

A b s t r a c t s

Minorities in Europe Aspirations, Rights, Conflicts

Egbert Jahn

Ethnic, Religious, and National Minorities

Definitions and Status Options

For a long time, ethnic, religious, and national minorities were seen by the majority as disruptive elements to be assimilated into a nation-state that was as homogenous as possible. In a few states, several minorities that have long been resident are considered to have the same rights as the majority; in others, they enjoy federal or autonomous status; and in many others, they face discrimination or oppression. New immigrants and naturalized minorities have fewer rights everywhere. The pattern of settlement and political-geographic position of ethnic minorities within states is of considerable significance for the level and type of eventual mobilization and radicalization within national movements. A differentiated range of definitions for types of minorities makes it easier to develop different options for the social, political, and legal interaction between majority and minorities.

Bruno Schoch

Learning from Helvetia?

Switzerland – Model or Special Case?

When the pacification of conflicts between nationalities in a multi-lingual, multi-ethnic environment is at stake, the reference to Switzerland is not far away. But the Swiss model's transferability is limited. Without the support of society, the will of the state, and the consensus of the elite, the institutions of conflict resolution as they developed in Switzerland in a long process of state-building do not allow themselves to be transferred. But Switzerland remains at any rate an example of a political order where the cantons represent the key to linguistic peace, where the term minority has nothing pejorative about it, and where institutions and values were developed that release an enormous integrating force.

Sabine Riedel

Ambivalences of Minority Protection

International Organisations Put to the Test

After the East-West conflict, international organisations expanded minority protection and in doing so established new, legal collective minority rights. The situation in the Republic of Macedonia, Serbia/Kosovo, Belgium, and

France shows, however, that neither the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, nor the Council of Europe could solve inter-ethnic conflicts with this instrument. Instead, they created an asymmetrical system of protection with different legal standards, which inevitably entailed additional demands for more minority rights and created new potential for social conflict. The conceptual weakness of contemporary minority protection could be corrected by drawing on individual human rights as developed by the Council of Europe and the European Union.

Bruno Coppieters

Dimensions of Conflict Resolution

The EU and Georgia's Renegade Territories

The European Union is trying to mediate in the secession conflicts between Georgia and South Ossetia as well as Abkhazia. In doing so, it is relying on conflict prevention, conflict transformation, international conflict management, and conflict resolution. Its efforts, however, are being thwarted. Georgia would like settlement immediately, the leaderships of the separatist territories, on the other hand, are playing for time with Russia's support. Tbilisi is trying to break the blockade by escalation, but with that, it is undermining confidence building and the prospects of a status settlement acceptable for Georgia.

Uwe Halbach

Frozen Conflicts in the Southern Caucasus

Problems and Limits of Europeanisation

With the European Security Strategy and the Neighbourhood Policy in the greater Black Sea area, regional conflicts in the southern Caucasus came to the fore of EU foreign and security policy. Since then, the "Europeanisation" of these "frozen conflicts" has been discussed. Both terms are controversial. The "frozen state" of unsolved conflicts of secession from Abkhazia to Nagorno-Karabakh is being called into question by diverse developments. "Europeanisation" has taken place on the level of perception, but less on the level of action.

Martina Fischer

Civil Society and State-Building

Integrated Approaches in Bosnia-Herzegovina

Peace is more than the absence of war. It requires overcoming the ethno-political divisions that the war deepened, opening up economic perspectives for the people, creating security, and building a functioning democratic and just polity. The experiences of more than a decade of state-building in Bosnia-Herzegovina show that the international community can achieve this neither alone from the outside, nor from top to bottom. It must instead incorporate as many forces as possible from civil society. The advancement of peace, conflict transformation, and economic development as well as European prospects for the people in the region must go hand in hand.

Wim van Meurs

Frozen Conflicts

What Is to Become of the Virtual States?

The first interpretations of ethnic conflicts in Eastern Europe after 1989 have been proven wrong in many issues. The number of conflicts that escalated into violence has been smaller than expected, but finding a solution for them has been harder. The virtual states that have come into being such as Kosovo, Transnistria, or Abkhazia have proven more capable of surviving than was predicted at the start of the 1990s. Furthermore, it has turned out that these virtual states are not only lucrative elite projects. They cannot get around offering a minimum of the state's re-distributional function or establishing a regional or national identity. The study of causes and conflict management must be reconsidered.

Bruno Coppieters

The Criteria for Just Secession

Kosovo as a Model Case?

International efforts to find a solution for the Kosovo conflict have reached a dead end. Eight years after NATO put an end to the violence, Serbs and Kosovo Albanians have yet to reach an amicable solution regarding Kosovo's future status. However, the international community is also split. Russia and China are blocking a United Nations Security Council resolution that would recognize the independence of Kosovo. Even the EU members are divided. If one weighs all the criteria for a just secession, then the best of the bad solutions at the moment is only the postponement of the status question.

