# Conflict Management in Divided Societies: The Many Uses of Territorial Self-governance

**Abstract**

Conflict over territorial control in divided societies is widespread, frequently violent and difficult to resolve, and thus merits systematic analytical and empirical engagement. Extending the discussion of territorial approaches to conflict management in divided societies beyond the usually narrower focus on federation and autonomy, this article develops the concept of territorial self-governance as a form of state construction and conflict management, arguing that it encompasses five distinct arrangements from confederation and federation to federacy, devolution and decentralisation and illustrates their manifestations with examples from 12 countries across three continents. The article establishes and tests a framework to explain their emergence, examines the conditions under which they are combined with other conflict management strategies, such as power sharing, and reflects on their track record of providing stability in divided societies, finding it more promising than its critics allow.

## 1. A Contested Approach to Conflict Management in Divided Societies

In 2007, Donald Horowitz published an article, entitled 'The Many Uses of Federalism'.[1] Horowitz here accepts that homogeneous provinces, too, can prove useful for the purpose of ethnic conflict management, but argues that rather than the aim being to facilitate group autonomy (the consociational rationale), homogeneous provinces offer the possibility to foster intra-group competition,[2] which, in turn, is more in line with the broader centripetalist approach to conflict management. Horowitz's concern with the use of territorial self-governance mechanisms in order to manage conflict in divided societies[3] dates back to more than two decades earlier: in what remains a classic work in the field, Horowitz cautioned that "the most potent way to assure that federalism or autonomy will not become just a step to secession is to reinforce those specific interests that groups have in the undivided state",[4] echoed later in another contribution to the debate in which he emphasised that federal or autonomy provisions need to be "[c]ombined with policies that give regionally concentrated groups a strong stake in the center".[5]

These 'many uses of federalism' are the subject of the following analysis, extending the discussion beyond the usually narrower focus on federation and autonomy. It also considers territorial approaches in a temporal or procedural perspective, i.e., not only as

---

[1] D. L. Horowitz, 'The many uses of federalism', 55:4 *Drake Law Review* (2007).

[2] Horowitz, *supra* note 1, pp. 960-96; D. L. Horowitz, 'Conciliatory Institutions and Constitutional Processes in Post-conflict States', 49:4 *William and Mary Law Review* (2008) p. 1218.

[3] Following Rabushka and Schepsle, a society is diverse (or plural) "if it is culturally diverse *and* if its cultural sections are organized into cohesive political sections. […] Politically organized cultural sections, communally based political parties, the partitioning of major social groups (e.g., labor unions) into culturally homogeneous subgroups, and political appeals emphasizing primordial sentiments serve as unambiguous indicators of a plural society." See A. Rabushka & K. A. Shepsle, *Politics in Plural Societies: A Theory of Democratic Instability* (Merrill, Columbus, OH, 1972) p. 21.

[4] D. L. Horowitz, *Ethnic groups in conflict* (University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 1985) p. 628.

[5] D. L. Horowitz, 'Democracy in Divided Societies', 4:4 *Journal of Democracy* (1993) p. 36.

permanent status settlements but also as interim frameworks on the way towards final status for a particular territorial entity.

Is such an engagement with just one distinct approach to conflict management justified? Territorial approaches have traditionally been associated in particular with self-determination conflicts, or more precisely with conflicts in which territorially concentrated identity groups (whose identity is, in part, derived from association with this 'homeland') demand greater rights of self-governance. Such territorially concentrated groups in divided societies are more likely to do so,[6] and to use violence,[7] while the initiation of peace negotiations in such conflicts is less likely as are government concessions.[8]

At the same time, the academic community is divided over the utility of territorial approaches to conflict management in divided societies: Cornell in his analysis of conflicts in the Caucasus argues that the "institution of autonomous regions is conducive to secessionism",[9] a point that Roeder made in relation to Soviet ethnofederalism and in a broader empirical study,[10] in line with similar findings by Hale and Treisman.[11]

The view that territorial approaches to managing conflicts, rather than being a cure, induce conflict, has not gone unchallenged: Gurr argues that the "recent historical track record shows that, on balance, autonomy arrangements can be an effective means for managing regional conflicts."[12] Wallensteen concurs, pointing out that "since the Cold War, autonomy solutions have been of increasing interest" and that "[t]hus far, the territorial solutions negotiated since the end of the Cold War using autonomy or federation have not failed."[13] Saideman et al. find that "federalism reduces the level of ethnic violence",[14] Bermeo concludes that "federal institutions promote successful accommodation" in cases of ethnic conflict.[15]

---

[6] E. Jenne, S. M. Saideman & W. Lowe, 'Separatism as a Bargaining Posture: The Role of Leverage in Minority Radicalization', 44:5 *Journal of Peace Research* (2007), S. M. Saideman & R. W. Ayres, 'Determining the Causes of Irredentism: Logit Analyses of Minorities at Risk Data from the 1980s and 1990s', 62:4 *Journal of Politics* (2000), M. D. Toft, *The Geography of Ethnic Violence: Identity, Interests and the Indivisibility of Territory* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J., 2003), M. D. Toft & S. M. Saideman, 'Self-determination Movements and Their Outcomes', in J. J. Hewitt, J. Wilkenfeld & T. R. Gurr (eds.), *Peace and Conflict 2010* (Paradigm Publishers, Boulder, CO, 2010).

[7] J. D. Fearon & D. D. Laitin, 'Weak States, Rough Terrain, and Large-Scale Ethnic Violence since 1945', Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Atlanta, GA, September 1999, <http://www.stanford.edu/~jfearon/papers/insurg1.pdf>, visited on 10 February 201; N. B. Weidmann, J. K. Rød & L.-E. Cederman, 'Representing ethnic groups in space: A new dataset', 47:4 *Journal of Peace Research* (2010).

[8] B. F. Walter, 'Explaining the Intractability of Territorial Conflict', 5:4 *International Studies Review* (2003).

[9] S. E. Cornell, 'Autonomy as a Source of Conflict: Caucasian Conflicts in Theoretical Perspective', 54:2 *World Politics* (2002).

[10] P. G. Roeder, 'Clash of Civilizations and Escalation of Domestic Ethnopolitical Conflicts', 36:5 *Comparative Political Studies* (2003; P. G. Roeder, 'Soviet Federalism and Ethnic Mobilization', 43:2 *World Politics* (1991; P. G. Roeder, *Where Nation-States Come From: Institutional Change in the Age of Nationalism* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2007).

[11] H. E. Hale, 'Divided We Stand: Institutional Sources of Ethnofederal State Survival and Collapse', 56: *World Politics* (2004); H. E. Hale, 'The Parade of Sovereignties: Testing Theories of Secession in the Soviet Setting', 30:1 *British Journal of Political Science* (2000); D. S. Treisman, 'Russia's "Ethnic Revival": The Separatist Activism of regional Leaders in a Postcommunist Order', 49:2 *World Politics* (1997).

