MAKING OR BREAKING INFORMAL VOLUNTEERING

Welfare statism and social capital in a sub-national comparative perspective

**Birte Gundelach, Markus Freitag and
Isabelle Stadelmann-Steffen**

University of Konstanz, Konstanz, Germany

ABSTRACT: This article evaluates the relationship between welfare state institutions and informal voluntary activity. In particular, we wish to investigate the extent to which welfare state arrangements influence the individual's decision to volunteer informally. Focusing on informal volunteering – a vital, yet often neglected form of social capital – we reinvestigate the hypotheses on crowding in and crowding out. Our sub-national multilevel analysis of the Swiss cantons reveals that there is no significant effect of welfare statism on informal volunteering. Cantonal differences in individual propensity to volunteer informally can rather be attributed to different cultural-linguistic backgrounds as well as to the cantonal degree of urbanisation.

Key words: informal volunteering; welfare state; crowding out; social capital

1. Introduction

Recent literature on social capital has increasingly been focusing on the role the state and political institutions have in the creation of social capital (e.g., Hooghe and Stolle 2003; Rothstein and Stolle 2003; Kumlin and Rothstein 2005; Freitag 2006; Larsen 2007; Rothstein and Stolle 2008). Over the course of the last two decades, social capital researchers have paid particular attention to the influence of welfare state institutions on the formation of civil society (Wolfe 1989; Skocpol 1996; Zijderveld 1999; Rothstein 2001; Salamon and Sokolowski 2003). While one of the leading hypotheses holds that expansionary welfare states harm social capital, another view, however, claims the opposite: Rather than crowding out the civic spirit in society, the welfare state promotes civic institutions and

practices (van Oorschot and Arts 2005). This well-known debate forms the starting point of our analysis. Although a growing number of studies focus on the welfare state–social capital nexus, two important issues remain to be addressed.

First, we argue that for a better understanding of the effects of welfare state arrangements on social capital one needs to move beyond general discussions of welfare state impact on social capital; instead, one should concentrate on *specific* forms of social capital. In this respect, we will investigate the effect of welfare state institutions on an important, yet often neglected form of social capital in this debate, namely, informal voluntary work. In general, *volunteering* is defined as follows: '*Volunteering means any activity in which time is given freely to benefit another person, group or organization*' (Wilson 2000: 215; emphasis added). To date, only a handful of authors have analysed the connection between social capital and welfare statism by focusing on *informal* volunteering (Boje and Strandh 2005; Kääriäinen and Lehtonen 2006; Finsveen *et al.* 2008; van der Meer *et al.* 2008). While *formal* volunteering through organisations that recruit and organise volunteers is an adequate (and frequently used) indicator for social cohesion, so too is *informal* voluntary activity. Informal volunteering refers to activities such as helping and supporting friends, neighbours, acquaintances and relatives (outside of one's own household) that take place directly between the people involved and outside of any formally organised structure. Social networks are built equally well on these less formal and more private person-to-person kinds of social interaction, typical in the context of unpaid informal work (Boje and Strandh 2005). More importantly, recent research on volunteering has shown that it is informal volunteering in particular that bolsters social cohesion of society (Kwak *et al.* 2004; Boje and Strandh 2005; Taylor 2005; Stadelmann-Steffen *et al.* 2007). Having said this, we argue that a specific type of social capital is immanent within informal volunteering, as this non-paid activity encompasses both social interaction as well as the inherent value of this interaction. This special attribute of informal volunteering is well illustrated by the so-called *third person criterion* (Bühlmann and Schmid 1999): Voluntary vs. recreational or leisure activities are accordingly differentiated by ascertaining whether it is possible to pay a third person to conduct the activity in question. For example, exercising or a trip to the beauty salon rank among recreational or leisure activities because a third person cannot be paid to do these activities for someone else. Driving someone outside of one's own household to sports practice or to the dentist are regarded as informal volunteering in the sense of the above definition. By means of the third person criterion, a defined material or immaterial value is assigned to any voluntary social activity so that informal volunteering

becomes social *capital*.¹ Finally, with regard to previous research on welfare systems and social capital, the results concerning the crowding in or crowding out effect seem to strongly depend on the respective dimension of social capital (Van Oorschot *et al.* 2005; Kääriäinen and Lehtonen 2006; Stadelmann-Steffen forthcoming). Social capital comprises both structural aspects (i.e., social networks) as well as cultural aspects (i.e., trust and social norms and values) (van Deth 2003). Whereas empirical results concerning social trust predominantly reject the crowding out hypothesis (Rothstein and Stolle 2003; Delhey and Newton 2005; Kumlin and Rothstein 2005), we find a variety of contradictory results with respect to the structural dimension of social capital, meaning informal and formal voluntary activities, and social contacts (see for example Curtis *et al.* 2001; Scheepers *et al.* 2002; van Oorschot and Arts 2005; van der Meer *et al.* 2009). In addition to these rather inconclusive findings, empirical results on informal volunteering remain very scarce (Boje and Strandh 2005; Kääriäinen and Lehtonen 2006; Finsveen *et al.* 2008; van der Meer *et al.* 2008).

Second, since informal volunteering is an inherently local social phenomenon, we will confine our analysis to the sub-national level;² more precisely, we will investigate the influence of Swiss cantonal welfare state regimes on individual informal volunteer activity. The Swiss cantons are particularly well-suited to such an analysis, as they are powerful political entities in an exceptionally decentralized federation (Lijphart 1999; Vatter 2002). Although the Swiss cantons comprise a multitude of political and economic structures, they remain entities within a single national political system and therefore have many characteristics in

1. An informal voluntary activity is profitable for the supplier as well as for the beneficiary: The recipient benefits from the volunteer's charitableness, whose dedication can, in turn, be regarded as an investment in social capital, thereby generating an obligation on the part of the beneficiary which may be honoured in the future. This rule is valid particularly if norms of reciprocity are observed and if there is a high degree of interpersonal trust between the involved persons.
2. *Informal* voluntary activity (helping and supporting people around us like friends, neighbours, acquaintances) is virtually per definition an activity that takes place in the proximate social surroundings. We are well aware, however, that – at least theoretically – there are possible situations in which this type of volunteering takes place beyond one's immediate community. We are grateful to the anonymous reviewers for this comment; however, looking at the overall empirical results on informal volunteering in the Swiss Volunteering Study (2007), we conclude that it is correct to define informal volunteering in Switzerland as a truly local phenomenon (Stadelmann-Steffen *et al.* 2007). In Switzerland even the *formal* voluntary activity is predominantly performed locally: The Swiss Volunteering Survey (2007) shows that over 80% of the Swiss indicate that their formal voluntary activity is locally oriented (*ibid.*).

common that may be treated as constants (Vatter 2002; Vatter and Freitag 2007). In this sense, intra-national comparisons may prove more fruitful than comparisons at the national level. This type of comparison also lends itself quite well to the demands of a most similar systems research design (Przeworski and Teune 1970; Lijphart 1975). The Swiss cantons therefore present an excellent opportunity to assess the effect of welfare state policy, exhibiting considerable autonomy in social policy and therefore substantial differences in the orientation and the design of instruments and measures implemented. These differences have also been noted by Armingeon *et al.* (2004), who – based on Esping-Andersen (1990) – identify four types of cantonal social security systems: liberal, conservative-Catholic, social democratic and a mixed regime that shares attributes of the first two systems, labelled liberal-conservative. With this typology, they are able to illustrate that the differences in the cantonal welfare state policies in fact resemble those between national welfare regimes.

