conditions in the whole of the country from the start of their period of governing. Nevertheless, in the 1950s, the conditions were still very different and there were separate laws for rural and urban schools. The rural people's schools were often so small that they could not divide children into different age groups at all or had to group them in fewer than seven groups. The minimum amount of schooling was much lower and the curricula were different as well. This was changed with the law of 1959, the first school law which applied to rural and urban schools alike. In principle, this was supported by all of parliament. All parties agreed that it was necessary to improve the rural schools and lessen the differences in schooling standards by integrating the previously separate laws.

However, some disagreements within the parliamentary education committee indicate that the center parties stood in opposition to the Labor Party and partly to the Conservative Party in some of the details. For example, the three center party representatives on the committee, Hordvik (Liberal Party), Hovdhaugen (Centre Party) and Ommedal (Christian Democrats), suggested a change to the law proposal according to which the state would finance up to 50 percent of the costs of new school buildings. They argued that economically weak rural municipalities would need much more state support or else they would be left behind in school development. The Labor Party and the Conservative Party representatives agreed that state support for weak municipalities had to be increased but thought that 50 percent state financing for school buildings would be too high, considering that the law already contained a paragraph according to which the counties had to pay 50 percent. In effect, it would thus be possible for a municipality to receive up to 100 percent financing from county and state together. The majority of the Labor Party and the Conservative Party thought that this would stand in opposition “to the old principle that municipalities should organize their schools themselves” (*Innst. O. II (1959), p. 14*). The center party representatives also argued that financing of school buildings by the county should be increased from 50 to 65 percent which the majority of the committee, including the conservatives, rejected (*ibid.*).

Furthermore, paragraph two of the law included regulations for the reorganization of school districts. The merging of school districts often led to the closing of local village schools. In this regard, the school directors, who were appointed by the ministry, played an important role as organizers of comprehensive school reforms and of centralization. According to Telhaug and Mediås (2003, pp. 190ff), the school directors were usually welcomed by municipalities as advisors in the reform process but sometimes centralization led to conflicts between school directors and other bodies on the local level. In case of such disagreements, both the county school boards and the school directors had the right to appeal to the ministry. Here, the center party representatives, and the conservative representative, Christie, suggested a change to the law text. They did not like the fact that the school director, a single individual, could appeal to the ministry by himself, whereas a majority of the county school board had to consist of at least three people. Instead, they suggested that each member of the county school board and the school director should be allowed to appeal to the ministry as long as one more member of the board supported them in the appeal. The two other conservative representatives, and all of the Labor Party representatives, thought that there was no reason to change the current regulations on this (*Innst. O. II (1959), p. 7*). This illustrates that the center parties were more skeptical of the attempts by the central government to control reforms in the countryside, for example with the aid of the school directors.

An important reason for the center parties’ representatives voting against the law of 1959 was also that they were worried that it would lead to excessive centralization, meaning long distances to school or an increase in boarding schools. They opposed boarding schools and

centralization, especially in the first six years of the primary school; they generally argued that reforms had to be based on the existing school infrastructure so that “elastic” transitions to nine-year obligatory comprehensive schooling would be possible (*Innst. O. II (1959)*, pp. 10f). In this, they received the support of the Conservative Party representatives on the parliamentary education committee but it is clear that the conservatives’ main motivation was different. As discussed previously, they did not care primarily about the rural *framhaldsskoler* or about centralization but rather about the urban *realskoler* (cf. section 5.2.5).

During the 1960s, centralization and the discussions about it continued. By 1963, around 72 percent of all students in the people’s or children’s schools across the country went to schools divided into yearly age groups. In the cities, this was 96 percent. In the rural districts, the percentage had increased from 41 percent in 1953 to 63 percent in 1963. Still, around 22 percent of students in the countryside attended schools that were divided into only four or five age groups and around 15 percent attended schools that were even smaller, in one percent of the cases even without any differentiation by age (*Innstilling frå Folkeskolekomitéen av 1963 (1965)*, p. 151). Furthermore, 5076 primary school students lived in boarding schools or boarding homes close to their school (*Innstilling frå Folkeskolekomitéen av 1963 (1965)*, p. 282). The people’s school committee projected in its report of 1965 that better roads, generally improved transport conditions and the decreasing rural population would lead to even more centralization. The declared aim was to get rid of the smallest village schools which divided children into fewer than three age groups, since these were considered pedagogically inferior and too expensive. There was also a lack of qualified teachers, especially in the rural schools (*Innstilling frå Folkeskolekomitéen av 1963 (1965)*, pp. 151f). However, the total number of teachers relative to the number of students was quite high in comparison to NRW (cf. section 6.2.2): In 1963/64, there were 16,815 children’s school teachers for 419,441 children’s school students (approx. 25 students per teacher) (*SSB*, 1966, p. 269, own calculation). In the academic secondary school types of the *realskole* and *gymnas*, the average number of students per teacher was even lower (approx. 21 students per teacher). Moreover, in the continuation school (*framhaldsskole*), there were only around 17 students per teacher (*SSB*, 1966, p. 269, own calculations).

For the youth school, the pressures of centralization were even greater than for the children’s schools. The reason was that the children’s schools did not have ability grouping or other forms of differentiation. The early curricula of the youth school with the various tracks, ability groups and elective subjects implied that a certain number of students were required. The people’s school committee suggested that a youth school should have at least three parallel classes in each grade (*Innstilling frå Folkeskolekomitéen av 1963 (1965)*, p. 155). In some urban areas, the early enthusiasm for differentiation led to extremely large youth schools. In Bergen, there was for example one youth school with 14 parallel classes (*Innstilling frå Folkeskolekomitéen av 1963 (1965)*, p. 279).

To the Centre Party, the centralization of the children's school was, however, clearly the bigger problem. As the Centre Party representative, Undheim, put it in the parliamentary school debate of 1963:

“It has often been said that the nine-year school is of great benefit for the villages in that it places them on a par with the cities in terms of schooling. And there is much truth in this. The youth school exam or the kind of *realskole* exam that all rural young people will now receive in their home village, instead of having to travel further away, is of the greatest value for the villages, both with regard to the youths who move away from the village and those who stay at home. But the advantage for the villages lies at the youth school level, not as far as the children's school is concerned. The villages already had an equally good or better children's school than the cities and there is no reason to take it from them.” (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, May 21, 1963, p. 3343*)

Undheim further argued that the rural children's schools had managed to teach children just as much even though there had been tuition on just three days of the week. According to him, the reasons for this were that the children spent more time studying at home than was usual in the cities, that they were taken better care of at home and that they were not as “overly schooled” as city children. He was also worried that rural children would lose touch with the local economy and would be raised to become “city youths”, uninterested in and incapable of doing “the hard toil on farms tough to cultivate” (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, May 21, 1963, p. 3343*). Here, the Centre Party's opposition to centralization at the children's school level was coupled with an opposition to the city's curricula and general cultural standards which were seen as detrimental to the rural way of life. In this regard, the Centre Party was more conservative than the Labor Party, whose politicians enthusiastically supported not only the structural but also the curricular changes which resulted from the equalization of regulations for rural and city schools. Presumably, not many Labor Party representatives would have agreed that the rural schools were actually “better” than the city schools. This was probably a fairly unusual point of view at the time, for despite some reservations voiced by the center parties, overall there was a broad consensus that a certain degree of centralization was necessary to improve rural schools.

In individual cases, pressures of centralization sometimes led to fierce conflicts between various administrative levels, for example between the individual schools' boards, the municipality's school boards, the county's school boards, the school directors, the ministry and the local population. In one instance, namely in the small mountain village of Vats in central Norway, parents and teachers even decided to found a private school to replace the fourth to sixth grades of the public people's school which had been closed down. This took place even though the municipal school board had voted against it – though only with a slight majority. The school director had reluctantly accepted the municipality's decision but the

county school board had objected and appealed to the ministry under the Labor Party's minister, Sivertsen, who had ruled in 1961 that the upper grades of the children's school should be centralized in the village of Leveld, 12.8 kilometers away. This was unacceptable to the parents of Vats, who wanted their children to be able to walk to school and who were afraid that once the upper stage of the people's school vanished, the lower stage would vanish too (*Innstilling IV fra Privatskoleutvalget (1968), p. 24*). In the report of the private school committee of 1968, it is claimed that this conflict is "in many ways typical of the centralization debates across the country" (*Innstilling IV fra Privatskoleutvalget (1968), p. 32*). It was, however, the only case in which the village population took the matter into their own hands and actually build a new school building collectively and without payment and hired their own teacher. To the administration, the school was a "difficult case, because it would be impossible to implement the large nationwide plan for the people's school if all district regulations were annulled" (*Innstilling IV fra Privatskoleutvalget (1968), p. 32*).

Over time, the general enthusiasm for larger schools began to wane, however. It was now said that very large schools led to pedagogical and administrative problems and that they made it difficult to develop "a good school atmosphere" (*Innst. O. XIV (1968-69), p. 10*). As we have seen in Chapters 4 and 5, the pedagogical trend of the late 1960s and 1970s was also to differentiate less and less based on tracks and ability groups in the youth school. Large schools were therefore no longer as necessary as previously. In its report on the primary school law of 1969, the parliamentary education committee unanimously supported the suggestion of the Christian democratic minister, Bondevik, that youth schools should have a maximum of six parallel classes. Youth schools with only two parallel classes were also allowed but should usually be connected to children's schools. In the case of very isolated areas such as islands, even smaller youth schools were allowed based on exemptions granted by the ministry (*Ot. Prp. Nr. 59 (1966-67), pp. 38f; Innst. O. XIV (1968-69), p. 10*). According to Jakob Aano (1991, p. 124), this was another example of Bondevik's capacity to withstand pressure, in this case from rural school politicians who were disappointed that a minimum of two parallel classes remained the norm and who had expected the non-Labor government to go further in its correction of the "centralized school expansion the Labor Party had initiated". This interpretation is supported by a remark by the Centre Party representative, Einar Hovdhaugen, in the parliamentary debate on the primary school law of 1969:

"Correctly or incorrectly it has often been claimed that the municipalities at times have been pressured by the government to go further on the path of centralization than they often wished. This has often created antipathy and conflict around the new school regulation. The new school law should put municipalities in a freer position. But I would like to ask the ministry to assume a liberal stance with respect to exemptions from the demands regarding the size of the youth school, in cases where the

geographical and transport conditions indicate this.” (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, April 21, 1969, p. 275f*)

At a later point in the debate, representatives of the Liberal Party and the Christian Democrats uttered their concern regarding exemptions for youth schools which had fewer than two parallel classes. The minister, however, assured them that exemptions would be granted liberally and pointed out that the number of small youth schools with two or fewer parallel classes had already risen from 62 in 1966-67 to 107 in the forthcoming school year of 1970-71 (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, April 21, 1969, p. 369*). The Labor Party representative, Per Karstensen, remarked in response to this:

“I listened with interest to the information from the minister about the tendency we can see today for smaller youth school units. This is probably a tendency which one can find not least on the purely pedagogical level. It is becoming easier to manage and easier to make possible smaller youth schools.” (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, April 21, 1969, p. 369*)

Presumably, he was referring to changes in the forms of differentiation in the youth school. At this point, the Labor Party had begun to support pedagogical differentiation within the classroom and thus no longer saw the need to insist on larger school units at any cost.

The Centre Party also suggested a change to the law proposal according to which youth schools with fewer than two parallel classes would be allowed to remain independent of children’s schools. Their representatives argued that such a connection between the children’s and the youth school would lead to overly large schools and would weaken the small youth schools pedagogically, leading to a lack of qualified teachers trained for the youth school level. The proposal received no further remarks from any of the other parties. It received 13 votes, all presumably from the Centre Party, and was thus rejected (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, April 21, 1969, pp. 368ff*).

Finally, with regard to the merging of school districts and the relocation of schools, the law of 1969 contained a small change. In paragraph three, it was now specified that the population of the school district should only be allowed to vote on such changes if the municipal board or the municipal school board requested this. In the previous laws, special rules had applied to rural municipalities which had been allowed to vote on such issues in all cases. The votes were, however, non-binding. The aim was now to create equal rules for rural and urban municipalities which was the reason why all other parties apart from the Centre Party agreed to the change. However, the parliamentary education committee underlined that it should remain usual to let the population of rural municipalities have a say on such issues (*Innst. O. XIV (1968-69), pp. 11f*). The Centre Party was not satisfied with this specification and suggested that all school districts should be allowed to vote on such issues in all cases. The proposal received 17 votes which indicates that a few other representatives besides the Centre

Party's must have voted for it (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, April 21, 1969, p. 371*). Nevertheless, the Centre Party was clearly the most concerned about these issues.

In the 1970s, "decentralization" became a buzzword used by all parties. In the name of democratization and decentralization, it was demanded that the individual school, the teachers, students and parents should be given more influence over decision-making. Of course, for the different parties, the term "decentralization" did not have the same meaning. The conservative, Lars Roar Langslet (1977, p. 101), summed up his view of decentralization thus:

"We need a school that has better interaction with the society around it. No more mammoth schools! But school units as small as we can manage and with good distribution [across the country]. We must end the isolation of the young in large educational ghettos, distanced from ordinary social life and social responsibility. We must give the local society more decision-making power over the local schools and end unnecessary central management through an unstoppable flood of regulations, instructions and provisions from the ministry and expert councils. If other countries west of the Iron Curtain dare to treat people outside of such organs as adult, responsible creatures, we must also be able to dare to do so."

More specifically, the conservatives used the decentralization argument to argue for the abolition of the Experimental Council and to argue against the central regulations of 1979 which forbade permanent ability grouping (cf. *Forhandlinger i Stortinget, May 11, 1979*). In this, they were supported by the Centre Party and the Christian Democrats who also thought that the Experimental Council was a top-down structure which was not sensitive enough to local needs and which had made exaggerated demands with respect to centralization. In the final debate on permanent ability grouping in May 1979, the Centre Party and Christian democratic representatives also emphasized that the main reason why they opposed new central regulations was that they thought that the local schools should themselves decide which forms of differentiation they found apt. In this regard, it seems as if the conservatives had managed to convince them that any kind of central regulation now had to be fought, even though small local schools often could not use ability grouping anyway, since they lacked sufficient numbers of students. The regulations of 1979 were thus not of much consequence for rural schools which is probably the reason why the Centre Party and the Christian Democrats did not oppose them with the same ideological fervor as the conservatives. The Labor Party and the Liberal Party, on the other hand, also emphasized that local schools should receive sufficient and, in some cases, increased pedagogical influence but not with regard to whether there should be permanent ability grouping.

Overall nonetheless, the Centre Party and the other center parties supported the youth school reform in principle. The main reason for this was that the introduction of the youth school in

many cases meant that rural students received two years of additional schooling to which they had not previously had access. This was especially true for the Northern counties. In the words of Kjell Horn:

“In Finnmark, in the counties furthest north, the school supply was miserably bad. And when the state decided they wanted to start with what they called experiments, [...] start with nine-year schooling, these counties received full funding to build these fantastic [...] school palaces [which were] out of this world. With boarding schools and everything. And I worked in one of these. And I had Arthur Gjermundsen [...] as] school director in Finnmark. I had many fun meetings with him. And there was such an enthusiasm for the nine-year school in Finnmark because... [from a situation] where there had been almost no school supply, all young people now received a proper nine-year school supply. And that was a fantastic cultural boost out of this world in northern Norway.<sup>22</sup>

It should be added that the Labor Party was strong in the northern counties as well. In other rural parts of Norway, it also had many active local politicians who supported the introduction of the youth school and forged local alliances with center party politicians. The youth school was generally welcomed in the countryside because it was connected to the introduction of nine-year obligatory schooling. The trend for decreasing organizational differentiation made it even easier to introduce this school type throughout the country. Even though the conservatives in some cases succeeded in building alliances with the center parties based on the argument of centralization, the issue overall did not contribute much to the cohesion of the non-Labor camp. The conservatives were still perceived by the center parties as an urban party which did not really prioritize rural interests. The Labor Party's efforts to increase the quality of education in the countryside were more believable from the center parties' point of view. It should therefore be concluded that the centralization debates were no obstacle to the prolongation of comprehensive schooling. On the contrary, the need for small local schools even contributed to the transition to pedagogical differentiation in the youth school.

### 6.2.2 Debates about rural schooling and centralization in NRW

In NRW, many farmers and Christian laymen were organized in the CDU. In general, the CDU was strong in the countryside, where small rural people's and later primary schools were still common. In addition, the denominational separation of students meant that schools were often smaller than they would have been if both denominations had been taught together. In their party programs and in the public and parliamentary debates, the CDU therefore emphasized the value of smaller schools. During the 1960s, there were, however, internal disagreements regarding this issue within the CDU and the party's position was changed and modernized. Later, in its programs for the elections of 1975 and 1980, the CDU suggested

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<sup>22</sup> For more on Gjermundsen's role in Finnmark, cf. Chapter 5, footnote 8.



that primary schools should not have more than three parallel classes for each age group, for the sake of “pedagogical lucidity” and that one class per age group should be possible if necessary. In 1980, the CDU program suggested that just two classes for the four grades of the primary school should be allowed in exceptional cases. At this point, the number of students had begun to decline which made new – or maybe one should say, old – solutions necessary. Nevertheless, the CDU rejected the cooperative school which was presented as a solution to the problem of decreasing student numbers by the SPD-FDP government in the second half of the 1970s. The main line of the CDU with regard to lower secondary schooling in the countryside was to expand and preserve the number of *Realschulen* and *Gymnasien*. In the CDU program for the national elections of 1980, the party stated:

“Schools need to be preserved in adequate local proximity. Children and youths in rural areas are also entitled to a local, varied supply of educational institutions. We will prevent the decrease in the number of students leading to a wave of school closures and more and more students having to be driven to a distant central school.”

The SPD, on the other hand, continuously opposed the existence of “dwarf schools”, as social democrats termed them. Even though the SPD had its political strongholds in the cities, it justified this with the wish to improve living and educational conditions in the countryside. In contrast to the CDU, the SPD did not believe that the quality of small people’s schools could ever be on a par with larger schools divided into separate classes for all grades. For this reason, the SPD’s programs suggested using school buses and centralizing schools. During the 1960s, the SPD’s irritation was focused on the undivided or little divided mostly denominational people’s schools (cf. 6.1.2 above). The SPD suggested the introduction of “center schools” (*Mittelpunktschulen*) in the countryside, where particularly the upper grades of the people’s schools would be centralized so that separate classes for the age groups would be possible. The compromise of 1967/68 brought them closer to their goal (cf. below). Also later, the SPD in NRW continuously advocated in its party programs that primary schools should have a minimum of two parallel classes for each age group, as this would increase the quality of schooling. The SPD also supported the expansion of the *Realschule* and *Gymnasium* in the countryside which took place in the 1960s; from 1967, however it emphasized that the focus should now be on the development of the *Hauptschule* (cf. Ministry of Culture of NRW, 1967, p. 3). In the 1970s, this focus shifted to the development of comprehensive schooling and later cooperative schooling as a compromise designed especially for rural areas. Nevertheless, the SPD did not manage to convince the rural population of the benefits of the comprehensive or the cooperative school; quite to the contrary, in fact.

The FDP also favored in its party programs the centralization of schools in the countryside and the equalization of opportunities for city and rural youth. During the late 1950s and early

1960s, liberals fought especially against denominational and private schooling, partly because these schools were too small. During the CDU-FDP coalition of 1962 to 1966, FDP speakers supported some of the SPD's motions for the establishment of center schools. Later, the FDP's party programs tried to appeal to the rural population, arguing that comprehensive or cooperative schooling would make it easier to preserve a good supply of education in rural areas. For some FDP politicians, such as Jürgen Hinrichs, this was considered the most convincing argument for cooperative schooling.

In the following, the debates about the undivided – and in many cases, denominational – people's schools and the introduction of the *Hauptschule* during the 1960s are reviewed once more in more detail, this time not with a focus on denominational schooling (cf. above), but with a focus on debates about centralization. Finally, in the last part of the section, the CDU's focus on the preservation – and expansion – of the parallel school system in the countryside is contrasted with the SPD's and, in part, also the FDP's attempt to introduce comprehensive or cooperative schools as a solution to the declining number of students, especially in the countryside. It is shown that the SPD and FDP did not manage to build alliances with the rural population in school politics and that the rural-urban cleavage remained latent beneath the cross-class alliance within the CDU.

In fact, there were surprisingly many undivided people's schools in NRW during the 1960s, both in comparison with the much less populated Norway and other federal states. In 1960, there were 895 one-class schools, 1050 two-class schools, 779 three-class schools and 509 four-class schools of in total 6365 people's schools (Düding, 2008, p. 492). In 1959, the average number of students per class was 39.2 and the average people's school had 5.7 classes, even though it comprised eight age groups or grades (*Statistisches Landesamt Nordrhein-Westfalen*, 1960, p. 44, own calculations). In 1963, there were still around 2000 one-class or two-class people's schools, as the SPD politician and later Minister of Education, Fritz Holthoff, lamented in several parliamentary debates (*Landtag NRW, April 10, 1962, p. 3009; Landtag NRW, May 14, 1963, p. 535*). However, the CDU Minister of Education, Paul Mikat, pointed out that undivided one-class schools were attended by only 1.8 percent of all students, while 40.4 percent of people's school students attended schools with at least eight classes. 82.7 percent of the students attended schools with five or more classes (*Landtag NRW, May 14, 1963, p. 545*).

In April 1962, the NRW parliament debated the massive shortage of teachers in the people's school, in response to an interpellation made by the FDP (*Landtag NRW, April 10, 1962*). Even though the small schools were not the main focus of this debate, they were mentioned several times. Both the SPD politician, Fritz Holthoff, and the FDP politician, Ernst Günther Herzberg, argued that the lack of teachers was partly a result of the large number of “dwarf schools”, as Holthoff termed them (*Landtag NRW, April 10, 1962, p. 3009, p. 3019*). These

schools, they argued, bound up too many teacher resources in comparison with the city schools and made the teaching profession unattractive to young people who were not interested in teaching in tiny village schools. Furthermore, they suggested that people's schools should be centralized in order to overcome the "medieval" structure of the current system (Herzberg, *Landtag NRW, April 10, 1962, p. 3020*). The CDU representative, Albert Pürsten, defended the small schools and emphasized their value to the village. He thought that it would be an undesirable "mechanization of our pedagogical life" if six-year old children from 15 different villages were driven to a central school (*Landtag NRW, April 10, 1962, p. 3012*). To this, the FDP representative Herzberg replied that the school was no longer the "intellectual center of a village" because more and more teachers commuted to their village schools from cities and refused to live in the village permanently (*Landtag NRW, April 10, 1962, p. 3019*).

In its program for the elections of 1962, the SPD NRW included the following sentences:

"The rural child must have the same number of educational opportunities as the city child. Center schools which unite children from several villages in a centrally located school must be established and equipped so modernly that their performance will be wholly equal to the performance of the city schools."

The CDU won the NRW elections of 1962 and formed a government with the FDP. In the following years, the SPD parliamentary group turned the demand for center schools into one of its most important areas of work. In February 1963, the issue came up in a budgetary debate (*Landtag NRW, February 12, 1963*). Holthoff (SPD) suggested that the small people's schools should be phased out and replaced by central schools (*Landtag NRW, February 12, 1963, p. 251*). To this, Albert Pürsten (CDU) replied:

"The central school was contrasted with the schools with not much division and one-class schools by Mr. Holthoff. [...], I think that we should never see this question as a matter of principle but we should look at it based on the characteristics of the district [...]; these questions can only be judged and decided on from the local perspective and based only on the individual case. [...]. [...], let us not underestimate the value of the school to the village also with respect to the future development. We should really discuss this without rage or zealotry or based on extremes and we should not aim at general regulations but we should try to achieve an improvement of our school system in the countryside by way of enlightenment and support. But I warn against [...] seeking salvation exclusively in the central school. If we equip the small school in the countryside as well as the larger school, if we make an effort so that good teachers come to the small rural schools, then, ladies and gentlemen, we will see that it can be a fine and rewarding task to be involved in the life of a village as a teacher." (*Landtag NRW, February 12, 1963, p. 269*).

In response, the FDP representative Herzberg remarked again that the school might have been the intellectual center of the village in earlier times, “when one still traveled by means of the post cart or horse”, but no longer (*Landtag NRW, February 12, 1963, p. 278*). The young SPD representative Johannes Rau argued that the current school system was adapted to the “first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century”, instead of to the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He lamented that young teachers risked being placed in tiny schools “in the dark countryside” without any colleagues and without sufficient public transport facilities to maintain personal contact with family and friends. CDU representatives reacted with yells to his words, suggesting that he should tell the voters during election campaigns that they were living in “the dark countryside” and arguing that the result of centralization would be that all students would have to commute, instead of just one teacher (*Landtag NRW, February 12, 1963, pp. 287f*).

Shortly after this debate, the SPD proposed a motion according to which center schools [*Mittelpunktschulen*] would be established in the rural areas of NRW (*Landtag NRW, April 2, 1963*). These schools should comprise grades five to eight of the people’s school. For this level of schooling, the motion suggested, a well-regulated school operation [*geordneter Schulbetrieb*] could only be guaranteed if all age groups or grades were taught in separate classes. The term “well-regulated school operation” referred to the Constitution, in which the CDU had made sure in 1950 that one-class schools were explicitly defined as such (cf. above, p. 274). All people’s schools which could not comply with this should be shortened to four years so students could attend a center school from grade five. The federal state should pay for the use of school busses. The motion ended with the following careful remarks:

“During the implementation of the reorganization of the rural school system in particular [...] any coercion or schematization of the school operators is to be rejected. Instead, the open-mindedness and initiative of the municipalities and other participants in school life are to be brought about through the speedy planning and realization of exemplary individual center schools.” (*Landtag NRW, April 2, 1963*)

In the following parliamentary debate on the motion, speakers of the CDU mentioned this paragraph several times, while emphasizing that centralization could indeed not be brought about by coercion and voicing doubts whether the SPD really understood this. The Minister of Education, Paul Mikat (CDU), replied very carefully. On the one hand, he did not want to “glorify” the rural schools; on the other hand, he was aware of their “great value” (*Landtag NRW, May 14, 1963, p. 546*). On the one hand, he supported the merging of small schools “where it seems reasonable” and in ways that safeguarded the “principle of self-government” of the municipal school operators (*Landtag NRW, May 14, 1963, p. 548*). On the other hand, to him it was an “open question” whether dividing schools into classes for all age groups always meant better performance (*Landtag NRW, May 14, 1963, p. 547*). Furthermore, transporting students by bus was undesirable and “shrunk schools” comprising only grades

one to four were not sufficient to uphold the “originality of the rural schools” (*Landtag NRW, May 14, 1963, p. 549*). Instead, he suggested that only grades eight and nine – once the ninth school year had been introduced – should be centralized. He also pointed out that centralization in the countryside would not improve the lack of teachers because most of the small rural schools had around 40 students per class which complied with the regulation for the maximum number of students per teacher. Finally, Mikat made a remark which is characteristic of the approach of the CDU to school politics. He refused “any leveling, not only between city and countryside but also between differently structured rural areas”, while claiming that the problem had to be solved in different ways in different places. Furthermore, in his view, “differentness but equal rights and equal value” characterized “the relation of city and countryside today” (*Landtag NRW, May 14, 1963, p. 546*). The emphasis on “differentness but equal rights” sums up one of the main arguments of the CDU not only in this but also in other school-political debates.

Other CDU representatives, namely Peter Giesen and Anton Volmert, spoke more passionately about the small village schools than Mikat. Giesen warned against taking the older students from the school and thereby “executing” it and emphasized the pedagogical advantage of teachers living close to the students’ parents (*Landtag NRW, May 14, 1963, p. 570*). Volmert, who represented the rural municipality of Warburg, explained that the introduction of center schools for grades five to eight in line with the SPD motion would actually mean an increase in one-class schools in his municipality. The reason was for example that a two-class school which would lose its oldest students and would then be reduced to a one-class school for grades one to four. He also claimed that the reform would worsen the lack of teachers. In general, he was appalled by the motion:

“One thing I know – I come from a small village – if such a village loses its school, it loses a center of cultural education. The opposition of very many people out there hangs [...] on the following consideration: our village is no longer attractive for anything, not even as an industrial location, if we no longer even have a school.” (*Landtag NRW, May 14, 1963, p. 574*)

The SPD speakers justified the motion by pointing to the unequal educational results in cities and villages and underlined that their aim was to promote the talents of the rural population. Holthoff (SPD) pointed to the USA, Sweden and even Norway, where centralization of the school system was taking place. One-class schools were an “anachronism” in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (*Landtag NRW, May 14, 1963, pp. 532f*). The FDP representatives Herzberg and Luchtenberg showed sympathy for the SPD motion and rejected the CDU speakers’ plea for the small village schools, despite the fact that they were in a coalition with the CDU at the time.

In January 1965, the SPD once again attempted to initiate a reform of the people’s school. This time, the social democrats suggested that all people’s schools – not only those in the

countryside – should be divided into a four-year primary school and a five-year *Hauptschule* which would become an independent secondary school. The primary school could in exceptional cases be undivided but the *Hauptschule* should always consist of at least five separate classes. The SPD proposed a change in the relevant school laws and in the Constitution so only separate classes for all age groups in the *Hauptschule* would be considered a “well-regulated school operation” (*Landtag NRW, January 12, 1965a; Landtag NRW, January 12, 1965b*). Notably, the SPD did not suggest abolishing denominational schooling. The proposals were modest on this.