[12] T. R. Gurr, *Minorities at risk: A global view of ethnopolitical conflicts* (United States Institutes of Peace Press, Washington, DC, 1993) p. 301.

[13] P. Wallensteen, *Understanding Conflict Resolution* (Sage London, 2007) pp. 175, 179.

[14] S. M. Saideman, D. J. Lanoue, M. Campenni & S. Stanton, 'Democratization, Political Institutions, and Ethnic Conflict: A Pooled Time-Series Analysis, 1985-1998', 35:1 *Comparative Political Studies* (2002) p. 118.

[15] N. Bermeo, 'The Import of Institutions', 13:2 *Journal of Democracy* (2002) p. 97. Other authors who have contributed to this debate in a similar way include C. Hartzell & M. Hoddie, *Crafting Peace: Power-sharing Institutions and the Negotiated Settlement of Civil Wars* (Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park,

A final point that highlights the relevance of engaging with (potential) conflicts in which control over territory is at stake is the fact that situations in which ethnic groups demand self-determination (by violent means or not) occur frequently and across all continents. According to Quinn, since the end of the Second World War alone, '79 territorially concentrated ethnic groups have waged armed conflicts for autonomy or independence, not counting the peoples of former European colonies'.[16] In an assessment focused on Europe only, Csergo and Wolff identify a total of 82 groups in 28 countries who have sought a greater degree of political control over territories they consider their traditional homelands at some stage after 1945.[17]

Self-governance claims made by territorially concentrated groups can range from demands for independent statehood, unification with another state, territorial self-governance within an existing state, and non-territorial self-governance (or cultural autonomy).[18] The focus of the following exploration is on the multiple uses of territorial self-governance (TSG) arrangements as mechanisms of conflict management that avoid contested changes to international boundaries. The discussion proceeds in several steps. First, I conceptualise the meaning of TSG in the context of conflict management in divided societies and then offer a brief illustration of its practical usage in Europe in the period before 1990. This historical contextualisation is important for an understanding of both the contemporary theory and practice of TSG as a strategy of conflict management which I examine in the subsequent section. I conclude with some general observations on the utility of TSG as an approach to conflict management in divided societies.

## 2. Territorial Self-governance: A Conceptual and Empirical History

There are considerable conceptual and empirical problems with the definition of TSG as a strategy of conflict management.[19] Moreover, much discussion has focused on just two forms of TSG—autonomy and federation. Conceptually broader and more contested is the term autonomy—referring simultaneously to the specific territorial status of an entity within an

PA, 2007); U. Schneckener, 'Making Power Sharing Work: Lessons from Successes and Failures in Ethnic Conflict Regulation', 39:2 *Journal of Peace Research* (2002); and S. Wolff, 'Complex Power-sharing and the Centrality of Territorial Self-governance in Contemporary Conflict Settlements', 8:1 *Ethnopolitics* (2009).

[16] D. Quinn, 'Self-determination movements and their outcomes', in J. Hewitt, J. Wilkenfeld & T. R. Gurr (eds.), *Peace and Conflict Report 2008* (Paradigm Publishers, Boulder, CO, 2008) p. 33.

[17] Z. Csergo & S. Wolff, 'Regions of Nationalism in Europe', 105th Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Toronto, 3-9 September 2009, <http://ssrn.com/abstract=1449082>, visited on 10 February 2010.

[18] Similar distinctions between internal and external territorial solutions are made by a number of authors. Cf., for example, K. Henrard, *Devising an Adequate System of Minority Protection: Individual Human Rights, Minority Rights, and the Right to Self-determination* (Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, Boston, London, 2000), J. McGarry & B. O'Leary, 'Introduction. The Macro-Political Regulation of Ethnic Conflict', in J. McGarry & B. O'Leary (eds.), *The Politics of Ethnic Conflict Regulation* (Routlegde, London, 1993) and Wallensteen, *supra* note 13.

[19] There have been a number of attempts in the past to conceptualise 'territorial solutions', including T. Benedikter, *The World's Working Regional Autonomies* (Anthem Press, London, 2007), D. Brancati, *Peace by Design: Managing Intrastate Conflict through Decentralization* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2009), J. Coakley (ed.) *The territorial management of ethnic conflict. Second edition* (Frank Cass, London, 2003), Y. Ghai (ed.) *Autonomy and Ethnicity* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2000), H. Hannum, *Sovereignty and Self-determination: The Accommodation of Conflicting Rights* (University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, PA, 1996), R. Lapidoth, *Autonomy: Flexible Solutions to Ethnic Conflicts* (United States Institute of Peace Press, Washington, D.C., 1996), J. McGarry & B. O'Leary, 'Territorial Approaches to Ethnic Conflict Settlement', in K. Cordell & S. Wolff (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Ethnic Conflict* (Routledge, London, 2010), K.-Å. Nordquist, 'Autonomy as a Conflict-solving Mechanism: An Overview', in M. Suksi (ed.) *Autonomy: Applications and Implications* (Kluwer Law International, The Hague, 1998), M. Weller & S. Wolff (eds.), *Autonomy, Self-governance and Conflict Resolution: Innovative Approaches to Institutional Design in Divided Societies* (Routledge, London, 2005).

otherwise unitary state (e.g., the Åland Islands in Finland) and the functional status of a particular level of government within a multi-layered system (e.g., the autonomy of a federal state to make certain decisions independent of the federal government). Put differently, autonomy, which is one of the most often employed terms to describe territorial approaches to conflict management in divided societies, is used both in an abstract functional sense in the context of governance arrangements and as a concrete manifestation of territorial self-governance in a specific (often singular) sub-state entity in a given state. At the same time, there are empirical issues: for example, do the territorial arrangements in the former communist bloc, such as in Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union —count as examples of TSG? And what about arrangements in place for the Free City of Danzig and the Memell and territory in the inter-war period or for the Saarland in the same period and again after the Second World War? It is, therefore, useful to trace the academic history of the concept of 'autonomy' and its practical application in a broad sense as this illustrates how TSG as a tool of statecraft and as a tool of conflict management in divided societies have become more and more intertwined.

The difficulty to pin down and conceptualize autonomy has been recognized, among others, by Brendan O'Leary and John McGarry:

> Overlapping cantonization and federalization there exists a grey area of territorial management of ethnic differences which is often found in conjunction with external arbitration. International agreements between states can entrench the territorial autonomy of certain ethnic communities, even though the 'host state' does not generally organize itself along either cantonist or federalist principles.[20]

Despite this appreciation of the difficulty to define clearly what autonomy is, political scientists and international lawyers have not hesitated to propose a variety of definitions[21] and drawn on numerous and diverse cases to illustrate their definitions empirically.[22]

Regardless of the scope and detail of the above definitions, the one common feature they all share, directly or indirectly, is the transfer of certain powers from a central government to that of the (thereby created) self-governing entity, and the relatively independent exercise of these powers. Such arrangements then can incorporate executive, legislative, and judicial powers to varying degrees . Where they are used as an instrument for conflict prevention and settlement in divided societies, they ideally include such a mix of the three that enables the self-determination movement in question to regulate independently the affairs central to the concerns of its members, which are normally easily identifiable as they manifest themselves in concrete claims. However, as such TSG arrangements fall short of full sovereignty, this often happens within the broader constitutional and legislative framework of the existing state and under the supervision of a central government or similar agencies.