Our approach is to use hierarchical models to simultaneously illuminate individual, societal, and, in particular, political-institutional conditions for informal voluntary activities in a systematic comparative manner. In empirical social research, this methodology is seen as a tried and tested means for overcoming micro-macro dualism, since individual attitudes and behaviour are structured both by personal traits and social context (Anderson and Singer 2008). In other words, societal conditions structure individual attitudes and influence personal behaviour. The individual data for our analysis come from the Swiss Volunteering Survey 2007 (*Freiwilligen-Monitor Schweiz*); official statistics are used for the aggregate-level data.

The article is structured as follows: In the next section we present previous research on the topic and illustrate the theoretical links between welfare state institutions and social capital as well as the hypotheses derived from them. We then present the data and methodological references in section 3, continuing with the empirical analysis in section 4. The article closes with a summary of the most important findings and some conclusions.

2. Theory, hypotheses and previous research

This study evaluates the relationship between welfare state institutions and individual informal voluntary activity. In particular, we wish to investigate the extent to which welfare state arrangements influence individual informal volunteering activity. Viewed analytically, this inquiry forces us to take hierarchical structures into account, as the assumption is posited that a macro-level condition (welfare state) is capable of

influencing actions on the micro-level (the decision to volunteer). Theoretically, interactions with one's social surroundings or the observation of one's environment can shape individual choices. A specific incentive offered by the individual's economic and socio-political surroundings can influence the individual to act in a particular manner. From the perspective of neo-institutionalism, political institutions mould individual preferences and stimulate or limit behavioural options by means of certain incentive mechanisms (Mayntz and Scharpf 1995; Hall and Taylor 1996; Immergut 1998). In other words, contextual conditions act as an opportunity structure and influence individual attitudes and personal behavioural patterns (Schofer and Fourcade-Gourinchas 2001: 810). According to comparative studies on volunteering, incentive mechanisms encompass aspects of the government systems, as well as welfare state arrangements (Rothstein and Stolle 2003; Freitag 2006). This type of institutional research perspective places a broad critical focus on incentives or possible institutionalised barriers that coincide with civic engagement.

In this context, public services can be seen as 'secondary institutions', as the welfare state, once created, 'can become an instrument of establishing and constructing identities' (Crepaz 2007: 137). Consequently, the design of welfare state arrangements can influence individual attitudes and personal behavioural patterns in ways similar to the primary institutional setting of a country. For example, welfare state programs confer resources on and create specific incentives for individuals that structure and affect important personal choices, e.g., in terms of whether or not to volunteer (Esping-Andersen 1990; Pierson 1993). Furthering this line of thought leads to competing considerations on how to theorise on the relationship between welfare state policy and informal volunteering in detail. In general, two different theoretically plausible conjectures are found within the literature.

The first approach advocates the so-called 'crowding out' hypothesis (Habermas 1973; Offe 1984; Wolfe 1989; Coleman 1991; Etzioni 1994; Zijderveld 1999; Fukuyama 2000; Putnam 2000; Karlson 2004). Scholars supporting this perspective argue that encompassing welfare programs suppress private obligations presumed to build strong reciprocal ties for mutual support in situations of distress. Rather than relying on private social networks, the welfare state's citizens rely on the state's responsibility to guarantee social benefits in times of need. Consequently, social engagement in private personal networks decreases: '[P]eople will lose their moral sense of collective and communal duties and responsibilities' (van Oorschot and Arts 2005: 6). In other words, a well-developed welfare state reduces the need for privately organised initiatives and thus leads to a 'crowding out' of informal voluntary work. The fundamental assumption of this perspective holds that the public

provision of social services competes with social support and help provided privately by one's fellow citizens. If the state takes on these tasks, civic engagement, and particularly informal voluntary work, becomes less necessary. The resulting lack of initiative of the civic actors induces a passive civil society. This discussion thus leads to the following working hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: The more encompassing the welfare state arrangements are, the greater the likelihood that informal volunteer activity will be crowded out by state activities.

In particular, *social* volunteering, that is informal voluntary activities that incorporate specifically personal helping or personal assistance, is most directly related to public welfare state activities. It should thus be the area where we are most likely to find a crowding out effect, since a potential trade-off between public and private services, a substitution effect, is most probable if the activities compared (of the state and civil society) can replace each other (Stadelmann-Steffen forthcoming). In the empirical analysis we will therefore test the hypothesis not only considering general informal volunteering but also considering specifically *social* informal volunteering.

A second approach, the so-called 'crowding in' hypothesis, assumes the existence of a more balanced and complementary relationship between the welfare state and private initiatives. In this vein, it is assumed that pervasive welfare state arrangements create the 'structural and cultural conditions' (van Oorschot and Arts 2005: 6) that pave the way for successful creation of informal voluntary activity (Skocpol 1996; Kuhnle and Alesalo 2000; Rothstein 2001; Salamon and Sokolowski 2003; Torpe 2003): Broad welfare programs help to provide circumstances of social peace and trust that afford people social security, thereby assuaging concerns over maintaining a living. People thus have increased financial and time resources which can be devoted to developing and maintaining informal volunteer work. According to this theory, the state and civil society do not necessarily perform identical functions. As such, generous welfare state services do not replace civic activities; rather, they allow for a differentiation of civil society into pre-defined areas (Kumlin and Rothstein 2005). However, according to this perspective, the state continues to be responsible for certain welfare services and seeks to cooperate with individual and societal actors. Against this background, welfare state models that are less hierarchically and bureaucratically structured provide increased opportunities for informal voluntary activity as a non-governmental source of public goods and services capable of relieving the professional

systems (Heinze and Olk 2001; Zimmer 2007). From this discussion, the following working hypothesis is formed:

Hypothesis 2: The more encompassing the welfare state arrangements are, the greater the likelihood that informal volunteer activity will be strengthened by state activities.

Empirical evidence on the relationship between *informal* volunteering and welfare states is scarce and rather inconclusive. Whereas a number of studies examining *formal* volunteering reject the crowding out hypothesis (see e.g., Künemund and Rein 1999; Nicolaysen 2001; Salamon and Sokolowski 2003; Boje and Strandh 2005; Dahlberg 2005; van Oorschot and Arts 2005; Kääriäinen and Lehtonen 2006), a very limited number of contributions suggests that the informal type of volunteering tends to be unrelated to the welfare state regime type – contrasting conventional theoretical accounts on volunteering and welfare statism. In their analysis of only seven European countries, Boje and Strandh (2005) show that the level of informal volunteering is ‘high in Sweden, Czech Republic and Romania, medium in the Netherlands and Bulgaria and low in the United Kingdom and Hungary’ (18), concluding consequently that no clear differences can be observed between the conventionally distinguished welfare state regime types. Neglecting other controlling factors, Finsveen *et al.* (2008) reveal that in the Scandinavian welfare state, more informal help is provided than in conservative ones and that inhabitants of the Southern regime type in turn provide less help than people living in conservative regimes. However, they are unable to empirically illustrate a significant difference between the attitudes on informal volunteering in Scandinavian social democratic regimes and those in the liberal welfare states. Moreover, this study does find no link between informal help and social spending statistics. Based on a social support index Kääriäinen and Lehtonen (2006) also present no systematic relationship between welfare state type and informal help. Similarly, van der Meer *et al.* (2008) detect no significant effects of social spending expenditures on informal volunteering. In sum, scholars find either no significant relationship or that the differences between regime types do not correspond to predictions based on the crowding out or crowding in hypotheses.³

3. We should repeat that the focus in this article is on one specific aspect of informal social capital, namely informal *volunteering*. Therefore, we do not consider other contributions that address informal social capital without explicit mention of informal *volunteering* (see e.g., Scheepers *et al.* 2002 and van der Meer *et al.* 2009).

