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Deliverable 1
“Community Conflicts in Europe: A Review of the Literature – Mapping Conflict Dimensions”

Second Draft

PEACE-COM
Peace Processes in Community Conflicts: From Understanding the Roots of Conflicts to Conflict Resolution
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1. General Introduction

In terms of culture or of ethnicity, very few states in Europe are homogeneous. In almost all cases, linguistic divisions give birth to or go in parallel with other kinds of cleavages, at the religious, cultural, social or demographic levels. If we except the Basque and Catalan cases, these are quite small groups: for example Celtic (in Brittany, Ireland, Scotland and Wales), or Lapp (Samis in Norway, Finland or Sweden). These minorities often claim cultural rights, in order to preserve their language, but some of them defend more radical claims, such as autonomy or independence. The use of violence is obviously not a common feature of political strategies of these groups. Indeed, most of them claim to be against any kind of violence, or at least against the use of murders, assassinations and bombings, in order to achieve their goals. In Catalonia or in Scotland, for example, there is a strong consensus in the population, but also amongst nationalists, against violence. Even in the few cases (the most well-known, most of which are covered by this project, are ex-Yugoslavia, Corsica, Cyprus, Northern Ireland and the Basque Country) where cultural and political claims have sometimes taken a violent shape, there is also an important part of the population that is opposed to the use of political violence. It must be noted that in some cases, as in Catalonia for example, some small groups have used violence in the past, mostly during the seventies, but they never enjoyed popular support, and disappeared quickly. In Europe community conflicts seem less severe and lethal than in severely-divided societies of Asia and Africa, but cause nevertheless many casualties and widespread damage. Moreover, as Donald Horowitz remarks (1990: 1), “we cannot be quite sure whether the Western cases are conflicts that are moderate because they have effectively been controlled or whether they are effectively controlled because they are moderate conflicts to begin with”.

We are therefore facing a first challenging question: why do the conflicts take and retain a violent form in some cases, and not in others where there are yet communities in opposition and / or ‘nations’ with a cultural and political basis – as in Belgium?

Second challenging question, why do some countries find, apparently quite easily, ways to manage this communal diversity at the social, cultural and political levels, while in some others communal diversity gives birth to oppositional politics, despite the implementation of accommodation or consociational schemes? In fact, only a few states in Europe avoid these problems, and never completely, for instance Portugal, Czech Republic if we except the Sudettes problem, and Poland if we except the German speaking minority.

1.1. Research on Conflicts in Europe

Generally speaking, community conflicts refer to situations where at least one of the involved collective actors sees itself as a community and frames its opposition to its environment in these terms. One of the most striking features of research on conflicts in Europe is that it almost never analyzes them as community conflicts, even though the term of “communities” is widely used, both by actors of these conflicts, and by academics who scrutinize them. This does not mean that these conflicts have not been studied, and indeed many aspects of these conflicts have been extensively scrutinized, such as identity strategies, national identities, regionalisms or ethnic conflicts (Banton: 1977; Horowitz: 1985; Rex: 1986; Hutchinson and Smith: 1996; Wilson: 2001). But while these studies help us in understanding specific aspects of community conflicts, they fall short of an overall view and explanation, which would be necessary in most of these cases. Indeed, many so-called “ethnic conflicts” combine cultural, political, economic and symbolic dimensions; in other words, they are not simply ethnic, and to identify them as such alone, reduces the possibility to understand them and to find appropriate ways to solve them. The same can be said about most linguistic, religious, cultural or minority conflicts. Moreover, the various aspects of community conflicts evolve in time, and this has crucial consequences for the nature of the
conflicts. The conflict in Ireland for example, which was, at its beginning, mainly a colonial and religious problem, has evolved into a mostly political and cultural question, the religious dimension having lost a part of its relevance. The question therefore is not to explore the historical roots and causes of these conflicts, a question that has already been extensively studied by several generations of scholars, but to understand their current shape, and the factors that explain their endurance in nowadays Europe.

There have been very few attempts to analyze in a broad comparative perspective the situations where groups are in conflicts, whether by peaceful means or not. Generally speaking, research on conflicts in Europe can be divided in three main categories:

1) a first which deals mainly with minorities – such as migrants, but also Roma – and which uses overwhelmingly the ‘ethnic’ vocabulary, because the term ethnic has gradually come to be identified with minorities only, and because it is still often assumed that “as modernity progresses ethnic groups will change and eventually disappear” (Isajiw: 112); on the contrary, society at large is often considered as being non-ethnic, and there is a widespread reluctance to call ‘ethnic’ the conflicts involving national minorities that arise in Western societies, such as in Belgium, the United Kingdom, Spain or France. Research concentrating on conflicts deriving from the coexistence of various ethnic groups in a single country has so far mainly focused on the question of how to accommodate this diversity, and the claims for recognition and rights carried by these communities. Exemplary of this kind of approach is the work of Kymlicka (1995), who has concentrated on multicultural schemes, as opposed to integrationist ones, as a means to promote the peaceful coexistence of various ethnic groups, mainly migrants, in the same country.

However, the definition of the term ‘ethnic group’ is rather blurred; it has come to mean something like a people, but the criteria according to which a group can be called a people are themselves uncertain. For instance, criteria like language, political organisation or territorial contiguity do not always correlate, and many so-called ‘ethnic groups’ have no exclusive language, customs, livelihood or religion. Instead of using this concept, many authors thus refer to the term ‘ethnicity’, which can be defined as “an aspect of social relationship between agents who consider themselves as culturally distinctive from members of other groups with whom they have a minimum of regular interaction. It can thus also be defined as a social identity (based on a contrast vis-à-vis others) characterised by metaphoric or fictive kinship” (Eriksen, 2002: 12-13).

What is therefore important is that we are talking about groups – how ever they may be called – that have developed in mutual contact rather than in isolation. As such, “ethnicity” fits into an interdisciplinary and multifaceted approach, insofar as, according to Martiniello (1995), it combines surveys on individuals (feeling of membership), groups (mobilization and collective action) and structural constraints (cultural, political, economic and symbolic dimensions). As a consequence, it seems to be particularly relevant for comparative research (see also Poutignat and Streiff-Fénart: 1999; Cahen: 1994; Glazer and Moynihan: 1975). This sociological definition of ethnicity, which ties its constructivist and dynamic aspects, can therefore be considered as a heuristic and conceptual foundation to the study of conflicts. However, contrary to the concept of community, it does not cover all the dimensions these complex situations can present, and does not allow their separate analysis. As Eriksen states (2002: 173), “different forms of group loyalty and membership may be largely congruent with ethnic membership, or they may cut across it”. Moreover, as stated above, there is a widespread reluctance, linked to the story of the term itself (de Heusch, 2001), to apply the ethnic vocabulary to some of the conflicts taking place in Europe, where admittedly many of the actors themselves don’t frame the situation in these terms.

Community conflicts analyzed as ethnic minority conflicts by this literature, are therefore often conflicts over special minority status. Examples of this kind of conflicts can be found in various
case studies covered by this project, as in the Roma case, but also in the case of the Russian Minority in Estonia, or of the Slovene Minority in Austria.

2) the second category of literature deals with so-called “national groups” or “nations without states” (Guibernau, 1999), and falls within the studies of nationalism’s category. This literature either covers specific case studies – in which case very few general theoretical conclusions are drawn, if any – or tries to compare several case studies (Keating, 1996), or addresses this question through a mostly theoretical approach; the aim here is to understand the changes affecting the traditional model of the nation-state, and in this perspective this literature concentrates on the effects of globalization (Held, 1995). Horsman and Marshall (1995) for instance state that the social contract on which nation-states were based are put into question by these changes, and result in the emergence of tribalism and communitarian allegiances. This literature however recognizes the multifaceted character and the complexity of nationalism, and proposes several classifications of nationalism based on the ideology to which it is linked – civic, ethnic, primordialist, modernist… – or on the repertoire of actions it proposes to use – from independence war, insurrection, ethnic cleansing, to constitutional nationalism. According to Guibernau (1999: 8), these studies of nationalism lack a systematic account of the re-emergence of nationalism in nations without states, and present a biased view of nationalism, sometimes equated with tribalism, and seen as backward phenomena. On the contrary, Guibernau argues: “At present a significant number of nations without states are struggling to become global political actors in a changing world within which they enjoy the capacity to provide individuals with a strong sense of identity. Nations without states open up the possibility for individuals to play a more active part in the political life of their communities through participation in autonomous institutions. In so doing they contribute to the dynamization of civil society and encourage civic coherence”.

Despite the very high number of studies concentrated on these concepts, nationalism and nation are still very difficult to define, probably because the meaning of these terms varies for the populations to which they are applied, and also varies in the course of time. Extensive discussions have therefore been focusing on the question of which groups can be called a nation. For some, like Ciaran Cronin (2002: 8), importance is given to the sharing of a common history as well as to external threats: members of nations are more disposed to accept as real what may in fact be a fictive or a highly selective representation of historical or social reality, and these dispositions tend to be heightened by real or perceived threats to the group. But there is also a latent confusion in many studies on nationalism, which derives from the equivalence that is implicitly done between nations and nation-states. Empirically, this obviously proves to be wrong, as most so called ‘nation-states’ are not constituted by a single nation, and present rather features of multiculturalism than of homogeneity. Theoretically, this is equally problematic, as it presupposes that self-determination claims, which are usually part of nationalism, must be equated with statehood. And, as Keating (2001: 8) argues, “many nationality movements do not want a state on traditional lines at all, but seek other expressions of self-determination”, for instance rights to self-government, or rights to renegotiate their position within the state.

In order to build a bridge between ‘nationalism’ and ‘ethnic’ studies, and to give an account of the tensions that have arisen in Europe, but also in Africa and in Asia since the beginning of the nineties, some authors have also developed the concept of ‘ethno-nationalism’. According to Wilson (2001: 367), “Its counterpart is not the state (except by proxy) but the Other – not other citizens but an enemy-image of the latter, collectively conceived. The intensity of ethno-nationalist antagonism is proportionate not to any social inequality the client constituency suffers relative to a comparator / competitor group but rather to the sense of difference erected between them: as in Northern Ireland, communal polarisation may even intensify as intercommunal inequality diminishes”. What ethno-nationalist movements propose is to render group and state
boundaries coterminous, in order to ensure ethnic homogeneity; in that sense, ethno-nationalism comes to mean something very similar to the ethnic conception of the nation, as opposed to the civic one. However, what most of these studies on nationalism or ethnicity still miss is that in many of the situations we are facing in Europe, the groups in opposition are not necessarily looking for independence, but sometimes for recognition or freedom to develop their own culture, even though they may consider themselves as a coherent nation, or as a part of a wider nation whose members do not necessarily live in the same country.

Community conflicts analyzed as national / nationalist or ethno-nationalist conflicts by the literature, are therefore often conflicts where one or several specific groups seek independence or at least self-determination. Examples of this kind of conflicts can be found in various case studies covered by this project, as in the case of the Basque Country, of Northern Ireland, of Kosovo or of Corsica.

3) The third category of literature deals with the geographical location of most of these conflicts, and concentrates on ‘regionalism’; in this perspective, regionalism is often seen either as an unambitious, or unsuccessful, or late-coming, nationalism. In Europe as in the rest of the world, we have witnessed these last decades a clear renewal of regional discourses. Apart from general explanations relating to globalisation and the need for individuals to return to their roots, this trend has of course to be explained by the histories of each of these countries, but also by the fact that the process of European integration seems to foster regionalism. Indeed, though the European Union was created exclusively by existing sovereign states, and not by regional entities, since 1992 and the creation of an advisory Committee of the Regions, regions have become influential actors at the European level. Moreover, there has been these last years a renewed interest in regional development, as regions are increasingly seen as means to implement effective multi-level governance in Europe. However, peripheral nationalism in Europe is often viewed as an anachronism, given the apparent decline of the old nation-state within the context of an integrated Europe and globalization.

Two main schools can be distinguished: on the one hand, research that concentrates on the historical emergence of the centre / periphery cleavage in various European countries, and that sees regionalism, and the ethnic and / or cultural claims on which it is grounded, as a reaction against a centralist trend. Several researchers, in the wake of Rokkan and Urwin (1982) have thus scrutinized the politicization of ethnic or cultural claims at the regional level (De Winter & Türsan, 1998; Lynch, 1996). On the other hand, some authors like Keating (1998) have primarily linked regionalism the weakening of national states, and have studied the new political economy of regionalism, that promotes a civic rather than ethnic type of mobilization. Keating thus distinguishes between ‘old’ and ‘new’ regionalism in Europe. For him, ‘old’ regionalism refers to territorial politics which existed when the modern state emerged in Europe, from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries. This old regionalism has left a legacy of regional variation that has partly limited the integrating tendencies of the states. In addition, it has led to important differences between states as to their degree of integration and centralisation. But regionalism was most of the time fought by central governments, which equated modernisation with centralisation. It was not until the late sixties that a new form of regionalist politics emerged in the context of globalisation and European integration. This ‘new’ regionalism is modernising and forward-looking, in contrast to an older provincialism, which represented resistance to change and defence of tradition. Yet, according to Keating, both old and new regionalism continue to coexist, as the examples of Flanders and of Catalonia seem to demonstrate. One of the most serious flaws of regionalist studies is that they leave aside a whole series of situations where claims are not clearly geographically delimited, for instance when rival communities inhabit the same territory, or when a community is dispersed in various regions of the same state. The question of territorial control can indeed play a central role both in “regionalised” conflicts –
such as Belgium for instance – and in conflicts where no clear-cut territorial divisions can be drawn – as in Northern Ireland for instance.

Community conflicts analyzed as regionalist conflicts by the literature, are therefore often conflicts about the sharing of political power between a central state and one or several regions, peripheral or not. Examples of this kind of conflicts can be found in various case studies covered by this project, as in the Belgian case, but also in the case of Sandjak, South Tyrol, or Vojvodina.

Apart from these conceptual questions and quarrels, it must be noted that research concerning community conflicts in Europe is usually conducted as a matter of urgency, when a conflict arises or gets more violent. Research on community conflicts is therefore very often trapped in the specificity of case studies, or remains at a very general theoretical level. As a result, comparisons are underused, even though they have proven to be very fruitful (Landman: 2000; Mayer: 1989; Wright: 1987), in particular when they go beyond the juxtaposition of case studies. We can therefore draw another line of division between research on ‘peaceful’ conflicts, that concentrate for instance on linguistic divisions, and on the linguistic policies that they create, and research on ‘violent’ conflicts, that focus on groups generating violence, and on pacification and peace-building.

