THESIS

THE ORGANIZING MODEL AS A MEANS OF TRADE UNION REVITALIZATION WITHIN DUTCH CORPORATISM

Submitted by

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*We stand in the rain in a long line waiting at Ford Highland Park. For work.*

>You know what work is—if you’re old enough to read this you know what work is, although you may not do it.*

(...) *The sad refusal to give in to rain, the hours wasted waiting, to the knowledge that somewhere ahead a man is waiting who will say ‘No, we’re not hiring today,’ for any reason he wants. You love your brother, now suddenly you can hardly stand the love flooding for your brother, who’s not beside you or behind or ahead because he’s home trying to sleep off a miserable night shift at Cadillac so he can get up before noon to study his German* (...)  

from – “What Work Is” by Philip Levine
# Table of Contents

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**  
2

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**  
3

**INTRODUCTION**  
5

**RESEARCH QUESTION**  
7

**SUB QUESTIONS**  
7

**CHAPTER 2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**  
8

2.1 **CHALLENGES TO THE TRADITIONAL ROLE OF Trade Unions**  
8
2.1.1 **Change from Industrial Economy to Service Economy**  
8
2.1.2 **Changes in Types of Contracts**  
11

2.2 **Trade Union Responses to the Causes of Trade Union Decline**  
13
2.2.1 **The Organizing Model**  
14
2.2.2 **Recruitment and Representation**  
15
2.2.3 **Strategies and Tactics**  
16
2.2.4. **Strategies and Tactics against Transnational Corporations**  
17

2.3 **The Organizing Model and European Corporatism**  
18
2.3.1 **Institutional Contexts**  
18
2.3.2 **From a Servicing Model to a Model of Self-Representation**  
18
2.3.3. **The Broad applicability of the Organizing Model**  
21

**CHAPTER 3 METHODS**  
23

3.1 **Data Collection**  
23
3.1.1 **Newspapers**  
23
3.1.2 **Other Websites**  
23

3.2 **Conceptualization**  
24
3.2.1 **The Workforce**  
24
3.2.2 **Challenges to European Corporatism**  
25

3.3 **Analysis**  
26

**CHAPTER 4 DUTCH CORPORATISM**  
27

4.1 **The Wassenaar Agreement**  
27
4.2 **The Corporatist Bodies**  
27
4.2.3 **STAR**  
28
4.2.4 **SER**  
28

4.3 **Dutch Corporatism and the Law**  
29
4.3.1 **Laws on Collective Agreements**  
29
4.3.2. **Laws on strikes**  
30
4.3.3 **The Regulation of the Participation of workers**  
31

**CHAPTER 5 THE FNV AND RESPONSES TO TRADE UNION DECLINE**  
32

5.1 **The New FNV**  
32
5.2 **The FNV and its Concerns of Recruitment and Representation**  
34
5.2.1 **Recruitment of Ethnic minorities and (undocumented) Immigrants**  
34
5.2.2 **Recruitment of Young workers**  
35
5.2.3 **Representing the Unemployed**  
35
**CHAPTER 6 THE CASES**

6.1 Justice for Janitors Campaign in The Netherlands 36
6.1.1 The Cleaning Sector in The Netherlands 37

6.2 The Introduction of the Schoon Genoeg (Clean Enough) Campaign in The Netherlands 38
6.2.1 The FN V introduces the Organizing Model to the Cleaners 40
6.2.2 The Clean Enough Campaign in 2010 40
6.2.3 The Results of the 2010 Campaign 41
6.2.4 Clean Enough Campaign 2012 42
6.2.5 Results of the 2012 Campaign 43
6.2.6 The 2014 Clean Enough Campaign 44
6.2.7 The Results of the 2014 Campaign 44
6.2.8 News in 2015 45

6.3 The Young and United Campaign 45
6.3.1 Ahold Shareholder Meeting Striptease 46
6.3.2 Golden Hamburger 46
6.3.3 Hourglass 47
6.3.4 Laser Projections 47
6.3.5 Disruption of SER Meeting 47
6.3.6 Membership Increase Due to Activism 47

6.4 Results of the Young and United Campaign 48

**CHAPTER 7 ANALYSIS** 49

7.1 Clean Enough Campaign 49
7.1.1 Atypical Contracts 49
7.1.2 Subcontracting 49
7.1.3 Part Time Labor 51
7.1.4 Temporary Labor 51

7.2 Demographics 51

7.3 Challenges to Dutch Corporatism 52
7.3.1 Self-representation 52
7.3.2 Institutional and Legal Structure 53
7.3.3 Conflicts of Interest Within the Trade Union 55
7.3.4 Sustainability of the Organizing Model 56

7.4 Young and United Campaign Against the Youth Minimum Wage 56

8. Conclusion 60

References 64
Introduction

Across Europe trade unions are facing hard times. Globalization and neoliberal policies have profoundly changed the workforce and the social regulation that has long been in place in European industrial relations (Bernaciack et al, 2014: 1). One significant change that has taken place in European industrial relations is the change from an industrial economy to a post-industrial economy. This change has largely been caused by globalization and the overseas shipment of industrial labor (The Economist, 2015). Due to this the service sector has become dominant in most European economies.

The decline of trade union membership in Europe is linked to the decline of the industrial economy. Industrial workers have traditionally been the great majority of trade unions’ membership. The decline of industrial labor therefore poses a great challenge to the identity of trade unions. Trade unions have ever since been grappling with the question of how to recover from this decline. The obvious answer to this question is for trade unions to incorporate the new workforce with its multiple dimensions into its structures. The follow-up question however is how? To attract members of the changed workforce into trade unions, it is first necessary to understand how the workforce has changed and what the needs of those who work in this new workforce are. The fact of the matter is that the workforce in Europe is more diverse than it has ever been. With the change from an industrial economy to a service economy, women entered the labor market in large numbers. At the same time a significant demographic shift has taken place in the labor market with large numbers of immigrant and ethnic minority workers entering the workforce (Gumbrell-McCormick, 2013).

The increased diversity of workers in the workforce means that the needs and demands of the workers in the workforce are also diverse. If trade unions want to attract these workers as members they must develop the ability to represent their interests. Until recently trade unions in Europe have represented a predominantly white and male industrial workforce (Visser, 2012). Therefore the change to a more diverse and service sector workforce poses multiple challenges to their organization.
One of the most promising strategies to mobilize these new workers seems to be the Organizing Model. The Organizing Model originated in the United States, where it was first used in the Justice for Janitors Campaign that started in Los Angeles. The idea of organizing is that workers themselves are actively involved in defining their problems and organizing campaigns to tackle them (McCallum, 2013:49). Therefore it is a good way of energizing different groups that traditionally have not been incorporated in the trade union structure. The adoption of the Organizing Model thus means a change from the servicing-model in which trade unions defined and solved problems without almost any involvement of the workers themselves to a model in which workers are directly involved.

Trade Unions in Europe have now also begun to use the Organizing Model. The US trade union, Service Employees International Union (SEIU), introduced the Organizing Model to European trade unions (McCallum, 2013:48). Trade unions in Europe have just recently started to experiment with the model. It still remains to be seen whether this model is viable in the European corporatist context. The fact that it originated in the American context where unions operate on the business level is something to keep in mind. In European corporatism negotiations between employers and employees take place on the sector level with representatives of employers and trade unions. Trade unions and the representatives of employers are generally referred to as the social partners within European corporatism. Their relationship is usually cordial.

Therefore the introduction of the Organizing Model as a means of revitalizing trade unions might pose challenges to the way things are usually done within European corporatism. The tactics of the Organizing Model are rather antagonistic and they are often designed to create negative publicity for employers. Such tactics are thus a significant departure from the gentlemen’s agreement type of negotiation that typically goes on among the social partners.

In this thesis the focus will be on how the Organizing Model has been adopted in The Netherlands by the Dutch trade union FNV. This will be illustrated by two cases. One case is the Clean Enough Campaign, which has been modeled on the Justice for
Janitors Campaign in the United States and the other is the Young and United Campaign for the abolishment of the youth minimum wage in the Netherlands.

The Netherlands has a corporatist system par excellence (Lembruch, 1979). The Dutch industrial relations system is characterized by the typically Dutch Polder Model, in which industry and trade unions cordially negotiate collective agreements. The Dutch corporatist system is especially designed to prevent employers and employees from being diametrically opposed to one another. Demands are generally expected to be conform the economic projections of the Central Planning Bureau (CPB). (Connolly, 2011:5). This, however, has not stopped the Dutch trade union FNV, from using the more aggressive Organizing Model as a means of membership revitalization.

The theoretical framework of this thesis will illuminate the challenges that trade unions face and how the Organizing model might or might not be a viable response strategy within European corporatism. The first part of the theoretical framework will deal with the changes in the workforce that present new demands and the adoption of the Organizing Model as a functional response to the new challenges of workers. The second part of the theoretical framework will deal with the question of the viability of the Organizing Model within the institutional reality of European corporatism.

**Research Question**

What are the challenges that the Dutch trade union federation FNV faces, and does the Organizing Model fit within the Dutch industrial relations context as a tool for trade union revitalization?

**Sub Questions**

1. What are the challenges that trade unions face?

2. What is the Organizing Model?

3. Does the organizing model fit within the Dutch corporatism?
Chapter 2 Theoretical Framework

The principle goal of the theoretical framework of this thesis is to create a theoretical understanding of the changes the workforce in Europe has undergone and the challenges that these changes bring with them with regard to trade union revitalization. To do so, it is important to first define what is meant with trade union revitalization. Trade unions in Europe have steadily been in decline since the 1980s; this decline is mainly measured in membership numbers. Due to the European corporatist system in which collective agreements are extended to both union and non-union members, the decline in membership has not yet had drastic implications. Those who are critical of the power of trade unions, however, are increasingly questioning the legitimacy of the extension of collective agreements to whole sectors, seeing that membership numbers have been steadily falling (Vandaele, 2010: 25). Trade union revitalization in this thesis therefore is the increasing and guarding of the legitimacy of trade unions as representative institutions for workers.

2.1 Challenges to the traditional role of Trade Unions

2.1.1 Change from Industrial Economy to Service Economy

One of the major factors that has challenged the traditional role of trade unions is the change that has occurred from an industrial labor force to a service sector labor force in Western economies. This change has had critical implications for trade unions. Trade union membership has traditionally been linked to an industrial workforce. Therefore the decline of the industrial workforce has had a major impact on the membership numbers of trade unions (Gumbrell-McCormick et al, 2013:2, Visser, 2012). Industrial workers have traditionally played a leading role in trade unions. Unionization rates in industry have always been higher than in other sectors of the economy, with the possible exception of some sectors and occupations in the public sector, such as teachers, municipal workers and tax collectors (Visser, 2012:134).
The Industrial workforce

Industrial work also had a specific dynamic that was favorable to trade union organization. Industrial workers for example were often rooted in the community where their factory was established, meaning that workers often lived and worked in similar conditions and had common collective experiences (Visser, 2012:135). Industrial workers also saw themselves as a particular class, as they identified with their work in all aspects of their lives. This particular situation was conducive to the solidarity among workers and their capacity to organize (Gumbrell-McCormick, 2013:33).

One of the major differences between the industrial workforce and the service sector workforce is the level of trade union membership in these respective sectors (Visser, 2012). There is a proven correlation between the decline of the industrial economy and the decline of trade union membership. Countries such as the United Kingdom, France and the Netherlands that have made the transition to service economies quicker than Germany, Italy and Spain, also have seen a steeper decline in trade union membership (see table) (Visser, 2012:134).

Figure 1. Source: ICTWSS Database (Visser, 2011)
The major question is why trade unions have not been able to recruit members as successfully in the service sector, as they previously have been able to do in the industrial sector. Visser argues that trade unions are still very strongly characterized by the historical imprint of organization of and for manual workers. Trade unions have failed to address the changes on the labor market and incorporate new kinds of workers into their institutions (Visser, 2012:135). Most importantly trade unions have failed to recruit private sector white-collar workers and with the transition to the service sector workforce this has contributed to decline in membership.