It is important to bear in mind that TSG is seen here as a tool of statecraft *and* a mechanism of conflict management in divided societies, specifically when compact ethnic groups make demands for self-determination. McGarry and O'Leary's definition of the broader concept of territorial pluralism is useful in this context:

---

[20] McGarry & O'Leary, *supra* note 18, p. 32.

[21] *E.g.,* M. Hechter, *Containing Nationalism* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2000) p. 114, Gurr, *supra* note, p. 29; B. Harff & T. R. Gurr, *Ethnic Conflict in World Politics* (Westview Press, Boulder, CO, 2004) p. 22; H. Hannum & R. Lillich, 'The Concept of Autonomy in International Law', 74:4 *The American Journal of International Law* (1980) p. 85; Lapidoth, *supra* note 19, pp. 174-175.

[22] For example, Benedikter counts 58 regions across the world with territorial autonomy. See Benedikter, *supra* note 19.

Territorial pluralism assists geographically concentrated national, ethnic, linguistic, or religious communities. It is not relevant for small, dispersed communities, including immigrant communities, for whom self-government is infeasible or undesirable. Territorial pluralism should be distinguished not just from group-based (non-territorial) autonomy, but also from territorial self-government based on 'administrative', or 'geographic' criteria, including regional components of the state's majority community.

Hence, not every form of TSG is relevant to this analysis. The German or Austrian federal states, for example, are less relevant than the Swiss confederation; devolution in the UK and regionalization in France have greater relevance than the application of the subsidiarity principle to local municipalities in Finland or Ireland.

In summary, then, I define TSG as the legally entrenched power of territorially delimited entities within the internationally recognized boundaries of existing states to exercise public policy functions independently of other sources of authority in this state, but subject to its overall legal order. Conceptually, this definition of TSG applies its meaning as a tool of statecraft to the specific context of conflict management in divided societies and encompasses five distinct governance arrangements—confederation, federation, autonomy, devolution, and decentralisation.

- *Confederation* is an empirically relatively rare form of voluntary association of sovereign member states which pool some competences (e.g., defence, foreign affairs, and currency) by treaty without normally giving executive power to the confederal level of government. *Federation*, in contrast, implies a constitutionally entrenched structure in which the entire territory of a given state is divided into separate political units, all of which enjoy certain exclusive executive, legislative and judicial powers independent of the central government.
- A *federacy* enjoys similar powers and constitutional protection as federal entities, but is distinct in that it does not necessitate territorial sub-divisions across the entire state territory. *Devolution*, like federacy, can be applied to selected territories in an otherwise unitary state. However, the degree of legal protection for entities with devolved powers is weaker and often extends only to protection by 'regular' rather than constitutional laws.

*Decentralisation* means the delegation of executive and administrative powers to local levels of government. It is rarely constitutionally entrenched and does not include legislative competences.

These five different forms of TSG can be further distinguished and specified according to a series of dimensions, including the range of competences exercised, the extent of constitutional entrenchment, the existence of dispute resolution mechanisms, the degree of symmetry and asymmetry between multiple instances of TSG in a single country,[23] and whether they operate in combination with specific other governance mechanisms for conflict management, such as power sharing or corporate (cultural) autonomy. Such further specification is essential because it allows a more context-sensitive analysis, as can be illustrated with the wide range of TSG arrangements that have been adopted across Europe in order to address minority self-governance claims (see Table 1). For example, federations can be highly centralized with very few powers actually exercised by the federal subjects (for example, a large number of republics in the Russian Federation) or they can border quasi-

---

[23] On asymmetry see for example, M. Keating, 'Asymmetrical Government: Multinational States in an Integrating Europe', 29:1 *Publius: The Journal of Federalism* (1999) and J. McGarry, 'Asymmetry in federations, federacies and unitary states', 6:1 *Ethnopolitics* (2007).

confederal power structures with very little real power left for the centre (as in the case of Belgium). At the same time, local municipalities may enjoy a relatively significant degree of competences and may even be constitutionally mandated (for example, Macedonia and Kosovo). Sami TSG in Finland, Sweden and Norway is primarily a matter of decentralised local government, but incorporates elements of cultural autonomy and power sharing. Bosnia and Belgium are examples in which TSG is intrinsically linked with consociational power sharing at the centre, whereas in Northern Ireland and South Tyrol TSG arrangements emerged alongside consociational power sharing at the level of the self-governing entity. This is also the case in the Belgian capital of Brussels: itself one of three regions in the Belgian federation, the local consociational arrangement there illustrates that sovereign and regional consociations are not mutually exclusive. Such a 'nested consociation' also exists in relation to South Tyrol where power-sharing arrangements at the level of the province (South Tyrol) and the region (Trentino-South Tyrol) are mutually constitutive. Devolution in the UK has resulted in very different statuses for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. This asymmetry in terms of public policy functions exercised by TSG entities is also present in Russia and Spain, and has been retained, to a degree, in Italy in the post-2001 federalisation process, while attempts in France to grant a higher level of autonomy to Corsica have so far failed.

The significant variety of TSG arrangements is not the only empirical problem in studying territorial approaches to conflict management in divided societies: TSG arrangements also change over time. For example, Belgium has undergone further, significant constitutional reforms since 1990 and experienced a deep constitutional crisis regarding its federal consociational structure throughout most of 2008. Yugoslavia no longer exists following its bloody disintegration after 1991, with Kosovo's independence in 2008 the latest, and hopefully last chapter in this process. TSG in Northern Ireland was abrogated in 1972 with the institution of direct rule from Westminster, and despite several attempts to restore some form of self-governance, it took until 1998 and a further settlement in 2006 (as well as additional specification thereof in 2010) that TSG regained traction and a measure of sustainability as a mechanism of conflict management. Autonomy statutes in Spain are regular reviewed and 're-negotiated'.[24] TSG arrangements in Denmark, Finland, and Portugal, too, have seen significant reforms over the years.

TSG arrangements can also be used as frameworks for a temporary settlement, that is, for an agreed period of time prior to a final settlement of the status of the disputed territory. Reflecting conflict management practice, this has been discussed in the literature for some time and under different names, including interim status[25] and earned sovereignty),[26] the idea being that such devolution goes hand-in-hand with the shared exercise of sovereign functions between the two levels of governance, is accompanied by institution-building in the entity over which control is disputed, and involves the determination of its final status, usually by popular referendum in the disputed territory. The devolution of sovereign powers can be gradual and/or conditional, and the degree of sovereignty gained according to the determination of final status can be further constrained and internationally supervised. Kosovo and South Sudan are among the most frequently cited examples of this emerging practice.

