



## East Ukraine's four perspectives: A Solution According to the South Tyrol Model

Roland Benedikter

Orfalea Center for Global and International Studies,  
University of California at Santa Barbara

E-mail address for correspondence: [rolandbenedikter@yahoo.de](mailto:rolandbenedikter@yahoo.de)

### Abstract

Despite repeated attempts of the international community and the conflicting parties to solve the East Ukraine stalemate through negotiation and agreement, the confrontation has become a frozen conflict with no clear perspective of a solution. Irrespective of the historic evaluation of the political, diplomatic and strategic backgrounds and responsibilities which will have to be undertaken later on, the separatist parts of Eastern Ukraine around Donetsk and Lugansk stand before four concrete options: 1. Forced re-integration through military intervention by Kiev's central government; 2. Separation followed by probable association with Russia; 3. Federalization of Ukraine with strong regional states, among them an "Ethnic Russian" federal state within a Ukrainian federation at the Eastern border; 4. Wide-reaching autonomy from the central government while remaining integral part of the national Ukrainian territory. Despite its imperfection, the fourth option seems to be the least harmful and the most appropriate for an interim solution. It should therefore be carefully considered by all those involved. The concrete model to follow could be the proven territorial Autonomy of the Autonomous Province of South Tyrol-Alto Adige in Northern Italy, a model protected by international agreements considered one of the most successful mechanisms of ethno-political pacification in Europe.

ISSN: 2048-075X

Ethnopolitics Papers is an initiative of the Specialist Group Ethnopolitics of the Political Studies Association of the UK, published jointly with the Exeter Centre for Ethnopolitical Studies and Centre for the Study of Ethnic Conflict, Queen's University Belfast.

Edited by

Dr Gareth Curless, University of Exeter

Morgane Colleau, University of Exeter

Henry Jarrett, University of Exeter

We welcome contributions and comments on Ethnopolitics Papers to [mc301@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:mc301@exeter.ac.uk)

Ethnopolitics Papers are available online at

<https://www.psa.ac.uk/psa-communities/specialist-groups/ethnopolitics/blog>

## 1. A tragic spiral of events

The Ukrainian revolution of November 2013 against then-president Victor Yanukovych set free a tragic spiral of events. Yanukovych had suspended the association talks with the European Union in fear of a Russian reaction since in the view of Russian officials a closer integration of Ukraine into Europe would have faced the risk of further reducing the surrounding buffer zone of the Russian Federation considered as strategic influence area. When parts of the pro-European population ousted Yanukovych in February 2014, the situation had already precipitated not only towards heavy clashes between authorities and protesters in the capital Kiev, but also to civil war-like uprisings in the eastern areas of Ukraine inhabited by a Russian-speaking majority traditionally supporting a pro-Russian course. Although Yanukovych in an interview in June 2015 apologized for the violence against protesters, with dozens dead, asserting that he never gave the order to use deadly force, he did not so with regard to the Eastern Ukrainian areas, which in open hostility against the central government following his escape and emigration to Russia declared themselves independent, considering the Kiev revolution to be a *coup d'état* (Gatehouse, 2005). As a consequence, the major centres of Eastern Ukraine, Donetsk and Lugansk, became two particularly contested areas embattled between the pro-Russian rebels and the military of the central government.

The armistice signed on September 5, 2014 in Minsk by the Ukrainian government, leaders of the Moscow-backed separatist “governments” in Eastern Ukraine and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) left the areas around Donetsk and Lugansk as *de facto* independent from the central government in Kiev. This independence, however, has not been recognized by the international community, nor formalized in any way by the Ukrainian authorities. Since then, at least 2,000 people have died in violent clashes, bringing the number of victims of the conflict to more than 6,000 according to the UN, with at least 10,000 wounded (Brumfield, 2015). There were innumerable violations of the cease-fire since September, with multiple attempts to establish an enduring truce, all broken by the parties involved. The Minsk I ceasefire openly collapsed in January 2015, when clashes continued and escalated in the fight for the town of Debaltseve, which lies at a strategic interface between the main lines of communication in Eastern Ukraine. The Minsk II agreement of February 12, 2015 did not change the overall situation decisively, and the situation remains far from pacified. In June

2015, the European Union denounced “the most serious violation of the ceasefire” since its implementation, with no substantial improvement in sight (Euronews, 2015).

In response, the central government in Kiev from October and November 2014 repeatedly announced a major military offensive to “regain” the “lost” territories, only to repeatedly back off again after warnings by Russia, and some minor defeats on the battlefield. This and the elections held by the separatists in the Eastern Ukrainian areas at the start of November 2014 – against the approval of Kiev and not recognized by Western powers – have further added to the factual stall of the decision process of what will happen with the area. The result is a “frozen conflict” of unclear duration. The fact that on November 22, the U.S. – unlike NATO which rejected the request – envisaged to deliver up-to-date weaponry to the Ukrainian army, which as Ukrainian president Petro Poroshenko anticipated in February 2015, may arrive within summer of 2015, including artillery and radar systems as well as protection vests, will not change the principles of this situation, but is rather another worrying signal of potential deterioration.

What are the perspectives for progress? What concrete options are available? The article starts by briefly discussing the four potential solutions on the table, in order to then present the model of a territorial autonomy according to the example of the Autonomous Province of South Tyrol in Northern Italy as the likely best viable and most realistic model available.

## **2. Four Options**

Irrespective of the political, diplomatic and strategic backgrounds and their evaluation in detail which are intensely and controversially debated, the separatist Eastern parts of Ukraine, around the large cities of Donetsk and Lugansk, are faced with four options:

1. Forced re-integration through military intervention by Kiev’s central government;
2. Separation followed by potential association with Russia;
3. Federalization of Ukraine by the means of a constitutional reform with strong regional states that cooperate, among them a federal state with Russian majority on the Eastern border; or
4. Wide-reaching territorial autonomy of the area from the central government with special measures for minority protection while remaining integral part of the national Ukrainian territory.

While options 1 and 2 exclude each other, options 3 and 4 could also coexist or be implemented together. The first option, forceful re-integration, could mean continued war and bear the risk of some form of intervention by Russia, as well as further instability and ethnic clashes. The second, separation and association with Russia, may be preferred not only by pro-Russian separatists, but – somewhat surprisingly – eventually also by Kiev in order to avoid open confrontation with Russia. It could also get rid of a potentially permanent source of conflict for which, importantly, the central government has to pay more than it receives due to the catastrophic economic situation of the area that does not contribute much to the national budget. Already since fall 2014 Kiev has demonstratively stopped its social welfare payments, such as pensions and health insurance to the area, which has been read by many as a move towards formal separation of an informally already separated region (Shetchko, 2014). Despite many appeals of the Eastern Ukrainian independence leaders to the Western allies, Kiev did not rethink this move (RT.com, 2015). In turn, the expected high costs of any potential “integration” of the comparatively under-developed separatist areas with Russia, be it as association, alliance or direct inclusion into the nation’s territory, are (and will remain) a strong deterrent to curb the appetite of Russia for any such solution.