3. Data, variables and methodological approach

For the remainder of this paper, our primary focus will be on testing the hypotheses presented above. The dependent variable is the reported individual informal volunteering activity as indicated by the Swiss Volunteering Survey 2007: 'In addition to formal volunteering in associations and other organisations, there are alternative opportunities for volunteering. Did you perform another type of unpaid work beyond volunteering in associations or other organisations, such as babysitting (children other than your own), neighbourly-aid, participating in any kind of projects, organising a (street) party in your neighbourhood, etc. in the last four weeks? (The work has to be for the benefit of people *outside* one's own household)' (question 46, own translation). Respondents indicating informal voluntary engagement were allocated the values of 1, while all others were assigned the value 0. We proceed analogously in order to measure *social* volunteering. Here, only respondents who indicate informal voluntary activities that imply personal helping or personal assistance were allocated the values of 1, while all others were assigned the value 0. Informal volunteering rates vary considerably across cantons. For instance, in Geneva, Zug and Ticino, only about a quarter of the resident population reported to have engaged in informal voluntary activities, whereas front-runners Nidwalden and Appenzell Inner-Rhodes have informal volunteering rates of 48 and 55%, respectively (see Table A in the appendix). The extent to which individual propensities to volunteer informally in a canton can be attributed to differently designed welfare state institutions is addressed thoroughly in the following analysis.

The central explanatory variable is the welfare state regime type. We will run three regression models, each with an alternative operationalisation of the welfare state. We will use Armingeon *et al.*'s (2004) indicator for welfare state regime type. The ideal welfare types applied to the Swiss cantons can be described as follows (Armingeon *et al.* 2004: 23–4): The *liberal welfare state* is marked by a restricted transfer of payments. It relies primarily on market solutions to meet societal needs. People in distress can turn to residual mean-tested public social programs only as a last resort. This basic social security net provides no further guarantees beyond the poverty line. In place of providing public welfare schemes, liberal systems rather subsidise private insurance plans, which therefore become necessary for people to protect themselves against risks like unemployment, disease, poverty in old age, etc. By contrast, in the *conservative-Catholic welfare state*, there are generous income transfers and social services; benefits, however, are based on previous earnings and the social status the affected person had during employment. Assistance

through public welfare programs is not provided until the family's capability to support itself is exhausted. This type of welfare regime encourages traditional family structures; it perpetuates the traditional model of the male breadwinner (Saint-Arnaud and Bernard 2003). The *social democratic welfare regime* implies comprehensive social programmes, which, by design, are universal. Programmes aim primarily to balance social inequality, irrespective of former employment status, gender, nationality, etc. Generally, the system tends to socialise the costs of raising a family and provides opportunities for individual independence (Rostila 2007: 225). See Table B in the appendix for the classification of cantons used in the following analysis.⁴

Furthermore, we will supplement the measurement of the aforementioned welfare state arrangements by social spending statistics: Here, we use two different indicators, namely, the cantonal welfare state's social spending per capita (understood as welfare state generosity) and the cantonal welfare state's social spending as a percentage of the GDP (conceived as welfare state priority). Social expenditures as a percentage of the GDP is the most widely used indicator of welfare efforts in empirical literature. It can be seen as a measure of the importance of welfare state policy relative to a country's available resources. The main shortcoming is the fact that the measure not only depends on public social spending, but also on the GDP, implying that high values of this indicator can be driven both by substantial social spending and a comparatively low GDP. Social expenditures per capita take into account that the effect of welfare spending depends largely on how much could actually be paid per a given population. See Table B in the appendix for the cantons' social spending statistics.

Although we focus on the welfare state regime as the pivotal independent variable explaining the variation in informal volunteering across cantons, we

4. As mentioned above, Armingeon *et al.* (2004) distinguish four different types of welfare state regimes: liberal, conservative, social democratic and liberal-conservative. Concerning the detailed procedure for the classification of cantonal welfare regimes, we refer to the description given by Armingeon *et al.* (2004). For simplicity's sake, we combine the conservative and liberal-conservative categories in our empirical analysis. This procedure is straightforward as the liberal and the social democratic welfare states are the most clearly distinguished types of welfare states and typically seen as the classic antipodes in welfare state typologies whereas the conservative type is in itself a hybrid as is the case with the liberal-conservative in the Swiss cantons. Furthermore, results do not differ if we do not collapse the two hybrids in one category. Additionally, Armingeon *et al.* (2004) investigate four different sub-regimes of the cantonal welfare regimes, namely, employment, education, taxation and social security. We will limit our analysis to the field of social security because, at least theoretically, this field is the most directly connected to engagement in informal volunteering, which mainly covers informal assistance.

will also include various controls at the individual and contextual levels of analysis. In addition to institutional arrangements affecting the incentives for individuals to volunteer informally, previous research on the determinants of volunteering show a variety of other factors that should be considered in order to avoid invalid findings. Concerning the selection of control variables at the *individual* level, we draw on the findings of previous research dedicated to explaining volunteerism (see Wilson 2000 for an overview). The final selection of variables is based on Verba *et al.* (1995). They argue that there are three reasons as to why individuals do *not* actively participate: 'because they can't; because they don't want to; or because nobody asked' (15). Therefore, a willingness to volunteer informally implies resources (such as time, money, and education), psychological engagement with collective and communal duties (socio-cultural aspects such as religiosity) and social contacts (acquaintances, family) that simplify recruitment and provide opportunities to volunteer. In order to capture the factors mentioned by Verba *et al.* (1995) and including standard demographics, the following individual variables should be considered as potential determinants of informal volunteering: level of education, professional status, nationality (national/foreigner), employment status, number of children, duration of residency, religious denomination, age, and gender. Data for these variables are taken from the Swiss Volunteering Survey 2007.