---

[24] On the evolution of the TSG system in Spain, see R. Agranoff & J. a. R. Gallarín, 'Toward Federal Democracy in Spain: An Examination of Intergovernmental Relations', 27:4 *Publius: The Journal of Federalism* (1997) and C. Colino, 'Constitutional Change Without Constitutional Reform: Spanish Federalism and the Revision of Catalonia's Statute of Autonomy', 39:2 *Publius: The Journal of Federalism* (2009).

[25] M. Weller, 'Self-governance in Interim Settlements: The Case of Sudan', in M. Weller & S. Wolff (eds.), *Autonomy, Self-governance and Conflict Resolution: Innovative Approaches to Institutional Design in Divided Societies* (Routledge, London, 2005).

[26] P. R. Williams, J. Hooper & M. P. Scharf, 'Resolving Sovereignty Based Conflicts: The Emerging Approach of Earned Sovereignty', 31:3 *Denver Journal of International Law & Policy* (2003).

A final temporal dimension in the use of TSG arrangements is their use as transitional mechanisms prior to the reintegration of a disputed territory into a proclaimed metropolitan state. While the outcome of processes described in the preceding paragraphs is one of increasingly enhanced self-government (including, specifically, the option of attaining full sovereignty as an independent state under international law), the use of TSG arrangements as mechanisms to facilitate reintegration points into the opposite direction. An example of this is the case of Eastern Slavonia between 1995 and 1998 when a UN mission (UNTAES) oversaw the exercise of self-government in this de-facto break-away region by the local Serb population and facilitated its reintegration into Croatia.

The relatively broad scope of territorial approaches to conflict management in divided societies, as embodied in the use of the term 'territorial self-governance', also allows addressing both of these empirical problems (variety of specific arrangements and change over time). Focusing on the conflict-management 'purpose' and the state-construction 'mechanism' of TSG thus enables abstracting from the traditionally narrower focus on autonomy and federation as principal models of territorial conflict management, and analyzing the utility of territorial approaches more generally, thereby also changing the terms of the debate on their viability and feasibility as part of the conflict management toolkit.

## 3. From Theory to Practice (and Back): Territorial Self-governance as Conflict Management

TSG arrangements are not a uniquely European model of conflict management in divided societies. In fact, a striking feature of much contemporary conflict management practice in cases of self-determination disputes is that a very significant number of actual and proposed settlements involves forms of territorial self-governance. This reflects the assumption (albeit not necessarily the reality) that such regimes can contribute to sub-state, state, regional and international stability. In ethnically, linguistically and/or religiously heterogeneous societies in which corresponding group identities have formed and become salient, the degree of self-governance enjoyed by the different segments of society is often seen as more or less directly proportional to the level of acceptance of an overall institutional framework within which these different segments come together. Self-governance arrangements are thus also meant to provide institutional solutions that allow the different segments of diverse societies to realize their aspirations for self-determination while simultaneously preserving the overall social and territorial integrity of existing states. In doing so, self-governance arrangements above all offer mechanisms for conflict parties to settle their disputes by peaceful means. Consequently, there is a large number of such settlements that provide evidence for this trend, including in North America (e.g., Canada), Central and South America (e.g., Panama, Colombia, Mexico, Ecuador and Nicaragua), Africa (e.g., Sudan, Zanzibar), Asia (e.g., Iraq, India, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Philippines), and Europe.

Analytically and empirically, two questions, thus, can be asked of TSG arrangements: under which conditions do they emerge as feasible responses to self-governance claims and when do they prove viable and sustainable as a compromise between a central government and its challenger? For reasons of space constraints, I focus primarily on the first question, but will also offer some empirically derived observations on the second question towards the end of my argument.

### 3.1. Structural Conditions for the Emergence of Territorial Self-governance Arrangements

One of the shortcomings of current theoretical engagements with TSG as a mechanism for conflict management in divided societies is a focus on just the territorial dimension of conflict settlement. Critiques of the utility of TSG focus on the degree to which territorial arrangements empower fundamentally separatist elites and their supporters and endow them

with resources to pursue their agenda even more vigorously.[27] Only rarely do scholars look beyond the territorial dimension and towards a more complete package of institutions within which TSG is but one, albeit central element. Hartzell and Hoddie, for example argue, that conflict settlements (after civil war) are the more stable the more they institutionalize power sharing across four dimensions—political, economic, military, and territorial.[28] Specific conceptual and empirical links between consociation and federation had already been established by Lijphart three decades ago, noting two crucial principles, namely that "the component units [must] enjoy a secure autonomy in organizing their internal affairs… [and] that they *all* participate in decision-making at the central level of government".[29] McGarry and O'Leary also note that "some successful cases of territorial pluralism suggest that, at least with sizable nationalities, autonomy should be accompanied by consociational power sharing within central or federal institutions.  Such arrangements prevent majoritarianism by the dominant nationality, and make it more likely that minorities have a stake in the state."[30] This is in line with conclusions reached by Weller and Wolff who argue that "autonomy can only serve in the stabilization of states facing self-determination conflicts if it is part of a well-balanced approach that draws on elements of consociational techniques, moderated by integrative policies, and tempered by a wider regional outlook."[31] It also reflects the concerns raised by Horowitz for the need to design institutions that offset potentially centrifugal consequences of TSG,[32] a point made in a different way by O'Leary in his conception of self-rule and shared rule.[33]

This phenomenon of TSG arrangements occurring in combination with other conflict management mechanisms has been identified by several authors over the past few years. Kettley, Sullivan, Fyfe , Weller , and Wolff  refer to it, albeit in somewhat different ways, as 'complex power sharing',[34] O'Leary  has used the term 'complex consociation',[35] and Hartzell and Hoddie conceptualize it as 'highly institutionalized negotiated settlement'.[36] Especially proponents of (liberal) consociationalism have pointed out the important connections between, and complementarity of, consociational power sharing and TSG, but conceptual links have only recently been established more systematically,[37] and I therefore

---

[27] *E.g.,* V. Bunce, *Subversive Institutions: The Design and the Destruction of Socialism and the State* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1999), D. S. Treisman, *The Architecture of Government: Rethinking Political Decentralization* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2007).

[28] Hartzell & Hoddie, *supra* note 15.

[29] A. Lijphart, 'Consociation and Federation: Conceptual and Empirical Links', 12:3 *Canadian Journal of Political Science* (1979) p. 506.

[30] McGarry & O'Leary, *supra* note 19, p. 260

[31] M. Weller & S. Wolff, 'Recent trends in autonomy and state construction', in M. Weller & S. Wolff (eds.), *Autonomy, self-governance and conflict resolution: Innovative approaches to institutional design in divided societies* (Routledge, London, 2005) p. 269.

[32] *E.g.,* D. L. Horowitz, *A democratic South Africa? Constitutional engineering in a divided society* (University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 1991).

[33] B. O'Leary, 'Powersharing, pluralist federation and federacy', in B. O'Leary, J. McGarry & K. Salih (eds.), *The future of Kurdistan in Iraq* (University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, PA, 2005).