This is why Russia, in particular Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, as his declarations since March 2014 suggest, seems to currently prefer a third option: “Clear-bordered” federalization of Ukraine. As Lavrov stated:

The fact that the current events in Ukraine are the result of a deep crisis of a national identity, caused, in particular, by the inability... to reconcile interests of western and south-eastern regions. Things cannot keep going on in this way. We are convinced that a deep constitutional reform is required. Frankly speaking, we do not see any other ways for sustainable development of the Ukrainian state other than a federal state. Maybe, some people know better and some magic formula can be found within a unitarian state. However, when the west, the east and the south (of Ukraine) celebrate different holidays, honour different heroes, have different economies, speak different languages, think differently and are attracted by the culture of different European civilisations, it is very hard to live in a unitary state in such conditions. Therefore, on 10 March 2014 we distributed unofficial documents, which was before those transferred to our US, west European, Chinese

partners, several other partners, in particular, BRICS countries, and said that it was our vision.<sup>1</sup>

The creation of a federal state at Ukraine's Eastern border dominated by the Russian ethnic group could give Moscow a strong leverage on the course of a newly federalized Ukraine, since such a federal state would without doubt have a strong voice in Kiev and at the same time cooperate closely with Russia. The problem of this fourth potential solution is that it would make the remaining Ukrainians in the area the minority in such a federal state with the need to claim their rights. That would mean that the ethnic problem as one of the roots of the overall conflict would have been only transferred from the national Ukrainian state (where the Russians are the minority with around 17% of the overall population) to the potential new Eastern federal state. That would create a constellation similar to that of Kosovo, where the independence from Serbia of February 2008 did not pacify the situation since new minorities, the Serbs and Roma, were created within the new nation and up to the present day do not feel considered equally by the ethnic Albanian majority.<sup>2</sup>

Considered overall, all three of these options are to a certain extent imbalanced and bear the risk of new, potentially prolonged conflicts since there is a mix of Russian and Ukrainian populations in the area which will not disappear with any of the three solutions in the short or medium term, at least not without ethnic cleansing from the one or the other side. And while there are U.S. theorists like Jerry Z. Muller in his disputed 2008 *Foreign Affairs* essay "Us and Them. The Enduring Power of Ethnic Nationalism" (Muller, 2008) seem to favor "one time only" ethnic cleansings to "never-ending" ethnic conflict, such cleansings should be avoided at all costs since they would without doubt trigger a further radicalization of the conflict and involve the major powers standing even further away.

---

<sup>1</sup> The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation: Interview given by the Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov to the programme 'Vesti v subbotu s Sergeem Brilyovim', Moscow, 29 March 2014 [online], available at:

[http://www.mid.ru/bdomp/brp\\_4.nsf/e78a48070f128a7b43256999005bcbb3/2729b161f336d8b844257cad00579575!OpenDocument](http://www.mid.ru/bdomp/brp_4.nsf/e78a48070f128a7b43256999005bcbb3/2729b161f336d8b844257cad00579575!OpenDocument) [Date accessed: April 04, 2014].

<sup>2</sup> OSCE Mission in Kosovo: Kosovo Communities Profiles 2010, [online], available at: <http://www.osce.org/kosovo/75450?download=true>. Cf. KFOS Kosovo Foundation for Open Society: Baseline Survey: The Position of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in Kosovo 2009, [online], available at:

[http://kfos.org/pdf/The%20Position%20of%20RAE%20Communities%20in%20Kosovo%20Baseline%20Survey\\_ENG.pdf](http://kfos.org/pdf/The%20Position%20of%20RAE%20Communities%20in%20Kosovo%20Baseline%20Survey_ENG.pdf) [Date accessed: March 12, 2014].

Of the available options, then, a fourth: territorial – not ethnic – autonomy for all people living in the area, and thus for common benefit, with special rights for *all* ethnic groups and permanent status in the Ukrainian constitution, including guaranteed ethnic representation in a semi-independent regional parliament and with the right of Russia and the European Union to be diplomatic observers on a collaborative basis, could be a feasible intermediate way between forced integration, separation and – potentially conflict-ridden – federalization. This solution could be the most practical and concrete of the four since it has a decades-long successful predecessor: the case of the South Tyrol autonomy in Northern Italy, which since 1972 has succeeded to pacify the area after a violent post-WWII history and to turn it from poor to rich within just a couple of decades. A regional territorial autonomy like the one of South Tyrol thus could result to be the perspective less harmful both for all ethnicities on the ground as for the outside interests involved at least as a temporary compromise, until the most profound wounds have been healed and dialogue has been strengthened to the point to proceed to potential other solutions.

### **3. A prerequisite: the ethnonationalism issue, a fundamental problem for Western strategists**

Without doubt, the situation in Eastern Ukraine has very heterogeneous backgrounds and origins, among them power plays between international actors and geostrategic interests. Ethnic issues are not the only origin of conflict, but they are among the important factors at play – an issue still widely undervalued by Western strategists, who tend all too easily to blame Russian versus American geopolitical interests, as well as European weakness and Ukrainian polarization and domestic problems for the situation. But as Patrick J. Buchanan (2009) rightly commented on another occasion:

The larger issue [here] is the enduring power of ethnonationalism — the drive of ethnic minorities, embryonic nations, to break free and create their own countries, where their... culture and language are predominant... [Nevertheless], American's elite regard [ethnonationalism] an irrelevancy, an obsession only of the politically retarded.

Indeed, the perception of the meanings and political potentials of ethnic struggles like those in Eastern Ukraine are very different in Russia and America. Russian concerns on the explosive potential of ethno-nationalism in Ukraine, including the causes and reasons

for minorities to fight against the national government, are not always self-evident in the American strategic hemisphere. And neither is the “Medvedev doctrine” in the eyes of American leaders.

The “Medvedev doctrine” is a foreign policy approach that claims that Russia has the duty –and the right – to help Russian ethnic populations outside Russia with all possible means, since in the view of the Kremlin many of them have been underprivileged or even disadvantaged after the end of the Soviet Union. It may be a side note of history, but ethno-nationalism has been without doubt one of the few blind spots in American domestic and foreign policy of the past decades; and it still remains an under-developed field of expertise among its elites.

The reason is that basic aspects of the American mindset, the Western and global lead nation’s civil religion, as well as its founding mythology, are not about *formalizing* and *regulating*, but on the contrary about *overcoming* ethnic provenience and affiliation in order to build a united nation made of basically all global ethnic groups that exist. The U.S. is a first in the historical experiment of overcoming ethnic and cultural heritage, and an experiment of a “united humanity” society based on individualism, not group-affiliation. In essence, the U.S. is centered on the *demos*, not on the *ethnos*, and this is the main difference to many other societies which in many cases are still centered on ethnic features. That has made the American leadership somewhat hesitant to help ethnic groups develop autonomies within existing nation states.