To take potential confounding *contextual* variables into account, we include the cantonal level of urbanisation, language region and religious context in our analysis. Previous research on volunteering in Switzerland shows that these variables proved to be of importance in explaining volunteering (see e.g., Bühlmann and Freitag 2007). Whereas the degree of urbanisation is supposed to have a negative impact on informal volunteering (Kriesi 2004), research on Swiss informal volunteering consistently shows that voluntary activity in the Swiss German cantons is significantly higher than in the Latin language region (cp. Stadelmann-Steffen *et al.* 2007). We further assume that a canton's religious context (measured by the share of non-religious people) impacts informal volunteering: In regions with larger shares of a religious population, individuals are presumed to exhibit an increased propensity to volunteer informally than in areas that are less devout (Bühlmann and Freitag 2007).⁵ We use the values of the contextual factors measured prior to

5. It is widely accepted that religious people generally share an ethic that boosts the propensity to volunteer, compared to non-religious people (Wilson and Musick 1997). Ideally, we would base our measurement of the religious context (the share of religious people) on considerations such as church attendance, frequency of prayer, or similar more direct measurements of religiosity. Unfortunately such data is not available.

2006 to ensure that the potential cause precedes the effect. Further details on data sources and operationalisation of variables used in the analysis can be found in Table C of the appendix.

The nature of the research question, as well as the hierarchical structure of the data, call for multilevel analysis: We will examine the influence of contextual variables on individual behaviour (thereby controlling for individual characteristics), namely, the type of welfare state system on informal volunteering. Since the dependent variable is binary (informal volunteering: yes/no), we will use multilevel logistic regression to explain individual informal volunteering behaviour:

$$L_{ij} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1ij} + \dots + \beta_p X_{pij} + \alpha_1 Z_{1j} + \dots + \alpha_q Z_{qj} + \mu_{0j} + \varepsilon_{ij}$$

The engagement in voluntary activity of individual i in canton j is explained by the average intercept (β_0), several individual variables (X_1 to X_p and their estimates β_1 to β_p , respectively), and characteristics of the cantons (Z_1 to Z_q and their estimates α_1 to α_q , respectively). Following this approach, we are able to model individual based differences (ε_{ij}) and context dependent differences (μ_{0j}) concerning the average informal voluntary activity.

4. Empirical results: informal volunteering in the welfare state

In this section we subject our theory-derived relationships to empirical tests, with a focus on the influence of welfare state arrangements on the development of informal volunteering. As mentioned above, we will present three different models, each with different operationalisation of the welfare state. The first and second model quantitatively measure welfare statism using cantonal social spending per capita and cantonal social spending as a percentage of the GDP, respectively. Model 3 estimates welfare statism qualitatively using the regime typology of Armingeon *et al.* (2004) based on Esping-Andersen (1990). As can be seen in Table 1 the results for the 'empty models' yield statistically

TABLE 1. Empty models

	Informal volunteering	Social informal volunteering
Contextual variance	0.03 (0.01)	0.08 (0.01)
Likelihood Ratio test vs. logistic regression	20.54***	72.83***

Note: Estimated contextual variance, standard errors in brackets. Individual variance is set to 1, with standard error 0. *** $P < 0.001$

significant contextual variance. In addition, the 'likelihood ratio test versus logistic regression' provided by STATA.10 also confirms the adequacy of using multilevel analysis for the data at hand.

First, we will briefly report findings at the individual level of analysis, continuing with a presentation of effects at the contextual level, paying special attention to the welfare state regime type (see Table 2).

Overall, individual findings are consistent with previous results on informal volunteering in Switzerland (Nollert and Huser 2007; Stadelmann-Steffen *et al.* 2007). The estimations confirm that educational attainment does not substantively influence informal engagement. Nevertheless, a higher professional status (currently or in the past) is associated with more frequent informal volunteerism than a lower status. Concerning employment status, non-working people and part-time workers tend to engage more frequently in informal volunteer activities than full-time workers.⁶ Affirming former studies' findings, foreigners participate less than Swiss nationals. Furthermore, social integration reveals to be an important factor for being involved in informal voluntary activities: Having school-aged children at home as well as a relatively long duration of residency positively affects informal volunteering. In corroboration with prior research, the relationship between informal volunteering and age is inversely u-shaped, with women being more active than men. Finally, there is no statistically significant effect of individual religiosity on informal volunteering.⁷

We will now address empirical findings at the contextual level of analysis. First, we can state that results of each of the three models, irrespective of the operationalisation of the welfare state, point consistently to the same conclusion regarding the influence of welfare state policy on informal volunteering. Although the signs of the regression coefficient of the welfare state variables uniformly indicate a crowding out of informal volunteering by welfare statism, none of the coefficients reach statistical significance. Consequently, we conclude that there is no

6. We had insufficient data on occupation and income and we therefore could not directly include these variables in our models. The educational level and the professional status represent the best proxies available for the socioeconomic status. Further data measuring social class (cp. Davis Smith 1998) were not available in the Swiss Volunteering Survey 2007.

7. In models not presented in the article, we checked if the results changed by introducing further individual controls sometimes used to explain voluntary activity, such as trust, political interest, and contact frequency with friends; the inclusion of these controls did not however change our results. Against this background, we decided to keep the parsimonious model, excluding variables being not explicitly a root cause of informal volunteering. We thank the anonymous reviewer for pointing out this matter.

TABLE 2. Welfare statism and informal volunteering – multilevel logistic regression

	<i>Social spending per capita</i>	<i>Social spending as % of GDP</i>	<i>Welfare regime type</i>
<i>Fixed effects</i>	<i>Log odds (standard error)</i>		
Individual level			
<i>Resources</i>			
Education (ref: middle)			
Education none completed	− 0.721*** (0.198)	− 0.720*** (0.198)	− 0.720*** (0.198)
Education low	0.002 (0.090)	0.001 (0.090)	0.002 (0.090)
Education high	0.064 (0.063)	0.064 (0.063)	0.066 (0.063)
Professional status	0.298*** (0.062)	0.298*** (0.062)	0.298*** (0.062)
Employment status (ref: full-time)			
Part-time	0.373*** (0.073)	0.374*** (0.073)	0.375*** (0.073)
Not working	0.476*** (0.117)	0.476*** (0.117)	0.475*** (0.117)
Foreigner	− 0.441*** (0.087)	− 0.441*** (0.087)	− 0.435*** (0.087)
<i>Social integration</i>			
Children	0.347*** (0.070)	0.348*** (0.070)	0.348*** (0.070)
Duration of residency	0.184* (0.078)	0.183* (0.078)	0.191* (0.078)
<i>Socio-cultural aspects</i>			
Religiosity	0.025 (0.080)	0.024 (0.080)	0.024 (0.080)
<i>Socio-demographics</i>			
Age	0.019 (0.010)	0.024 (0.080)	0.019 (0.010)
Age ²	− 0.000** (0.000)	− 0.000** (0.000)	− 0.000** (0.000)
Sex	− 0.385*** (0.063)	− 0.385*** (0.063)	− 0.385*** (0.063)
Contextual level			
Welfare Effort	− 0.000 (0.000)	− 7.594 (10.593)	
Welfare regime type (ref: social democratic)			
Liberal			0.118 (0.096)
Conservative			0.136 (0.090)
Urbanisation	− 0.004* (0.002)	− 0.004* (0.002)	− 0.002 (0.002)
Language Region	0.003* (0.001)	0.003* (0.001)	0.004*** (0.001)
Religious Context	1.589 (0.873)	1.289 (0.727)	1.209 (0.671)
Constant	− 0.954*** (0.278)	− 0.928** (0.294)	− 1.235*** (0.309)
Random effect			
Contextual variance	1.60e-13 (4.14e-08)	7.15e-11 (8.91e-07)	1.30e-20 (8.88e-12)
% of variance explained	100%	100%	100%
N (# of cantons)	5951 (26)	5951 (26)	5951 (26)
Deviance	7695.484	7695.784	7693.930

Note: * $P < 0.05$; ** $P < 0.01$; *** $P < 0.001$.

meaningful effect of the characteristic shaping of welfare state arrangements on informal volunteering in Switzerland – neither confirming the argument of welfare state optimists, nor that of pessimists.

