



## **Conference Outline**

### **New Policies of Accommodating Diversity Challenges and Opportunities for Multilevel States**

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## 1 Introduction

Questions of how to accommodate diversity have become increasingly important not only in Western Europe but also as part of processes of democratization outside Europe. Apart from the renaissance of internal nations within states, mobility and immigration are transforming the cultural composition of societies, thereby increasing their heterogeneity. Communities differ in terms of language, religion, cultural tradition, and national or ethnic identity. Demands for special recognition or protection of group distinctiveness are challenging liberal principles of equality and raise questions about belonging, identity, in- and exclusion. Apart from practical problems of finding satisfactory solutions for divergent groups, policies of integration also touch normative principles of living together within one state.

The aim of the conference is to shed light on these fundamental questions and to compare policies of diversity management in different contexts. We will discuss issues of accommodation, integration and territorial dynamics from different theoretical perspectives, including single and comparative case studies about different types of communities in Europe as well as in other world areas focusing on the policies directed at those communities' demands.

## 2 Aim of the Conference

The aim of the conference can best be described as narrowing a theoretical gap and at moving forward in the task of developing an analytical framework for studies on diversity management. Theoretically, the question that has been driving our research from the very beginning of the project and which has also been the guiding principle in conceptualizing and planning this conference is: ***How can the peaceful living together of different groups in one body politic be secured (or at least enabled)? Which policies or institutions need to be established to enhance the chances of societal peace while at the same time securing group self-determination?*** In approaching this most acute and highly relevant question, we join several strands of research, which have been largely unconnected in the past. One strand of research is driven by normative questions on the 'whether', 'what for' and 'how much' of accommodation, the other is driven by empirical observations and positive questions of institutional design, focusing on the 'how' of accommodation. These discussions reflect, on the one hand, the debate between liberalists and multiculturalists about the sufficiency of minority rights as individual rights or the necessity of collective rights for equal opportunities, self-determination and the preservation of cultural differences. On the other hand, different modes of power-sharing based on either the territoriality principle or the personality principle are distinguished. These modes capture recurrent debates among federalism scholars about the potential to prevent or the risk to increase secessionist movements when making use of consociational mechanisms, of integration policies or of forms of cultural autonomy. Based on these reflections, we explore normative as well as empirical questions, comparing real-life situations, policies and institutional arrangements in several world regions in developed as well as in developing democracies. In all conference panels, theoretical and empirical considerations are closely linked, thereby promoting exchange between the subdisciplines and contributing to the development of an integrated analytical framework.

During the discussions of the conference we thus hope to join the strands of inquiry into the normative foundations of managing cultural diversity as well as into the conditions of successful accommodation in different contexts. As questions of regional identity and claims of cultural communities are connected to historical legacies and contextual factors such as economic circumstances or opportunities for democratic participation, approaches to the management of cultural diversity differ leading to a variety of policy initiatives applied in practice. Comparing these different concepts and

settings of diversity management, presentations and discussions at the conference will increase our knowledge and understanding about conditions under which certain policies are preferred over others as well as conditions of success and failure of peaceful accommodation of culturally diverse societies.

### **3 Relevance of Accommodation Research**

Policies of diversity management and conflict regulation in divided societies received enhanced scholarly and political attention in the past decades. While processes of decentralization in multinational states were directed at the demands of territorially concentrated national minorities, the acceptance of the UN's Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities or the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity and several declarations on the rights of minorities have contributed to an increase in multicultural policies towards indigenous peoples but also towards immigrant minorities in Europe. Those policies resulted in curbing conflict and reducing claims, in short-term perspective at least, but it is still unclear whether long-term developments will witness peaceful coexistence or a revival of violent or non-violent protest. While multinational states acquired a great deal of experience in the recent decades in dealing with claims for autonomy stated by national minorities and indigenous peoples, strategies of territorial accommodation are becoming ineffective in the light of increasing diffusion of ethnic, social, racial, linguistic, religious and political communities due to migration between and within states. As a consequence, even rather homogenous societies such as Germany are confronted with claims for cultural accommodation of religious minorities and searching for best practices. At the same time – without implying causal inference – we can observe that support for multiculturalism seems to decline – the pendulum is swinging back. At least in rhetoric if not always in practice, political actors are requesting immigrants to better integrate into the majority population and higher hurdles for citizenship have been discussed and implemented in several states (Vertovec & Wessendorf, 2010).

