



Civil Society, Economy and the State

Structure of session II

- Why? (theory of collective action)
- Who? (trade unions... and others)
- How? (conditions, mechanisms)

Rational Choice Theory (1)

- *methodological individualist position*
- *attempts to explain all social phenomena in terms of the rational calculations made by self-interested individuals*
- *social interaction as social exchange, modelled on economic action*
- *people are motivated by the rewards and costs of actions and by the profits that they can make*

Rational Choice Theory (1I)

- *there is no single rational choice theory or unambiguous standard for assigning the label "rational choice" to a theory*
- *the rational choice approach to the study of politics*
- *Basic assumptions: utility maximization, the structure of preferences, decision making under conditions of uncertainty, the centrality of individuals in the explanation of*

Rational Choice Theory - assumptions

- *Consistency of requirements: ranking of options, transitivity of ordering*
- *Expected value of payoff (utility)*
- *Agents are individuals*

Rational Choice Theory - criticism

- *Utility maximization: array of options, measurable utility (which? – thin vs. thick rationality; information? – „the agent has to assess the value of information that she does not yet have in order to determine whether it is worth taking the trouble to gather that information“), uninterest in others' fortunes*

Theory of Collective Action

- History: collective behavior, **breakdown theories**
- Contemporary approaches: identity, grievances, resources, collective good (RAT)

Olson's theory of collective action

- Critique of pluralism and *theory of groups*:
- *groups of individuals try to maximize their interests*
- *groups have different interests and may act as "veto groups"*
- *many non-governmental groups use their resources to exert influence*

Olson's theory of collective action

- RAT perspective: rational individual maximalizing its utility
- Maximalization of utility = self-interest/egoism?
- Altruistic preferences?

Olson's theory of collective action

- Public good
- If collective action – achievement of public good
- Definition of public good...
- non-excludable and non-rivalrous (individuals cannot be effectively excluded from use and where use by one individual does not reduce availability to others.
- **... free-rider dilemma (and others collective action problems !!!)**



Olson's theory of collective action

- Any contribution to collective good – collective action
- How? When?
- Assumption: large (latent) group with common interest, contribution of individual negligible
- Need of „selective incentives“ – *first order public good and second order public good*

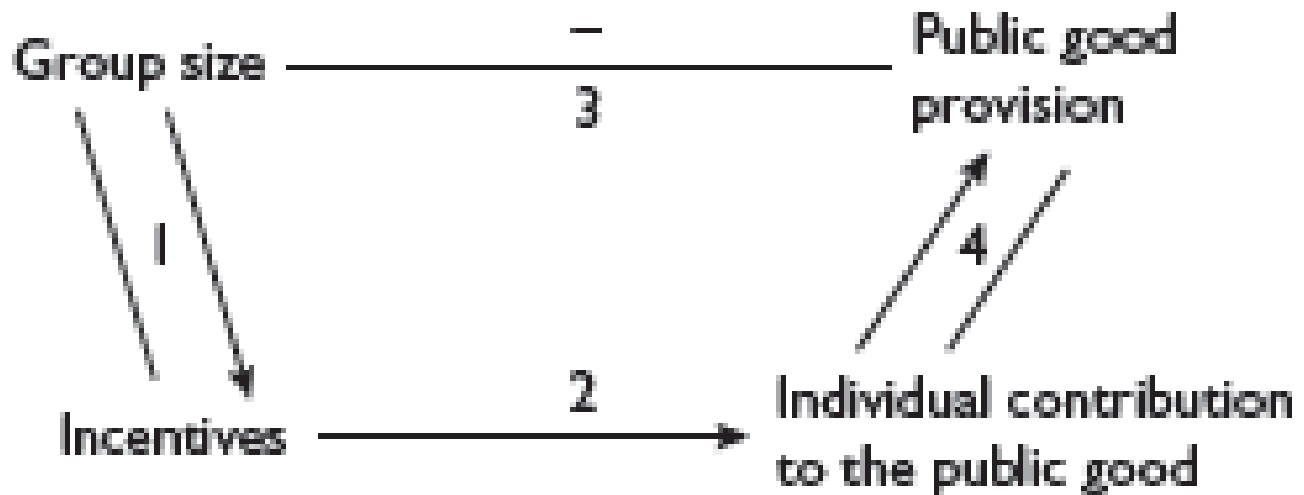
Olson's theory of collective action

- Macro-micro factors
- Macro: size of a group
- Micro: Motivation to achieve public good
- Micro: Impact of individual activity
- Ideology? Nation state...