In further analyses, we tested the effect of welfare state effort exclusively on *social* informal volunteering, meaning informal voluntary activities that incorporate personal helping or personal assistance. As mentioned above, a crowding out effect should therefore be most probable for this specified area of informal volunteering since a potential trade-off between public and private services, is most probable if the activities compared (of the state and civil society) can replace each other. However, as can be seen in these re-specified models (Table 3), neither the welfare state effort nor the welfare regime types are significantly associated with social informal volunteering.

Relating the results to the meagre body of research on informal volunteering in the welfare state, we are able to add strength to the general finding that there is no clear story to be told on this relationship. In line with the analyses provided by Boje and Strandh (2005), Finsveen *et al.* (2008), Kääriäinen and Lehtonen (2006), and van der Meer *et al.* (2008), we detect no significant effects of social spending expenditures or welfare state regimes on informal volunteering in our sub-national analysis.

With regard to the control variables, our analysis shows that the individual's propensity to volunteer informally is influenced by the degree of urbanisation and the cultural background shaped by the linguistic region in which one resides. These socio-structural and cultural effects dominate the shaping of individual informal volunteerism such that there is no significant role for welfare state institutions to play. The higher the degree of urbanisation, the lesser the extent of informal volunteering. Furthermore, Swiss-Germans' informal voluntary activity is significantly higher than that of the French-speaking and Italian-speaking Swiss. We have to note though that basing calculations on the welfare state typology, the effect of urbanisation loses statistical significance; the influence of the linguistic region however remains robust.⁸ Notably, the German-speaking cantons are those cantons with the most liberal institutions of social welfare politics, while in the French- and Italian-speaking cantons,

8. We tested the sensitivity of the empirical findings by including other controlling factors such as cantonal GDP, cantonal direct democracy, cantonal autonomy, share of Protestants and Catholics, respectively, age distribution of the cantonal populations. However, the results do not change in any substantive way: While the welfare state variables remain statistically insignificant, the language region and/or the degree of urbanisation consistently show statistically significant effects on informal volunteering. Furthermore, results do not change if we exclude Basle-Town and/or Geneva – both exhibiting remarkably high social spending figures per capita – from the analysis.

TABLE 3. Welfare statism and informal social volunteering – multilevel logistic regression

	<i>Social spending per capita</i>	<i>Social spending as % of GDP</i>	<i>Welfare regime type</i>
<i>Fixed effects</i>	<i>Log odds (standard error)</i>		
Individual level			
<i>Resources</i>			
Education (ref: middle)			
Education none completed	− 0.852*** (0.246)	− 0.852*** (0.246)	− 0.843*** (0.246)
Education low	− 0.064 (0.099)	− 0.064 (0.100)	− 0.061 (0.100)
Education high	0.012 (0.070)	0.011 (0.070)	0.012 (0.070)
Professional status	0.185** (0.068)	0.184** (0.068)	0.184** (0.068)
Employment status (ref: full-time)			
Part-time	0.270*** (0.080)	0.271*** (0.080)	0.270*** (0.080)
Not working	0.402** (0.129)	0.403** (0.129)	0.399** (0.129)
Foreigner	− 0.391*** (0.100)	− 0.391*** (0.100)	− 0.395*** (0.100)
<i>Social integration</i>			
Children	0.304*** (0.077)	0.304*** (0.077)	0.305*** (0.077)
Duration of residency	0.246** (0.089)	0.245** (0.089)	0.240** (0.089)
<i>Socio-cultural aspects</i>			
Religiosity	0.008 (0.089)	0.007 (0.089)	0.009 (0.089)
<i>Socio-demographics</i>			
Age	0.028* (0.011)	0.028* (0.011)	0.028* (0.011)
Age ²	− 0.000** (0.000)	− 0.000** (0.000)	− 0.000** (0.000)
Sex	− 0.501*** (0.070)	− 0.500*** (0.070)	− 0.499*** (0.070)
Contextual level			
Welfare Effort	− 0.000 (0.000)	− 10.072 (11.805)	
Welfare regime type (ref: social democratic)			
Liberal			− 0.067 (0.104)
Conservative			− 0.128 (0.100)
Urbanisation	− 0.002 (0.002)	− 0.002 (0.002)	− 0.003 (0.002)
Language Region	0.006*** (0.001)	0.006*** (0.001)	0.006*** (0.001)
Religious Context	0.918 (0.969)	0.620 (0.804)	0.200 (0.748)
Constant	− 2.049*** (0.315)	− 2.003*** (0.333)	− 1.940*** (0.346)
Random effect			
Contextual variance	3.21e-13 (5.28e-08)	1.32e-12 (1.08e-07)	8.75e-15 (7.94e-09)
% of variance explained	100%	100%	100%
N (# of cantons)	5951 (26)	5951 (26)	5951 (26)
Deviance	6657.28	6657.37	6656.33

Note: * $P < 0.05$; ** $P < 0.01$; *** $P < 0.001$.

conservative and social democratic welfare statism prevails. It is therefore a very complex task to neatly disentangle the cultural aspects (language region) from the institutional feature (welfare state).⁹ Nevertheless, together these cantonal characteristics can completely explain cantonal differences in informal volunteering.¹⁰

5. Conclusion

The interplay between a state's civil society and its welfare state politics is currently receiving a great deal of attention in academic debates. The turning point in this debate is the question of the extent to which state-organised social services can replace or, conversely, promote (informal) voluntary activity by members of society (Dahlberg 2005). Although most studies have found an influence of welfare state politics on civic engagement or trust, the direction of the effect of this relationship has been assessed differently depending on the indicators examined (cp. for example Boje and Strandh 2005; Daatland and Lowenstein 2005; Scheepers and Grotenhuis 2005; van Oorschot and Arts 2005; van Oorschot *et al.* 2005; Kääriäinen and Lehtonen 2006; Stadelmann-Steffen forthcoming).

In their empirical analyses, researchers focus on different aspects of civil society or social capital, sometimes focusing on the structural aspects, foremost social networks and sometimes on the cultural facet, mainly social trust. With regard to social trust, the investigations clearly corroborate the assumption that a comprehensive welfare state provides optimal conditions for a deep trusting society, explicitly rejecting the crowding out of social trust as one important component of the social capital concept. Nevertheless, no paralleled level of clarity exists concerning the network aspect of social capital. In this domain, either the conflicting reasoning found in the theoretical accounts gets carried over to the empirical results or researchers find no effect whatsoever.