[34] M. Weller, 'Settling Self-determination Conflicts: An Introduction', in M. Weller & B. Metzger (eds.), *Settling Self-determination Disputes: Complex Power Sharing in Theory and Practice* (Martinus Nijhoff, Leiden, 2008) and S. Wolff, 'Peace by Design? Towards "Complex Power Sharing" ', in R. Taylor (ed.) *Consociational Theory: McGarry & O'Leary and the Northern Ireland Conflict* (Routledge, London, 2009).

[35] B. O'Leary, 'Debating consociational politics: Normative and explanatory arguments', in S. Noel (ed.) *From powersharing to democracy* (McGill/Queen's University Press, Montreal, 2005) pp. 34-35.

[36] Hartzell & Hoddie, *supra* note 15.

[37] *See* A. Lijphart, 'The Wave of Power Sharing Democracy', in A. Reynolds (ed.) *The Architecture of Democracy: Constitutional Design, Conflict Management and Democracy* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2002), Norris *Driving Democracy: Do Power-sharing Institutions Work?* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2008), B. O'Leary & J. McGarry, 'The Politics of Accommodation: Surveying National and Ethnic

examine them in more detail now, demonstrating that, analytically, it is possible to explain both why such multi-dimensional institutional arrangements emerge and why they might have a greater chance of success.

Leaving aside the rather more trivial condition that TSG is only of real benefit to minorities that live territorially concentrated, two characteristics are particularly important in determining the likelihood of a combination of TSG arrangements with power-sharing institutions at the local and/or central levels of government: the degree of ethnic heterogeneity in the territorial entities to which powers and competences of self-governance are to be assigned; and their significance relative to the rest of the state. Thus, it can be expected that the settlement for a territorial entity characterized by ethnic (or another identity-based form of) heterogeneity would exhibit local power-sharing institutions, whereas a more homogeneous one might not—compare Brussels to the Flemish region, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina to Republika Srpska, or Northern Ireland to the Åland Islands. The institution of local power-sharing mechanisms, i.e., within the self-governing entity, also addresses one frequent criticism and potential flaw of TSG arrangements—that they empower a local majority to the disadvantage of one or more local minorities either creating new conflict within the entity or, if the local minority is a state-wide dominant group, destabilizes the TSG arrangement as the central government (out of concern for its ethnic or religious kin) might want to abrogate or delimit the powers of the TSG, seeing them as being abused to discriminate against other population groups.

As far as power sharing at the level of the central government is concerned, the most likely structural predictor of the need for such arrangements is the significance of the self-governing territory (or territories) relative to the rest of the state. For states, territory possesses certain value in and of itself, including natural resources, the goods and services produced there and the tax revenue generated from them, and military or strategic advantages in terms of natural boundaries, access to the open sea, and control over transport routes and waterways. Additionally, for ethnic groups, territory very often is also important in a different way—as a crucial component of their identity. Territory is then conceptualized more appropriately as place, bearing significance in relation to the group's history, collective memories, and 'character'. Yet, for ethnic groups, too, territory is, or can become, a valuable commodity as it provides resources and a potential power base. Thus, significance can arise from size, population density, natural resource availability, strategic location, and cultural importance. Power-sharing institutions at the centre then are a reflection of the bargaining position that a given self-determination movement has—the greater that is, the more it can assert its position at the centre. Yet, elements of a carefully designed set of power-sharing institutions at the centre can also address a frequently-mentioned reservation about TSG arrangements, namely that they empower self-determination movements while weakening the central government; in other words that they create an asymmetric power relationship that privileges separatists. Power-sharing institutions, however, for their own success, also need to involve agreed dispute resolution mechanisms, which in turn can contribute to regulating ongoing bargaining processes between central government and self-governing entity in ways that maintain a political process of dispute management (rather than resurgence of violence) and enable to state- and TSG-preserving outcomes (rather than state break-ups or abrogation of TSG arrangements). Consociational power sharing in the Belgian federation, combined with the so-called alarm-bell mechanism, is one example of this. Belgium is also an

Conflict Regulation in Democractic States', in A. Guelke & J. Tournon (eds.), *The Study of Politics and Ethnicity: Recent Analytical Developments* (Barbara Budrich, Opladen, 2010), and M. Weller & B. Metzger (eds.), *Settling Self-determination Disputes: Complex Power Sharing in Theory and Practice* (Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, Leiden and Boston, 2008).

instructive illustration of the notion of 'significance'. The country has three linguistic groups—French-speakers, Dutch-speakers, and German-speakers—but only the former two are large enough to warrant inclusion in central power-sharing arrangements. In the UK, none of the three devolution settlements (Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales) provided for central-level power sharing, given the predominance of England within the UK. On the other hand, the constitution of Iraq of 2005 provides consociational institutions to include the Kurds into decision-making at the centre, and offers dispute resolution mechanisms, including judicial arbitration and joint committees and implementation bodies. In Macedonia and Kosovo, even though TSG here only exists in the form of decentralized local government, Albanians (in Macedonia) and Serbs (in Kosovo) share power at the centre, and agreed dispute resolution mechanisms are in place.

### 3.2. Feasibility and viability reconsidered: an empirical illustration

By way of a more systematic empirical illustration, I consider twelve country cases with a total of seventeen individual TSG arrangements: Belgium (Brussels, Walloonia, Flanders); Bosnia and Herzegovina (District of Brčko, Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, RepublikaSrpska); Indonesia (Aceh); Iraq (Kurdistan); Italy (South Tyrol); Kosovo (Serbs/Mitrovica); Macedonia (Albanians); Moldova (Gagauzia); Papua New Guinea (Bougainville); Philippines (Mindanao); Ukraine (Crimea); United Kingdom (Northern Ireland, Scotland). This choice of cases illustrates the variety of different forms that TSG arrangements can take (from quasi confederal Bosnia and Herzegovina to decentralization in Macedonia) and the diversity of contexts (from post-war Iraq with its shaky democracy to the consolidated democracy of Belgium which experienced no violence related to its ethnolinguistic divisions in the past century). They thus offer a broad, albeit incomplete, universe of relevant cases that can illustrate the merits of my argument by way of an initial exploration and lay the foundation for a future more systematic and comprehensive comparative study of TSG arrangements.

As Table 2 indicates, all but two of the 17 self-governing entities are distinct, and clearly demarcated territories. Only the situation in Macedonia and Kosovo is different inasmuch as the settlement areas of ethnic Albanians and ethnic Serbs, respectively, do not constitute a specific larger territorial entity but comprise relevant local government units only. However, the constitution of Kosovo specifically allows for the establishment of 'horizontal links' between local units of self-government, i.e., greater levels of cooperation on matters devolved into the competence of the local communes. This makes it conceivable that Serb-dominated communes can establish their own quasi-region. In contrast to similar provisions in the Iraqi constitution of 2005 (formation of regions from provinces/governorates), in the Kosovo case this does not mean a change in status or powers at the disposal of the quasi-region.