As we can see from those observations, the inquiry into the desirability and applicability of policies for accommodating diversity in states all over the world is not only an academic exercise, but of high political relevance. Previously rather homogenous societies can learn from 'old' multinational states, emerging democracies from established ones and vice versa. Power-sharing between groups has been suggested as a prerequisite for peaceful coexistence within one state (Lijphart, 2004; Horowitz, 1993, 2002). Accommodation by power-sharing, however, can be effectuated in two different ways, following either the territoriality or the personality principle. The comparisons will shed light on the questions whether a stable liberal democracy forms a prerequisite for successful accommodation or whether we find alternative models in emerging democracies that serve equally or even better in reducing community tensions. In stimulating a dialogue about the extent of accommodation that we deem desirable and realistic, the conditions under which autonomy can be granted to different groups, but also about the limits of this autonomy within one state, we will learn more about the balance between offering space for self-determination of groups, the guarantee of individual rights and the integrity of the state. Furthermore, little is known about how accommodation can be enacted, how territorial and non-territorial solutions interact and what may be possible pitfalls of the two strategies. Finally, we need to get a better understanding of the interaction of territorial, cultural and societal dynamics as a consequence of accommodation policies if they are to contribute to enduring peace and stability.

### ***3.1 The principle of accommodation***

The term 'accommodation' has been used to describe an agreement among people with dissenting opinions on a subject without specifying the mode of the agreement (treaty, statement of interest) or the scope of alteration of the status quo. In his analysis of power-sharing mechanisms in the Netherlands, Arend Lijphart applies the term to the non-majoritarian institutions of consociational democracy thereby narrowing the meaning to a certain set of agreements (Lijphart, 1975; see also Barry, 1975). More recently, accommodation has been formulated in opposition to integration as distinct strategy to deal with cultural diversity. Here, both strategies – accommodation as well as integration – take a middle position between the suppression of differences on the one end and secession on the other. While accommodation “requires the recognition of more than one ethnic, linguistic, national, or religious community in the state” and “aims to secure the coexistence of different communities within the same state”, integration “aims at equal citizenship” and at privatization of differences (McGarry, O'Leary, & Simeon, 2008: 52, 45). Differences are accepted in both cases and not assimilated or extinguished but their role in the public sphere differs significantly as well as the role of the state in securing the cultural survival of distinct groups. In this rather narrow use of the term, accommodation implies a normative decision about the right ways of diversity management.

In our research, however, we adopt a broader understanding of the term accommodation, including institutional or procedural devices agreed upon between a state and one or several distinct cultural groups living on this state's territory and defining the terms of mutual coexistence. This understanding precludes normative a priori decisions as to whether the agreement privatizes cultural differences, thereby defining a limited sphere of group autonomy, or whether those differences are explicitly made part of public life, extending the sphere of group autonomy. It highlights, however, the requirement of consensus between all involved actors thereby relying on the ideas of social contract and recurring dialogue between cultural communities. Clearly distinct from accommodation in our understanding are assimilation or extinction of differences as well as secession. All those strategies aim at homogenization of diversity instead of managing it.