In view of the strong theoretical argument suggesting a systematic influence of political institutions such as the welfare state on informal volunteering on the one hand, and the inconclusiveness of results on the other, we investigated this matter – this time with an alternatively

9. However, tests of multi-collinearity at the contextual level of analysis show that, according to common standards, multi-collinearity is not an issue for our models: variance inflation factors (VIFs) on the contextual level do not exceed 2.65, 2.8 or 2.61 for the models 1, 2, and 3, respectively.

10. Compared to the null model, the contextual variables account for 100 percent of variance at the cantonal level.

elaborated research design and high quality data on informal volunteering in Switzerland. Rather than focusing on cross-national comparisons, we have 'scaled down' (Snyder 2001) to the sub-national level. Using multilevel analysis, we have investigated the influence of welfare state commitment in the Swiss cantons on a fundamental dimension of individual social capital – informal volunteering.

Particularly in Switzerland, recent findings have shown that it is the informal kind of unpaid work that is the most important and dominant form of volunteering and, as such, an indispensable element of the social capital keeping society together (Stadelmann-Steffen *et al.* 2007). Similarly to Boje and Strandh (2005), Finsveen *et al.* (2008), Kääriäinen and Lehtonen (2006), and van der Meer *et al.* (2008), we do not find any conclusive impact of welfare state size on informal voluntary activity. Our sub-national analysis of the Swiss welfare statism thus confirms these cross-national investigations of welfare state effects. Individual propensity to volunteer informally in the Alpine Republic is steered rather by socio-structural and cultural conditions than by welfare institutions. Regardless of the characteristic shaping of the welfare state, individuals living in the countryside simply engage more frequently in voluntary activities. The same holds true for people from a Swiss-German cultural background. In short, we found neither a crowding in nor a crowding out effect of the cantonal welfare state programmes on informal volunteering activity.

These findings could indicate that the theoretical importance attributed to the impact of welfare state size on social capital is, at least concerning informal volunteering in Switzerland, overemphasized. However, we should not hastily conclude that there is no effect at all of welfare statism on informal volunteering. Welfare state arrangements may crowd out voluntary engagement in some instances, while boosting engagement in other contexts (Stadelmann-Steffen forthcoming), thereby preventing a clear result in statistical terms to be found in the present analysis. Before we abandon the theoretically strong idea that welfare state arrangements could have a substantive impact on informal volunteer behaviour, we should first refine the analysis on this topic: It is necessary to further theoretically and empirically single out which aspects of welfare state arrangements, which institutions and which kind of welfare spending are directly connected to individual willingness and capability to volunteer informally in specified areas. Moreover, we should elaborate on the measurement of welfare state efforts in order to ensure more reliable empirical analyses in this field. The measurements currently used in the investigations on social capital in welfare states are indeed very rough measurements and are far from providing an encompassing picture of comprehensive welfare states. The persistent urgency to reform the welfare systems, coupled with the indispensable role that informal

volunteering plays in keeping society together, serves as a motivational push to overcome these shortcomings in further research.

References

- Anderson, C. J. and Singer, M. M. (2008) 'The sensitive left and the impervious right. Multilevel models and the politics of inequality, ideology, and legitimacy in Europe', *Comparative Political Studies* 20: 1–26.
- Armington, K., Bertozzi, F. and Bonoli, G. (2004) 'Swiss worlds of welfare', *West European Politics* 27: 20–44.
- Boje, T. P. and Strandh, M. (2005) 'Different worlds of volunteering and informal care in Europe', paper presented at the Second Annual ESPAnet Conference, University of Fribourg, Switzerland, September.
- Bühlmann, J. and Schmid, B. (1999) *Unbezahlt-aber trotzdem Arbeit*, Neuchâtel: Bundesamt für Statistik.
- Bühlmann, M. and Freitag, M. (2007) 'Freiwilligentätigkeit als Sozialkapital. Eine empirische Analyse zu den Rahmenbedingungen bürgerschaftlichen Vereinsengagements', *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie Sonderheft* 47: 163–82.
- Coleman, J. S. (1991) *Grundlagen der Sozialtheorie*, München: Oldenbourg.
- Crepaz, M. M. L. (2007) *Trust Beyond Borders: Immigration, the Welfare State, and Identity in Modern Societies*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Curtis, J. E., Baer, D. E. and Grabb, E. G. (2001) 'Nations of joiners: Explaining voluntary association membership in democratic societies', *American Sociological Review* 66: 783–805.
- Daatland, S. O. and Lowenstein, A. (2005) 'Intergenerational solidarity and the family–welfare state balance', *European Journal of Ageing* 2: 174–82.
- Dahlberg, L. (2005) 'Interaction between voluntary and statutory social service provision in Sweden: A matter of welfare pluralism, substitution or complementarity?', *Social Policy & Administration* 39: 740–63.
- Davis Smith, J. (1998) *The 1997 National Survey of Volunteering*, London: Institute for Volunteering Research.
- Delhey, J. and Newton, K. (2005) 'Predicting cross-national levels of social trust: Global pattern or Nordic exceptionalism?', *European Sociological Review* 21: 311–27.
- Esping-Andersen, G. (1990) *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*, Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Etzioni, A. (1994) *The Spirit of Community: The Reinvention of American Society*, New York: Simon & Schuster.

- Finsveen, E., van Oorschot, W. and Gelissen, J. (2008) 'How does the welfare state influence access to informal help?', paper presented at Social Policy Research Day, Utrecht University, The Netherlands, April.
- Freitag, M. (2006) 'Bowling the state back in: Political institutions and the creation of social capital', *European Journal of Political Research* 45: 123–52.
- Fukuyama, F. (2000) *Social Capital and Civil Society*, Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund, IMF Institute.
- Habermas, J. (1973) *Legitimationsprobleme im Spätkapitalismus*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.
- Hall, P. A. and Taylor, R. C. R. (1996) 'Political science and the three new institutionalisms', *Political Studies* 44: 936–57.
- Heinze, R. G. and Olk, T. (2001) *Bürgerengagement in Deutschland: Bestandsaufnahme und Perspektiven*, Opladen: Leske + Budrich.
- Hooghe, M. and Stolle, D. (2003) *Generating Social Capital: Civil Society and Institutions in Comparative Perspective*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Immergut, E. (1998) 'The theoretical core of the new institutionalism', *Politics & Society* 26: 5–34.
- Kääriäinen, J. and Lehtonen, H. (2006) 'The variety of social capital in welfare state regimes – a comparative study of 21 countries', *European Societies* 8: 27–57.
- Karlson, N. (2004) *Dignity and the Burden of the Welfare State*, Stockholm: Ratio Institute.
- Kriesi, H. (2004) 'Freiwilligkeit aus Sicht der Politikwissenschaft', in H. Ammann (ed.), *Freiwilligkeit zwischen liberaler und sozialer Demokratie*, Zürich: Seismo Verlag, pp. 72–85.
- Kuhnle, S. and Alesalo, M. (2000) 'Introduction: Growth, adjustments and survival of European welfare states', in S. Kuhnle (ed.), *Survival of the European Welfare State*, London: Routledge, pp. 3–18.
- Kumlin, S. and Rothstein, B. (2005) 'Making and breaking social capital: The impact of welfare-state institutions', *Comparative Political Studies* 38: 339–65.
- Künemund, H. and Rein, M. (1999) 'There is more to receiving than needing: Theoretical arguments and empirical explorations of crowding in and crowding out', *Ageing and Society* 19: 93–121.
- Kwak, N., Shah, D. V. and Holbert, R. L. (2004) 'Connecting, trusting, and participating: The direct and interactive effects of social associations', *Political Research Quarterly* 57: 643–52.
- Larsen, C. A. (2007) 'How welfare regimes generate and erode social capital: The impact of underclass phenomena', *Comparative Politics* 40: 83–101.