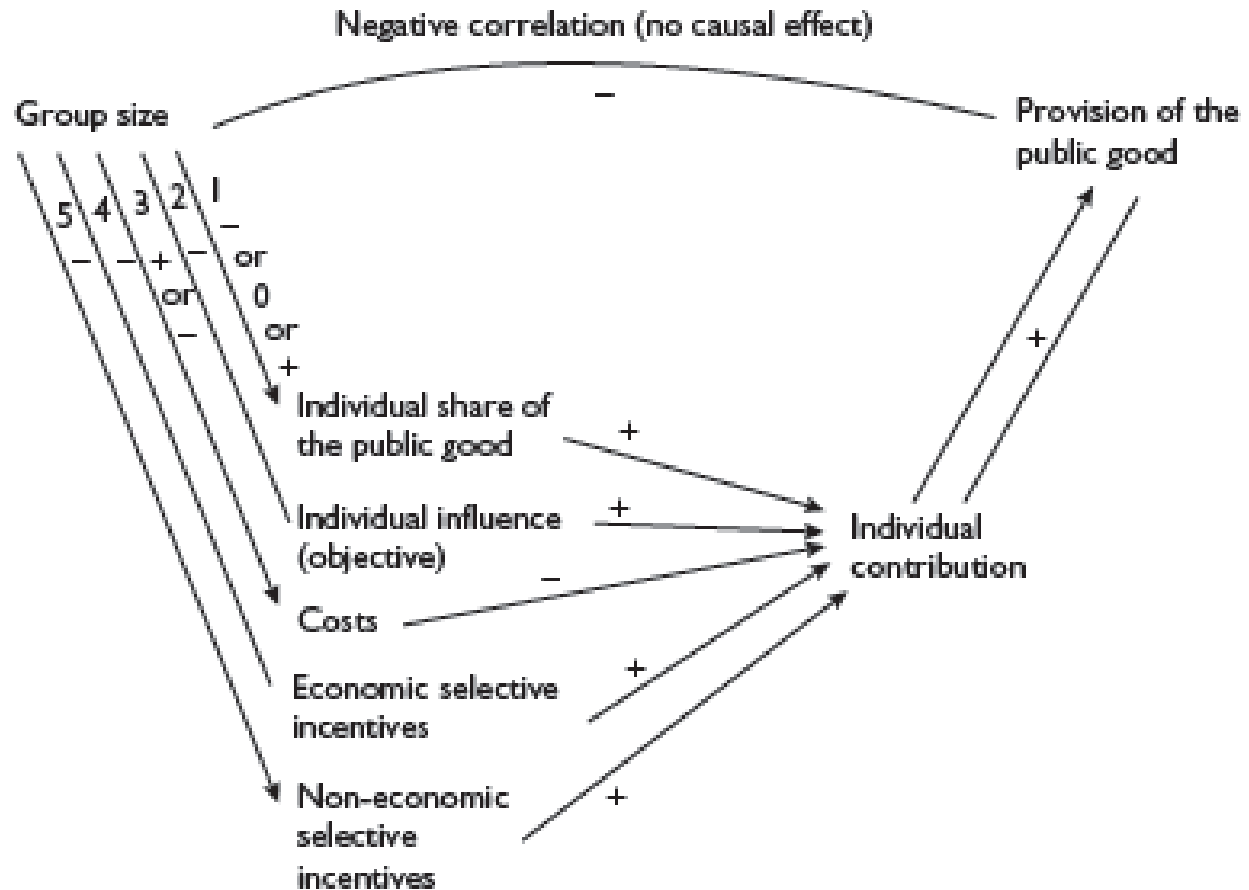
Olson's theory of collective action

- Micro: selective incentives
- Public good motivation vs. effect of individual contribution vs. costs vs. selective incentives

Olson's theory of collective action



Olson's theory of collective action



Critique

- Extent of application?
- Unit of analysis?
- Consensus on shared interests?
- Perceptions?