*The Service Sector Workforce*

Trade union organization in the service sector faces some challenges. The major challenge of the incorporation of the service sector workforce in existing trade unions is, that the dynamics of the service sector workforce are not completely compatible with the traditional form of organization of the existing trade unions. Traditional trade unions are tailored to represent the interests of an ethnically homogenous and male workforce with full-time permanent contracts (Gumbrell-McCormick et al, 2013:54). The service sector workforce, however, is different from the industrial workforce in that it is more ethnically diverse, has more women, part-time workers and workers with temporary contracts and subcontracts (Gumbrell-McCormick et al, 2013:32/33).

Furthermore employers were strategically taking advantage of the inability of trade unions to respond to the changing workforce. The shift from industrial to service sector meant a very fundamental change of how the workplace is organized. Creating opportunities for employers to construct many new workplace environments and introduce new types of work relations, challenging the traditional terms of employment (Visser, 2012 and Gumbrell-McCormick et al, 2013). Examples of such new types of work relations are subcontracting and temporary work contracts.
2.1.2 Changes in Types of Contracts

The Flexible workforce and other atypical forms of employment

Employment security has conventionally been seen as one of the hallmarks of the European Social Model (ESM). The ‘decommodification’ of labor through restrictions on the employer’s ability to hire and fire at will was a key element in the social compromises established across much of Western Europe after the Second World War (Esping-Andersen, 1990). The normal employment relationship consisted of a full-time permanent contract that could only be terminated due to very narrowly defined reasons. In case of firing this could also be contested in the labor courts (Gumbrell-McCormick, 2011:294). The new types of contracts the so-called atypical forms of employment, leave workers in a precarious situation in which they have less job security (Gumbrell-McCormick, 2011:294/295).

As mentioned previously, traditionally the workforce was for the most part industrial and it consisted of full-time workers. Since the 1980s the industrial workforce has been in decline in most industrialized economies (Visser, 2012:136). The decline of the industrial workforce and trade union membership has occurred simultaneously (Visser, 2012:133). With the rise of the service sector other types of work relations were also introduced. Part-time work, temporary work contracts and subcontracting are much more prevalent in the service sector than in the industrial sector (Gallin, 2001:5350. In the service sector there are also more instances of contracting out work to other companies, making the relationship between employer and employees less well defined.

Part-time labor

Part-time work is has also risen tremendously. The rise of part-time work is linked to the fact that many women have made their entrance into the service sector workforce (Plantenga, 1996, Gumbrell-McCormick, 2013:54). Part-time work does not necessarily have to be less secure than full-time employment. This depends on the national institutional context and the provisions available to part-time workers within those systems (Gumbrell-McCormick, 2011:294). The European Union has a
directive in which national governments are prescribed to treat part-time workers equal to full-time workers. However, part-time employment can constitute a different employment form, organized on different principles, and on different terms and conditions to full-time jobs (Gumbrell-McCormick, 2011:295).

Extreme types of the part-time work are the zero hour and on-call contracts. These contracts give no guarantee of any work or pay within a specific time period (Gumbrell-McCormick, 2011:295). These types of contracts have become increasingly prevalent across Europe. Young people entering the labor force are most likely to be offered these types of contracts, in Germany for example over 80% of workers under the age of 20 are working under these types of contracts, in Sweden the rate is almost 60% for workers under the age of 25 (Gumbrell-McCormick et al, 2011:295).

The precarious situation many workers are in is the result of deliberate policy choices made by governments to deregulate the labor force. Many politicians that are aware of the challenges that the flexibilization of the labor market poses to especially young people entering the labor market argue that temporary work can form a bridge to permanent work in the long run. This, however, has turned out to be farcical, because it is a minority of younger workers that gets an opportunity to move on to a ‘normal’ employment contract (Gumbrell-McCormick, 2011:295). The irony of this situation is that in countries where ‘normal’ employment is tightly protected by legislation, there is a reluctance to give out full-time permanent contracts. The reason for this is because once a ‘normal’ contract is given, it becomes difficult to fire the worker. In the United Kingdom where the regulations for terminating ‘normal’ contracts is much more lax, zero hour contracts and temporary contracts are much less prevalent (Gumbrell-McCormick, 2011:296).
Subcontracting

Subcontracting of labor is one form of labor organization that has become more prevalent with the rise of the service sector workforce. In the case of subcontracting, employees are not directly employed by the company that they work for. This is often a strategic way for employers to evade legal responsibilities they would have if they employed workers directly (Gallin, 2001:535). The private sector is using subcontracting more and more to cut down on permanent full-time workers, by decentralizing and subcontracting all but indispensable core activities, and by relying whenever possible on unstable forms of labor (casual, part-time, seasonal and on call). The private sector is also using these new forms of employment strategically not only to deregulate the labor market, but to shift the responsibility for income, benefits and benefits to the individual worker (Gallin, 2001:535). This becomes a challenge for the organization of workers, due to the fact that his or her fate is not necessarily tied to that of his or her colleagues. Workers are, because of the way the system is organized, left to their own devices.

Another aspect of subcontracting is that in some respects, the use of outsourcing provides companies with a functional equivalent to temporary contracts: work formerly performed in-house is contracted to external firms that therefore bear the risks of fluctuation in demand. A client might in principle employ workers permanently, but due to the very temporary nature of their contracts with parent firms, it encourages and may well legally justify, temporary status (Gumbrell-McCormick, 2011:296).

2.2 Trade union Responses to the causes of trade union decline

In the previous section of this theoretical framework, various potential challenges to the traditional trade unions have been addressed. These challenges are borne out of changes in the workforce that require trade unions to respond in a different manner than they have traditionally done. The link between these challenges and trade union decline lies in the fact that trade unions have been slow in responding to the changes in the workforce and therefore have failed to appeal to a new workforce with different needs.
The lack of recruitment and representation of women, immigrants, workers on fixed contracts, young workers, and workers in the private service sector is identified as major drivers of trade union decline (Gumbrell-McCormick et al, 2013:55, The Economist, 2015). Furthermore globalization and neoliberal economic policies might also have a negative impact on the benefits trade unions incur for their members, due to the decline of regulatory power in the labor market.

The argument is that trade union decline is caused by the fact that workers do not feel represented by trade unions any longer, due to the fact that many trade unions have not been able to adapt to the particularities of the modern workforce (Ebbinghaus, 2002: 465). Thus, an important component of trade union revival lies with proper representation of the interests of workers in the modern workforce. A good tool for trade unions is the Organizing Model in which they can engage members to develop their representative capacities so that they can represent their own interests and bargain their own benefits. This is an alternative model to the traditional servicing model in which a bureaucratic apparatus of union professionals provided benefits to members through collective bargaining and representation over individual grievances; members were treated as largely passive recipients of these services (Gumbrell-McCormick, 2013:55).

2.2.1 The Organizing model

The definition of what the Organizing Model involves is ambiguous, but generally the Organizing Model is characterized by an approach to trade unionism that emphasizes membership activism around workplace issues (Simms et al, 2008:1). The Organizing Model distinguishes itself from the traditional servicing model of trade unions, the former is more bottom-up and the latter more top-down (Turberville, 2004:777). Unions have traditionally represented the interests of their membership through a top-down system in which union leadership solves problems on the basis of requests made by its members (Turberville, 2004:777). This kind of trade unionism did not require much active engagement of the union membership. Members were completely dependent on how the trade union hierarchy would grapple with their grievances. The Organizing Model tries to resolve this issue by giving trade union members the opportunity to represent their own interests through organization.
2.2.2 Recruitment and Representation

The Organizing Model requires involvement of the union membership in problem solving. Organizers are trade union members that operate on the shop floor level; it is at this level that they have face-to-face contact with other workers. Through these contacts and efforts organizers generally attempt to translate individual grievances into a collective condition of unrest and channel it into the direction of group-action (Gumbrell-McCormick, 2013:57). Organizers generally tailor their organizing approach to the concerns and problems of the prospective members (Simms et al, 2008:2). In this way organizers attempt to recruit specific groups, such as women, private sector workers, racial and ethnic minorities into the trade union movement.

The Organizing Model is seen as an alternative to the traditional servicing model of trade unionism as a way of recruiting more women, ethnic minorities and young workers into trade unions (Gumbrell-McCormick, 2013:53). Organizing gives these groups the opportunity to organize themselves on the shop floor level and represent their own interests, with the backing of the trade union apparatus that rallies behind the concerns of these workers (Gumbrell-McCormick, 2013:55). According to De Turberville the power of the Organizing Model is foremost rhetorical. The Organizing Model creates an environment in which social relationships are created on the basis of proactive bottom-up organizing around the understanding of the commonality of the challenges that workers have (Turberville, 2004:776).

Frege argues that coalition building with other social movements is a great benefit to organizing. These coalitions could help trade unions acquire power resources, such as key individual networks within specific communities that could assist with organizing campaigns. These links can also help broaden the interests and the agendas that unions seek to represent and thus broaden their appeal to poorly represented segments of the labor force (Frege et al, 2003:9). Thus, it is in the interest of trade unions that seek to diversify their representation by creating coalitions and links with specific communities that can assist in organizing campaigns.
2.2.3 Strategies and Tactics

The promise of the Organizing Model lies in the radical perspective of increased democratization, training and militant action being giving by union staff to a membership that is willing to use innovative tactics to further its interests. In turn the benefits they accrue from this – for example, empowerment, a relevant agenda, improved material conditions—demonstrate to non-members why joining and participating in a union/movement is worthwhile (Turberville, 2004:779).

One major shift in the strategies and tactics adopted by trade unions is the move toward the organizing of campaigns, simply called ‘organizing’. Organizing entails the concept of invoking a number of different strategic approaches such as workplace committees, one-on-one meetings with workers, social movement-inspired protests and research-based campaigning. “Taken together, these varied strategies connote a more aggressive and action-oriented unionism that is at the heart of what is often meant to be the vernacular of organizing” (McCallum, 2013:50). The idea behind this active approach is to create a sense of empowerment for workers. This ‘organizing’ was traditionally a strategy used by US unions to challenge the power of corporations in the much more hostile United States labor union environment (McCallum, 2013; Evans, 2014).

The American union Service Employees International Union (SEIU) was successful in convincing some European trade unions that combating trade union decline warrants a different way of trade union organization (McCallum, 2013). The tradition of ‘organizing’ rests on the notion that workplace committees, one-on-one meetings with workers, social movement-inspired protests and research-based campaigning are effective tools to pressure employers (McCallum, 2013:50). Furthermore these campaigns are valuable for the organizing of groups that otherwise do not take part in the trade union movement. SEIU organized janitors in a campaign that became a model that was later copied by many trade unions around the world (McCallum, 2013).
The model of the Justice for Janitors Campaign is focused on creating symbolic power for a group of workers that does not have structural power, such as janitors, security guards and other low-level service workers (McCallum, 2013:53). The strategy was to engage in public dramas, theatrical protests that call attention to unfair labor regimes. The Justice for Janitors Campaign turned to already existing tactics such as sit-ins, militant demonstrations, and civil disobedience that interfered with employers’ ability to do business. These tactics were also but a small burden to the finances of trade unions.

The Justice for Janitors Campaign was also successful due to a combination of the fact that the janitors had appealed to their clients instead of their direct employers and the fact that they had staged public dramas, which prompted clients to engage with their direct employers to raise wages so that the commotion outside their buildings would end (McCallum, 2013:53). The lesson from the Justice for Janitors Campaign is that trade unions can arm themselves with vibrant protests, corporate research, worker to worker meetings, worksite committees and community support and subsequently be successful in their efforts (McCallum, 2013:55).