Still, this rather broad understanding of accommodation entails a range of normative questions. First, as the liberalism vs. multiculturalism debate shows, a relevant question is how many of the values of the majority group(s) need to be shared by all groups in the state. Is there a chance that an 'overlapping consensus' (Rawls, 1987) between groups exists? What kind of overarching consensus is necessary to make a peaceful living together (or even mere coexistence) within one body politic possible? Who will be accepted as legitimate arbitrator when the cultural traditions of two communities conflict with each other and no compromise seems to be available? To give an example: tolerance is one of the most important values in liberal societies. But does tolerance towards difference also mean to accept another group's intolerance? At which point is it the duty of a state to intervene in order to protect life and security of its citizens? Does the respect for religious or cultural practices include accepting harmful practices directed at members of the same group who are still citizens of the state? The definition of accommodation as agreement on terms of coexistence formed between cultural communities or the majority population and minorities does not mean a disengagement from normative discourses. Any reflection about accommodating diversity already starts with a basic normative question: Which groups are entitled to preferential treatment and why?

Another complex of questions deals with strategic reflections and practical implications that can differ depending on the perspective – either of the respective communities or of the state. From the viewpoint of the cultural community, claims may be directed at an increase in integration (better

representation, support for language education, affirmative action regarding career opportunities or social equality) or at autonomy (separate school boards, jurisdiction over education and culture or also tax levying power). Under which conditions is it better to claim integration, when autonomy? From the perspective of the state, strategies may focus on keeping differential treatment at a minimum even if claims differ in comparison of the groups. Granting autonomy to one group involves a privileged position in comparison with other groups. How many different policies of accommodation can be established simultaneously? Where is the line drawn and how can this be justified? Privileging geographically concentrated groups and granting territorial autonomy results in asymmetric federalism with its particular imbalances and dynamics. Privileging dispersed cultural groups according to the personality principle may result in imbalanced interest representation and jeopardize societal peace.

Finally, the normative bias in favor of accommodation (as contrasted to assimilation or secession) needs to be questioned: under which conditions is homogenization preferable to diversity management? How can the decision for the one or the other mechanism of conflict regulation be legitimately justified?

### ***3.2 Territorial accommodation***

Applying territorial mechanisms of power-sharing involves the creation of substate entities so that a territorially concentrated, cultural community forms a majority within the smaller unit. The territoriality principle, therefore, rests on the logic of ethno-federalism. Based on the classic definition of Daniel Elazar, federalism combines self-rule and shared rule components, meaning autonomous fields of jurisdiction for the substates as well as their representation in institutions and participation in decision-making processes at the center (Elazar, 1987: 12). Speaking of territorial autonomy, therefore, focuses on the self-rule component of federalism. Depending on how jurisdictions are distributed, territorial autonomy allows the national community to define policies in the fields of education, culture, media or language rights according to their respective needs and independently of the majority population. According to Alfred Stepan (1999) 'holding-together' federations are created to safeguard the coexistence of ethnic groups or national minorities within one state. Federalism is also regarded a viable alternative and an attempt to prevent secession because it allows for combining a certain degree of unity with a certain degree of diversity (Burgess, 2006; Kymlicka, 1998). While demands of national minorities in Western Europe have frequently been met with decentralization or federalization over the last decades leading to an increase in regional authority (Marks, Hooghe, & Schakel, 2008), tying substate nationalism to security issues has prevented similar developments in Central and Eastern Europe (Kymlicka, 2005).

The potential of territorial arrangements, however, for solving tensions or appeasing violence between different ethnic or cultural groups was profoundly questioned in the past few years in two respects. On the one hand, increasing evidence of failure of territorial arrangements to appease violent ethnic or religious conflict all over the world prove that federalism does not automatically entail conflict appeasement (Brancati, 2006; Erk & Anderson, 2009). On the other hand, processes of decentralization in multinational states were initiated in formerly unitary states to meet the demands of territorially concentrated national minorities. Those processes, however, unleashed territorial dynamics unforeseen by their initiators and potentially fostering instead of preventing the road to secession (Colino, 2009; Roeder, 2009). While federalism offers the potential for appeasing conflicts by addressing group demands thus increasing their loyalty to the state, it may also strengthen secessionist aspirations either caused by the limits of decentralized power and resources or by positive