- Lijphart, A. (1975) 'The comparable-cases strategy in comparative research', *Comparative Political Studies* 8: 158–77.
- Lijphart, A. (1999) *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Mayntz, R. and Scharpf, F. W. (1995) 'Der Ansatz des akteurszentrierten Institutionalismus', in R. Mayntz and F. W. Scharpf (eds), *Gesellschaftliche Selbstregulierung und politische Steuerung*, Frankfurt, New York: Campus, pp. 39–72.
- Nicolaysen, B. B. (2001) 'Voluntary service provision in a strong welfare state', Working Paper 35, Mannheimer Zentrum für Europäische Sozialforschung.
- Nollert, M. and Huser, C. H. (2007) 'Freiwillig Aktive in der Schweiz: Einflussfaktoren und typische Profile', in P. Farago (ed.), *Freiwilliges Engagement in der Schweiz*, Zürich: Seismo Verlag, pp. 14–55.
- Offe, C. (1984) *Contradictions of the Welfare State*, London: Hutchinson.
- Pierson, P. (1993) 'When effect becomes cause: Policy feedback and political change', *World Politics* 45: 595–628.
- Przeworski, A. and Teune, H. (1970) *The Logic of Comparative Social Inquiry*, New York: Wiley-Interscience.
- Putnam, R. D. (2000) *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Rostila, M. (2007) 'Social capital and health in European welfare regimes: A multilevel approach', *Journal of European Social Policy* 17: 223–39.
- Rothstein, B. O. (2001) 'Social capital in the social democratic welfare state', *Politics & Society* 29: 207–41.
- Rothstein, B. and Stolle, D. (2003) 'Social capital, impartiality and the welfare state: An institutional approach', in M. Hooghe and D. Stolle (eds), *Generating Social Capital*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 191–209.
- Rothstein, B. and Stolle, D. (2008) 'How political institutions create and destroy social capital: An institutional theory of generalized trust', *Comparative Politics* 40: 441–67.
- Saint-Arnaud, S. and Bernard, P. (2003) 'Convergence or resilience? A hierarchical cluster analysis of the welfare regimes in advanced countries', *Current Sociology* 51: 499–527.
- Salamon, L. M. and Sokolowski, W. S. (2003) 'Institutional roots of volunteering', in P. Dekker and L. Halman (eds), *The Values of Volunteering. Cross-Cultural Perspectives*, New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers, pp. 71–90.
- Scheepers, P. and Grotenhuis, M. T. (2005) 'Who cares for the poor in Europe? Micro and macro determinants for alleviating poverty in 15 European countries', *European Sociological Review* 21: 453–65.

- Scheepers, P., Grotenhuis, M. T. and Gelissen, J. (2002) 'Welfare states and dimensions of social capital: Cross-national comparisons of social contacts in European countries', *European Societies* 4: 185–207.
- Schofer, E. and Fourcade-Gourinchas, M. (2001) 'The structural contexts of civic engagement: Voluntary association membership in comparative perspective', *American Sociological Review* 66: 806–28.
- Skocpol, T. (1996) 'Unravelling from above', *The American Prospect* 25: 20–5.
- Snyder, R. (2001) 'Scaling down: The subnational comparative method', *Studies in Comparative International Development (SCID)* 36: 93–110.
- Stadelmann-Steffen, I. (forthcoming) 'Social volunteering in welfare states: Where crowding out should occur', *Political Studies*.
- Stadelmann-Steffen, I., Freitag, M. and Bühlmann, M. (2007) *Freiwilligen-Monitor Schweiz*, Zürich: Seismo.
- Taylor, R. F. (2005) 'Rethinking voluntary work', in L. Pettinger, J. Parry, R. Taylor and M. Glucksmann (eds), *A New Sociology of Work?*, Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 120–35.
- Torpe, L. (2003) 'Social capital in Denmark: A deviant case?', *Scandinavian Political Studies* 26: 27–48.
- van der Meer, T., Scheepers, P. and Grotenhuis, M. T. (2008) 'Does the state affect the informal connections between its citizens? New institutionalist explanations of social participation in everyday life', in H. Meulemann (ed.), *Social Capital in Europe: Similarity of Countries and Diversity of People?*, Leiden, Boston: Brill, pp. 41–70.
- van der Meer, T., Scheepers, P. and Grotenhuis, M. T. (2009) 'States as molders of informal relations', *European Societies* 11: 233–55.
- van Deth, J. W. (2003) 'Measuring social capital: Orthodoxies and continuing controversies', *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 6: 79–92.
- van Oorschot, W. and Arts, W. (2005) 'The social capital of European welfare states: The crowding out hypothesis revisited', *Journal of European Social Policy* 15: 5–26.
- van Oorschot, W., Arts, W. and Halman, L. (2005) 'Welfare state effects on social capital and informal solidarity in the European Union: Evidence from the 1999/2000 European Values Study', *Policy and Politics* 33: 35–56.
- Vatter, A. (2002) *Kantonale Demokratien im Vergleich: Entstehungsgründe, Interaktionen und Wirkungen politischer Institutionen in den Schweizer Kantonen*, Opladen: Leske + Budrich.
- Vatter, A. and Freitag, M. (2007) 'The contradictory effects of consensus democracy on the size of government: Evidence from the Swiss cantons', *British Journal of Political Science* 37: 359–67.

- Verba, S., Schlozman, K. L. and Brady, H. E. (1995) *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Wilson, J. (2000) 'Volunteering', *Annual Reviews in Sociology* 26: 215–40.
- Wilson, J. and Musick, M. (1997) 'Who cares? Toward an integrated theory of volunteer work', *American Sociological Review* 62: 694–713.
- Wolfe, A. (1989) *Whose Keeper? Social Science and Moral Obligation*, Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Zijderveld, A. C. (1999) *The Waning of the Welfare State: The End of Comprehensive State Succor*, New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.
- Zimmer, A. (2007) *Vereine-Zivilgesellschaft konkret*, Wiesbaden: VS Verlag.

Birte Gundelach is research fellow at the Cluster of Excellence 'Cultural Foundations of Integration' at the University of Konstanz, Germany. Central research interests include social capital, civic engagement, and the relationship between ethnic diversity, multiculturalism, and social cohesion.

Markus Freitag is professor of comparative politics at the Department of Politics and Management, University of Konstanz, Germany. He studied political science and economics at the Universities of Heidelberg and Bern (PhD and Habilitation) and was assistant professor at the Humboldt-University of Berlin. He has published on trust, social capital, direct democracy, comparative public policy and voter participation in the *British Journal of Political Science*, *Comparative Political Studies*, *European Journal of Political Research*, *European Union Politics*, and *European Sociological Review*.