2.2.4. Strategies and Tactics against Transnational Corporations

The Justice for Janitors Campaign shows how trade unions can use strategies to get employers to the bargaining table. The implementation of the same strategy in different sectors, however, has faced organizers with a new challenge: using the organizing model on foreign owned companies. This type of organizing requires a much more complicated organization of workers. This form of organizing is called Comprehensive campaigns (McCallum, 2013).

Comprehensive research based campaigns have become the primary alternative to shop floor struggles or labor law reform (McCallum, 2013:76). Comprehensive campaigns often have two interconnected goals, the first is to target a company’s board of directors and disrupt its financial interdependencies that keep it economically viable. Another is to publicly shame the company into submission through smear campaigns and generating negative publicity (McCallum, 2013:77). Central to the comprehensive approach is the role of the strategic research. A know-thy-enemy ethic
means that anti-corporate research on the structure of a company, its investment portfolio, its political connections and contributions, and its industrial position relative to other players in the market has become the most reliable source to determine campaign targets and organizing priorities (McCallum, 2013:77).

The main goal of the strategic corporate research is to develop a strategic corporate summary in which key relationships are identified. These key relationships are identified according to their importance for the maintenance of a company’s growth plan and profit center. These relationships could range from relationships with key suppliers or customers or to those with key lenders, board members or regulatory organizations (Juravich, 2007:35).

2.3. The Organizing Model and European Corporatism

2.3.1 Institutional Contexts

The Organizing Model has been discussed as an important tool for the recruitment and the mobilization of groups that have traditionally not been represented by the trade union servicing model. The effect of the Organizing Model, however, will differ according to the institutional context of the trade union involved in adopting the model (Connolly et al, 2011:2). The Organizing Model originated in the US context of business unionism; in which trade unions operate on the company-level (Stevis, 2002:148). In the European corporatist context, trade unions are embedded in a much larger social structure, with the government and employers. These ‘social partners’ deliberate and negotiate on a centralized level about collective agreements for whole sectors (Connolly et al, 2011:4).

2.3.2 From a Servicing Model to a model of Self-Representation

The Organizing Model might truly be an effective way to recruit new groups that have traditionally not been represented in the trade union structure. Nonetheless it is important to ask the question whether the Organizing Model can deliver on its promises in every industrial relations context. One of the great appeals of the Organizing Model is that it can be used as a way not only to mobilize but also to help new recruits represent their own interests through grass roots organization. This promise of grassroots organization, however, might cause tensions in the corporatist
trade union context. In the corporatist trade union context, there are specific rules that regulate the relations between, employers, employees, trade unions and the government (Connolly et al, 2011; Turberville, 2004). These rules are often concerned with minimizing the antagonism between parties, hence the term “social partners”. In the corporatist system, both employers and business must look after one another’s interests, and radical demands are therefore not commonplace.

The introduction of the Organizing Model as a grassroots model might cause problems within the relatively harmonious environment in which negotiations of collective agreements take place. The Organizing Model also promises workers that they can represent their own interests, and that the role of the trade union is merely to provide them with the resources and the tools they need (Heuts, 2010:29). In corporatist contexts this could pose problems, because traditionally the main sector organization and trade unions work as representatives of respectively employers and workers. Having workers directly involved in the negotiation process is also impossible to accomplish. Thus, it is likely that trade union representatives are still going to be involved in that process, also because negotiations require a specific skill set.

De Turberville also questions whether the Organizing Model can lead to discernible benefits to the new recruits within a European corporatist context. He argues that the Organizing Model is effective as a rhetorical device to energize and mobilize workers and potentially attract new recruits. While the Organizing Model might be a useful mobilizing tool it also presents multiple challenges, starting with the sustainability of organizing campaigns. The argument goes that the power of organizing lies in the ability of organizers to channel the grievances of workers into collective action. It is paramount for organizers to keep the momentum after a campaign has been completed, and bringing that momentum onto the next campaign. Trade unions must invest in organizers that are willing to continue from campaign to campaign.

Nevertheless continuing organizing campaigns poses challenges within the trade union structure. The changing demands of organizers must be reconciled with the vested interests of full-time union officials and branch officers (Turberville, 2004:779). If the conflict between organizers and the vested interests of full-time
union officials is not reconciled this could lead to potential difficulties in translating organizing efforts into better terms and conditions for the members (Turberville, 2004:779).

Another important challenge of the Organizing Model is that it provides tools for decentralized action by organizers. This type of Organizing Model originates from the US context in which unionization takes place on the company level (Stevis, 2002:148). In a highly centralized union structure, which is still prevalent within European trade unionism, trade unions that deploy the Organizing Model face some challenges. Therefore it is important to understand the contextual implications of trade union dynamics. De Turberville argues that trade unions operate within a restrictive set of organizational traditions that influences the interaction between members’ interests, union democracy and union power (Turberville, 2004:783). The challenge, however is to reconcile the various interests that are mobilized through separate organizing campaigns within one trade union structure.

The Organizing Model is celebrated as being a powerful tool for recruitment and mobilization of different groups. The question, however, is whether the decentralized mobilization of different interests will lead to a collision of interests on the centralized level of the trade union. Turberville argues that it is reasonable to suggest that the decentralized participatory aspects of the Organizing Model are best suited to unions with small homogeneous memberships. Unions with large heterogeneous memberships will need to use increasingly bureaucratic forms of democracy to reconcile the vast array of interests of members within a reasonable time-span. This is to generate a broad union agenda in which the interests of a multitude of members are reconciled (Turberville, 2004).

According to De Turberville the Organizing Model can only be used in centralized fashion in the contexts of European trade unions, that is to say in a top-down fashion. The result of this being that it is used as a sort of mobilizing model, in which trade unions strategically pick their campaigns to mobilize specific groups of workers, while at the same time avoiding a collision of interests between the various groups that they are trying to incorporate into the trade union structure (Turberville, 2004:776). In this regard that ideal of the Organizing Model as a way for
marginalized groups to organize and engage in self-representation of their interests might not be fulfilled. Nevertheless the crucial question that remains is whether De Turberville is right in his assessment.

De Turberville criticisms do a poor job, however, at making a clear distinction between the threat of the Organizing Model to the interests of trade unions and the threat of the Organizing Model to corporatism. De Turberville seems to suggest that it would not be in the interest of trade unions to modify the existing corporatist system and the ways that trade unions have traditionally been organized. Trade unions on the other hand might have a very different perspective on corporatism, and no inherent interest in protecting the status quo of the corporatism. Especially when it threatens their existence.

Therefore it is important to understand that trade unions will adapt their strategies, even if this means challenging the dominant ideologies and practices of trade union and industrial relations organization. There might be dominant frameworks, but broader networks and interests of new sets of works and new types of works can also challenge them (Connolly et al, 2011:4). In other words, trade unions will change their strategies in ways that will benefit their agenda; they will be willing to challenge traditional corporatism and their own organizational structures and strategies if this will lead to better prospects of revival. Nevertheless, they will be cautious not to overstep the bounds, by overzealously deploying the Organizing Model at the risk of hurting their own interests.

2.3.3. The Broad applicability of the Organizing Model

The concerns raised about the effectiveness of the Organizing Model in European corporatism are very legitimate concerns, but they are mostly limited to the institutional impediment the Organizing Model might be faced with. This, however, negates the fact that the Organizing Model can be applied outside the institutional straitjacket of corporatism. Trade unions can also be mere facilitators of civil society action. The power of the Organizing Model lies in its ability to mobilize and create public awareness on a variety of issues (McCallum, 2013). This mobilization does not have to be limited to periods in which collective agreements are being negotiated.
between trade unions and employer’s organizations.

The Organizing Model fits within the broader Social Movement Unionism (SMU), in which trade unions are involved in broader social justice issues and not only with organizing workers around workplace issues (Parker, 2008:1). Thus, the focus of SMU is not only on mobilizing workers, but the citizenry and civil society groups in general. SMU entails grassroots democracy and unions returning to their roots, by reaching out to other social groups and pursuing broader social justice aims (Parker, 2008:2). This kind of unionism involves the wider public and does not only focus on workers. Therefore those who are part of the mobilization do so in their role as citizens, rather than workers.

The criticism of De Turberville is that the Organizing Model is a good rhetorical devise for the purpose of mobilization, but that it will be much more difficult to acquire actual results within the corporatist system. What De Turberville forgets, however, is that even in a context in which corporatism is dominant, political pressure outside the corporatist bodies is capable of influencing labor policies. The government is an important actor within the corporatist system and is susceptible to political pressure in ways that employers’ organizations are not. Furthermore the government is an actor within corporatism, but often is not an equal partner to the employers and the trade unions. The government has legislative power that the other actors within the corporatist system have not. Therefore trade unions also have tools to tackle issues of labor outside the traditional corporatist system thereby circumventing the institutional impediments of corporatism.
Chapter 3 Methods

3.1 Data collection

3.1.1 Newspapers

The main method of data collection of this thesis is newspaper articles that have been published in the Dutch press about the actions of the FNV and workers in the cleaning sector. The timeline chosen is from 2009 when the first strikes began to 2014 when the last big actions in the cleaning sector took place. The data is spread over intervals of two years (with the exception of the year 2009), because of the fact that collective agreements in the cleaning sector are up for negotiation every two years. With Regard to the Young and United Campaign the timeline is mostly between 2015 and 2016.

The newspaper articles have been accessed through the World Wide Web, directly from the websites of newspapers and through lexis nexit. The titles and dates of the respective articles will be supplied in the reference list so that falsification by third parties is possible. The newspapers that I have chosen are mostly quality newspapers, such as NRC Handelsblad, de Volkskrant and Trouw, which generally have a trustworthy reputation in the Netherlands. There are also instances in which I refer to the regional newspaper Het Parool, which is also a respected newspaper and the highly regarded weekly journal De Groene Amsterdammer.

3.1.2 Other websites

Much of the data has also been accessed through the websites of the FNV and Young and United, but these are not the primary sources, but rather supplemental sources. The websites of the FNV and Young and United are only used as primary sources when it comes to descriptions of public stunts that they have organized. The website of Open Democracy has also been accessed, this website is a trusted website where respected academics write journalistic pieces about a variety of social issues of the day.
3.2 Conceptualization

Key concepts that will be used for the purpose of analysis in this thesis will be derived from its theoretical framework. The theoretical framework of this thesis in the first part focuses on the changes that the workforce has undergone and the ways that the Organizing Model can be used as a way of addressing these particular issues. The second part of the theoretical framework focuses on whether the strategies that the Organizing Model proposes fit within the European corporatist system.

In the empirical part of this thesis the focus is on how the Organizing Model has been implemented in Dutch corporatism by the FNV and workers in the cleaning sector and within the Young and United Campaign for the abolishment of the youth minimum wage. The concepts will be divided in three categories; the first category has to do with the workforce, meaning the changes in the workforce that require a new kind of trade union organization, away from the traditional form in which they have not effectively been addressed. The purpose of the conceptualization is to measure whether these concepts have been incorporated in the organizing narrative of the FNV.

3.2.1 The Workforce

The three main concepts that can be derived from the changes that have occurred in the workforce are the following:

Atypical types of contracts: The change of the workforce from an industrial workforce to a service sector workforce has presented multiple challenges that the organizing model should address. One of these challenges is the atypical types of contracts which put workers in a precarious situation and for which the traditional forms of trade union organization have no effective response.

The atypical types of contracts will be broken down to the following concepts:

- Subcontracting
- Part-time labor
- Temporary labor
Demographic changes in the workforce: The changes in the workforce from an industrial workforce to a service sector workforce have also led to large numbers of women entering the workforce and at the same time many immigrants and ethnic minorities entered the workforce. These groups are also disproportionately faced with the precariousness of atypical types of contracts and are also underrepresented within trade unions. The same goes for young workers, especially those of immigrant background. It is important to know, however that all these concepts intersect for many workers.

The demographic changes in the workforce will be broken down into the following concepts.