experiences in deciding autonomously on policy initiatives and expenditures. Separatist parties have rejoiced in their electoral success and currently exchange experiences on how to achieve independence. In the UK, the Scottish National party, after having gained the majority in the past parliamentary elections, announced a referendum on Scottish independence which is now scheduled for 2014. Transforming Belgium into a federal state was analyzed as a process hollowing-out the center with disintegrative tendencies deeply ingrained in the conflict-solving strategies adopted prior to decentralization (Hooghe, 2004; Petersohn, 2011). Now, Bart de Wever speaks of an independent Flanders more openly after his last success in the municipal elections. In Spain, autonomous communities repeatedly challenged the central state by declaring their own nationality (Catalonia) or even envisaging a sovereign state within the EU (Basque Country). Catalan nationalists are still determined to hold a referendum on secession in this legislature. Although territorial dynamics are considered to be an inherent aspect of multilevel and federal systems resulting from the necessity to adapt the allocation and exercise of power to changing circumstances (Benz & Broschek, 2013; Behnke & Benz, 2009), they can become problematic for the further existence of the multinational state when taking the form of accelerated decentralization or resulting in complete dismantlement of the state (McGarry & O'Leary, 2009). The extent to which federal arrangements are fundamentally questioned and challenged in their capacity for adaptation is rather unprecedented.

Apart from those basic doubts about the peacemaking capacity of federal arrangements, the logic of re-drawing boundaries and granting territorial autonomy poses several conceptual problems which will be addressed in detail during the conference. First, territorial concentration offers a certain orientation for the drawing of boundaries, but mostly leads to the creation of new minorities within the smaller units. For only rarely do territorial boundaries of a substate coincide with the territorial extension of a national group. The question of how to accommodate distinct communities that are territorially concentrated is therefore not entirely addressed but repeats itself in ever smaller circles. If substate units are to be created that can function and survive, there has to be a limit in granting territorial autonomy. In defining this limit (e.g. in terms of size of group or of territory), certain groups who fall below that threshold will be denied territorial autonomy. Such a decision can only be regarded as legitimate if those groups can be sure to be protected in other ways. Cases like Bosnia-Herzegovina or India with high degrees of dispersion and overlapping spheres of belonging illustrate this problem where the concept of territorial autonomy reaches its limits.

Second, problems may arise from differentiations within and between groups. Cultural communities within a state do not only differ in terms of their origin as the distinction of indigenous peoples, national minorities, and immigrant groups has suggested. It is not uncommon that states include several national minorities or indigenous nations on their territory differing with regard to group size, historical rights, distinct languages or higher or lower number of people speaking a distinct language within the respective group, or a higher or lower degree of group identity. Recognizing distinct cultures in the public sphere and accommodating group demands may take the form of 'treating different groups differently' as has been suggested in Charles Taylor's concept of 'deep diversity' (Taylor, 1992). In case of more than one territorially concentrated national minority, this may include granting different levels of territorial autonomy and establishing asymmetrical federal arrangements. While communities that are larger in size, share a distinct language and a longer history of special rights will be more satisfied with this different treatment and more autonomy, those that are granted lesser degrees of autonomy feel underprivileged and may develop demands for 'catching up' to the higher level of autonomy followed by demands of communities with a high level of autonomy for re-establishing a distance between the distinct communities. Recent studies have demonstrated that

dynamics in asymmetrical federations are not just caused by the intensity of national identities of territorial concentrated groups but that the reactions of those regions without distinct national communities matter for the creation of centrifugal dynamics after asymmetrical power-sharing arrangements have been introduced (Hombrado, 2011).

