Does type-of-contract segmentation hinder union growth? : the significance of local collective bargaining structures and worker's political capital for labour union membership in Spain

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DOES TYPE-OF-CONTRACT SEGMENTATION HINDER UNION GROWTH?

The significance of local collective bargaining structures and workers' political capital for labour union membership in Spain

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Abstract

There is a general consensus on the thesis that type-of-contract segmentation represents a strong structural constraint on labour union growth. Nevertheless, in this paper I will contend that the negative influence of type-of-contract segmentation has been overstated. Through the analysis of a sample of the Spanish workforce, I will demonstrate that the effect of type-of-contract segmentation is not significant once the quality of local collective bargaining structures (CBS) is introduced in the explanatory model. The quality of CBS will be defined here as a function of the communication with and prestige of the local delegates among their actual and potential constituents. Besides the quality of local CBS, I will also show that the ideologico-attitudinal dimension of the worker is quite relevant in explaining labour union membership. As it is usually reduced to the position of the worker in the left-right ideological scale, I intend to flesh out this dimension by enriching it with the concepts of social and political capital, which have been neglected up to now in this field. As will be shown, both the position on the left-right scale and social capital appear to be significant explanatory variables. Further, the political capital of the worker stands out as one of the most influential variables in the model.

To sum up, the findings of this paper suggest that a great deal of variation in union membership actually depends on organizational factors within the union's reach and on ideologico-attitudinal characteristics of the worker which might be endogenous to processes of social and political capital formation, while type-of-contract segmentation does not actually represent *per se* a significant structural constraint on union growth.

The workforce has undergone major transformations since the structural crisis of the 1970s. These transformations include, among others, the expansion of the service sector at the expense of industry, the massive incorporation of women to the labour market, and new divisions based on qualification and type of contract. The result is a more heterogeneous and segmented labour force in which the industrial, male, permanent worker has ceased to be the dominant figure. These transformations are historically correlated, in broad terms, with the progressive decline of unionization rates experienced in the advanced capitalist countries in the last two decades. Thus, research has manifested a renewed interest on the causes of affiliation (and disaffiliation) in relation to the particular challenges that the new configurations of the workforce might involve for labour unions.

Although there is some confusion and debate among segmentation theorists as to what are the relevant segments in the labour market and how to define them, there seems to be a significant degree of agreement on the idea that the workforce is fundamentally divided in these two segments: a primary segment (*insiders*), characterised by high-skilled jobs, high job security, and high wages; and a secondary segment (*outsiders*), defined by low-skill, poorly-paid, insecure jobs[1]. In essence, this division amounts to the one between workers on permanent contracts and workers on fixed-term or temporary contracts. Following Polavieja (2001), I will refer to this division as type-of-contract segmentation.

There is a general consensus on the thesis that type-of-contract segmentation represents a strong structural constraint on labour union growth, as it can generate additional, structural forms of competition among workers. The overwhelming majority of union members are insiders and affiliation rates are significantly higher among these workers than among outsiders. Somehow, type-of-contract segmentation would seem to be creating a barrier that hinders the expansion of unionization beyond the 'core' of workers on permanent contracts.

Nevertheless, in this paper I will contend that the negative influence of type-of-contract segmentation has been overstated. Through the analysis of a sample of the Spanish

[1] The unemployed are sometimes included in this category as well.

workforce, I will demonstrate that the effect of type-of-contract segmentation is not significant once the quality of collective bargaining structures in the firm (CBS from now on) is introduced in the explanatory model. The quality of CBS will be defined here as a function of the communication with and prestige of the local delegates among their actual and potential constituents.

Besides the quality of local CBS, I will also show that the ideologico-attitudinal dimension of the worker is quite relevant in explaining labour union membership. As it is usually reduced to the position of the worker in the left-right ideological scale, I intend to flesh out this dimension by enriching it with the concepts of social and political capital, which have been neglected up to now in this field. As will be shown, both the position in the left-right scale and social capital appear to be significant explanatory variables. Further, the political capital of the worker stands out as one of the most influential variables in the model.

To sum up, the findings of this paper suggest that a great deal of variation in union membership actually depends on organizational factors within the union's reach and on ideologico-attitudinal characteristics of the worker which might be endogenous to processes of social and political capital formation, while type-of-contract segmentation does not actually represent *per se* a significant structural constraint on union growth.

The first section of the paper deals with theoretical issues related to the main variables under consideration: type-of-contract segmentation, the quality of local CBS, and social and political capital. The second section presents a comprehensive explanatory model which includes these variables among others. A subsample of the Spanish workforce is used to test the model, applying logistic regression techniques. The empirical analysis is followed by some remarks on the practical implications of these findings for labour unions.

1. Theoretical Considerations: Type-Of-Contract Segmentation, Local Collective Bargaining Structures, and Workers' Social and Political Capital.

In the last decades, scholars have started to study union organization in the workplace, shifting their focus from the macro to the micro level. According to research carried out in diverse countries, union delegates and local leaders can, with their actions and attitudes, effectively promote affiliation in the workplace (Shister 1953, Undy et al. 1981, Hartmann and Horstmann 1987, Kelly and Heery 1989, in Taboadela 1993: 88-95). Not only are they an essential piece in articulating affiliation campaigns organised by the union, but their face-to-face relation with their actual or potential constituencies might also be critical. This relation involves perhaps the most fundamental link between workers and the union, as delegates embody the daily image of the union and constitute also an immediate channel of communication and representation. Therefore, we can reasonably expect that the way in which delegates accomplish their role as intermediaries and representatives is very relevant in promoting affiliation in the workplace.