Shortly afterwards, the CDU Minister of Education Mikat proposed a new obligatory schooling law which prolonged obligatory schooling to nine years and introduced a distinction between primary school and *Hauptschule* but with no real administrative separation. The term “people’s school” which now comprised both the primary school and the *Hauptschule* was kept (*Landtag NRW, January 28, 1965*). The amendment of the law and the SPD motions were discussed in three parliamentary debates (*Landtag NRW, February 23, 1965; Landtag NRW, May 10, 1966; Landtag NRW, May 25, 1966*). During these debates, it became clear that Mikat now supported centralization in the countryside more clearly than in 1963. For example, he stated that the students in grades five and six could under no circumstance be taught in the same class as the students of the primary school and declared that those who did not share this view could not claim to be aiming for a higher number of *Abitur* graduates in the countryside (*Landtag NRW, February 23, 1965, p. 1831*). On February 23, 1966 – exactly a year after the first debate of the SPD motions – Mikat issued a decree for the introduction of center schools (*Landtag NRW, February 23, 1966*). Here, he stipulated that especially grades seven to nine had to be centralized so two classes for each grade would become the norm. In rural districts, one class for each grade would be acceptable. Grades five and six should be taught in at least one class for each grade. In exceptional cases, grades five and six could be taught in one class but under no circumstance with grade one to four. The first four grades of primary school should be taught in separate classes as a rule but it was permissible to combine a maximum of two grades in one class. Furthermore, the minister decreed that center schools could either comprise all nine grades, so small schools would be disbanded completely, or center schools could comprise only grades seven to nine or grades five to nine so small primary schools would continue to exist in the villages. These decisions should be made case by case. Mikat’s new rules were significantly stricter than previous regulations and meant that great changes had to be made in NRW’s rural districts.

However, it was an open secret that Mikat stood in opposition to many of his own party colleagues regarding these – and other – school-political issues. In the parliamentary debates, this fact was commented on by the SPD speakers several times but Mikat dismissed such

comments light-heartedly. He had not given up his personal opinions when becoming minister, he declared:

“The difficulties which I [...] have with my parliamentary group are not pleasant for me but they are a sign of a lively debate to me which is possible and taking place in my party; and even if Mr. Minister of Culture sometimes slams a door so that it can be heard in your parliamentary group, then you’ll know ‘it’s lively over there! They must be on the trail of a new improvement!’ That’s how you should look at it! (*cheerfulness and applause by the governing parties*)” (*Landtag NRW, May 10, 1966, p. 2770*)

Presumably, Mikat’s difficulties with his own parliamentary group were the reason why he refused to change the Constitution and refused to split the people’s school into a separate primary school and a *Hauptschule*. He argued that a change to the Constitution should be an “*ultima ratio*” and that the necessary reforms and centralization could be achieved without it (*Landtag NRW, February 23, 1965, p. 1827*). In addition, he argued that the *Hauptschule* would remain the obligatory school for any child who was not attending the *Realschule* or *Gymnasium* and that it would not help the *Hauptschule* to be considered a new secondary school (*Landtag NRW, May 10, 1966, p. 2776f*). Some of his fellow party members became more emotional, stating that the SPD aimed at “breaking up” the people’s school (*Landtag NRW, February 23, 1965, p. 1838*).

In response, the SPD speakers pointed out that constitutionally allowing one-class people’s schools was a real obstacle to centralizing schools in the countryside. Some municipalities continued to build one- or two-class schools and there was no way the Minister could prevent this because the Constitution sanctioned this practice. A change in the Constitution was therefore not a matter of irrelevant wording but of getting rid of a significant obstacle. The separation of the people’s school into a primary school and a *Hauptschule* was also more than a matter of wording for the social democrats. For them, turning the *Hauptschule* into a real secondary school was a sign of respect and an upgrading of this school type. This time, the FDP speakers did not side as clearly with the SPD but supported Mikat’s argument that a change in the Constitution was unnecessary and that the primary school and the *Hauptschule* should remain one institutional unit (*Landtag NRW, February 23, 1965, p. 1840*). Presumably, both Mikat and the FDP knew that a change in the Constitution’s school articles would simply not have received a majority from the CDU parliamentary group at this point (cf. Düding, 2008, p. 494).

After the NRW elections of 1966, the situation changed because the SPD won and formed a government with the FDP. Generational changes within the CDU parliamentary group also made a new attempt at a change in the Constitution more likely to succeed. Thanks to the compromise of 1967/68 between the SPD, FDP and CDU (cf. above, p. 279), not only denominational schooling was given up on the *Hauptschule* level but it was also decided that

the *Hauptschule* should as a matter of principle consist of two classes for all grades and that it was an institutionally separate secondary school type. The primary school should consist of four classes as a matter of principle. In exceptional cases, if students could not be expected to travel to a fully divided school due to local transport conditions, two-class primary schools and five-class *Hauptschulen* were permitted (*Landtag NRW, June 20, 1967b; Landtag NRW, February 21, 1968b*). The Constitution was changed and no longer contained the sentence which sanctioned one-class people's schools as "well-regulated school operations" (*Landtag NRW, June 20, 1967a; Landtag NRW, February 21, 1968a*). In the final debate on the compromise, speakers of the CDU but also the FDP representative, Roswitha von Bergmann, underlined that the new laws should be implemented carefully so that the development towards larger, centralized schools would not ask too much of the rural population (*Landtag NRW, February 29, 1968, p. 1104*). In the end, the Constitution was changed with 172 of 200 votes, implying that 28 CDU representatives voted against the change or abstained (*Landtag NRW, February 29, 1968, p. 1106*).

The time of the one-class people's schools was now over and the centralization of the school system was conducted rather swiftly. Even in the years before the reform, the number of people's schools had decreased slightly, from 6530 in 1964 to 6255 in 1967, even though the total number of students was rising (*Statistisches Landesamt Nordrhein-Westfalen, 1968, p. 52*). By 1969, the total number of primary schools was 3643 and the total number of *Hauptschulen* was 1463. The average primary school now had 7.1 classes and the average *Hauptschule* had 12.3. 341 people's schools also remained that had not yet been divided up into primary schools and *Hauptschulen* and those still had a lower average number of classes per school, namely 5.8 (*Statistisches Landesamt Nordrhein-Westfalen, 1970, p. 48, own calculations*). The total number of schools had, in other words, decreased strongly and separation into age groups had finally become the norm. It should be remarked that centralization took place not only in the countryside but also in the cities, where denominational schooling had been the reason for the existence of small schools. This development of course created some unrest across the federal state and the CDU especially was criticized by its political grass roots. For this reason, the CDU initiated a parliamentary debate about the implementation of the new school laws, during which several CDU representatives complained about the speedy centralization process which had led to unfortunate developments in various cases (*Landtag NRW, June 12, 1968a; Landtag NRW, June 12, 1968b; Landtag NRW, June 26, 1968*). Especially the CDU representative, Peter Giesen, made no secret of his dislike for what he considered excessive centralization and claimed that the government had not kept its promise to implement the laws in a cautious way (*Landtag NRW, June 26, 1968, p. 1388*). The SPD speakers denied the criticism. They pointed out that the unrest created by the new laws had been foreseeable and could have been avoided if the CDU had accepted earlier reforms and had not insisted on various exemptions for



denominational schooling which now had to be dealt with in practice. These debates were, however, a rather irrelevant footnote in the wake of the decisive battles and negotiations which had taken place; despite the internal unrest the CDU had to deal with, the compromise held. By 1979, only six people's schools remained which had not yet been included in the reform and all of these consisted of separate classes for all grades (*Landesamt für Datenverarbeitung und Statistik Nordrhein-Westfalen*, 1980, p. 126).

During the 1960s, great changes took place not only on the level of the people's school but also with respect to the *Realschule* and *Gymnasium*. CDU Minister of Education Paul Mikat was more modern than his predecessor, Werner Schütz, in that he supported the view that the number of *Abitur* graduates had to be increased. Among the rural population, workers and girls, many talents could still be found and needed to be developed (Mikat, 1966, p. 24). In his view, especially the *Realschule* needed to be expanded, because it occupied a "joint function" in the school system and represented "the condition for the educational-political mobility which is [...] demanded today and which is an expression of progressive social politics" (Mikat, 1966, p. 42). More explicitly he said that "[t]he *Realschule* appears [...] to many people today to be the higher stage of educational ascent which they can handle with their 'socio-cultural' prerequisites. [...] Its educational mandate is approved of by many sections of the population" (Mikat, 1966, p. 42).

This was certainly true for a significant part of the rural population. In line with Mikat's "Structural Plan for the Expansion of the Higher School and the *Realschule*", the number of *Gymnasien* and *Realschulen* was greatly expanded during the 1960s, also in the more rural districts of NRW. In addition, several new, preparatory forms of *Gymnasium* and *Realschule* (*Aufbauschulen*) were founded (Ministry of Culture of NRW, 1965, 1967). The main aim of Mikat's plan was to "increase the number of higher schools and *Realschulen* especially in those urban and rural districts where the relative school attendance for these school types is below the federal state's average" (Ministry of Culture of NRW, 1965, p. 7). In 1967, SPD Minister of Education Fritz Holthoff could conclude that the majority of disadvantaged districts – most of them were fairly rural – had successfully expanded the school system (Ministry of Culture of NRW, 1967, pp. 25f). In addition, the total variance in the percentage of students who attended either the *Realschule* or the *Gymnasium* had decreased across the federal state (Ministry of Culture of NRW, 1967, p. 17). Nevertheless, significant differences between the city and countryside persisted.

The social democrats had supported the expansion of the *Realschule* and *Gymnasium*, both in the countryside and in disadvantaged industrial districts. But supporters of the *Hauptschule*, such as Holthoff, were now becoming concerned that a continued flow of students to these school types would reduce the *Hauptschule* to a mere "rest school". Wilhelm Dowe, Head of Division in Holthoff's Ministry of Culture, deplored in a book about the development of the

*Hauptschule* in NRW that more and more occupations required students to have attended the *Realschule* or *Gymnasium*. As he concluded:

“If this development, which has been going on for decades, is not met effectively, there is a danger that the upper stage of the people’s school will one day become a rest school for the future unskilled or low-skilled workers that is for the lower third of the students, who attend the upper stage of the people’s school today. Because of this, the expansion of the upper stage of the people’s school into a *Hauptschule* might have failed even before it has begun.” (Dowe, 1968, p. 21).<sup>23</sup>

In the same book, the upgraded *Hauptschule* was presented as a blessing, especially for the countryside, where it should “open up to a majority of students previously untapped possibilities of personal development and occupational ascent” (Hippenstiel, 1968, p. 146). In 1968, social democrats still felt that turning the *Hauptschule* into a secondary school was a step forward. At the same time, more and more of them preferred to pin their hopes on the integrated comprehensive school and later the cooperative school. As discussed in detail in Chapter 5, the CDU did not largely agree with this, even though Mikat and other CDU politicians supported experiments with cooperative schooling (Mikat, 1966, pp. 38f).

From the point of view of the rural school politicians within the CDU, increasing the quality of the *Hauptschule*, introducing the ninth obligatory school year and increasing the number of *Realschulen* and *Gymnasien* in the countryside was enough. Their constituents did not ask for anything else and perceived the steady flow of reforms from the social-liberal government as a threat. Overall, it can be concluded that the urban-rural cleavage did not strengthen comprehensive school protagonists, even though it could possibly have done so. The CDU managed successfully to integrate the interests of the rural population so this cleavage remained mostly latent. Even though social democrats and liberals tried to appeal to rural interests, such appeals did not bear fruit.

### 6.3 The Norwegian language struggle in school politics

The Norwegian language struggle has its roots in the country’s long domination by Denmark and later Sweden. It arose in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the farmer’s son and academic Ivar Aasen and others developed a New Norwegian language standard (*nynorsk*) based on some Norwegian dialects and Old Norwegian (cf. Chapter 4, p. 60). Today, both the language standard *bokmål* (literally “book language”), which is more similar to Danish, and *nynorsk* are used, though *bokmål* is used more widely. For example, in 2015 around 12 percent of Norwegian primary school students used *nynorsk* as their main language standard,

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<sup>23</sup> It is remarkable that such a precise prophesy was foretold as early as 1968, the year in which the *Hauptschule* was introduced as a secondary school type. It is tempting to conclude that the *Hauptschule* was doomed to fail from the start. This was also the view of several interviewed experts, who had come to this conclusion with the benefit of hindsight.

whereas 87 percent used *bokmål*. The remaining 860 students used Sami as their first language (SSB, 2015). The language struggle thus remains politically relevant, even if it is no longer fought with the same degree of passion. The percentage of *nynorsk* users in the primary school has been going down more or less steadily since 1944, when it reached its maximum of 34.1 percent (Vikør, 2002, p. 157).

The two language standards are mutually understandable but they differ in vocabulary and grammar. Over time, both standards have changed considerably and there were continuous debates about the direction of these changes. In both camps of the struggle, there were internal disagreements about whether traditional, historical forms should be used, or forms based on the actual spoken language. There was also considerable disagreement about whether the two standards should be developed towards each other, or whether their distinctiveness should be strictly preserved. This was complicated by an earlier political attempt to merge the two standards into one common standard (*samnorsk*). In school politics, the language struggle came to expression through conflicts over the choice of language standard taught at school, the language of schoolbooks and whether students should learn both language standards. In addition, the language struggle also came to expression in conflicts over the language standard to be used in the public administration and the media, especially the state media. The many facets of this struggle can, however, not be discussed here in detail. In the following paragraphs, the positions of the major collective actors in this struggle is first analyzed in brief, based on party programs, other primary and some secondary sources. In the next step, the school-political language conflicts of the post-war period are summed up. Finally, the ideological cleavages behind this conflict are illustrated, also by a few quotes from the expert interviews. The aim is to demonstrate how the urban-rural and center-periphery cleavages but, in part, also the class cleavage came to expression in this conflict and how this influenced the development of coalitions in school politics.

Of the political parties, the Liberals have traditionally been the most important supporter of *nynorsk*. As well as the independence movement, the farmers' movement, the temperance movement, the burgeoning Labor movement and the women's movement, the *nynorsk* language movement was one of many which came together in the founding of the Liberal Party in 1884. Ever since, the party has been an advocate of *nynorsk*, though it has included more and less radical currents emphasizing either the "pure" *nynorsk* of the villages or a convergence with urban spoken Norwegian (cf. Almenningen, 2002a, p. 104). In its political programs of the post-war decades, the party demanded for example that all schoolbooks should be published in both language standards at the same time and for the same price. Until 1969, the Liberal Party's political programs also included a sentence stating that the long-term aim should be a merging of the two standards into *samnorsk*. In the program of 1973, this position had, however, been relinquished.

The Centre Party has also been a supporter of *nynorsk* and, until 1965, its programs suggested that the two standards should be merged in the long term. The Christian Democrats' programs did not include equally detailed demands regarding the language struggle but the party agreed with the two other center parties that schoolbooks had to be published in both language standards and that *nynorsk* generally had to be strengthened in the Norwegian public sphere, e.g. on the radio and television. In 1977, the Christian Democrats and the Liberal Party also demanded in their programs that it should continue to be obligatory for students on the youth school and secondary school levels to learn also the language standard which was not their first choice. Finally, the Socialist People's Party and its successors the Socialist Electoral Alliance/Socialist Left Party supported *nynorsk*. In their program of 1973, the socialists insisted for example that central authorities should communicate in *nynorsk* with municipalities using *nynorsk* as the main language standard and that the two language standards needed to be put on a par in all public documents.

On the other side of the conflict there was the Conservative Party. Of all the parties, it had the largest number of supporters of *bokmål*. Most of these came from the urban upper classes and considered *bokmål* to be the most sophisticated, refined form of Norwegian. In its political programs of the post-war period, the Conservative Party did not, however, openly attack *nynorsk*; on the contrary, it was argued that both *nynorsk* and *bokmål* should be allowed to "develop freely and naturally side by side". In some of the programs, the importance of *nynorsk* schoolbooks and of generally supporting the development of *nynorsk* were also mentioned. The most important language-political goals of the conservatives were to avoid *sammorsk* and defend the forms of the most conservative variant of *bokmål*, Traditional Standard Norwegian (*riksmål*).

The Labor Party did not have a very clear stance on language politics in its early decades of existence; even in the post-war period, its programs did not contain much about this issue. Language was not one of the priorities of the party. Because it was to a high degree an urban-rural and a center-periphery conflict, the workers living in urban areas, who spoke urban dialects, were placed somewhere in between the rural population and the cities' upper classes in language politics (cf. Almenningen, 2002a, p. 100). However, from the 1930s, the official and practical line of the Labor Party was to support the development of *sammorsk* which should be based on the actual language spoken by the people, mostly the common people, both in the cities and in the countryside. Especially the Labor politician, Halvdan Koht, played an important role in the development of this policy. He argued that farmers and workers shared an interest in language politics and that a written language should be developed based on their spoken language, forcing the upper classes to respect this language. In Koht's eyes, both *nynorsk* and *bokmål* would have to be adapted to the actual spoken language (Ramsdal, 1979, pp. 17ff). The Labor Party's program of 1953 still included the

development of *sammorsk* as a political aim but, in 1957, the social democrats removed this demand from its program – much earlier than the Liberal Party and Centre Party.

Besides the political parties, the most important collective actors in this conflict were the organizations of the language movement, such as the Norwegian Language Society (*Norges Mållag*), founded in 1906 and the Riksmåal Society (The Society for the Preservation of Traditional Standard Norwegian, *Riksmålsforbundet*), founded in 1907. They both attempted to put pressure on the political parties. The Riksmåal Society had long been a fairly small organization but it grew especially from the 1950s and had about 45,000 members in 1963 (Allmenningen, 2002b, p. 132). Even though most supporters of *riksmål/bokmål* had upper class or middle class urban backgrounds, not all of them were conservatives. A prominent example is the poet Arnulf Øverland, who was leader of the Riksmåal Society from 1947 to 1956 and a former communist, who had spent three years in the German concentration camp at Sachsenhausen. The Norwegian Language Society was also characterized by a broad variety in the political standpoints of its members. It was rather weak after the war, with around 10,000 members and grew only slightly to around 12,000-13,000 members in the 1980s (Allmenningen, 2002b, p. 138; Vikør, 2002, p. 168). While the Riksmåal Society continuously opposed *sammorsk*, the Norwegian Language Society was characterized by internal splits regarding this issue. From 1968, however, the organization relinquished the idea of *sammorsk*, worrying that a potential merger of the standards would be based primarily on *bokmål* (Vikør, 2002, p. 167). However, the Association for Language Integration (*Landslaget for språklig samling*) was founded in 1959 and still supports a form of *sammorsk* based on the spoken language of the population.

The opposition to *sammorsk* increased over time. In 1951, The Riksmåal Society organized a committee called *Foreldreaksjonen mot sammorsk* (Parental Action against the Common Standard). This committee collected 400,000 signatures against *sammorsk* but for schoolbooks with “moderate” instead of “radical” forms of *bokmål*. In 1953 and 1954, the campaign also asked parents to correct the language in the schoolbooks. This campaign was supported by conservatives and business leaders who hoped to attack and weaken the Labor Party on this front. Eventually, the Ministry of Education allowed parallel editions of schoolbooks with radical and moderate forms in 1954. As a result, the books with radical forms became less and less used (Almenningen, 2002b, pp. 132ff).

In 1959, a new language standard for schoolbooks was passed in parliament against the votes of the Conservative Party and the opposition of the Riksmåal Society. Some *nynorsk* supporters were equally unhappy about the new standard, because they thought that *nynorsk* had been changed too much, while *bokmål* had been changed too little. However, users of *nynorsk* accepted the standard in practice, while many users of *bokmål*, such as the conservative press, big publishing houses or business people, simply ignored the rules applied

in the new schoolbooks and kept writing a more traditional form of *bokmål* (Almenningen, 2002b, pp. 139ff).

The 1959 *folkeskole* law specified that the school board still had the power to decide which of the language standards should be used primarily in the school. A vote had to take place if more than 25 percent of the eligible voters in the school district, or a majority of the school board, requested it. The eligible voters were at this point all voters registered for the municipal elections, and parents of children of school-age. Furthermore, if a majority of more than 40 percent of the voters wanted a certain language standard to be used, this would be binding for the school board. In 1964, the Vogt Committee was tasked with discussing the language situation in the country in general. In 1966, it suggested that parents should simply let the school know which language they preferred for their children when they started school and that elections should no longer be held. A minority of the committee suggested instead that there should still be votes on the question but only parents of schoolchildren under 14 should have voting rights. This minority position was supported by all parties except for the Conservative Party and included in the 1969 *grunnskole* law. It was also decided that schoolbooks had to be published in both languages for the same price and that all students should be taught both language standards during the last two years of primary school. Finally, the conflict was becalmed by new rules for parallel teaching: if the parents of more than ten students wanted their children to be taught a different language standard than the one usually used at the school, teaching in parallel classes was allowed (Myhre, 1971, pp. 141 ff.).

For the purposes of this thesis, the most important insight is that, of the political parties, the Conservative Party stood alone in the debates about language throughout the period under investigation. Both in 1959 and even in 1969, when the center parties were in a coalition with the Conservative Party, the paragraphs of the school laws that regulated questions of language were passed with the support of the center parties and the Labor Party, against alternative suggestions from the conservatives (*Innst. O. II. (1959), pp. 17f; Innst. O. XIV (1968-69), pp. 50ff*). At first glance, it is hard to grasp from the reports of the parliamentary education committee what the language conflicts actually were about, since the disagreements about the specific paragraphs do not seem very significant. In 1959, the conservatives were the only party which suggested that only parents of under 14-year-olds should have voting rights in local elections about the school language. By 1969, this position had been adopted by the other parties as well, except for a small minority of Labor Party and Liberal Party representatives, who still insisted that all eligible voters for municipal and national elections should be allowed to vote on the local school language form, since this was such an “important cultural question” (*Innst. O. XIV (1968-69), p. 38*). The conservatives had now sharpened their position and wanted to make all local elections on school language binding for the school board. The background for this was that most local elections resulting from municipal centralization and urbanization were in favor of *bokmål* (cf. Allmenningen, 2002b,

pp. 130ff). The center parties and the Labor Party, however, made sure that it remained the rule that a majority of at least 40 percent of the eligible voters was required in order to bind the school board to the voters' decision.

To understand the conflicts of interest here, one has to look in more detail at the ideological arguments employed to legitimize the various positions on this matter. For this thesis, two important former activists of the language movement were interviewed. One was the conservative politician, Lars Roar Langslet, who has written a history of the *riksmål* movement where he has been active (cf. Langslet, 1999). The other was the former Liberal Party and later Christian democratic politician, Hans Olav Tungesvik, who has been active in the *nynorsk* movement all his life and was chairman of the Norwegian Language Society from 1965 to 1970. Both of them opposed the idea of *sammorsk* and regarded each other as allies in this regard, though opponents in others. In addition, the socialist politician, Torild Skard, was interviewed, who was one of Halvdan Koht's granddaughters and could thus provide additional information about the position of the supporters of *sammorsk*. The other Norwegian experts interviewed were also asked about the language struggle and contributed interesting insights into this Norwegian political struggle.

All of the experts interviewed agreed that language was a highly emotional, hotly contested issue in Norway. For example, Torild Skard experienced first-hand the anger she roused by speaking a mixture of the two standards – something she did because she had spent her early years in exile in the USA as the daughter of a couple who mixed the standards and the granddaughter of the “*sammorsk* prophet”, Halvdan Koht:

“Whenever I said ‘*nase*’ [nose] or ‘*gras*’ [grass] or something like that, they booed at me at school. Still, I didn’t want to back down because I didn’t understand why ‘*gras*’ was less acceptable than ‘*gress*’. So I was in this war throughout my youth. And even in the student society, if I used a radical form, the right side of the audience sat there booing. And [the newspaper] *Aftenposten* corrected all radical forms in articles, for example. So this was a tough, really tough time.”

When asked whether this issue upset people more than the question of differentiation at school, Skard replied:

“Yes, yes, yes, [...] The question of differentiation, of using different courses of study or different groupings to differentiate between the students, this was in a way a pedagogical-technical issue, right? [...] Whereas the language issue applied to everyone, everyone spoke a language after all. And language is strongly related to identity. So that was the basis for all those emotions.”

This assessment was supported by other experts interviewed. Many of them gave examples which illustrate how controversial the issue was and how much space it took up in public

debates. For example, Kari Lie mentioned that the Norwegian Teachers' Association generally tried to keep a neutral stance in language politics and therefore made sure that the editorials of its journal were written alternately in *nynorsk* and *bokmål*. Nonetheless, she remembered one national congress of the association which started out with a protest by *nynorsk* supporters about the fact that the remittance slip for the membership fee had been sent out to members only in *bokmål*. For this reason, some members refused to pay their fee. Another example was given by Kjell Horn, who remembered a situation he had experienced when teaching in the western parts of Oslo. There, he was once confronted with complaints by one of his students' fathers, a lawyer, about his spoken language. It was said that he spoke too "radically", meaning that he was not sticking to conservative forms of *bokmål/riksmål*. He therefore had to invite all parents to a meeting at which he made an effort to speak as conservatively as possible in order to undermine this criticism.

Both Lars Roar Langslet and Hans Olav Tungesvik emphasized that they supported their respective language standards, because they represented "their" language. In the following, two long quotes from these interviews illustrate in more detail what motivated them and how they viewed their opponents. Hans Olav Tungesvik explained his activism for *nynorsk* in the following way:

"[...] my natural dialect base is close to *nynorsk*. [...] So that was a natural reason. The other was that my father had also been active for the language cause and encouraged me to participate in this important work.<sup>24</sup> And I have also always considered it a very important cultural value that as many people as possible here in the country can use, also in writing, a language that is most natural for them orally. So consistency between written and spoken language is an important consideration. And not least the very rich cultural treasure that we have in *nynorsk* with all the *nynorsk* authors and, in general, the *nynorsk* contribution to Norwegian cultural life is very important [...].

*Interviewer: [...] So what do you think motivated the people from the Riksmåls Society to struggle against this?*

Well, it was in a way something similar, you might say the finer classes, as we called them... in Oslo... the Oslo area and eastern area especially and in a way also in Bergen... they wanted [...] to have a written language as close as possible to their natural '*talesprog*' [spoken language], as they liked to say, with a 'g' at the end instead of '*språk*', it was '*sprog*', s-p-r-o-g. But [...] over time both languages gradually became modernized and more in accordance with people's natural way of speaking.

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<sup>24</sup> Hans Olav Tungesvik's father was mayor of the small village of Skånevik for 30 years, in the county of Hordaland by the fjords. In 1914, he went there as a teacher. He was a member of the Liberal Party and of the language movement, as many teachers were during this period.



That applied both to *nynorsk* and *bokmål*. And then there were the most conservative *riksmål* people. There is a difference between *bokmål* and *riksmål*. *Riksmål* is ultraconservative. Almost half-Danish. So they wanted to continue the very traditional, oldest variant of *bokmål/riksmål*. And the goal of the Riksmåls Society was to prevent modernization and what they experienced as a destruction of their formerly strongly conservative form of speaking. [...]

*Interviewer: So it was in a way the 'finer classes' as you put it who placed an emphasis on this, who considered it to be more cultivated or...?*

Absolutely. That's exactly the way it was, yes."

Lars Roar Langslet, on the other hand, viewed things in this way:

*"Interviewer: But what motivated you to fight for riksmål?*

Yes, rather simply [the fact] that it's the main language here in the country. Around 90 percent use it in writing and large parts of our literary heritage are connected to this tradition which is irreplaceable for me. So it's my language. But I have great regard for the part of Norwegian heritage which is connected to [...] *nynorsk*. I write regularly in *nynorsk* myself in the newspaper *Dag og Tid*, so I try to use both but I see also how difficult it is, because when I write *nynorsk* I need to sit and rack my brain for a long time over each sentence.

*Interviewer: So what do you think motivates the nynorsk supporters of the Norwegian Language Society? Why are they so concerned about this?*

The good thing which motivates them is probably that they stand for an important tradition in Norwegian culture [...] which began with Ivar Aasen and has very important literary expressions in Norway. And as long as there is a rather large group who feel that their identity is connected to *nynorsk* that should be respected. But I do think the Norwegian Language Society is a bit too sly with their tactical maneuvers which they did in the old days, when they had the Liberal Party as their ally. They use their power as far as they can. To prevent reforms. My position today is that the Language Society belongs to the most highly conservative powers in Norway. Nothing at all is supposed to be changed within the language-political regime which was introduced one hundred years ago. Ultraconservative."