Third, the allocation of territorial autonomy rests on a pragmatic decision to grant powers or special rights to the inhabitants of a territory – irrespective of their group membership. However, at the very same territory, there may just as well live members of the national majority or members of other minorities who form in this territory a regional minority. Internal differentiation cannot be accounted for and members of a distinct community who move across the jurisdictional boundary will no longer benefit from the rights granted and powers allocated (Bauböck, 2004). Territorial autonomy therefore proves to be too rigid to accommodate cultural diversity in times of increased mobility requirements. Similarly, territorial accommodation is unable to satisfy the needs and requests of immigrants, who increase diversity within the smaller territory. Immigrants (if they have citizenship status) may be subject to autonomy rights granted to territories based on considerations of protecting a national minority against the majority population. But they will be unable to turn those opportunities into special protection or rights for their own community, because any further recognition of other cultural communities in that very territory might undermine the efficiency of existing power-sharing arrangements in ensuring the autonomy of the regional majority group and its cultural survival.

### ***3.3 Cultural accommodation***

Regarding political practice as well as comparative research, non-territorial or national cultural autonomy has played a subordinate role in comparison to territorial autonomy. Karl Renner and Otto Bauer were the first to develop a coherent concept for the distinct linguistic groups in the Austro-Hungarian Empire (Renner, 1918), but the empire fell apart before it was implemented and tested. Their ideas of non-territorial accommodation of distinct groups experienced renewed interest for the dealing with minorities in those states that followed the dissolution of the former communist bloc in Europe. Non-territorial autonomy includes transfers of the jurisdiction over education and culture to national communities irrespective of their residence or territorial concentration. Non-territorial autonomy resembles consociational mechanisms but focuses on what has been called segmented autonomy and on the capacities of communities to make decisions in the transferred fields of jurisdiction independently of the majority population. The requirement of elite-consensus between the distinct groups prominent in consociationalism (Lijphart, 1985; Nimni, 2005), however, does not exist in the concept of national cultural autonomy. According to Renner, the concept allows the state to recognize cultural communities as its basic components without the necessity to be restructured into a multinational federation (Renner, 1918; Coakley, 1994: 300). In order to be eligible for autonomy transfers, a certain group size is nevertheless necessary. Renner identified the local level as appropriate to establish multilingual administrations, thus protecting minorities without requiring a territorial concentration and federalization. National cultural autonomy in this sense was suggested as a solution for protecting dispersed national minorities or religious diaspora communities. However, application of this concept has so far been less frequent than territorial decentralization, and the knowledge about practical implications of this concept is still limited. Presumably, power-sharing mechanisms based on territoriality or personality principles are not competitors, but can complement each other in varying constellations and support the successful accommodation of claims made by cultural communities. In order to determine the potential of non-territorial autonomy to regulate community conflicts, more comparative studies are necessary inquiring into the level of autonomy and funding patterns of cultural councils in Central and Eastern Europe, of parliaments for indigenous

people in Northern Europe or autonomous school boards for dispersed linguistic minorities existent in different world areas.

Similar to territorial autonomy and federalism, non-territorial forms of power-sharing face a number of conceptual and practical obstacles. First and similar to territorial arrangements, a decision has to be made which groups gain special recognition symbolically or also in changed power-sharing arrangements. But contrary to the easy demarcation of belonging in case of territorial boundaries, group membership has to be defined additionally – be it by individual choice or based on criteria established by the group itself. In a liberal variant membership is based on individual declaration which means that each individual decides whether to express a wish to belong to a group or not. However, if the group establishes criteria of belonging, membership becomes more compulsory and more likely to be based on identity markers such as decent, language, or religion. Boundary drawing of membership is very strict in this case in both directions including individuals which might prefer not to become a member of this group as well as excluding individuals who might wish to belong to this group. In contrast to pluralism aiming at organized civil society, where multiple memberships are possible and even welcome, membership is generally exclusive. Being a member of a group might not be challenged by moving out of a certain territory, but the question arises how flexible these criteria are to reflect changes within each group (Bauböck, 2004). Second, policies of accommodation always induce the question of its limits also in case of non-territorial mechanisms of power-sharing. Self-rule provisions allow each group to decide autonomously upon certain policies that affect their culture and traditions. Similar to conflicts over jurisdictions and their limits between the levels of government in a federal system, a decision has to be made about the limits of the groups' autonomy in non-territorial power-sharing arrangements as well.