One example of Western helplessness when dealing with ethno-nationalism was mentioned in Jerry Z. Muller’s emblematic essay “Us and Them” of 2008, conceived as a key analysis for the then new era of multi-polarity. From the two basic concepts of conflict resolution: dissociative (partition) versus associative (integration) solution finding, Muller clearly prefers the first. According to Muller, the best solution for ethnic conflicts, particularly in areas where different ethnic groups live together in a tight space, such as Eastern Ukraine, is to make a clean cut in order to divide the groups, if necessary by ethnic cleansing. The goal, according to Muller, to some extent still echoing the idea of “self-determination” of Woodrow Wilson of the post-WWI-era, should be to create a “clean” nation state for each and every group for itself by moving large numbers of the population,

if necessary, through forcing them to leave their homes, thus splitting existing ethnic “aggregates” in the hope of ending conflict once and for all by dividing the groups. Muller clearly prefers an end in terror to terror without end. Ethnic cleansing, in his view, may prove to be the lesser evil in the end. Or in his own words:

Partition may thus be the most humane lasting solution to such intense communal conflicts. It inevitably creates new flows of refugees, but at least it deals with the problem at issue. The challenge for the international community in such cases is to separate communities in the most humane manner possible: by aiding in transport, assuring citizenship rights in the new homeland, and providing financial aid for resettlement and economic absorption. The bill for all of this will be huge, but it will rarely be greater than the material costs of interjecting and maintaining a foreign military presence large enough to pacify the rival ethnic combatants or the moral cost of doing nothing.

But if applied to Eastern Ukraine, this approach would not only be in open contrast to Western interests, but could also prove to be catastrophic from a humanitarian perspective. Furthermore, neither Moscow nor Kiev could accept such a “simplifying” “once-and-for-all” solution, and would probably rather embrace war than accept “partition” at such cost.

The good news then is that *not* undertaking Muller’s strategy does in no way mean to “do nothing”. On the contrary, there is a much better, peaceful, proven and practical solution to follow that has been used for a long time as an example in European school books.

#### **4. A proven European model of pacification**

In view of the crisis, one lesson is clear: amid increasing instability, it is time to press for a viable solution to provide at least a temporary arrangement. Is there a practical model for how the international community may organize the further political and institutional existence of Eastern Ukraine? And could such an arrangement be not only in the interest of Russia, but also be accepted by the Ukrainian government, the U.S. and Europe, as well as by the international community, at least as an interim solution? How could such a win-win arrangement potentially look?

Perhaps the most viable model of pacification and justice for all sides involved could be one that strictly adheres to *realpolitik*: non-ideological, practice- and problem-oriented policy and applied to the concrete circumstances on the ground. This solution might follow the example of the trilingual Autonomous Province of Bolzano-South Tyrol in Northern Italy, a region where three different ethnic groups coexist in harmony. This works on the basis of a commonly developed and accepted rule of law and a formalized arrangement overseen and protected by the European Union (Alcock, 2011). A similar solution, inspired by the South Tyrol example, could be implemented immediately in Eastern Ukraine. It would formalize (if only temporarily) regional autonomy for the separatist areas within the national borders of Ukraine – i.e. implement self-administration (with elements of self-determination) *without* separation.

The implementation of this model would build on sound foundations. The South Tyrol model is currently debated for crisis regions around the world, including the West Sahara area in Morocco – South Tyrolean researcher Eva Pförtl presented it in front of the 4th Committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations in October 2014 (Salto.bz, 2014) - as well as for Chechenia, Tibet (Benedikter, 2014), and even parts of Iraq (Benedikter, 2015). Permanent study groups made up by representatives of international ethnic groups exist at the European Academy of Applied Sciences (EURAC) in the provincial capital Bolzano/Bozen/Bulzan (carrying three names according to the three main ethnicities that live in the area). The EURAC is a research unit and think tank that is dedicated to foster knowledge about the South Tyrol model and to work with representatives of various ethnic conflict areas to seek consensual and feasible solutions, with many leading ethnic minority representatives visiting the area on a regular basis (see Südtirol online, 2009).

## **5. A Model for Peace in East Ukraine: The South Tyrol Autonomy**

Already the Minsk II peace talks between Vladimir Putin, Pedro Poroschenko, Angela Merkel and Francois Hollande of February 2015 brought up the issue of institutional reform in Ukraine as part of a multidimensional and integrated solution. The task of constitutional reform is to strengthen the regions against the central state and concede the Russian majority in the Eastern part of the country around Lugansk and Donetsk greater autonomy. As part of the international efforts to provide “best practice” examples and as a concrete

model of how to implement the autonomy idea, Italy's Minister of Foreign Affairs Paolo Gentiloni brought to the fore a practical solution proven for decades as functional: the South Tyrol model of regional autonomy which he proposed to use as a model for the embattled Eastern Ukrainian territories. As Gentiloni stated on February 11:

We don't think that the delivery of weapons to Ukraine is a good solution, that would put Putin into the littlest trouble. We have a different view, although the U.S. are and remain our strongest and most important partner and have their legitimate viewpoint on the issue. For a peaceful option, the regional autonomy of South Tyrol at Italy's northernmost border with Austria could prove to be useful for creating a new, better order pattern in the Eastern parts of Ukraine through legal and institutional measures. Although the context is different, we should continue to negotiate and to push towards wide-reaching autonomy for the area at Russia's border. The South Tyrol model offers the chance to keep the territorial unity of the Ukrainian nation and guaranteeing its borders while providing autonomy to the country's minorities. The prerequisite is of course Moscow's will to discuss such a model as a viable solution for the separatist areas. It depends on the Kremlin now.<sup>3</sup>

Immediately afterwards, the former governor of the Autonomous Province of South Tyrol, Luis Durnwalder, offered himself to travel to East Ukraine and present the South Tyrol model there in person. He promised to not only deliver its legal framework and the dozens of studies about how to transfer some of its features to other contexts, but also to share his decade long experiences with the model, including its strengths and weaknesses. "The South Tyrol model is a concrete option. To our area, formerly ridden by ethnic conflict, this model has brought peace," Durnwalder stated on February 12 in South Tyrol's provincial capital Bozen-Bolzano-Bulsan.