It is rather fascinating from the German point of view of the author of this study that both of these experts accused the other side of the conflict of being "ultraconservative" – this is not an accusation which one would have expected between a conservative and a Christian democratic politician. It shows, however, that the issue split the political landscape crossways and not primarily to the left and the right. Lars Roar Langslet explicitly stated that, in his

view, there had mainly been an opposition between the center parties and the Conservative Party and that the Labor Party had been less consistent in its language-political stance. In his view, the activism of the Riksmåls Society of the 1950s contributed to the change of mind within the Labor Party. The fact that parents affiliated with the Labor Party also took part in the “correction” of children’s schoolbooks according to *riksmål* standards clearly frightened some leading social democrats, he thought. In particular, he pointed out that the Labor Party’s decision to put in place the language-political Vogt Committee in 1964 had been an expression of their understanding that they needed to “slow down and reposition, for otherwise one could risk losing elections”. The committee, it was hoped would be calm people’s passions. Langslet was asked to be on the committee by the Labor Party minister, Helge Sivertsen, an offer he declined because he felt that he was too young and did not yet have sufficient experience in the *riksmål* movement. As a parliamentary representative, he later gladly contributed to the “winding-up” of the *samnorsk* policies and thought that in this process one had achieved “good cooperation with the Labor Party, who also understood that such politics now had to be turned around”. It had apparently become clear to the leadership of the Labor Party that the opposition to *samnorsk*, especially in the middle and upper classes of Oslo and partly in the second largest city Bergen, was too strong to be easily overcome. Nonetheless, the Labor Party had to avoid burning any bridges with the *nynorsk* supporters in the population and in the center parties and social democrats thus continued to support New-Norwegian friendly policies. This was presumably not too difficult since the center parties also eventually relinquished the idea of *samnorsk*.

Indeed, Hans Olav Tungevik thought that the Labor Party had been in a rather stable alliance with the center parties and the Socialist People’s Party in language politics, while the Conservative Party and later also the right-wing Progress Party stood on the other side. To understand this, one should remember that this was partly also a class issue, as indicated for example by Tungevik’s characterization of his opponents as “the finer classes”. The geographical cleavages and the class cleavage partly overlapped in Norway since the Norwegian power elite, consisting of the upper ranks within the state and the economy, was centered in the cities, and especially in the center of Oslo. The rural periphery was governed by an urban elite. For this reason, the socialist Kjell Horn was of the opinion that the language struggle was primarily an expression of “the bourgeoisie defending its privileges”. In his words:

“Fiendishly much power lies in language, right? Since the olden days, the language of the Danish civil service kept its hand over the proletariat and the farmers in a colossally strong way. The sheriff and the priest and all the bailiffs and the entire establishment spoke Danish. And after a while they spoke *bokmål*, call it *riksmål*. And in this enormous power lies. [...] So I think that the language struggle, it’s taking from

the bourgeoisie their language which is a means of power; you're taking a means of power from them. And that's not... that wasn't popular, no."

The broad coalition of the center parties and the Labor Party in language politics, however, did not mean that the conservatives were weak on this issue. On the contrary, the conservative, Per Lønning, was of the opinion that his party "won the language struggle" in the sense that the idea of *sammorsk* was buried. As he pointed out, this was a great comfort to many conservatives since they had perceived *sammorsk* as the greatest danger in language politics. As illustrated also by the quote of Lars Roar Langslet above, they could tolerate, and even to a certain degree, value *nynorsk* as long as it remained a minority language used mainly for literary purposes which did not threaten *riksmål* as such. Nonetheless, *nynorsk* supporters also enjoyed some victories. They certainly contributed to the fact that Norwegian dialects today enjoy higher social status than German dialects. The idea that children should be allowed to speak dialect at school without having to feel inferior about it and that their written language should be as close as possible to their dialect is still part of Norwegian "common sense" in school politics. In Germany, this is not the case; the school system and the media, the economy, the state and so on are dominated by standard German.

Overall, the language struggle should be considered another important factor which separated the Conservative Party from the center parties and thereby destabilized potential non-Labor alliances. The Labor Party's support for *sammorsk* and later *nynorsk* policies was not only tactical but based on an understanding that the rural population and the lower classes of the cities had common interests in the struggle against conservative cultural hegemony. In addition, the idea of a purely Norwegian language, independent of Danish, was a unifying factor in the development of the Norwegian nation. From the 1930s onwards, the Labor Party took over the Liberal Party's role as a state-building party in many ways, though giving it a social-democratic flavor. This was also reflected in the party's language-political ideology.

#### 6.4 German anti-communism in school politics

This section focuses on the role anti-communist arguments have played in school politics in Germany. It is shown that anti-communism had a detrimental effect for potential coalitions for reform because it split the labor movement and to a lesser degree the liberal FDP, undermined reformers' legitimacy and contributed to an enormous polarization and emotionalism in German political discourse, also on schooling. It must therefore be considered an important explanatory factor for why comprehensive school reforms failed. Of course, anti-communism is not only a German phenomenon. It has certainly also played a role in Norwegian political development in various ways but the important difference is that it did not come to expression in school politics the way it did in Germany. The high importance of anti-communist arguments against the comprehensive school and generally against the education politics of the SPD, unions and in part the FDP seems to be a German particularity.

Before this importance is demonstrated empirically in the following, some introductory historical and theoretical remarks are necessary.

Anti-communism and the socialist-communist cleavage have a long history in Germany, beginning with the oppression of social democracy in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and continuing with the split of the German labor movement during the First World War and the Weimar Republic. After the Second World War, the conflict was intensified by the fact that Germany was divided into a communist East and a capitalist West which turned Germany into one of the primary stages of the Cold War. The Communist Party (KPD) was re-founded but forbidden in 1956. In 1950, the Adenauer CDU government had issued a resolution, according to which members of the KPD or any of its subsidiary organizations could not be employees of the state (*Beschluss der Bundesregierung vom 19. September 1950*, quoted in Koschnick, 1979, p. 83). As a result of the party's ban, it has been estimated that around half a million people suffered political persecution in some way – many of whom had already suffered persecution under the Nazis (Graf, 1976, p. 112). In 1968, a new German Communist Party, the DKP, was founded. The DKP and its subsidiary youth organizations such as the Socialist German Workers' Youth (SDAJ) or the Marxist Student Union Spartakus (MSB) sympathized with the orthodox interpretation of communism of the German Democratic Republic and also received financing from there. In addition, various other communist groups and parties with Maoist, Leninist or Trotskyist orientations were founded in the aftermath of 1968, the "K-groups". These groups were smaller and stood in opposition to the orthodox communists within the DKP. The various communist groups were severely split among themselves. In elections, the DKP was unsuccessful and communist groups achieved significant influence only within student politics, on a few works' councils or in local union chapters.

Even though the objective political influence of communists in post-war Western Germany was low, many saw communism, and especially the Soviet Union, as "the danger of our time", as the CDU stated in its Düsseldorf Declaration of 1965. The SPD's Godesberg program and the ideology of the leading SPD personnel were also clearly anti-communist. However, it was a more divisive and complicated issue for the SPD than for the other political parties, because the CDU's anti-communism was also directed against the SPD and because there was no agreement within social democracy about how to respond to that. The SPD was split into a moderate or right-wing current, to which many leading SPD politicians in NRW belonged, and a current of more radical, leftwing and often younger reformers. The youth organization of the SPD played an important role and the conflict was to a high degree a generational conflict, especially after 1968. When the SPD-FDP government under Willy Brandt in 1969 initiated *Ostpolitik*, a new external policy that aimed at easing the tensions with the East, the internal split became more problematic. For the leading personnel of the SPD, *Ostpolitik* entailed the problem of having to dissociate themselves (even) more clearly from communists to rebut conservative criticism that the SPD was cozying up to communists.

On the other hand, the young reformers disliked such moves to the right. Even though they were no revolutionaries or communists, they did indeed want to use reforms to change society. However, the acts of terror by groups such as the Red Army Fraction (RAF), and the reports of former communists who had left the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and become “apostates”, contributed to anti-communist hegemony. In addition, around 2.4 million people had migrated from the GDR to the Federal Republic between 1950 and 1961, many of whom were officially recognized as displaced people or as refugees from the Soviet Zone (Koch, 1986). Many West Germans also had relatives in the East and were therefore aware of the GDR’s weak economic development compared to the West and of the repression of internal critics. People’s negative experiences with the communist regime influenced the climate in West Germany decisively.

This is not the place for a detailed analysis of the character and extent of anti-communism in Germany and about the special role it has played there (for an overview of different contributions, see Schwan, 1999, pp. 19ff, pp. 35ff, see also Hofmann, 1967; Graf, 1976). It should, however, be remarked that authors from different political camps have at least agreed on the fact that anti-communism has played an important role in German post-war society as an “integrative” ideology (cf. Schwan, 1999, pp. 17, 40f, 66f). Furthermore, Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich (2007 [1967]) argue that German post-war society was characterized by a denial of the defeat by the Soviet Union and by a denial of Germany’s identification with the terrible Nazi crimes against, among others, the Slavic people. As a result of this denial, parts of Nazi anti-Bolshevist ideology, according to which the Slavic people were inferior in culture and “race”, prevailed without proper reflection and were merged with the anti-communist ideology of the capitalist West into “the official civic attitude” of “emotional anti-communism” (Mitscherlich/Mitscherlich, 2007 [1967], p. 42). To what extent this diagnosis is correct cannot be discussed further here. It is certainly true that anti-communism remained an extremely emotional issue which made rational evaluations of anything communist, which would also have permitted rational criticism, difficult (cf. also Hofmann, 1967). In fact, anti-communism often served more as a tool for discrediting egalitarian policies suggested by leftist political opponents as “undemocratic”, or even treacherous, and for stoking fears against irrational images of the enemy (cf. Schwan, 1999, pp. 35ff; Graf, 1976). From the very beginning of the history of the Federal Republic of Germany – and indeed up to the present day – anti-communism has thus represented a serious challenge to the internal unity of the German Left, including the SPD, and diminished the Left’s prospects of achieving far-reaching reforms. As Graf (1976, p. 104) points out:

“The – desired and intended – result of the application of such [anti-communist] methods was a great pressure toward social conformity. Accusations of anticommunism needed only to be levelled, not supported; the onus of proof then automatically went over to the accused who, even if he could prove his innocence, was

‘tainted’ by the charge. Political proposals or policies were not judged according to their intrinsic value but by the degree to which they were associated with communist objectives or by the number of ‘eastern contacts’ which their proposers were said to have had. Such defamation almost invariably meant the neutralization of independent-minded persons, particularly those on the Left. Professors, Nobel Prize winners, former anti-Nazis, distinguished public personalities, whole parties and organizations – all saw their influence diminished through the application of the techniques of anticommunism.”

In the rest of this section, it is first illustrated how conservative opponents of school reforms attempted to use anti-communist arguments to undermine the legitimacy of school reforms. It is shown that the characterization of the comprehensive school as a “socialist comprehensive school” played an important role in the conflict and that school reformers were generally accused by their opponents of wanting to bring class struggle into the schools and of allowing communists to teach the children. Both structural reforms and changes in the content of individual subjects, such as political science and history, were subject to anti-communist criticism. In the second step, it is shown how difficult it was for the SPD and its allies to counter such attacks. For the purposes of this work, it is especially important to illustrate how these debates split the reformers internally. This comes to expression especially in the discussion of the occupational bans on communists (*Berufsverbote*) which affected many teachers. Finally, the conflicts within the SPD and within the Education and Science Workers’ Union (*GEW*) regarding cooperation with communists are discussed at the end of the section (Hasenritter, 1981; Sachse, 1985).

In the party programs of the CDU, the relation between anti-communism and school politics can be traced, especially during the second half of the 1970s, when the debate about the comprehensive school was in full swing. For example, in its program for the national elections of 1976, the CDU and its sister party the CSU ensured voters that they would

“stand up firmly [...] against a socialistically shaped Germany in a Europe threatened by popular fronts; [...] against a society steered by functionaries and bureaucrats; against the trivialization of enemies of the Constitution, of political radicalism, terror and violence; for school and education policies which secure future chances for the young generation; against dangerous experiments and socialist education at the expense of our children, their parents and the future of us all”.

Furthermore, the program stated: “The school and education policies of the SPD/FDP have failed. The coalition has misused schools and colleges as an ideological field for experimentation.” The culture-political program of the CDU from the same year concluded:

“Since 1969, the education politics of the SPD and FDP in the federal government and the federal state governments have been designed to assist in a change of society. [...]

The aims and content of all educational paths must be in accordance with the Constitution [...]. [...] Contents of education [...] must not be instruments of social change. [...] The institutions of the education system must be defended against ideological misuse.”

The CDU/CSU program for the elections of 1980 warned in drastic words that due to the *Ostpolitik* of the social-liberal government, the “menacing shadow of the Soviet Union over Europe [was] becoming longer and darker” and the “terrible alternative of capitulation or war” was becoming more and more likely. The program also emphasized that “enemies of the state have no place in state service”. With respect to school politics, the CDU program of 1980 stated:

“The SPD and FDP have experimented heedlessly with their school politics and have thus unreasonably burdened parents and students. Socialist system changers are attempting to practice class struggle in the classrooms. Schools should no longer be places of education and upbringing but [reformers seek] opportunities to charge students ‘conflict-theoretically’, to alienate them from their parental home, to push on them a one-sided political worldview based on a distorted and falsified view of history.”

The reference to “practicing class struggle” in the classrooms contained a grain of truth in that some of the more radical school reformers of the time indeed wanted to enlighten students about the power structures of society and ideally motivate them to take action. For example, Anne Ratzki, former principal of a comprehensive school, remembered that a leftwing teacher at another school had developed a lesson on the subject of work which ended with a demonstration against the local employer organized by the students. This lesson had, however, been forbidden by the social democratic ministry. However, the CDU used the fact that some of the proponents of comprehensive schooling were positioned quite far to the political left to present even the most modest educational reforms of the social-liberal coalition as dangerous, anti-capitalist politics.

Also in the expert interviews, the great importance of anti-communist arguments became clear. For example, all the German experts interviewed who supported comprehensive schooling agreed that they could under no circumstances use the term *Einheitsschule* – similar to the Norwegian term *enhetsskole* – as a description of the comprehensive school or later the cooperative school, even though it was the usual term in the 1920s. The reason was that *Einheitsschule* was now associated with the GDR and that the term “socialist *Einheitsschule*” was employed exclusively as an “agent of warfare”, as the former CDU politician, Wilhelm Lenz, said in the interview. For example, the leader of the CDU opposition in the NRW parliament, Heinrich Köppler, argued against the cooperative school reform with the following words in a parliamentary debate:

“I know that you don’t like hearing about the socialist *Einheitsschule*. But, my much-esteemed ladies and gentlemen, the aim of introducing integrated comprehensive schools as regular schools for everyone is a socialist aim after all (*shouts from the SPD*). You decided it at your party convention (*Schlottmann (CDU): ‘Also the Minister of Education in this house!’*) And a school that wants to take away from other school types their right to exist is an *Einheitsschule*. (*‘Very true!’ Applause from the CDU*) And both taken together, my ladies and gentlemen, is this socialist *Einheitsschule*, towards which you want to make a decisive step with this cooperative school.” (*Landtag NRW, June 29, 1977, p. 2893*)

Uwe Franke, representative of the Association of Education and Upbringing and leftwing CDU member, thought that this “threat of the socialist *Einheitsschule*” and of “an alternative concept of society” had in fact been the most influential argument against the integrated comprehensive school. It scared people and stood in the way of cooperation between moderate and radical school reformers. Anne Ratzki, member of the SPD, of the Education and Science Workers’ Union and one of the first principals of an integrated comprehensive school in NRW, agreed that this was one of the major influential arguments:

“One side was the debate about achievement; the second side was the socialist *Einheitsschule*. Your children are brought up to be class warriors. Right and left extremists teach your children, do you want that? They’re the kinds of tones we were elated with in 1975. [...]

*Interviewer: Since you referred to the GDR and the socialist Einheitsschule, this agent of warfare and so on, would you say that the comparison with the GDR played an important role in this discussion?*

Yes, yes, yes. In the beginning. How did they put it? In the pamphlets – I’ve kept some of them – it was said again and again that one wanted to introduce the socialist *Einheitsschule*. The teachers were communists. It played a great role; this fearmongering against the GDR was transferred to the comprehensive school. Most people actually had no idea about what was going on in the GDR and they only noticed what was said in the papers or by politicians. Where they knew comprehensive schools locally, it didn’t work, but in places where comprehensive schools were introduced for the first time, without the possibility of getting an idea of them, it did some damage, of course.”

Figure 6.1 below is a copy of a CDU pamphlet from 1974 against social-liberal school politics which Anne Ratzki had among her personal papers and kindly supplied to the author. It is possible that the pamphlet originates from the federal state of Hessen, not NRW, but it illustrates the anti-communist character of the reform opponents’ arguments. The pamphlet reads as follows:



“The wrong school politics of the SPD-FDP federal government have led to considerable organizational chaos at our schools and to extreme groups increasing their influence on our children. Parents, defend yourselves against the misuse of our school! Don’t let our children be turned into the guinea pigs of reform-obsessed educational fantasists! Don’t let our children be brought up to be antidemocratic class warriors! Don’t let right and left extremists be teachers for our children!”

The tone of the pamphlet is also characteristic of the emotionalism and polarization of education-political debates in Germany. As the former FDP politician, Jürgen Hinrichs, stated in the interview, there were “too many emotions involved, less reasoning” – a judgment which presumably would have been shared by the majority of interviewed experts. Hinrichs described several situations where he was confronted with audiences who were comprised of reform opponents up to about 90 percent and where he felt that he was being “mopped up”: “It was really... you have no chance, you cannot gain any ground, if you are being booed at after every sentence. So it was terrible. Yes. But that is how it is, when masses are mobilized.”

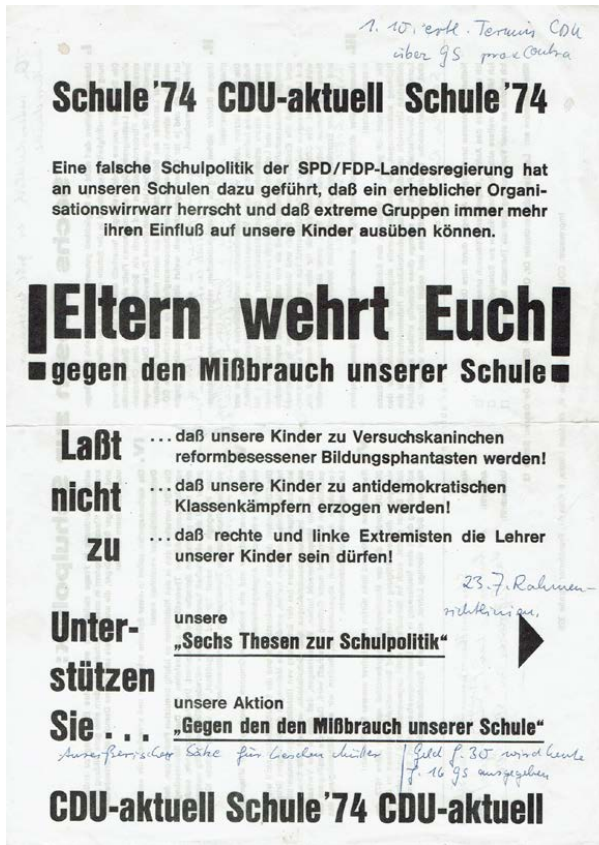
Ilse Brusis, former chairwoman of the Education and Science Workers’ Union in NRW from 1975 to 1981, also gave accounts of anti-communist attacks:

*“Interviewer: the socialist Einheitsschule was something of an agent of warfare of the opponents as well? Was it much used? I’ve seen it a couple of times in documents but was the argument about the GDR used much?”*

Brusis: Yes. Very much. No matter where I appeared in public and argued for a longer common length of schooling, or for the introduction of pre-school education, or also for more democracy in the schools [...], the conservatives always countered: ‘Go to the GDR, there you have it all!’ [What one was saying] was always demonized with GDR-conditions, it was terrible. One couldn’t argue without inhibition. And they were not willing to let something like this get through to them at all. That’s GDR, we don’t want that.”

That Brusis of all people had to face this charge illustrates that conservative opponents drew no significant distinction between whom they attacked with anti-communist arguments. Ilse Brusis actually fought her own battles with the many DKP members in the Education and Science Workers’ Union, who “were such a pain in the neck with their dogmatism”, as she put it. But the fact that she herself was involved in conflicts with communists to the extent that people thought that “at times that I ate a DKP man for breakfast each morning” did not make her immune to anti-communist attacks. Because she led one of the most leftwing unions in NRW, she was perceived as “Red Ilse” by her CDU opponents and any political suggestions she made were delegitimized by that.

Figure 6.1: CDU pamphlet against social-liberal school politics from 1974



Source: Anne Ratzki, personal archive. The handwritten notes are by Anne Ratzki.

The former CDU politician, Wilhelm Lenz, actually pointed out in the interview that none of the parties wanted a communist *Einheitsschule*, including the SPD. In other words, CDU politicians were in fact aware that the SPD was not promoting communist school politics. Nevertheless, CDU politicians in parliamentary and other public debates were swift to warn against communist “infiltration” within social democracy, as the CDU politician Heinrich Köppler put it in a parliamentary debate on the employment of “radicals” in the public services (*Landtag NRW, August 22, 1973, p. 2930*).

To all these charges, the SPD, the Education and Science Workers’ Union and the FDP had no forceful or united response. For the SPD, it was particularly difficult to handle the charge that they were conducting “socialist” education politics and letting themselves be infiltrated by communists. Of course, the SPD had socialist roots, but it had abandoned a truly socialist, anti-capitalist program with its Godesberg program of 1959 and had moved considerably to the right (cf. Graf, 1976). In 1960, the SPD had cut its ties to its student organization, the SDS, but this had not brought an end to internal opposition to the party’s adaptation to CDU

hegemony (cf. Graf, 1976, pp. 225ff). The successor of the SDS, the Socialist College Union SHB, and later also large parts of the young socialists, continued to play the role of a leftwing internal opposition. In addition, leftwing opposition outside of the SPD was growing in the various groups of the New Left after 1968. Among the radical school reformers and teachers, many saw school reform as a step towards a socialist society. However, many of the leading SPD politicians, including *Ministerpräsident* Kühn and the Minister of Education Fritz Holthoff, had little sympathy for this New Left and its radical ideas about the purpose of education (cf. Chapter 5, pp. 205f regarding Holthoff's role). In this situation, it was difficult for SPD politicians to agree that their school politics were socialist but nor could they entirely refute it. For example, in the second parliamentary debate about the cooperative school, the SPD politician, Heinz Schwier, argued:

“I will tell you this: if more cooperation between schools and an improvement in educational opportunities is socialism (*Köppler*, CDU: “*As if this is an improvement!*”) and if the forced selection of young children to separate schools is freedom, then I am in support of socialism (*applause from the SPD*).” (*Landtag NRW, June 29, 1977, p. 2885*)

Instead of taking ownership of the term “socialism”, Schwier only referred to the supposed opposition between socialism and freedom drawn up by the CDU. This was a weak line of defense which can hardly have pleased more radical school reformers.

The deep split in the labor movement and also partly in the Liberal Party became even more apparent in the debate about occupational bans. These bans stemmed from a decision by the *Ministerpräsidenten* of the federal states and Chancellor Willy Brandt of February 28, 1972, according to which members of “anti-constitutional organizations” (in practice, mainly DKP communists but in a few cases, also members of the K-groups, social democrats or Nazis) could not be public employees (see the decision quoted in Koschnick, 1979, p. 84). They affected around 11,000 leftist activists, among them many teachers, and led to massive public debate (Düding, 2008, p. 693; cf. Koschnick, 1979; de Lorent, 1977). Especially within the SPD, opposition to the bans was significant from the start, also in NRW. Most of the young socialists and the young democrats, the youth organization of the FDP, opposed them. Large sections of the SPD grassroots in NRW also considered the occupational bans illegal (Düding, 2008, p. 678). In 1973, one of the first occupational bans in NRW against a young lawyer and DKP member, Volker Götz, led to a parliamentary debate (*Landtag NRW, August 22, 1973*). This gave the CDU a welcome opportunity to criticize the social-liberal government and split the coalition of the FDP and the SPD and the SPD internally. Whereas the SPD Minister of Justice at first insisted that Götz was well-qualified for the job and not dangerous, several FDP ministers disagreed, insisting that Götz could not be hired. *Ministerpräsident* Kühn decided with the support of Chancellor Brandt that Götz was not worth risking the coalition

with the FDP, both in NRW and nationally, and Götz was rejected and never became a judge. This decision by Kühn led to indignant reactions from the SPD's left wing (see Düding, 2008, pp. 676ff, for a detailed discussion of this case).

In the following years it became apparent, also to the initial supporters of the bans within the SPD and FDP, that they had made a mistake, as Chancellor Willy Brandt also later admitted (cf. Koschnick, 1979). Especially in CDU-governed federal states but also in NRW – as the case of Götz illustrates – membership of the DKP was often enough for a person to be banned from public employment, at least initially. Sometimes the bans were repealed later but, in any case, they led to a general feeling of insecurity for young, leftwing activists. Applicants' records with the secret services were checked as a matter of principle and the regulation virtually invited the federal states' administrations to snoop and make denunciations. Both the SPD and FDP underlined in their party programs of 1976 and 1980 that they in principle still opposed the employment of “enemies of the Constitution” by the state but that administrative practices were completely out of proportion. They insisted that each case had to be reviewed separately and that the involvement of the secret service in each appointment was unnecessary. Especially the SPD underlined that mere membership of the DKP should not be a sufficient criterion but that applicants would have to be involved in actual “anti-constitutional activities” in order to be rejected. This was also a reaction to criticism from abroad.<sup>25</sup> The new – still rather unclear – policy regarding the occupational bans, however, did not overcome the internal split. The general anti-communist line of the leadership was still in opposition to a sizable minority of the SPD's and a smaller minority of the FDP's grassroots.

This also came to expression in the SPD's internal conflicts over cooperation with communists. On November 14, 1970, the SPD party executive decided that any type of “popular front” with communists was unacceptable and that any social democrat who issued publications, organized meetings, signed appeals or in any other way cooperated with communists, would have to be “informed about the damaging character of his behavior for the party” (quoted in Hasenritter, 1981, pp. 156f). If necessary, internal disciplinary proceedings had to be initiated. Hasenritter (1981) has studied the frequency of party disciplinary proceedings within the SPD, CDU and FDP and has shown that the SPD had by far the highest number of such internal proceedings. A majority of the proceedings carried out by the Federal Arbitration Commission of the SPD were related to cooperation with communists in some way (Hasenritter, 1981, p. 157). For example, members who cooperated with communists in the struggle against the occupational bans or in the peace movement risked exclusion. The vast majority of such members were not excluded but, instead, particularly

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<sup>25</sup> In fact, the European Court of Human Rights ruled in 1995 that the German practice of occupational bans was a violation of Article 10 (freedom of opinion) and Article 11 (freedom of association) of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of November 4, 1950. Only then was the practice given up (Düding, 2008, p. 693).

prominent internal critics were made an example of. On the local or federal state level, such conflicts were sometimes resolved with the imposition of sanctions – for example, members who had cooperated with communists lost their voting rights for a few years. Whenever such disciplinary proceedings reached the Federal Arbitration Commission, members who had cooperated with communists were, however, always excluded (Hasenritter, 1981, p. 162). In comparison, party disciplinary proceedings in the FDP and the CDU were rare. The FDP tolerated the young democrats' partial cooperation with communists to a greater extent than the SPD and no similar problems existed within the CDU (Hasenritter, 1981, pp. 192ff).

The unions, in particular the Education and Science Workers' Union were beset with internal power struggles and splits resulting from the communist-socialist cleavage. On October 1, 1973, the Federal Executive Committee of the German trade union federation DGB passed a resolution according to which membership of one of the K-groups, such as the KPD, the KPD/ML or any of their subsidiary groups, was irreconcilable with membership of the DGB. DKP members were not explicitly mentioned (Sachse, 1985, p. 67). The reason was that DKP members did not attempt to organize communist fractions within the union but aimed at a broad "popular front" and were thus considered loyal union members. Members of the K-groups, on the other hand, were often involved in the organization of internal opposition, for example through the founding of "revolutionary" or "red union" opposition groups. The Education and Science Workers' Union adopted what was dubbed the *Unvereinbarkeitsbeschluss*, a resolution on irreconcilability, on March 8, 1975, but this was not immediately accepted by all federal state chapters. The Berlin chapter did not manage to produce the necessary majority for a change to its statutes and was therefore excluded in January 1977 (Sachse, 1985, p. 69). 854 individuals were excluded from DGB unions as a result of this resolution until 1982, of whom a total of 272 were excluded from the Education and Science Workers' Union (Sachse, 1985, pp. 84, 86). The Education and Science Workers' Union was in other words the DGB union with by far the highest number of exclusions. Especially because the Education and Science Workers' Union also organized students and university professors, it became one of the most leftwing unions during the 1970s and thus had to deal with much internal opposition. In general, there was fierce infighting between K-group and DKP members and between moderate and leftwing social democrats.