In a similar vein, some authors have theorised about general environmental effects in the workplace, elaborating what is known as *social custom theory*. According to this theory, union membership can confer on the worker a good social treatment among workmates. By developing and reinforcing a social norm (Coleman 1990) that rewards union members and sanctions non-members in their social life, the workforce as a whole provides an incentive to join the union, and thereby solves the free-riding problem[2] (Booth 1985, Booth and Chatterji 1993, Naylor and Cripps 1993, Corneo 1997, Goerke 1997, in Checchi and Corneo 1998; see also Cornfield 1997). For sure, the prestige of delegates is an essential element in order to generate and sustain an environment which fosters a positive consideration of unionism.

[2] At the 'core' of the question of labour union membership lies a typical collective action problem (Olson 1965). From a rational-choice perspective, the fundamental puzzle to be explained is how the free-riding problem inherent to the decision to join the union is overcome. If affiliation is not necessary in order to enjoy the right to be covered by the wage contract negotiated by the union, then why would a worker bear the costs that union membership entails?

Environmental factors can be traced to other spheres as well, such as the family, the community, or the society as a whole. The salience of class in these spheres, for example, might create a positive environment for the organization of the labour movement and, in particular, for unionization. Western (1997) considers social democratic governments and labour market centralization as institutional determinants of the salience of class and, thereof, of unionization. However, individuals affected by similar institutional conditions might also be exposed to more particular and contrasting environmental influences. The socialization of individuals, and their experiences as citizens and workers, involves in fact a wide range of environmental effects which contribute to the configuration of particular political attitudes and ideological features. It seems plausible that individual ideologico-attitudinal variables might play an important role in determining the worker's disposition towards labour union organization and membership. However, in most labour union membership models this ideologico-attitudinal dimension of workers merely amounts to their position in the left-right scale.

The characterization of this ideologico-attitudinal dimension can be enriched by taking into account the social and political capital of the worker. Putnam's concept of social capital (Putnam 1993, 1995, 2000) has been broadly applied to developmental economics and democratization studies, but its role in explaining labour union membership has been neglected to date. However, the concept of social capital is particularly applicable to the labour movement. Social capital, derived from voluntary cooperative relationships and memberships, can enhance a group's capacity to attain a common good, thus providing an important device to solve collective action problems, as the one that union organization entails. Putnam himself considers unionization as one of the indicators of social capital, and many studies have thus included union membership among other social capital indicators as independent variables in order to explain a wide range of questions. However, I'm not aware of any study that has tried to explain labour union membership taking other forms of social capital as independent variables.

Going a step beyond, Booth and Richard (1998) have tried to refine the mechanics of social capital by elaborating the concept of *political capital*. In order to have political significance, associational activism must foster attitudes that can actually have an impact in

some direct way[3]. If workers' social capital is usually measured by *membership* in diverse types of associations, workers' political capital can be measured by their degree of experience or willingness to take part in a number of *actions* associated with the kind of activities that labour movement struggle might involve: participation in strikes, demonstrations, boycotts, occupations of buildings or factories, and so on. Thus, political capital is defined and measured through actions instead of only memberships.

2. Labour Union Membership and Type-Of-Contract Segmentation in Spain.

During the last decades, Spanish unionism has been characterised by a strong presence in the political sphere contrasting, however, with a rather low affiliation rate. Paralleling the general trend in most developed capitalist countries, the affiliation rate experienced also in Spain a pronounced decline between the late 1970s and the early 1980s, decreasing from more than 50 per cent to below 10 per cent of the workforce (Taboadela 1993: ch. 5). During the 1990s, there has been a moderate recovery in the Spanish affiliation rate (Jordana 1996), which surpassed 20 per cent of the workforce in 2001[4]. The representativeness of Spanish labour unions is more based on voting than on formal membership. However, unions do care about affiliation rates, as these are an essential source of legitimation and bargaining power.

A number of authors have emphasized the negative effects produced by type-of-contract segmentation on union growth in Spain from the mid-1980s (Pérez-Díaz 1987, Bilbao 1991, Iriso Napal 1993, in Polavieja 2001: 33-34; Richards and Polavieja 1997; Polavieja 1998, 1999, 2001). The reform of the Worker's Statue of 1984 introduced fixed-

[3] As Booth and Richard study democratization, their indicators of political capital include attitudes supportive of democracy and actions such as voting, campaign activism, and contacting public officials. In contrast to social capital, political capital is defined as "state-impinging". After testing for the relationships between citizens' civil society activism, their social and political capital, and levels of democracy in Central America, they conclude that it is political rather than social capital that links formal group activism to democracy in Central America (Booth and Richard 1998: 796).

[4] 2001 Survey on Quality of Life in the Workplace, realized by the Ministry of Work and Social Affairs.

term contracts as a bid to reduce unemployment, though its only significant effect was to create a split between insiders and outsiders. Type-of-contract segmentation can be considered thus as an institutionally triggered process that generates 'horizontal' labour market inequalities. According to Polavieja, these inequalities, in turn, have had empirically observable consciousness effects on both workers' subjective identification with industrial and political organisations and on their behaviour in the industrial and political spheres (Polavieja 2001: 2). Unionism in Spain is increasingly based on, and identified with, the 'core' permanent workforce. In fact, there is a clear contrast in union density between insiders and outsiders: the membership rate for insiders is 19.2, and 80 per cent of all union members have a permanent contract, while the rate for outsiders is only 8 per cent, and only 20 per cent of all union members are fixed-term workers[5].