## **6. The territorial autonomy of South Tyrol: a model for Eastern Ukraine's (temporary) pacification?**

The regional autonomy of South Tyrol, established – in the framework of a "second autonomy statute" – in 1972 and now proven successful for more than 40 years, is based

---

<sup>3</sup> M. Bona, 'Il ministro degli esteri Gentiloni: Per risolvere la crisi Ucraina bisogna prendere a modello l'Alto Adige', *Alto Adige*, 11 February 2015 [online], available at: [http://altoadige.gelocal.it/bolzano/cronaca/2015/02/11/news/il-ministero-degli-esteri-gentiloni-per-risolvere-la-crisi-ucraina-bisogna-prendere-a-modello-l-alto-adige-1.10844733?refresh\\_ce](http://altoadige.gelocal.it/bolzano/cronaca/2015/02/11/news/il-ministero-degli-esteri-gentiloni-per-risolvere-la-crisi-ucraina-bisogna-prendere-a-modello-l-alto-adige-1.10844733?refresh_ce). [Date Accessed: 12 February 2015].

on the idea of “inter-ethnic tolerance established by law” (Pföstl). To many, it is so far the best example for the positive handling of civil divisions found in Europe.

South Tyrol is a small area approximately the size of Lugansk along the mountainous alpine border between Italy, Austria and Switzerland. With a total population of 505,000 (slightly higher than Lugansk), it has a high degree of political and cultural autonomy, and its model presents a working and practical solution to multi-ethnic co-existence. Here, the German speakers are the majority (67%) and have the majority in the provincial parliament, which disposes of an autonomous legislative and executive power. Italian state population in the province amounts to 26%, and a third ethnic group, the Rhaeto-romanic Ladins who have their own culture and language, represent 4%. All three main ethnic groups have the constitutional right to be represented in the autonomous parliament and to participate in its government.

### ***Historical background***

Before World War I (1914-1918) the region of South Tyrol was a core part of Austria. A majority (95%) of the area’s inhabitants were culturally Austrian, and thus German (Bavarian) native speakers. Ceded to Italy by the Treaty of St. Germain in 1919 against the will of the population, South Tyrol experienced a troubled and difficult transition to its current status of a wide-ranging linguistic and cultural autonomy. Not until June 1992 did the foreign ministers of Austria and Italy sign before the United Nations a declaration of settlement of dispute stating that the autonomy was a satisfying agreement safeguarding South Tyrol’s full autonomous status within the Republic of Italy.<sup>4</sup>

Three years following the annexation in 1919, Mussolini’s Fascist government began to Italianize the region by force by attracting large numbers of Italians mainly from the South to settle in the area. This was interrupted only by World War II. After the end of the war, South Tyrolese representatives and the provisional government of Austria began working to see that South Tyrol would be returned to Austria. The great powers of the victorious

---

<sup>4</sup> This part of the text is based on the official information booklet about South Tyrol: *South Tyrol: An Introduction* available at the Press Office of the Autonomous South Tyrolean Government, Crispi street 3, Landhaus 1, I-39100 Bolzano/Bozen/Bulzan. Other sources include the three seminal works of Anthony Alcock: *The History of the South Tyrol Question* (London: Joseph, 1970); A. Alcock: *The Future of Cultural Minorities* (Oxford: St. Martin’s Press 1979); and A. Alcock: *A History of the Protection of Regional Cultural Minorities in Europe: From the Edict of the Nantes to the Present Day* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan 2000).

allies had, however, already rejected such claims in the autumn of 1945 and, despite further massive attempts by the South Tyrolese and Austria (in South Tyrol more than 80% of the native population signed the call for a plebiscite, and in the capital of Tyrol, Innsbruck, a huge anti-Italian demonstration was held on May 5, 1946), a final negative decision was taken at the end of April 1946. The only way left open now for Austria and Italy was to negotiate directly so that South Tyrol should obtain an “intermediate” status through some form of self-government. Through special provisions and legislation, German-speaking citizens should be granted parity of the German and Italian languages in public offices and official documents as well as before the courts. A basic agreement was reached within the framework of the peace negotiations in Paris. On September 5, 1946 the “Paris Agreement” was signed by the foreign ministers of Italy and Austria, Alcide DeGasperi and Karl Gruber, and annexed to the peace treaty with Italy, so that the South Tyrol question was thereby given official international standing.

In the following years, Italy did not fulfil its obligation signed at the Paris Agreement and therefore in September 1959 the South Tyrol question was raised in the United Nations in New York by the then Austrian Foreign Minister Bruno Kreisky. Further efforts by the SVP (the South Tyrolean Peoples Party, an ethnic unification party representing the Austrian and Ladin population) and Austria were not successful: in 1961 bombing attacks were carried out by members of the growing independence movement with 37 separate incidents in the night of June 11 alone. They were followed by new negotiations with Rome, which reached a successful conclusion.

Little by little a whole package of measures to put the self-government of the South Tyrol area into effect was agreed upon. It was approved by a narrow majority of the SVP at its congress on 23 November 1969 against its independent wing and thereafter by the Italian and Austrian governments. Only after the coming into effect of the “new Autonomy Statute” (i.e. a local special constitution included in the national Italian constitution) in 1972 was the parity of the minorities energetically pursued with special executive measures and decrees by the Italian state.

### ***Ethnic groups***

Besides an increasing immigrant population mostly from Europe, but also from Islamic countries such as Pakistan, which currently amounts to 10% of the population, three main ethnic groups currently live in South Tyrol: the German and Ladin speaking minorities and the Italian state population.<sup>5</sup>

The Ladins are the oldest and at the same time the smallest language group in the province. They had already been resident in the country at the time of the Roman conquest from the South, but were then increasingly pushed back by the German tribes invading from the North. The Italians in South Tyrol mainly live in the cities of Bolzano/Bozen/Bulzan and Merano/Meran/Maran and in the bigger centers. At the 1910 census, the last to be held before World War I and therefore before South Tyrol's annexation by Italy, there were only 17,339 Italian-speaking inhabitants in South Tyrol (2.9% of the population). The considerable increase of the Italian population of South Tyrol occurred in the 1930s as a consequence of the violent Fascist Italianisation of the Province, but also in the years after 1945, reaching its peak, 34.3%, at the 1961 census. Since then, the Italian percentage of the population declined (1971: 33.3%; 1981: 28.7%, 1991: 27.65%, 2001: 26.47%).