Alternatives

- Pierre Bourdieu: *RAT as grounded in a misunderstanding of how social agents operate*
- *Social agents do not continuously calculate according to explicit rational and economic criteria but operate according to an implicit practical logic—a practical sense—and bodily dispositions, act according to their "feel for the game" (habitus, field).*
- *Social agents develop strategies which are adapted to the needs of the social worlds that they inhabit.*
- *These strategies are unconscious and act on the level of a bodily logic.*

Trade unions

- organization of workers to achieve common goals such as: improving safety standards, achieving higher pay and benefits such as health care and retirement, and better working conditions.
- bargain with the employer on behalf of union members (rank and file members) and negotiates labour contracts (collective bargaining) with employers.
- originating in Great Britain, trade union density highest in the Nordic countries

How to study TU?

TABLE 1. Disciplines Studying Labor Markets and Trade Unions, by Levels of Action and Types of Social Relations

<i>Level of Action</i>	<i>Type of Social Relation</i>	
	<i>Functionally Diffuse Noncontractual</i>	<i>Functionally Specific Contractual</i>
Individual action	Economic sociology	(Labor) Economics
Collective action	Political sociology, political science	Industrial relations

TU in context

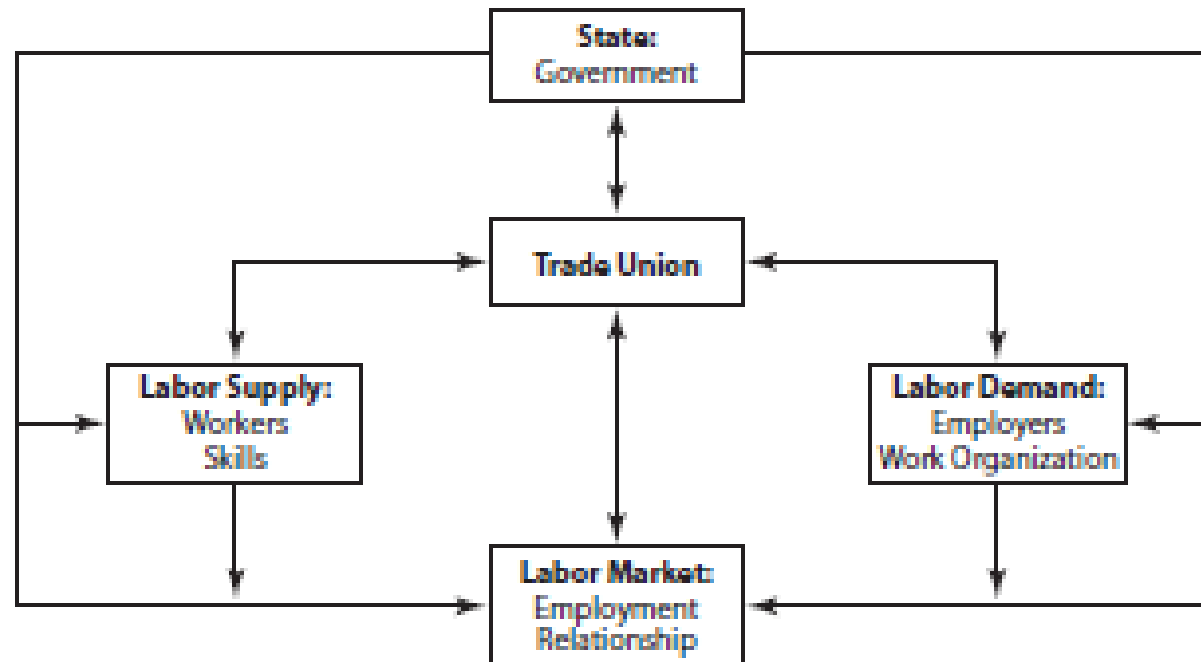


FIGURE 1. Labor markets and trade unions in context

Types of TU

- particular section of skilled workers (craft unionism),
- a cross-section of workers from various trades (general unionism),
- attempt to organize all workers within a particular industry (industrial unionism).
- domain confined to one employer only (enterprise unionism)