Polavieja analyses whether this difference in affiliation rates is in fact attributable to type-of-contract segmentation or is the consequence of other possible explanatory variables. His logistic regression analysis shows that "having a fixed-term contract (…) significantly reduces the chances of becoming a trade union member", even after controlling for "firm-level, ideological, and individual subjective and objective factors" (Polavieja 2001: 205-207, Table 6.2). Together with the type of contract, his model comprises three sociodemographic and socioeconomic variables (age, sex, and occupational class); two ideologico-attitudinal variables (position in the left-right scale, identification with unions), and two contextual variables (public/private ownership and size of the firm). However, the model does not take into account neither the quality of local CBS nor the social and political capital of the worker.

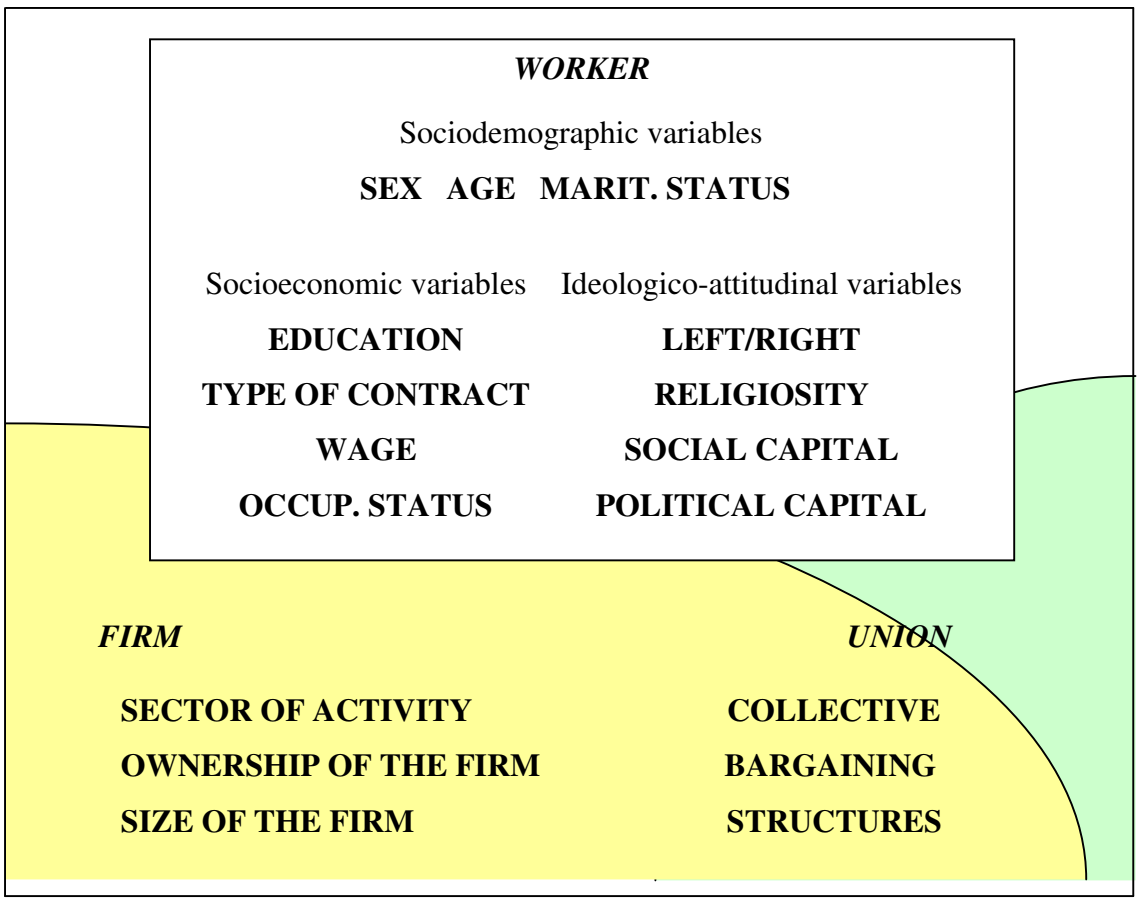
3. Testing a Comprehensive Model for the Spanish Case.

In order to observe the relative effect of the variables under consideration, I present here a comprehensive model of labour union membership that introduces the quality of local CBS and the worker's social and political capital together with type of contract and other

[5] Data from the Centre for Sociological Research's Survey on Trade Union Activity (CIS 2088), carried out in 1994 over a sample of 5965 respondents (Polavieja 2001: 205 and Appendix B).

variables. As shown in *Figure 3.1*, the set of independent variables comprises three major components: the worker, the firm, and the union. The worker is characterised by habitual sociodemographic (sex, age, marital status) and socioeconomic variables (education, type of contract, wage, and occupational status), and also by an ideologico-attitudinal dimension (position in the left-right scale, social capital, religiosity, and political capital). Concerning the firm, some typical contextual variables are included: its size, its form of ownership (public vs. private), and its sector of activity. Finally, the local CBS are introduced as an intersection of the union within the firm.

Figure 3.1*: Independent variables in the model.*



The model is tested, applying logistic regression analysis, for a subsample of the Spanish workforce taken from the 2001 Survey on Quality of Life in the Workplace, realized by the Ministry of Work and Social Affairs (SQLW 2001). The survey was carried out over a representative sample of 6020 occupied individuals who were 16 years old or more. The subsample used here to test the model is constrained by two main requisites: respondents are (1) salaried workers who (2) give either a positive or a negative answer to the question on whether they have ever been affiliated to a labour union[6]. Additionally, some observations had also to be suppressed due to requisites derived from the treatment of some of the independent variables. This yielded a final subsample of 4024 respondents.