Overall, in the Cold War atmosphere of the post-war decades, it was generally a very challenging, if not unsolvable, task to remain ideologically independent of either block. This was a problem especially for the internal unity of the social democrats and the unions. The CDU had chosen to place itself clearly on the side of the capitalist west and employed anti-communist arguments whenever it seemed useful, including in school politics. But within the labor movement, a sizable minority refused to take such a clear stand. People were drawn in both directions and the labor movement was split. Instead of positively and confidently defining and defending the contents of "socialist" school politics, the leading personnel of the

SPD instead continued its strategy of moderating the SPD's goals, of seconding anti-communist fears and of stifling internal criticism of this course. This strategy only consolidated anti-communist hegemony instead of weakening it. From a Rokkanian point of view, post-war anti-communism thus deepened the internal split of the labor movement in Germany. This affected also the capacity for cooperation between moderate or rightwing social democrats, who were anti-communist, and leftwing and often younger social democrats, who considered anti-communism to be a tool against their egalitarian political goals, including the comprehensive school. For potential cooperation partners, such as the Association of Education and Upbringing, anti-communist arguments, the internal conflicts of the reformers' camp and the leftist orientation of the Education and Science Workers' Union and other radical school reformers had a deterrent effect. As the case of Götz illustrates (cf. above), the relationship between the FDP and SPD suffered as well. Even though the FDP was comparatively tolerant of its leftwing young democrats, the leading personnel of the FDP remained strictly anti-communist and rejected the idea that school politics should be a means to change the social system as a whole. For the opponents of reform, this complex political situation opened up various possibilities for ideological attack which were used to a great extent.

### 6.5 Struggles over gender and education

The final political cleavage, which is examined in this thesis with respect to its effect on school politics, is the gender cleavage. While issues related to gender were in both cases in this study not among the most frequently debated in school politics, far-reaching changes nonetheless took place in the reform period of the 1950s to 1970s, not least on the ideological level. As discussed in Chapter 4, education for girls and women had long been a controversial issue in Norway and Germany. Women's organizations and organization of female teachers struggled for equal treatment, better education and better working conditions. In Norway, girls' access to schooling on a par with boys' was, however, introduced significantly earlier, namely in the 1880s. Of all the German states, Prussia was among the last to open the education system to girls and higher girls' schools were first put on a par with higher boys' schools in 1923 (Herrlitz et al, 2009, p. 100). In the initial decades after the Second World War, girls' educational achievement was still significantly lower. Both in Germany and Norway, girls caught up with boys in results within the school system in the course of the 1970s (Danielsen et al, 2013, pp. 281ff; Herrlitz et al, 2009, p. 191). Coeducation was also introduced step-by-step in both countries, though earlier and more consistently in Norway. Educational inequality between the genders persisted for longer in the higher education system and still comes to expression in the gender-divided labor markets of both countries today. In the following sections, the two cases are analyzed with respect to the gender-political cleavages in school politics.

### 6.5.1 Debates on gender and education in Norway

The most important actors in the debates on gender and education in Norway were clearly the various women's organizations, and not least the female teachers. In the following, the historical background of the female teachers' movement and the development of the Norwegian women's movement over time are discussed first, followed by an analysis of how the changing attitudes to gender roles came to expression in the programs of the political parties. In the next step, the school-political conflicts related to gender and, in particular, to the subject homemaking are analyzed chronologically based on various primary and secondary sources and expert interviews. The aim is to show that the gender cleavage, like other crosscutting cleavages, divided and united various political actors along lines of conflict which were partly independent of the dominating class cleavage between the left and the right. This again potentially contributed to a weakening of the alliance between conservatives and center parties.

Norwegian male and female primary school teachers were organized separately between 1912 and 1966. The story of the Female Teachers' Association is a fascinating piece of organizational history which cannot be explored in detail here (but see Hagemann, 1992, pp. 135ff). It is, however, important to understand that the female teachers were a central element in Norway's early women's movement, even before they had their own organization. Most of them had urban upper or middle class backgrounds, whereas the male teachers more often stemmed from the rural population – a difference which persisted well into the post-war period. The division of the teachers' organizations was thus an expression not only of the gender cleavage but also of urban-rural and class cleavages (cf. Hagemann, 1992, pp. 145ff, p. 242).

For the female teachers, one of the most important political aims was to achieve recognition for women's work – both their own work as teachers but also the work of the many Norwegian women who were housewives. They struggled not only for an ideological recognition of the important contribution women were making in society but also for material recognition, for example in the sense of equal wages for female teachers, equal representation in the teachers' organizations, or rights to holidays for housewives. In order to increase the social status and competencies of housewives, Norwegian women founded "housewife schools" (*husmorskoler*) from the 1860s, where young girls were trained to become housewives and teachers of homemaking (Fuglerud, 1980). In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, these schools were greatly expanded. Female teachers also cared about the social and hygienic living conditions of the population which they thought needed to be improved with the help of health education, mothering education, sex education and not least lessons in cooking and homemaking (*husstellundervisning*) in primary and secondary schools. In particular, many female teachers saw great value in the comparatively new school type, the *framhaldsskole* (continuation school) which they considered to be suitable as further education for girls.

Many of these schools were for girls only or included homemaking tracks which were attended by girls and thus were important workplaces for female teachers. For this reason, the Female Teachers' Association was not as enthusiastic as the male primary school teachers about the comprehensive school reforms begun in 1959, even though they supported the idea of extended obligatory schooling. They were worried that the specific advantages of the *framhaldsskole* as a more practical school type would disappear with the establishment of only one type of youth school and that education in homemaking would lose ground. Many of them also did not have the necessary educational qualifications to teach in more academic secondary schools so the reforms potentially threatened their jobs (cf. Hagemann, 1992, pp. 270ff). In the end, the development of the youth school from 1959 did weaken the Female Teachers' Association in various ways. Their ideal of separate but equally respected gender roles became unfashionable (cf. below) and they lost the influence they had through the *framhaldsskole* (Hagemann, 1992, pp. 274ff). As the expert Kari Lie also remarked in the interview, from the 1960s it became less and less understandable for young female teachers why they should have a separate organization. The reunification of the primary school teachers' organizations in 1966 was a logical consequence.

The movement of female teachers was politically independent, though many of its leading figures were active in various political parties. For example, the pioneer in homemaking education, Helga Helgesen, was a member of the Liberal Party and its only representative on the city council of Kristiania (Oslo) from 1923 to 1925. Another example is the first leader of the Female Teachers' Association, Anna Rogstad, who was also the first woman in the Norwegian parliament. She represented a small liberal party (*Frisinnede Venstre*) which cooperated with the Conservative Party. In 1917, she joined the Labor Party. This could be considered a rather exceptional choice, since most female teachers did not stand this far to the left, presumably due to their higher class backgrounds. This also came to expression in an early split in the Norwegian women's movement. In 1904, the Norwegian Women's National Council (*Norske Kvinners Nasjonalråd*) was founded by various women's organizations and in 1914/1915 the newly founded associations of Norwegian housewives and Norwegian homemaking teachers joined as well. But the large Women's Union of the Labor Party (*Arbeiderpartiets Kvindeforbund*), which had been founded in 1901, preferred to remain independent of the Norwegian Women's National Council. The specific conflict behind this was that the labor movement's women supported the struggle of housemaids for better working conditions, while the Association of Norwegian Housewives opposed it. Nonetheless, from 1914, the Labor Party's women's organization also clearly supported the idea of education in homemaking (Fuglerud, 1980, pp. 84f). Until the 1950s, "housewife ideology" remained strong, also within the labor movement (Pedersen, 2001, p. 22; Danielsen et al, 2013, p. 270).



In the course of the 1960s and 1970s, a remarkable change took place within the Norwegian women's movement and society at large. "Housewife ideology" lost ground and the early movement's acceptance of separate gender roles was increasingly questioned. New women's organizations were founded which were more radical and leftist. Even though the Association of Norwegian Housewives still had 50,000 members in 1974, with only 5000 members organized in the new women's organizations, they were more active politically and had many sympathizers (Danielsen et al, 2013, p. 293). Some of the new organizations, such as the Women's Front, had ties to the small Workers' Communist Party and the older women's organizations of the political parties still played a role. Nonetheless, the women's movement continued to exhibit a spirit of independence. For example, in the municipal elections of 1971, women of all political parties came together in several Norwegian cities in a "women's coup" with the aim of increasing the number of female politicians on the municipal councils. Female voters were taught how to strike out male candidates on the ballot papers and replace them with female ones. The campaign, which was prepared in secret, succeeded to such a degree that women became a majority on the municipal councils of Oslo, Trondheim and Asker. Male politicians of various parties were not pleased but the action contributed to an increase in women on the parties' lists (Danielsen et al, 2013, pp. 313f).

In the programs of the political parties published between 1957 and 1977, immense ideological changes can be traced which took place in gender roles. For example, the Labor Party's programs went from a long paragraph on the rights and living conditions of housewives in 1958 to suggesting that "married women must receive realistic possibilities to take work outside of the home" in 1969 and asking for "actual equality" and the overcoming of "traditional differences between men's and women's jobs" in 1974. In 1969, the Labor Party also first suggested in its program that school curricula should be revised so that men and women were no longer represented as assigned with specific roles in society. From the 1970s, the party's programs stated that measures had to be taken to induce both genders to choose non-typical types of education.

The programs of the Conservative Party also changed markedly. In 1958, the program stated that it was worrying that the economic and demographic development would presumably lead to an increase in married women on the labor market since "the housewife is the midpoint of the home and her wholehearted dedication there is of the very greatest importance both for every single family and for society as a whole". It was also suggested that schools should include "elementary consumer economics in homemaking lessons so young girls can learn how to handle money and examine quality and prices". In the 1960s, the programs continued to demand that housewife and homemaking schools should be expanded and that education in homemaking had to be prioritized but, from 1961, the Conservative Party also demanded "full equality with equal wages for equal work and equal advancement conditions for women and men". In the 1970s, the term "housewife" (*husmor*) suddenly vanished entirely from the

program which now only spoke of homemakers (*hjemmeværende*). Furthermore, it was stated that the Conservative Party wanted to “work for a change of mentalities and for practical reforms which make it possible to divide responsibilities and rights in society equally between women and men”. From 1973, the program demanded that curricula should not include “antiquated gender role thinking” and that the schools should take into account “that girls and boys shall share equal rights to vocational and other further education”.

Among the smaller parties, both the Socialist People’s Party and the Liberal Party included rather radical demands for gender equality in their programs from an early date. In its very first program from 1961, the Socialist People’s Party demanded for example that equal wages for women had to be introduced immediately, “not in the course of the next seven years as intended by the agreement between LO and NAF”, meaning the unions and the employers’ organization. But even here it was stated that “the question of better access to holidays and free time for housewives must be broached”, though “access to part-time work for housewives” was demanded at the same time. From 1965, the Socialist People’s Party demanded that curricula should become “equal for girls and boys” and, from 1969, that teaching material should be “considered carefully so that differential treatment and gender role thinking are changed in accordance with the principles of equality and equal rights”.

The Liberal Party was the first party to include the following demand in its program in 1957: “Boys and girls must have the same amount of teaching both in practical and theoretical subjects.” This referred especially to lessons in homemaking which at this point were still reserved for girls in most schools. Like the other parties, the Liberal Party also went from a housewife-centered rhetoric to an increased emphasis on equal rights. In 1977, the party made the radical demand that gender quotas should be applied in all educational institutions after primary school “in order to create a better balance in the distribution of women and men in our educational institutions”. From 1973, it also suggested that all discriminatory representations should be removed from schoolbooks and that a general change in attitudes was required to overcome “traditional gender role thinking”.

A change of rhetoric can be discerned also in the programs of the Christian Democrats and the Centre Party, even though they more clearly emphasized the housewife ideal and stuck to it longer. The Centre Party’s programs demanded from 1957 to 1965 that “all girls should receive good and adequate housewife education”. Otherwise, the programs did not include any far-reaching demands regarding the situation of women. Only in 1977 did the Centre Party include a paragraph about gender equality in its program, suggesting that the school system should contribute to a change of attitudes so “both genders shall have the same possibilities and responsibilities with respect to the home, work, public life and so forth”. The programs of the Christian Democrats also openly advocated separate gender roles until 1973, when they made an effort for the first time to formulate their demands in a more gender-

neutral way. For example, they now demanded that “housewife schools [...] must receive increased capacity and necessary equipment in order to provide a modern education, also for male students”. In addition, they now stated that economic reasons should not force both parents – mentioning no longer only mothers – of small children to work outside of the home and that part-time jobs should be made available for men and women alike. They did, however, continue to emphasize the value of marriage and homemaking and their support for housewife schools at a time when the other parties had largely abandoned the term “housewife”.

The only party that still advocated the housewife ideal without any reservations in the late 1970s was the right-wing Progress Party. Its program of 1977 stated that the party “considered the housewife’s work as especially important for society and for the family” and that “the housewife’s position must therefore be valued more highly”. Furthermore, the party stated that children should ideally “stay at home under the care of their parents until school-age”. No other party opposed working mothers that clearly and was thus as openly anti-feminist.

The development of the school subject of homemaking over time is a good indicator of how the gender cleavage affected school politics in this period. From 1936, homemaking had been an obligatory subject for girls in the cities’ primary schools. From 1946, it had also been obligatory for girls in continuation schools (*framhaldsskoler*), if at least four girls attended such a school. In 1949, the Commission that had been tasked with evaluating the school system as a whole (*Samordningsnemda for skoleverket*) published a report about homemaking as a subject. Here, it was stated that homemaking should become obligatory as soon as possible for girls all over the country, also in the countryside. This demand had a financial dimension as well, since cooking classes required school kitchens which were expensive. In addition, arguments were first made as to why strict gender separation might not be the best solution:

“In the continuation school, boys should receive as much teaching in homemaking in the school kitchen so that they can be self-dependent and help others with the most usual activities in the house.

The girls, on the other hand, could perhaps receive some teaching in manual training so that women will no longer be so clumsy when banging a nail into the wall, using a knife, axe, saw or other usual tools.” (*Samordningsnemda for skoleverket (1949), p. 4*)

This was supported by the Norwegian Teachers’ Association which had commented in a letter to the commission that although girls often received some instruction in cooking at home, boys most often did not. They pointed to studies about the diets of lumberjacks and fishermen which showed that these men often ate poorly. For this reason, they suggested that the municipal school boards should at least have the possibility to offer homemaking lessons to

boys, even if it would presumably be impossible to make the subject obligatory for all boys (*Samordningsnemda for skoleverket (1949), p. 9*).

In 1952, a commission was put in place to discuss homemaking in detail. In its report of 1954, it suggested that the subject should now become obligatory for all girls (*Innstilling fra Utvalget til å utrede skolekjøkken- og husstellopplæringa, 1955*). When the youth school reform was prepared in the late 1950s, the Labor Party ministry issued a document on the subject which built on the commission's conclusions but suggested that homemaking should become obligatory for both girls and boys in primary schools and in the new youth school (*St. meld. nr. 61 (1957) Om heimkunnskap og husstell*). This was justified in part by the fact that the content of the subject needed to be expanded to include not only cooking, handling clothes and other domestic chores but also knowledge about book-keeping, housing, furniture, nutrition and health:

“The ministry cannot agree with the commission [of 1952] that these points of view shall apply only to girls. It might be correct that the woman more than the man has to take responsibility for everything to do with the home and family life. But when the subject is supposed to include so much more than just practical cooking, it is difficult to understand why the boys should not take part in the teaching. Neither does it seem appropriate in today's times that boys shall receive no knowledge about practical cooking. In schools where cooking classes for boys have been tried, the experiences are good. The boys like the subject, the results are equally good as in girls' classes and the parents appreciate boys receiving such an education. If the majority of boys do not use what they learn in the subject, it is still of great educational value that all children should take such a course in the same way as all children are included in the other practical subjects in school. The housewife must probably take the biggest responsibility when it comes to the home but both the housewife and the housefather [*husfar*] are together in their decisions about and responsibility for the order of and tasks in the house. If the housefather is to have the same prerequisites and develop the right respect for the housewife's occupation, it is desirable for him to have the same education and insight into the problems as the housewife.” (*St. meld. nr. 61 (1957) Om heimkunnskap og husstell, p. 9*).

The opposition in the parliamentary committee responsible, meaning the representatives of the center parties and the Conservative Party, however, thought that it would be too costly for the time being to make homemaking obligatory for boys as well, even if it would be desirable. As long as homemaking could not be offered to all students for financial reasons and due to a lack of teachers, they thought that girls should be prioritized at least as far as the practical part of the education was concerned (*Innst. S. nr. 294., 1958, Tilråding frå den forsterkede landbrukskomité om heimkunnskap og husstell, p. 472*).

This was also debated in parliament in January 1959. Here, it became clear that not all representatives of the opposition parties really did consider it desirable that boys should receive homemaking lessons at school. For example, the Centre Party representative, Hans Borgen, stated that he personally thought that “there is reason to consider in more detail whether it is a reasonable usage of our educational possibilities and of students’ school time to press boys through the exact same educational program in homemaking as girls should have and hopefully also will have gradually in the general schools” (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, January 20, 1959, Heimkunnskap og husstell, p. 61*). But also the Labor Party representative, Olav Meisdalshagen, who had been the leader of the committee of 1952, expressed doubts about the feasibility of introducing homemaking for all boys and girls, for whom it was “despite of everything so much more important that they [girls] receive this education” (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, January 20, 1959, Heimkunnskap og husstell, p. 75*). This was not in line with the view of the female Labor Party representative, Guri Johannessen, who considered the decision to include boys in homemaking lessons to be extremely important and who praised the ministry under Birger Bergersen for having underlined this so strongly. Her main argument was that increased respect for the housewife’s occupation required also boys to have more knowledge about it (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, January 20, 1959, Heimkunnskap og husstell, p. 79*). She was supported by her party members, Peter Kjeldseth Moe and Rakel Seweriin. Kjeldseth Moe pointed out that if resources were insufficient to introduce homemaking for all students straightaway, one should introduce it for one age-group at a time, instead of one gender. In his view, it was about time to “break down barriers built on prejudices which do not belong in our time” (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, January 20, 1959, Heimkunnskap og husstell, p. 91*). Rakel Seweriin chose the following words in her speech:

“It is a new thought which never before has been presented to parliament that both sexes are to learn to work together and have responsibility together for the home and one should expect this to be greeted with happiness and satisfaction, at least by the majority of women in this country. But the bourgeois [*borgerlige*] parties emphasize in their remarks the old difference. They say that when it comes to practical education, meaning cooking lessons, the boys must be held back, even if experiences show that the boys have at least as much interest in and benefit from this education.” (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, January 20, 1959, Heimkunnskap og husstell, p. 95*).

This remark so angered the conservative Mons Arntsen Løvset and the liberal Olav Hordvik that they both felt prompted to reply to her by pointing to the wording of the parliamentary committee’s report. They rejected the charge that they were in principle against including boys in homemaking and repeated that they merely thought that girls should be prioritized for the time being due to a lack of resources (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, January 20, 1959, Heimkunnskap og husstell, pp. 98ff*).

Since the Labor Party had the absolute majority and the majority of the Labor Party clearly supported the ministry, the caveat was, however, ignored. The people's school law of 1959 included homemaking (now called *heimkunnskap*) as an obligatory subject for students of both sexes. In the experimental curricula of 1960 and 1964, homemaking was included as an obligatory subject from the 4<sup>th</sup> until the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and then became a separate track in the third youth school year (*Forsøksrådet for skoleverket*, 1960, pp. 369ff; *Forsøksrådet for skoleverket*, 1964, pp. 288ff). In the upper grades, the curricula even included topics such as "a democratic family life", family finances, housing and furniture, nutritional knowledge or childcare and care for the elderly. In addition, the subject of homemaking had to be organized in cooperation with the subjects of manual training (*forming*) and civics (*samfunnskunnskap*) which were supposed to cover additional topics such as handicrafts, family law or housing politics (*Forsøksrådet for skoleverket*, 1964, p. 309).

A related debate in the 1960s was the question of how the various upper secondary housewife schools should be regulated and not least what they should teach and to whom. In 1961, the Ministry of Education set up a working group which was to discuss in detail which place these schools should have in the future school system. Based on this group's report of December 1962, and a report by the Council for Homemaking (*Rådet for heimkunnskap og husstell*) of 1964, the Labor Party Minister of Education, Helge Sivertsen, presented a white paper on the topic in May 1965 (*St. meld. nr. 101 (1964-65) Om yrkesskoler i husstell*). The parliamentary education committee commented on this paper in February 1966 and it was debated in parliament in March 1966 (*Innst. S. nr. 94 (1965-66) Innstilling frå kirke- og undervisningskomitéen om yrkesskoler i husstell (St. meld. nr. 101); Forhandlingar i Stortinget, March 10, 1966*). There was now general agreement that housewife schools served several aims. They no longer exclusively prepared young women for the occupation of housewife but also for several occupations on the labor market. The name of the schools was therefore changed to "occupational schools for homemaking" (*fagskolene i husstell*).

The development of the housewife schools, which mostly ended up as one of many tracks in the reformed upper secondary school in the 1970s, cannot be analyzed in detail here (but see Fuglerud, 1980). But it is interesting to note that the parliamentary debate of 1966 again revealed that the Labor Party representatives, especially the female ones, expressed most clearly their belief that homemaking was no longer only for girls and that these schools should therefore be open to boys as well. They also emphasized most clearly that homemaking schools served as a form of vocational education for various occupations, not only the occupation of housewife. For example, the Labor Party representative Gunvor Eker remarked:

"The homemaking schools should be a part of an ensemble, in a way that they are attended by both boys and girls. [...] It is talked here of the housewife and the girls all the time. I think we should get away from that. Everywhere, we have shared classes.

Boys and girls go to school together from primary school on. We can see how young husbands to an ever higher degree take their share of the housework and they probably have as great a need to acquire a good base. The married couple together build up a home and raise their children. I cannot see that this is something which lies only on the mother or the housewife. Something has happened also on this front recently and I hope that it can be continued so that there will be equality in this area too.” (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, March 10, 1966, p. 2314*).

The speakers of the Conservative Party did not make such far-reaching remarks but they were clear in their support for homemaking as a more general, vocational form of education. For example, the conservative, Jo Benkow, pointed out:

“The term ‘occupational schools in homemaking’ is used with an all too narrow meaning. I think what we need is an education which in competition with other occupational schools and also in competition with the academic upper secondary school [*gymnas*] can stand independently and on its own and which can lead to actual vocational competencies both in and outside of the home in the entire large sector connected to the home and the family, to services, consumption and social work. Education in this sector must never be given the character of being a subsidiary solution because one has no access to other, more attractive choices in the general school supply. Today it is obvious that a great number of young women – and also men for that matter – choose for example the upper secondary school [*gymnas*] because there are no equal or better suited possibilities in the general school supply.” (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, March 10, 1966, p. 2305*).

For this conservative representative, the important matter was to regulate the educational expansion which was taking place also among women in a way that would not threaten academic education in the upper-secondary school. In contrast, the Centre Party politician, Karstein Seland, insisted that the most important role of the homemaking schools should still be to educate housewives – “the most important of all occupations”, as he put it (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, March 10, 1966, p. 2303*). In addition, he thought that it was strange that the Labor Party ministry had argued in its white paper in 1965 that it was hard to estimate the exact need for spaces in these schools, since one did not know exactly the number of “employees” in the occupation of housewife. In his view, the fact that around 24,000 marriages were registered in Norway each year was a sufficient estimate. Each one of these 24,000 newly wed housewives should have access to a housewife’s education, not only a meager 15 percent, as was the case at present (*Forhandlinger i Stortinget, March 10, 1966, p. 2303*). The reference to the number of marriages was repeated by various non-socialist representatives, such as the Christian Democrat, Jakob Aano. Also the Liberal Party representative, Borghild Bondevik Haga, agreed that it was a shame that so many young

housewives could not be offered a housewife's education. At the same time, she seemed unsure whether only women needed this:

“The goal for the expansion of our housewife schools will not be reached until one can give every single girl – and why not just as well say every single boy – education as to how to take care of and make a home, education which gives knowledge about cooking, about managing the family economy, knowledge about the psychological element in a family's life and in our society in general, some knowledge in sociology. All this is required in order to be able to build a home and take care of the values which one would like a home to have.” (*Forhandling i Stortinget, March 10, 1966, p. 2311*)

The additions made by both Bondevik Haga and Benkow with respect to men and boys show that mindsets were changing fast and that politicians felt compelled to adapt their wording. There was a strong trend in the 1960s towards equal curricula and coeducation on all levels. For example, the people's school committee of 1963 also expressed in its report in 1965 that since the division of labor in the home was now “less marked” than it had been, it was right that curricula should no longer distinguish between boys and girls in certain subjects. All differentiation should instead be based on interests, not gender (*Innstilling frå Folkeskolekomiteén av 1963 (1965), p. 116*).

In the expert interviews, this trend was also confirmed and several experts agreed that the introduction of coeducation which took place in many urban municipalities in the course of the 1950s and 1960s had not been heavily debated but had simply been an expression of the spirit of the times. In the countryside, the coeducation of boys and girls had been the norm anyway, since there were simply not enough children to divide them up by sex. Of all the experts interviewed, only Torild Skard could remember that the introduction of coeducation had been opposed by anyone, namely by the school reformer, Anna Sethne, who had been the chairwoman of the Female Teachers' Association from 1919 to 1938 and who continued to take part in reform debates until her death in 1961. According to Skard, Sethne argued in the debates with Skard's mother, Åse Gruda Skard, who was also an important feminist activist, that girls could easily be dominated by boys in mixed classes and that separate teaching for girls and boys was therefore required, at least in some cases. In the early female teachers' movement, there was no agreement about this question (Hagemann, 1992, pp. 178f). But in the course of the 1960s, separation by sex in the school system largely became a thing of the past in practice. With the curriculum of 1974, it was made officially binding that girls and boys should always attend mixed classes and should not be separated in any subject (*Kirke- og undervisningsdepartementet, 1974, pp. 23f*). As the expert Theo Koritzinsky also pointed out, the curriculum of 1974 was one of the most radical and explicit curricula ever in Norwegian history with respect to the equality of the sexes.



All in all, it should again be underlined that the Norwegian women's movement stood for an independent political struggle which sometimes crisscrossed other lines of conflict. When it comes to the political parties, the Labor Party and the Socialist People's Party most clearly supported the radical claims of the new women's movements in the 1960s and 1970s. The Centre Party and the Christian Democrats, on the other hand, seemed to be the most reluctant to give up their insistence on separate gender roles. Presumably, this is related to their more rural voter base. The Liberal Party, on the other hand, and the urban Conservative Party, were placed somewhere in between and often supported the claims of the women's organizations, not least the less radical ones, such as the Female Teachers' Association. The Liberal Party included some rather radical demands regarding the educational equality of the sexes in its post-war programs. The Conservative Party also organized a number of well-educated upper and middle class women who belonged in some way to the women's movement. Thus, the cultural and, in part, the urban-rural difference between the various non-leftist parties also came to expression in the debates about gender and education during the reform period of the post-war decades. It can be assumed that this was an additional difference which potentially weakened non-leftist alliances.

#### 6.5.2 Debates on gender and education in NRW

For the German women's movement, girls' education was one of the most important aims from the outset (cf. Hervé, 1990). Female teachers played an important role in the women's movement's struggle for girls' access to education on a par with boys. In the following, the history of the women's movement's internal cleavages and their relations with the female teachers' organizations are discussed in brief. Also, the party programs of the post-war decades are reviewed with respect to the question of to what degree they met the women's movement's demands. In the next step, the history of girls' education in NRW after 1945 is analyzed with a focus on the importance of Catholic private schooling for girls, on the development of the special higher school type reserved for girls (the *Frauenoberschule*) and on the introduction of coeducation and equal curricula for boys and girls. It is shown that women's demands were generally not prioritized by the political parties from the 1950s to 1970s and that significant changes in the situation of girls in the education system first took place from the late 1960s onwards. The ideal of the housewife remained strong throughout the period. Furthermore, even though the SPD and FDP most clearly attempted to integrate the women's movement's demands at least in part, the CDU also had ties to the Catholic parts of the women's movement and was in many ways supported by them in its school politics. The class cleavage and the state-church and denominational cleavage thus undermined the unity of the women's movement so that it did not represent a serious threat to the unity of the conservative alliance against school reforms.

From the beginning, the German women's movement was divided into social democratic, liberal and conservative currents (cf. Hervé, 1990, pp. 12ff). Even though the majority of the

liberal/conservative current was united under the umbrella of the *Bund deutscher Frauenvereine* (*BdF*, Union of German Women's Associations) founded in 1894, several splits existed within it between social liberals, national liberals and conservatives (cf. Wurms, 1990). In addition, the women's movement was split along lines of denomination. The conservative *Deutsch-Evangelischer Frauenbund* (German-Evangelical Women's Union) became a member of the *BdF* but the *Katholischer deutscher Frauenbund* (*KDFB*, Catholic German Women's Union) which still exists today, did not. Membership of the liberal *BdF* would have been irreconcilable with the rootedness of the Catholic women's activists in the broad Catholic milieu which had developed in the course of the cultural struggle (cf. section 4.3.3; cf. Sack, 1998, p. 38). When a new national umbrella organization, the *Informationsdienst für Frauenfragen* (Information Service for Women's Questions, since 1969: *Deutscher Frauenrat*, German Women's Council) was founded in 1951, the Catholic women's movement was, however, involved and included (cf. Illema, 2016, pp. 112ff). Besides the *KDFB*, the Catholic women's movement comprised organizations such as the *Verein katholischer deutscher Lehrerinnen* (*VkdL*, Association of Catholic German Female Teachers), founded in 1885 which also still exists today. This association had its strongholds in the Rhineland and Westphalia, where there were much higher numbers of female teachers than in the Protestant areas of Prussia. The reason was that the coeducation of boys and girls was rarer in Catholic areas and that separate girls' schools meant greater possibilities for the employment of female teachers (Sack, 1998, pp. 115ff). The *VkdL* organized mainly people's school teachers but cooperated with smaller Catholic female teachers' organizations for secondary school teachers (Sack, 1998, p. 122). The Catholic women's movement was strongly affiliated with the Centre Party and later with the CDU. Before the Second World War, there was also a liberal, mostly Protestant organization for female teachers of all school types, the *Allgemeiner Deutscher Lehrerinnenverein* (*ADF*, General German Female Teachers' association), founded in 1890. Most of the Protestant female teachers, however, joined the male organizations during the Weimar Republic and the *ADF* was therefore not reestablished after the war.