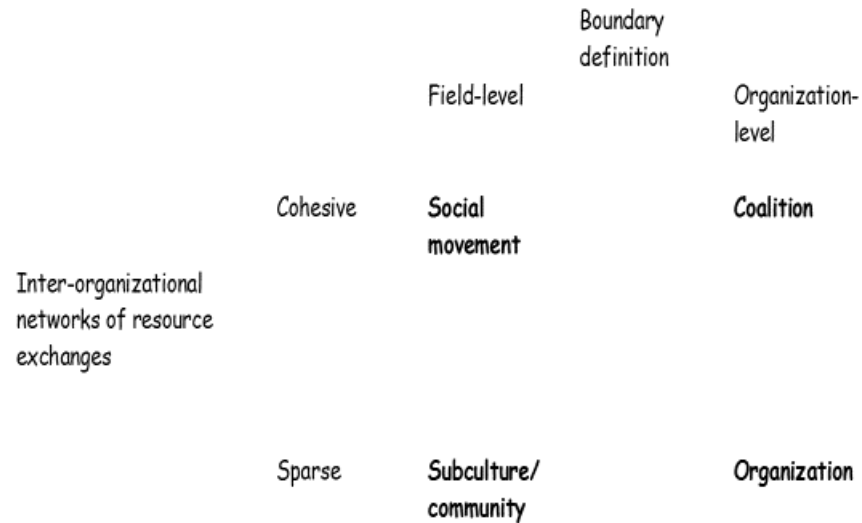
Types of TUs

TABLE 3. Types of Trade Unions, Labor Markets, Employment Relations, and Political Action

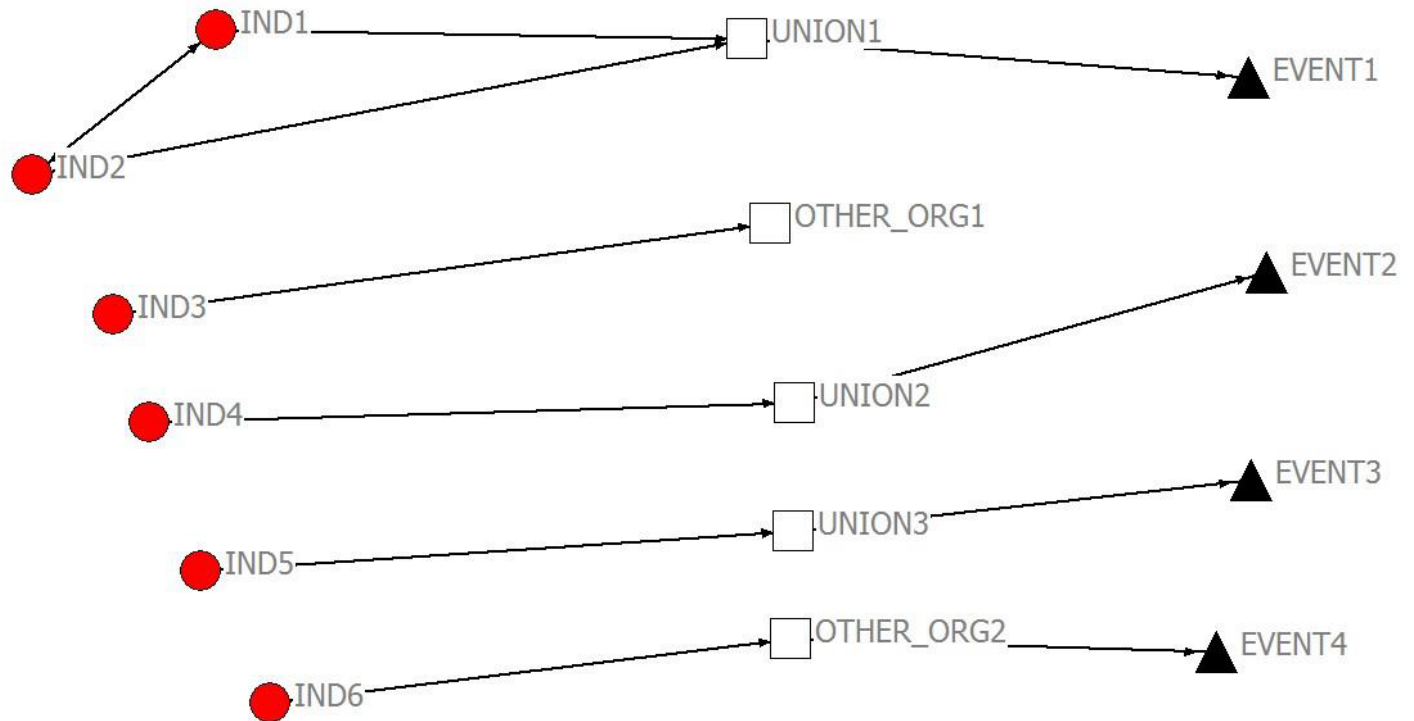
	<i>Skills</i>	<i>Union Structure</i>	<i>Work Organization</i>	<i>Labor Market</i>	<i>Employment</i>	<i>Union Security</i>	<i>Political Action</i>
Craft union	Skilled, transportable, union-controlled	Particularistic, fragmented by trade	Job control	External, occupational	Job by job	Preentry closed shop	Voluntarism, "free collective bargaining"
General union	Unskilled	Incompletely encompassing	Bureaucracy job control and seniority	Mainly external, general	At will	Postentry closed shop	Limited, due to voluntaristic tradition
Industrial union	All skills partly workplace-specific, contested control	Encompassing, "class-based"	Bureaucracy, negotiated flexibility	External-occupational and internal	Protected	Legal and political institutionalization	Political and industrial action in different combinations, tripartism
Enterprise union	All skills workplace-specific, employer-controlled	"Enterprise community"	Bureaucracy, autonomous working groups	Internal	Lifetime	"Enterprise community"	Nonpolitical