### ***What are the pillars of South Tyrolean autonomy?***

To the present day, the Statute of 1972 represents a solid guarantee that the German and Ladin linguistic minorities can survive as ethnic groups with their own linguistic and cultural identities, so that the implementation and observation of the measures of protection form the basis for a peaceful co-existence of the three ethnic and linguistic groups in the province. Currently, the pillars of the South Tyrolean Autonomy are as follows:

- The so-called *Ethnic Proportions Decree* demands the declaration of ethnic affiliation by every citizen on the soil of South Tyrol in the framework of every census, as well as the proof of an acceptable knowledge of the major provincial languages in South Tyrol, German and Italian, as obligatory for people employed in the public sector. The “acceptable knowledge of the German and Italian languages” is usually ascertained

---

<sup>5</sup> Autonomous office for statistics of South Tyrol/Alto Adige (ASTAT): Results of the census 2011 in Italy regarding South Tyrol, 16 May 2013, [online], available at: [http://www.provinz.bz.it/astat/de/volkszaehlung/aktuelles.asp?aktuelles\\_action=4&aktuelles\\_article\\_id=425640](http://www.provinz.bz.it/astat/de/volkszaehlung/aktuelles.asp?aktuelles_action=4&aktuelles_article_id=425640) [Date Accessed: 04 April 2015].

through a bilingualism examination, which can also be extended to trilingualism. This exam is a hurdle for all candidates of the Italian national state who have no knowledge of German. It prevents uncontrolled immigration and is an implicit advantage for the local population in search of labor. In the competition for employment in the public sector, the vast majority of the candidates from other Italian provinces would be excluded - to the advantage and benefit of South Tyrolean residents. This can be seen as one major reason for high employment in the province (4.4% unemployment rate in 2014<sup>6</sup>), which is another main precondition for the success of the Autonomy model and for the peaceful co-existence between the ethnic groups. Most probably, the autonomy regulation wouldn't be accepted so well by all three ethnic groups without the apparent economic success and the practical benefits for all local citizens.

- The proportion of percentages between the ethnic groups also regulates the distribution of public money to the respective groups, as well as the composition of public bodies and the distribution of administrative and bureaucratic posts in the public administration. In practice, every group has the right to as many posts in the public administration as its percentage in the census is. Thus, 67% of the posts are currently announced for declared members of the ethnic German (Austrian) speaking group, 26% for the Italians, and 4% for the Ladins. Nevertheless, the measure is handled flexibly, i.e. when for example no appropriate candidate can be found for a job reserved for the German speaking group, it is opened up to all groups.
- The regulations on bi- and trilingualism contained in the above-mentioned Ethnic Proportions Decree have been extended to the recruitment of personnel in firms, societies and bodies which carry out public services or services of use to the public in the Autonomous Province of Bozen/Bolzano/Bulsan.
- 90% of the taxes collected in the province by the Italian national authorities - South Tyrol has no independent tax authority - are automatically restituted to the local Autonomous government. They are then distributed proportionally to the three ethnic groups (except the expenses for issues of common interest like road building or public constructions), thus benefitting every citizen of South Tyrol equally, without

---

<sup>6</sup> Autonome Provinz Bozen-Südtirol: ASTAT: Erwerbstätige und Arbeitssuchende 2014, [Online], Available at: [http://www.provinz.bz.it/arbeit/service/news.asp?arbeitsnews\\_action=4&arbeitsnews\\_article\\_id=503767](http://www.provinz.bz.it/arbeit/service/news.asp?arbeitsnews_action=4&arbeitsnews_article_id=503767) [Date Accessed: 15 March 2015].

favoring neither the Italian state population nor the minorities. That's why the South Tyrol autonomy is explicitly considered a *territorial* autonomy, not an *ethnic* autonomy, which would be at the disadvantage of the Italian state population living in the territory.

- In order to ensure the independent cultural development of each linguistic group, each has its own administrative and organisational domain in form of an independent local ministry for culture and schooling. The Italian ethnic group culturally cooperates closely with other Italian provinces and regions, while the German and Ladin ethnic groups maintain active contacts with the German and Raetoroman cultural worlds. According to the Autonomy Statute, the Province of South Tyrol has primary legislative powers in terms of culture.
- Legal proceedings and trials must be conducted in the declared mother tongue of the accused.

### ***Measures to protect the minorities***

The statute of 1972, the so called "Autonomy Package", consisted of 137 measures. The measures should have been issued within four years from then by the Italian national government. But in the end more than 20 years were required by the fast changing Italian governments to implement it.

On the basis of the Paris Agreement, the South Tyrol Autonomy Statute should ensure the maintenance and linguistic and cultural development of the German and Ladin linguistic groups within the framework of the Italian national state. But at the same time the benefits of the enlarged powers of self-government apply to members of all three linguistic groups in South Tyrol.

- The most important primary powers of the Autonomous Province of South Tyrol are: place naming, protection of objects of artistic and ethnic value, the regulation of small holdings, arts and crafts, local customs and traditions, planning and building, public housing, public construction, common rights (i.e. for pasturage and timber), mining, hunting and fishing, agriculture and forestry, the protection of fauna and flora, fairs and markets, prevention of disasters, transport, tourism, expropriation, public welfare, nursery schools, school welfare, and vocational training.

- Restricted powers apply to teaching in primary and secondary schools, trade and commerce, apprenticeships, promotion of industrial production, hygiene and health, sport and leisure.

### ***Census and linguistic proportions***

An important prerequisite for the protection of an ethnic minority is to know its exact numerical size. In the 1920s and 1930s, the Italian Fascists succeeded almost completely in forcing the South Tyroleans (“those of foreign origin”, as Mussolini described them in his speech to the Parliament in Rome in 1928) out of public employment and regional administration.<sup>7</sup>

Furthermore, during the Fascist dictatorship, public housing in South Tyrol was almost exclusively allocated to Italian-speaking tenants. This kind of policy continued even after the 1946 Paris Agreement which provided for “equality of rights as regards the entering upon public offices with a view to reaching a more appropriate proportion of employment between the two ethnical groups.” From 1935 to 1943, 3,100 units of public housing were built in South Tyrol (of which 2,800 were in the capital Bolzano/Bozen/Bulzan), which were entirely allotted to immigrating Italian families. From 1950 to 1959, the national government built a further 5,500 units, of which 3,500 were in Bolzano/Bozen/Bulzan with only 5% given to local German-speaking tenants.<sup>8</sup>

The introduction of a fair distribution of administrative posts and housing according to the numerical strength of the three ethnic groups was therefore perceived as reparation of Fascist injustice by the minorities. Since 1972, the key to that distribution has been the above-mentioned principle of ethnic proportions which is based on the numerical strength of the three linguistic groups living in the province according to the latest census. Since 1988, however, public housing has been distributed according to a so-called “combined proportion” which takes into account not only the numerical strength of the three linguistic groups but also the needs of each group based on the requests for housing submitted.

---

<sup>7</sup> *South Tyrol: An Introduction.*

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

Concerning the local bodies in the province (public sector, the municipalities, the health services, etc.), the equality of rights which regulates the entering upon public offices provided for in the Paris Agreement was gradually implemented. By the year 2002, employment in Italian national and semi-autonomous bodies in South Tyrol (railways, postal service, roads administration, customs service, court administration) also occurred proportionally according to the strength of the three ethnic groups. However, certain state bodies such as, for example, the military, the police and the security service, are not subject to the principle of ethnic proportions.