There was no agreement between different currents of the women's movement regarding both the content and the structure of girls' education. Especially the liberal and conservative parts of the early women's movement supported traditional gender roles to a large extent and argued that the majority of girls should receive an education which befitted their destiny as mothers and housewives and which would improve the status of these roles. Even though the liberal women also struggled for the admittance of upper and middle class women to higher schools and universities, it was understood that the destiny of most women was to marry which excluded active participation on the labor market. Only the social democratic women's movement represented the interests of working women from the start. Nevertheless, ideas of the special "character" of women were sometimes adhered to here too (cf. Tornieporth, 1977,

pp. 221ff). Over time and especially in the decades after the Second World War, the situation gradually changed. Working women became more usual and one spoke increasingly of a “double role” of women as housewives and employees. In the liberal and social democratic parts of the women’s movement, more and more women supported coeducation – the further to the left they stood, the more they argued for coeducation in principle, not merely as a workaround (cf. Pfister, 1988, p. 35). These trends were intensified after 1968, when many new, radical women’s organizations mushroomed (Doormann, 1990, pp. 255ff). However, the Catholic women’s movement continued to oppose coeducation in principle and clung to the idea that the freedom of women consisted in the choice between marriage and motherhood or maidenhood and career (Illemann, 2016, pp. 179ff; Pöggeler, 1977, pp. 372ff; Schultheis, 1995, pp. 200ff, pp. 254ff). Until at least the 1950s, the *VkdL* expected its members to remain single in order to concentrate completely on their vocation.<sup>26</sup> It opposed married teachers, even though the celibacy requirement for female teachers had been abolished during the Weimar Republic (Illemann, 2016, p. 180; Sack, 1998, pp. 128ff). This can only be understood against the background of Catholic theology and practice which offered limited possibilities of emancipation and a certain degree of respect to women who chose celibacy. Especially in the Rhineland and Westphalia, Catholic female orders had stood for the development of girls’ and women’s education (Sack, 1998, p. 30). The *VkdL*’s support of separate education for girls had its roots both in pedagogical convictions based on traditional gender roles and in vested interests. Catholic female teachers were worried that they would not receive equally good conditions of professional advancement in coeducational schools (Sack, 1998, p. 133). Furthermore, the Catholic female teachers supported denominational schooling, in contrast to the rest of the women’s movement. In the expert interviews for this study, frequent derisory remarks about this organization illustrated that the *VkdL* became a relic of the past over time. Already in the 1970s, it seems that most politically active people in NRW did not really take the Catholic female teachers seriously. Their importance should therefore not be overegged. Nevertheless, the *VkdL* continued to represent a strongly antagonistic voice to school reforms with influence within the many Catholic girls’ schools and it was included in all parliamentary hearings about school politics. It also joined the campaign against the cooperative school in 1976 and was thus a part of the conservative anti-reform alliance.

In the party programs of the SPD, CDU and FDP from the 1950s to the 1970s, significant ideological changes in gender roles can first be traced in the second half of the 1970s.

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<sup>26</sup> Christine Teusch, CDU Minister of Education in NRW from 1947 to 1954, is a prime example. Born in 1888, she became a people’s school teacher in order to finance her brother’s medical studies and joined the *VkdL*, several other Catholic women’s organizations and the Centre Party which she represented in the first democratic parliament from 1919. She was also active in the Christian unions. Against massive male opposition, she struggled for influence within the post-war CDU and became one of the leading politicians of NRW, responsible among other things for the reestablishment of denominational schooling. In accordance with the *VkdL*’s principles, she never married (cf. Eich, 1987, pp. 84ff).

Nevertheless, over time all parties included more and more detailed comments regarding the situation of women in their programs. The early party programs of the CDU contained almost no references to women in particular. The Hamburg program of 1953 only stated that even though the CDU supported “equal rights of men and women” – which had been proclaimed in the new Constitution after long struggles – the “natural order of family and marriage” was the CDU’s principle with regard to a possible revision of the family law. In other words, the husbands’ legal predominance should not be abolished completely. Indeed, equal rights in family and marriage law first became a reality in 1976, under the social-liberal national government. However, the CDU managed to modernize its programs while continuing to represent traditional ideals of motherhood and homemaking. For example, the program of 1972 stated:

“We want to strengthen the position of women in our society. Women must be able to choose freely whether they want to address themselves exclusively to the tasks of family and household or in addition be employed fully or part-time. Women’s rights to fair chances in education, apprenticeship, further education, professional practice and to equal chances of ascent must be realized. We are – also with respect to women – for equal pay in cases of equal performance. The independent woman’s right to sufficient social security is to be ensured for the future. We advocate a strengthening of the regard for the social merit of women in the family and household.”

In other words, the CDU continued to take it for granted that the “tasks of family and household” were primarily women’s ones but widened its view of women so that the interests of employed women would also be represented. Like the Catholic women’s movement, the CDU emphasized in its program of 1976 that “the position of the housewife and mother is of the same value as that of the employed women” and that “the occupation of the woman in the family is to be put on a level with professional occupations outside of the family”. “Especially small children need the security of the parental home”, the 1976 program also stated. Furthermore, in its program of 1980, the CDU stated that there had been “a lack of progress in the equal rights of man and woman which must not be limited to the social betterment of the childless employed woman”. However, the CDU also passed a more radical declaration entitled “Woman and Society” at its party congress of June 1975, in which it was stated explicitly that “already in the upbringing of children in the parental home, gender typical role clichés must be avoided” and that boys and girls should receive basic education in pedagogy and homemaking in the lower and upper secondary school levels in order to be prepared for “their task in the family based on partnership”. The declaration also suggested that more girls should be motivated to choose non-typical occupations, that housewives should receive possibilities for further training and that upper secondary homemaking lessons should be developed further so that they would qualify people for various occupations.

In contrast to the CDU, the SPD included comparatively detailed suggestions for women's politics in its early programs but nevertheless, here too, the housewife ideal long stood strong. In its program for the elections of 1957, the SPD suggested for example that all girls in general and vocational schools should receive homemaking lessons. Being a housewife and mother was described as "the natural task of the woman" and women were said to be "of equal value" but not of "equal character" as men which meant that women had a right to "special protection". However, in contrast to the CDU, the SPD demanded in 1957 that the woman's status in marriage and family law should be wholly equal to that of the man. As the Godesberg program of 1959 stated:

"Woman's equal rights must be realized legally, socially and economically. The woman must be offered the same possibilities of education, apprenticeship, choice of occupation, professional practice and pay as the man. Equal rights shall not call into question the psychological and biological character of the woman. Housewives' work must be acknowledged as occupational work. Housewives and mothers are in need of special help. Mothers of pre-school and school-aged children must not be forced to hold down a job for economic reasons."

In its youth-political guidelines of 1965, the SPD had not come much further. Here, it was stated explicitly that "full employment of mothers is difficult to reconcile with the upbringing of infants and school children" and that "part-time work offers the possibility to realize the child's right to motherly care and education and the right of the woman to an occupational development of her own". That the child could also have a right to fatherly care was not considered at this point. In NRW, the SPD also prided itself in its program of 1962 on having defended the monthly paid "housework day" for employed women which had been introduced in NRW after an initiative by the Communist Party in the early post-war years (cf. Hervé/Nödinger, 1990, p. 202). First in its program for the NRW elections of 1980 did the NRW SPD point out that part-time work should be available to men and women alike and that both mothers and fathers should have the possibility to reduce their daily hours of work. However, it was still assumed that combining family and work was mostly a problem of women:

"Reducing prejudices and disadvantages is only possible if the consciousness of society regarding the role of man and woman is changed. The state has the task to create the necessary conditions so that *women* can reconcile their family and an occupation." (emphasis added)

That schoolbooks or curricula should be changed in order to change gender roles was not a major topic of debate during the 1970s (cf., however, Zinnecker, 1972, pp. 83ff). First in the early 1980s, this was debated in the NRW parliament and in 1985 the SPD-led Ministry of Education in NRW published a regulation on the topic (quoted in Pfister, 1988, pp. 261f).

Similar to the CDU, the FDP did not include far-reaching demands for women in its early programs. In 1961, the national program merely included the sentence that “social, pedagogical and domestic women’s occupations are to be valued more highly socially and economically”. From 1969, the FDP demanded independent pensions for housewives. The national program for the elections of 1976 underlined in more detail that the FDP had contributed to the reform of marriage and family law which finally allowed women to choose freely whether they wanted to work, without needing their husband’s consent. Nevertheless, the program conceded that “many disadvantages” persisted and that women needed to receive equal chances in the education system and employment. Furthermore, here too it was stated that “the occupation in the household must receive the same value and appreciation as any other occupation”. In the program for the federal state elections of 1976, the NRW FDP mentioned that “housewives’ work” should be recognized but that “practical life support”, such as “company kindergartens” or “day nannies”, was also necessary. In its program for the national elections of 1980, the FDP demanded an antidiscrimination law and also suggested that “the traditional view of the family hierarchy, for example in schoolbooks”, should be dismantled.

Overall, one must agree with Doormann (1990, pp. 272ff) that none of the political parties convincingly integrated the women’s movements’ demands during the 1970s. While the social democratic women’s organization suggested many far-reaching policy changes, none of these made it into the program of the social-liberal governments (Doormann, 1990, p. 274). It therefore seems that the influence of the German women’s movement on party politics was relatively limited. In the next step, it is analyzed how the gender cleavage came to expression in NRW school politics after the war. Again, it becomes apparent that the “housewife ideal” long stood strong; also, the internal cleavages of the women’s movement continued to play a role.

First, it needs to be underlined again that girls’ education in the region had long been dominated by the Catholic Church which had filled the vacuum left by the Prussian state, especially in the area of higher schooling. In the post-war decades, a large percentage of private schools were still Catholic girls’ middle and higher schools. For example, in 1953, 20 of the federal states’ private *Realschulen* were for girls, eight for boys and nine for both sexes. Among the public *Realschulen*, 34 were for girls only, 41 for boys only and 108 for both sexes. Among the private higher schools, 50 were for girls only, 19 for boys only and 10 for both sexes. Among the public higher schools, 96 were for girls only, 155 for boys only and 112 for both sexes (*Statistisches Landesamt Nordrhein-Westfalen*, 1954, pp. 80ff). In 1979, 2433 of the 3141 students (77 percent) who passed the *Realschule* exam at a private school were still girls. 25,202 girls passed the *Realschule* exam at a public school, so private school *Realschule* graduates made up about nine percent of all female *Realschule* graduates. Among the *Abitur* graduates of private schools in 1979, 3469 of 5365 students (65 percent) were girls.

15,896 girls passed the *Abitur* at a public school, so about 20 percent of female *Abitur* graduates had attended private schools (*Landesamt für Datenverarbeitung und Statistik Nordrhein-Westfalen*, 1980, p. 134). Even though some private schools were Protestant or non-religious, most of them were Catholic. In other words, the influence of the Catholic Church on girls' education remained significant.

Especially the 1950s and 1960s were characterized more by ideological and structural continuity regarding the relation of gender and education than by change. The NRW *Schulordnungsgesetz* (law on the regulation of schools) of 1952 explicitly stated that the different "character of the sexes" should be taken into account in the structure of the school system. Compared to other West German federal states, NRW was in a leading position regarding the separate education of girls and boys. In 1967, a total of 70.8 percent of all higher schools were either boys' or girls' schools. Only the Saarland had a higher percentage (Zinnecker, 1972, p. 67). This was a result of the Catholic Church's influence on education in the federal state but also of the many densely populated areas which made coeducation for practical reasons less necessary (Zinnecker, 1972, p. 68).

The post-war years also saw the re-establishment of the *Frauenoberschule*, a higher school designed exclusively for girls with roots back to 1908, when girls' education had finally been regulated by the Prussian state. During the Weimar Republic and under the National-Socialist regime, this school type had been developed further. It was revived only in NRW, the Rhineland-Palatinate and Lower Saxony (Zinnecker, 1972, p. 72). The re-established *Frauenoberschule*, from 1966 dubbed the *Gymnasium für Frauenbildung*, did not award a general qualification for university entrance but qualified only for entrance to a Pedagogical Academy in order to become a people's school teacher, for university education as a middle or higher school teacher in specific subjects and for some administrative state careers, for example in public libraries. Talented students could take an additional exam in Latin or French and mathematics in order to acquire a full *Abitur*. This was a step backwards, for under the National-Socialist regime the *Frauenoberschule* had actually awarded a general qualification for university entrance – dubbed "*Pudding Abitur*" by contemporaries (cf. Eich, 1987, p. 166, Neghabian, 1993). Strangely, the first female Minister of Education of NRW, the Catholic teacher Christine Teusch (see footnote 26), was responsible for the demotion of the school types' leaving certificate and enforced this policy against considerable protest. Eich (1987, p. 170) suggests that Teusch preferred a more scientific girls' education and therefore opposed the *Frauenoberschule* in principle. If that is correct, Teusch was unsuccessful in reducing the importance of this school type. The *Frauenoberschule* remained a relevant, downgraded version of the *Gymnasium*. In 1965, 133 such schools had 23,879 students which made up almost 22 percent of all female higher school students (Ministry of Culture of NRW, 1965, table 6 and 7, own calculation). Its curricula did not include Latin and "the scientific subjects ma[d]e way from the 9<sup>th</sup> grade on for the subjects of women's work", meaning

homemaking and pedagogy (Ministry of Culture of NRW, 1965, p. 13). As the Ministry of Education under Mikat (CDU) explicitly declared:

“There is no comparable [school] type for boys. This can be explained by the dual task of all girls’ education which is defined by the goals of the specific school type and the tasks of the future housewife and mother. In the area of higher schooling, this led to the creation of a school type which accentuates the second task.” (Ministry of Culture of NRW, 1965, p. 12)

In 1967, SPD Minister of Education Fritz Holthoff proudly declared that educational expansion had affected girls to the extent that they now made up 50 percent of all *Realschule* students and 44.4 percent of all *Gymnasium* students (Ministry of Culture of NRW, 1967, p. 28). The last number, however, included 29,215 students at the *Frauenoberschule*, now termed the *Gymnasium für Frauenbildung* so a significant number of female higher school students still did not receive a full-value *Abitur* exam. Also, 22.5 percent of the girls still left the *Gymnasium* after the 10<sup>th</sup> grade, compared to 11.2 percent of boys (Ministry of Culture of NRW, 1967, p. 33). Only in 1972 was the *Frauenoberschule* abolished in the course of the *Gymnasium* reform. Until then, many different *Gymnasium* types had existed. Girls had mostly attended modern languages *Gymnasien* or *Frauenoberschulen*, while boys more often attended classical or mathematical-natural scientific *Gymnasien* (Zinnecker, 1972, p. 70). All these types were now merged and the previous different types were reduced to elective subjects on the upper secondary level. Also homemaking and pedagogy now became potential elective subjects open to boys and girls alike. However, they were still chosen mostly by girls, so they became a type of “women’s school within the comprehensive *Gymnasium*” (Neghabian, 1993, p. 216).

In the curricula of the people’s schools and the *Realschule*, the 1950s and 1960s were dominated by traditional gender role thinking. The curricula of the NRW people’s schools of 1955 included for example eight hours of “life-practical education” exclusively for girls during the eighth grade. During the same time, the boys had three hours of manual training, one hour of mathematics, three hours of physics and chemistry and one hour of German (Hagenmaier, 1988 [1969], p. 250). When the ninth people’s school year was introduced in NRW and eventually also the *Hauptschule* in 1966, coeducation became the rule in this school type also because centralization made it necessary. Nevertheless, the curricula differentiated between the sexes to a high degree. For grades seven, eight and nine, they allotted five to six hours of “life-practical education” (including homemaking, biology/physics/chemistry, needlework and art) and two to three hours of physical education to girls. During the same time, boys were taught three hours of biology/physics and chemistry, two hours of manual training and three hours of physical education (*Landtag NRW, June 13, 1966; Landtag NRW, November 29, 1966*, quoted in Dowe/Frommberger, 1968, pp. 303ff;



309f). In the NRW *Realschule* curricula of 1965, two hours of needlework and three hours of homemaking were reserved for girls in the ninth grade. During the same time, the boys had two hours of mathematics, one to two hours of physics and chemistry and one hour of biology (Hagenmaier, 1988 [1969], p. 250). The NRW curricula for the *Hauptschule* and the *Realschule* of 1968 and 1973 gradually also included boys in homemaking lessons, though at the beginning this was elective. In 1968, the SPD Minister of Education Fritz Holthoff stated explicitly in a parliamentary debate that even though he thought it could be useful for boys to learn how to cook, he thought that their participation should not be obligatory (*Landtag NRW, October 22, 1968, p. 1595*). At the same time, homemaking was stopped as an individual subject and instead included in a broader subject named “work studies” (*Arbeitslehre*) (Tornieporth, 1977, pp. 340ff). Only in the *Hauptschule* and in the integrated comprehensive school, elements of homemaking remained obligatory parts of the curricula for both sexes. Subjects that included homemaking elements remained girls’ subjects in all other educational institutions including the universities, because they were and still are chosen almost exclusively by girls (cf. Bartsch/Methfessel, 2012, p. 203; Methfessel/Kettschau, 1994, p. 90). Methfessel and Kettschau (1994, p. 90) conclude with respect to homemaking lessons that “coeducation, even where it is realized formally, is undermined in real terms, or only takes place in adaptation to male biographies”.

In the *Realschulen* and the *Gymnasien*, general coeducation was nevertheless realized step-by-step from the late 1960s onwards. This was not so much a result of purposeful political decision-making but mostly a result of changed preferences in the population. In October 1968, the topic was discussed in the NRW parliament because the SPD representative, Bargmann, had directed a question to the Minister of Education, the SPD politician Fritz Holthoff. The question was: “Does the federal state government welcome the tendency of many school operators to introduce coeducation also at *Realschulen* and *Gymnasien*, analogous to the development of the secondary *Hauptschule* school?” (*Landtag NRW, October 22, 1968, p. 1593*).

Holthoff replied that he supported coeducation in principle, because boys and girls grew up “into the same cultural, social and political reality” and should be made capable of realizing “the political-legal equality of the sexes” (*Landtag NRW, October 22, 1968, p. 1594*). To this end, they needed to practice cooperation in school. At the same time, Holthoff emphasized that coeducation was only desirable if it was ensured that “potential gender-specific interests” could come to expression (*Landtag NRW, October 22, 1968, p. 1594*). For this reason, one had to make sure that the number of female teachers was sufficient and that the principal and the vice-principal of the school were, if possible, a man and woman. Furthermore, Holthoff stated:

“It must be ensured that the education in physical education and needlework is secured for the girls and that separate education within the bounds of possibility is given in single subjects which are especially characteristic – of girls’ education for example. Under these conditions, the federal state government will support coeducation at the *Gymnasien* and *Realschulen* in our federal state.” (*Landtag NRW, October 22, 1968, p. 1595*)

In the following exchange, SPD representative Bahr asked whether this meant that the ministry would now decree that coeducation had to be introduced at the public *Gymnasien*. To this, the minister replied that he would not do so, because he thought it was better to let things grow, instead of issuing decrees:

“My perception is that especially the school operators, parents and teachers are going in for coeducation to an increasing degree. I have received numerous applications which I will examine. So far I have not found a reason to refuse any application. The development is definitely heading in this direction. But to do so with a decree [...] would mean underestimating the different situations in the teachers’ bodies [...] and so on. I openly declare my sympathy for such a development but without imposing any obligations by decree.” (*Landtag NRW, October 22, 1968, p. 1595*)

Anne Ratzki, former principal of a *Gymnasium* in Cologne which was founded in 1967 and turned into one of the first comprehensive schools in NRW in 1975, described the development at her own school and at other similarly newly founded schools in the expert interview:

“Well, the conditions were rather modest [...] but – and that was the really great thing – it was the first coeducational *Gymnasien* in Cologne. [...] Until then there were only boys’ and girls’ [*Gymnasien*]. So [...] in 1967 these were founded [...]. And it was greeted by the parents – I can only speak for Cologne, I have no overview of the federal state but assume that it was similar in other places – so enthusiastically that we had 450 applications the following year for three classes... and in shacks with really bad conditions. And the old boys’ and girls’ *Gymnasien* had just 25 to 50 applications. So the city of Cologne of course urged other *Gymnasien* to convert too. And then from year to year it became... [...] well, there were still some boys’ *Gymnasien*, some girls’ *Gymnasien* but they grew fewer year on year. I well remember that the principals of the boys’ *Gymnasien* then said: we don’t have girls’ bathrooms; we cannot admit girls and the other way around. The toilet question was crucial.”

Other experts agreed that by the late 1960s, the opposition to coeducation had been greatly reduced and the only really antagonistic force at this point was the *VkdL*. As the former chairwoman of the Education and Science Workers’ Union, Ilse Brusis, put it, any remaining opponents relinquished their opposition rather quickly because “they were just making fools

of themselves". Even the associations of male Catholic teachers had begun modestly to support coeducation as early as the 1920s, though possibly mostly because they hoped that this would open up additional positions to them in Catholic girls' schools (cf. Sack, 1998, p. 133). By 1980, there were 600 coeducational *Gymnasien* in NRW (65 of which were private schools), with 14 boys' *Gymnasien* (11 of which were private schools) and 31 girls' *Gymnasien* (28 of which were private schools) (*Philologen-Verband NRW*, 1981, p. 620). A small number of boys' and a slightly higher number of – often Catholic – girls' schools remain until the present day.

Overall, the gender cleavage in NRW politics was less dominant than the denominational and class cleavages, so the women's movement as a whole did not pose a serious challenge to the conservative anti-reform alliance. Conservative opponents of school reform found willing cooperative partners within the women's movement, such as the *VkdL*. Even though the *VkdL* represented mostly people's school teachers and only women, social democrats and liberals could not forge an alliance with this group, simply because of its connection to Catholicism. This is noteworthy, because some of the Catholic women's movements members had their roots in the Centre Party and were thus partly sympathetic to policies serving the working class. But they were culturally too far removed from social democracy. Social democrats and liberals only forged a weak alliance with more radical parts of the women's movement. The internal splits of the women's movement thus also left their mark on the development of girls' education during the post-war decades. Even though significant progress was made in girls' access to education, the housewife ideal and Catholic influence on education remained strong.

## 6.6 Summary and comparison – the significance of crosscutting cleavages

This chapter has shown that crosscutting cleavages resulted in both cases in crosscutting struggles in school politics which, for some actors, were more relevant than conflicts over comprehensive schooling. In Norway, these crosscutting struggles stabilized the cooperation between the center parties and the Labor Party, or at least did not sabotage it. In Germany, on the other hand, they stabilized the internal unity of and cross-class alliance within the CDU. The fact that social democrats in Norway managed to build a stable reform alliance, while German social democrats did not, can therefore in part be explained as due to the unequal cleavage structures of the two countries. The findings are discussed in more detail in this section.

In Norway, the most important crosscutting cleavages were the center-periphery and rural-urban ones. They were crosscutting with respect to the class cleavage in the sense that they were not so much about left/right oppositions or class background than about geographical background. In terms of class politics, the Norwegian Liberal Party, the Centre Party and the Christian Democrats represented the political center. But in terms of the rural-urban and center-periphery cleavages, they represented the rural periphery. The Conservative Party, on

the other hand, was mostly an urban party, while the Labor Party stood in the middle, as it was strong in the cities and countryside alike. Nevertheless, these cleavages were potentially threatening for the Labor Party because it could not have held on to power in the political center, Oslo, if the periphery, potentially also including non-central cities such as Bergen, had decided collectively to rise up against it. This was illustrated for example by the struggle over EC membership. In school politics, these cleavages came to expression especially in the conflicts over the centralization of small rural schools and in the conflicts over the language used in schools and schoolbooks. The rural periphery opposed too far-reaching centralization and disliked the urban elites' traditional views of language (cf. sections 6.2.1, 6.3). In addition, conflicts over Christian education were to a certain degree an expression of the rural-urban and center-periphery cleavages, as illustrated by protests by west Norwegian mayors against the central governments' regulations limiting the number of hours taught in this subject (cf. section 6.1.1). However, the Labor Party usually managed to prevent these conflicts seriously obstructing its school reforms. Only in 1959 were rural worries the reason why the center parties did not vote with the Labor Party for the abolition of the old school types (cf. section 5.2.3). After this, the Labor Party government financed the introduction of the youth school in rural municipalities so generously that it became viewed as a formidable educational boost in these areas, also because it was connected with the introduction of nine years of obligatory schooling. The trend towards less and less organizational differentiation within the youth school accommodated the center parties' dislike of centralization because schools without tracking or ability grouping could be smaller. Also in language politics, the Labor Party maneuvered smartly in not repelling the peripheral movement even after it had relinquished the aim of *samnorsk* (cf. Chapter 6.3). Even with regard to Christian education, the Labor Party government made concessions (cf. section 6.1.1). The Conservative Party, on the other hand, opposed the center parties in the language struggle. With regard to centralization and Christian education, it attempted to build bridges with them but often did not succeed in convincing the representatives of the center parties that it actually cared. The center-periphery and rural-urban cleavages thus strengthened the coalition of the center and the Labor Party.

In NRW, on the other hand, the center-periphery cleavage was not particularly relevant. The rural-urban cleavage was not particularly dominant either but came to expression to a certain extent in the conflicts over the centralization of small rural schools, termed "dwarf schools" by the SPD (cf. section 6.2.2). In fact, centralization in NRW progressed more slowly than in the much less populated Norway. In Norway, only one percent of students were taught in one-class schools in 1963, compared to 1.8 percent in NRW in the same year (*Innstilling frå Folkeskolekomitéen av 1963 (1965)*, p. 151; *Landtag NRW, May 14, 1963*, p. 545). This difference is remarkable, considering that NRW was one of the most highly populated federal states in Germany. One explanation for the many one-class schools in NRW was the extreme

lack of teachers. Even though there was a lack of teachers in Norway as well, there were on average 25 students per teacher in Norway in 1963/1964 (SSB, 1966, p. 269, own calculation). In NRW, there were 42.8 students per people’s school teacher in 1963 (*Statistisches Landesamt Nordrhein-Westfalen*, 1964, p. 52). During the 1970s, however, centralization in NRW progressed considerably. The shortage of teachers was finally overcome and the average number of students decreased to 22 students per teacher in the primary school and 19.4 students per teacher in the *Hauptschule* in 1979 (*Landesamt für Datenverarbeitung und Statistik Nordrhein-Westfalen*, 1980, p. 126). In Norway, there were 18.9 students per teacher in children and youth schools in 1978/79 (SSB, 1980, p. 347, own calculation).

**Table 6.2: Important political expressions of various cleavages in Norway and NRW during the post-war school reform period**

Cleavage	Expressions in Norway	Expressions in NRW/Germany
<b>Worker-owner</b>	Conflicts over the introduction of the youth school and the abolition of the <i>realskole</i> , over tracking, ability grouping and the abolition of grading in the youth school	Conflicts over the introduction of the integrated comprehensive school and the cooperative comprehensive school
<b>Center-periphery and rural-urban</b>	Conflicts over the centralization of rural schools, over school language, over the number of hours of Christian education taught in west Norwegian schools	Conflicts over the centralization of rural “dwarf schools”
<b>State-church</b>	Conflicts over the number of hours taught in Christian education, the content and role of Christian education, the Christian preamble of the school law and Christian private schooling	Conflicts over denominational schooling, denominational “dwarf schools”, the influence of the Catholic Church and Christian (especially Catholic) private schooling
<b>Communist-socialist</b>	-	Conflicts over the political standing of teachers, occupational bans, supposedly socialist curricula and the conservative claim that comprehensive schools were “socialist”
<b>Men-women</b>	Conflicts over the separate organizations of male and female teachers, equal curricula for boys and girls and coeducation	Conflicts over the separate organization of Catholic female teachers, equal curricula for boys and girls and coeducation

The pejorative term “dwarf school” indicates in itself that the NRW social democrats had little sympathy for small rural schools. They were supported in their struggle for centralization by the liberal FDP. Both parties considered centralization to be in the interests of the rural population, because in their view, only schools of a certain size could guarantee the sufficient quality of education. However, the rural population did not necessarily share these concerns. On the contrary, the CDU was strong in many of NRW’s rural areas. Within the CDU, there were some parliamentary representatives who were especially known for their support for small rural schools. In debates, these representatives emphasized the small schools’ advantages and their cultural and economic value for rural communities. At the same time, other CDU representatives, such as Mikat, supported centralization. But they also knew that they had to avoid provoking unrest among the rural population and thus did so only very carefully. In other words, even though a certain amount of ideological division existed within the CDU on these issues, the rural population’s dislike of school centralization was integrated into the CDU’s political program and its internal cross-class coalition was maintained.