Table 3.1*: Description of the variables included in the model*

Variable	*Obs.*	*Mean*	*St. dv.*	*Min.*	*Max.*	*Description*
AFF	4596	0.26	0.44	0	1	1 if the worker has ever been affiliated to a union; else 0.
MAL	5998	0.63	0.48	0	1	1 if the worker is male; 0 if is female.
AGE	5998	39.25	11.41	16	80	Age of the worker in years.
MAR	5998	0.63	0.48	0	1	1 if the worker is married or has a stable partner; else 0.
EDU	5942	2.00	0.66	1	3	Highest educational level reached by the worker (Primary; Secondary; University or further).
OUT	5998	0.54	0.50	0	1	1 if the worker is an outsider (fixed-term contract); 0 if s/he is an insider (permanent contract).
WAG	4994	1.88	0.55	1	3	Wage level of the worker (Low; Medium; High).
OST	5998	2.27	1.10	1	4	Occupational status of the worker (Unskilled; Skilled manual; Intermediate; Service).
LFT	5998	0.32	0.47	0	1	1 if the worker is left-wing; else 0.
SCI	5998	0.49	0.69	0	2	Social capital of the worker (Non active; Active; Very Active).
REL	5998	1.28	0.91	0	3	Frequency of religious practice of the worker (Non religious; Occasional; Regular; Very frequent).
PCI	5998	0.96	0.67	0	2	Political capital of the worker (Non active; Active; Very Active).
SEC	5998	2.57	0.62	1	3	Sector of activity of the firm in which the worker is employed (Primary, Industrial, Service).
PBL	4683	0.23	0.42	0	1	Ownership of the firm in which the worker is employed: 1 if it is public; 0 if private.
SZF	5998	2.69	1.31	1	5	Size of the firm in which the worker is employed (Alone; Small; Medium; Large; Very large).
CBS	4683	0.92	1.09	0	4	Quality of the collective bargaining structures in the firm where the worker is employed (None; Poor; Fair; Excellent).

[6] Those who didn't answer this question (2.33 per cent) were eliminated from the subsample.

The categories and main characteristics of the variables included in the model are summarized in *Table 3.1*. Some of these variables have been transformed and/or constructed from other variables:

-Wage (*WAG*) was recoded into three categories defining the 'medium' category as the one including those salaries within one standard deviation from the mean. Thus, 'low' and 'high' wages are those below and above one standard deviation from the mean, respectively.

-The position in a ten-point left-right ideological scale was transformed into a dummy variable (*LFT*) that gives value 1 to those workers who adopt a position from 1 to 5 in the scale (extreme left to centre left), and 0 to the rest, including those who don't know or don't answer.

-The social capital index (*SCI*) was constructed from a set of 8 variables on membership in diverse types of associations (professional; environmental; sportive and recreational; cultural and artistic; political parties; charity; neighbourhood; and "others") – religious ones were excluded, as there is a specific variable on religiosity[7]-. In each type, non membership (including also those who didn't answer) was given value 0; non-active membership, value 1; and active membership, value 2. The sum of the values of each respondent was transformed into a score in a 16-point scale. Those with a score of 0 were labelled as 'non active'; those with a score between 1 and a standard deviation above the mean, as 'active'; and those with a score equal to or higher than one standard deviation above the mean, as 'very active'.

-The political capital index (*PCI*) was constructed in a very similar way. Respondents were asked whether they had participated or were willing to participate in 5 forms of protest and struggle: signing of petitions; boycotts; demonstrations; strikes; and occupations of buildings and plants. Those who would never do it, didn't know or didn't answer were given

[7] Religious membership and practice has been dissociated from other forms of social capital in order to test whether it actually has an opposed effect to that of non-religious social capital. As religion tends to be related to a conservative mindset, the expectation here is that it has a negative effect on labour union membership, in contrast to other forms of social capital.

value 0; those who may do it, value 1; and those who had already done it, value 2. The sum of the values of each respondent was transformed into a score in a 10-point scale. Those with a score of 0 were labelled as 'non active'; those with a score between 1 and a standard deviation above the mean, as 'active'; and those with a score equal to or higher than one standard deviation above the mean, as 'very active'.

-The variable on the quality of local CBS (*CBS*) was constructed as a combination of a variable that registers whether in the firm where the worker is employed there is some structure that facilitates collective bargaining (delegates, workers committee, and so on) – lack of it was labelled as "none"- and a set of three variables on the local delegates or members of the workers committees, when applied. Those who answered that there was some CBS in the firm, were asked to declare their degree of agreement with the assertions that they knew the delegates; they had good communication with them; and they had a good opinion of them. Strong disagreement was given value 1; disagreement, value 2; indifference, value 3; agreement, value 4; and strong agreement, value 5. The sum of the values of each respondent yielded a score on a scale from 3 to 15. The quality of the local CBS was labelled as 'poor' for scores from 3 (the minimum) to 10 (the value just above the score that would yield the sum of indifference on the three aspects); 'fair' for scores from 11 to 14; and 'excellent' to scores equal to 15 (the maximum value).

Analysis

In order to examine the specific effect of the variables under consideration, I propose an incremental or step-wise procedure. First, I present a basic version of the model containing the type-of-contract variable together with a number of common individual and contextual variables. Then, a second version adds the quality of CBS to the previous independent variables. Finally, the third, complete version introduces also the social and political capital of the worker. In each case, I will very briefly comment on the major changes in significance produced by the introduction of the added variables. A full interpretation of the model will be given after the presentation of its complete version. Finally, the effects of the quality of local

CBS and of worker's political capital, as contrasted to type-of-contract segmentation, will be illustrated with tables of predicted probabilities of labour union membership.