A whole cluster of studies deals with theoretical explanations for the eruption of violence, and proposes diverging ‘theories of violence’. Grossly speaking, these theories can be divided in two main paradigms:

1) A first one which sees violence as primarily reactive, such as the ‘frustration – aggression’ theory, first developed by John Dollard and several other social scientists from Yale University (Dollard & al, 1939). According to them, frustration is the main reason for violence, because people are led to attack others when they cannot achieve their goals, or when they are denied the rewards they think they are entitled to get. This ‘frustration – aggression’ theory was later developed by theories of social discontent or of relative deprivation (Gurr, 1970), which explain that violence arises out of the discrepancy between expectations and capabilities. This discrepancy in turn generates a discontent that can be politicized and instrumentalized by political actors. John Burton (1990) has developed a similar approach through his Human Needs Theory, which stresses the importance of satisfaction of a series of basic human needs such as recognition and identity. All these authors however show that frustration is not sufficient for violence to occur, and that most of the time violence emerges out of larger problems of which it is an indicator.

2) A second one cluster of theories sees violence as a mean of action that is likely to be used by small radical groups who are deprived of traditional political resources. Many authors have thus drawn upon the rational choice theory and explain the recourse to violence as a rational choice made by individuals or groups who do not have access to other means of actions, in order to put forward their claims. Thus, violence is used “strategically” (Hechter, 1995) – rather than in an eruptive manner, as it was the case in the relative deprivation scheme – and can be seen as a perfectly rational way of behaving, especially as it has proven successful in the past, an efficiency on which theories of social learning focus (Bandura, 1973).

One of the main interests of these theories is to show that violence is not necessarily irrational, and above all that it must be understood as the result of the specific situation in which the group or the individuals who use it are placed. In other words, there is no fatality in violence, and this is why it is important to understand not only the current issues of the conflicts, but also their root causes. It also means that it is not possible to understand conflicts without including both violent
1.2. Communities and conflicts

Most of the internal actors of these conflicts indeed first describe themselves as members of specific communities. Some of these can be called, following Benedict Anderson (1992), “imagined communities”, when they refer to the idea of a sovereign authority – though this does not concern all the communities we are dealing with here. Some of these communities are thought of as nations, others as ethnic, religious or cultural groups, but in all these situations, whether referring to the idea of a sovereign nation or not, the term of “community” refers to what Ferdinand Tönnies (1977: 56) has described as a “Gemeinschaft”, i.e. a community that, building on blood or place ties, becomes progressively a “community spirit”. The building of such a community, as Weber (1964) points out, depends closely on the meaning and representations that its members attach to it. Therefore, political communities are not only interest communities, but above all emotional communities (Sloterdijk, 1998). Moreover, this process of “communalisation” (in the sense of Weber’s Vergemeinschaftung) is backed by a very powerful identity assignation, as, in most cases, membership in these communities does not derive from the free will of the individuals, but depends on their family origins. This community membership assigns to them a social, political or cultural identity, from which it is very difficult to escape.

Therefore, the word “community” as it is used in PEACE-COM, presents a holistic dimension, in the sense that membership of the community transcends other possible memberships, and leaves its mark on most activities the individual may be engaged in. It may be possible to leave the community, but it is in any case very difficult, if not impossible, to join another one.

However, the concept of community is very elusive to define. As Peter Hamilton states (in Cohen: 8), “the concept (…) provides both a means of encompassing a wide variety of social processes and an idea which has much more than simply technical meaning, for it refers to symbols, values and ideologies which have popular currency. People manifestly believe in the notion of community, either as ideal or reality, and sometimes as both simultaneously”. The study of the structural dimensions of communities has therefore to be complemented by a study of what belonging to a specific community means to its members; this is why the case studies on which this deliverable builds have been focusing on practices as well as on actors’ discourses.

1.3. The notion of community conflicts

Conflict arises when different communities pursue different or even opposing, contradictory or apparently contradictory goals and aims. The expression “community conflicts” thus does not only describe armed conflicts or wars, but also tense situations where at least one group sees itself as a community whose interests are diverging from those of other communities or of the broader environment (political, cultural, economical…) it is embedded in. These communities are not bound to use violence, and can use mainly peaceful (e.g. institutional) means (Marret, 2001:15); however, these conflicts are always likely to degenerate.
One of the theoretical as well as empirical questions raised by this concept of community is the bias that may be induced by the use of a term that is also used by the actors in conflict, and which may therefore lack distance. While we are well aware that the communities are social products that depend on the actors’ actions and discourses, it seems useless to deny their practical consequences. Cultures and representations may be of an abstract imagined nature, but they produce practical effects that are incomprehensible without them. This is the case even of community conflicts occurring under prosperous economic situations and in the absence of a bloody history (e.g. in Belgium).

In the framework of this project, by ‘conflict’ we mean the pursuit of goals perceived as incompatible by different groups. This suggests a broader span of time and a wider class of struggle than armed or violent conflict. The word ‘conflict’, as meant here, therefore applies to any political conflict, whether it is pursued by peaceful means or by the use of force. Usually analysts use the figure of 100 people killed per year to determine if the conflict is or has become ‘violent’, but one must keep in mind the fact that violence can be direct (murder, bombing…), structural (e.g. economic deprivation because of discriminatory policies) or cultural (what Bourdieu calls ‘violence symbolique’).

There has been, for several decades, both in academic circles and between actors on the ground, a ‘conflict about conflicts’, and especially about labels that can be used in order to describe them. O’Leary and McGarry (1995) talk about “meta conflicts”, conflicts about what the conflicts are about, and explain that the terms in which conflicts are framed by actors in opposition are part of the conflict themselves. Theories and models elaborated by academics and researchers play of course an active role in these semantic quarrels.

According to the element (claims, issues or types of actions) on which the emphasis is put, different labels have thus been used:

- **focus on the claim**: separatism, irredentism, secessionism, nationalism… According to the name that is given to the claim, disqualification or legitimization processes are at play, “nationalism” or “regionalism” have for instance a more positive connotation than irredentism and secessionism that seem to refer to illegitimate claims. Of course there are conflicts about naming, because according to the name that is given, groups are supposed, or not, to be entitled to auto-determination. For instance, Kymlicka (1995:10-33), differentiates two types of situations: first, polyethnicity which refers to an internal social diversity resulting from international migrations, and second multinationality which refers to the coexistence of several “historic” communities in the same state, resulting either from a war, or from a hazardous border drawing. In the first case, auto-determination does not even seem to be an option for the concerned groups, whereas it is considered as legitimate in the second.

- **focus on the central issue of the conflict**: ethnic, identity, religious, territorial… There is a wide use of the “ethnic” vocabulary, by the actors as well as by the academics, in order to describe conflicts that oppose communities in Europe. However, there are some exceptions where authors as well as actors are less likely to use this kind of vocabulary (for instance Corsica, Belgium or Northern Ireland), a reluctance which may be explained by the geographical location of these conflicts (in Western Europe, where nation-state building is supposed to have put an end to ethnic phenomenon, at least inside “ancient” national communities), and not by fundamentally diverging characteristics. Other labels are therefore used, such as identity, linguistic, cultural, religious or territorial conflicts, which tend to put the stress on the concrete issue on which the conflict builds. Apart from the fact that some of these labels can be understood negatively, especially in some
national contexts where for instance religious mobilisations are not deemed legitimate, it must be noted that most of these labels depict conflicts as if they were mono-dimensional, which is hardly ever the case.

- **Focus on the actions**: “cultural claims”, “regionalist party”, “guerrilla”, “terrorism”, etc. Here the stress is rather put on the kind of mobilizations that take place, on their extent, as well as on the means and repertoires of actions that are used. At first sight, this approach concentrating on actions rather than on claims seems to be more objective, but the use of highly contested terms such as ‘terrorism’ proves that disqualification processes are at play here too. Moreover, these labels focus on the most visible aspects of conflicts, and therefore tend to neglect social processes that sustain them.

These various labels reflect meaningful variations between situations (e.g. between a claim for cultural rights, and a claim for independence), and point to important dimensions these conflicts can present. As a consequence, and because these theories may address various levels or issues of the conflicts, there is some overlapping between them. However, by choosing to reflect on one aspect – a type of actors, of claims, a geographical location, etc. – these terms tend to oversimplify reality, by reducing conflicts to what is presented as being their most remarkable characteristic. This in turn leads to misguided policies, trying for instance to fight terrorism instead of addressing the reasons why individuals might be led to use such radical means of action.

The choice of using the expression “community conflicts” in PEACE-COM therefore derives from the belief that all these situations are multidimensional and should be understood as such, and that beyond obvious variations, these mobilizations and claims are always based on a primary and fundamental perception, of a “community” that would be intrinsically different from the rest of the world. In many instances, this sense of “us” even pre-exists ethnic identity, which it can however help to ‘create’ or re-enact. In this project, the concept of community conflicts is thus used as a tool to build a transversal and integrated approach.

1.4. The selection of case studies

The case studies included in this project have been selected according to criteria of diversity and geographical scope. But above all, we have been careful to include conflicts presenting various shapes, both in terms of issues at stake, and of levels of violence. The aim was therefore twofold:

- first, to cover all phases of the full cycle of conflicts, from political mobilisation, to the eruption of violence, and to conflict resolution, because it seems that if we do not include cases where violence is not present, or where actors have given up violent means of action, we will not be able to fulfil some of our major objectives, namely on the one hand to explain the emergence or not of physical violence in cases of communal opposition, and on the second hand to observe and assess the successes or failures of accommodation policies; we have therefore included in our study enough cases in order to cover all five stages proposed by the Interdisciplinary Research Program on Causes of Human Rights Violations (PIOOM) at Leiden University:
  - **peaceful stable situations**, with a “high degree of political stability and regime legitimacy”, where a distinct minority coexists peacefully with a majority whose cultural background and heritage differs largely, as in the case of the Slovene

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1 PIOOM was hosted by the Centre for the Study of Social Conflict at Leiden University, and supported by the United Nations in the framework of its programme on conflict prevention. For a discussion of this typology, see: [http://www.pcr.uu.se/conferenses/Euroconference/paperjongman.doc](http://www.pcr.uu.se/conferenses/Euroconference/paperjongman.doc)
minority in Austria, of Roma in Central Europe, or of the Russian minority in Estonia;

- *political tension situations*, with ‘growing levels of systemic strain and increasing social and political cleavages, often along factional lines’, as in the case of Vojvodina. Sometimes these conflicts currently take or have taken in the recent past – since the second World War – a violent form, without causing human casualties, as in the case of South Tyrol, but there are also cases where the coexistence of several communities with distinct identities does not entail any specific form of physical violence, as in the case of Belgium;

- situations which present or have recently presented the features of a *violent political conflict*, where tension has escalated to ‘political crisis’ inasmuch as there has been an ‘erosion of political legitimacy of the national government’ and / or a ‘rising acceptance of violent factional politics’ with a number of people killed in any one calendar year up to a hundred. It is the case of the Basque Country, of Cyprus, of Sandzak or of Corsica;

- *low intensity conflicts*, where there is ‘open hostility and armed conflict among factional groups, regime repression and insurgency’ with 100-999 people killed in any one year; it is the case of Northern Ireland;

- finally, *high intensity conflicts*, where there is an ‘open warfare among rival groups and /or mass destruction and displacement of sectors of the civilian population’, with 1000 or more people killed; it is the case of Kosovo.

- second, to cover the widest range of dimensions and issues these conflicts can present. The literature on conflicts has indeed identified, as we shall see in the following sections, numerous issues whose presence seems to be concomitant to – or to foster? – conflict situations. Such is the case of language, of culture, or of territory. But in order to assess the real importance of these issues – for instance, according to a whole part of the literature, religion is a major factor explaining the appearance of violence – and, perhaps even more importantly, the links that may tie these various issues, we needed to cover as many occurrences of these issues as possible. This task has been made easier by the fact that all the conflicts chosen display several dimensions at the same time, and some of them have displayed nearly all key dimensions over a certain period of time. For instance, at the root of the Northern Irish conflict lies a colonial situation, where access to citizenship was denied to a community identified through its religious allegiance; this religious division itself overlapped strong economic disparities and cultural differences, which were instrumentalized by a political elite. Nowadays, the colonial or citizenship issues have nearly completely disappeared from the political scene, but the politicization of the divisions they created, remain. We are therefore facing situations where present issues and dimensions are tightly linked to past issues and dimensions, but also to other current issues and dimensions. This is this highly complex web of interactions that we aim to understand, with a specific focus, for practical reasons, on the post-World War Two period. Our ambition is to identify key connections and patterns, in order to specify, at a later stage, specific models of community conflicts in Europe.

In the following sections, we will proceed with a review of the main “causes” – or rather dimensions, as we prefer to call them – of community conflicts, as identified in the literature, with “boxes” illustrating each aspect, and drawn from the case studies covered by this project. Boxes have been chosen in order to illustrate different aspects or possible interpretations of the identified “causes” or dimensions, as their meaning varies a lot; for instance the issue of territory
in Cyprus and in Kosovo means very different things, as it is the case with the issue of religion in Northern Ireland and in Sandzak. Our research indeed shows that it is important to go beyond the oversimplification that derives from the labelling exercise, and to integrate the meaning given to these various stakes by the different actors of these conflicts.
2. Review of Dimensions

The causes of the conflicts, peaceful or not, opposing communities in Europe, are not immediately obvious, as some cultural, ethnic or religious groups seem to integrate smoothly in some cases, but not in others. The main aims of the following sections are therefore to go more in-depth into situations where conflict is sometimes open, sometimes blurred, to propose general hypotheses on the conflicts that appear or endure nowadays in Europe, and, by overcoming the historical and descriptive complexity of each case, propose a conceptualization of the main dimensions that characterize them. We will thus be seeking patterns of variations across case studies that may be seen by each specialist as unique.

Authors advance conflicting theories on the emergence of community conflicts in Europe, putting the stress on different factors, reasons or dimensions, as key explanations, with various combination possibilities. For the sake of clarification, we have classified these explanations in 12 main groups, which may in some authors’ books and articles in fact overlap or even merge, or are sometimes divided into further categories. Each of them has to be read in relation to the others, as none of them is able to provide an overall and encompassing explanation for the emergence or endurance of conflicts. Each of them simply stresses one or two factors as the main “cause” of community conflicts, without denying that some other factors may also intervene.