Furthermore, the struggle over “dwarf schools” was also related to the struggle over denominational schooling which can be considered an expression of the state-church cleavage. This cleavage had long been dominant in the region of NRW, where the Catholic Church continued to enjoy significant power in the post-war decades. The SPD and FDP not only disliked denominational schooling as such but also disliked the fact that it made it harder to get rid of the many small schools in rural areas (cf. section 6.1.2). In addition, the high number of Catholic private schools was also a point of discord. The Protestant Church was also to a certain degree involved in these debates but it ran a much lower number of private schools and eventually relinquished its support for denominational schooling. The CDU was the political party closest to the Catholic Church. Even though it eventually had to accept a compromise over denominational schooling, the CDU managed to push through various exceptions which safeguarded a certain amount of Catholic influence (cf. section 6.1.2). The state-church cleavage and the rural-urban cleavage thus overlapped with the class cleavage in terms of party politics. Both these crosscutting cleavages strengthened the internal alliance of the CDU, rather than offering the SPD and FDP any means to weaken it.

Ideologically, the struggle over denominational schooling and Catholic private schooling was in many ways paradigmatic for later struggles over comprehensive schooling. The struggles exhibit interesting ideological similarities. For example, the argument that parents should be able to choose freely which education they wanted for their children was one of the most important conservative arguments in these debates, as was the argument that everybody should receive “equally valuable but different” education. By the CDU, the school politics of the SPD and FDP were generally seen as an attack on parental rights driven by an excessive belief in the state. This fear becomes more understandable when one considers that parents had in fact lost significant influence over the lives of their children during the Nazi

dictatorship. Even though the character and Constitution of the German state had been democratized, opponents of denominational and later of comprehensive schooling still felt that they had to reject any excessive state demands with regard to the upbringing of young people. The churches overall had not been particularly courageous opponents of the Nazis but the Catholic Church especially had remained a somewhat independent social force besides the Nazi state. After the war, the churches therefore claimed moral authority. During the struggles over denominational schooling, and also during later debates about comprehensive schooling, Catholic Church officials in particular capitalized on this authority and warned sometimes in drastic terms against supposedly totalitarian tendencies in social democratic and liberal school politics. These arguments were adopted by the CDU as well. The opposition to social-liberal school politics was thereby bestowed with an image of anti-totalitarian resistance (cf. below and section 6.4). This was not really a rational argument because many post-war social democratic politicians had actually suffered greatly under Nazism, had been imprisoned in concentration camps or had lived in exile. They certainly did not sympathize with totalitarian school politics. Nevertheless, it must be assumed that such ideological reflexes, which had developed during the struggles over denominational schooling, still played an important role in the struggles over comprehensive schooling. This made the task of leftist supporters of comprehensive schooling within both the SPD and the FDP considerably harder.

In Norway, the state-church cleavage was not quite as relevant since there were very few Catholics. Nevertheless, the cleavage comes to expression in the enormous conflicts over the number of hours taught in Christian education, the financing of Christian private schools and the Christian preamble of the school law (cf. section 6.1.1). Especially the Norwegian Christian Democrats struggled for a Christian influence on schooling. They represented the rural laymen more than the upper ranks of the church which were better integrated in the state and conservative urban elites. The Christian Democrats sometimes received support from the Centre Party and the Conservative Party, while the Liberal Party was placed more in the middle. The Labor Party and the Socialist People's Party represented the other side of the conflict. These conflicts were so massive that they contributed to the electoral victory of the four non-socialist parties in 1965 which illustrates that they were politically dangerous to the Labor Party. With regard to comprehensive schooling they were, however, not such a great obstacle for social democratic policies. In some cases, the Labor Party managed to split the non-socialist parties by cooperating with the Liberal Party. In addition, the Christian Democrats' demands for Christian education were in some cases so far-reaching that even the Centre Party and Conservative Party could not agree. On other issues, the Conservative Party stood alone in the coalition of 1965, for example with regard to extensive deregulation of private schooling. The center parties wanted Christian schools to have stable financing but they did not support private elite schooling. The non-socialist block was thus not entirely united and the Labor Party made the most of these divisions politically. For these reasons,

neither the regulations on Christian education nor on Christian private schooling could seriously threaten comprehensive school reforms, at least during the time period in question.<sup>27</sup> Compared with the German case, there were also no equally obvious ideological similarities between the struggles over Christian education and the debates about comprehensive schooling.

Furthermore, in the Norwegian case, anti-communism and the socialist-communist cleavage did not come to expression much in school politics. This cleavage might have played a role in local conflicts here and there but, on the national level, anti-communist arguments can rarely be found in school debates. Especially for the youth school reform, such arguments played no relevant role. In the debate about grading, internal conflicts within the Left became more obvious and the few communists who played a role in school politics were more often to be found on the side of the protagonists of an abolition of grading. At the same time, many social democrats opposed grades as well, while the arguments for grades were not to a high degree anti-communist. There were communists in all teacher unions but this did not split them to a degree which would have diminished their political influence. The Norwegian teachers' organizations had no problem studying the GDR school system with an open mind. Even though anti-communism and communist-socialist divisions played a role in other areas of Norwegian politics, this line of investigation can therefore be disregarded with respect to school politics. This cannot be said about the German case.

In NRW, the communist-socialist cleavage was a serious obstacle for reform protagonists (cf. section 6.4). Conflicts over teachers' political convictions, occupational bans on teachers and conflicts over cooperation between social democrats and communists split them internally. Of course, the fact that Germany was a divided country at the time and that the GDR had instituted a more comprehensive school system, played a role. Especially the Education and Science Workers' Union was highly split as a result of internal divisions between social democrats, more radical socialists and various groups of communists. The SPD was also ridden with internal disagreements on these issues. Within the SPD, the split was not between communists and socialists, but between a moderate or right-wing current also comprising many leading SPD politicians in NRW and a current of younger, leftist reformers. The reformers' camp considered the comprehensive school to be an anti-capitalist tool and aimed at teaching students to be critical of the capitalist system, develop solidarity and so on. Less radical social democrats did not support this program and wanted the comprehensive school to have less of a class struggle and more of a harmonious character, aiming at social and national integration, not conflict. For the reform antagonists, this complex situation opened up various possibilities for ideological attack. The integrated comprehensive school was dubbed the "socialist comprehensive school" (*sozialistische Einheitsschule*) and warned against in drastic

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<sup>27</sup> To what degree private schooling undermines comprehensive schooling in Norway today is another question.



words. This scared off potential reform allies, such as the primary and lower secondary school teachers organized in the Association of Education and Upbringing and probably many parents and voters. Anti-communist arguments also played a role in the movement against the cooperative school. The high turnout this movement achieved must be seen at least partly as a result of this. Many people presumably felt that they were signing not only against a school type but generally against anti-capitalist, radical leftist tendencies in German politics. Anti-communist ideology had created a lot of fear.

It should be remarked at this point that the programs of the German political parties were generally characterized by a much higher degree of political polarization compared to the Norwegian programs. They were formulated much less matter-of-factly and instead were often extremely critical of the other parties. In comparison, the Norwegian programs were impressively focused on detailed suggestions for reforms and only included slight criticisms of the other parties here and there. It is especially striking how much space German party programs of the time devoted to foreign politics and the Cold War and how emotionally charged the programs were with respect to this. This illustrates that Germany's separation and the Federal Republic's position on the border of the Western alliance shaped German politics decisively, also in school politics.

Finally, the gender cleavage came to expression in both cases but again with unequal results for political coalition- and decision-making. The comparable strength of the Norwegian women's movement is illustrated by the fact that coeducation and the equalization of curricula were achieved much earlier and with fewer exceptions than in NRW. Norwegian female primary school teachers had their own organization until 1966 which is a reflection of their strength and long traditions but eventually they no longer felt it necessary to continue to organize themselves separately. Their interests were now sufficiently represented by the Norwegian Teachers' Organization. In addition, the gender roles coming to expression in the school curricula became a topic of debate in Norway at a much earlier point than in Germany and the "housewife ideal" came under greater criticism. The post-war Norwegian women's movement was thus a part of the general reform movement and in an alliance with the Labor Party. The gender cleavage did not overlap exactly with the class cleavage as the Christian Democrats and the Centre Party were the clearest antagonists of the women's movements' demands, while the Conservative Party and the Liberal Party in many cases at least consented to reforms that were in the interests of girls and women. Nevertheless, the Labor Party profited from this cleavage because it again split the four non-socialist parties in various ways.

In the German case too, social democrats stood most clearly on the side of the women's movement but the German SPD was not as "modern" in this respect as the Norwegian Left was. The German party programs generally contained less extensive demands than the

Norwegian programs with regard to gender roles in education. In 1957, the SPD suggested for example that all girls should receive homemaking lessons – this coincided with a time when the Norwegian Labor Party was introducing homemaking as an obligatory subject for both sexes despite the skepticism of the other parties (cf. section 6.5). In NRW, a special *Gymnasium* for girls existed until 1972 and did not award a full-value *Abitur* so a significant percentage of girls in higher schooling continued to be channeled away from high-status university education and towards typical female occupations. There was no comparably strong female teachers' organization as in Norway. However, female Catholic teachers had and still have their own organization which was originally dominated by primary school teachers but opened up to teachers of other school types over time. This organization is an expression of the state-church cleavage and the gender cleavage and results from the special and somewhat contradictory role the Catholic Church has played in girls' education in NRW (cf. section 6.5.2). The state-church cleavage split the German women's movement not only along party lines but also along denominational lines, which weakened the movement as a whole. It also meant that the CDU had ties to the Catholic parts of the women's movement and managed to build an alliance with these. As a result, Catholic female teachers became a part of the antagonists' camp in the comprehensive school debates. Their organization also joined the movement against the cooperative school. The gender cleavage thus did not undermine the internal unity of the CDU and did not considerably strengthen the reformers of the SPD.



## 7 Conclusion

This study began with the following questions: why was the abolition of parallel school tiers, tracking, ability grouping and grading effectively carried out in Norway during the post-war reform period, while comparable reforms attempted in West Germany during the same period remained limited in scope? Why were the reforms a strongly contested issue in Germany but not in Norway? What are the reasons for the stickiness of the multi-tier German school structure and what are the reasons for the Norwegian willingness to reform? In the following, the main arguments of this study, which were developed in response to these questions, are first summarized. In the second step, the study's conclusions are compared with the results of a range of other works on the same and related subjects. Finally, some open questions and potential extensions of this study are outlined. It is also discussed in brief which lasting legacies the period under investigation here has produced and how these influence the situation in the school politics of the two countries today.

### 7.1 Summary of results

The results and arguments of the present study can be summarized in three steps which should be seen as linked together by the theoretical framework employed. First, the study places the post-war comprehensive school reforms in Norway and NRW/Germany in a long-term historical, institutional context. By tracing the institutional development back to the beginnings of the two school systems, long-term trends become apparent, indicating that feedback effects play an important role in both cases. The analysis illustrates that the development of the two school systems exhibits significant similarities as well as differences. In both cases, there were recurrent debates about comprehensive and primary schooling as a tool for nation-building and for social integration and justice. In Norway, liberal reformers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century laid the ground both ideologically and structurally for the social democratic reforms of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. From an early point, conservative resistance to such reforms was weak. In Prussia and later NRW on the other hand, liberals and social democrats also propagated comprehensive education but had long been confronted with well-organized opposition. In both cases, there was a trend towards educational expansion. However, in Germany, this was coupled with a trend towards hierarchical differentiation into parallel school types and in Norway with a trend towards comprehensivization, both of which date back well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In addition, it becomes apparent in the comparative-historical analysis that there were trends towards secularization, centralization and an increasing inclusion of girls and women in the school system in both cases. The Catholic Church in Germany had, however, long been involved in sharper conflicts with the state regarding control over education than the Norwegian Protestant state church. On the other hand, peripheral rural movements played an important role in Norway, while in NRW no

comparably important peripheral movements can be found. Finally, the women's movement was stronger in Norway from an early date, with the result that women's access to education was regulated much earlier there than in Prussia/Rhineland-Westphalia. Despite the existence of long-term trends, the recurrent reform phases in both cases were critical junctures with open endings, as different types of compromises between historical actors were always possible.

The 1950s to 1970s were a major reform phase which have significantly influenced the shape of the school systems in both countries up to the present day. For this reason, the present study analyzes this critical juncture in detail. It can be concluded on the one hand that the German trend towards hierarchical differentiation and the Norwegian trend towards comprehensivization continued during this period. On the other hand, the reform periods in Norway and NRW/Germany also exhibit striking similarities with regard to their timing and development: in both cases, there was a temporary consensus that the school system should be expanded. During this time of expansion, the social democratic governments in both cases initiated comprehensive school reforms which were borne by eager reform movements with a pioneering spirit. In the 1970s, conservative opposition to these developments grew. In both cases, social democratic governments eventually gave up their most far-reaching reform ideas, against the opposition of the most leftwing supporters of reforms. Of course, the Norwegian reform phase began earlier and went much further. In the German case, it seems that the window of opportunity was too short for more far-reaching reforms. Nevertheless, in both cases the education reforms marked a pinnacle in social democratic eagerness for reform. These similarities are partly a result of the fact that Norwegian and German educational histories are interdependent and interwoven. As becomes apparent at several points in the analysis conducted here, reform movements in the two countries were in touch with each other and political actors referred to other countries in the political debates.

Secondly, this thesis contributes a detailed, comparative analysis of the material power resources and of the ideology and degree of ideological unity of protagonists, consenters and antagonists of the comprehensive school reforms at the time. In terms of material power resources, reform protagonists were slightly stronger in Norway than in NRW. For example, the Norwegian Labor Party clearly had better election results. Nevertheless, the German social democrats also had considerable material power resources. They had more members than the CDU and remained in power in NRW for a long time, even after they had given up on comprehensive schooling. On the side of the antagonists, the NRW Association of Philologists had the fewest members of all teachers' organizations, yet it had significant political influence. In Norway, the Conservative Party and the Association of Norwegian Secondary School Teachers had considerable financial resources, so their failure to build up significant opposition to comprehensive school reforms cannot be attributed to a lack of financial means. Overall, it can be concluded that the distribution of material power resources

is relevant, but not sufficiently explanatory with regard to the historical outcomes. Ideology is another important factor, which is related to the material power balance between collective actors and their social base, but which can sometimes override purely material interests and resources.

The analysis in Chapters 4 and 5 shows that an ideological left/right opposition regarding comprehensive education can be found in both cases. Protagonists of comprehensive school reforms were in both cases more on the left, while antagonists were on the right. Their arguments also exhibit significant similarities. For this reason, it can be concluded that the conflicts analyzed here – namely conflicts about the integrated and the cooperative comprehensive school types in the German case and conflicts over the youth school and the abolition of grading in the Norwegian case – are an expression of the class cleavage. However, the hegemonic balances which developed in the two cases were different. Norwegian reform protagonists were more radical than North Rhine-Westphalian reform protagonists, while Norwegian reform antagonists were less radical than their North Rhine-Westphalian counterparts. The social democratic and liberal idea that it was unjust and detrimental for learning outcomes to divide students into school types, tracks or ability groups became hegemonic in Norway over time. For Norwegian social democrats, comprehensive schooling was a step towards overcoming class society. They were mostly united in their support for the comprehensive school. Only in the grading debate did their unity become less stable. German social democrats, on the other hand, were highly divided ideologically. Some of the more moderate or right-wing social democrats in leading positions were of the opinion that comprehensive schooling was not important enough to risk great conflicts over it and thought that opening up the *Gymnasium* to working class children would suffice. The more radical reformers – among them many teachers – were closer to the ideology of the Norwegian left. On the side of the antagonists, the situation was the reverse. The German antagonists were mostly united ideologically, whereas the Norwegian antagonists were split. In Germany, the idea that children should be divided into (seemingly) homogeneous ability groups remained hegemonic. Especially many conservatives viewed the *Gymnasium* as an “untouchable” school type which should be the school of future elites and high achievers. In Norway, the school politicians of the Conservative Party were divided over the question of comprehensive education and differentiation in the youth school, especially in the 1950s and 1960s, so the party did not manage to develop a clear profile in school politics. Only during the 1970s did Norwegian conservatives unite to a higher degree in their rejection to abolish grades in the youth school and in their belief in the necessity of some form of organizational differentiation.

Importantly, the rural and religious parts of the population were to be found in different kinds of cross-class alliances in the two cases. This leads to the third main argument of the present study, namely the emphasis on the importance of the unequal cleavage structures of the two

countries for the historical outcomes. The present study is the first to show how various crosscutting cleavages affected comprehensive school reform attempts in the two cases in historical detail and to include previously neglected cleavages, such as the communist-socialist cleavage and the gender cleavage, in the analysis. To sum up, it can be said that in Norway the crosscutting cleavages mostly had the effect of weakening potential coalitions between the political center and the conservatives. The Labor Party largely succeeded in handling these cleavages in a way which at least did not sabotage and sometimes even strengthened its school reforms. The center parties, who represented the rural population especially, largely consented to comprehensive school reforms. Only in the grading debate did some of the center parties position themselves more clearly on the side of the conservatives. The rural-urban cleavage played an important role in this outcome because the youth school was a major educational boost for the rural population and was therefore supported in rural areas. An important factor in this regard was the connection of comprehensive schooling with the introduction of nine years of obligatory schooling. In addition, the development towards decreasing internal organizational differentiation in the youth school made smaller youth schools possible and thus eased pressures of centralization. Also with regard to struggles over the language standard used in schools and schoolbooks, the Labor Party navigated the rural-urban and center-periphery cleavages skillfully. The state-church cleavage, which came to expression in fierce conflicts over the subject of Christian education, Christian private schools and the Christian preamble of the school law, was dangerous for the Labor Party with regard to election results. However, the compromises which came about in this area of school politics did not threaten comprehensive school reforms. Finally, the gender cleavage also split the four non-socialist parties in various ways and strengthened the position of the Labor Party.

In NRW, on the other hand, the state-church cleavage was a major obstacle for the social democrats and their liberal allies in school politics. It was more dominant than in Norway and partly overlapped with the rural-urban cleavage. The Catholic rural population was integrated in a broad cross-class coalition under the umbrella of the CDU over issues such as denominational schooling, Catholic private schooling and the centralization of “dwarf schools” so a potential school reform alliance with the social democrats was out of the question. Instead, these parts of the population were included in the antagonistic camp with regard to the integrated as well as the cooperative comprehensive school. The CDU managed to maintain this alliance by supporting educational expansion within the parallel school system instead, for example through the expansion of the *Realschule* and *Gymnasium* in the countryside, and not least through its support for the introduction of nine years of obligatory schooling. It was unfortunate for the social democrats of NRW that the introduction of the ninth obligatory school year could not be connected to an introduction of comprehensive schooling, as in Norway, but instead was connected to the reform of the people’s school and the overcoming of denominational separation. Even though this was a step forward for them,

it made it harder to include the rural population in further school reforms. In addition, the CDU claimed to support the *Hauptschule* in particular which convinced the sincere *Hauptschule* supporters in its ranks but also gave upper class and upper middle class *Gymnasium* supporters a welcome legitimization of the parallel school structure. The state-church cleavage also came to expression in splits within the women's movement. Catholic women's organizations were involved in Catholic private schooling for girls, were well connected to the CDU and stood in opposition to more liberal or leftwing parts of the women's movement in topics such as coeducation, curricula for girls and comprehensive schooling. Thus, the women's movement was weakened both by the class cleavage and by the state-church cleavage, and the gender cleavage did not threaten the internal unity of the CDU and its allies. Finally yet importantly, the communist-socialist cleavage came to expression through serious splits within the labor movement, caused in part by strong general anti-communism. In school debates, anti-communist arguments played a large ideological role and were conducive to the ideological unification of the antagonists' camp as well as to the success of the campaign against the cooperative school. In NRW, the communist-socialist cleavage was an important factor for the historical outcome.

Overall, the comparison leads to the conclusion that the unequal cleavage structures in the two cases contributed to unequal hegemonic balances, with consequences for the outcomes of comprehensive school reforms. Reform protagonists in NRW were faced with great obstacles because the various political cleavages and historical trends made coalition-building difficult for them and instead contributed to the unity and strength of reform antagonists. Even though the North Rhine-Westphalian social democrats became more powerful in the course of the 1960s and 1970s and for a short time managed to destabilize the hegemony of conservative ideas about schooling, their lack of internal unity stood in the way of more far-reaching success. In addition, at the latest from around 1975, the social democrats' ally, the FDP, could no longer be fully depended upon, because the liberals were split internally too. Social democrats and social liberals did not manage to break up the internal cross-class coalition of the CDU. In the Norwegian case, on the other hand, the Labor Party was in such a strong position that it could in some cases push through important decisions on its own. In other cases, it cooperated with the parties of the political center, with primary school teachers and with the women's movement, thus building a powerful hegemonic coalition. Norway's cleavage structure gave Norwegian social democrats various opportunities which they used smartly. Not least, they could build on the previous achievements of Norwegian liberals during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Nevertheless, in both cases the historical outcomes represent a compromise. Even though the Norwegian compromise was more in favor of reform protagonists and the North Rhine-Westphalian compromise was more in favor of reform antagonists, neither of them got exactly what they wanted. In Norway, reform protagonists had to relinquish the abolition of grading in the youth school. In NRW, reform antagonists



had to accept that the integrated comprehensive school would become a regular school type besides the other parallel school types, that additional such schools were founded in the 1980s and that they have remained a part of the North Rhine-Westphalian school system until the present day.

Finally, it should again be underlined that the ideological and political strategies chosen by the actors in the period of investigation were meaningful and had consequences for the kinds of compromises that came about. This may seem like a trivial statement. However, in Germany, the belief that comprehensive schooling was and continues to be “impossible” to introduce in a German context is quite influential today (cf. below). In Norway, on the other hand, it might be difficult to imagine a development of the Norwegian school system which would not have included comprehensivization to the same extent. The present analysis certainly supports the view that the differences in the historical and structural conditions actors faced contributed to a development along different paths. However, this should not be taken to mean that there was no room for action. For example, it should be noted that it is uncertain whether Norwegian social democrats would have managed to introduce the youth school as smoothly if they had not decided in 1959 that the old school types should be excluded from experiments, thereby simply overriding all opposition. Also with regard to ability grouping within the youth school, different kinds of compromises could have come about. In theory, social democrats in NRW could also have insisted on introducing the comprehensive school as a regular school type with blanket coverage but without experiments, or on focusing experiments exclusively on organizational differentiation within the comprehensive school, as Norwegian reformers did. They could also have accepted the CDU’s offer to introduce cooperative schools on a general level in 1973 (cf. sections 5.4.5 and 5.4.6). True enough, this would have roused opposition in the population. However, it is probable that this opposition would not have been equally strong in the late 1960s or early 1970s as it was during the late 1970s. Moreover, if the CDU had been involved in the reform, it would have had to defend it as well. Of course, these are hypothetical remarks. Nobody knows what would have happened *if* actors had made different choices. It is nevertheless important to emphasize that there were opportunities for making different choices.

## 7.2 Alternative and supporting explanations

The history and political economy of comprehensive school reforms have not often been studied comparatively. However, a few contributions have tried to shed light on the stickiness of the German system or on the trend towards comprehensive education in Scandinavia and have sometimes compared these cases. In the following, the conclusions of the present study are first contrasted with a number of studies which propose other explanations than the ones suggested here. The work of Wiborg (2009, 2010) is discussed, as well as the suggestion that federalism is at the root of the matter in the German case. In the next step, contributions, which develop similar arguments as the present study and thus support its findings, are

considered. Some of these are comparative, while others are studies of single cases. Finally, some researchers have compared German and Scandinavian education systems but with a focus on other areas of school politics, e.g. vocational education. These works are discussed at the end of this section and their relevance for the results of the present study is assessed. It should be noted that the following discussion does not purport to cover all of the literature in the field but focuses on a few relevant, selected works.

Susanne Wiborg (2009, 2010) has produced the most important comparative-historical work on the history of comprehensive schooling in Europe, with a focus on Scandinavia, Germany and England. Her study is similar to the one conducted here in several respects. Her analysis is focused on the political activities of various collective actors, on their ideology, on coalitions and conflicts between them and on the class structure of society. She does not explicitly make use of the power resources, historical institutionalist or Rokkanian framework. However, she builds to a certain degree on Esping-Andersen (1985). Wiborg (2009, pp. 19ff) also builds on Green (2013) and convincingly demonstrates that intensive processes of state-building were related to education reforms. However, she points out that this relationship cannot explain why the level of vertical differentiation differed so strongly in Scandinavia and Germany (Wiborg, 2009, p. 47). For this reason, she analyzes the class structure of the different societies in more detail (Wiborg, 2009, pp. 49ff). Her hypothesis is that “the relative homogeneity of Scandinavian societies was propitious for the development of a ladder system of education” (Wiborg, 2009, p. 215). She finds some support for this hypothesis and emphasizes for example that the peasants in the Scandinavian countries developed into a rural middle class represented by its own organizations, while Prussian peasants were divided economically as well as politically. Moreover, she points out, as has also been emphasized by Norwegian historians (Sejersted, 2011), that Norway in particular was characterized by a comparatively weak bourgeois and noble class, in contrast to Germany with its powerful, educated elite (Wiborg, 2009, pp. 49ff, pp. 215ff). However, her analysis of the class background of students enrolled in secondary schooling shows that Prussian secondary schools enrolled almost as many children from the peasantry as the Scandinavian secondary schools. For this reason, she concludes that Prussian conditions in the 19<sup>th</sup> century were not completely unfavorable to the development of a ladder system of education and that the comparatively egalitarian class structure in Scandinavia and the existence of a powerful conservative elite in Germany are not a sufficient explanation for the difference in the historical outcomes (Wiborg, 2009, pp. 64ff, p. 218). In the next step, Wiborg (2009, pp. 75ff; 2010, pp. 546ff) analyzes the role of liberal politics in the creation of comprehensive education. She points out that Scandinavian liberals laid the ground for the comprehensive ladder system of education and that their social base differed significantly from that of the more urban and more upper class liberals in Germany and England. The fact that German

liberals did not manage to forge an alliance with the Catholic rural population is indeed an important factor.

Up to this point, Wiborg's work and the present study are mutually supportive. However, Wiborg's (2009, p. 231; 2010) final hypothesis is that "it was ultimately the nature and strength of social democracy that explains the divergent development of comprehensive education in Scandinavia, on one hand, and Germany and England, on the other". In Scandinavia, social democratic parties forged alliances with the liberal peasantry and later with the emerging white-collar middle class. With the support of such alliances, social democrats managed to become extraordinarily powerful, and introduced ten years of comprehensive education in Denmark, Sweden and Norway. With regard to Germany, Wiborg (2010, p. 554) concludes that "[t]he absence of a powerful social democracy [...], at both the Federal and *Länder* levels, provides the key to understanding why the tripartite system was never reorganized on comprehensive lines." Moreover, she maintains that "the primary explanation for the Party's defeat [in the elections of the post WWII years] is that the SPD was rooted in the past" (Wiborg, 2010, p. 554). By this, she refers to the party's ideology, which she believes was too oriented towards Marxism and not sufficiently revisionist to capture a significant and stable proportion of the votes of the middle class. She also maintains that the SPD of the interwar years refused to build alliances with the farmers, though this could have helped it to broaden its power base. For this reason, Wiborg (2009, p. 142) is of the opinion that "[f]ew political parties have failed so completely in the achievement of their manifest destiny as the Social Democrats of the Weimar Republic".

The present study also concludes that the nature and strength of social democracy were one decisive factor among others for the historical outcome in both Norway and NRW/Germany. However, the view that the SPD's failure to become as powerful as the Scandinavian social democrats was a result of Marxist ideology is not shared here, either with regard to the interwar period or with regard to the post-war decades. The SPD of the Weimar Republic was actually not more radical but less radical than the Norwegian Labor Party, which was a member of the Comintern from 1919 to 1923. At this point, the SPD had already voted for the war credits financing Germany's participation in the First World War and had entered its first governing coalition with the Catholic Centre Party and the liberals. In this coalition, the SPD managed to push through the four-year comprehensive primary school in 1920. Overall, there was no "lack" of reformism in the SPD, either before or after the Second World War (cf. Walter, 2011). On the contrary, some have argued that the SPD adapted to conservative rule by moderating its views and offering itself as a subordinated assistant (cf. Abendroth, 1964, p. 54). For the reform period under investigation here, it can definitely be concluded that the major problem of the SPD was not that it was too radical, but rather that it was split. Its moderate and right-wing currents did not support comprehensive schooling wholeheartedly. Conservative arguments regarding education influenced the views of leading social democrats

significantly. They did not develop strong counter-hegemonic arguments, but rather argued defensively throughout the period under investigation here. As discussed in detail in section 6.4, the internal split of the SPD was also a result of the dominant anti-communism in Germany. In school debates, reformers were confronted with anti-communist arguments regularly. This was a serious obstacle because it forced reformers into a defensive position and because it frightened potential allies in the political center. Finally, even though social democrats lacked support among Catholics, the rural population and the self-employed, they were in fact in an alliance with the FDP and for a while had the support of the social liberals in their attempts to introduce reforms. Their power base was smaller than the Norwegian social democrats' power base but it was not so small that they could not have pushed more far-reaching reforms through – *if* they had been united internally.