- Immigrant
- Women
- Young workers

3.2.2 Challenges to European Corporatism

In the second part of the theoretical framework the issue of the Organizing Model being compatible with European corporatism was raised. In the empirical part of this thesis, the analysis will be whether the Organizing Model fits within Dutch corporatism, which is a near perfect example of corporatism (Lembruch, 1979).

The following issues have been addressed within the theoretical framework as challenges within the corporatist system.

- Self-representation
- Institutional and legal structure
- Conflict of interests
- Sustainability of organizing
- The use of the Organizing Model as a civil society tool
3.3 Analysis

The analysis of the data will occur according to the concepts that have been defined above. In the analysis a comparison will be made between the Clean Enough and Young and United Campaigns, to give insights in the different ways the Organizing Model has been applied in the Dutch corporatist system.
Chapter 4 Dutch Corporatism

In the theoretical framework the criticism of some scholars with regard to the applicability of the Organizing Model in European corporatism has been discussed. In this chapter the focus will be on Dutch corporatism and how Dutch Industrial Relations work. The applicability of the Organizing Model in Dutch Industrial Relations will be discussed in the analysis. In this chapter Dutch corporatism and its emphasis on social dialogue and harmony between employees and employers’ organizations will be explained.

4.1 The Wassenaar Agreement

In the 1980s the Netherlands went through a major economic crisis and the government, trade unions and employers’ organizations were trying to find their way out of the crisis through dialogue. The Wassenaar agreement of 1982 was a turning point in Dutch industrial relations; it led to more coordinated deliberations between trade unions and employers, which largely pacified the activism of trade unions. In the Wassenaar agreement trade unions and employers agreed to wage moderation, redistribution of labor, to combat youth unemployment and for the strengthening of the competitiveness of business. The Wassenaar agreement ushered in a new period of deliberation and consensus building among trade unions and employers, rather than a politics of confrontation (NRC, 1999; CBS, 2007). This new model came to be known internationally as the Dutch Model, or the Polder Model.

4.2 The Corporatist Bodies

The Dutch industrial relations model is considered a corporatist system par excellence (Lembruch, 1979). The Dutch economy is traditionally based on dialogue and consensus, also referred to as the ‘Polder Model’. The Polder Model is characterized by high degree of consultations that has weathered both good and bad economic times. It is a tradition of dialogue between parties with different and partly conflicting interests, and the willingness of the parties to reach agreement or at least find a solution with which everyone can live (FNV, 2016:13).
4.2.3 STAR

Social Dialogue between the different interest groups in The Netherlands, takes place in corporatist bodies. The role of these bodies is to achieve a high degree of consensus, cooperation and coordination among responsible social partners of organized capital, organized labor and the democratic state (Connolly et al, 2011:4). These corporatist bodies are the STAR (Stichting voor de Arbeid, Labor Foundation) and The SER (Sociaal Economische Raad). The largest employer’s organization, VNO-NCW, and the largest trade union, FNV, are co-chairs of the bipartite labor foundation STAR where collective agreements are negotiated and adopted (Connolly et al, 2011:4 FNV, 2016: 14). The STAR is also an official partner of the government in deliberations on budgets, wages and social policies.

4.2.4 SER

The Social and Economic Council (SER) is also a corporatist body, it is the most important government advisory body in the field of socio-economic policy. The council consist of representatives of the trade union confederations FNV, CNV and VCP and the employers’ organizations (VNO-NVCW, MKB Nederland and LTO-Nederland) and independent experts appointed by the government. The government can ask the council for advice, but is not legally obligated to follow the advice of the council. The government, however, needs a very good reason to ignore the advice of the council, with regard to public support due to the fact that the members of the council come from a wide array of the public (FNV, 2016: 13).

Thus, the STAR and the SER are the main bodies in which the interactions between the government, trade unions and employers take place. These interactions range from consultations to bargaining. The main goal of these corporatist bodies is to achieve compromise without conflict. The demands of the social partners are also expected to be in line with the economic forecasts done by the Central Planning Bureau (CPB). These forecasts are published twice a year, and deliberations on wage policy usually take place based on the expected economic trajectory (Connolly et al, 2011:5). The effect being that demands are mitigated on the basis of economic needs.
Within the corporatist system activism and strikes are an aberration, and are seen as excessive tools. In the Netherlands, strikes are generally a tool of last resort and are only considered acceptable when all other means of deliberation have failed. However, strikes are still rarely used in the Netherlands (Connolly et al, 2011:5).

4.3 Dutch Corporatism and the Law

4.3.1 Laws on Collective Agreements

In the Netherlands the law on collective agreements leaves the choice open to employers to decide whether and with whom they are going to bargain. The law states that if employers conclude an agreement with a union, they are obligated to apply its conditions to all comparable employees including to those belonging to other unions. The collective agreements are legally binding. There is also another law that is concerned with the extension and nullification of collective agreements. This law grants the Minister of Social Affairs and Employment special powers to extend agreements in whole or in part to employees that are not members of the signatory unions, in the case that the agreement covers a substantial majority of industry (Connolly et al, 2011: 5).

The 1970s Wages Act in the Netherlands states that all collective agreements must be registered at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment. This act also grants the Minister of Social Affairs and Employment the authority, after consultation with the STAR, to temporarily suspend a new agreement with the purpose of achieving policy goals (Connolly et al, 2011:5). These laws show that the ultimate goal of Dutch corporatism is to achieve harmonious results.

These laws also form incentives for employers to join the deliberation process, because the corporatist system builds a shield against possible confrontational demands of trade unions. This explains the high level of employer involvement in the Dutch corporatist system and the high coverage rate of collective agreements. For trade unions the advantage of the corporatist system and the automatic extension of collective agreements to the whole sector, is that union and non-union firms do not have to compete with one another. On the other hand the corporatist system also creates impediments for trade unions, because they cannot directly involve workers
and this takes away incentives for workers to join (Connolly et al, 2011; Visser 1998).

4.3.2. Laws on strikes

There are no specific laws that regulate the right of workers to strike. Collective agreements, however, do contain a peace clause. This means that the signatory parties to the collective agreement are not allowed to go on strike for a specified period after a collective agreement is signed. Trade unions that are not a signatory to the collective agreement are not bound by the peace clause. The Highest Court in the Netherlands has recently decided that it is not necessary for unions to exhaust all the tools within collective agreement negotiations to be able to legally strike. These strikes, however, still have to be announced to the employer beforehand (Cats, 2015).

Trade unions in The Netherlands, however, generally want to be included in the collective agreements because only trade unions that are signatory to collective agreements gain union representation rights. There are funds attached to these union representation rights. These funds are an incentive for trade unions to moderate their demands so that they are not excluded from the bargaining process (Connolly et al, 2011:6). This system has limited effectiveness, however, because the trade union with the most members is most likely a key partner in the collective bargaining process, hence its exclusion is in no one’s interest.
4.3.3 The Regulation of the Participation of workers

In the Dutch corporatist system workers are traditionally not actively involved in demands, deliberation and negotiation of collective agreements. Workers are represented by trade unions that bargain on their behalf. There is a strong division by law between collective bargaining, which is under the jurisdiction of trade unions, and employee participation within the enterprise through work councils (Ondernemingsraden), which is mandatory in all firms with more than 35 employees. These work councils are elected by all workers, and are in charge of promoting the interests both of the enterprise and of its workforce. Work councils are not allowed to interfere in collective bargaining.

The practice that workers are not directly involved in representing their interests, but rely on trade unions to do so (servicing model) has been a key impediment in energizing the trade union membership and attracting new members (Vandaele, 2010:18). There is also a dilemma this raises within the corporatist system; Dutch corporatism traditionally requires trade unions to bargain collective agreements on behalf of workers and these collective agreements are then extended to all workers within a given sector, whether they are members of a union or not. This also creates a disincentive for workers to join trade unions. On the other hand the extension of collective agreements to all workers in a given sector is also being questioned, due to decline of trade union membership (Vandaele, 2010:25).
Chapter 5 The FNV and Responses to Trade Union Decline

5.1 The New FNV

The FNV is the largest trade union federation in the Netherlands. Before 1 January 2015 it was an organization that only legal entities could join. In January 2015, Abvakabo FNV, FNV, FNV Bouw, FNV Sports merged into the FNV, a merger that transformed FNV into an association of sectors formerly represented by these newly merged unions. In the past workers had to be members of one of the affiliated trade unions to become a member of the FNV, now they can become members of the FNV directly if they work in one of the sectors represented by the FNV. There are also some 14 unions who are members of the FNV, and that organize workers within their own sectors. The FNV as a whole represents the interests of workers, people, people on benefits and pensioners. The FNV directly represent 900 000 members. The affiliates represent another 200 000 members (FNV, 2016:7).

The merger of the affiliated unions of the FNV into one union was done to strengthen the position of the FNV vis-à-vis the government and the employers’ organizations. One of the intentions of the merger was to provide employers and the government with clarity about who their negotiating partner is. The merger sought to achieve centralization on broad issues, such as the negotiations of the retirement age. In the past the FNV would negotiate with the social partners, but could end up being called back by the leaders of affiliated unions who disagreed with the approach of the FNV. The merger is designed to prevent this from happening and therefore is meant to increase clarity between the social partners (Dekker, 2014).
On the other hand the merger also gives sectors much more autonomy on sector-oriented issues. The aim of the merger is also to be closer to workers on the work floor level and thereby having the workers more involved in the work of the FNV. The FNV expects that this approach will lead to stronger sectors with more pronounced and autonomous positions. Rather than the line being set out on a centralized level, on sector issues the new merger is meant to come closer to the worker and have them give more input concerning the direction of the sector (FNV, 2014).

Thus the merger had two aims, to on one hand have a centralized response on general issues and on the other hand create stronger sectors with distinctive characters within one FNV. This means that on sector issues the sectors would be recognized as distinct from one another, meaning that at times different sectors take positions that might seem contrary to one another. The Organizing Model will also be more keenly used in some of these sectors, while other sectors will likely opt-out of using more confrontational tactics (Troost, 2014).

The merger is part of a process that started long ago, with the FNV trying to find ways to revitalize trade union membership. The FNV started to look for ways to find innovative strategies for trade union renewal and published a brochure on the challenges that trade unions face and the need to organize specific groups into the trade union structure to combat decline. The reorganization of the FNV is in line with the aspirations of the FNV to find new ways to get closer to workers and incorporate them into the trade union.
5.2 The FNV and its concerns of recruitment and representation

In 2005 issues of weaknesses of membership and trade union representation became central issues in the FNV. Topics such as representativeness, union democracy, workplace relations and participation started to be outlined, influencing also the stances taken toward ethnic minority workers, who tended to be over-represented in sectors with low membership density and precarious working conditions. The union made internationalist declarations on the need to create more room for ethnic minorities (Connolly et al, 2011). This eventually resulted in a booklet written by Dick Kloosterboer of the FNV that was published in 2007. The booklet was published to provide trade unions all over the world with input about how they could redefine themselves.

The booklet shows the understanding of the FNV of the challenges that trade unions are faced with and the tools available to tackle these challenges. The FNV itself is presented before the challenge of recruiting and representing workers such as ethnic minorities, young workers and workers in the service sectors. These workers are underrepresented and new strategies are necessary for them to be recruited into the trade union structure. The document has been published for the purpose of guiding both the FNV and other trade unions towards new strategies.