When it comes to demographic characteristics, only two of the seventeen regions (with the relevant qualifications) are not heterogeneous: RepublikaSrpska (BiH), and the Flemish Region (Belgium). With the exception of the Walloon Region (Belgium), all other regions display levels of diversity of at least 5% local minorities. As far as the demographic diversity of the territories in question is concerned, two further observations are noteworthy. First, constitutional reforms in Macedonia following the 2001 Ohrid Framework Agreement, which established the principle of far-reaching decentralization, went hand in hand with redrawing the boundaries of local communes, thus rendering them more ethnically homogeneous. Second, two of the territorial entities—Gagauzia and ARMM—are, in fact not territorially contiguous, but rather a patchwork of territories whose populations decided by referendum that they wanted to be part of the respective territorial entity. In South Tyrol, similarly, the boundaries of the autonomous province were largely determined on the basis of

the historical entity of South Tyrol, but some "adjustments" were made to incorporate some predominantly German-speaking municipalities that would have otherwise been part of the province of Trentino.

Several cases—Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iraq, and Belgium—highlight another interesting phenomenon: territories that are internally disputed either between the centre and the self-governing territorial entity (Iraq) or between two self-governing entities (Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina). These are critical issues for the stability of any settlement, and have potentially significant international implications, as illustrated by the ongoing dispute over Kirkuk. The internationally arbitrated Brčko Award indicates a potential way toward the resolution of such disputes.[38]

The theoretical assumptions that I have outlined earlier about the structural conditions under which TSG arrangements emerge as a compromise solution and under which they are combined with other conflict management mechanisms, such as power sharing, include that conflict management in cases of territorially compact groups making self-governance claims (1) requires territorial self-government, (2) that 'internal' heterogeneity in the thus emerging self-governing territories leads to power sharing arrangements there, and (3) that high significance of the territory relative to the rest of the state results in power sharing at the centre. The data in Table 3 empirically confirm that these assumptions are, by and large, correct for the twelve countries included in this analysis. They also illustrate, again, the broader application of TSG arrangements for conflict management purposes in divided societies beyond the European examples referred to above.

3.2.1. Forms of territorial self-government

With two exceptions, the territories in which the relevant compact groups live have distinct legal status and enjoy legislative and executive powers of their own and do so independently of the central government. The exceptions to this rule are Macedonia and Kosovo where territorial self-government exists only qua decentralization of power to local communes. While the degree of centralization is quite substantial, the powers enjoyed by local communes do not include legislative powers. Moreover, strictly speaking, decentralization in these two cases also means that the relevant groups—ethnic Albanians in Macedonia, ethnic Serbs in Kosovo—cannot fully determine themselves as distinct population groups in their countries of residence, but only as subgroups in their relevant local communes. This is somewhat mitigated in the Kosovo case, however, where the constitution specifically provides for local communes to cooperate on matters of joint interest in areas in which they do have powers.

In all other cases, the specific territories in which the groups reside have legal status as a whole and on their own. This takes different forms:

- Devolved government (one country, two cases): Scotland, Northern Ireland;
- Autonomy (seven countries, seven cases): Brčko, Aceh, South Tyrol, Gagauzia, Bougainville, ARMM, Crimea;
- Federation (four countries, seven cases): Brussels Capital Region, Flemish Region, Walloon Region, Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, RepublikaSrpska, Kurdistan Region.

3.2.2. Forms of local power sharing

The initial assumption made about the impact of local demographic diversity was that ethnic heterogeneity in the self-governing entity leads to the establishment of local institutions that guarantee power sharing between relevant identity groups. The results of the case analysis

---

[38] On the relative success of this approach in Brčko, see A. Jeffrey, 'Building state capacity in post-conflict Bosnia and Herzegovina: The case of Brcko District', 25:2 *Political Geography* (2006).

here are less unambiguous at first sight. Even assuming that heterogeneity is politically (i.e., electorally) relevant only above the level of 5%, there are still several cases that do not confirm this assumption: Aceh, Gagauzia, Crimea, and Scotland. The case of Aceh is the one most difficult to explain, given the relative novelty of the arrangements and lack of data availability. In Scotland, during the first two terms of devolved government, the pro-union Labour Party governed first in a majority government of its own and then with the support of the Liberal Democrats in a coalition. The only decisively pro-independence Scottish National Party (SNP) achieved a plurality of votes in the 2007 elections (47 out of 129) and has been governing as a minority government since then. From this perspective, the nature of the party system, at least in part, explains the lack of a power sharing government: the SNP is the only decidedly pro-independence party, and none of the other major parties (Labour, Liberal Democrats, and Conservatives) was keen to join it in government, but the political-ideological differences between them prevented them from forming an (anti-independence) coalition, even though numerically this would have been possible with the three parties commanding a total of 78 (out of 129) seats in the Scottish parliament. However, indirectly, and because of the balance of power in the parliament, the SNP needs to seek support from the other parties for its legislative programme which guarantees the major parties a certain degree of at least indirect influence on government policy.

In Gagauzia and Crimea, the situation is slightly different. In Crimea, coalition governments including ethnic Russians and ethnic Ukrainians have been the norm rather than the exception in regional politics, even though this has meant that the Crimean Tatar population (12.1% of the Crimean population) has been excluded from executive power. Voluntary power-sharing coalitions, in this case at least, thus can have a potentially negative impact on inter-ethnic relations inasmuch as they can become a mechanism of exclusion rather than inclusion. In Gagauzia, on the other hand, the chief executive of the autonomous government is directly elected and appoints his or her own cabinet. This kind of 'presidential system' is combined with a single-member plurality election system that has so far always resulted in a regional assembly that has been relatively representative of Gagauzia's ethnic make-up and has, qua committee scrutiny, checked the powers of the regional governor.

All other heterogeneous self-governing entities have guaranteed power-sharing mechanisms in place:

- Guaranteed representation in the regional executive: Brussels Capital Region, Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brčko, Kurdistan Region, South Tyrol, Bougainville, Northern Ireland;
- Parliamentary decision-making procedures (qualified or concurrent majority voting): Brussels Capital Region, Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brčko, Northern Ireland.

### 3.2.3. Forms of central power sharing

In cases of highly significant territories, power-sharing institutions exist at the level of the central government, except in the case of Crimea. Moreover, there are provisions for power sharing at the centre in four cases of medium significance: Kosovo, Gagauzia, Bougainville, and Mindanao. These arrangements, however, are subject to some important qualifications.

In the case of Kosovo, they extend to the guaranteed representation of representatives of the Serb and other non-Albanians communities in the government and to concurrent voting procedures on issues of vital interest in parliament. However, while the majority of Serbs lives in the districts of the Mitrovica region, there are other pockets of Serb settlement in central and southern Kosovo, and thus a guarantee of Serb representation and co-decision making does not equate to these guarantees applying to Serb representatives from Mitrovica.