Andreas Heinemann-Grüder

One Step Forward, Two Steps Back

From Ethno-Federalism to "Russia of Russians"

The federalisation of Russia starting in 1992 and the de-federalisation under Putin have taught us that federal institutions do not reproduce themselves on their own. They depend on a federal political culture, federal-integrative parties, effective institutions of conflict regulation, an independent constitutional court, and the combination of federalism and democracy. Russia is lacking in all of these. De-federalisation under Putin was facilitated by a lack of democracy in the regions, centralist norms, and Russophilism in public discourse as well as the fact that political parties do not need federalism in order to gain power.

Michael Edinger, Mindaugas Kuklys

Ethnic Minorities in Parliament

Representation in East European Comparison

Ethnic minorities are represented in many parliaments in East Central and Eastern Europe. The extent and type of representation vary from state to state

and have changed considerably since 1989. In addition to a minority's share of an overall population, citizenship, laws governing political parties, and the electoral system influence the possibilities for parliamentary recruitment and representation. Bulgaria, Slovakia, and Romania have accomplished an exceptional degree of integration. There, the minority parties have become acceptable coalition parties and have provided ministers for various cabinets.

Thomas von Ahn

State, Nation, Europe

Hungary and the Foreign Hungarians

More than two million ethnic Hungarians live outside the Hungarian nation-state. Budapest counts these foreign Hungarians among the Magyar nation and feels responsible for them. In the first half of the 1990s, Budapest championed human rights in international organisations and tried to set an example based on its own rules. For several years, Hungary has also been granting the Magyars from Romania, Ukraine, Slovakia and Serbia special rights for entering and residing in Hungary. A controversial referendum on dual citizenship has failed, however. Slovak and Romanian fears of Hungarian irredentism are therefore unfounded.

Ludwig Elle

Minority Protection in Germany

The Sorbs of Lusatia

The Sorbs of Lusatia as a Western Slavic ethnic group are recognized and promoted as a national minority in the Federal Republic of Germany. The constitutions of their home states of Brandenburg and Saxony as well as other legal regulations guarantee them the freedom to declare themselves a part of this minority, the right to use the Sorbian language in the public sphere, and political interest representation. Efforts are underway to counter the strong linguistic tendency to assimilate. In particular, these measures include action in the field of language policy and safeguards for a political and financial framework to counter-balance the structural disadvantages that minorities face.

Monika Wingender, Katarzyna Wiśniewiecka-Brückner

The Boom in Minority Languages

Poland's Language Policy and Kashubian

The political departure of 1989-1991 in Eastern Europe brought about an about-face in language policy. In many of the Soviet successor states, national languages appreciated in value vis-à-vis Russian. In East Central Europe, the rapprochement with the European Union created better conditions for promoting minority languages. The attitude of the community of speakers is more important for the development of these languages than legal and political safeguards. This is shown by the example of Kashubian. Poland legally recognizes it as a regional language and promotes its preservation.

But only because a large number of people in Kashubia embrace this small Slavic language is Kashubian once again playing a larger role in society.

Katrin Bergholz

The Return of Minorities

Integration in Bosnia-Herzegovina

At first glance, the return of wartime refugees to Bosnia-Herzegovina reads like a success story. According to the registers, two thirds of refugees have returned home, even if they are a part of the local ethnic minority. But contemporary investigations show that only a few actually live in the places where they are registered, because they cannot find work there and face discrimination on the part of the authorities, schools, and hospitals. The rapprochement between Bosnians, Serbs, and Croats is taking place on a personal level at best. The public sphere still consists of mono-ethnic blocs held together solely by the international community.

Joachim Krauss

The Integration of the Roma in Romania

More than Opportunism for EU Accession?

Romania has the largest Roma population in Europe. The Roma live in precarious social conditions and are hardly integrated into society. The EU and international institutions have already provided considerable financial means to improve the situation of the Roma. The Romanian government may have also enacted its own programmes and projects for integrating the Roma, but discrimination, discreditation, and exclusion of the Roma as well as racism in politics and society remain structural problems.

Sonja Haug, Lenore Sauer

Russian Germans

The Problems of Professional, Linguistic, and Social Integration

Russian Germans make up the largest immigrant group in Germany and with that one of the most important target groups of communal integration assistance. As a survey of experts and affected persons shows, the integration of this group has proved difficult primarily in the labour market, whereby most Russian Germans cope with everyday life relatively easily where language is concerned. To a large extent, social integration proceeds through church involvement or athletic activities.