### ***United Nations and European leaders***

Summing up, the primary legislative competences of the autonomous provincial government of the South Tyrol area include: the organization of provincial authorities and their staff, the obligation of bilingualism for all public employees, the protection and care for historical, artistic and ethnic values, provincial planning and building directives, conservation of the landscape, community easements, roads and public works, communication and transport, tourism and catering industry, agriculture and forestry, public care and welfare. There are also special measures to protect and preserve the three languages, for example through the distribution of public money for cultural and schooling affairs according to the proportional system to the three mutually independent ministries of culture and schooling.

One of the most important measures is that the province of South Tyrol has three separate school systems for the three language groups, where every system works mono-lingual in the native language of one group (with the second language thought as first foreign language), but where all citizens, independent from their ethnic affiliation, can freely choose which system they want to send their children. The province furthermore spends a substantial amount of money on German, Italian and Ladin cultural activities. In order to ensure the independent cultural development of each linguistic group, each has its own administrative and organizational domain: the three parallel culture ministries are completely independent from each other and receive their part of the tax revenues according to the proportion of population they represent. Nevertheless there are a number of areas, for example in music and art, where close cooperation between all three linguistic

groups results in mutual enrichment.<sup>9</sup> South Tyroleans receive different colour identity cards from those of other Italians and the street signs and other public communications are bilingual, in the Ladin areas trilingual.

In addition, the United Nations play an important role in the autonomy of South Tyrol. They made available legal mechanisms to the South Tyrolese to ensure Italy complies with international treaties affecting the region, and require that Italy consult formally or informally with other members of the UN and the European Union before taking any action which may affect the provincial autonomy. The result is that the Italians cannot forbid the use of German (as they did under Fascism in the 1920s) and cannot create economic projects to persuade Italian citizens from other provinces to immigrate thereby possibly weakening the minorities. Italy must, moreover, consult with other states and abide by treaties signed with the minority groups or risk alienation by the European Union.

The former Chancellor of Germany and architect of German unification, Helmut Kohl, and the former leading member of the European Parliament, Ria Oomen-Ruijten from the Netherlands, represent the opinion of many international politicians and experts, including Italian statesmen Azeglio Ciampi and Lamberto Dini and former Austrian chancellor Wolfgang Schüssel and foreign minister Alois Mock, when they contend that South Tyrol, after a violent past of ethnic division, is today the best example for the peaceful co-existence of different ethnic groups in Europe. Comparative autonomy researcher Thomas Benedikter rightly calls it “one of the great modern Autonomy systems of the world” (2009a), able “to solve conflict through self-government” (2009b).

## **7. Conclusion: autonomy, equality and parity as three principles to integrate in every process of solution finding for East Ukraine**

To conclude, it can be stated that, on the one hand, the proportional and bi- and trilingual regulations applied in South Tyrol represent reparation of acts of injustice against the regional minorities. On the other hand, they are a safeguard, not uncontroversial but nevertheless useful for an agreed distribution of welfare amongst members from all three language groups. The success of the South Tyrol model, in contrast to the devastation that

---

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

has accompanied other ethnic conflicts, reveals that it could provide a good example of autonomous integrated regional organization between different cultural and ethnic groups. Can these arrangements be imitated and succeed in Eastern Ukraine as well, or at least help as an orientation for the co-existence of the major ethnic groups there?

In judging the origin, impact and effect of the South Tyrol autonomy system, the reasons for its success, as well as its potential usefulness for Ukraine's problems, it is first of all important to discern between the three principles of *autonomy*, *equality* and *parity*. They are not the same, but have all without exception to be integrated if a working solution is to be practically implemented.

As the South Tyrol model indicates, ethnic conflicts are not necessarily only about equality, but about self-determination of certain sub-groups within a more complex societal body. These groups usually feel disadvantaged and demand a counter-offer for their unsatisfying condition. That implies special treatment, which is usually perceived as 'justice' by the given groups, and as 'unjustified privilege' by the others, in particular by the majority which has to concede special rights to the minority.

On the other hand, civil conflicts, even if equipped with the most efficient solution mechanisms, will never reach full 'justice'; and can never be based solely on equality, but are essentially also about parity. Parity in such settings can mean many things: from 'positive discrimination' like special rights in order to further 'equal' chances through the *territorial* implementation of rights rather than an *ethnic* implementation.

Territorial autonomy means to grant every citizen living in a particular area the same rights. That would mean giving the Ukrainians living in an autonomous Eastern Ukrainian zone the same autonomous rights as the Russians of the area – although that in turn may lead to new conflict, as in the case of Italy where 'normal' Italian citizens outside the South Tyrol area often denounce the special rights of self-government of Italian native speakers living in South Tyrol as an unjustified discrimination that allegedly hurts the principle of equality, as well as certain fundamentals of the rule of law anchored in the Italian national constitution.

Following these insights, the best interim solution—could be an agreement between the major ethnic groups on the basis of a regional autonomy following the South Tyrol model – if such a model is implemented through a sober, non-idealistic approach that does not ignore the differences and complexities between autonomy, equality, justice and parity.

In particular, some basic aspects from the South Tyrol model could be transferred to Eastern Ukraine, such as differentiated regional tax autonomy; distribution of money according to percentages of ethnic population; guarantees for ethnic representation in the regional government and parliament; and systematic cultural independence as an alternative to ethnic separatism. Furthermore, in areas with a high of ‘mixed’ coexistence between different ethnic groups, it might be wise to install parallel cultural and school administrations, and to give national and international guarantees for language and heritage autonomy.

Concerning all of these proposals, the autonomy of South Tyrol should not be merely seen as a model to copy, but as an example of concrete success that can help to find appropriate, original local solutions according to the practical needs of single situations. In short, following the South Tyrol model, the Eastern Ukrainian areas of Donetsk and Lugansk would proceed from a *de facto* to a regulated autonomous zone based on formal agreement and the rule of law, administered by a government elected by the regional residents and equipped with primary and secondary legislative powers. The area would be entitled to establish its independent bilingual schooling system where Russians would have their own self-administered schools using their mother tongue.

Both Russians and Ukrainians would be represented by law in the government and parliament. Money for cultural and educational issues, including heritage protection, would be distributed among the ethnicities according to census percentages. The national government of Ukraine would keep overall sovereignty, while taxes collected within the autonomous area would belong exclusively to the autonomous region and be distributed among the ethnic groups, according to population.

While the Ukrainian national government would continue to control the military to secure the borders, the autonomous Eastern area could have its own police force responsible for

domestic security. It would have primary legislative powers in the fields of agricultural development, environment, fishing and hunting, housing (both public and private), industry, transport, demographic development and tourism, among others. The respective agreements could be supervised by Ukraine's 'neutral' neighbours such as non-EU member states (Switzerland) or even China, or the OECD, following the practice of supervision and guarantee of the South Tyrol model in Italy by the European Union.<sup>10</sup> Such a 'greater' arrangement could serve as trust-building measure with positive long-term effects on the geopolitics of the region.