Isabelle Stadelmann-Steffen is post-doctoral researcher at the Department of Politics and Management, University of Konstanz, Germany. She studied political science and economics at the Universities of Bern and Geneva and earned her PhD in Bern. She has published on comparative public policy, welfare state policy, civic engagement and direct democracy in journals such as *European Union Politics*, *Governance*, *Journal of Social Policy*, *Non-Profit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, and *Political Studies*.

Address for correspondence: Birte Gundelach, University of Konstanz,
P.O. Box 84, Universitätsstraße 10, 78457 Konstanz, Germany.
E-mail: birte.gundelach@uni-konstanz.de

Appendix

TABLE A. Informal volunteering rates in Swiss cantons

<i>Canton</i>	<i>Informal volunteering rate</i>
Geneva	25.05%
Zug	25.52%
Ticino	26.44%
Vaud	32.89%
Neuchâtel	34.27%
Appenzell Outer-Rhodes	34.62%
Valais	35.22%
Jura	35.63%
Grisson	35.87%
Zurich	37.03%
Basle-Town	37.21%
Schaffhausen	38.16%
Argovia	38.83%
Fribourg	39.18%
Basle-Country	39.56%
Glarus	39.61%
Solothurn	40.82%
Berne	40.88%
Schwyz	41.28%
Uri	41.52%
Lucerne	42.28%
Obwalden	43.24%
St Gall	43.52%
Thurgovia	43.78%
Nidwalden	47.71%
Appenzell Inner-Rhodes	54.60%

Source: Swiss Volunteering Survey 2007. Proportions are weighted with an individual weight for cantonal sampling effects, household size, and post stratification (according to age, sex, nationality, educational attainment) based on Swiss census of population 2000 (Stadelmann-Steffen *et al.* 2007).

TABLE B. Social spending statistics and welfare regime types in Switzerland (classification of the 26 Swiss Cantons, related to social security system)

<i>Canton</i>	<i>Welfare regime type</i>	<i>Social spending per capita</i>	<i>Social spending as % of GDP (*1000)</i>
Zurich	Social democratic	307.55	4.83
Berne	Liberal	427.65	9.89
Lucerne	Liberal-conservative	274.83	6.51
Uri	Liberal-conservative	182.75	4.10
Schwyz	Liberal-conservative	167.70	3.37
Obwalden	Liberal-conservative	139.58	3.70
Nidwalden	Liberal-conservative	197.40	3.18
Glarus	Liberal	82.78	1.38
Zug	Conservative	364.15	4.33
Fribourg	Conservative	268.03	6.91
Solothurn	Liberal-conservative	178.55	3.99
Basle-Town	Social democratic	1070.68	12.43
Basle-Country	Social democratic	239.63	4.63
Schaffhausen	Social democratic	200.05	3.86
Appenzell Outer-Rhodes	Liberal	105.23	2.40
Appenzell Inner-Rhodes	Liberal	175.80	4.02
St Gall	Liberal	212.28	4.83
Grison	Liberal	223.33	5.02
Argovia	Liberal	200.98	4.14
Thurgovia	Liberal	131.50	3.00
Ticino	Social democratic	474.50	12.11
Vaud	Conservative	652.15	13.04
Valais	Conservative	243.98	6.61
Neuchâtel	Conservative	584.10	13.13
Geneva	Social democratic	1238.80	21.98
Jura	Liberal	342.48	9.35

Sources: Welfare regime types from Armingeon *et al.* (2004); social spending statistics (averages 2001–2004): Eidgenössische Finanzverwaltung, Öffentliche Finanzen der Schweiz, various years, Federal Statistical Office Switzerland. List of cantons in official order.

TABLE C. Variables, Hypotheses, Operationalisation, Sources

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Hypothesis</i>	<i>Operationalisation/Source* [Question**]</i>
Dependent variable		
Informal volunteering		Dummy: 1 = individual performs informal unpaid voluntary work (informal assistance, e.g., babysitting (children other than your own), neighbourly-aid, participating in any kind of projects, organising a (street) party in your neighbourhood); 0 = individual does not volunteer informally [Q46].
Social informal volunteering		Dummy: 1 = individual performs informal unpaid voluntary work related to personal helping or personal assistance; 0 = no social informal volunteering [Q46, Q48].
Independent variables – Individual level		
Level of education	The probability to volunteer is greater for well educated than for less educated individuals.	0 = no level of education completed; 1 = low educational achievement ('Sekundarstufe I'); 2 = middle educational achievement ('Sekundarstufe II'); 3 = high educational achievement ('Tertiärstufe') [SD21].
Professional status	The probability to volunteer is greater for individuals with a high professional status.	0 = no superior; 1 = superior [SD17].
Employment	Due to time constraints, part-time workers' and non-active individuals' probability to volunteer is greater than that of full-time workers.	1 = full-time; 2 = part-time; 3 = non-active [SD14].
Children	Parent's probability to volunteer is higher than that of childless people.	0 = childless; 1 = at least one child under 15 years old [SD11, SD12].
Foreigner	Foreigners volunteer less frequently than native Swiss.	0 = native Swiss; 1 = foreigner [SD05].
Duration of residency	The longer the duration, the greater the probability to volunteer.	0 = max 3 years; 1 = more than 3 years/very long [SD03].

TABLE C (Continued)

Variable	Hypothesis	Operationalisation/Source* [Question**]
Religiosity	Religious people's probability to volunteer is greater than that of the non-religious.	0 = non-religious; 1 = religious [SD22].
Age	An inverse u-shaped relationship between age and volunteering is expected: Engagement first increases and then decreases as an individual ages.	Age (in years); Age squared (in years) [SD01].
Sex	Women's probability for informal volunteering is higher than that of men.	0 = woman; 1 = man
Independent variables – Contextual level		
Welfare regime	1) A developed welfare state crowds out informal volunteering. 2) A developed welfare state creates conditions that support informal voluntary activity.	1 = liberal; 2 = conservative/mixed; 3 = social democratic. Source: Armingeon <i>et al.</i> (2004).
Cantonal social spending as % of GDP (average 2001–2004)	See (1) and (2) above.	Source: Swiss Federal Statistical Office, Eidgenössische Finanzverwaltung: Öffentliche Finanzen der Schweiz, various years.
Cantonal social spending per capita (average 2001–2004)	See (1) and (2) above.	Source: Swiss Federal Statistical Office, Eidgenössische Finanzverwaltung: Öffentliche Finanzen der Schweiz, various years.
Urbanisation	The probability to volunteer is lower in urban than it is in rural areas.	Proportion of inhabitants in urban regions. Source: BADAC, 2001.
Language region	Individuals from the German speaking part of Switzerland are more likely to do unpaid voluntary work than individuals living in the Latin part of Switzerland.	Proportion of German-speaking people in the respective canton. Source: Swiss Federal Statistical Office, 'Regional portraits' (key data), 2000.
Religious context	The higher the proportion of non-religious people, the lower the probability to volunteer.	Proportion of non-religious people. Source: Swiss Federal Statistical Office, 'Regional portraits', 2000.

*All individual variables are taken from the Swiss Volunteering Survey 2007.

**Number of question according to the Swiss Volunteering Survey 2007.