Collective action: trade unions

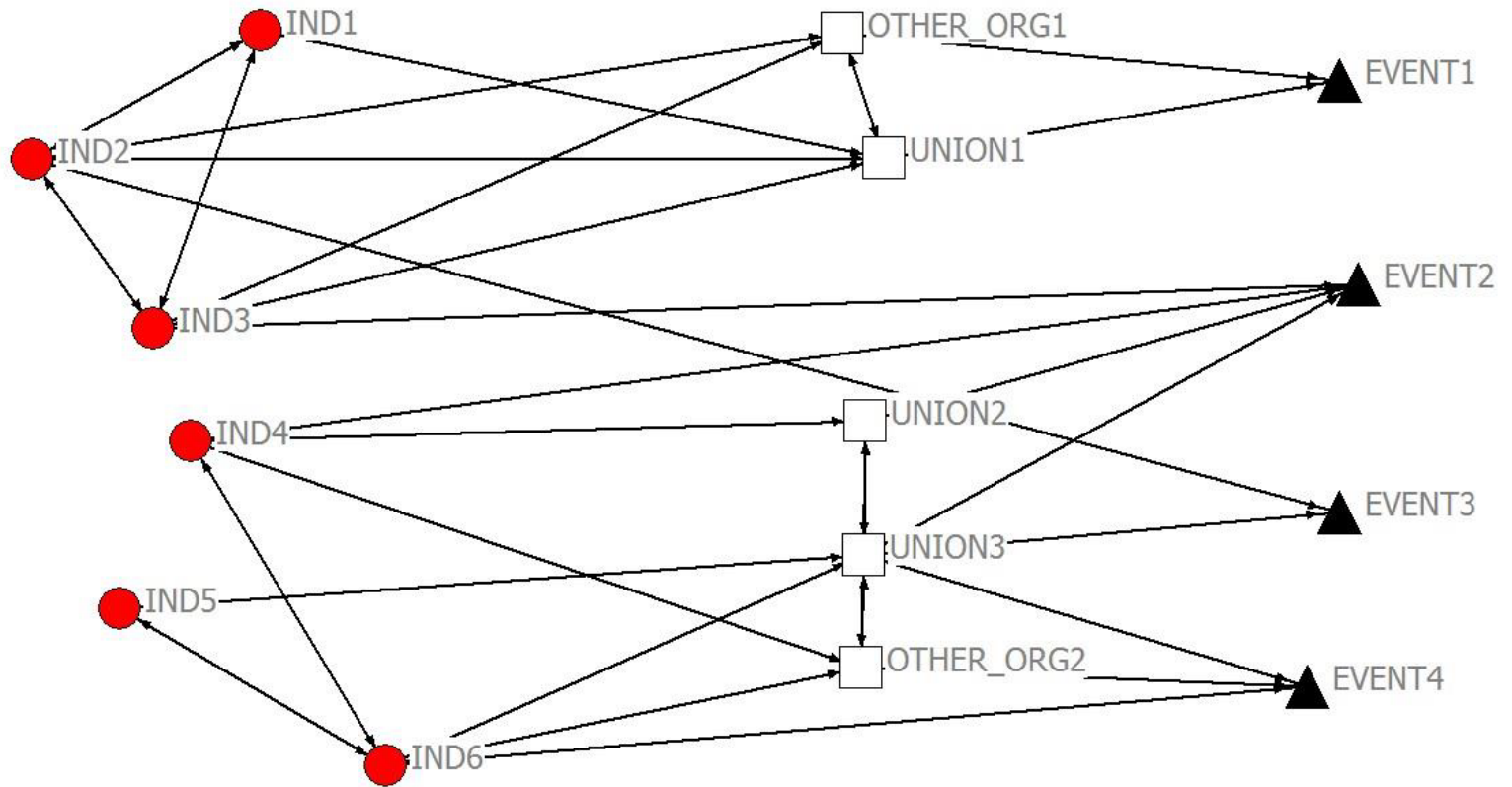
Modes of coordination



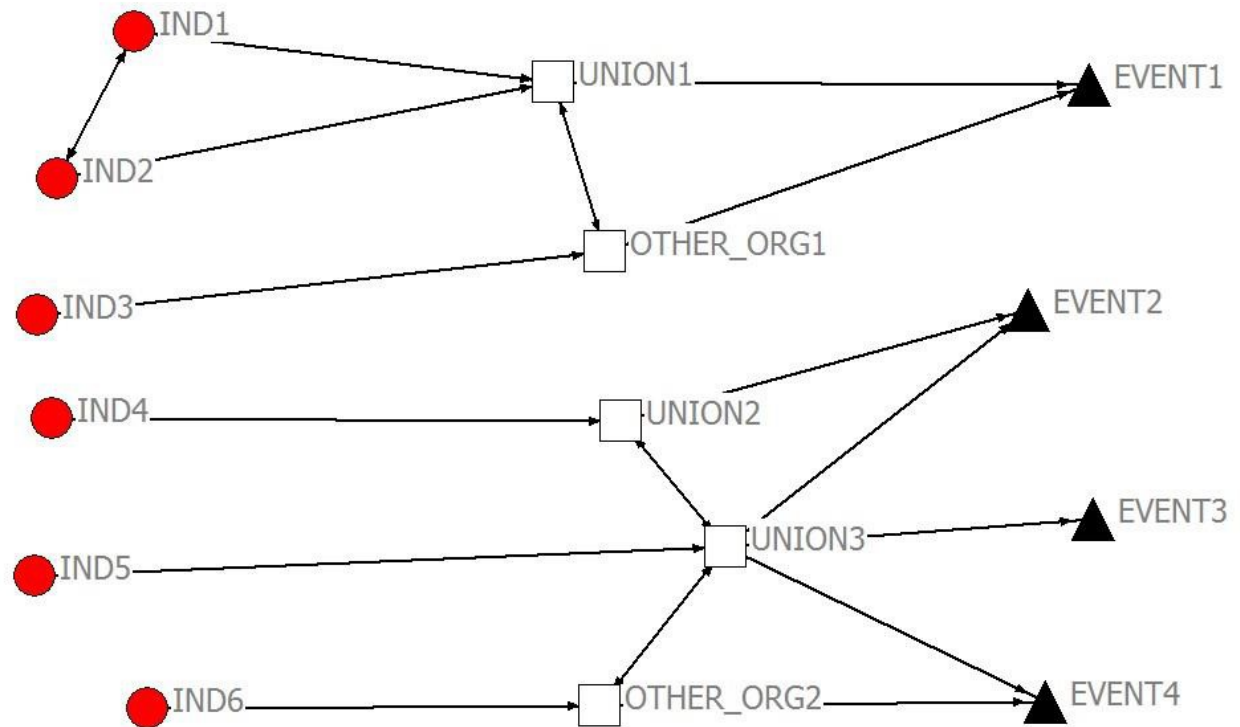
