



The World's Strongest Trade Unions: The Scandinavian Labor Movement

Walter Galenson

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Despite the general decline of trade unions throughout the Western world, unions in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden have prospered. Why? Galenson cites their ability to organize white collar workers, the special attention they give to recruitment of women, and their ability to undergo structural change under employer pressure. He analyzes these factors in the belief that if unions in other parts of the world understand why and how unionism is succeeding in Scandinavia, its deterioration may be slowed and even reversed. In doing so, Galenson offers specific advice on how industrial relations professionals should manage to avoid breakdown of existing systems elsewhere. Labor unions, officials, and organization executives, as well as executives throughout the public sectors, will find Galenson's views informative and enlightening.

Although there has been a good deal written about the Scandinavian labor movements in Dano-Norwegian and Swedish, there has been nothing comprehensive in English that deals with the labor movements in the three countries. Nor has there been a systematic analysis of their policies and practices. Galenson provides readers, now, with an account of how unions in the Scandinavian countries have managed to secure the world's highest rates of organization: up to 90% of all who are employed in Sweden, and somewhat less in Denmark and Norway, are trade union members, compared with 15% in the United States. The countries in which they operate are welfare states and are among the wealthiest countries in the world, yet remarkably little is known about the systems of industrial relations that have contributed to these results. Galenson's book will fill that gap and in doing so, make a unique contribution to the determination of policy in other countries.

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