

Border regions and minorities – an (un-) explored area?

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National minorities in Europe

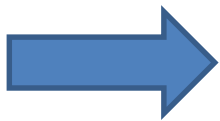


Minorities in European integration

- Direct context: Copenhagen criteria, Charter of Fundamental Rights
- Indirect context
 - More open borders
 - “Europe of Regions” offers new opportunities for substate nations
 - Bi- and tri-linguality can be an asset in a common market
 - ‘Blurred’ minorities
 - The use of violence to achieve secession has become unfashionable (Ireland, Basque)
 - Last not least: economic growth can lead to social inclusion

Minorities – true Europeans?

- Bilingual/bicultural: by choice or of necessity?
- Schleswig-case (20th century):
 - Germans in North Schleswig: European self-identification since the mid 1950's
 - Danish in South Schleswig: reflect the ambivalent Danish attitude to European integration



Minorities often reflect their kin-state's "Europeanness"

Minorities and cross-border cooperation – a problem?

- Border revisionists, secessionists, hidden agenda
- Representing sensitive border issues (Hungary-Romania, Hungary-Slovakia, historic. Germany-Denmark, Germany-France, Italy-Austria, a.o.)
- Danger of intra-ethnic cooperation instead of inter-ethnic (Hungary-Croatia, Tyrol, Estonia-Russia)
- Ressource conflicts can harm otherwise good bilateral relations (school funding Schleswig)

Minorities – an asset?

- National minorities illustrate that borders can divide people by separating previously united cultural landscapes
- Bilingual, bicultural – ”transnational borderlanders” (Oscar Martinez*) or ”Regionauts” (Tom O’Dell*)
- Questions:
 - Are minorities an avantgarde to reunite landscapes by cross-border cooperation?
 - Are minorities preconditioned to be a decisive factor in cross-border cooperation because of their knowledge of their (neighbouring) kin state’s culture, language and political system?

*Martinez, O. J. (1994). Border People. Life and Society in the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands University of Arizona Press.

O’Dell, T. (2003). "Øresund and the Regionauts." European Studies 19: 31-53.

Minorities and cross-border cooperation in Schleswig

- Minorities as a collective have been a barrier to cross-border cooperation until the 1980's:
 - fear of a hidden agenda: border revision, 'Lebensraum'
 - fear of the loss of the specific minority identity in an integrated, trans-national cross-border region

Minority members as individuals, though, have profited from cross-border cooperation because of their bilingual education and because they are bi-cultural:

- regional labour market
- higher education opportunities

Minorities: capacity builders in cross-border regions (Tove Malloy*)?

- Minority cooperation in cross-border governance organs:
 - Directly (institution) through their delegated representatives
 - Indirectly (individually)
 - As employees in the secretariate
 - As project holders or 'regionauts' in Interreg projects

*Malloy, T. (2010). "Creating New Spaces for Politics? The Role of National Minorities in Building Capacity of Cross-Border Regions." Regional & Federal Studies 20(3): 335-351.

Danish-German CBC

- Region Sønderjylland-Schleswig (euroregion)
- Municipal Border Triangle (Aabenraa-Sønderborg-Flensburg)
- Schleswig-Holstein – Region South Denmark
- Fehmarn Belt
- Baltic Sea Region
- North Sea Region
- String Hamburg – Kiel – Copenhagen – Malmö – Göteborg - Oslo

Levels of cooperation

Level	Minority participation	Potential minority participation
Region Sønderjylland-Schleswig	Medium	High
Border Triangle Flensburg-Aabenraa-Sønderborg	Low, higher since Flensburg's mayor is from SSW	High
Cooperation Agreement Schleswig-Holstein – Region Syddanmark	None, higher since SSW is in the state government	Low
STRING	None, higher since SSW is in the state government	Low
Baltic Sea Region	None, higher since SSW is in the state government	Low
North Sea Region	None, higher since SSW is in the state government	Low

Minorities as regionauts

- Common policymaking on minority issues
- 'Regionalist' political agenda in election campaigns since the 1950's
 - Seemingly successful for SSW since the 1970's
 - Seemingly successful for SP in the 2009 municipal elections



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Presence of minorities does not automatically lead to intensive cross-border cooperation:

- Minorities often connected with national irredenta, border revision or other threats to sovereignty
- Conflict of interests: Minorities are predominantly interested in good cultural relations to their kin-state, majorities in tangible financial gains
- Minorities' interest in an overcoming of the border might be contrary to majorities' interest in a preservation of the border because of its protective function
- Minorities' integration into civil society is necessary for constructive minority-majority cross-border cooperation
- Cross-border cooperation intensifies, when a financial incentive is given to the majority population
- High level participation in CBC is outside the tasks and means of minority institutions
- As individual actors, minority members can act as transnational borderlanders

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