For the sake of clarity, we have grouped these dimensions under four main clusters:

- The first cluster of explanations deals with **cultural dimensions** understood in a very broad sense. Here conflict derives from the fact that groups in presence (be it two communities of comparable sizes, or an ethnic minority in front of a much stronger majority) are characterized by cultural elements (religion, history, traditions, language…) that make them irreconciliable. In other words, it is the nature, the very definition of groups themselves, that explains the conflict situation. Three main types of opposition have been identified:

  1. **Religious conflicts**: according to this view, conflicts derive from conflicting ideological views or religious faiths (e.g. Huntington and his “clash of civilizations”).
  2. **Identity conflicts**: community conflicts are viewed as struggles for basic needs such as recognition, as John Burton (1990) has for instance argued. Communities put the stress on differences that exist between them and their neighbours, and on the animosity that has ‘always’ opposed them. An important process of “victimization” is at play, using medias, historical narratives, etc.
  3. **Cultural / Linguistic conflicts**: conflicts here derive mainly from linguistic and cultural differences that communities wish to preserve, as part of their basic identity and characteristics.

- The second cluster of explanations deals with **socio-economic and geographical dimensions**. Here it is the material conditions of living of the concerned communities that are at stake, and that explain that their coexistence is leading or has led in the past to an open or underlying confrontation. Three main “material” reasons for opposition have been identified:

  1. **Socio-economic conflicts**: conflicts here are explained by the differences in socio-economic resources available for the concerned communities. This cluster of theories encompasses Marxist theories as well as “frustration/ aggression” and “relative deprivation” theories.
2. **Conflicts linked to demography and population shifts**: conflicts here derive from various processes leading to demographic changes, such as migrations, hazardous border drawing, differences in birth rates, etc. These changes often create discrepancies between political structures and communities’ demographic weights. They can also generate fears of extinction or of ‘minoritization’.

3. **Territorial Conflicts**: according to authors like Walter (2003) or Toft (2003), the most intractable conflicts are those fought over territory, as it is often seen as indivisible, and bears a romantic meaning.

- The third cluster of explanations deals with **political dimensions**, concentrating either on the nature of political claims that are being put forward, or on the channels through which these claims or issues are being politicized. Within this cluster, four main types of conflict situation have been identified:

  1. **Centre-Periphery conflicts**: the conflicts oppose a peripheral region or territory to central state structures (Rokkan, 1983), which are accused of neglecting them, or of preventing them from preserving and developing their own culture, identity and interests.

  2. **Security Dilemma and Access to Political Scene**: conflicts here arise from distrust and estrangement a community can feel towards state structures and apparatus, which seem to prevent them from participating in discussions and debates about their own conditions of life and future.

  3. **Conflicts beginning among political leaders**: “top-down conflicts”: conflicts here result either from the policies of states and of governments, which either give preferential treatment to one group or incite violence as a way to divide the population and rally support around them, or from the propaganda and actions of a small group of political leaders whose position and power are legitimized and reinforced by conflict.

  4. **Conflicts caused by a citizenship denial**: when citizenship is framed in terms of a national belonging which is itself strictly defined in terms of language, ascendancy or religion, access to citizenship can be difficult for some communities; in this case, distrust, frustration and even revolt might appear.

- Finally, the fourth cluster deals with ‘external’ dimensions, namely with exogenous factors that may have fuelled or even caused the concerned conflicts. Here it is an event, action or actor located outside the geographical borders where the conflict is taking place, that is held responsible for the emergence or endurance of opposition. Two broad types of explanations have been included in this cluster, the first one focusing on big geopolitical changes and events that have occurred since the beginning of the XXth century, the second one on external actors who have a strong link with (be it geographical, cultural or political) or even a responsibility for the conflict situation:

  1. **Conflicts as a cause of decolonization, globalization and aftermath of WWI and WWII**: this concerns mainly “decolonization”, “democratization” or “transition” wars and conflicts. Conflicts here are linked to geopolitical transitions; they sometimes result from the resurgence of ancient hatreds kept under control by colonialism and / or the Cold War. Globalization has also been accused by numerous authors to provoke identity withdrawals and community conflicts, because it entails the erosion of the state’s autonomy (Kaldor, 1999).
2. **Conflicts caused by neighbouring countries, diasporas and bordering communities:** conflicts can also be created and sustained by external factors, such as neighbouring countries competing for territorial control and favouring allegiance of one of the communities in opposition.

In the following sections, we will be looking more in depth at these theories or models, and we will illustrate them by various examples taken from the case studies covered by this project.
2.1. Cultural Dimensions

2.1.1. The religious dimension

Amongst theories focusing on the cultural causes of conflicts, Samuel Huntington (1996) argues that one factor whose importance is growing is that the characteristics of current civilizations are less mutable, and that it is therefore more difficult to reach agreements between them; for him, religions play a fundamental role in the emergence and endurance of conflicts, because they embody one of the reasons for which men are ready to fight and die. This kind of theory is not really new, Max Weber (1978) for instance has long described the “War of Gods” which seemed to be the most intractable.

According to Marta Reynal-Querol (2002), religiously divided societies are more prone to intense conflicts than countries were people have conflicting claims to resources based on interest groups or language divisions; however, she adds that the fragmentation of societies on religious groups is preventing them from violence rather than inducing them to conflict; it is therefore in societies where one big religious cleavage transcends all the others that conflict is the most likely to erupt and persist.

However, the case studies covered by this project show that no straightforward conclusion should be taken concerning the real impact of religious differences, without a closer look at the real influence of clergy and faith in the conflict, and at the extent to which actors in conflict frame it in religious terms. The Sandžak case for instance shows that it is in fact the pre-existing conflict between ethnic groups that has increased the religious consciousness of the population. This growing faith in turn generates its own dynamic of estrangement and distanciation from other groups.

The growing influence of religious leaders in Sandžak

Ethnic conflicts in the territory of former Yugoslavia increased religious consciousness in Sandžak. The number of worshippers increased on both sides. The Serbian Orthodox Church and the Islamic Community of Sandžak in their appearances and public statements strived to contribute to the maintenance of civil neighborly relations in Sandžak. These two religious institutions did not have mutual conflicts nor did they officially interfere with political relations of actors at the local level, but they indeed indirectly supported certain political programs. In that respect, the Serbian Orthodox Church has a very strong nationalistic wing, while the Meshihat of the Islamic Community of Sandžak, on its part, supported the Memorandums released by the Bosniak Ethnic Council of Sandžak.

Moslem ethnic parties have been persistent in insisting on higher autonomy level for Sandžak. In October 1991, the Moslem Ethnic Council organized a referendum which has never been recognized by official Serbian authorities. The question posed on referendum was if the citizens of Sandžak are for or against the autonomy of Sandžak. The turnout was 70.2% of voters in the region, of whom 98.9% declared to be in favor of the autonomy of Sandžak.

The Islamic Community of Sandžak is thus a significant local party to the conflict but it is not directly involved in politics. It supports higher autonomy for ethnic Moslem, with the aim to provide wherewithal for maintaining the Moslem culture.

Even in cases where the conflict is framed, both by internal and external actors, in religious terms, religion is not necessarily the main issue or cause of the conflict. Ciaran Cronin (2002: 26) explains for instance that the salience of religion to the Northern Ireland conflict is not a function of the ritual and doctrinal content of the religions themselves, but of the cultural
significance of religion as a marker of identity. A similar discrepancy can be found in the Cyprus case, where religious differences, which seem quite obvious, do not play a major role in the current opposition between the populations leaving North and South of the border.

Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland

Observers often describe the groups in conflict as Catholics and Protestants, or use Catholic / Protestant and nationalist / unionist as interchangeable. Indeed, nationalist and republican parties derive their support almost exclusively from Catholics, while unionist and loyalist parties are overwhelmingly supported by Protestants. The correlation between political partisanship and religion is therefore very high. Religion is the key ethnic marker, facilitating the residential, marital and educational segregation which helps reproduce the two communities. But theological beliefs do not seem to be particularly important either individually or in aggregate for explaining political violence in the region, even though religious devotion has been extremely high in Northern Ireland; for instance, the proportion of the population which professes no religion (less than 14 per cent according to the 2001 census) is considerably less than in Great Britain.

Still, the Churches are often blamed for a conflict in which the most consistently perceived dividing line is between Catholics and Protestants. For instance, the Churches’ association with paramilitary funerals mean that they too are actors in the conflict. At the same time, many clergymen have tried to use funerals as places for appeals for an end to reciprocal violence. Church leaders have been associated with calls for an end to ‘violence’. At an ecclesiastical level, contact between Catholic and Protestant Churches remains tentative. Within official Church circles, such contact has largely been limited to clergy and Church employees and has not extended to widespread interchange on a congregational basis.

Protestantism is said to be more political than Catholicism. This arises from the fact that some, particularly around the leader of radical unionism Ian Paisley, express their outlook in theological terms. Nevertheless, as an institution, the political profile of the Roman Catholic Church is much higher than that of any Protestant Church, which are dispersed. Moreover, in the absence of a State to which many Catholics can feel loyal to, the Catholic Church has become since several decades the main institutional organiser in the Catholic community, directly challenging the popular leadership of nationalist political movements.

2.1.2. The ‘Ancient Hatreds’ dimension – Identity Conflicts

For this cluster of theories, which seems to perfectly fit the intractability of some conflicts, opposition between communities relates to primordial affiliations, in the sense that community is supposed to pre-exist any other kind of affiliations and feelings. Wright (1987: 14) thus argues for instance that in Northern Ireland “antagonism is itself before it is any of the interests it has been fashioned to serve”.

These primordialist theories also focus on the importance of the past, of traditions and of myths, in the making of the community. Monica Duffy Toft (2002: 82) speaks of “ancient hatreds arguments”, which “see violent ethnic conflict as the result of long standing historical enmity among the warring groups”. This literature draws upon history, mythology, but also psychology in order to show how conflicts arise between groups which are long-standing rivals (Geertz, 1973; Isaacs, 1975). Stuart Kaufmann (2001: 30) explains for instance that conflicts result from the combination of two types of myths, which themselves are more important that the reality with which they may not fit: myths justifying the political domination of a specific territory, and
myths of past injustices or atrocities perpetrated by other groups. In this perspective, antecedent hostility explains current aggressive or oppositional responses.

In almost all cases, the stress put by a group on its identity allows for its differentiation from the rest of the world, and nourishes obsidional discourses about the need to preserve this identity from external threats. However, the virulence of these identity claims can be more or less important. In the Basque country for instance, there is a strong insistence on the Basque collective identity, even by moderate nationalists, but which is not necessarily accompanied by a denigration discourse on other groups’ identities; this identity discourse nevertheless legitimizes a confrontational attitude towards the central Spanish state.

**The definition of a Basque people**

If we take into account the specific history of industrialization in the Basque Country and the historical development of the Spanish nation state, we can infer the appearance of the need to redefine the cultural collective identity of this subject that identifies itself as a psychological community that shares a specific identity. In consequence, there is a constant ambiguity and disagreement on the meaning of the “Basque people”, understood not just as ethnic group but above all as a “sociocultural subject”.

The formation of Basque nationalism started at the end of the XIX th century, a period in which the “invention” of the Basque community arose, in a context of high industrial development in comparison with the rest of the Spanish regions, with the exception of Catalonia. The reasons of the conflict were formulated as the struggle of “a nation without state”, in which main differences regarding the “rest of Spain” were explained, from the beginning, in terms of its cultural and ethnic specificities. Therefore, there was a need to build up a common history and a set of national symbols and myths that stressed that Euskadi was the only non-romanized region in the Iberian Peninsula.

Historically the Basque language has become a decisive element in the construction of the Basque political identity providing a constant challenge to the central authorities both before and after the coming of democracy. At present, the policy of recognition of the Basque community is directly linked to the protection/guarantee of their language rights. Due to the repression exerted by the Franco regime on this language it has become one of the main symbols of the Basque political identity increasingly becoming a recognition element. Since the “Ley para la normalización del euskera” (Euskera Normalization Bill) was passed in 1992, Basque political government has constantly motivated the promotion of the Basque Language. The launch and support of cultural and educational institutions and the implementation of policies to head the development and spread of the Euskera both inside and outside the Basque territory.

More generally, the national issue – a nation without State”- shapes the range of answers given to all social problems. This is the issue that determines completely different perceptions on key social and political problems. The ideological perception of the “national issue” legitimises different discourses on the cultural and identity community features and on the cultural relationships established within the community. But it also legitimises the confronting discourses on the concept and structure of the Basque State. Therefore, the debates on the need for its democratisation, its decentralisation and even the questioning of its spatial framework cannot be understood without taking into account this cleavage.

Moreover, this same cleavage affects a wide range of other political and social issues such as: the scope and power limits of social and political organizations; the articulation and spatial organization of Basque political institutions and social services, the industrial and ecological problems…
In the Kosovo’s case, even if antipathies are not very old, they are depicted as such, and these ‘ancient hatreds’ are used to justify aggressive attitudes towards the other community. A process of “victimization” is at play, using mainly medias and historical narratives, which depict the community as a victim of history, awaiting for obtaining redress, and still under a threat of aggression.

Ancient Hatreds’ between Albanians and Serbs in Kosovo

For many authors, nationalism in ex-Yugoslavia is a continuation of centuries of ethnic struggle. Kosovo is split between Serbs who are loyal to Belgrade, and Albanians who seek either autonomy or independence, or, for a small number of them, unification with Albania. Slavic and Albanian peoples have co-existed in Kosovo since the 8th century. The region was the centre of the Serbian empire until the mid-14th century, and Serbians regard Kosovo as the birthplace of their state. Over the centuries, as the ethnic balance shifted in favour of Albanians, Kosovo came to represent a Serbian golden age and the heartland of Serbia. Serbs and ethnic Albanians vied for control in the region throughout the 20th century. In the 1960s the suppression of Albanian national identity in Kosovo gave way to a more tolerant line from Belgrade. Ethnic Albanians gained a foothold in the local and national administrations.