There will be at least four fundamental problem clusters, which every attempt to use the South Tyrol model in today's Ukraine, will have to deal with. First, because of deep mistrust, no outer protecting power may be seriously (and openly) involved in the autonomisation process comparable to Austria in the case of the South Tyroleans. Austria after WWII always understood itself as the 'protecting power' (*Schutzmacht*) of South Tyrol's German and Ladin populations. Then Austrian chancellor Bruno Kreisky brought the 'South Tyrol question' in 1960 before the United Nations given Italy's hesitance to fulfil its international commitments with regard to the area (*Der Spiegel* 8/1961). If autonomisation is the goal, the will of Ukraine's government will be decisive, and the most influential positive sustain from the outside may come not from nation states, but from global bodies like the United Nations.

Second, the size factor: a small area like South Tyrol is better to handle through regional autonomy than the Eastern area of Ukraine with its 18 million people which is the size of a medium nation state in itself. Although not impossible, it remains to see if and how a far-reaching autonomy for such an extended part of the country can work out.

Third, there is a different culture when it comes to ideas associated with the nation, the individual, sub-groups of society, ethnicity and authority in Russia when compared with the West. In fact, one of the crucial prerequisites for the solution of the South Tyrol dispute was that all powers that participated in the negotiation, in particular Italy and Austria, were

---

<sup>10</sup> The Austrian Ministry for Foreign Affairs: South Tyrol. In: <http://www.bmeia.gv.at/en/foreign-ministry/foreign-policy/europe/neighbourhood-policy/south-tyrol.html>. Cf. T. Benedikter: *The World's Working Regional Autonomies: An Introduction and Comparative Analysis*, Anthem Press 2007.

working democracies. Russia is not a democracy in the contemporary Western sense, and it is unlikely that it will become one soon - although it may evolve its own forms of rule of law and democracy. This is probably the main problem for an inner-Ukrainian differentiation as envisaged with the autonomy option.

Fourth, there is a global trend away from group rights towards individual rights triggered by modernization and growing transnational and transcultural interdependency. It goes against the trend towards formalizing ethnicity within the rule of law and makes international agreements on the issue not exactly easier.

These differences in context, settings and prerequisites constitute without doubt obstacles against applying the South Tyrol model to today's Ukraine's realities. A proportional mechanism similar to the South Tyrol agreement will only work if both ethnic groups show understanding and a real commitment to reconciliation. This is also the reason why the implementation of any such – or similar – model of pacification on Ukrainian territory may not be a lasting solution like in South Tyrol, but rather a starting point to make the most out of a difficult situation.

In fact, the South Tyrol example could be used as a model for a transition phase only temporarily. The effects would nevertheless be multiple. They would lead to a better identification of the ethnicities within a more differentiated Ukraine and this would lead to a reduction of conflict and the facilitation and further empowerment of Ukraine's development.

Given that Vladimir Putin, according to his own words, does not want to have a new iron curtain in Europe because he is aware that 'this would be the ruin of Russia', and although the South Tyrol autonomy model is itself in a phase of transition due to the ongoing reform of the Italian constitution,<sup>11</sup> the idea of discussing to transfer some features to Eastern

---

<sup>11</sup> G. Pallaver, 'South Tyrol's Changing Political System: From Dissociative on the Road to Associative Conflict Resolution', in *Nationalities Papers: The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity*, Volume 42, Issue 3/2014 [online], available at: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00905992.2013.856393?ai=7qpt&ui=g6h4&af=H> [Date Accessed: 05 May 2015].

Ukraine in order to facilitate the pacification process could be worth a try – even if to only spark the discussion of ideas more suited to the local and regional realities.

What is needed to make this attempt constructive is first of all – and most importantly – a new pragmatism from all sides. The new Ukrainian government has the historic window to pacify its Eastern regions in order to change things for the better. To give Eastern Ukraine an autonomy that better fits the needs and requests would liberate Ukraine from a permanent spine in its flank, and prove to the many domestic and foreign critics that the new government has started a new phase of reconciliation and development. Putin, on the other hand, should not waste this chance because it will not be there forever, but most probably be limited to a certain time window. Third, Europe, which has proven to be a weak and rather unreliable partner so far, would contribute a practical model which represents one of its best political achievements and part of its specific historic heritage. Fourth and not least, the U.S. would have achieved peace and a more democratic Ukraine, which can only be in its interest.

The autonomy solution could thus be in the interest of all parties: the Ukraine, Russia, Europe and the U.S. While such a solution might not be fully satisfactory for each party involved, because it necessarily relies on compromise from all negotiating partners, it could provide a rational model of renewal and progress in order to become an at least temporary win-win arrangement for all sides. Given that the South Tyrol autonomy model it is by no means radical, but allows cautious progress based on compromise, ‘tolerance by law’ and justice based on realism, the Ukrainian government and the international community should consider it as a viable path to adapt to the situation for the sake of a better future.

## **8. Bibliography**

Alcock A. (2011) *The South Tyrol Autonomy. A Short Introduction*. Londonderry and Bozen-Bolzano-Bulzan, <http://www.provinz.bz.it/en/downloads/South-Tyrol-Autonomy.pdf>.

Alcock A. (2000) *A History of the Protection of Regional Cultural Minorities in Europe: From the Edict of the Nantes to the Present Day*, New York and London: Palgrave McMillan.

Alcock A. (1979) *The Future of Cultural Minorities*, Oxford and London: St. Martin's Press.

Alcock A. (1970) *The History of the South Tyrol Question*, London: Joseph.

Autonome Provinz Bozen-Südtirol (2014) *ASTAT: Erwerbstätige und Arbeitssuchende 2014*, [Online], Available at:

[http://www.provinz.bz.it/arbeit/service/news.asp?arbeitsnews\\_action=4&arbeitsnews\\_article\\_id=503767](http://www.provinz.bz.it/arbeit/service/news.asp?arbeitsnews_action=4&arbeitsnews_article_id=503767) [Date Accessed: 15 March 2015].

Autonomous Office for Statistics of South Tyrol/Alto Adige (ASTAT) (2013) *Results of the census 2011 in Italy regarding South Tyrol*, [Online], Available at:

[http://www.provinz.bz.it/astat/de/volkszaehlung/aktuelles.asp?aktuelles\\_action=4&aktuelles\\_article\\_id=425640](http://www.provinz.bz.it/astat/de/volkszaehlung/aktuelles.asp?aktuelles_action=4&aktuelles_article_id=425640) [Date Accessed: 04 April 2015].

Benedikter R. (2015), 'Extremism and Ethnicity. Fighting Extremism Will Require New Task Forces At The Interface Between Ethnicity And Religion – Worldwide', Essay Series in 6 parts. *Global Policy Journal*, [Online], Available at:

<http://www.globalpolicyjournal.com/blog/28/04/2015/extremism-and-ethnicity-part-i-isis-lesson-ethnicity-key> [Date Accessed: 28 April 2015].