The first version replicates, approximately, the model designed by Polavieja (2001: 205-210, Table 6.1). The differences are that the version presented here does not control for identification with unions –as the SQLW did not allow to do so-, although it introduces some other variables that were not included in Polavieja's model, such as marital status, education, wage, and sector of activity. Thus, the first version of the model adopts the following form:

$$P(AFF=1) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 MAL + \beta_2 AGE + \beta_3 MAR + \beta_4 EDU + \beta_5 OUT + \beta_6 WAG + \beta_7 OST + \beta_8 LEFT + \beta_9 SEC + \beta_{10} PBL + \beta_{11} SZF + \varepsilon$$

Table 3.2: *Logistic regression model on the probability of union membership. Explanatory variables include type of contract and control variables.*

Explanatory variables	Probability of being a union member			
	Coefficient	Z	Significance	% change in odds
MALE	0.31	3.23	****	36.2
AGE	0.03	7.11	****	3.1
MARRIED	0.39	4.27	****	47.2
EDUCATION →(Primary)				
Secondary	0.08	0.75	n.s.	8.8
Superior	-0.06	-0.36	n.s.	-5.6
OUTSIDER	-0.24	-2.41	**	-21.3
WAGE →(Low)				
Medium	0.51	3.67	****	66.0
High	0.34	1.68	*	39.9
OCCUP.ST. →(Service)				
Unskilled	0.23	1.54	n.s.	26.0
Skilled manual	0.53	3.81	****	69.4
Intermediate	0.21	1.65	*	23.8
LEFT	0.67	8.53	****	94.9
SECTOR →(Secondary)				
Primary	-0.27	-1.10	n.s.	-23.3
Tertiary	0.17	1.59	n.s.	19.1
PUBLIC	0.51	4.84	****	66.5
SIZE →(Working alone)				
Small (2-25)	0.43	1.43	n.s.	54.4
Medium (26-249)	0.80	2.62	***	123.0
Large (250-999)	1.25	3.88	****	248.0
Very large (1000 or +)	1.18	3.81	****	225.1
Observations:	4024		p>0.1→n.s.	
Prob. > Chi^2:	0.0000		p<0.1→*	p<0.01→***
Pseudo R^2:	11.91		p<0.05→**	p<0.001→****

As *Table 3.2* shows, type-of-contract segmentation is moderately significant. Being an outsider has a negative effect on labour union affiliation, reducing by 21.3 per cent the odds of union membership.

The second version introduces the quality of local CBS, adopting this form:

$$P(AFF=1) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 MAL + \beta_2 AGE + \beta_3 MAR + \beta_4 EDU + \beta_5 OUT + \beta_6 WAG + \beta_7 OST + \beta_8 LEFT + \beta_9 SEC + \beta_{10} PBL + \beta_{11} SZF + \beta_{12} CBS + \varepsilon$$

Table 3.3*: Logistic regression model on the probability of union membership. Explanatory variables include type of contract, quality of local CBS, and control variables.*

	Probability of being a union member			
Explanatory variables	Coefficient	Z	Significance	% change in odds
MALE	0.32	3.33	****	38.3
AGE	0.03	6.66	****	2.9
MARRIED	0.38	4.07	****	45.6
EDUCATION →(Primary)				
Secondary	0.00	0.03	n.s.	0.4
Superior	-0.13	-0.77	n.s.	-11.8
OUTSIDER	-0.04	-0.38	n.s.	-3.9
WAGE →(Low)				
Medium	0.38	2.74	***	46.9
High	0.14	0.69	n.s.	15.2
OCCUP.ST. →(Service)				
Unskilled	0.25	1.61	n.s.	28.0
Skilled manual	0.52	3.68	****	68.1
Intermediate	0.23	1.74	*	25.9
LEFT	0.65	8.16	****	92.0
SECTOR →(Secondary)				
Primary	0.01	0.05	n.s.	1.2
Tertiary	0.25	2.23	**	28.6
PUBLIC	0.45	4.22	****	57.1
SIZE →(Working alone)				
Small (2-25)	0.36	1.16	n.s.	42.8
Medium (26-249)	0.37	1.18	n.s.	44.7
Large (250-999)	0.69	2.11	**	100.1
Very large (1000 or +)	0.76	2.41	**	114.4
COLL. BARG. STR. →(None)				
Poor	0.59	4.45	****	79.7
Fair	1.09	10.28	****	198.3
Excellent	1.21	9.31	****	235.1
Observations:	4024		p>0.1→n.s.	
Prob. > Chi^2:	0.0000		p<0.1→*	p<0.01→***
Pseudo R^2:	14.90		p<0.05→**	p<0.001→****

As can be observed in *Table 3.3*, the introduction of the quality of CBS produces two major changes. First, the explanatory power of the model is notably enhanced. As the value of the pseudo R^2 indicates, the percentage of variability of the dependent variable explained by the model has increased from 11.91 to 14.90, that is, an increase of 3 percentage points. The categories of the new variable are not only significant at the maximum level but they are also the most significant ones of the model, as indicated both by the level of significance and by Z statistics. Taking the extreme categories of this variable, the model shows that having available CBS of 'excellent' quality at the firm, as contrasted to having 'none', increases by 235.1 per cent the odds of labour union membership. Second –and crucially-, *the significance of type-of-contract segmentation disappears*. This also happens with the 'high' category of wage and with the 'medium' category of size of the company. In the opposite direction, the 'tertiary' category of sector of activity becomes significant.