The 1974 Yugoslav constitution laid down Kosovo’s status as an autonomous province, and pressure for independence mounted in the 1980s after the death of Yugoslav President Tito. But when Slobodan Milosevic became Yugoslav president in 1989, he revoked Kosovo’s autonomy. A passive resistance movement in the 1990s failed to secure independence or to restore autonomy, although ethnic Albanian leaders declared unilateral independence in 1991. In the mid-1990s an ethnic Albanian guerrilla movement, the Kosovo Liberation Army, stepped up its attacks on Serb targets. The attacks precipitated a major, and brutal, Yugoslav military crackdown, which itself finally led to NATO air strikes in March 1999.

During the time when Kosovo was under the sovereignty of Serbia, Albanian and Serbian communities lived completely separated. Albanians even built their parallel educational and health care systems. Two endogamous and hermetic communities are thus maintained, and two perceptions of the situation can be identified: on the Serbian side, Kosovo must remain part of Serbia, as it is identified with ‘old Serbia’, and houses many Serbian churches and historical sites; moreover, there is a widespread fear that ancient hatreds lead to the complete disappearance of Serbs from Kosovo, and that if Belgrade accepts Kosovo’s independence, the project of Greater Albania might become a reality, while Serbia would be further fragmenting along ethnic lines. On the Albanian side, Kosovo is identified with ancient Illyria before the Slav migrations, and there is a strong affinity with Albanian peoples in neighbouring countries; Serbia is accused of treating them as second class citizens, and there are fears of an increased use of force and repression by Serbia if Kosovo’s status does not change.

2.1.3. The cultural and linguistic dimension

For other theories, community conflicts entail a clash of cultures where each group’s fundamental values are in conflict. When culture is at stake, conflicts are said to be more intractable, because cultural identity is non-negotiable and not open to compromise. Moreover, if cultures are different, peoples are not supposed to understand each other, and to make compromises.
However, various cases studied in this project show that things are in fact much more complicated. Indeed, in many cases cultural and linguistic issues oppose groups who know each other rather well, and are used to share the same territory, or at least to live in the same state structure. In fact, it even seems that proximity reinforces the need to protect one’s culture and / or language, in face of the threat embodied by the other’s diverging cultural ambitions.

What is undoubtedly clear is that this element of cultural or linguistic opposition is present in all cases studied, even if it is not always the main current issue or cause of the conflict situation. In some instances, as in the case of the Slovene minority in Carinthia, it however seems that linguistic cleavages are in fact the main explanation for the maintenance of group boundaries, and for suspicious attitudes, which however are more the fact of German nationalists than of Slovenes themselves.

### The Slovene Minority in Austria

Today, relations between Slovenes and the German-speaking Carinthians are relatively stable and courteous. Ethnic groups’ rights are guaranteed under Article 7 of the State Treaty and by the Law on Ethnic Groups of 1976. However, not all of the guarantees as determined by these laws have actually been implemented, as shows the example of bilingual topographical signs. No conflict in the last few years has split the two groups to the extent that this issue has. For example, the total of 91 bilingual town signposts have yet to be set up in Carinthia, due to the strong opposition by the provincial governor Jörg Haider, the FPÖ in Carinthia, and the nationalist Kärntner Heimatsdienst and Kärntner Abwehrkämpferbund. As a matter of fact, Carinthian Slovenes claim that there ought to in fact be between 700 – 800 bilingual signs, and that 200 signs would be a compromise only. The Kärntner Heimatsdienst on the other hand argues that the Slovenes in Carinthia have adequate privileges, while the German speaking minority living in Slovenia does not even enjoy basic minority rights such as the right to school instruction in the native language or the use of German as an official language. Therefore, there is no basis for setting up additional bilingual topographical signs in Carinthia. In short, though the Slovenes may have the judiciary on their side, German-speaking Carinthians, in particular the nationalists (including the FPÖ, Kärntner Heimatsdienst and Kärntner Abwehrkämpferbund) continue to apply rigorous and permanent pressure on the Slovenes to assimilate by counterattacking each time the Slovenes are granted additional rights by the Constitutional Court or federal government. This “practice” of obstructing any advancement by the Slovenes is characteristic of the relations with the German-speakers of Carinthia.

The Kärntner Abwehrkämpferbund (Carinthian Defense Federation), along with the FPÖ and the Kärntner Heimatsdienst are the Slovenes’ main antagonists in Carinthia. The Kärntner Abwehrkämpferbund’s main objective is to “foster tradition, preserve cultural identity and increase homeland awareness” (see KAB homepage, www.kab.or.at). The KAB’s demands include for children who are not registered for bilingual classes to not be discriminated against by the “one-sided Austrian Minority Education Law”, equal treatment of German-speaking teachers within the minority school system, and no approval of any additional demands made by the ethnic group that go beyond Article 7 of the State Treaty. The KAB furthermore claims that the Slovene minority in Carinthia is one of the “best supported ethnic groups in Europe”, i.e. that the Slovenes are granted numerous privileges and should therefore not be entitled to receive additional “special treatment”. A few months before the accession of Slovenia to the EU, on February 16, 2004, the KAB distributed a leaflet at elementary schools pointing out that the Slovenes in Carinthia wanted to “break up” the province and that the “Slavs’ acts of aggression and crimes have shaped the historical awareness of Carinthians and do so to this day”. The KAB clearly foments fear and hatred and surely plays a role in why the Slovenes in Carinthia still face
more obstacles than do other ethnic groups in Austria. In 2000, the KAB had approximately 10,000 members.

The South Tyrol case study also presents very interesting features regarding this linguistic question. Language indeed corresponds to a deep division inside the society, which has sometimes had violent implications, but which has nevertheless been overcome through the setting up of consociational premises. In this case, language is used as an ethnic mark, and linguistic divisions have given birth to “parallel societies” which are largely autonomous. However, in spite of a recent history of violent confrontations, this cleavage is not accompanied by a process of identity withdrawal and of victimization.

**The linguistic cleavage in South Tyrol**

Three different ethnic groups live in nowadays South Tyrol – 69.15 per cent of the total population of 428,691 residents are German-speaking, 26.47 per cent Italian and 4.37 per cent are Ladin-speaking, while 2.24 per cent declared that they belong to neither of the three groups.

After the Fascists came to power in 1922, the German-speaking population living in South Tyrol had to face a policy of repression. In 1923, a program for de-nationalization was approved by Mussolini, making Italian the only official language to be used in public offices, administrative bodies and in schools, Italianizing German signs and inscriptions, as well as place names and given and surnames, and abolishing German newspapers and political parties. Those who did not speak Italian were dismissed from their posts, and public housing was almost exclusively allotted to Italian-speakers. Mussolini furthermore created an Industrial Zone on the outskirts of Bolzano/Bozen encouraging the immigration of Italians who came predominantly from the south. During this time, the Italian population living in South Tyrol increased from 4 to 24 per cent.

After WWII, the Paris Agreement signed between Italy and Austria granted elementary and secondary teaching in the native language, as well as parity of the German and Italian language in public offices and official documents. According to the Autonomous Statute that was adopted by the Constituent Assembly on January 31, 1948, though Italian was the official language of the region, the use of German was permitted in public offices. German schools could be established but were required to teach Italian, whereas Italian schools could choose whether German would be offered at their schools. Not until 1959 did a provincial law require new recruits to the provincial administration to be bilingual. In 1961, an additional provincial law provided for bonuses to be paid to Italian officials in state bodies who were willing to learn German. However, the vague wording of the Statute caused serious tension regarding the interpretation of the text. It had been deliberately designed to ensure that the cultural, social and economic development of the South Tyroleans was controlled by the Italians.

The demographic and socio-economic situation of the German-speakers incited ethnic mobilization. The socioeconomic division between the two communities was reinforced by the disparity between German dominated villages and alpine rural areas, and Italian towns and cities in South Tyrol. Public administration and housing were under Italian control as well, which further deepened the cultural division between the German/Ladin and the Italian communities. In other words, both ethnic blocks had developed a strong ethnic solidarity, being aware that their chances of survival depended on the unity of their group. German and Ladin speakers thus opposed anything that might expose their group to Italian cultural assimilation tendencies. The resulting ‘segregation policy’ meant that each group had its own schools, youth and sports clubs, political parties, trade unions and media.
Today, South Tyroleans are a “balanced social group” involved in all aspects of economic, commercial and intellectual life with the exception of industry. There are two dailies in German and German language programs are broadcast on the radio and on T.V. German and Ladin radio and T.V. programs from Germany, Austria and Switzerland are also available.

A further issue that has yet to be resolved regards approximately 8000 place names that were Italianized under the Fascists. The province has primary legislative competence for place names and can approve German, Italian and Ladin versions of names. Efforts to change some of these names, which requires government assent, have not yet been successful.
2.2. Socio-Economic and Geographical Dimensions

2.2.1. Socio-Economic Dimensions

Theories concentrating on socio-economic factors are often linked to modernization theories, which focus on the differences in economic and social developments inside a state’s boundaries, and argue that conflict arises when modernization and development follow uneven patterns on the territory (see for instance Deutsch: 1966; Horowitz: 1985), or when a specific ethnic, linguistic or cultural group is economically and socially discriminated against (see Gurr: 1970). Relative deprivation, these authors argue, leads groups, whether ethnic or not, to compete and oppose for resources.

But what is striking is that both economic discrimination and privilege can politicize or reinforce the political relevance of cultural and community identities. Indeed, territories which are wealthier than the rest of the country are very often those where regionalist or autonomist feelings are stronger, like in the case of Flanders, South Tyrol, or the Basque Country. This can be explained by the fact that these regions contribute more than they receive from the national State. In most of these regions, the inhabitants think that their region gives too much money to the central state, that is wasting it by redistributing it to poorer and less dynamic regions. These kinds of arguments are very clear in the discourses of the Vlaams Belang, for example. But the counter argument, for economically disadvantaged regions or groups, seems valid too. For instance the feeling, established or not, of being or having been despised or treated unfairly in the past by the central state gives very often a strong basis for opposing the state or the specific cultural group that embodies it; one of the impetus for the autonomist claims is to obtain redress for this bad treatment, or to obtain autonomy in order to manage its own affairs, and not being dependent on the central state anymore. This is one of the main explanations for the conflict in Corsica in France, but it is also the case in Belgium for Flemish regionalism (Flemish were long oppressed and discriminated against by the French speaking community, the Walloons), and the argument has also been used to some extent in Spain.

The role of economic factors in the opposition between Walloons and Flemish in Belgium

For a variety of reasons, Flemish were cultural, economic, social underdogs in the newly founded Belgian state, completely overwhelmed by French-speaking elites, that turned the new state into a Francophone state. The struggle for recognising the Flemish language was mainly developed by intellectuals, literate middle classes and lower clergy. Long-lasting, reformist protest led to a very slow but real improvement to a position of near equality of both languages, although there are still some linguistic issues unsettled (Brussels, facilités). But also socio-economically Flanders was discriminated, with lack of industrial employment destroying house industry and small farming, forcing Flemish peasants to emigrate to Walloon industry or North America. The first Flemish cultural movements which were created around 1840 therefore quickly became also economic and social. Even if Flanders was mainly rural, still a part of the economic activity was based on small companies. These economic elites played a leading role in the construction of the Flemish identity in widening the problematic from cultural existence into one of economic existence.

In the 1960s, the problem of community relationships shifted decisively from the strictly linguistic domain into the domain of economic relations. Wallonia declined in economic terms after World War II. While the post-war industrialisation of Flanders was based on small and medium sized enterprises and multinationals, Wallonia’s economy was based on heavy industry (coal and steel), and slowly started to de-industrialise. The reaction against this experience of decline found its culmination point in the ‘General Strike’ (Grande Grève) of winter 1960 against
the budget cuts of the centre-right government. At the same time, gradually Flanders became a prosperous region, thanks to Flemish working ethics and “entrepreneurship”.

At the end of the 1980s, the scientific community began to examine the financial transfers between Belgian communities. The analyses made by the ‘Club van Leuven’ in 1989 were the first ones, and a lot of others followed. They all demonstrated more or less the existence of such explicit or implicit transfers between regions. Unsurprisingly, financial support between regions or communities were found to be largely in favour of the Walloon and Brussels regions, and consisted of transfers from Flanders to Wallonia and Brussels.

As far as welfare expenditures were concerned, 33% of the 1999 budget was allocated to the Walloon Region, 57% to Flanders and 10% to Brussels. These figures almost corresponded to the distribution of the population in Belgium: 32.7%, 58.1% and 9.2%, respectively. However, concerning social protection revenues, each region’s share was appreciably different: 29% for Wallonia, 63% for Flanders and 8% for Brussels. This means that in demographic terms Flanders was supporting a greater part of the global revenues in relation to its population. Moreover, Belgian arrangements of social security redistributions that basically run North to South since 40 years, are considered to hinder the further expansion of Flemish economy, one of the strongest regional economies in Europe. Hence, the calls for economic autonomy (if necessary accompanied with full independence) is justified. Opposition to these claims by francophones are considered illegitimate, as they come from parasite elites and their clienteles that only gave in to Flemish demands by pressure and force, not by reason or justice.

The case of Roma in Czech and Slovak Republics illustrates another socio-economic pattern: Roma have been for centuries victims of discrimination, segregation and social exclusion, organized at state level, and legitimized by popular prejudices and stereotypes. Nowadays, some state policies aim at correcting these discriminations, but due both to the persistence of negative attitudes at the grass-root level, and to the scattering of Roma communities, improvements are very slow to come about. One of the striking features of this case study is thus the relatively low level of political mobilisation on the Roma side, in spite of the numerous grievances on which political organizations could build on.

**Social exclusion and discrimination against Roma in Czech and Slovak Republics**

Social exclusion and discrimination severely affect Roma access to employment opportunities, education, and public services. Discrimination, both explicit and implicit, permeates many aspects of life, including education, employment, and housing. Historical negative stereotypes of Roma continue to be widespread throughout Central and Eastern Europe.

Historically [Central], European states’ policies toward Roma have either aimed to further exclude Roma from majority societies-through expulsion, forced ghettoization, and denial of services-or to fully assimilate Roma into the majority society, often through coercive measures. Policies of exclusion and forced assimilation, though different in many ways, share one important goal: both seek to reduce the visibility of Roma lifestyles, or even communities-on the one hand by forcing them to the margins of society, on the other by forcing them to assimilate. Poverty rates for Roma in all countries of the region are strikingly high in all cases several times higher than among non-Roma.

