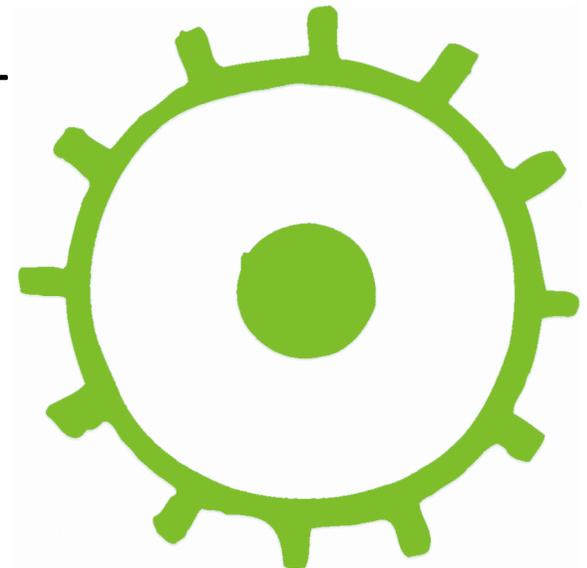


# The Åland Example and Its Components – Relevance for International Conflict Resolution

Research project

The Åland Islands Peace Institute

2010 & 2011



# RESEARCH DESIGN

## Part I

### The Three Components of the Åland Example

- Autonomy legislation
- Demilitarisation & neutralisation
- Cultural and language guarantees

Research question:  
Continuity & Change

Authors:

Sarah Stephan

Sia Spiliopoulou  
Åkermark

Heidi Öst



# RESEARCH DESIGN

## Part II

### The Use and Relevance of the Åland Example in International Conflict Resolution

- Professor Yash Ghai
  - Professor Kjell-Åke Nordquist
  - Dr Fujio Ohnishi
  - MP Elisabeth Naclér
- Autonomy in practice
- Hong Kong, Nagaland, Sri Lanka, Papua New Guinea/Baugainville
  - East Timor
  - Discussions in Japan (Northern Territories and Okinawa)
  - Former Yugoslavia



# RESEARCH DESIGN

## Part III

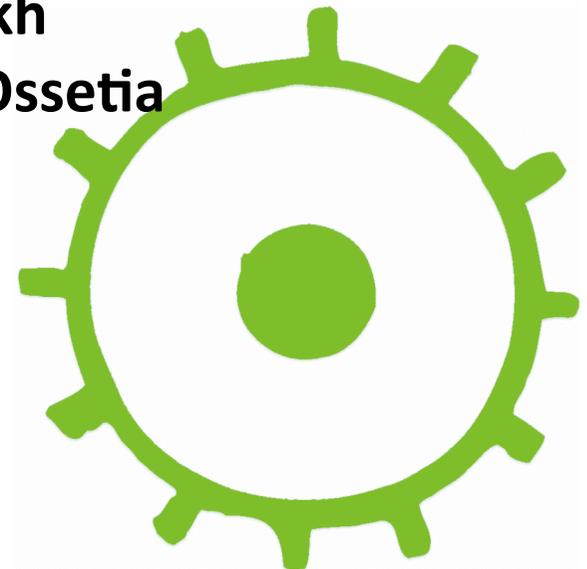
### Interviews and Case Studies

#### **Experts interviewed:**

Jan Eliasson, Terhi Hakala, Pär Stenbäck,  
Thorvald Stoltenberg, Heikki Talvitie, Sten  
Widmalm