Finally, the social and political capital of the worker are added, thus resulting in the third, complete version of the model:

$$\begin{aligned} \mathrm{P}(AFF{=}1) = {} & \beta_0 + \beta_1 MAL + \beta_2 AGE + \beta_3 MAR + \beta_4 EDU + \beta_5 OUT + \beta_6 WAG + \\ & \beta_7 OST + \beta_8 LEFT + \beta_9 SCI + \beta_{10} REL + \beta_{11} PCI + \beta_9 SEC + \beta_{10} PBL \\ & + \beta_{11} SZF + \beta_{12} CBS + \varepsilon \end{aligned}$$

The results of the complete version of the model are displayed in *Table 3.4*. All the categories of the latter variables added are significant, especially those of political capital, which are significant at the maximum level. These variables raise the pseudo R^2 from 14.90 to 17.08, increasing the explanatory power of the model by 2.2 additional percentage points. The introduction of social and political capital does not affect the significance of the quality of CBS, which remains significant also at the maximum level; nor the lack of significance of type-of-contract segmentation. However, the 'Male' dummy and the 'large' category of size of the company lose part of their significance, and two categories become moderately significant: 'superior' education and 'unskilled' occupational status.

Table 3.4*: Logistic regression model on the probability of union membership. Explanatory variables include type of contract, quality of local CBS, worker's social and political capital, and control variables.*

	Probability of being a union member			
Explanatory variables	Coefficient	Z	Significance	% change in odds
MALE	0.27	2.66	***	30.5
AGE	0.03	7.40	****	3.4
MARRIED	0.39	4.11	****	47.3
EDUCATION →(Primary)				
Secondary	-0.09	-0.74	n.s.	-8.3
Superior	-0.34	-2.02	**	-28.8
OUTSIDER	-0.06	-0.59	n.s.	-6.0
WAGE →(Low)				
Medium	0.37	2.59	***	44.3
High	0.03	0.17	n.s.	3.5
OCCUP. STATUS →(Service)				
Unskilled	0.36	2.30	**	43.5
Skilled manual	0.64	4.42	****	89.5
Intermediate	0.34	2.52	**	40.8
LEFT	0.34	3.93	****	40.7
SOCIAL CAPIT.→(Non active)				
Active	0.22	2.25	**	24.8
Very active	0.34	2.77	***	41.1
RELIGIOSITY →(None)				
Occasional	-0.26	-2.50	**	-23.3
Regular	-0.36	-3.11	***	-30.5
Very frequent	-0.57	-3.43	****	-43.7
POLIT. CAPIT.→(Non active)				
Active	0.41	3.42	****	49.9
Very active	1.04	7.56	****	182.4
SECTOR →(Secondary)				
Primary	-0.01	-0.03	n.s.	-0.8
Tertiary	0.25	2.17	**	28.1
PUBLIC	0.37	3.39	****	45.2
SIZE →(Working alone)				
Small (2-25)	0.31	1.01	n.s.	36.6
Medium (26-249)	0.31	0.98	n.s.	36.3
Large (250-999)	0.61	1.84	*	84.4
Very large (1000 or +)	0.70	2.19	**	101.1
COLL. BARG. STR. →(None)				
Poor	0.54	4.01	****	71.3
Fair	1.07	9.91	****	191.4
Excellent	1.18	8.92	****	226.7
Observations:	4024		p>0.1→n.s.	
Prob. > Chi^2:	0.0000		p<0.1→*	p<0.01→***
Pseudo R^2:	17.08		p<0.05→**	p<0.001→****

Most of the results of the control variables conform to the bulk of the literature and previous empirical analyses. Being a *male* worker increases by 30.5 per cent the odds of labour union membership. *Age* has also a positive effect, each additional year increasing by 3.4 per cent the odds of affiliation. And so does the fact of being *married* or coupled –which produces a positive change of 47.3-, probably because it is associated with a greater intensity in the preference of security and planning. *Education* has a negative effect on union membership. Better educated workers are usually expected to have greater individual bargaining power, thus being less dependent on unions. As shown here, having 'superior' education, in contrast to having only 'primary', decreases by 28.8 per cent the odds of affiliation. The effect of *wage* suggests a non-linear, inverted U-shape relationship. While the difference between 'high' and 'low' wage is non significant, earning a 'medium' wage, as opposed to a 'low' one, does increase by 44.3 per cent the odds of union membership. Somehow paralleling wage, the effect of *occupational status* also suggests a non-linear, inverted U-shape relationship. All the categories below the 'service class' managers and professionals significantly increase the odds of affiliation, but it is the 'skilled manual' category which produces the highest increase (89.5 per cent) and at the highest level of significance, while the categories 'intermediate' and 'unskilled' are less significant and produce more moderate positive effects.

Concerning the contextual control variables, the effect of the *sector* of activity indicates a tertiarization of unionism: working in the services, in contrast to industry, increases by 28.1 per cent the odds of affiliation. Being employed in a *public* company produces a very significant positive effect, increasing by 45.2 the odds of union membership. As for the *size* of the firm, only the biggest ones make a significant difference as compared to working alone: 'large' and 'very large' firms produce a positive change of, respectively, 84.4 and 101.1 per cent.

Let's now move to the quality of CBS and the ideologico-attitudinal variables. As shown in *Table 3.4* above -and confirming what was already observed in the second version of the model-, the *quality of CBS* is the most significant variable in the model and the one that produces the highest positive effect on the dependent variable. All the categories of this variable are significant at the maximum level. Having available even 'poor' CBS, in contrast

to having 'none', increases already 71.3 per cent the odds of affiliation; 'fair' CBS produce an increase of 191.4 per cent; and 'excellent' CBS, an increase of 226.7 per cent.