Slovak Roma, who migrated to the Czech lands after World War II, usually came from very poor backgrounds with little or no education at all. While basic literacy courses were organized for analphabetic grown-ups primarily in the 1950s and 1960s, special schools or classes for Romani children only were set up from 1952 on.
At the same time, socialist Czechoslovakia, along with some other countries of the communist bloc, had very small disparities between wages for manual and intellectual work. In fact, unqualified manual work on construction sites was often better rewarded than work for which educational qualifications were necessary. Those with very little education could make relatively good earnings. A 1972 survey carried out in the northern Bohemian city of Most with a substantial Romani population showed that the salaries of only 15 per cent of the Roma there - mainly women - were below average. Almost 50 per cent of the Roma in Most earned above average salaries. After 1989 many Roma were forced out of the construction business by guest workers from the former Soviet Union who were willing to work for very little pay, for example. The Romani community was undoubtedly very harshly hit by the changes from which the educated gained and those with little education lost.

The refusal to implement policies in support of the Roma is now causing friction between the Slovak national government and local administrations. While the national government came up with a policy document aimed at improving the situation of Roma by May 2000, the local municipalities maintain the power and responsibility for implementation of the policy. In Slovakia, nearly all rights (schooling, housing, social welfare, health care, etc) depend on local residency. Local mayors often refuse to even think in terms of improving the situation of Roma, arguing that there are no Roma living in their districts. This claim is based on census information that cites "Slovak" as the nationality of all. This attitude has been criticized by the national government and is slowly disappearing from the scene of local politics. However, in some places antagonism toward the implementation of policies designed to improve the lives of Roma continues. A problem particular to Slovakia were the terrible housing conditions of many Roma who lived in the so-called “osady”, exclusively Romany communities which resemble slums. These did not exist in the Czech lands, for Roma were provided with standard housing upon their arrival in the various industrial centres there. In the mid-1950s there were still 1,305 “osady” which had 14,935 houses harbouring 95,000 Roma. Eighty percent of these houses were utterly inadequate for living.

2.2.2. The Demographic Dimension

Population shifts (forced or voluntary) are characteristic of almost all case studies covered, at some particular point in time, and are crucial for our understanding of the current shapes these conflicts are taking. For instance in Estonia, large-size immigration of Russian-speaking people took place during the period from 1945 to 1991 of the Soviet rule. During the Soviet period, the number of non-Estonians increased 26-fold, from 23,000 (in the current borders of Estonia) in 1945 to 602,000 in 1989. At the same time the number of Estonians decreased from about 1,000,000 in 1940 to 965,000 in 1989. These large demographic changes, which occurred also in the two other Baltic States during the Soviet times, were the main factors for establishing jus sanguinis citizenship policies in Estonia as well as in Latvia during the 1990s. Lithuania, on the contrary, chose to grant citizenship to all its residents in 1991, as the size of immigration to this country during Soviet times had been considerably lower than in the Latvian and Estonian cases.

In fact, it appears that population shifts and demography play an important role in community conflicts in two main instances, which may overlap: first, when two or several communities of comparable sizes share the same political space; second, when important waves of migration modify the demographic balance of a specific geographic zone. In the first case, as demography can be one of the basis for the sharing of political power and positions – especially in democratic societies – any change, and in particular any increase in the demographic weight of one of the communities, induces changes in the political landscape as a whole. These changes are often seen
as a threat by the other communities, who wish to retain their positions and privileges. In the second case, new migrants or refugees can be seen as invaders who jeopardize political structures as well as political cultures, especially if they are claiming rights for political access. Demography thus nourishes discourses and charges about invasion, ethnic cleansing or even bastardy.

The case of Vojvodina illustrates one of the possible impacts of migrations and population shifts, with a decisive modification of communities’ political weights, and the development of an opposition movement to the Serbian government.

Vojvodina – Population shifts and minority rights

None of the important actors of the conflict in Vojvodina disputes the nature of the State of Serbia, i.e. justification of its existence. According to the 2002 census, Serbs constitute 2/3 of the population in Vojvodina, while 1/3 are national minorities. Hungarians are today the only minority with a participation of over 3% in the total population. Compared with the previous census from 1991, the ethnic structure of Vojvodina underwent considerable changes. While Serbian community noticeably increased, all other minorities (except Roma) registered fall in number. This change was not a result of considerably different birth rates of particular ethnical communities (it has been very low in all communities from Vojvodina for decades), but of migrations. In the course of the 1990s, perhaps as much as 300,000 Serbian refugees moved in from Croatia and Bosnia. On the other hand, a large number of the members of minorities moved away from Vojvodina (about 100,000). Only the Croats were subject to direct persecution. Members of other minorities were moving away due to their fear of conscription, out of a wish to go to school in their motherland or for economic reasons. For national minorities, the most important is that their rights are respected. During the 1990s, when after the fall of communism ethnic conflicts regained momentum, no national minority disputed the territory of Vojvodina. The representatives of the minorities did pursue political fight against the authorities in Belgrade, but not out of secessionist intentions. They fought against Milošević’s policy for which the minorities lost many rights they had been granted earlier. This was confirmed in 2000, when the parties of the national minorities entered into alliance with the parties of Serbian opposition against Milošević.

Another illustration of the impact of demography can be found in Northern Ireland, where two communities fight over the future of the region. Despite the fact that demographic patterns do not suggest any significant political change before at least two decades, they have been highly politicized, and demonstrate again that demography is always highly politicized in divided societies.

The sensitive issue of demographics in Northern Ireland

The demographic balance between Protestants and Roman Catholics in Northern Ireland is an increasingly delicate issue. Catholics now make up about two-fifths of the population, and their slightly higher birth rate has led to speculation that they eventually will become the larger of the “two communities” (according to the 2001 census, the population is divided between 53 per cent Protestant and 44 per cent Catholic) Although Protestants continue to be a majority, complex local demographic patterns and changes have been at play since the time of the Partition of Ireland. The power balance between the two communities is more fine tuned today than at any time in the past. The Catholic proportion of the population continues to rise, and there has also been a tendency for Protestants to move from the predominantly Catholic West of the province to the predominantly Protestant East. In the 1960’s and the 1970’s, there have also been massive
population movements within towns, especially in Belfast, as families migrated – frequently as a consequence of paramilitary intimidation – into predominantly Protestant or predominantly Catholic areas. This pattern persists today, with broad sections of the territory which are almost exclusively Catholic or Protestant. These local demographic patterns have given birth to endless arguments about ‘ethnic cleansing’ conducted by paramilitary groups, as well as about traditional parades organized by the Orange Order in areas where Catholics are now in majority.

Moreover, the rise in the percentage of Catholics in the population seems to point towards the inevitable emergence of a Catholic majority. Many nationalists assume that a Catholic majority will automatically mean a nationalist majority in the north, and that a nationalist majority will vote in favour of a united Ireland. But things may be a bit more complicated than that, as not all Catholics are voting for nationalist parties – even though a huge majority of them do.

2.2.3. The Territorial Dimension

The importance of the territorial dimension for nearly all the case studies covered by this project is striking. Indeed, in almost all cases but two – the case of the Slovene minority in Austria, and the case of Roma – territory is a central or significant issue, and sometimes diverging territorial claims are even at the roots of the conflict itself. As Monica Duffy Toft (2002) explains, territory can be seen both as a material and as a non material value. She argues that one should examine a territory in relation to settlement patterns and homelands, and recognize the different meanings of territory, as well as the different views held by actors of the disputed territory. When territory is considered as not divisible, then conflict is more likely to arise, because in that case communities have to cohabit in the same space, even though their political aims and ideals may be strongly diverging. One of the most comprehensive efforts to date to solve this question was made by the peace settlements of 1918-1922, that tried to make boundaries of national groups and boundaries of states coincide. However, “the failure of this solution was soon apparent as successor states struggled with the impossibility of drawing lines on maps to separate discrete national groups” (Keating, 2001: 1).

The cases covered here show that territory can be at the centre of the conflict whether it is its symbolic or material signification that is stressed, or both. In the Kosovo’s case, there is a strong link, at the discursive and symbolic levels, between territory and identity, which are considered as non negotiable and absolute values, and which make accommodation and peace settlements difficult.

Kosovo: A conflict about territory

The Kosovo conflict is about the control over the territory. The Albanians argue that Kosovo is occupied and that it has never belonged to Serbia. On the other hand, Serbs argue that Kosovo is “a cradle of the Serbian nation.” It was Kosovo where the Serbs waged the “glorious” war against the invasion of Turks, which they lost in 1389. Some Serbs believed that Albanians do not deserve to have any rights at the territory of Kosovo and are obliged to respect the Serbia rule on Kosovo. The war for territory was to a great extent accompanied with ethnic animosities and ethnic hatred between Serbs and Albanians. During the time when Kosovo was under the sovereignty of Serbia, Albanian and Serbian communities lived completely separated. Albanians even built their parallel educational and health care systems. They, however, never contested Serbia as a state but rather contested its political system in Kosovo. They accused the system of being repressive and denying basic human and ethnic rights.
Kosovo Albanians also contested the claim of the Serbian government to the territory of Kosovo. Albanians believe that Kosovo was occupied and does not belong to Serbia. In this sense the Serb-Albanian conflict is about the control over the territory based on the principle of ethnic legitimacy, where European ideals of multiculturalism, multi-ethnicism and multi-confessionalism are declared without being upheld. In short, the ideology of both the Serbian and Albanian political movement in Kosovo can be described as the combination of territorial and ethnical nationalism.

Cyprus’s case presents completely different patterns, as communities are nowadays living on different parts of the island; control of territory has been here referring to complex geopolitical issues, which are accompanied by local and ‘smaller’ territorial issues, whose complexity is as high. When territory is vested with a symbolic and emotional meaning, as it is the case for lost properties here, physical separation of communities, in an attempt to deal with territory as a material object only, proves insufficient to bring about peaceful coexistence.

The importance of territory in Cyprus

The new Cypriot state that was created in 1959 was a ‘reluctant republic’ because it did not fully satisfy any political actor in both communities. In December 1963 armed groups from the two communities intensified tensions which led to a civil war between Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots. Intercommunal fighting started in Nicosia and spread throughout the island while the Turkish Cypriot leadership pursued their own partitionist aims. Greek Cypriot forces and paramilitary groups attacked Turkish Cypriot villages and enclaves aiming to gain absolute territorial control in the island. Turkey and Greece got actively involved in the conflict by sending either military personnel or by providing weapons for fighting groups. Intercommunal violence and killings generated profound hatred and collective mistrust between the two communities. The representatives of the two communities started intercommunal talks in 1968 under the auspices of the special representative of the UN Secretary-General aiming at resolving the problem by revising the 1960 constitutional system. Intercommunal talks continued until 1974 without culminating in any fruitful result. As a result of continual intracommunal conflicts and political schism in the Greek Cypriot community, the National Guard, the Greek Cypriot Army that was established in 1964, staged a coup d’état against the Cyprus government on 15 July 1974 which pave the way for Turkish intervention on 20 July 1974. The Greek coup d’état and Turkish military intervention culminated in de-facto division of the island. Turkish troops extended to northern part of Cyprus and began to control nearly thirty-seven per cent of the island’s territory. Thousands of Cypriots from both communities were evacuated from their original homes in order to secure from dangers. They were resettled in the houses which originally belonged to the members of the other community. Despite the fact that the leaders of the two communities agreed in 1977 and 1979 that Cyprus dispute would be resolved on the grounds of a bi-communal and bi-zonal federal system, the political situation has worsened with the newly arisen conflicts relating in particular to issues of property.

The Annan plan is based on a comprehensive logic accommodating legalist-human rights (Greek Cypriot) and political-pragmatist (Turkish Cypriot) perspectives in terms of its approaches relating to property issue. Property rights are recognized but also restricted so as to foster bi-zonal character of the new federal republic. The plan proposes territorial adjustment by which about 26 per cent of the island’s territory is given under the control of Turkish Cypriot constituent state. In addition, the plan offers compensation and limited reinstatement for dispossessed property owners. Despite territorial adjustment, property issue remains extremely problematic because, among other reasons, many Greek Cypriots demand full reinstatement.
2.3. Political Dimensions

2.3.1. The Centre-Periphery Cleavage

Acts of these conflicts often refer to an history of conquest by a foreign state, as well as to a forced incorporation of ‘their’ territory into it, which neglected their sovereignty, culture and rights. Here conflicts are framed in terms of an opposition between a peripheral region or territory to central state structures (Rokkan, 1983), which are accused of neglecting them, or of preventing them from preserving and developing their own culture, identity and interests. According to this model of understanding, conflict are thus the result of power relations between the central – or ‘foreign’ – state and a specific region or territory, which tries to gain or regain more independence and/or rights.

In fact, some examples like the Corsican one show that regionalist claims can at least partly be understood as reactions against centralist policies, and that feelings of specificity as well as desire for a specific status did not always pre-exist.

Corsica: nationalism as a reaction to centralist policies

From an administrative point of view, the centralistic pattern of the French state is well known. As a consequence, moderate nationalists would like to obtain a more developed self-government for Corsica. This could be obtained for Corsica only or even within the framework of a global reform of the French unitary state, as the ones that were implemented by Spain or Italy, or even through the project of a ‘Europe of regions’. Radical nationalists reject the French state as a whole, even if their independentist claim is not very explicit since they know that only one tenth of the population living in Corsica is in favour of independence.

French national integration policies started slowly: in a voluntary schematic way, one could distinguish the period of basic control (1789-1870) from the period of effective integration during the Third Republic (1870-1940). This last regime was the one that implemented nation-building policies (mandatory school attendance, building of a national economic market and extension of it in the French colonies in Africa and Asia, development of a national transport network). Schematically, the first autonomist movement embodied by the Partitu Corsu d’Azione (Corsican Party of Action, born in 1922) and then, from 1927 to 1939, the Partitu Corsu Autonomista (Autonomist Corsican Party) can be seen as a reaction against the consequences of such an integrative process: massive emigration, systematic clientelism, loss of Corsican culture and identity. However the PCA, which had no popular support, chose to cooperate with Italian fascism which was developing irredentist policies in order to try to get would-be "Italian" lands (Nice, Savoy, Malta, etc.) back. When Italian fascism collapsed and France was liberated from German military domination and Vichy collaborationist government, the very idea of regional autonomy and Corsican identity was considered as typical of the extreme right and, hence, illegitimate.