5.2.1 Recruitment of Ethnic minorities and (undocumented) Immigrants

The booklet also addresses some solutions to for example the recruitment of ethnic minorities and the importance of trade unions to forge alliances with community organizations to get access (Kloosterboer, 2007:28). There is also a xenophobic element within many trade unions that should be dealt with. The attitude towards undocumented immigrants must also change, meaning that trade unions must stop seeing immigrants as a threat but rather must see them as allies and represent them so that standards for all workers can be raised.
5.2.2 Recruitment of Young workers

Kloosterboer also mentions that the traditional trade union membership is ageing; therefore it is important that trade unions reinvigorate themselves by attracting young members. Trade unions attract young workers by attracting these workers through the organization of campaigns in which the focus lies on issues that especially hurt young workers. In Sweden for example trade unions started an experiment with giving students the opportunity to join at a reduced rate. The focus of the trade unions is also on the transition from studying to work, by providing students with mentorship to find jobs and the writing resumes. After graduation they are contacted by the local union organization to ask them to become regular members of the union connected to the profession they have chosen (Kloosterboer, 2007:32).

In the Netherlands, young members of the FNV held a manifestation at the 2005 Congress, resulting in the creation of FNV Jong. FNV Jong is a network of young (under 35 years old) trade union members that can express views independently of the FNV. Its chair, Judith Ploegman, has gained a rather high profile in the media. The aim of FNV Jong is to get youth issues higher on the agenda both within and outside the FNV, as well as to increase the visibility of the FNV among young workers. Furthermore FNV wants to get the 235,000 young trade union members more actively involved in the organization. Ploegman has a seat on the Socio-Economic Council (SER), an official advisory body. At her initiative, the SER has published a high-profile advice on unemployment among ethnic minority youth (Kloosterboer, 2007:33).

5.2.3 Representing the Unemployed

Trade unions should also try to beat decline by finding ways to organize the unemployed. The decline of trade unions has been less in countries that have the Ghent system in which trade unions provide the unemployed with unemployment benefits (Gumbrell-McCormick, 2013:39). This is the case in Denmark, Sweden and Belgium. In Britain and Germany membership is almost free for the unemployed, however, this is not attracting the unemployed. It seems that the unemployed are not convinced that unions have something to offer them (Kloosterboer, 2007:35).
Chapter 6 The Cases

6.1 Justice for Janitors Campaign in The Netherlands

The organizing of cleaners is the first experiment with organizing employed by the Dutch trade union FNV Bondgenoten, which is the largest trade union with the trade union federation FNV. The Justice for Janitors campaign originated in the United States and was later on transported to Europe.

The idea of the Justice for Janitors Campaign was to approach and organize workers in the cleaning sector and give them the tools to represent their own interests. The goal was to create an environment, in which workers are able to represent their own interests and set issues on the industrial relations agenda from the bottom-up. This was a clear move away from the servicing-model in which trade unions represent the interest of workers, without the involvement of the workers themselves. The Organizing Model deployed by the Justice for Janitors campaign, focused on research-based campaigns that provided workers with the knowledge to strategically confront their employers. For example the understanding of how the cleaning sector operated was crucial in deciding to also focus on the building owners that subcontracted the services of the cleaning companies, instead of only on the direct employers (McCallum, 2013:53).

One of the main goals of the Justice for Janitors Campaign was to get extensive media coverage, so that the wider public was made familiar with the working conditions of the workers. The publicity was also important in shaming the cleaning companies and the companies that subcontract the cleaners into action, due to the fact that the public exposure gave them a bad name. The cleaning sector is also a sector with mostly an immigrant and ethnic minority workforce. These groups are often vulnerable on the job market, and are often left to do the jobs at the bottom of the employment ladder. They have traditionally also been abandoned by trade unions, thus trade unions should seize the opportunity to organize these workers into their ranks. This was also the orientation of the Justice for Janitors campaign in the United States (McCallum, 2013).
6.1.1 The Cleaning Sector in The Netherlands

The cleaning sector in the Netherlands consists of roughly 150,000 workers, of which 65% are women. The majority of the cleaners is of foreign background and is working on temporary contracts. Therefore cleaners are one of the most vulnerable workers and are generally at the bottom of the job ladder. The FNV argues that 69% of cleaners in the Netherlands live below the poverty line (Schoongenoeg, 2013). The sector is also characterized by a very high degree of subcontracting, meaning that the building or company where the cleaners work does not employ the cleaners directly, but cleaners are subcontracted to these companies. This kind of subcontracting raises challenges for workers, because the involved parties often evade responsibility when it comes to issues of pay. When workers argue that they have received too little pay, their employers point to the client that has filled-out the hours. In turn clients point back to the cleaning companies, leaving workers in the dark (Tielemans, 2014).

The main problem in the cleaning sector, however, is the excessive competition between cleaning companies for contracts. Clients often want the lowest possible price, for the best quality. This means that workers are ultimately the ones that have to pay the price, because their demands for higher wages and other benefits are not met, while their workload increases. Cleaners for example only have 90 seconds to clean a toilet. In an interview with the Dutch weekly De Groene Amsterdammer, a cleaner of Turkish origin named Nuray, stated that she was expected to clean 38 hospital treatment rooms in three hours, this would amount to 5 minutes per treatment room (Beekmans et al, 2012).

Another issue that workers in the cleaning sector in the Netherlands face is that they generally work for years with a temporary contract. Meaning that they have little job security, which makes them more vulnerable to exploitation by their employers. The cleaners, however, state that they primarily want to be treated with more respect. They feel that they are often denied their dignity as professionals, by the fact that they are not able to do their work professionally due to lack of cleaning products and time (Beekmans et al, 2012).
Thus, the cleaning sector in the Netherlands is a perfect sector in which the Organizing Model can be deployed to revitalize the trade union. A vulnerable workforce of female, immigrant labor characterizes the sector. These groups are often underrepresented within trade unions, while they are the most desperately in need of better representation within industrial relations. An important aspect of this is that the situation of cleaners is also appalling to the general public as a David and Goliath narrative. The image of the exploited immigrant that cleans after us generally makes a profound appeal to our moral compass. Publicity therefore is key, such as witnessed in the Justice for Janitors Campaign in the United States.

6.2 The Introduction of the Schoon Genoeg (Clean Enough) campaign in The Netherlands

The Justice for Janitors style of organizing first arrived in the Netherlands in 2007, with the help of American and Australian organizers (Alzaga, 2011; Heuts, 2010). The first big strike of cleaners in the Netherlands took place in 2009 when employers failed to meet the demands of cleaners after three months of negotiations. The cleaners’ demands were for the covering of transportation costs by their employers, permanent contracts and more respect (ANP, 2009a) The strike at Schiphol got extensive media coverage and public recognition. In the Netherlands strikes are regulated, but in the case of the cleaners at Schiphol, a Court granted the cleaners the permission to strike, because it was a last resort option after three months of negotiations had failed to come to an acceptable result. (ANP, 2009a; Alzaga, 2011.) Strikers also went to the KLM headquarters to hand a bar of soap to the management of the company, but they stated that they could not do anything due to the fact that KLM is not party to the negotiation process (ANP, 2009a). The 2009 strikes were just the beginning of what turned out to be a reoccurring campaign by cleaners to get more respect, wage increases and the softening of their workload (Visser, 2014).
In 2010 FNV Bondgenoten started the Clean Enough Campaign (Dutch: Schoon Genoeg). This campaign lasted for a total of 9 weeks and garnered major public support. The cleaning workers – who were Turkish, Moroccan, Latin American, Asian as well as Dutch – organized major actions all over the country demanding benefits, Dutch classes and the right to organize without repression. The public was largely sympathetic to the demands of the cleaners and they received strong support from social movements, political parties and the FNV (Alzaga, 2011). The cleaners were aware of the importance of public support and were actively engaging the public, by doing banner drops, giving out awards to the worst building-owners and cleaning companies, they also spoke to the press about their situation as to capture the Dutch national imaginary (Alzaga, 2011).

The focus of the campaign was primary on the exploitation of immigrant and ethnic minority labor. The approach was to sensitize the Dutch general public to the racism and economic discrimination faced by migrant workers in the Netherlands. As a result of these campaigns and the very public fight that they created, public support for the union grew immensely. The Dutch campaign was ultimately very successful in achieving its aims (Alzaga, 2011).

The cleaners had a substantial organization, of about 1400 cleaners that were at the center of the organization of the actions. These cleaners transcended nationally, language barriers and were a combination of workers on permanent contracts and workers on non-standard contracts (temporary, subcontracted, zero-hour contracts) (Heuts, 2010:28). Ron Meyer the head of the organizing campaign of the cleaners for the FNV, said in an interview with Pien Heuts that these front line workers were the key players in achieving a new collective agreement. Meyer also emphasized the fact that in the case of the organizing campaign of the cleaners, there was a clear shift away from the servicing model, in which the trade union is a problem defining and solving organization, to a model in which the trade union provides workers with the tools to represent their own interests (Heuts, 2010: 29). According to Meyer trade unions have for far too long seen their members as customers, and that has not encouraged them to get involved, he argues that the image of the union leader shepherding his flock is dead and gone (Heuts, 2010: 28).
6.2.1 The FNV introduces the Organizing Model to the Cleaners

The grassroots element of the Organizing Model in the case of the cleaners was not there from the outset. The FNV first had to win cleaners over and convince them that that the Organizing Model would bear fruit. Meyer argues that people have to be clued up on their situation, because they are the only ones to get things done. The FNV had to first approach workers and potential organizers and convince them that the best way is for them to stand up for their own interests. Most workers in the cleaning sector have for a long time been humiliated by their employers and were fearful and suspicious, and might not want to have anything to do with a union (Heuts, 2010: 28/29).

According to Meyer FNV organizers had rather free access to all workplaces and employers were not keeping records on the workers that were attending union meetings. That enabled the FNV to keep up intensive contacts with the rank and file (interview of Pien Heuts with Ron Meyer, 2010). The FNV also reached out to workers through community centers, churches and mosques and wanted to involve priests, pastors and imams in the next campaign. The goal of the FNV was to create a broad social coalition where the struggle of the cleaners and other low-income workers was on the foreground (Heuts, 2010:30).

6.2.2. The Clean Enough Campaign in 2010

In late February 2010 after a couple of light-hearted stunts that failed to get the employers to the negotiating table to improve their pay-offer, the cleaners turned to the only means left to them, striking. The FNV had first commissioned a study in which the cleaning sector was analyzed. The strike was to have a strategic approach, in which the focus would be on creating publicity and affect change. To do so, it was necessary to have information about where to best aim the public attention. From that study the FNV had concluded that one major problem within the cleaning sector was, that the clients of cleaning companies were demanding throat-cutting prices (Heuts, 2010: 29).
The FNV opened a strike fund and 1400 cleaners immediately signed up. These activists roamed the country for a total of nine weeks, organizing sit-ins and marches for respect all over the country (ANP, 2009a; Heuts, 2010:30). The activists also reacted immediately to reprisals and workers that were being threatened with the sack. They were in the media to tell their stories and seek public attention to their exploitation by their employers. Judy, a cleaner and activist at Schiphol told Pien Heuts that every time they went back into negotiations, everyone seemed even more determined to keep on fighting (Heuts, 2010:30).

Ron Meyer, the head of the cleaning sector at FNV Bondgenoten, told Pien Heuts that it is important for the whole public to realize that a trade union is a winning organization, composed out of ordinary people on the ground. The public also got to see that these people are not merely working poor and disadvantaged, but they are lively, impassionate, cheeky and characterful. These people were worthy of respect and the public sentiment echoed this (Heuts, 2010:30).

6.2.3 The Results of the 2010 Campaign

The strikes finally ended on 24 April 2010. The cleaners got a structural wage increase of 3.5%, the ability to take Dutch lessons during working hours and a 750-euro completion bonus. The wage increase was a considerable achievement, because the employers previously refused any type of wage increase, going into the negotiations (Heuts, 2010:30; ANP, 2010).