Benedikter R. (2014), 'The Ethnonationalism Problem: Is There A Feasible Solution In Sight? The Cases of the Uyghurs and Tibet', in R. Benedikter and V. Nowotny (eds) *China's Road Ahead: Problems, Questions, Perspectives*, pp. 47-72.

Benedikter T. (2009a) *The World's Modern Autonomy Systems. Concepts and Experiences of Regional Territorial Autonomy*, Bozen/Bolzano/Bulzan: EURAC Research.

Benedikter T. (2009b) *Solving Ethnic Conflict Through Self-Government. A Short Guide to Autonomy in South Asia and Europe*, Bozen/Bolzano/Bulzan: EURAC Research.

Benedikter T. (2007) *The World's Working Regional Autonomies: An Introduction and Comparative Analysis*, Anthem Press.

Bona M. (2015) 'Il ministro degli esteri Gentiloni: "Per risolvere la crisi Ucraina bisogna prendere a modello l'Alto Adige"', *Alto Adige*, 1 February, [online], available at:

[http://altoadige.gelocal.it/bolzano/cronaca/2015/02/11/news/il-ministero-degli-esteri-gentiloni-per-risolvere-la-crisi-ucraina-bisogna-prendere-a-modello-l-alto-adige-1.10844733?refresh\\_ce](http://altoadige.gelocal.it/bolzano/cronaca/2015/02/11/news/il-ministero-degli-esteri-gentiloni-per-risolvere-la-crisi-ucraina-bisogna-prendere-a-modello-l-alto-adige-1.10844733?refresh_ce) [Date Accessed: 12 February 2015].

Brumfield, B. (2015) '6,000 have Died in Eastern Ukraine in less than a year, UN says', *CNN*, 2 March [online], available at: <http://edition.cnn.com/2015/03/02/europe/ukraine-death-toll/> [Date Accessed: 4 March 2015].

Buchanan P. J. (2009) 'The Power of Ethnonationalism', *The American Conservative*, 10 July, [Online], available at: <http://www.theamericanconservative.com/the-power-of-ethnonationalism/> [Date Accessed: 11 March 2015].

Civic Network of South Tyrol (2013) English Information about South Tyrol [Online], available at: <http://www.provinz.bz.it/en/> [Date Accessed: 4 November 2015].

Bruno Kreisky, *Der Spiegel*, 15 February 1961, [online], available at: <http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-43159775.html> [Date accessed: 6 May 2015].

Euronews (2015) 'At least 24 dead in 24 hours: EU condemns most serious violation of Ukraine truce', 4 June, [online], available at: <http://www.euronews.com/2015/06/04/at-least-24-dead-in-24-hours-eu-condemns-most-serious-violation-of-ukraine-truce/> [Date accessed: 5 June 2015].

Gatehouse, G. (2015) 'Ukraine crisis: Yanukovich regrets bloodshet in Kiev', *BBC News*, 22 June, [online], available at: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-33224138> [Date accessed: 25 June 2015].

KFOS Kosovo Foundation for Open Society (2009) *Baseline Survey: The Position of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in Kosovo*, [online], available at: [http://kfos.org/pdf/The%20Position%20of%20RAE%20Communities%20in%20Kosovo%20Baseline%20Survey\\_ENG.pdf](http://kfos.org/pdf/The%20Position%20of%20RAE%20Communities%20in%20Kosovo%20Baseline%20Survey_ENG.pdf) [Date accessed: 15 Mach 2015].

Muller J. Z. (2008) 'Us and Them The Enduring Power of Ethnic Nationalism', *Foreign Affairs*, March/April, [online], available at:

<http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/63217/jerry-z-muller/us-and-them> [Date accessed: 15 March 2015].

OSCE Mission in Kosovo (2010) *Kosovo Communities Profiles 2010*, [online], available at:

<http://www.osce.org/kosovo/75450?download=true> [Date accessed: 14 April 2015].

Pallaver G. (2014) 'South Tyrol's changing political system: from dissociative on the road to associative conflict resolution', *Nationalities Papers: The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity*, Volume 42, Issue 3, [online], available at:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00905992.2013.856393?ai=7qpt&ui=g6h4&af=H> [Date Accessed: 05 May 2015].

Pföstl E. 'Tolerance Established by Law: The Autonomy of South Tyrol in Italy', Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group, [online], available at:

[http://www.mcrq.ac.in/EURAC\\_RP2.pdf](http://www.mcrq.ac.in/EURAC_RP2.pdf) [Date accessed: 04 June 2015].

Press Office of the Autonomous Government of South Tyrol/Alto Adige (1998), *South Tyrol an Introduction*, [online], available at: <http://www.provinz.bz.it/lpa/english/index.html> [Date accessed: 05 March 2015].

RT.com (2015) 'Donbass Leaders to Germany, France: Make Kiev Pay Pensions Approved by Minsk Deal', *RT.com*, 6 April, [Online], available at:

<http://rt.com/news/247165-ukraine-pensions-minsk-merkel/> [Date accessed: April 7, 2015].

Salto.bz (2014) *Eva Pföstl vor der UNO in New York. Die Meraner Minderheitenexpertin Eva Pföstl plädierte vor der UNO für eine Autonomie für die Westsahara - nach Südtiroler Vorbild*, 10 October, [Online], available at: <http://www.salto.bz/article/10102014/eva-pfoestl-vor-der-uno-new-york> [Date accessed: 11 October 2015].

Shetchko, N. (2014) 'Ukraine to Stop Benefits to Rebel-Held Areas', *The Wall Street Journal*, 5 November, [Online], available at: <http://www.wsj.com/articles/ukraine-to-stop-benefits-to-rebel-held-areas-1415195655> [Date accessed: 2 February 2015].

Südtirol online (2009) *Dalai Lama an der Europäischen Akademie (EURAC)*, 10 November, [online], available at: <http://www.stol.it/Artikel/Chronik-im-Ueberblick/Lokal/17.-November-Dalai-Lama-an-der-EURAC> [Date accessed: 6 May 2015].

The Austrian Ministry for Foreign Affairs, *South Tyrol*, [Online], available at: <http://www.bmeia.gv.at/en/foreign-ministry/foreign-policy/europe/neighbourhood-policy/south-tyrol.html> [Date accessed: June 5, 2015].

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation (2014), Interview given by the Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov to the programme "Vesti v subbotu s Sergeem Brilyovim", Moscow, 29 March, [Online], available at: [http://www.mid.ru/bdomp/brp\\_4.nsf/e78a48070f128a7b43256999005bcbb3/2729b161f336d8b844257cad00579575!OpenDocument](http://www.mid.ru/bdomp/brp_4.nsf/e78a48070f128a7b43256999005bcbb3/2729b161f336d8b844257cad00579575!OpenDocument) [Date accessed: 04 April 2014].