For this reason contemporary Corsican nationalism was born on other bases. Scholars of Corsican nationalism agree on the fact that one of the decisive impulses for this mobilisation was given by the French central government, which started to promote in Corsica new regional development policies (exposed in the Plan d’Action Régionale in 1957) that aimed at fostering agriculture (especially in the Eastern plain) and at developing tourism. These economic reforms were less enjoyed by Corsicans than by other actors as French repatriates from Algeria and foreign workers. The genesis of Corsican nationalism can be seen as a perfect illustration of how relative deprivation leads to (nationalist) political mobilisation.

The new regional development policies were given a decisive impulse with the ‘statut Deferre’ given to Corsica in 1982, which anticipated the French regionalisation reform’s implementation.
by organising immediate elections for the ‘Assembly of Corsica’. The ‘statut Joxe’ (prepared in 1988 and voted in 1991) was a more important reform since: (i) it attempted to recognise legally ‘the Corsican people, part of the French people’ but this statement was declared unconstitutional by the French Constitutional Council, (ii) it granted more powers to the Corsican region, now called ‘Collectivité Territoriale de Corse’, which enjoyed a limited self-government, (iii) it reformed the regional political institutions by organising a kind of parliamentary system with an executive power (‘Executive Council’) responsible towards the Assembly of Corsica. These new powers were again expanded with the ‘Matignon process’ (public negotiations between Corsican representatives and the French government led by socialist Prime Minister Lionel Jospin) and the 2002 law on Corsica.

Completely diverging processes are at play in the Basque case, where a multi-secular tradition of self-government exists, and where the Spanish State, since the democratic transition, has granted the Basque country an autonomy status. Here it is the national policies regarding the state structures that can be understood as reactions to autonomist claims.

**The Basque conflict: a conflict with the centre**

Together with Catalonia and Galicia, the Basque Country obtained the right to self-government during the II Republic (1931-39). After the end of the Spanish civil war (1936-1939), during the long years of the Franco regime (1939-1975), all democratic political rights and freedoms were banned in the “historical national communities” as well as in the rest of Spain. Nevertheless, the repression was specially severe in the Basque Country throughout the dictatorship period, with particular stress on the prohibition of Basque cultural singularities, mainly the use of Basque language (“euskera”). From the end of the fifties, the building of a new radical nationalism took place, closely linked with other organizations of the anti-franco opposition. In fact, ETA appeared, as a PNV (Basque Nationalist Party) fraction, in 1959, and soon shifted towards supporting the strategy of armed struggle as the only way to defeat Franco dictatorship and, at the same time, to obtain the independence of the Basque Country.

This strategy of political violence, and ETA’s evolution from the end of the sixties explain the split of Basque nationalism in two main branches at the end of franco regime: 1) The “moderates” who were in favour of a political solution to the “Basque problem” within the frame of a peaceful process of Spanish democratisation. 2) The “radicals” who, openly or not, supported political violence as one of the legitimate repertoires to obtain Basque self-government, and who tended to differentiate the Spanish and the Basque solutions to the ending of dictatorship.

During the democratic transition, an autonomic referendum (25 October 1979) established the Basque Autonomy Charter, and in 1980, following the development of the Spanish Constitution, the Basque government, pioneering the process of autonomic decentralisation in Spain, received substantial powers, including financing. Within the context of the political conflict, the nature of the Spanish state has been challenged on numerous occasions by nationalist parties in the Autonomous Communities claiming greater autonomy and even a federal state, especially in the Basque Country.

However, Spanish political transition and the consolidation of a parliamentarian democratic political system, together with the establishment of a autonomic structure of the Spanish State drastically transformed the Basque conflict and its issues. To put it roughly, in the last twenty five years, the national issue has been formulated in three different and clashing ways: a) for the central government, Basque national rule has already solved the traditional nationalist demands for autonomy and self-government; b) for moderate nationalists, even accepting the progress
meant by Basque national rule, and within the frame of Spanish democracy, there is a need to increase political self-government and to redefine the relationships within Spanish State; and, finally, c) for radical nationalists, the current Basque autonomy charter does not solve Basque political demands, which implies that the only solution is a complete independence from the Spanish State.

2.3.2. Security Dilemma and Access to the Political Scene

Rational-choice theorists have explained inter-group conflicts by insecurity and uncertainty, in particular when a minority cannot trust the guarantees offered by the related majority, or when central institutions are weak or when anarchy prevails. In this perspective, autonomist and separatist feelings, or conflicting attitudes towards other groups are said to develop when a group prefers to secede rather than to participate in the regime and possibly weaken its position (Hechter: 1995). Conflicting attitudes can also develop when a group’s access to political scene is hampered by various legislations and procedures set up by the central state; these measures leave the group with few other options for expressing its feelings and claims than protest and opposition.

In this cluster of explanations, the paradigm of the “security dilemma” is dominant (see for instance Posen: 1993; Fearon: 1994). It argues that political uncertainty and lack of information concerning threats leads group to take measures to reinforce their security and identity, thus further isolating them from the outside world. This paradigm fits more specifically multinational states that, when faced with decline and risks of fragmentation, can no longer protect the interests of cultural groups and minorities, who then feel politically, culturally and even physically at risk.

In the Sandžak case, the attitude of the Serbian central state towards the Bosnian minority has clearly led to its radicalization, to its estrangement as well as to its tendency to look elsewhere – in Bosnia-Herzegovina – for protection.

The Sandžak case

The ethnic Moslems neither disputed the legitimacy of the Serbian state in the area of Sandžak, nor the fact that the territory of Sandžak is to be under the Serbian jurisdiction. The subject of the conflict has always been the political system, namely the level of autonomy for the ethnic Moslems living in the Sandžak area. Since WWI to date, the Bosniak community, Bosniak intellectual elite and politicians, have been contesting the political system (i.e. political organization in terms of territorial organization (regions), minority rights, political self-governance, education and the use of language), which, Bosniaks believe, put them at a disadvantage.

The Serbian government contested the right to territorial and political organization of the Bosniak community by setting up such a territorial organization that would prevent Sandžak from existing as a political actor. The Serbian state has been refusing to grant higher autonomy to Sandžak, but the reason for this only partly can be explained by referring to ethnic animosities between Serbs and Moslems. Namely, Serbia is anyhow a highly centralized country, and the level of local autonomy is generally low. In 2002, municipalities were given higher autonomy and a number of prerogatives that are defined as original. Municipalities have budgets but no substantial fiscal autonomy. They are rather beneficiaries of the state budget.
On June 6, 1993, the Council adopted the Memorandum of the Establishment of a Special Status for Sandžak. The Memorandum expressed a wish of Sandžak Bosniaks for a special status of Sandžak within the Federal Republic Yugoslavia. Memorandum requested a constitution of Sandžak, the establishment of the Sandžak parliament and the government, police and judiciary. It also called for demilitarization of the region and the arrival of the independent observers of human rights. The District Court in Užice and the Supreme Court of Serbia banned the printing and distribution of the Memorandum.

On July 19, 1999, the Council adopted Declaration on the Right of the Bosniaks to Political and Ethnic Equality and the Memorandum of the Autonomy of Sandžak and Special Relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina. The former document stated that Bosniaks ‘see the future FR of Yugoslavia as a democratic state in which Sandžak could enjoy a high level of autonomy and self-government’. The latter document refers to Bosnia & Herzegovina as a mother state of all Bosniaks/Moslems by emphasizing the need for development of separate cultural-historical and diplomatic relations between the mother state and Sandžak. The Memorandum was a response to special relations which Serbia built with the Republika Srpska, part of Bosnia & Herzegovina, during the 1990s. All these document did not challenge the legitimacy and territorial integrity of the Serbian state.

The case of the Slovene minority is Austria presents radically different features. Here mobilization derives from the reluctance, on the side of the German-speaking minority, to allow the political representation of Slovenes. It is the majority that feels threatened by the minority’s demands.

The political representation of Slovenes in Austria

If we look back at the development of the relations between German and Slovene speakers in Carinthia, we observe that the tensions began when the Slovenes first began asserting themselves as an ethnic group in the early 19th century. Since then, the German-speaking majority has felt threatened by the Slovenes’ demands for more rights and autonomy, and has undertaken a number of efforts at political and individual level to counter these demands. After WWII, the political ambitions of the Slovene community in Carinthia continued to be hampered and thus their position was further weakened. In the 1975 provincial elections in Carinthia, the Slovene party Koroska enotna lista fell short of securing a seat in the provincial parliament by only a few hundred votes. As this was perceived as a threat by many of the German speakers, the electoral law in Carinthia was adjusted to prevent the Slovene party from winning a mandate in future elections. The predominantly Slovene areas were thus divided into 4 constituencies and a minimum of 10 per cent of the votes required for gaining a seat in the provincial parliament, though a 4-5 per cent clause for a mandate applies to the rest of Carinthia and Austria. Through the merging of constituencies, the proportion of the Slovene population in many cases fell under the required 25 per cent threshold for the putting up of bilingual signs. In December 2001, the Constitutional Court ruled that the threshold of 25 per cent of ethnic population for the setting up of bilingual topographical signs was not compatible with the Austrian Constitution and that henceforth, a 7 per cent threshold ought to apply.

Today, the Slovene community in Carinthia is represented by a total of 52 municipal officials and four vice-mayors in 13 of 36 municipalities in Carinthia’s bilingual region. Until 1975 when the Enotna Lista was founded, the Slovene factions ran for elections with a programme directed specifically toward the Slovene minority in Carinthia. After 1975, the EL’s political, economic and social programme addressed all southern Carinthians, thus expanding their pool of potential voters. At the last municipal council election in March 2003, the EL got 5,632 votes in 24 southern Carinthian municipalities (52 mandates), 105 more votes than in the previous elections.
in 1997. In the last provincial elections in 1999, the Enotna Lista formed an alliance with other small Carinthian parties including the Greens, but only gained 4 per cent of the total votes, which was insufficient for a mandate in the provincial parliament.

The Volksgruppenbüro (Ethnic Group Bureau) was established by provincial governor Jörg Haider in 1990 and integrated in the Carinthian provincial government. The Volksgruppenbüro represents the interests of the Slovenes at the provincial level and makes recommendations for the improvement of the ethnic group’s situation. At national level, the Slovenes’ political, economic and cultural interests are represented by the Rat der Kärntner Slowenen (Council of the Carinthian Slovenes) and the Zentralverband slowenischer Organisationen (Umbrella Organization of Slovene Associations).

2.3.3. Elite manipulation

Some constructivists approaches explain community conflicts as a result of identity manipulation efforts by political entrepreneurs, whose main goal is actually to gain or retain power (see for instance Gagnon: 1995). In that sense, elites “construct” the conflict in order to serve their own interest, and they manipulate group identities (Brass, 1997). These ethnic entrepreneurs contribute to fears and uncertainty inside the communities, for instance by using myths of past injustice and by manipulating perceptions of current perceived discrimination. They thus drive the conflict ‘from above’.

As Haymes (1997: 553) explains, political elites play a fundamental role in handling the demands and setting the goals for groups: “Ethnic/ nationalist elites are the natural nexus between, the subnational, the transnational within a state, and the international, and therefore play a critical role in the structure and process of interethnic and international relations”. Moreover, elites have often a vested interest in the perpetuation of the conflict, which legitimizes their own existence; their power and influence indeed derive from the existence of divisions between communities, and favouring peace and reconciliation may be seen as endangering their survival – as indeed the fate of the two main architects of the Good Friday Agreement in Northern Ireland, John Hume and David Trimble, seems to suggest.

However, most of these theories present several flaws; for instance, they fail to explain why the followers of elites follow them if all rewards and benefits go to the elites and not to the grass root militants. Of course, incentives like emotions or leaders’ charisma may in part explain this manipulation, but these theories nevertheless often imply a passivity of masses and underestimate the fact that elites’ actions are themselves embedded in specific myths and social representations which can be heavily influenced by nationalism or communal history.

Despite these problems, it is clear that elite manipulation plays a fundamental role in some of the cases covered by this project. In Belgium for instance, political elites are the major defenders of community cultures and identities.

The role of political elites in the Belgian conflict

Political parties and, more generally, the political elite, can be described as the main actors of the conflict in Belgium. On the Flemish side, one could say that the Flemish parliament and government, and especially the minister-president, have become the main engines of the Flemish movement. Since the 1980s, they certainly outweighed the spokespersons of the traditional Flemish cultural movements. Their identity building efforts are applauded by a large section of the Flemish press, which traditionally considers itself as the guardian of the conscience of the
Flemish movement. The Flemish government pursues a conscious cultural policy, glorifying its cultural past and current economic, cultural and technological achievements. Also, at the level of the fate of regionalist parties, the democratic Flemish-nationalists (Volksunie) declined gradually since 1981, and finally split in 2001 between hardliners NVA (that only gained one seat at the 2003 general elections) and “post-nationalist” Spirit, that only survived by concluding an electoral cartel with the Flemish socialists. Finally, since the 1999 liberal-socialist-green coalition, the regional top elites have been moderating strongly their verbal aggressive tone, and tried to arrive at further steps in federalisation through polite negotiations, rather than by threat and insults.

Like in Flanders, in Wallonia the defence of language and identity has been largely usurped by party political actors. The defence of the regional economy also has passed mainly hands from civil society to regional party political actors. The “great strikes” of 1960 forced a bridge between the Walloon cultural movement, and the Walloon trade unions fighting economic decline. However, the Walloon movement never saw the defence of a Walloon identity, culture or language as a primary goal, nor did it mobilise the Walloon population around such themes. Its emphasis was always socio-economic, and Walloon-nationalist discourse was avoided in order not to divide Walloons and Francophone bruxellois.

In Corsica, the process of elite manipulation is even more obvious, as only a small minority of the population favours the independentist option put forward by nationalist leaders. In this case, elites succeed in imposing their view of the situation, and in imposing themselves as legitimate interlocutors with the central state, while their popular support (in the elections or for the defence of language and culture) does not put it in a situation of clear majority.

**The Corsican conflict: A conflict between elites?**

The main actors of the Corsican conflict are to be found amongst institutions and political parties, both at national and regional levels. One of the main actors, beside nationalist movements on the ground, is indeed the French state itself, that is to say its institutions in Paris and its representatives in Corsica, the main one being the Préfecture in Ajaccio.

The parties’ leaders are politicians whose goals are ambiguous. On the one hand, they claim that they want independence or a strong autonomy for Corsica. But on the other hand they remain quite vague on the content of such a perspective. At the beginning of the conflict autonomist movements were leading the struggle. They have however been overcome by radical movements even in the public sphere since radical parties are rather stronger than the moderate ones from an electoral point of view.