In the cases of Gagauzia and Mindanao, representation of the self-governing entities in the central government is achieved qua cooptation. Central-level power sharing, therefore, is somewhat limited in that it only extends to the mandatory inclusion of members of the regional government into the national government. While regional representatives, thus, can participate in the national executive process, they do not have veto powers nor are there qualified or concurrent majority voting procedures in place that would increase the influence of regional representatives at the centre. Hence, the main benefit of these arrangements needs to be seen in both the symbolic recognition of the region (qua inclusion of its representatives into the national government) and in the establishment of formal channels of communication between regional and central executives (i.e., the institutionalization of a policy coordination mechanism).

In the case of Bougainville, local influence on central decisions is generally sought to be achieved through the establishment of consultation mechanisms aimed at establishing consensus between the central government and the government of Bougainville, and by reference to judicial arbitration where such consensus cannot be achieved. Moreover, any changes to the agreed and constitutionally entrenched structure of the institutions created by the 2001 Bougainville peace agreement require the consent of two-thirds of the representatives of Bougainville's parliament and the Bougainville government has to be represented at its request in any international negotiations potentially affecting the constitutional status and powers of Bougainville as per the 2001 peace agreement.

The situation in another case of medium significance is also of interest in this respect. In South Tyrol, no central-level power-sharing arrangements exist, but the settlement for South Tyrol creates technically a nested consociation with guaranteed power sharing at the level of the province (South Tyrol) and the region (Trentino-Südtirol), which is the next higher level of authority, and where South Tyrol is clearly of high, rather than medium significance.

In broader terms, this means that in both low-significance cases, no central-level power sharing exists as predicted. For a total of eight cases where the self-governing territory is of high significance, in seven central-level power-sharing structures exist, and the same is true for four out of seven medium-significance cases. Thus, central-level power sharing institutions exist in eight out of 12 country cases discussed here (with the qualifications elaborated above) where the self-governing entity is at least of medium significance relative to the rest of the state:

- Guaranteed representation in the central executive: Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Indonesia, Iraq, Kosovo, Macedonia, Moldova, Papua New Guinea;
- Parliamentary decision-making procedures (qualified or concurrent majority voting): Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iraq, Kosovo, Macedonia, Papua New Guinea.

## 4. The Utility of Territorial Self-governance as an Approach to Conflict Management in Divided Societies

In the preceding sections, I have made an analytical and empirical case for the use of TSG arrangements in conflicts in which locally concentrated identity groups make claims for self-governance. A credible claim to the utility of this approach, however, cannot only rest on plausible theoretical assumptions and the fact that they can be shown empirically to be adopted as a result of negotiations between the conflict parties. What is additionally important is to demonstrate that they offer sustainable institutional settlements. This is all the more important as the failure, in particular of ethnic federations and autonomies, is one of the most frequently voiced objections to the use of TSG arrangements for managing conflict in divided societies. Moreover, recent research by Chapman and Roeder indicates that, from the perspective of long-term stable democratic outcomes, partitions are preferable to any other

territorial settlement;[39] while Brancati found that 'political decentralization' (meaning, in fact, federation) has short-term positive effects; its long-term consequences, however, are more often than not negative for preserving peace and existing international boundaries. Importantly, Brancati draws on her analysis of federal failures to offer recommendations on how to design political decentralization in ways that minimize its inherent risks and arrives at similar conclusions as offered above, namely that TSG arrangements need to be complemented with other mechanisms to ensure that they provide institutions that help deal with remaining disputes by peaceful, political means.[40]

There is no denying the fact that territorial approaches to conflict management in divided societies have a track record that is far from spotless. In several cases, TSG arrangements have failed to prevent the break-up of multi-national states, in others they have been unable to preserve or sustain peace between the conflict parties, and critics of territorial approaches have documented these cases well empirically and analytically.[41] Many of these critiques are focused on federal arrangements alone and on the post-communist/post-Soviet region. In contrast, the broader approach to understanding the utility of TSG as a conflict management mechanism in divided societies advocated here emphasizes three aspects that are often neglected in critiques. First, territorial options for conflict management extend beyond federal and federacy (autonomy) arrangements. Devolution and decentralized local government offer viable alternatives that can satisfy self-determination demands without endangering the continued territorial integrity of an existing state. Second, TSG arrangements are adopted not only as negotiated settlements after civil wars fought over minority self-determination demands but also in the course of non-violent disputes. Hence, many arguments against the viability of TSG arrangements apply exclusively to civil-war contexts, and it is unwarranted to draw the conclusion from that that TSG is not a viable approach to conflict management in divided societies more generally. Third, no claim is made here that TSG arrangements are a panacea in themselves, but rather that, when combined with other conflict management mechanisms in a more comprehensive institutional package, they can make an important contribution to maintaining peace and keeping international borders intact.

This cannot only be demonstrated analytically but there is also empirical evidence in support of such an assumption. Of the 12 country cases documented in Table 3, six have proven relatively stable for over ten years: Belgium (notwithstanding recent difficulties of government formation), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine, Moldova, UK, and Italy. The settlements in Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Iraq, and Macedonia have held for more than five years. Kosovo is too recent and yet too contested a settlement to pronounce its current TSG arrangements a success. The settlement for Mindanao has only achieved partial success in bringing peace to a troubled region of the Philippines. While the track record of TSG arrangements in managing conflicts in divided societies may thus be sketchy, it is far less disheartening than some of its critics suggest.

---

[39] T. Chapman & P. G. Roeder, 'Partition as a Solution to Wars of Nationalism: The Importance of Institutions', 101:4 *American Political Science Review* (2007).

[40] Brancati, *supra* note 19.

[41] *E.g.,* V. Bunce & S. Watts, 'Managing Diversity and Sustaining Democracy: Ethnofederal versus Unitary States in the Postcommunist World', in P. G. Roeder & D. Rothchild (eds.), *Sustainable Peace: Power and Democracy after Civil Wars* (Cornell University Press, Ithaka, NY, 2005), E. A. Nordlinger, *Conflict Regulation in Divided Societies* (Harvard University Center for International Affairs, Cambridge, MA, 1972), and J. Snyder, *From Voting to Violence: Democratization and Nationalist Conflict* (Norton, New York, 2000).