Furthermore, the SPD actually attempted to motivate the rural population to support its school politics. For example, one of the most important arguments for the cooperative school reform in NRW was that it would improve educational supply in the countryside. To understand why such attempts to convince the rural population to support the SPD were fruitless, one has to consider the nature of the CDU as a cross-class and Christian – and in NRW still mostly Catholic – party. Wiborg (2009, 2010) discusses the important differences between Scandinavian and German conservatives at several points but does not analyze their role in as much detail as that of the liberal and social democratic forces. The same is true of the relevance of religious cleavages. In the present study, a detailed analysis of the resources and arguments of the antagonists of comprehensive schooling, including in the German case the Catholic Church, leads to the conclusion that the strong state-church cleavage was an important factor for the failure of the SPD to build an alliance with the rural population. Furthermore, also in the Norwegian case, the analysis of conservatism's role is illuminating. The strength of Norwegian social democracy and its alliance with the political center are mirrored in the weakness and internal splits of Norwegian conservatism and its failure to build similar, stable alliances. Again, the reason for the failure of the Norwegian Conservative Party to cooperate with the Norwegian center parties is not so much that they did not try or that their ideology was too radical. Rather, even though they adapted their ideology and were rather moderate in their school-political views, the strong rural-urban and center-periphery cleavages stood in the way of such coalition-making. Overall, it is therefore important to consider the political playing field in its entirety and the varying conditions of coalition-making in the two cases.

Another argument that has been brought forward in the German case is that the federalist structure is conducive to the institutional stickiness of the German school system (cf. Ertl and Philipps, 2000; Hahn, 1998). Indeed, federalism can be considered to produce veto points in the decision-making process because it creates an additional institutional level on which reforms must be negotiated (cf. Immergut, 1992; Huber/Stephens, 2001). However, a study by

Erk (2003) indicates that German federalism tends to develop unitary characteristics in education and that standardization is high despite federalism. As Wiborg (2010, p. 544) points out, “[p]olitical actors as well as educators and academics were on the whole supportive of the nationalisation of education policy, but they differed immensely over the content”. Her judgment that “political conflicts rather than federalism” account for the stickiness of the German system is shared here (Wiborg, 2010, p. 544). Moreover, the present study focuses on one federal state in particular, NRW. In theory, North Rhine-Westphalian school politicians could have introduced comprehensive lower secondary schooling despite the fact that other federal states did not. This would have been legally possible because school politics fall under the political responsibility of the federal state government. Of course, this would potentially have entailed conflicts in the bodies in which federal states’ school politics are coordinated. This possibility of conflict with other federal states was, however, not a major reason why school reformers in NRW were not more successful. Rather, as demonstrated in the present study, there were major conflicts between the collective actors involved which ended with the successful campaign against the cooperative school – clearly a victory for the antagonists. Federalism was therefore not at the root of the matter.

Furthermore, a range of historical and sociological analyses of the German as well as the Norwegian case supports various aspects of the analysis presented here. For example, several authors have underlined the importance of the conservative educated elite in Germany (cf. Hahn, 1998; Ringer, 1969, 1979). Under the title “forces of reaction”, Hahn (1998, pp. 100ff) mentions not only the German *Bildungsbürgertum* and its associations such as the Association of Philologists, but also the Catholic Church, which he rightly includes as a major antagonistic actor, and conservatively oriented parents, who insisted on their right to choose the *Gymnasium* for their children. Studies focusing on the NRW campaign against the cooperative school, such as the works by Blumenthal (1988), Rösner (1981) and Seifert (2013), are also mostly supportive of the arguments developed here. Especially Rösner (1981) demonstrates convincingly the strength of the North Rhine-Westphalian Christian democrats in the countryside and the importance of Catholicism for the political positioning of the rural population. The importance of the struggle over denominational schooling has also been underlined by Friedeburg (1992, pp. 281ff).

In addition, some researchers have studied more recent German reforms leading to the abolition of the *Hauptschule*, the lowest secondary school type, in some federal states, as well as to the inclusion of a higher number of disabled children in the general school system (Edelstein, 2010; Edelstein/Nikolai, 2013; Hartong/Nikolai, 2016). For example, Edelstein and Nikolai (2013) analyze reforms in the federal states of Saxony and Hamburg, where different versions of a two-tier parallel school system were instituted. In Hamburg, it was also decided in 2008 to prolong the comprehensive primary school by two years to six years, but this reform was stopped by a massive campaign and a referendum organized by the supporters

of the *Gymnasium*. Edelstein and Nikolai (2013, pp. 484f) identify four reproductive mechanisms which can help understand such school reforms and reform attempts. The first mechanism is functionalist and refers to interlinkages between educational institutions, such as between primary and secondary schools, which can lead to the mobilization of stakeholders of such institutions. Secondly, utilitarian mechanisms are described as incentive structures, which make change unattractive, such as developed administrative and pedagogical routines, or previous investments in buildings designed to fit the current school structure. In the present study, such effects are considered as feedback effects of previous reforms. Thirdly, Edelstein and Nikolai (2013, p. 484) include power-based mechanisms. Here, they refer to the development of actor coalitions who are privileged by the current school system and therefore have an interest in preventing change. They name teachers' associations, trade associations and the educational elite (*Bildungsbürgertum*) as potential actors. Finally, they define legitimizing mechanisms as leading cultural ideas, which are internalized, objectified and reproduced in existing institutions. Their prime example here is the idea that homogenous ability groups produce better learning results than heterogeneous groups. All of these mechanisms, they maintain, can erode in some way, leading to possibilities for change. They conclude that legitimizing and power-based mechanisms have had the most decisive influence – a conclusion which is backed up by the results of the present study, though for a different time period (Edelstein/Nikolai, 2013, p. 492).

For the Norwegian case, the great importance of at first the Liberal Party and later the Labor Party for the shaping of comprehensive education has been demonstrated, for example in the works of Telhaug and Mediås (2003), Rust (1989) or Volckmar (2016). Telhaug (1969) provides among other things a useful analysis of the Norwegian parliamentary debates in the 1950s and 1960s. Kjøl and Telhaug's (1999) analysis of the education political statements in the party programs of the Norwegian parties between 1945 and 1977 is also illuminating in various respects. For example, they demonstrate that Norwegian education politics entered a particularly reform-oriented period in the 1960s and that the eagerness for reform waned towards the end of the 1970s (Kjøl/Telhaug, 1999, pp. 100ff). Their analysis is therefore in line with the conclusion that this period was a particularly important critical juncture. Furthermore, they conclude that while there was broad consensus in many areas of Norwegian education politics, the various Rokkanian cleavages also come to expression. Like the present study, they maintain that the conflicts over grading as well as differentiation result from the political cleavage between the left and the right. They also emphasize that Christian education, private schooling and centralization were issues of conflict throughout the period (Kjøl/Telhaug, 1999, p. 100). In addition, they point out that the parties of the left and the non-socialist parties were not always united between themselves. For example, they mention that the Liberal Party was more critical of Christian private schooling than the other non-socialist parties, and the Conservative Party was most critical of comprehensive schooling and

*nynorsk* (Kjøl/Telhaug, 1999, p. 108). A small difference between their analysis and the present study is that the latter more clearly emphasizes that the Conservative Party was split over the introduction of the youth school and differentiation within it. Because their analysis is based primarily on party programs, this split apparently went unnoticed by them.

Relevant comparative studies of the political struggles over the development of educational institutions have been conducted, for example by Heidenheimer (1974, 1997). Especially his article from 1974, in which he tries to explain the “different outcomes of school comprehensivization attempts in Sweden and West Germany”, is of interest here. While he focuses mostly on the relationship between party politics and the state bureaucracy, he also acknowledges the importance of ideological factors. He does not analyze these in detail but gives examples of more elitist attitudes prevalent among German experts on pedagogy, teachers, politicians and parents. He also compares the role of the teachers’ associations and finds that the German *Gymnasium* teachers had greater political influence than their Swedish counterparts. This is attributed to the fact that they were part of a strong anti-reform coalition with the CDU, conservative bureaucrats and middle-class parents’ associations. Heidenheimer (1974) concludes that the German left was not united enough to overcome this challenge and points to internal conflicts. In Sweden, on the other hand, no party ever declared itself clearly against comprehensive reform and the Swedish secondary school teachers were left on the sidelines politically. Heidenheimer (1974) only touches on some important factors and the early date of his study limits the scope of analysis. Nevertheless, his conclusions are mostly in accordance with the results of the present study.

There is also a range of studies which has analyzed school politics in various OECD nations comparatively, but with a focus on other areas, such as upper secondary schooling, vocational schooling, higher schooling, education expenditure or teacher unions. Some of these clearly point in similar directions as the present study. In his work on “partisan politics and the political economy of education reforms in western welfare states”, Busemeyer (2014) focuses for example on the development of general upper secondary schooling, vocational training systems and higher education, using Sweden, Germany and England as his main contrasting cases. Busemeyer (2014) combines the study of policy development with the study of its effects, such as various levels of socioeconomic inequality and popular attitudes to education. Similar to the present study, he argues that Christian democratic parties have played a different role in education politics compared to secular conservative parties, as they opposed comprehensive school reforms, but supported the development of vocational education systems regulated by corporatist bodies. As a result, he argues that a “collective skill-formation regime” developed for example in the German case, based on a specific form of cross-class compromise, and contributing to lower degrees of socioeconomic inequality than in the Anglo-Saxon countries. The Swedish case, on the other hand, is considered an example of a “statist skill-formation regime”, in which the coalition between social democracy and the

agrarian Centre Party led to comprehensive school reforms including the integration of vocational education into the public, general upper secondary school system. This system also contributes to comparatively low levels of socioeconomic inequality. Finally, the English “liberal skill-formation regime” according to Busemeyer (2014) is characterized by a post-war expansion in comprehensive schooling and higher education, but by a lack of regulated vocational training, contributing to a polarization of skills and to high socioeconomic inequality.

Another recent contribution is the anthology on teachers’ unions and education systems around the world edited by Terry M. Moe and Susanne Wiborg (2017a). Moe and Wiborg (2017b) point out that focusing on teachers’ unions is a good entry point for the comparative analysis of education politics because such unions have been key players almost everywhere. This is certainly the case in Norway and Germany, as the country chapters written by Rita Nikolai et al (2017) and Susanne Wiborg (2017) illustrate. Nikolai et al (2017) focus on the Education and Science Workers’ Union (*GEW*) and the Association of Philologists (*DPhV*) as the main teachers’ unions in Germany. Their findings are largely in line with the findings of the present study. For example, they emphasize that the unionism of German teachers is highly fragmented and that the Association of Philologists has been continuously more influential than the Education and Science Workers’ Union. This comes to expression not least in the philologists’ formidable opposition to comprehensive school reforms. The present study also includes the Association of Education and Upbringing (*VBE*) and to a certain extent the Association of Catholic German Female Teachers (*VkdL*) in the analysis. Including these organizations leads to the additional finding that the split of primary and lower secondary school teachers along denominational and political lines has weakened this category of teachers significantly so the Association of Philologists could more easily dominate politically. In Norway, on the other hand, the primary school teachers were the most influential teacher category. As Wiborg (2017, p. 155) points out, “[b]y ensuring that primary school teachers held the monopoly to teach in the nine-year comprehensive schools, and by pushing out university-educated teachers, teacher unions demonstrated perhaps the most astonishing example of power in Scandinavian educational history”.

### 7.3 Outlook

Some issues could not be explored in detail in the present thesis but could be valuable to address in future work. This applies for example to a more detailed analysis of the relationship between comprehensive school reforms on the lower secondary and the upper secondary level, including reforms of vocational education. Both in Norway and Germany, protagonists of comprehensive school reforms envisaged comprehensive schooling also on the upper secondary level, while antagonists opposed it. In Norway, upper secondary schooling did not become fully comprehensive, but various reforms diminished the differences between academic and vocational upper secondary schooling (cf. Olsen, 2012). In Germany, on the



other hand, academic and vocational upper secondary forms of education remain more distinct. To what extent the ideological arguments made in debates about lower and upper secondary education in Norway and Germany exhibit similarities could be examined in more detail. It could also be analyzed whether the various crosscutting cleavages influenced the outcomes of such reform attempts in similar ways as on the field of lower secondary education. The work by Busemeyer (2014) discussed above illustrates that there are potentially similar dynamics on this field of school politics. However, such a comparison of school politics on the lower and upper secondary levels would require the inclusion of additional collective actors, such as business associations and various industrial unions, in detailed analysis, and the collection of more data about this field of school politics.

A similar potential extension of the present study relates to post-secondary education in colleges and universities. Both in Norway and Germany, the 1960s and 1970s saw the establishment of new types of colleges, for example in more rural areas. This also involved debates about the status of these new institutions in relation to the universities. In NRW, the term “comprehensive college” (*Gesamthochschule*) became a political buzzword employed mostly by social democrats and liberals, but at times even by the CDU, but with limited results for the actual landscape of post-secondary educational institutions. Nevertheless, in both cases the development of the post-secondary educational sector was an important part of the educational expansion at the time. This part of the educational history of the two countries could be compared more closely and related to the debates about comprehensive schooling on the lower levels of the general education system.

Furthermore, there have also been recurrent debates and reforms of special schooling, which to a certain extent exhibit similarities to the debates about comprehensive schooling. In recent years, the slowly increasing inclusion of disabled children in the general school system has led to renewed discussions of parallel schooling in Germany (cf. Hartong/Nikolai, 2016). In Norway, special schools were largely abolished in the 1970s and 1980s (cf. Dalen, 2006). Much of the data collected for the present study indicates that the ideological arguments for the abolition of Norwegian special schools were in many ways similar to the arguments for comprehensive lower secondary schooling. This relationship could be explored in more detail. However, it should again be noted that this field of school politics involves important additional actors besides the ones studied here, such as special school teachers and parents of disabled children. Disability politics is an independent political field. For this reason, such an extension would also require additional data collection and analysis.

The present work could also be extended by including additional cases. For example, it would be interesting to compare the present cases with reforms of lower secondary schooling in a country such as England, where private schooling has long played a more important role than in Norway and Germany. How various political cleavages come to expression in conflicts

over non-religious, widespread private schooling could be examined in more detail. Another possibility would be to include cases like Sweden or another German federal state such as Hessen, where the historical developments were similar to the cases in the present study. This would allow for the comparison of cases with similar outcomes with the aim to examine which conditions were and were not present in them. Generally speaking, including additional cases with more or less different cleavage structures would allow one to explore to what extent the findings in this work are generalizable. Most likely, the Rokkanian approach would prove fruitful also in approaching other cases and would generate new insights. This could also contribute to future theory development on these issues.

Another open question deserving additional analysis and research is why a political trend reversal occurred in both cases in the mid-1970s. All the experts interviewed agreed that such a trend reversal took place, but could not really explain why. Some of the reform protagonists who were interviewed had only realized with the benefit of hindsight that the window of opportunity had actually been closed from the mid-1970s onwards. Other experts interviewed noticed at the time that the tide had turned and that any eagerness for reform was waning quickly. Most likely, economic development played a role in this trend reversal but it is unclear how it may have done so. The relationship between economic development and cycles of educational expansion and reform could therefore be analyzed in more detail, also from a long-term perspective (see for example Nath, 2001, and Titze, 2004, for a starting point). This could be connected to a detailed analysis of the long-term relationship between demographic development and educational expansion. The increasing student numbers of the 1960s and 1970s, as well as the needs of the economy for more qualified labor, certainly pressured political actors to reform the school system in some way. As demonstrated in the present analysis, the economic development was often referred to by reform protagonists, especially in Germany (cf. section 5.4.1). Demography also played a role in the debates. For example, it was pointed out by reform protagonists that comprehensive schooling would secure schools in the countryside, once student numbers started to decline again. However, this argument was not very effective during the 1970s because demographic pressure on small rural schools first made itself felt in the 1980s. A more detailed analysis of these questions would be valuable but should not be based on functionalist assumptions linking the economy, demography and education system in a clear-cut way. As Green (2013, pp. 35ff) convincingly argues, there is no simple functionalist relationship between economic development and the institutional development of the school system. The variation between the educational developments of Western nation states is much too big to warrant a purely functionalist explanation.

Finally, the timeframe of the study could be expanded. For example, one could examine the development of the school system in the two cases from the 1980s to the present day with the aim of analyzing how cleavage structures and ideologies have continued to influence school politics. At first glance, it seems that there are significant similarities between the educational

ideologies of collective actors of today and those of the 1950s to 1970s and that the class cleavage remains relevant. The struggles of the post-war reform phases have in both cases left important legacies. Overall, the hegemonic balances seem similar at least, even though new issues have come up and the political playing fields have changed as a result of the development of new parties and organizations.

In the North Rhine-Westphalian case, it is especially striking that not a single truly comprehensive school reform has been attempted since the 1970s. Nevertheless, this does not imply that there was a complete standstill. Today, integrated comprehensive schools (*Gesamtschulen*) continue to play an important role in the North Rhine-Westphalian school system. In fact, the proportion of the integrated comprehensive school has grown significantly in the past ten years. In 2008/2009, this school type had 232,814 students, with 593,080 students attending the *Gymnasien*. In the school year 2017/2018, 307,975 students in NRW attended an integrated comprehensive school, with 519,789 students attending *Gymnasien*, 219,990 attending *Realschulen* and only 72,066 attending *Hauptschulen*. The *Hauptschule* seems to be in the process of disappearing and student numbers at this school type are declining very quickly. In addition, a new school type was founded in 2011 which combines at least two school types from grades five to ten and thus is basically a new version of the cooperative school of the 1970s. This school type is called *Sekundarschule* (secondary school) and had 57,877 students in 2017/2018, with a tendency to increase (IT.NRW, 2018). In other federal states, the *Hauptschule* has been abolished and a two-tier parallel school system seems to be taking shape (for an overview see Helbig/Nikolai, 2015, pp. 99ff).

However, the opposition to comprehensive school reforms voiced by the CDU, the Association of Philologists and others is still considerable. In 2011, a minority government of the SPD and the Green Party agreed with the CDU to change the school articles of the NRW Constitution so that the *Hauptschule* no longer has to be an obligatory school type in the federal state. A sentence was included in Paragraph 10 according to which the federal state “guarantees a sufficient, varied public school system, which allows for a multi-tiered school system, integrated school types as well as other school types”. As illustrated by this compromise, many social democrats in NRW – and presumably in Germany as a whole – consider truly comprehensive school reforms today “impossible” and have basically accepted parallel schooling. Most likely, for many social democrats and nowadays also greens, the reference to continued conservative opposition and to the struggles of the past is a welcome excuse for not even trying. As we have seen, the SPD was never entirely united with regard to comprehensive schooling. For some, the social democratic thirst for education was sufficiently quenched by the increasing openness of the *Gymnasium*. In addition, conservative thinking about the necessity of selection and biological theories of endowment had made inroads into social democracy. Today, there seem to be even fewer clear-cut reformers in the

party and truly comprehensive schooling – which would include the abolition of the *Gymnasium* – has not been a major issue for the party for a long time.

At the same time, social scientists still emphasize that inequality is reproduced to a high degree in the German system and the debates continue. Denominational schooling and anti-communism have lost importance in school politics but have not disappeared completely. Private schooling and questions of gender are also still issues of debate. In addition, new issues have come on the agenda, such as the treatment of ethnic minorities in the school system. The introduction of Bachelor and Master's degrees in teacher training, which took place in NRW in 2009, has also entailed new debates about the unequal pay of teachers of different school types. Now that all teachers have the same length of education, it is possible that this will eventually lead to a reduction in their status and pay differences, which would increase the chances of comprehensive school reforms. However, teachers' organizations in Germany remain highly fragmented. This represents a challenge to any far-reaching attempt at reform. It seems that a minimum requirement would be an alliance between the primary and lower secondary school teachers organized in the Education and Science Workers' Union and in the Association of Education and Upbringing. Finally, the slow death of the *Hauptschule* might eventually force school politicians in NRW to reform the system more decisively, for example by reducing the high number of parallel school types – as has been done many times before in the region's school history. However, a more far-reaching, truly comprehensive reform would require an ideological repositioning of the actors involved, and the development of bolder, counter-hegemonic arguments capable of shifting the hegemonic balance.

In Norway, on the other hand, the comprehensive school structure is taken for granted by most people. Hardly anybody – including conservatives – wishes to reintroduce parallel schooling on the youth school level.<sup>28</sup> In fact, comprehensive schooling was prolonged by another year by the reforms of the 1990s. In addition, all youths received the right to three years of upper secondary education. The ideological justifications for these reforms were similar to those of previous social democratic reforms in the sense that equality remained a major goal (cf. Volckmar, 2008, 2016, pp. 87ff). However, since the 2000s, Norwegian educational rhetoric and politics have changed more in the direction of the ideas and practices of New Public Management. There is an ongoing debate whether reforms of curricula oriented towards competencies more than the content of schooling and the related introduction of national tests have weakened the socially integrative function of the Norwegian comprehensive school (Volckmar, 2016, pp. 111ff). The growth in special schooling arrangements within the comprehensive schools could also be seen as a threat to comprehensive education. With regard to upper secondary schooling, there is a debate

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<sup>28</sup> The only exception the author of this study has come across is the suggestion of the leftist Kjell Horn (2015, pp. 432ff) to divide the youth school up into two different school types, one theoretical and the other practical. However, Horn (2015, p. 434) emphasizes that such a change is in his opinion conditional on an upgrading of blue-collar work in the economic sphere.

whether free school choice based on grades has increased inequality and been detrimental for weaker students, many of whom have ethnic minority backgrounds (NRK, 2018). The term *enhetsskole*, which until the 1990s was the usual Norwegian term for comprehensive schools, has been replaced in public debates by the term *felleskole* – according to Volckmar (2016, p. 114), this is an indication that the previous conception of the Norwegian comprehensive school is now seen by many as not leaving enough room for students' individuality. The political right has thus made a certain amount of progress in Norwegian school politics. On the other hand, in the question of grading, conservatives have recently backed down and decided not to reintroduce grades in the last years of the children's school because they concluded that this would be too demotivating for students. Abolishing grades in the youth school has not been attempted since the 1970s. With respect to grading, it therefore seems that the hegemonic balance, which came about in the reform period under investigation here, bore up.

Among the teachers' organizations, the merger process continued over time so most groups of teachers today are united in the Union of Education (*Utdanningsforbundet*), Norway's second largest union. However, dissatisfied university-educated secondary school teachers founded a new organization in 1997, which somewhat boldly is called *Norsk Lektorlag*. It is not to be confused with the earlier Association of Norwegian Secondary School Teachers, which was also named *Norsk Lektorlag* until 1983 and which became a part of today's Union of Education through mergers. With around 5500 members, the new *Norsk Lektorlag* is relatively small but can be considered a conservative and antagonistic actor to comprehensive schooling; for example, it demands the possibility to make use of organizational differentiation and grades also in the children's and youth school (*Norsk Lektorlag*, 2015). Another moot point is whether the growth in private schooling undermines comprehensive schooling in the public school. The law on private schools has been reformed several times in the past 15 years (cf. Volckmar, 2016, pp. 114ff). The latest reform took place in 2015, when the Conservative Party, the Progress Party, the Liberal Party and the Christian Democrats agreed on a reform of the private school law, which on the one hand remained as restrictive as previous compromises, but on the other made it easier to found new "profile schools" with alternative curricula and a focus on specific subject areas (Volckmar, 2016, p. 123). It remains to be seen whether the Labor Party will again apply the strategy of cooperating with allies on the left as well as in the political center in order to take steps against the growth in private schooling. Finally, Norwegian language issues, gender issues and the centralization of Norwegian rural schools also continue to be debated in school politics, though these debates are no longer as emotional as they once were. Hopefully, future analyses of such school political conflicts may benefit from the present historical-sociological contribution and potentially extend it to include additional cleavages and developments.

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- Landtag NRW, June 20, 1961, Plenarprotokoll 04/63, 4. Wahlperiode, 63. Sitzung am 20. Juni 1961, pp. 2291-2313.*
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- Landtag NRW, January 28, 1965, Betr.: Entwurf eines Gesetzes über die Schulpflicht im Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen (Schulpflichtgesetz – SchpflG), 5. Wahlperiode, Drucksache Nr. 655.*
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- Landtag NRW, June 26, 1968, Plenarprotokoll 06/36, 6. Wahlperiode, 31. Sitzung am 26. Juni 1968, Antrag der Fraktion der CDU: Durchführung der neuen Schulgesetze, Drucksache Nr. 775, p. 1285-1400.*

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- Landtag NRW, April 2, 1979, Beschlussempfehlung und Bericht des Ausschusses für Schule und Kultur zu dem Antrag der Fraktion der CDU, Reform der Hauptschule, Drucksache 8/4355.*

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### Party programs of Norwegian parties

*Note: All Norwegian party programs are accessible at the Archive of Party-Political Documents of the Norwegian Center for Research Data (NSD), see:*

<http://www.nsd.uib.no/polsys/data/parti/partidokumentarkivet/>

*The following programs were analyzed for the present work.*

#### Labor Party:

DNAs arbeidsprogram for 1953-1957

DNAs arbeidsprogram for 1958-1961

DNAs arbeidsprogram for 1962-1965

DNAs arbeidsprogram for 1966-1969

DNAs prinsippprogram for 1969, Prinsipper og perspektiver

DNAs arbeidsprogram 1970-1973, Politikk for en ny tid, Vekst - Trygghet - Trivsel

DNAs arbeidsprogram 1974-1977, Vekst og vern - demokrati og likestilling, Trygghet for folket

DNAs arbeidsprogram 1978-1981, Du skal vita kva det gjeld, solidaritet – arbeid – miljø

#### Socialist People's Party:

SFs arbeidsprogram 1961-1964

SFs arbeidsprogram 1965-1969

Prinsipperklæring SF 1969

SFs arbeidsprogram 1969-1973

SFs valgprogram 1973-1977

SVs prinsippprogram 1977

SVs valgprogram 1977-1981



Liberal Party:

Venstres arbeidsprogram for 1958-1961, Stem for vi vil programmet, stem Venstre –  
Folkpartiet, Mennesket i sentrum

Venstres arbeidsprogram for 1961-1965, Framgang i frihet

Venstres arbeidsprogram for 1965-1969, Samspill mellom medmennesker - en framtid med  
Venstre

Venstres arbeidsprogram for 1969-1973

Venstres arbeidsprogram for 1973-1977

Venstres arbeidsprogram for 1977-1981

Christian Democrats:

KrFs program ved stortingsvalget 1957

4 år med Kristelig Folkeparti, Program ved stortingsvalget 11. sept. 1961.

KrFs arbeidsprogram 1965-1969

KrFs prinsipielle program 1965, Vegen og Målet

Valgprogram KrF 1969-1973

KrFs program for 1973-1977

KrFs program for 1977-1981, Samling om verdier

Centre Party:

Bondepartiets program 1957

Senterpartiets program 1961

Senterpartiets stortingsvalgprogram 1965-1969

Senterpartiets prinsipp-program 1965, Vilje til ansvar

Senterpartiets valgprogram 1969-1973

Senterpartiets prinsipp-program 1973

Senterpartiets valgprogram 1973-1977

Senterpartiets valgprogram 1977, Vekst er ikke å forbruke mer, men å forvalte bedre!

Conservative Party:

Hovedprogram for Høire og Høires arbeidsprogram 1958-1961

Høires hovedprogram 1961

Høyres hovedprogram 1965

Høyres hovedprogram 1965

Høyres hovedprogram og arbeidsprogram 1969-1873

Høyres program stortingsvalg 1973

Høyres program 1977-1981

Progress Party:

Anders Langes partis valgprogram 1973, Vi er lei av å bli utbyttet av statskapitalismen

Fremskrittspartiets handlingsprogram for stortingsvalget 1977

Fremskrittspartiets prinsipp-program 1977

### Party programs of German parties

*Note: The SPD's national programs were downloaded from the archive of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. The SPD's regional programs of 1962, 1975, 1980 were obtained via the Bergen University library. The CDU's national programs were downloaded from the archive of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, and the regional programs were kindly supplied by email by the archive. The FDP's national and regional programs were obtained from the Archive of Liberalism by the Friedrich Naumann Foundation. In addition, publications which summarize and document the most important school political positions of the parties over time were included, such as publications by the SPD executive board (SPD, 1975, 1979) and a publication by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation focusing on the CDU's education politics from 1945 to 2011 (Gauger, 2011). The following programs were analyzed for the present work.*

SPD:

Bundestagswahlprogramm 1957 (printed in Jahrbuch der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands 1956/57, Hannover – Bonn: Neuer Vorwärts Verlag).

Godesberger Programm (Grundsatzprogramm der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands), 1959

Regierungsprogramm der SPD, 1961

Bildungspolitische Leitsätze der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands, 1964

Tatsachen und Argumente, Erklärungen der SPD Regierungsmannschaft, 1965

ENTWURF: Modell für ein demokratisches Bildungswesen (1969 vom Bildungspolitischen Ausschuss beschlossen und im Einvernehmen mit dem Parteivorstand als Diskussionsentwurf veröffentlicht.), pp. 42-72 in Dokumentation. Programme und Entschlüsse zur Bildungspolitik 1964-1975. Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands.