Civil society was rather sympathetic to the struggle at the beginning in the 1970s but it has gradually dissociated itself from the long-running violence, and now only a small minority of Corsicans (about 10%) is in favour of independence. However, in this context of political violence within such a small society like Corsica there is no direct significant expression of dissent against Corsican nationalism coming from civil society.

It is therefore mainly a conflict between political elites which propose diverging definitions of the situation. On the one hand, Corsican nationalist activists are acting to make the French state acknowledge the fact that there exist at least two distinct communities: the Corsican one, which is allegedly in situation of minority on its own land, and the ‘foreign’ one (all the non Corsicans, being them French or from a foreign origin), whose presence would be the result of a process of colonisation, and especially of settlement colonisation, organised by the French state and that aims at making the ‘Corsican people’ disappear.
On the other hand, the French state (i.e. its successive governments) tends to deny that there is a conflict in Corsica. It argues in this sense on the ground of the limited electoral impact of Corsican nationalist parties and on its knowledge of Corsican public opinion that does feel French in a very large extent. The French state considers that nationalist violence is committed by minority groups that do not represent the Corsicans and that are not legitimate because they do not respect the democratic way of disagreements’ resolution.

To this, Corsican violent movements reply that there is no genuine democracy in Corsica since all non-nationalist candidates are sustaining the central government’s goals and that there is no possible political opportunities because of clientelism and electoral fraud.

2.3.4. Access to Citizenship

In countries characterized by the strong nationalism of their majorities, there is a tendency to give to minorities only rights that are thought as non-threatening in the eyes of the majority, and to grant a preferred status to the majority. The political models these societies are building have been called “ethnic democracies”, in the sense that a portion of its inhabitants are not granted citizenship, which depends on ethnic criteria (Smooha, 2002).

Such is the case of Estonia, whose population, after its declaration of independence in 1991, comprised a one third minority of Russian speakers. However, it must be noted that it is not the restricted access to citizenship in itself which is at the roots of conflicts, it rather reinforces pre-existing divisions, and legitimizes mobilization of the population that is victim of discrimination.

The Russian minority in Estonia

The great majority of ethnically non-Estonians were not accepted as Estonian citizens when Estonia regained its independence in 1991. Instead of offering citizenship to all residents on the basis of a “zero-option” formula the Estonian restricted automatic citizenship to those who had held it before the Soviet occupation and their direct descendants. Often characterised as “Russian-speakers” because of their primary language, these settlers and their descendants accounted for about 40 percent of the population of Estonia (as opposed to 8 percent in the pre-war period). The non-citizens were for the most part not integrated in Estonian society and often did not speak the national language. Most ethnic Estonians considered them as illegal immigrants, their presence a product of the policy of enforced Russification which had led to considerable demographic changes in their countries which experienced a massive influx of settlers from other parts of the USSR, mainly Russians and other Slavs. Many Estonians feared that they will one day find themselves a minority in their own country, unable to preserve their language and national identity. While understandable from a psychological point of view, these policies generated resentment, distrust and hostility among the non-citizens who feared expulsion from the state (where many had been born) or deprivation of political and economic rights if they were allowed to remain. In addition, many had great difficulty in adjusting to a new situation in which they were no longer the representatives of the dominant nation in the state and in which their language had been replaced as the ofﬁcial tongue by a language few of them spoke or even understood.

At the end of June and the beginning of July 1993, tensions in Estonia increased because of uncertainties around the legal status of persons with undetermined citizenship. The adoption by the Estonian parliament of Aliens Act led to fears among the non-citizen population of Estonia that they might even be threatened with expulsion from Estonia. Some provisions of the Aliens
Act gave a basis for an interpretation that the Government of Estonia wanted to start a policy of expulsion from Estonia of Russian-speaking non-citizens-residents.

In 1995 the Parliament adopted a new Citizenship Act that extended the residency requirement for naturalization from 2 to 5 years and added a requirement for knowledge of the Constitution and the Citizenship Act to the requirement for Estonian language proficiency. Some other changes to the Citizenship Act and related Acts (Aliens Act) have been adopted since 1995 also providing opportunities to apply for citizenship on a simplified model for specific target groups (elderly people, subjects of family reunification cases, etc.).

Between 1992 and 2004, 131,174 persons have received citizenship through naturalization. In 1997 the Russian Embassy in Tallinn reported that some 120,000 persons had obtained Russian citizenship, but the actual number of Russian citizens is probably lower, ca 90,000. It is also plausible that a number of Russian-speaking Estonian citizens hold dual citizenship, i.e. Russian passport.

With respect to other two Baltic States experience in this field, a similar problem of non-citizens exists also in Latvia, as Latvian Parliament adopted the Citizenship Act on the basis of the same principle of jus sanguinis. Also, majority of the local non-Latvians do not speak Latvian fluently which is an obstacle for citizenship application, similarly to Estonia's case. And Latvian State has launched also an Integration Programme for speeding up the integration process of ethnic minorities into society. In the case of Lithuania, the number of Russian-speakers was low by 1991 re-independence. By taking into account this fact, Lithuanian Government decided to give citizenship to all residents of Lithuania in 1991.

In the case of Roma in Czech and Slovak Republics, the difficult access to citizenship has not led to political mobilization, but rather to a specific social behaviour reinforcing the estrangement of Roma from the society they live in. It has also generated several waves of migration towards western countries.

A difficult access to citizenship for Roma in Czech and Slovak Republics

After the dissolution of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, some of its residents automatically acquired Slovak citizenship, even though they were born in the Czech Republic, had been living there for a long time, and had their places of permanent residence there (a condition accorded importance by the law). The procedures required were particularly difficult for the Roma (many of them were f.e. handicapped most seriously by the condition that citizenship could be obtained only by a person without a record of criminal activity in the previous five years). On the contrary, it was not so difficult to acquire Slovak citizenship: everyone who had a permanent residence in that part of the federal country before dissolution of the joint state became a Slovak citizen.

Under the Constitution Act 1969 there were two types of legal identity: firstly, as citizens of Czechoslovakia, and secondly, as citizens of either of the two federal states according to the place of birth. Until 1993 there was no use for this federal citizenship and its significance was largely regarded as symbolic. Those who were Slovak citizens in 1969 and their families are denied citizenship as of right, and will need to apply for the new Czech citizenship - notwithstanding their permanent residence on Czech soil. A child born in Czech lands whose ancestors are Slovak will thus be a Slovak citizen, as will those born in Slovakia even where there is no connection with Slovakia. They will need to apply for citizenship under Article 18 of the new law, despite often being forcibly moved from Slovakia in the first place. It is estimated that up to 150,000 Roma had to apply for citizenship in their own country.
The Czech Government claims that only two hundred Roma have been denied citizenship. Whilst the exact figures remain elusive, it is clear that this figure is a blatant underestimate. In the first years after the introduction of the new law the Tolerance Foundation managed to find over four hundred people who have had their applications refused and the Roma National Congress estimate that 77,000 Roma have been affected. The Equal Rights programme established by the Tolerance Foundation found that out of a sample of ninety-nine cases 92% of those without citizenship had not got a Slovak passport and 8% had relinquished their Slovak identity and were thus de jure stateless. None had acquired legal permanent residency.

The issue of the Czech citizenship law never caused divisions among major political parties; the issue barely touched party politics. Besides a few small NGOs which relied largely on external funding, there was little opposition to the Law on Citizenship inside the country. External pressure came from certifying agencies.

Then in 1997, the Roma “exodus” from both the Czech Republic and Slovakia, signifying their renunciation of Czech nationality, or at least their opinion that they would never be treated as equal members of the Czech nation. They went abroad to demand political asylum.
2.4. “External” Dimensions

2.4.1. Decolonization, globalization and the consequences of WWI and WWII

Most authors working on nationalism or ethnic phenomena stress the importance of globalization processes for understanding the rise of sub-state nationalisms, regionalisms or community-based mobilizations (Guibernau, 1999). For many authors communal opposition is indeed often linked to globalization and transition to market economy, for instance in Eastern Europe. Beverly Crawford (1998: 4-5) argues for instance that globalization and liberalization are “triggers” for cultural conflicts: “transition to the market and the pressures of globalization – increased demands for industrial competitiveness and rising external debt that weakens the state’s capability and willingness to allocate resources – are associated with high levels of conflict and even violence”. Economic reforms and institutional transformations bring about new rules and norms as well as power shifts, and break old “social contracts” on which the distribution of resources were grounded.

One of the main troubles that these theories are facing is the fact that indicators of globalization are difficult to trace, as it involves complex patterns and processes which impact on political, economical and cultural levels at the same time. This leads authors to use wide metaphors, such as Mary Kaldor (1999: 71) who argues that globalization has broken up the ‘vertically organized cultures’ on which ‘modern’ nationalism was founded.

The effects of decolonization, that are often linked to globalization processes both theoretically and empirically, are easier to trace and assess. Ignatieff (1999: 7) for instance stresses the importance of decolonization factors, that often lead to the disintegration of states or of political structures that used to provide a link between different cultural groups: “even the long-standing, apparently adamantine antipathies of the ethnic war zones turn out, on closer examination, to be expressions of fear created by the collapse or absence of institutions that enable individuals to from civic identities strong enough to counteract their ethnic allegiances. When individuals live in stable states – even poor ones – they do not need to rush to the protection of the group. It is the disintegration of states, and the Hobbesian fear that results, that produces ethnic fragmentation and war”. However, examples of decolonization wars, or wars linked to some form of imperialism are relatively scarce in nowadays Europe. This does not mean that some of the conflict situations or problems that we are facing are never linked to some kind of colonial heritage or imperialism, but rather that this does not appear to be very often a predominant factor explaining the persistence of tensions. For instance, if the decolonization paradigm has certainly been used by nationalist actors in Corsica, Northern Ireland or the Basque Country, it does not explain why these conflict situations persist nowadays.

Finally, it must be stated that many conflicts we are studying can be seen as ‘rest-overs’ or ‘unfinished business’ from the first and/ or the second world war. Gellner (1995) for instance has shown that, because the two world wars have brought the disintegration of the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires, and subsequently the emergence and strengthening of the area of influence of the communist ideology, numerous conflict situations have been artificially frozen. In many European countries, irredentist nationalisms have thus been kept under control, or made subordinate to the outcome of the Cold War. As a consequence, the collapse of the Soviet Empire allowed for the defrosting of those claims and conflict situations.

The impact of colonization in Cyprus has been particularly interesting and strong during the first half of the XXth century, as it has generated diverging affiliations and political options on the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot sides.
The consequences of colonization in Cyprus

In Cyprus, the declining power of the Ottoman Empire and the powerful trends towards enshrining the ‘nation-state’ as an ideal model of political organization throughout Europe were among the major reasons that fostered nationalist feelings. On the grounds of a treaty between the Ottoman Empire and Britain known as ‘Cyprus Convention’, the Ottoman Empire temporarily transferred the administration of the island to Britain in 1878 in exchange for being protected against Russian expansionist actions. Britain maintained its political grip in Cyprus from 1878 to 1960. The British, however, annexed the island in 1914 as response to the Ottomans’ involvement in the WWI on the side of Germany. As the ‘successor state’ to the Ottoman Empire, Turkey recognized the British rule in Cyprus under the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923. Since Greece was a signatory of the aforementioned treaty, this country also accepted British sovereignty over the island. Influenced by Greek war of independence, Orthodox Church of Cyprus and Greek speaking political elite began to articulate their sympathy to the idea of enosis. Moslem political elite used to express its sympathy towards the restoration of Ottoman supremacy in the island in response to this unionist claim.

After WWI, the conflicting perspectives pronounced by intellectuals from both communities were about the political status of the island. While maintaining their allegiance to the idea of enosis the Orthodox Church and its representatives, both in the legislative assembly and in the local media, increased their opposition to the colonial administration. The essence of this opposition was that the colonial administration should provide people with more rights especially political participation in the affairs of the island. The first most important uprising of the Greek Cypriot against British Colonial administration that erupted in 1931 brought the tacit conflict between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot political elites. Despite intracommunal divisions in both communities, the first was largely loyal to the idea of enosis or self-government while the second concentrated on the maintainance of the existing order.

Conflict motifs leading to open disputes between the two communities intensified in the Post-WW2 era as a result of ethnic politicization and nationalisms. The international popularity of the principle of ‘national self-determination’ provided justification for anti-colonialist struggle which made Greek Cypriot political circles demand ‘national restoration’ which might have meant enosis, independence or autonomy-self-government. Any of the above possibilities, however, was regarded unacceptable by the political groups in the Turkish Cypriot community whose perceptions about the political regime in Cyprus were largely shaped by a fear that as a minority they might lost their rights in a post-colonial regime. Thus, politicization in the Greek Cypriot community against the colonial rule created political sensitivity in the Turkish Cypriot leadership and fostered a counter-politicization against the Greek Cypriot demands and expectations. Opposition to such changes predisposed the Turkish Cypriot political groups and organizations to demand a preservation of the existing colonial rule as the only preferable international status for Cyprus. Until the mid 1950s Cyprus problem remained to represent a conflict between the colonial administration and the majority community whose political leadership aimed to gain political autonomy or independence of Cypriots from the foreign rule.

Aided by the motherlands, nationalist leaderships solidified their ascendancy in both communities on the eve of independence. Their major goals and perspectives on Cyprus’ future political status were in profound conflict. Greek Cypriot leadership began to consider Turkish Cypriot community as the British’s closest ally whose basic objective was to prevent majority community from demanding its democratic rights including the right to self-determination. Turkish Cypriot political activism which clearly manifested its resistance to enosis, the increasing diplomatic initiatives of the Turkish government against enosis and Turkish political support for a model of solution encouraging separation of the two communities predisposed Greek Cypriot leadership to believe that not only the colonial rule but also Turkish Cypriot leadership and Turkish
government were standing out against rightful cause of national liberation. For Greek Cypriot leadership, the rights of Turkish Cypriot minority could not be more important than the rights of majority community.

The Russian occupation of Estonia, and the subsequent collapse of the Soviet System that occurred at the beginning of the nineties, triggered another kind of configuration, as the enforced russification of the Estonian society was replaced by policies of 're-estonianisation' of the society with are supported at the popular level.