The cleaning sector also promised to address the issue of cutthroat competitiveness by introducing a code for socially responsible market behavior between cleaning companies and clients. The aim of the code is to form an agreement between cleaning companies about minimum standards (van der Ploeg et al, 2014). This is to prevent cutthroat competition, which is detrimental to the cleaners with regard to wages and workload. Parties to the code, have to agree about a balance of price-quality.
6.2.4 Clean Enough Campaign 2012

In 2012 when the previous collective agreement that was signed in 2010 was due to expire cleaners came up with new demands. The main demands of the workers were as follows:

- A permanent contract after 9 months of work
- Dutch courses during working hours
- 0.50 per hour wage increase for all workers, including youth.
- End of the year payment should be increased with 300 euros for workers that work 38 hours, and proportionally for everyone else.
- Erasure of the two waiting days, meaning that workers get sick-leave paid from the first day that they are sick.

The cleaning sector organization OSB that represented the cleaning companies in the collective agreement negotiation process called the demands of the cleaners unrealistic and from early on there was an impasse between the OSB and the FNV. Thus, the cleaners called a strike that lasted for 105 days. In these strikes they continued the practices they had started in the 2010 strikes (ANP, 2009a): but this time the direct activists grew from 1400 to about 3000 in 2012 (ANP, 2012a). The strikes and publicity stunts of the cleaners was mostly directed at the clients rather than at the cleaning companies (ANP, 2009). The cleaners were mainly concerned that the clients were demanding prices that were too competitive and this is why the cleaning companies were so unwilling to raise wages.

The FNV and the cleaners had organized respect marches in 11 cities. The cleaners also organized sit-ins at universities such as the Universiteit Utrecht and Vrije Universiteit (VU). At these universities many students and university staff were in solidarity with the cleaners, because they saw the way that the cleaners were being treated badly and they saw this as characteristic of the broader neoliberal swing of the university management (KSU, 2012a; KSU, 2012b; van Moort, 2012a).
Cleaners working for the cleaning company Hago, also occupied the building headquarters in Arnhem. They were unhappy about the fact that the management of the company had made a deal with the Dutch railway company, NS, that was extremely competitive (1 million euros under the offer of the next lowest bidder), while denying them paid sick leave from the first two days of their illness. The cleaners occupied the building, chanting that they had a right to do so because they were de facto paying for the building with their cheap labor. Some cleaners even spent the night in tents in front of the headquarters of Hago (van Moort, 2012b; ANP, 2012b).

The cleaners also made good use of the rising public sentiment about the greed of managers of big companies. Four owners of big cleaning companies are listed on the Quote 500 list; it lists the allegedly 500 wealthiest persons and families in The Netherlands. The cleaners picketed in front of the villas of what they called the cleaning sheiks, wearing signs with the message: how many paid sick-leave days fit in this villa? Bringing home the message that the money the companies were saving on them was going to the lavish lifestyle of the company owners (De socialist, 2012).

The Cleaners also organized many marches for respect. A key element of the 2012 campaign was that the cleaners wanted to increase their visibility. Together with their demands for an increase in wages and paid sick-leave, the actions of the cleaners were focused on the emancipation of the cleaners within Dutch society (Volkskrant, 2012a).

6.2.5 Results of the 2012 Campaign

After 105 days of striking the results of the 2012 campaign were that wages went up with 5% and the cleaning companies promised that they would do experiments with sick leave. The employers also promised to conduct workload measurements, to keep track of the work pressure cleaners were under (Volkskrant, 2012; Volkskrant, 2014).
6.2.6 The 2014 Clean Enough Campaign

In 2014 the collective agreement of the cleaners negotiated in 2012 was due to expire and negotiations for a new CA had begun. The cleaners demanded .50-euro pay raise and the first two days of illness also to be paid. In the previous collective agreements workers were not being paid for the two first days of illness, and they were not able to get employers to agree, so the issue was raised again. The strikes were mostly aimed at the Dutch Railways NS, which led to a lot of public outrage about the dirty trains (van der Ploeg, et al, 2014; ANP, 2014a). The NS had to defend itself in the media, because most travellers were blaming the company for the mess and not the cleaners. The NS’s defense was that it is not a party in the negotiation process, because the negotiations took place between representatives of the cleaning companies and the FNV that represented the cleaners. The FNV and the representatives of the cleaning companies had failed to come to an agreement and this led to a weeklong strike (ANP, 2014a).

The FNV seized the opportunity to publicly point to the responsibility of the NS, the fact that workers were being exploited largely had to do with the fact that the NS does not hire workers directly, but instead subcontracts them through highly competitive bids that are mainly focused on driving down costs for the client. Thus, the NS is also largely responsible for the exploitation of the cleaners, (van der Ploeg et al, 2014; ANP, 2014a). FNV Bondgenoten has been trying and still continues to put the issue of subcontracting on the agenda. FNV Bondgenoten’s wish is that all cleaning workers are eventually on the payroll of the companies that they clean for, like it used to be in the past (van der Ploeg et al, 2014).

6.2.7 The Results of the 2014 Campaign

The results of the strikes were that cleaners will get a pay raise of 6,6% spread over three years, a 2% pay raise per year and a 0,2% end of the year bonus raise. The two unpaid illness days will disappear over time (ANP, 2014b).
6.2.8 News in 2015

In 2015 there was an important breakthrough, the Minister of Social Affairs and Employment announced that the government is going to put the cleaners of the ministries on their direct payroll, de facto making them civil servants. Lodewijk Asscher, the Minister of Social Affairs and Employment, signed an agreement with FNV Schoonmaak and FNV Overheid with the conditions of the in contracting (Mooring, 2015a).

6.3 The Young and United Campaign

In 2011 the FNV expressed its concern about the distinction made between the minimum wage of youths and those above 23 years old. Currently the Dutch minimum wage is divided in age groups, with those below 23 years old, earning significantly less (albeit differences exist between age groups under 23).

Table: minimum wage per month (gross per 1 January 2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Per Month</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23 years and older</td>
<td>€ 1.524,60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 years</td>
<td>€ 1.295,90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 years</td>
<td>€ 1.105,35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 years</td>
<td>€  937,65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 years</td>
<td>€  800,40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 years</td>
<td>€  693,70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 years</td>
<td>€  602,20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 years</td>
<td>€  526,00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 years</td>
<td>€  457,40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table1 Source: Rijksoverheid

The FNV has created a major campaign to address the issue of the gap in the minimum wage between age groups. The FNV argues that some young workers cannot live of the youth minimum wage, because they have the same bills to pay as older workers, especially those who live independently (Young and United, 2015) Critics, however, argue that letting the distinction between age groups disappear, would be detrimental to young workers, because companies would not have any incentive any longer to hire young workers, and will in most cases opt for older
workers.

The FNV directed these actions mostly against companies that hire young workers, of which the supermarket industry is the largest. 75% of the workers in the supermarket industry are younger than 23 years old. The fast food industry is also a big employer of young workers (Mooring, 2015b).

The FNV initiated the Young and United campaign to attract new young members to the trade union. The Young and United campaign was a major public awareness campaign and received extensive media coverage. A petition went around asking the public to voice their support for the end of the youth minimum wage. The petition was signed by 130,000 citizens (Young and United, 2015).

6.3.1 Ahold Shareholder Meeting Striptease

The activists of Young and United made use of very public campaigns in which they were keen on showing the unfairness of the youth minimum wage. One of those public campaigns was the striptease of a young worker of the Albert Heijn, who interrupted the shareholder meeting of Ahold (the parent company of Albert Heijn) to demonstrate to the head of the company that with his salary he could afford but half a suit and to make the same amount the CEO of Ahold, Dick de Boer, makes yearly he would have to work for 299 years. This was a ploy by the Young and United Organization to put a clear narrative of exploitation to the public (Beerekamp, 2015). The actions also led to questions being asked in parliament.

6.3.2 Golden Hamburger

Campaigners protested in front of a newly opened MacDonald’s and they handed the management half a golden hamburger at the opening of the new luxurious golden MacDonald’s in Rotterdam. The message the activists of Young and United wanted to convey is that the MacDonald’s is champion in under-payment (Young and United, 2015b).
6.3.3 *Hourglass*

Young workers placed an hourglass at the working address of the Minister of Social Affair and Employment in The Hague. The Minister had promised the activists three times before that he would come up with a proposal to raise the minimum youth wage, but up until the moment of the placement of the hourglass they had not heard from him. The hourglass was placed to remind the Minister of his promise. The activists were determined to keep coming back until the Minister delivered on his promise. The activists were also handing out pamphlets to the employees of the Ministry, to inform them about their presence there. The previous day the activists had installed a laser projection with the text #DUURTLANG (It is taking a long time/We are tired of waiting) (Mooring, 2016).

6.3.4 *Laser Projections*

On 25 March activists of Young and United projected the message: Hey Rutte Halflloon WTF?! (Hi Rutte, Half a wage WTF?!?) onto the office of the Prime Minister. They also projected similar messages onto Rotterdam Central Station and onto the headquarters of the Employers organization VNO-NCW to attract the attention of the public and thus publicly shaming the government and employers (Young and United, 2015d).

6.3.5 *Disruption of SER meeting*

The activists also disrupted a meeting of the SER by giving the head of the employers’ organization VNO-NCW, Hans de Boer, an oversized diaper (Young and United, 2015b).

6.3.6 *Membership Increase due to Activism*

The activism of the Young and United campaigners led to 6000 members over a course of half a year (Young and United, 2016).
6.4 Results of the Young and United Campaign

The Minister of Social Affairs and Employment of the Netherlands, Lodewijk Asscher, on 21 April 2016 announced that the youth minimum wage would be disbanded gradually. The age that the youth minimum wage would end would be changed from 23 years to 21 years in 2017 and 2019. This means that in 2019 workers from 21 years old are entitled to the adult minimum wage. The minimum wage for those between 18 and 21 will also be increased, but will remain less than the adult minimum wage. The Minister said that this was the outcome of a concerted effort between government, coalition partners and the social partners (Verlaan et al, 2016).

The employers agreed to an increase in the minimum wage, because the Minister also made some concessions when it comes to other issues. The government tweaked its plans with regard to transition compensation, the money paid to employers when their contracts are terminated due to business closure or downsizing. The transition compensation will remain, but in some instances the government will step in and pay the compensation. The government also made concessions on the law that states that employers must pay chronically ill workers for two full years, in the new plans the government would make the payments earlier on, if it is clear that the worker will not be reintegrated any time in the future (Verlaan et al, 2016).

To achieve the disbanding of the youth minimum wage the Minister of Social Affairs and Employment also had to give up his beloved flexibilization law in the case of seasonal work. Due to the flexibilization law employers had to give a worker a permanent contract after giving three temporary contracts within 2 years. Employers could only offer a temporary contract again after 6 months of the expiry date of the third temporary contract. For seasonal workers this meant that they would lose their jobs. As a compromise the Minister of Social Affairs adapted this law for seasonal work. Reducing the break between contracts from 6 to 3 months. Both the comprise and the mounting political pressure of due to the Young and United Campaign
contributed to the willingness of employers to abandon the Youth minimum wage (Jongejan, 2016).

Chapter 7 Analysis

7.1 Clean Enough Campaign

7.1.1 Atypical contracts

The Clean Enough Campaign that was initiated in 2010 in the Netherlands clearly took the issue of atypical contracts to task. A great number of cleaners were working on temporary contracts for years and their job security was threatened. One of the main demands of the cleaners in 2012 was that workers get a permanent contract after 9 months of work, because many of the cleaners have been working on temporary contracts for years.

7.1.2 Subcontracting

The issue of subcontracting played a key role in the organization of the workers in all the years that they have organized campaigns. The issue of subcontracting came to be understood as the crux of the whole exploitation of cleaners. The subcontracting made the situation of who had to be addressed when it came to the wages of the cleaners an important issue, because the cleaning companies were blaming their clients, while the clients were evading responsibility. Therefore the impetus of the subsequent campaigns of the cleaners was to devise public campaigns in which clients that subcontracted the cleaners were also targeted. The cleaners came to understand that their exploitation for a large part had to do with the competitiveness within the cleaning market, mainly due to the fact that clients were demanding very low-prices. The Organizing Model gave the rare opportunity for cleaners to be involved in public stunts and strikes that forced clients to react.