Regierungsprogramm der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands, 1969, Erfolg, Stabilität, Reform

Wahlprogramm der SPD, Mit Willy Brandt für Frieden, Sicherheit und eine bessere Qualität des Lebens, 1972

Regierungsprogramm 1976-1980, SPD – Weiter arbeiten am Modell Deutschland

Wege zur menschlichen Schule – die Reform muss weitergehen. Programm zur Fortführung der Bildungsreform (Beschlossen auf der AfB-Bundeskonferenz 23.-25. März 1979 in Osnabrück)

Wahlprogramm 1980, Sicherheit für Deutschland

SPD NRW:

SPD vorn. Nordrhein-Westfalen muss Vorbild werden. Material zur Landtagswahl am 8. Juli 1962

Nordrhein-Westfalen-Programm 1975 (published in 1970 by the social-liberal federal state government)

Programm zur Landtagswahl 1975 - Entwurf

Unser Programm für die 80er Jahre „Politik für unser Land“, 1980

FDP:

Aktionsprogramm zur Bundestagswahl der Freien Demokratischen Partei, 1957

Aufruf zur Bundestagswahl 1961 der Freien Demokratischen Partei

Wahlprogramm zur Bundestagswahl 1969 der Freien Demokratischen Partei „Praktische Politik für Deutschland - Das Konzept der F.D.P.“

Wahlaufruf zur Bundestagswahl 1972 der Freien Demokratischen Partei „Vorfahrt für Vernunft“

Stuttgarter Leitlinien einer liberalen Bildungspolitik der Freien Demokratischen Partei, 1972

Wahlprogramm zur Bundestagswahl 1976 der Freien Demokratischen Partei „Freiheit Fortschritt Leistung“

Wahlprogramm zur Bundestagswahl 1980 der Freien Demokratischen Partei „Unser Land soll auch morgen liberal sein“

FDP NRW:

Wahlaufruf zur Landtagswahl 1962 der Freien Demokratischen Partei Landesverband Nordrhein-Westfalen „Besser regieren – weniger Staat“

Wahlplattform zur Landtagswahl 1970 der Freien Demokratischen Partei Landesverband Nordrhein-Westfalen „Aktion Liberal“

Wahlplattform zur Landtagswahl 1975 der Freien Demokratischen Partei Landesverband Nordrhein-Westfalen „Liberale Politik für Nordrhein-Westfalen“

Wahlprogramm zur Landtagswahl 1980 der Freien Demokratischen Partei Landesverband Nordrhein Westfalen „Mut zur Freiheit - Mut zur Verantwortung“

CDU:

Hamburger Programm CDU, Das Programm der Christlich Demokratischen Union für den zweiten deutschen Bundestag, 1953

Kölner Manifest, CDU, 1961

Bildung in der modernen Welt. Hamburger Empfehlungen der CDU/CSU zur Kulturpolitik. 3. Kulturpolitischer Kongress, 9.-10.11.1964.

Düsseldorfer Erklärung der CDU, 31. März 1965, beschlossen auf dem 13. Bundesparteitag der CDU in Düsseldorf.

Deidesheimer Leitsätze. Entwurf eines schul- und hochschulpolitischen Programms. 4. Kulturpolitischer Kongress, 28.2.-1.3. 1969.

CDU 1969-1973, Wahlprogramm der Christlich Demokratischen Union Deutschlands

Schul- und Hochschulreformprogramm der CDU, 1971. Argumente, Dokumente, Materialien Nr. 5258, herausgegeben von der CDU-Bundesgeschäftsstelle.

Bildungspolitik auf klaren Wegen. Ein Schwerpunktprogramm der CDU/CSU. Ein Papier der Kultusminister Walter Braun, Wilhelm Hahn, Hans Maier, Werner Scherer, Bernhard Vogel und des vorm. MdB Berthold Martin, 1972.

Mannheimer Erklärung „Frau und Gesellschaft“ 1975, 23. Parteitag, 23.-25. Juni 1975.

Kulturpolitisches Programm 1976. Vorgelegt von den Kultusministern der von CDU und CSU regierten Bundesländer.

Das Wahlprogramm der CDU und CSU 1976

Freiheit, Solidarität, Gerechtigkeit. Grundsatzprogramm 1978.

Für Frieden und Freiheit. Das Wahlprogramm der CDU/CSU für die Bundestagswahl 1980.

CDU NRW:

Aktions-Programm für Nordrhein-Westfalen, CDU NRW 18.4.1970. Archiv für Christlich-Demokratische Politik (ACDP), Pressedokumentation.

CDU: Ziele und Wege '80. Programm für Nordrhein-Westfalen zur Landtagswahl 1975. Archiv für Christlich-Demokratische Politik (ACDP), Bestand CDU-Landtagsfraktion Nordrhein-Westfalen, 05-009-349.

Aussagen der CDU in Nordrhein-Westfalen zur Landtagswahl 1980. Langfassung. Archiv für Christlich-Demokratische Politik (ACDP), Bestand CDU-Landtagsfraktion Nordrhein-Westfalen, 05-009-865.

## Expert interviews

*For more detailed information on the interviewed experts, see Table 3.1.*

### *Norwegian experts:*

Jakob Aano, interviewed in person on July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2014  
Ivar Bjørndal, interviewed in person on June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015  
Gudmund Hernes, interviewed in person on January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2014  
Kjell Horn, interviewed in person on November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2014  
Unni Johannessen, interviewed on the phone on November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2014  
Theo Koritzinsky, interviewed in person on November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2014  
Lars Roar Langslet, interviewed in person on June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014  
Kari Lie, interviewed in person on December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2014  
Tore Lindbekk, interviewed in person on June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2014  
Per Lønning, interviewed in person on June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2014  
Per Arne Sæther, interviewed in person on July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014  
Torild Skard, interviewed in person on October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2014  
Hans Olav Tungesvik, interviewed in person on June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2014

### *German experts:*

Anke Brunn, interviewed in person on August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015  
Ilse Brusis, interviewed in person on April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015  
Uwe Franke, interviewed in person on April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015  
Reinhard Grätz, interviewed in person on May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2015  
Wolfgang Heinz, interviewed in person on April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015  
Jürgen Hinrichs, interviewed in person on June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015  
Burkhard Hirsch, interviewed on the phone in May 2015  
Walter Hupperth, interviewed in person on May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015  
Wilhelm Lenz, interviewed in person on May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015  
Hiltrud Meyer Engelen, interviewed in person on May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015  
Anne Ratzki, interviewed in person on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2015  
Hans-G. Rolff, interviewed in person on May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015



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## Translations – school types, exams, forms of teaching

Norwegian term	Translation and explanation
Allmueskole	Commoners' school, primary schools for the poor population prior to 1889
Latinskole / Katedralskole	Latin school; academic secondary schools, replaced by the term <i>gymnas</i>
Folkeskole	People's school; lasted first 7, then 9 years, later replaced by the term <i>grunnskole</i>
Barneskole	Children's school; later term for the first 6, now 7, years of schooling
Middelskole	Middle school; older term for the academic secondary school / <i>realskole</i>
Realskole	Middle school; newer term for the academic secondary school leading from the people's school to high school
Gymnas	High school; academic secondary school leading to the <i>eksamen artium</i>
Framhaldsskole	Continuation school; non-academic secondary school
Ungdomsskole	Youth school; replaced <i>realskole</i> and <i>framhaldsskole</i>
Linjedelt ungdomsskole	Tracked youth school; included two tracks resembling the old school forms <i>realskole</i> and <i>framhaldsskole</i>
Enhetsskole	Comprehensive school
Grunnskole	Primary school; includes children's school and youth school
Videregående skole	Upper secondary school; term replaced the older term high school / <i>gymnast</i>
Eksamen artium	School leaving certificate of the old high school that qualified for university education
Studiekompetanse	Literally 'study competency'; school leaving certificate of the current upper secondary school
Kursplaner	Term used for ability group system in the early youth school
Sammenholdte klasser	Literally 'kept-together classes'; classes in which all children are taught together independent of ability or background

German term	Translation and explanation
Volksschule	People's school; comprised of the four-year primary stage, the <i>Grundschule</i> , and an upper stage later termed <i>Hauptschule</i>
Lateinschule	Latin school; academic secondary school, replaced by the term <i>Gymnasium</i>
Grundschule	Primary school; introduced in 1920, lasts

	four years, is part of the <i>Volksschule</i> until late 1960s
Hauptschule	Basic School; secondary school for grade five to ten introduced in 1968, originally the upper stage of the <i>Volksschule</i>
Realschule	Middle school; secondary school for grade five to ten
Gymnasium	High school; most prestigious secondary school for grade five to twelve/thirteen, leads to the <i>Abitur</i> exam
Integrierte Gesamtschule	Integrated comprehensive school; comprehensive school which teaches children in common classes with the exception of ability grouping in the main subjects
Kooperative Schule	Cooperative school; tracked comprehensive school consisting of three tracks resembling the school types <i>Hauptschule</i> , <i>Realschule</i> and <i>Gymnasium</i>
Einheitsschule	Comprehensive school, original term from 19 <sup>th</sup> and early 20 <sup>th</sup> century debates, no longer used in postwar debates except as a ‘warfare-agent’ in combination with the adjective ‘socialist’
Sekundarschule and Gemeinschaftsschule	Newer versions of more or less comprehensively organized secondary schools which exist in NRW today
Abitur	School leaving certificate of the <i>Gymnasium</i> that qualifies for university education

### Translations – political parties

Norwegian term	Translation
Arbeiderpartiet	Labor Party
Høyre	Conservative Party
Kristelig Folkeparti	Christian Democrats
Venstre	Liberal Party
Senterpartiet	Centre Party
Sosialistisk Venstreparti (earlier Sosialistisk Folkeparti, Sosialistisk Valgforbund)	Socialist Left Party (earlier Socialist People’s Party and Socialist Electoral League)
Norges Kommunistiske Parti (NKP)	Communist Party
Arbeidernes Kommunistparti (AKP), and Rød Valgallianse (RV), predecessors of Rødt	Workers’ Communist Party, and Red Electoral Alliance, predecessors of the Red Party
Fremskrittspartiet	Progress Party

German term	Translation
Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (SPD)	Social Democratic Party, SPD
Christdemokratische Union (CDU)	Christian Democratic Union (CDU)
Freie Demokratische Partei (FDP)	Free Democratic Party (FDP)
Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands (KPD)	Communist Party (KPD)
Deutsche Kommunistische Partei (DKP)	Communist Party (DKP)
Zentrum	Centre Party
Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen	Green Party

### Translations – teacher organizations and unions

Norwegian term	Translation
Filologenes og realistenes landsforening	Association of philologists and natural scientists (university educated teachers), founded in 1892
Norsk Lektorlag	Association of Norwegian Secondary School Teachers, new name of the older <i>Filologenes og realistenes landsforening</i> from 1939
Norsk Undervisningsforbund (NUFO)	Norwegian Educational Association, new name of <i>Norsk Lektorlag</i> from 1983
Lærerforbundet	Teacher Association, created in 1993 as a merger of <i>NUFO</i> , and the teacher organizations <i>Norsk Spesiellærerlag</i> , <i>Norsk Faglærerlag</i> and <i>Norsk Handelslærerlag</i>
Utdanningsforbundet	Union of Education Norway, created in 2001 as a merger of <i>Lærerforbundet</i> and <i>Norsk Lærerlag</i>
Norges Lærerlag	Norway's Teachers' Association, founded in 1892, name of the organization of primary school teachers and other non-university educated teachers before it became <i>Norsk Lærerlag</i> after the merger of 1966
Norsk Lærerlag	Norwegian Teachers' Association, created in 1966 as a merger of <i>Norges Lærerlag</i> , <i>Norges Lærerinneforbund</i> , <i>Norges Skolelederlag</i> and <i>Norsk Øvingslærerlag</i>
Norges Lærerinneforbund	Female Teachers' Association, founded in 1912, association of female primary school teachers and other non-university educated female teachers before they joined <i>Norsk Lærerlag</i> in 1966
Landsorganisasjonen (LO)	Norwegian Federation of Trade Unions

German term	Translation
Gewerkschaft Erziehung und Wissenschaft (GEW)	Education and Science Workers' Union, founded in 1947/48/49, mostly primary school and <i>Hauptschule</i> teachers, open for everyone in the education sector
Vereinsverband akademisch gebildeter Lehrer Deutschland	Association of academically educated teachers Germany, founded in 1903
Deutscher Philologenverband (DPhV)	Association of Philologists, new name of the association of academically educated teachers after 1921
Verband der katholischen Lehrerschaft Deutschlands (VKLD)	Association of German Catholic Teachers, founded in 1949 based on previous Catholic teacher associations dating back to 1889
Bund Evangelischer Lehrer (BEL)	Association of Protestant Teachers, founded in 1947 based on previous Protestant teacher associations dating back to 1848
Verband Bildung und Erziehung (VBE)	Association of Education and Upbringing, created in 1969 as a merger of the Catholic and Protestant teacher associations
Verband katholischer deutscher Lehrerinnen (VkdL)	Association of Catholic German Female Teachers, founded in 1885
Allgemeiner Deutscher Lehrerinnenverein (ADLV)	General German Association of Female Teachers, founded in 1890, not refounded after WWII
Verband Deutscher Realschullehrer	Association of <i>Realschule</i> teachers, founded in 1949 based on previous middle school teacher associations
Gemeinnützige Gesellschaft Gesamtschule (GGG)	Organization Comprehensive School
Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund (DGB)	German Confederation of Trade Unions
Deutscher Beamtenbund (DBB)	Association of Public Employees, a federation of non-social democratic public employee organizations

## Interview guide

*This interview guide was used in the German interview with Reinhard Grätz and serves as example here to get an idea of what the interview guides looked like. The interview guide was adapted for each interview partner. Questions were not always asked in the same order and spontaneous questions were sometimes added (cf. Chapter 3).*

Before we begin, I need to request permission to record the interview. As you can see from the information leaflet, I cannot anonymize my informants, because they are well known public persons and experts. I hope it is ok for you to be quoted personally with single sentences? You will be provided with the transcription of the interview, so that you can make sure that everything was transcribed correctly.

The interview is about education politics in the late 1950s, the 1960s and 70s. I am especially interested in the ideological-political lines of conflict in the debates. So the interview is not so much about specific dates, which I can find in written sources. The interviews are meant to help me understand the political dynamics of the time.

I suggest that we proceed chronologically, from the late 50s to the 70s. I have some blocks of questions in the following order: first on the debate about denominational schooling, then on the start of the debates and the educational expansion in the 60s, then on the debates about comprehensive schooling and the debate about the cooperative school. Then some questions on teacher education and pay and on the distribution of financial burdens in the education sector. Finally I have some general questions on the political power balance in education politics. If you cannot say so much in response to some questions, we just leave them out. Before I start with my questions, maybe you could shortly tell me a bit about your personal background and your experiences during this time. (go through CV with interview partner)

### ***Denominational schooling***

In 1952, a new school law regulated under which conditions schools could be founded, abolished or changed. If I understand it correctly, the main issue of conflict here was the denominational character of the people's school, so whether it should be a denominational school or a common Christian school. The debate continued in the 1960s. It was related to the debate about the denominational Pedagogical Colleges. How would you describe the ideological lines of conflict in this debate?

What were the standpoints of the major political actors, such as parties or organizations, and churches? What motivated them to struggle for or against denominational schooling?

(Notes: issues of debate: who is allowed to teach religion – teachers or church officials? Which rights of control do the churches have? What were the conditions for changing small schools into common schools? Where did the teacher organizations stand?)

What was the position of the SPD with regard to this question? (Were Catholic or Protestant members of the SPD organized in networks within the party?)

What was more important for the supporters of denominational schooling: to stop secularization or to defend the division of the denominations?

Were there conflicts between Catholics and Protestants regarding this question?

How much influence did the churches have in education politics?

Would it be correct to say that the debate about denominational schooling took much more space in the 1960s than other education political topics?

### ***1960s – The start of the educational debate and the educational expansion***

In 1953, the *Deutsche Ausschuss für das Erziehungs- und Bildungswesen* was founded. This body published in 1959 the *Rahmenplan zur Umgestaltung und Vereinheitlichung des allgemeinbildenden Schulwesens*. This document still supported the multi-tier school system, but suggested for example an orientation stage and a prologation of the *Hauptschule*, as well as a division of the *Gymnasium* in 7-year and 9-year institutions. Can you remember how the document influenced the development and atmosphere in NRW?

How was the *Deutsche Ausschuss* viewed by the political actors?

In the early 60s, the debate about education began, for example as a result of an OECD report of 1961, and because of texts such as “The German educational catastrophe” by Georg Picht. How would you describe the education-political atmosphere at the time?

Picht suggested among other things to leave the *Gymnasien* „untouched aside“ and to increase numbers of *Abitur* graduates through preparatory forms of *Gymnasium* and *Realschule* [*Aufbauschulen/Aufbauklassen*]. Between 62 and 66, under the CDU government, the ministry introduced for example 2- and 3-year schools for graduates of the *Realschule*, which led to the *Abitur*, as well as evening *Gymnasien*. The *Realschule* was also expanded. Was this development supported by all actors?

Was there a public discussion about the expansion of alternative educational paths?

What was your party’s/organizations’ opinion on the topic? What is in your view the purpose of evening schools and *Aufbauschulen*? (Do you think that the purpose could also have been to satisfy the ambitions of the middle classes, without having to open up the *Gymnasium* to everyone, and without having to introduce comprehensive schools?)

In March 1964, the „Berlin Declaration“ was passed at the 100th meeting of the Conference of the Ministers of Education. In this declaration, an educational expansion was supported, a horizontal instead of a vertical school organization and the introduction of new secondary

school forms was suggested. It was also signed by the CDU/CSU-Ministers. How do you explain that?

In October 1964, the Hamburg Agreement was signed (new version of the agreement between the federal states regarding standardization of the school system). 9-year, and potentially 10-year obligatory schooling was thereby introduced, as well as the term *Hauptschule*. In NRW, the law on obligatory schooling of 1966 introduced the division of primary school and *Hauptschule*. What were the main reasons to introduce the *Hauptschule* as an independent secondary school type?

1966, still under Meyers' CDU-government, 9 years of obligatory schooling were introduced step by step. What were arguments for or against nine years of obligatory schooling? (was there serious opposition?)

The SPD demanded the introduction of comprehensive schooling in its education political guidelines from 1964 onwards, right? How did this fit together with the introduction of the *Hauptschule*? (Did anybody within the SPD demand a strong *Hauptschule* instead of comprehensive schools?)

#### ***Late 1960s / early 1970s – comprehensive school debate***

In 1965, the German Educational Council was founded. In 1969, the suggestions of this body for experiments with differentiated, integrated comprehensive schools were published. In this report, it is suggested to establish at least 40 experimental schools. In 1970, the *Strukturplan für das Bildungswesen* followed, in which the Council suggested a vertically organized school system, with a common orientation stage for all and differentiation from grade 7, in common schools. Also the upper secondary stage should integrate Gymnasium education and vocational education. In April 1970, SPD and FDP presented their North Rhine-Westphalia program 1975 for the elections, which includes an integrated and differentiated main stage (of schooling) as an aim, and as a long-term aim experimentation with and – if supported by the experiments – general introduction of the comprehensive school and integration of the entire school system. Did you personally think in the early 1970s that the general introduction of comprehensive schools, including the abolition of the *Gymnasium*, was a realistic possibility?

What do you think the term *Gesamtschule* actually means?

How about the term *Einheitsschule*, which also has been used from time to time?

What do you think was the most important argument for and against the integrated comprehensive school?

Which argument do you think had the greatest effect politically?



Did anybody within the SPD suggest to abolish ability grouping within the comprehensive school completely?

Which organizations and groups of people were the most important supporters of the comprehensive school and what were the relationships between them? (e.g. New Left, currents within the SPD, FDP, GEW, scientists...)

In 1972, the FDP published its Stuttgart guidelines for liberal education politics, in which it suggests comprehensive schools as so-called open schools. How united do you think that the FDP was behind this aim?

In the documents of the Educational Council, it is stated that the discussion had been „very ideological“ so far, and that scientific experiments could potentially contribute to a more matter-of-fact discussion. At the same time, the commission of the council clearly supports comprehensive schools. Where did the commission itself actually stand politically?

What was the role of school experiments? Were they really about scientific results, or were they an instrument of power? (For example in order to get reforms started or to buy time?)

The curricula of the comprehensive school had to be developed from scratch. Can you remember whether this created any conflicts? (For example with regard to *Leitlinien Politik* – did the SPD support the introduction of new social scientific subjects or contents?)

In November 1971, the CDU group in the NRW parliament made a motion for the first time suggesting experiments with cooperative comprehensive schools. In 1973, the CDU even suggested the general introduction of cooperative comprehensive schools. How would you describe the education-political strategy of the CDU in the early 1970s?

In 1974, the federal government made a motion according to which the comprehensive school should become a regular school type, and the legal conditions should be created for a general introduction of the school type independent orientation stage. After amendments made by the FDP, a different law was passed in February 1975, which only gave the comprehensive school an experimental status and which did not contain anything on the orientation stage. The FDP stated in the final debate of the law that it intended to realize the orientation stage in the following legislative period. What explains this careful position of the FDP regarding the orientation stage and the introduction of the comprehensive school as a regular school type at this point in time in your opinion?

### ***Second half of the 1970s – the debate on the cooperative school***

Some authors claim that the atmosphere in the mid-70s was very different than in the early 70s, and that reform skepticism was making itself felt. Would you support this judgment? (And if yes, what do you believe was the reason for it? Which role did the economic development play?)

In 1975, SPD and FDP won the elections again. In the coalition agreement, the cooperative school was mentioned. The FDP made sure that the comprehensive school was still continued only as an experiment, with a maximum of 30 schools. Kühn mentions “sober-minded” education reforms as second key aspect of the legislative period, but says also: “The development of curricula and further education for teachers have priority over organizational reforms.” It seems as if education reforms were only tackled rather hesitantly by the federal government at this point? (What do you think is the reason for this?)

In 1976, the SPD representative Schwier and his assistant Fernau took the initiative for the introduction of cooperative school. They presented the organizational structure in March in the *Neue Deutsche Schule*. After the national elections, the law proposal was finished and brought into parliament by the parliamentary groups of SPD and FDP. What do you think was the motivation of SPD representatives to pin their hopes to the introduction of the cooperative school?

In the GEW, one wasn't very satisfied with the law proposal, because the integrated comprehensive school was not mentioned, right? How much did the GEW support the law proposal in your opinion?

At the federal state party conference of the SPD in June 1977, several motions were passed which emphasized the importance of the integrated comprehensive school and considered the cooperative school an intermediate step to comprehensive schooling. But for example Schwier emphasized regularly in debates in parliament, that the cooperative school should NOT be an intermediate step to comprehensive schooling, but that it was “neutral” with regard to this question. Minister President Kühn even distanced himself somewhat from the reform in a newspaper interview in February 1977 and said that one should not force anything on the parents. Were there different opinions within the SPD regarding the right strategy? Or were there also differences of opinion within the SPD regarding the content of education politics (f.ex. people like Holthoff vs. New Left)?

In December 1976, right after the first reading of the law proposal in parliament, the Association of Philologists decided to fight the law. Why were the philologists so much against the cooperative school?

Was the protest also related to the character of the curricula? (F.ex. the question whether Latin could be taught in the orientation stage? How do you explain the high importance of Latin for *Gymnasium* education in Germany?)

Also within the CDU, it was soon clear that one should support the protest. In December, argumentative guidelines were published, created by a commission led by Hanna-Renate Laurien, Minister of Education in Rhineland-Palatinate and active in the Association of Philologists: “No to the coop-school means: yes to the educational chances of our children!” –

How do you remember the arguments of the CDU? (Why did it consider the cooperative school a danger to children's educational chances now, even though it had supported the introduction of another variant of cooperative schools a few years earlier?)

How would you describe the role of the parents' associations, which supported the campaign against the cooperative school? (*Landeselternschaft der Gymnasien, Elternverein NRW, Verband der Elternschaften deutscher Realschulen* – what was the political position of these associations? What were their aims? How influential were they?)

Within the FDP, a longer discussion took place in early 1977 regarding the law proposal. In the end, the chairman Riemer joined the supporters (he was previously a skeptic) and the FDP voted for the law. Why was the FDP so split regarding this question?

Burkhard Hirsch told me on the phone, that it was never the aim to abolish the *Gymnasium* with the cooperative school. But the implementation of the Stuttgart guidelines would have meant the abolition of the *Gymnasium*. Was that no longer a topic in the late 1970s in the FDP?

There were many types of action against the law. For example, in February 1977 there was a huge demonstration in Essen with many thousand participants. Why were so many people, especially teachers, willing to take to the streets against the law?

The law was also attacked as supposedly unconstitutional by the campaigners, and the CDU criticized a public advertisement campaign by the Ministry as unconstitutional. Did this argument play an important role in the public debate?

It seems as if the argument that the cooperative school would better the educational supply in the countryside did not really convince the population in the countryside, did it? Why not?

In the end, almost 30 percent of the voting eligible population signed against the law. How do you explain the success of the campaign? (Which parts of the population took part?)

Why was it decided not to have a vote about the law after the campaign, but to repeal it? (The SPD was not in such a bad position, was it? In 1980, it won the elections very clearly, and the CDU lost. Could one not have risked a vote?)

In the election program of 1980, the general introduction of comprehensive schools is no longer suggested, only the introduction of comprehensive schools, where the parents want them. Did the campaign against the cooperative school contribute to the abandonment of the aim of a general structural reform?

Would you say that the failure of cooperative school reform was a result of the law having been too radical, or not radical enough?

### ***Teacher education and pay***

In 1957, the Steinhoff SPD government prolonged teacher education at the Pedagogical Academies from 4 to 6 semesters based on a cabinet order. In 1965, the prolongation became part of the law on teacher education from 1965. Today, teachers are still educated separately for different types of schools. However, for a while teachers in NRW were educated for educational levels, not school types. And the SPD aimed at the equalization of all categories of teachers, didn't it? With what arguments did the SPD argue for an equalization of teaching degrees? (And why was the Association of Philologists against the *Stufenlehrer*?)

There were also conflicts about the integration of the Pedagogical Colleges into the universities, which was finally pushed through in 1980, though the Pedagogical Colleges received various rights earlier. What were the most important arguments for *Gesamthochschule*?

The length of teacher education is of course also an element in the debate about teacher pay. According to Fluck, a representative of the Association of Philologists, the philologists were in danger from two sides: "from the elevated salary of the judges and the pressure of the people's school teachers and interested political circles, to introduce a special teacher salary (*L-Besoldung*)". Why did the Association of Philologists want to prevent an *L-Besoldung*?

### ***Finances – distribution between federal state and municipalities – rural-urban divisions***

Another topic was the distribution of financial burdens between federal state and municipalities. In early 1958, school fees were abolished step-by-step, first for people's schools and vocational schools, then secondary schools. School operators were compensated by the federal state in accordance with the law. This was before your active time in politics. But maybe you remember nevertheless whether anybody opposed the abolition of school fees or whether this was generally supported?

In 1958, a general school finance law was also introduced, replacing the old people's and middle school finance laws. It regulated the distribution of burdens between various actors. In 1966, the law was changed. The basis of calculation was no longer a fixed quota, but the tax capacity indicator in the *Finanzlastenausgleichsgesetz*. Was does this mean exactly? Is this about a redistribution of burdens from stronger to weaker municipalities?

In 1965, a law for free educational aids was also enacted. All schoolbooks which were recognized by the Ministry as educational aids were now publicly financed. Were there different opinions regarding the question what should be considered a necessary educational aid and how quickly this principle of free educational aids should be introduced?

Were there any conflicts between the federal state and the municipalities regarding school financing?

Did the opposition between urban and rural areas generally play an important role in education politics? How big were the differences in the school supply?

Who represented the rural population in education politics? (How strong was the FDP in rural areas? What about *Städtetag/Gemeindetag*? Where did these bodies stand politically?)

### ***Coeducation***

From around the mid-1960s to the mid-70s, also coeducation was discussed. I am not completely familiar with this development yet. Can you remember with which arguments it was argued for and against common schooling of boys and girls?

### ***General and final questions***

What were the most important means, which were employed by the SPD in order to influence education politics and reform processes? (for example press relations, informal channels, debates, information events, leaflets, demonstrations, campaigns...)

With which teachers' and parents' organizations did the SPD cooperate most of all, with which less?

The FDP was in a coalition with the CDU in the early 60s, and then joined a coalition with the SPD. What was behind this change?

When you look back over the decades, which organizations or parties would you say were most successful in shaping education politics in NRW?

When you compare NRW today with NRW back then, would you say that the balance of power between the most important education political organizations has changed or not?

What do you think is the most important thing children should learn at school?

*Thank you very much for the interview! (Ask for other potential interview partners)*



Graphic design: Communication Division, UIB / Print: Skjipes Kommunikasjon AS



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ISBN: 978-82-308-3747-4