Organizational mode of coordination



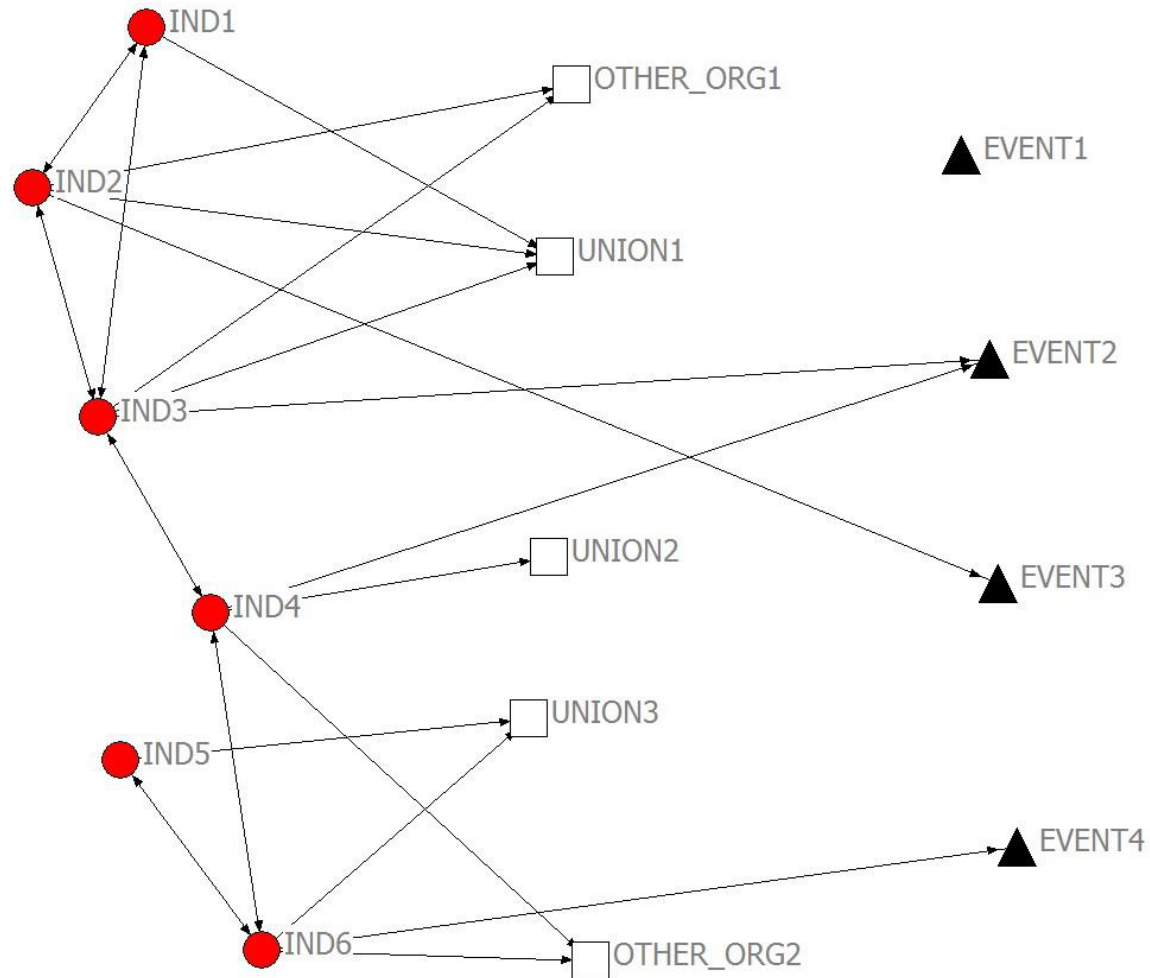
Social movement mode of coordination



Coalitional mode of coordination



Subcultural/communitarian mode of coordination



References

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