In 2012 and 2014 the cleaners directed most of their publicity stunts toward the
clients of their services. In 2012 this was mainly organized through sit-ins at universities and by organizing protest marches for respect. The focus of these campaigns was to build coalitions with other groups and exploit the growing narrative of the greedy manager. This was primarily the case with the coalition between student activists and cleaners, which fit in the wider narrative of the neoliberal wave that was starting to dominate many institutions, such as universities that were important clients of cleaning companies and were contributing to the exploitation of the cleaners.

In 2014 the Dutch Railway company NS was the next target of the campaign by the cleaners. Their weeks of strikes led to dirty trains, train stations infested with rats and most importantly public outrage. Travelers and the wider public for the most part blamed the NS for the uncleanliness of the trains, which forced the NS to react to the impasse in the negotiations between the cleaning sector and the cleaners. The NS first explained that the company was not party to the negotiations and therefore could not do anything about the strikes. The FNV, however, seized the opportunity to publicly point to the responsibility of the NS. The FNV blamed the NS for being responsible, due to the fact that to save money it did not hire workers directly, but contracted external cleaning companies through highly competitive bids, which were the source of the exploitation of the cleaners.

The Organizing Model showed to be an effective tool for the raising of the issue of clients. While the Dutch corporatist system limits the negotiation of issues to the level of the representatives of the direct employers and the trade union that represent the sector, the Organizing Model opened up the opportunity to involve clients through other means, namely highly publicized campaigns that damaged the public image of clients. The public stunts of the cleaners had forced clients to also take their responsibility. In this case the Organizing Model has shown its value, because traditional Dutch corporatism would not have given cleaners the necessary tools to involve the clients in the debate about their working standards. Traditional Dutch Corporatism would have shielded clients from responsibility in the negotiation process.

The workers, however, did not only take the clients to task. They also protested against their employers when they went along with a very low bid. The case of Hago
is a case in point. The cleaners at Hago were upset about the fact that the company made an offer that was 1 million euros below the next lowest offer and they occupied the building of Hago to protest this.

The rise of subcontracting has changed the dynamics between employers and employees and thus requires a different response. Therefore the question whether the Organizing Model fits within European corporatism requires some qualification. The formulation of the question i.e. whether the Organizing Model fits within corporatism suggests that corporatism is static or that it would be preferable if the dynamics of corporatism were unchanged. From the perspective of trade unions, however, changes in corporatism might be necessary for them to be more effective. The Organizing Model as applied in the case of the cleaners should however be seen as soft power, in which trade unions do not fundamentally try to change Dutch corporatism, but use organizing as a complementary tool to increase their power within the institutional structures of Dutch corporatism.

7.1.3 Part time labor

The issue of part time labor was not addressed in the campaigns of the cleaners. In the Netherlands working part time is fairly common and it generally does not specifically contribute to less security on the labor market.

7.1.4 Temporary labor

The issue of temporary labor was raised, because a great number of workers within the cleaning sector have been working on temporary contracts for years. The issue, however, did not require separate strategic action but was part of a number of other issues that caused the strikes.

7.2 Demographics

The cleaning sector consists mainly of female workers (65%) and the great majority of workers in the cleaning sector have an immigrant or ethnic minority background. These elements were clearly emphasized in the organizing campaign in the sector. The ethnicity of the workers was used as a narrative to show the wider public the racist elements of the Dutch job market and the fact that it was mostly immigrants that
were working at the lowest level of the job ladder. The campaigns were also used to emphasize the necessity for integration of these workers into Dutch society, by its demand for Dutch courses for the cleaners. The fact that these workers were themselves going on the streets and made themselves visible to the public, undoubtedly also helped to bring the message home.

The immigrant background of the cleaners and the particular needs that come with that, could have been represented by the FNV through the servicing model in the traditional form of Dutch corporatism. The demands of the cleaners, such as Dutch lessons did not necessarily require the use of the Organizing Model to be addressed. What did require the use of the Organizing Model, however, were the demands for respect that the cleaners had. The Organizing Model gave the cleaners the opportunity to increase their visibility; one of their major complaints was that they were invisible and therefore not respected. Cleaners often work very early in the morning or very late at night, so the people who work in the buildings they clean rarely see them. The campaign also tried to convey that the invisibility of the cleaners was not limited to the work floor but extended to their position in society as a whole. Their demands for Dutch courses were a part of their demand for emancipation within Dutch society.

7.3 Challenges to Dutch Corporatism

7.3.1 Self-representation

In the Dutch corporatist system traditionally sector organizations and trade unions represent employers and workers respectively. The collective agreement that is agreed on is also applied through the whole sector, whether these companies or workers have been represented in the negotiation process or not. The Organizing Model as the FNV and the cleaners have implemented it has not changed this system fundamentally. Union representatives still represent the interests of workers at the level of the STAR where the collective agreements are negotiated. This is altogether logical as negotiation between workers and cleaners directly would lead to chaos and workers do not necessarily have the required skill set to be good negotiators. What has changed however is the way issues are put on the agenda. The agenda setting process takes place from the bottom up. Trade unions are involved by sending organizers to workplaces that hear from the workers themselves what their grievances are. The role
of the trade union becomes that of the facilitator, by providing workers with the tools and knowledge they need to organize their own campaigns.

Within Dutch industrial relations this means that one of the tools that the FNV provides is the negotiator, but the demands are not formulated by the FNV but by the workers themselves. In the cleaning campaign the FNV’s role in providing cleaners with information about the mechanics of the cleaning sector was crucial in addressing the issue of subcontracting. The workers are involved in the negotiation process through the pressure that they put on the parties at the negotiating table, by organizing public campaigns and if necessary by striking.

The problem with this, however, is that the Organizing Model, as applied in the Clean Enough Campaign, would encourage strikes by workers as a pressure tool in the negotiation process. This goes against the tradition within Dutch Corporatism to minimize differences between the social partners. In the case of the Clean Enough Campaign, the strikes were accepted by the courts and thus did not break any laws. However, if this were adopted as a structural mobilization strategy to involve workers in the negotiating process, it would fundamentally change the way business is done within the Dutch corporatist system, because it would create an incentive for workers to go on strike. This development will be contrary to the tradition of harmony and the minimization of antagonism in traditional Dutch corporatism.

7.3.2 Institutional and Legal Structure

The institutional structure of the Dutch corporatist system is designed in a way that forces the social partners not to be diametrically opposed. The mechanism that should guarantee that is exclusion. Trade unions that make demands that are too radical can be excluded from the negotiation process. With respect to the FNV, however, exclusion is very unlikely. The FNV is the largest trade union in the Netherlands, thus in the case of the cleaning workers exclusion was out of the question. A collective agreement without the FNV would be impossible. In this respect the FNV has the power to change institutional tradition, without breaking any laws or rules. Employers cannot come to an agreement without the FNV, and it cannot be expected from the FNV not to take advantage of its power.
The deployment of the Organizing Model indeed is a radical approach that is very atypical within traditional Dutch industrial relations. On the other hand the status quo of Dutch industrial relations does not necessarily work in the interest of the FNV. Therefore the FNV cannot be blamed for using its power, when it is not breaking the law. The approach of the FNV is one in which it both uses the corporatist system to negotiate collective agreements for workers and one in which it devises an organizing strategy to change the power dynamics within that system in its favor. The fact of the matter is that the FNV has come to the realization that harmony that the Dutch system traditionally emphasizes cannot be upheld at all cost, because the types of workers and the types of employment have also changed. Subcontracting for example has created a whole new situation in which workers have to organize to get publicity for their cause and affect change. Workers have to appeal to the wider public and not just to those sitting at the negotiating table.

The Netherlands does not have specific laws that regulate strikes, but at the time of the Clean Enough Campaign the Courts have made decisions on issues of strikes and the general approach is that strikes are accepted as a last resort option. This means that strikes are acceptable when negotiations fail. The conditions, however, are that the strikes are announced in advance and they must not threaten the safety and security of the general public. Collective agreements, however, do have legally binding peace clauses, which means that strikes are not allowed when a collective agreement has been agreed upon. In the case of Clean Enough Campaign, we can clearly see that the peace clause has been respected. The strikes of the cleaners that took place in 2010, 2012 and 2014 all took place when negotiations of collective agreements came to a dead end.

As mentioned previously, however, the Organizing Model’s emphasis on involving workers can lead to an incentive for trade unions to let negotiations fail, so that they can organize strikes in which the workers and the public are engaged. In the Clean Enough Campaign for example we see that the strikes were crucial for the success of the Organizing tactics that the cleaners devised. Without the strikes these would have largely not been possible. Thus, while the corporatist system allows for strikes, the
model is built as disincentive to strikes while the Organizing Model incentivizes striking.

7.3.3 Conflicts of Interest within the Trade Union

Some critics of the Organizing Model such as De Turberville suggest that the aggressive campaigns against employers might backfire. The aggressive campaigns in which employers are put to shame might lead to discomfort with others workers that fall under different sector agreements, but who are members of the same trade union. This idea stems from the perception of the trade union as ultimately a centralized institution, in which the mobilization of the workers takes place on the decentralized level, but where decision-making still occurs on the central level. The critics of the Organizing Model believe that the nature of the union in a corporatist context will to a large extent remain top-down, to mitigate potential clashes that will take place on the central level.

In the Clean Enough case there is no evidence of clashes between the interests of workers across sectors. This does not mean that this is or will not be the case in the future, but it will be unlikely. From what is evident from the Clean Enough Campaign the Organizing Model has been implemented in a fairly bottom-up way. The FNV has operated as a revolving door between the demands of the cleaners and the negotiation with the employers. The structure of the FNV is also one in which there are clear and distinct sectors with a relatively high degree of autonomy. Thus trade unions are not as centralized as De Turberville seems to suggest. Therefore it is clear that the demands have come directly from the workers within the sector, which makes it unlikely that employers will seek retribution from the workers in other sectors when the FNV has to negotiate a new collective agreement for them.

The Organizing Model for that matter increases sector autonomy, because workers in the sector get to speak with their own voice. The trade union is merely the messenger. It must, however, be noted that this possibly will not be the case for all sectors. The cleaning sector has several characteristics that are conducive to solidarity between the workers. The fact that most of these workers are women, ethnic minority and work at the bottom of the social ladder is conducive to a strong class feeling. This might not
be the case in other sectors of the job market. The mobilization of financial sector workers for example will probably have a different effect, because workers within that sector are more diverse and might not have the same demands.

7.3.4 Sustainability of The Organizing Model

Critics of the Organizing Model have also questioned whether the organizing of campaigns can be sustained. The use of the Organizing model as a means of membership recruitment will lead to new members that are interested in keeping the flame of organizing. The reason why these people are attracted to trade unions is because they can be directly involved in representing their own interests. In Clean Enough Campaign we witness that the Organizing Model has kept on returning, with workers who were completely engaged and the number of activists rising. The issue of sick-paid leave kept on coming back, as it had not been completely settled. It remains to be seen whether the momentum will last through the coming years. The current collective agreement expires on 31 December 2016, so it remains to be seen whether organizing will take place then as well.

7.4 Young and United Campaign against the Youth Minimum wage

The Young and United Campaign against the minimum wage is a different campaign from the Clean Enough Campaign. Firstly the campaign did not come out of a specific sector, however the main target of the campaign was the supermarket industry due to the fact that most young workers below the age of 23 work in supermarkets. Generally, however, the campaign was concerned with the plight of a specific demographics, namely young workers. The Campaign was focused on getting young workers involved in trade unionism, by addressing an issue that is of great importance to young workers, the youth minimum wage. The strategy was clearly oriented towards getting this group to join the trade union movement.