Ideologico-attitudinal variables are all significant and produce considerable change in the odds of union membership. Workers with a position to the *left* in the left-right ideological scale increase by 40.7 per cent their odds of affiliation. *Social capital* –excluding religious membership- has a positive effect, although the significance is only moderate. Being socially 'active' and 'very active', as compared to 'non active', produces a positive change of, respectively, 24.8 and 41.1 per cent. *Religiosity* has a clear negative effect, which is more significant the more frequent religious practice is. Thus, 'occasional' practice, in contrast to 'none', produces a negative change of 23.3 per cent; 'regular' practice, a negative change of 30.5 per cent; and 'very frequent' practice, a negative change of 43.7 per cent. Finally, *political capital* produces a very significant positive effect. Being politically 'active' and 'very active', as compared to 'non active', produces a positive change of, respectively, 49.9 and 182.4 per cent, both at the maximum level of significance.

Two important conclusions can be drawn concerning the main variables under consideration. First, the significance of type-of-contract segmentation disappears once the quality of CBS is introduced in the model. Second, while type-of-contract segmentation is non significant within a comprehensive model, the quality of CBS and political capital are the most significant variables.

The contrast between the effects of these variables can be observed in *Tables 3.5*, *3.6*, and *3.7*, which display the predicted probabilities of union membership for diverse combinations of the values of each of these variables. A quick overview allows to see that, while the 'vertical' difference between the values is rather small, there is a great 'horizontal' variation. This reflects the fact that the effect produced by type-of-contract segmentation, expressed in the difference between the values of each column -which exceeds 2 percentage points-, is not statistically significant. In contrast, the range of variation in the predicted probabilities produced by the quality of CBS and by political capital is quite considerable. In the case of the quality of CBS, variation exceeds 25 percentage points (*Table 3.5*). In the case

of political capital, it exceeds 18 percentage points (*Table 3.6*). And the variation produced by the combined effect of both variables reaches 44 percentage points (*Table 3.7*).

Table 3.5: *Predicted probabilities of being a trade union member depending on type of contract and quality of the collective bargaining structures.*

TYPE OF CONTRACT	QUALITY OF THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING STRUCTURES			
	None	Poor	Fair	Excellent
Permanent	16.0	22.8	31.5	41.7
Fixed-term	14.3	20.6	28.8	38.6

Table 3.6: *Predicted probabilities of being a trade union member depending on type of contract and political capital.*

TYPE OF CONTRACT	POLITICAL CAPITAL		
	Non active	Active	Very active
Permanent	14.0	21.8	32.3
Fixed-term	12.5	19.7	29.6

Table 3.7: *Predicted probabilities of being a trade union member depending on type of contract and quality of the collective bargaining structures combined with political capital.*

	QUALITY OF THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING STRUCTURES / POLITICAL CAPITAL											
	None			Poor			Fair			Excellent		
TYPE OF CON-TRACT	Non Active	Active	Very active	Non active	Active	Very active	Non active	Active	Very active	Non active	Active	Very active
Permanent	9.8	15.7	24.1	14.5	22.5	33.1	20.8	31.1	43.5	29.1	41.2	54.5
Fixd.-term	8.7	14.1	21.9	12.9	20.3	30.3	18.8	28.4	40.4	26.5	38.1	51.3

It might be useful to illustrate the effect of these variables through sociologically recognisable figures. The variables in the model can be used to characterize two ideal types of worker. These ideal types are intended to stand as emblematic figures of two generations of workers –more expressively, the second worker could actually be thought of as the daughter of the first one-. From another point of view, they can also be taken as somehow characteristic types of the industrial and post-industrial eras. The first ideal type is a mature (50 years old), male, married worker, with secondary education, permanent contract, employed in a very large, public firm of the industrial sector. The second type is a young (25

years old), female, single worker, with superior education, fixed-term contract, employed in a small, private firm of the service sector. The remaining variables are held at their means. As can be observed in *Table 3.8*, the predicted probability of union membership for the first type is close to 50 per cent, while for the second type is only 6.7 per cent.

Table 3.8: *Predicted probabilities of union membership for two ideal types of worker.*

Ideal types	Predicted probability of union membership
-Mature (50 y.o.), male, married worker, with secondary education, permanent contract, employed in a very large, public firm of the industrial sector	48.3
-Young (25 y.o.), female, single worker, with superior education, fixed-term contract, employed in a small, private firm of the service sector	6.7

Drawing on the explanatory model, it is possible to see how the combined effect of the quality of local CBS and of political capital would affect these two ideal types of worker. This can be done by observing the predicted probabilities of union membership for different values of each of these variables. When these variables are held at their means, the predicted probabilities of union membership are the ones that are shown in *Table 3.8*: 48.3 and 6.7 per cent, respectively. Now, if the *first type of worker* has no CBS available, his odds of affiliation decrease to 38.4 per cent (see *Table 3.9*). If, additionally, he is not politically active at all, the odds decrease to 26.3. In the opposite direction, if CBS are excellent, the odds increase to 70.1. And if he is politically very active, the odds reach 79.7 per cent. If the *second type of worker* has no CBS available, her odds of affiliation decrease from 6.7 to 4.6 per cent. If, additionally, she is not politically active at all, the odds decrease to 2.7. In the opposite direction, if CBS are excellent, the odds increase to 15.3. And if she is politically very active, the odds reach 23.1 per cent. A very important observation is that, despite the fact that the first type of worker always has higher odds of union membership than the second type, the impact of the quality of CBS and of the political capital is much higher in the case of the latter than in the case of the former. The total percentage change produced by these variables is 203.0 for the first type, while it reaches 755.6 for the second one.