#### **Case studies:**

**Nagorno-Karabakh**  
**Abkhazia and South Ossetia**  
**Kashmir**  
**South Sudan**  
**Palestine-Israel**



# The Autonomy and Its Institutions –

Sarah Stephan

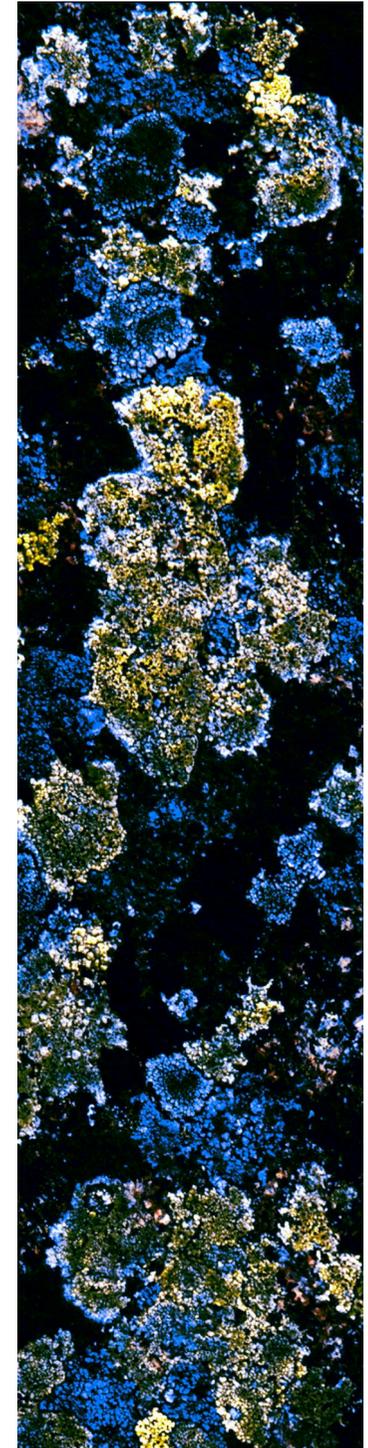
## Legislative framework

1921 Act on Autonomy: substantial revisions in 1951  
and 1991, 3rd revision under preparation

+

Recognition of Åland's status in Constitution of  
Finland

**Continuity and change:** League of Nations' guarantees have remained major points of reference while Act on Autonomy has been adapted to national and international developments (HR standards, EU membership)



# Institutional Design:

## Strong Ålandic institutions

Legislative Assembly, Government of Åland

+

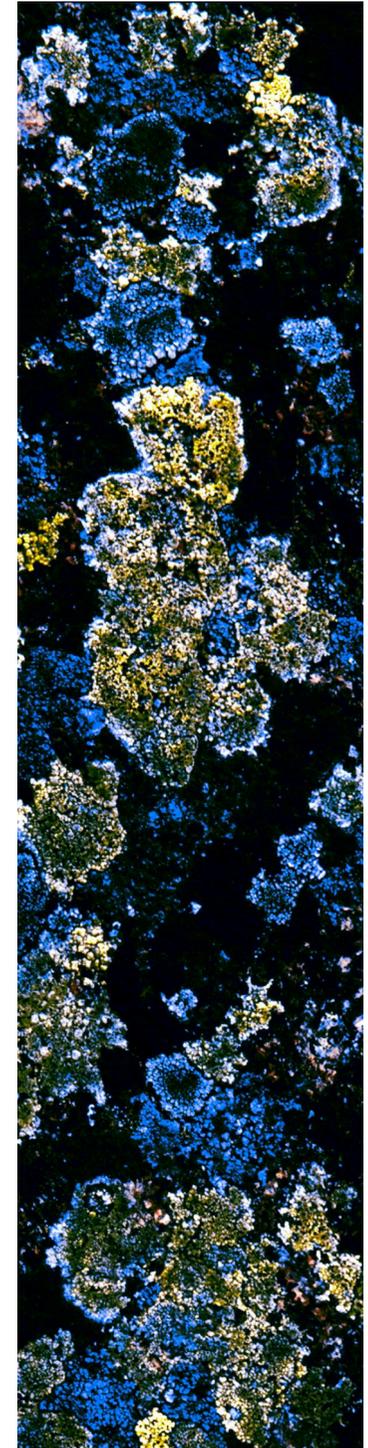
## 'Joints'

The President of the Republic, the Governor,  
the Åland Delegation,

Ålandic MP

+

**Continuous and long-term forms of contact** on  
ministerial level, through contact group,  
Nordic cooperation & on EU level