Third and more related to the shared rule component of each arrangement, granting special rights based on distinct cultural traditions will induce the elites and members of this group to emphasize the differences between groups or in comparison with the majority population while downplaying similarities or shared positions (Bellamy, 2000). At the same time, power-sharing arrangements presuppose that several decisions be taken jointly so that a will to compromise and moderate one's own interests is required from participating group representatives. On the one hand, group elites therefore have an interest in keeping differences alive and capitalize on them thus causing a stronger status quo orientation of the respective group. On the other hand, if elites moderate their interests in order to compromise, they run the risk of alienating parts of their groups who might then drift to more radical positions. While power-sharing mechanisms are intended to foster peace amongst different groups of a society and to allow for parallel autonomous decision-making, they may as well antagonize groups against each other and increase intergroup conflicts.

#### **4 Structure of the Conference – the Panels**

The effort to link the different strands of discussion as outlined above consequently permeates the entire structure of the conference. In the same vein, we link theoretical considerations and normative questions with empirical investigations of single or comparative case studies in every single panel.

We start with **panel 1 'Policies of accommodating diversity and territorial dynamics in established democracies'**. The presentations there provide descriptions of accommodations policies in countries which have a lot of experience in diversity accommodation and outline in a nutshell several of the basic normative questions – the legitimacy of secession; the dilemma of symmetry and asymmetry; the effects of decentralization on territorial dynamics; and the question of accommodation and stability. **Panel 2 'Non-territorial or cultural autonomy in theory and practice'** contrasts the – mainly



territorially based – experiences of the first panel with an explicit focus on policies of cultural accommodation. The presentations span historical examples, Western democracies and Central and Eastern European countries, but always with an explicit focus on theoretical considerations. After having outlined the two main principles of accommodation – the territoriality and the personality principle – in the first two panels, we shift the focus of discussion on world regions and different degrees of democratic development. **Panel 3** is dedicated to '**Policies of Accommodation in Central and Eastern Europe**' as post-communist (post-)transitional democracies with their specific problems of communist heritage, multinationalism and concerns about territorial solutions and decentralization. **Panel 4 'Policies of accommodating diversity in emerging or partial democracies'** looks at cases with a high degree of diversity, where arrangements of accommodation are being established more or less simultaneously with democratic structures, covering South-East Asia as well as Africa. The consequences of establishing an ethno-federal state may differ due to the lack of stable democratic institutions on the one hand. On the other, the deeply divided societies may require a different combination of accommodation policies and serve as examples for established democracies challenged by an increase in their cultural diversity.

The second day of the conference is devoted to more specific issues. We start with **panel 5 on 'Normative and theoretical reflections on accommodating diversity'**, where the presentations address several normative problems, namely the borderline between respecting autonomy and safeguarding the larger state; the rationale and possible justification of secession; and the linkage between deliberative democracy and integrating diversity. In **panel 6 'Immigrant and national minorities: accommodation or conflict intensification'** we address the overlapping and interaction of (territorially concentrated) national minorities with immigrant groups who typically reside dispersed across a state's territory. Immigrant groups are not only treated as different type of group in normative terms but the legitimacy of their claims is also disputed to a larger degree. Due to their dispersed settlements, territorial solutions are simply not applicable and their demands may run counter to protective mechanisms for other, territorially concentrated communities. In the final **panel 7 'Territorial party politics: Ideologies, strategies and dynamics'** we turn back to established multinational democracies, this time however with a particular focus on the role of parties as the most important actors. Regionalist, nationalist and non-statewide parties mobilize and organize group identities, formulate group claims and negotiate accommodation policies. Statewide parties, on the other hand, typically represent interests of the entire state and have to adapt their programs to electoral challenges by NSWP's as well as their internal structure to the changing multilevel architecture of the state. Parties thus find themselves in the dual role as promoters but also as subjects of territorial dynamics.

A closing discussion at the end of the conference is meant to help the organizers to synthesize the main results of the different strands of discussion.

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