Table 3.9: *Predicted probabilities of union membership for two ideal types of workers letting the quality of CBS and the PCI vary.*

	Predicted probabilities of union membership (changes with respect to the mean and total change in brackets)				
	CBS=0 PCI=0	CBS=0 PCI=Mn	CBS=Mn PCI=Mn	CBS=3 PCI=Mn	CBS=3 PCI=3
-Mature (50 y.o.), male, married worker, with secondary education, permanent contract, employed in a very large, public firm of the industrial sector	26.3 (-45.5)	38.4 (-20.5)	48.3	70.1 (45.1)	79.7 (65.0)
	←		(203.0)		→
-Young (25 y.o.), female, single worker, with superior education, fixed-term contract, employed in a small, private firm of the service sector	2.7 (-59.7)	4.6 (-31.3)	6.7	15.3 (128.4)	23.1 (244.8)
	←		(755.6)		→

Conclusions and Practical Implications for the Unions

Type-of-contract segmentation carries with it a number of undesirable consequences from a *moral* point of view. Basically, it generates 'horizontal' labour market inequalities, which implies that workers realizing equal tasks actually enjoy different job conditions derived from their types of contract, many times including lower wages for temporary workers. This is a fundamental reason why labour unions *should* care about outsiders. However, Spanish trade unions have not carried out an inclusive representation of interests. As Polavieja points out, "collective bargaining, which is the main determinant of wages in Spain, has mainly represented the interests of insiders" (Polavieja 2001: 193-194). In doing so, unions have certainly represented the interests of the overwhelming majority of their members, which is composed of insiders. Now, if the representation of interests depends on the composition of membership, then an inclusive representation would require the expansion of affiliation beyond the 'core' of permanent workers towards the 'periphery' of outsiders.

Some authors have argued that type-of-contract segmentation hinders union growth, because outsiders are less prone to become union members. However, this article has demonstrated, through the analysis of union membership in a sample of Spanish workers, that type-of contract segmentation is not a significant variable in explaining union membership

once the quality of CBS is introduced in the explanatory model. Additionally, the odds of affiliation have been shown to be quite sensitive to certain ideologico-attitudinal variables, especially to the political capital of the worker. Therefore, type-of-contract segmentation does not represent such bad news for labour unions regarding the prospects of affiliation.

The emphasis made by some authors on the negative effects of type-of-contract segmentation fosters the view that unions face a structural constraint that is beyond their reach. However, the critical role played by local CBS revealed by the analysis presented in these pages directly concerns the unions' responsibility. This role has been proven to be even more influential for the ideal type of worker representing the young workforce on fixed-term contracts (*Table 3.9*). The quality of CBS, as defined in the model, depends on the communication with and prestige of the delegates, providing that those structures are already present in the firm. If unions aim at recruiting members among outsiders, they would certainly benefit from any effort directed towards guaranteeing the presence of CBS at those firms where these workers are employed and towards improving the performance of delegates in the workplace. The latter would contribute to this aim if they actually make an effort at effectively communicating with their actual and potential constituents, promoting participation and membership in the union and workers committees.

Nevertheless, a study carried out in 1988 among delegates and members of the Spanish UGT (referred to by Taboadela 1993: 545-547) reveals that local delegates tend to stay distanced both from the wider structures of the union and from their workmates in the firm. On the one side, delegates perceive remoteness and a relative abandonment from the organization towards them. They express discontent with the channels of communication between the top management and the lower levels, complaining about lack of information. On the other side, delegates manifest a sceptical attitude towards their workmates in the firm. The generalized opinion among delegates is that the scarcity of membership falls on the lack of interest of the workers, rather than on the union or the delegates: 64.4 per cent of the delegates declared to "quite and strongly agree" with the assertion that "the workers that want to affiliate to the UGT know already where they need to go, it is not necessary to ask them to affiliate". It is clear that this attitude hinders the prospects of success of any possible affiliating campaign that the union may launch. A similar study carried out in 1985 among

delegates of the USO yields very similar results (see Taboadela 1993: 547-548). Studies realized in other European countries have also concluded that local delegates tend to be relatively isolated from their constituents, showing sceptical attitudes towards the workers (Schuller and Robertson 1983 on Britain, in Taboadela 1993: 93-94).

Besides the role of local delegates as a critical piece of the CBS in the firm, the present paper has also demonstrated that workers with higher political capital are significantly more prone to become union members. Political capital –which is defined through actions instead of only memberships-, has proven to have a greater and more significant impact on the dependent variable than mere social capital, confirming in the study of union membership the theorisation and empirical findings made by Booth and Richard (1998) in the field of democratisation. At the same time, the opposite effects produced by religiosity and by non-religious forms of social capital confirm also the need to use more fine-grained theorisation concerning the role of social capital.

According to Polavieja, outsiders are unlikely to join unions because "discipline costs and uncertainty as to the returns can act as 'objective' impediments to participation in union-related activities" (Polavieja 2001: 201). The findings of the present paper, however, suggest that political capital might compensate the negative conditions associated with fixed-term contracts. Politically active workers surely have a stronger motivation in participating in union activities and struggle, therefore being more likely to become union members. It is not quite clear how unions could enhance this potential, as political capital formation might be the result of a wide range of long-term complex processes and individual experiences. But it is plausible that unions would contribute to workers' political capital formation by generating participative environments and boosting mobilization of the workers, a task that, nevertheless, is probably more hindered by the bureaucratization and sclerosis of the unions than by labour market segmentation.

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