The consequences of Soviet occupation in Estonia
The roots of current community conflict in Estonia can be seen in the following major political and social changes in Estonia since 1940s - occupation of the Estonian Republic by the Soviet Union in June 1940, massive immigration of Russian speaking population to Estonia triggered by the authorities since the second half of 1940s, stalinist crimes and deportations of ethnic Estonians to Siberia in 1940s, policies of Russification throughout the period up to the end of 1980s.

The collapse of the Soviet system led to a severe disintegration of Estonian society. The powerful wave of civil initiative that had been the motor for the restoration of independence primarily mobilised ethnically oriented movements and associations (such as the Popular Front and the Inter-Front). At the same time such associations as trade unions, sports organisations, etc., which had united large interest groups regardless of their ethnic backgrounds, either disintegrated or ceased to exist altogether. Therefore in addition to the people’s different political status Estonia was polarised even on the most elementary level of the civil society.

Nowadays, there are still differing interpretations among Estonians and non-Estonians with respect to the modern history events, esp. the period 1939-1945. Whereas most of Estonians take the annexation of Estonian Republic to Soviet Union in 1940 as occupation, many non-Estonians (influenced also by Russian media channels) currently still consider the Estonia’s accession to Soviet Union as a free and democratic act of Estonian people in 1940. In a similar way, for the majority of Estonians, the end of WWII implied not only the liberation from Nazi Germany regime, but also the continuation of the Soviet occupation for Estonia that lasted until 1991. For many non-Estonians, the entrance of Soviet troops to Estonia in 1944 was a liberating act only.

2.4.2. Role of Neighbouring Countries, bordering communities and diasporas
Closely related to the question of decolonization, neighbouring countries often play an important role in enacting or sustaining community conflicts. Their motivations and degree of implication can vary a lot. They are sometimes competing for territorial control and are thus favouring allegiance of one of the communities in opposition; or they can be used by communities in conflict themselves as a way of legitimizing their secessionist claims. These kinds of claims and strategies are further reinforced and legitimized when communities are living in border regions, and / or in two countries at the same time.

External factors can also take the shape of diasporas coming from neighbouring countries, and whose cultural and political connections are seen as threatening and undermining the legitimacy of the central state.
The case of South Tyrol perfectly illustrates the case of a territory disputed by two bordering countries, and whose fate has long been depending on other factors than the will of its population.

The intervention of Austria in the South Tyrol ‘crisis’

Tyrol was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire when the First World War broke out and consisted of the present-day Austrian province Tyrol and the now Italian provinces South Tyrol and Trentino. In contradiction to U.S. President Woodrow Wilson’s Fourteen Points promoting the idea of self-determination, South Tyrol in its entirety was ceded to Italy in the Peace Treaty of St. Germain in 1919. When the Fascists came to power in 1922, Mussolini pursued a policy of repression against the German-speaking population living in South Tyrol in all spheres of cultural, economic and political life. In 1943, South Tyrol was occupied by German troops with the general support of South Tyroleans who perceived the arrival of the German Wehrmacht as a ‘liberation’ from Italian repression. The following two years of South Tyrolean collaboration with the Nazis became an obstacle to a favorable consideration of a return of South Tyrol to Austria during the peace negotiations after the war. On September 5, 1946, the Paris Agreement was signed by the Italian Foreign Minister De Gasperi and Austrian Foreign Minister Gruber, and annexed to the Peace Treaty with Italy, thereby giving the South Tyrol question international standing. This Agreement provided autonomous legislative and executive powers to the province of South Tyrol. The German-speaking population was to furthermore be guaranteed complete equality of rights and their cultural, economic and social development safeguarded. Austria became an internationally recognized protecting power with the right to intervene to ensure that the clauses of the Paris Agreement were being fulfilled by Italy.

From 1955 on, after the Austrian State Treaty had been signed and Austria’s sovereignty fully restored, Austria played an increasing role in the South Tyrolean People’s Party (SVP) efforts to increase South Tyrol’s autonomy. Frustration and disappointment by the German-speaking population living in South Tyrol began to increase rapidly, and by 1956, the crisis had changed from an economic and social one to a political one. Demonstrative bomb attacks on symbols of Italian rule were carried out by South Tyrolean activists seeking to draw international attention to the issue of South Tyrol. When the situation threatened to escalate further, the Austrian Council of Ministers decided in June 1960 to present the South Tyrol question to the UN General Assembly. On October 31, 1960, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 1496, confirming that the Paris Treaty committed Italy to establish autonomy for the protection of the ethnic South Tyrolean population, and that Austria had the right to a say in the matter. The resolution thus reversed Italy’s assertions that the autonomy of South Tyrol was an internal affair.

Subsequent Italian-Austrian negotiations, however, failed. Another series of bomb attacks was launched in 1961. Instead of yielding to the German-speakers demands, Italy responded by sending 15,000 troops and police officials to the province to carry out house-to-house searches and mass arrests. Following reports of systematic torture by the Italian police, leading to the death of two prisoners, external pressure on the Italian government increased. Six weeks after the bomb attacks, the Italian Interior Minister introduced a first de-escalation measure in the form of a parliamentary commission to examine the conflict and provide the government with proposals on how to resolve it. Nonetheless, the Italian government refused to implement improvements for the minorities and opposed demands to introduce a new Autonomy Statute. Austria again took the South Tyrol issue to the UN General Assembly, and on November 18, 1961, the representatives of 32 states reaffirmed Resolution 1496 adopted the previous year.

The presence of diasporas coming from neighbouring countries can also be an important dimension of conflicts, as these neighbouring countries can feel entitled to intervene and
intercede in favour of the members of their diasporas. Even if this involvement is not very important, it can cause a state of tension in the wider population, and make relations between neighbouring countries more difficult, as shows the case of the Hungarian diaspora in the Vojvodina region.

**Vojvodina – The role of the Hungarian diaspora**

In Vojvodina, the position and problems of the minorities are directly connected with inter-state relations, because numerous minorities are in fact diasporas coming from neighbouring countries. In that respect, with regard to Vojvodina, the most important are relations between Serbia and Hungary, as well as between Serbia and Croatia. Practice so far has shown that the emergence of conflicts in relations between these countries reflects primary on the minorities.

Although relations between Serbia and Hungary were relatively good even during the turbulent years of Milošević’s rule, in the course of 2004 these relations chilled over increase in the number of attacks on Hungarians in Vojvodina, and in Hungary’s opinion, insufficient engagement of Serbian police in clearing out these incidents. Representatives of Hungary, provoked by frequent anti-Hungarian excesses, showed pronounced interest and concern about developments in Vojvodina. They even initiated the discussion on this issue in European forums – the Council of Europe and European Union. Intervention of the Republic of Hungary for the position of their compatriots in Vojvodina and the internationalization of the “Hungarian issue” have been qualified in Serbian public as intertwining with internal affairs of Serbia, and in a way additionally deepened the conflict.

The radicalization of Vojvodina majority community prompted the radicalization of minorities. An example of such a radicalization is the founding of a branch of Hungarian extremist non-governmental organization *Youth Movement of 64 Parishes* in Vojvodina. This organization was founded in 2001 in Szeged and has its branches in Romania, Slovakia and Serbia. According to its Statute, the goal of this organization is “the realization of the right of Hungarians to self-determination in the Carpathian basin on the basis of international human and minority rights and recognition of unjustness of the Trianon Treaty”. The very name of this organization associates to Hungary before the Trianon. However, documents of this organization do not directly call for the revision of borders and they do not have racist dimensions. Nevertheless, external attributes accompanying its gatherings (black military uniforms, shaved heads, symbols), as well as the statements of the representatives of the organization clearly imply that this organization sees aggressive revision of borders as the only possible solution of the position of Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin, and regularly indicates that Vojvodina is a southern region of Hungary. The Subotica police expelled the president of *Youth Movement of 64 Parishes*, a Hungarian national, from Serbia and Montenegro, with the one-year ban on entry. The president of the organization attended a gathering in Mali Iđoš held on October 23, 2004 within the concert of a Hungarian rock band “Karpátia”. At the gathering, they propagated the change of borders and the annexation of a part of Vojvodina to Hungary. The Ministry of the Interior of Hungary condemned the behavior of participants of the gathering in Mali Iđoš. To the question of Hungarian daily *Magyar szó* “What do you think of the activity of *Youth Movement of 64 Parishes*?”, 335 readers (67%), out of the total of 500, said to be in support of the movement.

In December 2004 a referendum was held in Hungary on granting the dual citizenships to the Hungarians living in Diaspora. The turnout was insufficient so the referendum was unsuccessful, which caused a general sense of disappointment among the Hungarians in Vojvodina. In January 2005 15 Hungarian Diaspora organizations formed a Forum, with the aim to pressure the Hungarian authorities to support the policy of dual citizenship for ethnic Hungarians from Diaspora.
3. General Conclusion

3.1. Mapping causes or conflict dimensions?

The main objectives of this deliverable were to review the existing theoretical and empirical scientific literature on the various community conflicts in Europe, and to synthesise their findings and conclusions in a transversal approach. The review of existing scientific literature has allowed us to bring out twelve main dimensions of community conflicts in Europe, as identified both in the literature and in the case study reports written by the various teams involved in this project. These dimensions are sometimes defined as features of the conflicts, or as issues explaining their emergence or persistence, or even as causes.

Out of this review, several dimensions appear to be more salient than others: such is the case of cultural and linguistic differences, of identity questions, of territory, of socio-economic issues, or of neighbouring states and bordering communities. This of course does not tell us anything really new about community conflicts in Europe, apart from the fact that none of these dimensions seems enough in itself to explain either the emergence or the persistence of conflicts. Indeed, in all cases covered by this project, several dimensions interact and have to be taken into account in order to understand what is really going on. In addition, what is clear is that these various dimensions have very different implications and meanings on the ground, both for the actors and in terms of conflict resolution. In other words, saying for instance that socio-economic issues are essential in a conflict can both point towards discriminating policies generating mistrust, and to socio-economic differentials accused by a favoured community of hampering its own development.

On the other hand, several dimensions or even paradigms that are often depicted as main causes of community conflicts do not seem to present a real heuristic value. Such is the case of decolonization or globalization paradigms, that are too general and over-simplifying, or that, as far as decolonization schemes are concerned, have simply lost part of their relevance in nowadays Europe; in the same manner, religious factors or elite manipulation do not seem to help us understanding many conflict situations, even though they admittedly are present in a number of situations.

Despite the fact that most of these models of conflicts present themselves as explanatory paradigms, it seems to us that some of them, rather than explaining the reasons for conflicts to emerge, in fact describe one of their dimensions, as being the most salient or visible. In other words, they focus rather on conflict issues than on conflict causes. Descriptions are certainly useful, but they surely are not enough to understand what is really going on. For instance, the fact of denying citizenship to a whole section of the Russian speaking population in Estonia did not cause the conflict – it is rather one expression of it – but has certainly become a central conflict issue; the same can be said about fertility rates in Northern Ireland, which have gradually become an important issue in the conflict opposing Catholics and Protestants, but are certainly not at its roots.

The reverse can be applied to theories that focus on the role of elites or of globalization in the emergence of conflicts: while they clearly provide explanations on the emergence or persistence of conflicts, they do not say anything on their actual issues, on what conflicts are about. For instance, saying that political elites play a fundamental role in the conflict in Belgium does not tell us anything about the real content of the opposition between Walloons and Flemish communities.

Some dimensions presented here, however, can be interpreted both as causes and as issues. Such is the case of religion, language, identity, socio-economic disparities, territory… In this perspective, it seems that a good understanding of conflicts requires that we pay attention both to historical causes and current issues, as complex interaction processes are at play between them.
Another complexity lies in what we could call the shifting temporality of causes: one of the main characteristics of most of these community conflicts is indeed that they feed themselves constantly, they are self-perpetuating, start-up conditions giving birth to new conditions and paradigms in the framework of which new grievances can develop. This peculiarity poses a great challenge to analysis, because some processes which are rightly pointed out as the root causes of a conflict, like, say, colonization in Ireland, may be a lot less relevant than other dimensions for characterizing or even understanding its current shape. This raises another question: where do we have to stop in our search back in time for conflict ‘causes’? One way of dealing with this problem is to retain only historical causes that help us to understand current issues of conflicts, and to which actors still refer. In other words, confronting the discourses of actors, with those of historians and other academics, can be useful in order to assess the salience of an issue, or the relevance of a cause, how ever far it may take us back in time.
3.2. A map of conflict dimensions

Key to the table:
- dark grey cell: dimension present nowadays both in public discourses and policies
- light grey cell: dimension present nowadays either in public discourses or policies
- white cell: dimension absent nowadays from both public discourses and policies

The following table has been built in order to help visualising how, for the contemporary period, each conflict situation combines various dimensions, whose relative importance may vary in time or according to the actor you are talking to. It is indeed very important to keep in mind that, even though some issues or causes seem, at a certain point in time, more salient than others, they cannot be understood without taking into account their relative weight, as well as the causal relationships that may exist with other issues. For instance, as we have seen, cultural differences, which always exist in the cases we are dealing with, may be instrumentalized and politicized, or not, by some political elites in order to justify a restricted access to citizenship, or even discrimination policies in the socio-economic sector.

It is also worth noting that the level of conflict, or of violence, does not necessarily increase with the number of dimensions that are at stake. For instance, one of our most “peaceful” cases is the case of the Slovene minority in Austria, which displays a surprisingly high number of dimensions at the same time; on the other hand, Corsica, which is one example of “violent political conflict”, according to our typology, displays a relatively moderate number of dimensions, amongst which two can really be described as salient. It is however true that Kosovo, which is situated at the highest level on our scale, displays a very high number of dimensions, most of which can be considered as salient; but one needs more than one case for deducing a causal link. It might therefore be very difficult for us to answer the first key question we posed in the introduction, on the reasons for the emergence, endurance, or cessation, of violence.

One of the most important lessons we can draw from this mapping exercise is therefore that all these dimensions should be used in order to explain the nature of political demands, and their shifts, rather than the eruption or cessation of violence, as most authors have so far been trying to do. These dimensions indeed do not seem directly connected with the level of violence displayed by a conflict, but tell us a lot on its specific shape, and on relevant policies and programs that could be set up, in order to address political demands in an appropriate way, and therefore avoid escalation, or allow pacification. By pointing, for each case study, to interactions existing between dimensions, our research pleads for an integrated approach of each conflict situation, that would not focus on its seemingly most salient characteristics.
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