## Table 1: TSG arrangements in Europe[42]

| Metropolitan state | Self-governing entity | Nature of arrangement |
|---|---|---|
| Belgium | Flemish Region (1980-) | Federation |
| | Walloon Region (1980-) | Federation |
| | Brussels-Capital Region (1989-) | Federation |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | RepublikaSrpska (1995) | Federation (at the state level) |
| | Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (1995) | Federation (at the state level) |
| | Ten cantons of the Federation (1995) | Territorial autonomy (in the Federation) |
| | District of Brčko (1996) | Territorial autonomy (at the state level) |
| Croatia | (Eastern Slavonia) | International administration (1995-1998) |
| Denmark | Faeroe Islands (1948-) | Territorial autonomy |
| | Greenland (1978-) | Territorial autonomy |
| Finland | Aaland Islands (1920-) | Territorial autonomy |
| | Sami Homeland (1990s-) | Decentralized local government |
| France | Brittany (1981-) | Devolved government |
| | Corsica (1981-) | Devolved government |
| Georgia | Abkhazia (1931-1992/3) | Territorial autonomy |
| | Adjara (1921-) | Territorial autonomy |
| | South Ossetia (1922-1991/2) | Territorial autonomy |
| Italy | Sicily (1948-) | Territorial autonomy/Federation (since 2001) |
| | Sardinia (1948-) | Territorial autonomy/Federation (since 2001) |
| | Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol (1948-) | Territorial autonomy/Federation (since 2001) |
| | Friuli-Venezia Giulia (1948-) | Territorial autonomy/Federation (since 2001) |
| | Aosta Valley (1948-) | Territorial autonomy/Federation (since 2001) |
| Kosovo | Mitrovica region (2008-) | Decentralized local government |
| Macedonia | Western Macedonia (2001-) | Decentralized local government |
| Moldova | Gagauzia (1995-) | Territorial autonomy |
| Norway | Sami Finmark County (1980s-) | Decentralized local government |
| Portugal | Azores (1976-) | Territorial autonomy |
| | Madeira (1976-) | Territorial autonomy |
| Russia | 30+ republics and autonomous oblasts, okrugs and krais (1992-) | Federation/territorial autonomy |
| Serbia | (Kosovo) | International administration (1999-2008) |
| | Vojvodina (2006-) | Territorial autonomy |
| Spain | 17 autonomous communities (established between 1979 and 1983) | Territorial autonomy |
| Sweden | Finnish Administrative Areas | Decentralized local government |
| | Sami Administrative Areas | Decentralized local government |
| Switzerland | 23 cantons and 6 half-cantons[43] | Federation |
| Ukraine | Crimea (1995-) | Territorial autonomy |
| United Kingdom | Northern Ireland (1921-1972, 1998-) | Devolved government |
| | Scotland (1997-) | |
| | Wales (1997-) | |
| **Yugoslavia** | | |
| Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia | Bosnia and Herzegovina (1946-1991/2) | Federation |
| | Croatia (1946-1991/2) | Federation |
| | Macedonia (1946-1991/2) | Federation |
| | Montenegro (1946-1991/2) | Federation |
| | Slovenia (1946-1991/2) | Federation |
| | Serbia (1946-1991/2) | Federation |
| | Kosovo (1946-1990) | Territorial autonomy within Serbia |
| | Vojvodina (1946-1990) | Territorial autonomy within Serbia |
| Federal Republic of Yugoslavia | Montenegro (1992-2003) | Federation |
| | Serbia (1992-2003) | Federation |
| | (Kosovo) | [Under international administration (1999-2008)] |
| | (Vojvodina, 2002-2003) | Territorial autonomy in Serbia |
| Serbia and Montenegro | Serbia (2003-2006) | Confederation |
| | Montenegro (2003-2006) | Confederation |
| | Vojvodina (2003-2006) | Autonomy within Serbia |
| | (Kosovo) | [Under international administration (1999-2008)] |

---

[42] Table 1 excludes pre-1989 territorial autonomy arrangements in the former Soviet bloc.

[43] The revised constitution of 1999 only mentions 26 equal cantons, thus removing the term half-cantons from the constitutional dictionary. Two half-cantons, Obwalden and Nidwalden, have always existed in the Swiss federation, the other four emerged from the split of the full cantons of Appenzell (1597) and Basel (1833). The separation of Jura from Bern in 1979 resulted in Jura becoming a full canton in its own right.

## Table 2: Groups and their corresponding territorial entities

| Case | Group/s | Territorial Entity | Heterogeneity[44] | Significance |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Belgium | Dutch-speakers, French-speakers | Brussels Capital Region | 85:15 | High |
| | Dutch-speakers | Flemish Region | No | High |
| | French-speakers, German-speakers | Walloon Region | 98:2 | High |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | Bosniaks, Croats | Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina | (60:40) | High |
| | Serbs | RepublikaSrpska | No | High |
| | Serbs, Croats, Bosniaks | District of Brčko | 49:51 (35) | Low |
| Indonesia | Acehnese, Javanese, others | Nanggröe Aceh Darussalam | 70:30 (16) | Medium |
| Iraq | Kurds, Turkoman, Arabs, Christians | Kurdistan Region | 95:5 | High |
| Italy | German-speakers, Italian-speakers, Ladin-speakers | Province of South Tyrol/Region of Trentino-Südtirol | 64:36 (24) | Medium |
| Kosovo | Albanians, Serbs | Districts of the Mitrovica Region | 88:12 (7) | Medium |
| Macedonia | Macedonians, Albanians | Local districts in western Macedonia | 65:35 (25) | High |
| Moldova | Gagauz, Moldovans, Bulgarians, Ukrainians, Russians | Territorial Autonomous Unit of Gagauzia | 82:18 (5) | Medium |
| Papua New Guinea | Bougainvilleans | Province of Bougainville (North Solomons) | Yes (political) | Medium |
| Philippines | Muslims, Catholics, Evangelicals, others | Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao | 90:10 | Low |
| Ukraine | Ukrainians, Russians, Crimean Tatars | (Peninsula of) Crimea | 58:42 (24) | High |
| United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Protestants, Catholics | Northern Ireland | 53:47 (43) | Low |
| | Scots, British | Scotland | 88:12 (7) | Medium |

## Table 3: Institutional Arrangements

| Self-governing Territorial Entity | Heterogeneity | Local Power Sharing | Significance | Central Power Sharing |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Brussels Capital Region | 85:15 | Yes | High | Yes |
| Flemish Region | No | No | High | Yes |
| Walloon Region | 98:2 | No | High | Yes |
| Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina | 60:40 | Yes | High | Yes |
| RepublikaSrpska | No | No | High | Yes |
| District of Brčko | 49:51 | Yes | Low | No |
| Nanggröe Aceh Darussalam | 70:30 | No | Medium | No |
| Kurdistan Region | 95:5 | Yes | High | Yes |
| Province of South Tyrol/Region of Trentino-Südtirol | 64:36 | Yes | Medium | No |
| Districts of the Mitrovica Region | 95:5 | No | Medium | Yes |
| Local districts in western Macedonia | 95:5 | No | High | Yes |
| Territorial Autonomous Unit of Gagauzia | 82:18+political | No | Medium | Yes |
| Province of Bougainville (North Solomons) | Yes (political) | Yes | Medium | Yes |
| Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao | 90:10 | No | Medium | Yes |
| Peninsula of Crimea | 58:42 | No | High | No |
| Northern Ireland | 53:47 | Yes | Low | No |
| Scotland | 88:12 | No | Medium | No |

[44] This is presented as the ratio between the largest group and the total of all other groups. If local minorities make up more than 10% of the total, the share of the largest local minority group is indicated in parentheses.