The Young and United Campaign illustrates that the Organizing Model has not only been implemented in a corporatist context of collective agreement negotiations. In the analysis of the Clean Enough Campaign, we have explored the possible challenges that the corporatist system would create for the Organizing Model. The Young and United Campaign cannot be analyzed solely through the prism of corporatism,
however. The Young and United Campaign was a different campaign than the Clean Enough Campaign, due to the fact that it took place outside of the context of collective agreement negotiations. This is because the Young and United Campaign was focused on the abolition of the youth minimum wage. This is an issue of legislation in the Netherlands and not an issue of deliberation between the social partners.

Due to the fact that the minimum wage is an issue of legislation in the Netherlands, the targets of the campaign were those in political and legislative power and the Minister and Social Affairs and Employment in particular. This is a major difference from the Clean Enough Campaign, where most of the campaign was focused on the employers and clients directly. The attention that the Young and United Campaign paid to employers was mostly to generate negative publicity for them. The strip tease by the supermarket worker at the Ahold shareholders’ meeting generated a lot of negative publicity and embarrassed the company. The media attention that it got also led to questions being asked in parliament and a motion of members of parliament for raising the youth minimum wage.

Both campaigns made use of publicity and the public sentiment to further their cause, but in very different ways. The Clean Enough campaign used strikes and other means of creating public awareness to further their cause, in a context of collective agreement negotiations. The strategy used in that campaign was to strengthen the position of the trade unions during the negotiation of new collective agreements between trade unions and employer’s organizations by putting pressure on employers through strikes. The Young and United Campaign had a similar aim, namely creating significant pressure to affect change. The Young and United Campaign however had a different target, namely those in charge of making legislation, rather than employers.

The most significant difference between the Clean Enough and the Young and United Campaign was the group that was mobilized. Due to the fact that the Clean Enough Campaign took place during the negotiation process of collective agreements the position of the cleaners as workers was emphasized, they used their position as workers to strike and they had a direct stake in the outcome of the collective agreement negotiations. The context of collective agreement negotiation was also one
in which it was employers vs. workers. In the case of the Young and United Campaign the positioning was that of citizens vs. legislators. This is signified by the petition that was signed by 130 000 citizens. Thus, the Young and United Campaign involved a much wider public and this has largely to do with the different context of collective agreement negotiation vs. an issue of legislation.

With respect to the Young and United Campaign the role of corporatism cannot completely be disregarded, however. In the Netherlands the Minister of Social Affairs and Employment is expected, to consult trade unions and employers’ organizations when it comes to legislative action with relation to labor. Therefore the distinction made in the theoretical framework between the Clean Enough Campaign as taking place within corporatism institutions and the Young and United Campaign outside of corporatist institutions is not a hardline distinction. From the perspective of trade unions, however, it is an important distinction with regard to their strategic power, meaning that while corporatism was indeed in play, it was laid at the foot of the Minister of Social Affairs and Employment to consult with the employers on issues of minimum wage.

An important issue to note is that while trade unions and employers are equal partners in Dutch corporatism, they however are not equal partners to the government. This can be witnessed in the discretionary powers of the Minister of Social Affairs and Employment to suspend collective agreements if these are in opposition to his/her broader policy goals. Therefore it is strategically smart for trade unions to sometimes engage with the government directly in certain situations. Using popular pressure to influence the policy priorities of the Minister of Social Affairs and Employment can in many ways be more effective than trade unions bringing grievances directly within the corporatist bodies.

Nevertheless the reality remains that in Dutch corporatism strong cooperation between employers, trade unions and the government is expected. Trade unions and workers are still dependent on employers and the government to achieve their goals. The government also has an interest in continuing to promote relative harmony between employers and workers, and therefore will not always surrender to public pressure. Hence the use of the Organizing Model as a means of generating public
pressure to get things done through the political process, rather than through the corporatist bodies also has its limits. This can be witnessed in the concessions that the Minister of Social Affairs and Employment made to be able to gradually phase out the minimum wage for those 21 and older.

Thus, the Organizing Model cannot be applied with total disregard for corporatism. Nevertheless critics such as De Turberville who focus on the institutional reality of corporatism still miss the point of how trade unions can adapt in such a way that Organizing Model can be used strategically to circumvent some of the institutional impediments that corporatism creates for them. The Clean Enough and Young and United Campaigns are cases in point. The Clean Enough Campaign used the tools that the corporatist system granted it (the legality of strikes) to implement the Organizing Model. The Young and United Campaign strategically fought a political campaign in which it put its demands to the Minister of Social Affairs and Employment, who in turn had to make the political calculation between satisfying the public or satisfying the employers’ representatives within the corporatist bodies.

From the perspective of De Turberville it would be right to argue that the fact that strikes were crucial to the success of the Clean Enough Campaign and the deployment of the Organizing Model in that campaign, shows that it is diametrically opposed to the spirit of the corporatist system. The fact that the Young and United Campaign used a different approach than the Clean Enough Campaign does not placate the concerns of De Turberville. He would likely argue that it is undesirable to create a situation in which trade unions create public pressure on issues of wage and labor regulation, because this would mean that trade unions are in the business of increasing antagonism between workers and employers, even if this is not happening during collective agreement negotiations.

From the perspective of trade unions, however, these actions are legitimate because they do not violate any laws or official procedures of corporatism. Furthermore it is not necessarily in the interest of trade unions to uphold the status quo in which harmony is the ultimate goal. With the changing nature of the workforce and the decline in membership, the Organizing Model has proved promising and in the Clean Enough and Young and United Campaigns.
In the cases of the Clean Enough and Young and United Campaigns, we can see that the FNV has used the Organizing Model wisely. The FNV was able to achieve results within the corporatist system with both campaigns. The focus of the Clean Enough Campaign on mobilizing the public sentiment against employers and clients and the Young and United Campaign on those in political power was successful in achieving material results. These campaigns have shown that the Organizing Model is capable of increasing recruitment, mobilization and reaping material results within the Dutch corporatist system.

8. Conclusion

Trade Unions in post-industrial economies are going through a difficult time, with membership numbers steadily declining. Therefore many trade unions are concerned with finding new ways of recruiting new members, mainly be taking into account to changes that have taken place in the workforce.

The FNV has since the publication of the 2007 report on the innovative strategies for trade union revitalization publicly stated the need for new strategies to incorporate young workers, ethnic minorities and the unemployed into the trade union to combat decline. The Organizing Model was presented as a strategy to mobilize these groups into becoming involved in trade unions. The concern, however of some scholars was that the use of the Organizing Model would not be able to achieve fruitful results within the corporatist context. In this thesis the focus was on two campaigns by the FNV in which the Organizing Model was applied. These campaigns are the Clean Enough Campaign and the Young and United Campaign.

The Organizing Model was applied successfully in both the Clean Enough and Young and United Campaigns in mobilizing cleaners and citizens respectively. The FNV was able to achieve significant result in both the Clean Enough and Young and United Campaigns by achieving some significant gains in wages and benefits. Thus the FNV has been successful in using the Organizing Model to put the trade union forward as a winning organization. In this regard the Organizing Model has been successful in
addressing some of the challenges the FNV was faced with, namely the recruitment and mobilization of ethnic minority and young workers in these respective campaigns. The second part of the research question suggests that there might be a tension between the Organizing Model and Dutch corporatism. Answering this part of the question requires more elaboration.

In the theoretical framework of this thesis a theoretical debate about whether the Organizing Model could be sustained within a corporatist context was laid out. The empirics of the Clean Enough Campaign have given very interesting insights in the dynamics between corporatism and the Organizing Model. The way that the Organizing Model was deployed in the Clean Enough Campaign technically did not violate the procedures of corporatism. What should be noted, however, is that saying that the Organizing Model is compatible with corporatism would be misleading. The applicability of the Organizing Model was mostly possible due to the fact that the corporatist system allows for strikes, and it is through these strikes that the strategies of the Organizing Model were applied. Strictly speaking these strikes fit within the corporatist system because the strikes were legal. Nevertheless, the aim of the corporatist system is to limit antagonism. Thus in the case of the Clean Enough campaign the application might have been legal, but if the Organizing Model structurally depends on strikes this will significantly alter the harmony the corporatist system seeks to achieve.

In the Young and United Campaign the Organizing Model was used in a different context, which was not a context of collective agreement negotiations. This campaign also showed that the campaigns that use the Organizing Model do not necessarily have to depend on strikes. The nature of the minimum wage as a legislative issue also made the focus of the campaign different. Where the Clean Enough Campaign was focused on employers and clients, the Young and United Campaign was focused on politicians. This made the mobilization strategy of the Young and United Campaign different from that of the Clean Enough Campaign. Where the Clean Enough Campaign’s organizing power rested in strikes and mobilization of workers, the power of the Young and United rested in the mobilization of citizens.
In essence the group that was mobilized and the target group at which this mobilization was directed are the chief differences between the Clean Enough Campaign and the Young and United Campaigns. There is also a difference in how these campaigns relate to corporatism. Where the Clean Enough Campaign used strikes to change the power dynamics within the collective agreement negotiations, the Young and United Campaign used popular pressure to incline the Minister of Social Affairs and Employment to take action. The Minister of Social Affairs and Employment has more clout in corporatist bodies than trade unions do. Thus using popular pressure to influence the policy goals of the Minister is a much more effective way than if trade unions would themselves advance the same cause through the corporatist bodies.

Thus, the focus on the Minister of Social Affairs and Employment was a good strategy for multiple reasons. The first is that the minimum wage is an issue of legislation and therefore falls under the responsibility of the government and the Minister of Social Affairs and Employment in particular. The Minister due to the nature of his job is also much more susceptible to public pressure than for example employers. This gave the Young and United Campaign the opportunity to make it a large campaign focused on the citizenry as a whole, which really helped the public profile of the union. Another important point is that while the Minister of Social Affairs and Employment is expected to consult the corporatist bodies on issues of wage policy, he has significant discretionary power to pursue his own policy goals. These policy goals can be significantly influenced by public pressure.

The reality of the Clean Enough and Young and United Campaigns, has shown that the distinction made in the theoretical framework between one taking place within the corporatist system and the other outside of the corporatist system, is not a hardline distinction. Neither campaign was able to circumvent corporatism completely, but what they were able to do is to strategically apply the Organizing Model within the corporatist system to achieve their goals. There is no evidence either, that the FNV’s goal is to end the corporatist system. From what we see in the Clean Enough and Young and United Campaigns is that it strategically wants to use the system to work in its favor.
The criticisms raised by De Turberville, about the fact that the Organizing Model will not fit within the corporatist system and traditional trade union organization is flawed. De Turberville underestimates the willingness of trade unions to reform and become more effective in involving workers directly in organizing. In the case of the FNV we can see it in the restructuring of the trade union, in which sectors are stronger and more autonomous. Therefore the argument of De Turberville that interests will collide because of centralized decision-making in European trade unions, does not apply.

Nevertheless, it is important to understand that trade unions are not the only actors involved in industrial relations and that challenging the corporatist system will have its limits. For example it is not in the interest of the Minister of Social Affairs and Employment to always give into public pressure and unsettle the corporatist system. This can be witnessed in the fact that the Minister of Social Affairs and Employment made a compromise with employers in exchange for the phasing out of the youth minimum wage. This means that in exchange for the phasing out of the youth minimum wage the employers also got something in return.

Although the Clean Enough and Young and United Campaigns have been successful in achieving their aims, it is difficult to say much about the sustainability of the Organizing Model within Dutch industrial relations in the future. What can clearly be derived from the experience of these two campaigns is that the Organizing Model is able to function within Dutch corporatism. The issue of subcontracting in the cleaning sector even shows that the Organizing Model played a crucial role within the corporatist system in involving clients. This would not have been possible if the Organizing Model was not applied, because then clients could continue hiding behind the fact that they are not party to the negotiation process. The question that remains, however, is whether the Organizing Model will be able to continue to reap benefits into the future, if antagonism between trade unions increases. This is something that remains to be seen and might be a subject for further research.
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