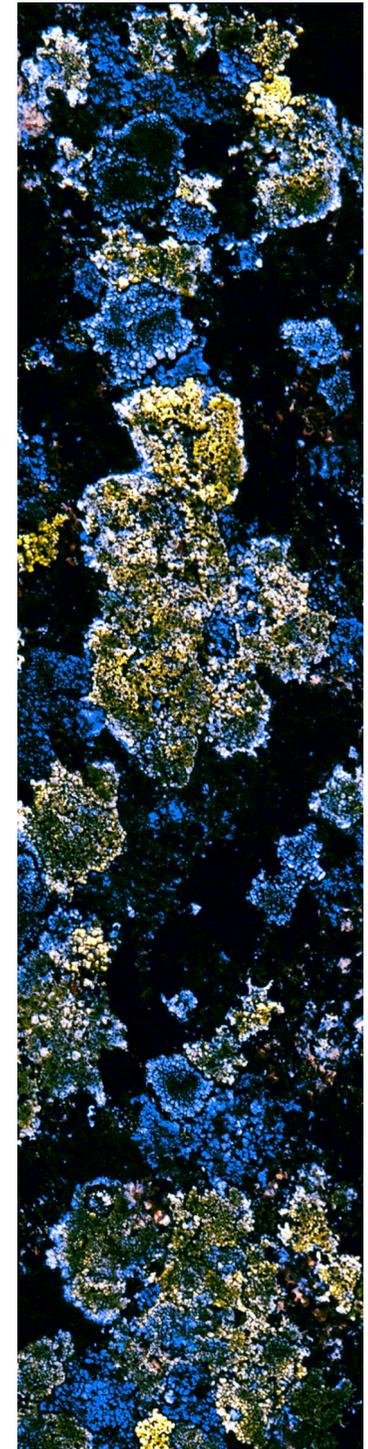
## Adaptation of the legal framework

e.g.

- clear enumeration of Autonomy vs. State powers (1951 & '91)
- 'Åland Protocol' to EU Accession Treaty (1994)
- right to vote in municipal elections extended to foreign residents (1995 & 2006)
- changes in system of tax equalisation (1991)

## & institutional set-up

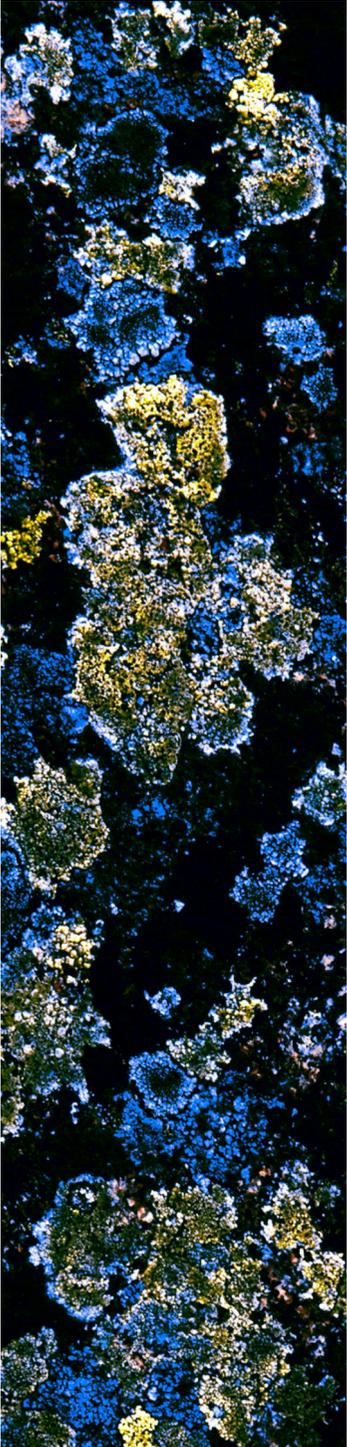
- extended role of the Åland Delegation
  - establishment of an EU Unit
- Ålandic representative at Perm. Rep of Finland in Brussels
- 'coalitions' on party level with counterparts on the mainland and in Brussels
  - Ålandic representation in Nordic cooperation
    - contact group





# The Demilitarisation and Neutralisation of the Åland Islands – Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark

- Continuity ensured by longstanding reaffirmed international agreements – not questioned but not really kept alive?
- Absence of constitutional entrenchment
- Deviations during periods of war and prewar from the neutralisation regime
- The Ålanders (the regional authorities, the Åland Parliament as well as the general public) are the most keen supporters of the regime



# The Demilitarisation and Neutralisation of the Åland Islands – current trends

- Absence of updated nautical charts for specialised as well as for general use
- Challenges to demilitarisation due to technological developments, intensified military cooperation in the region, the grey zone between military and non-military activities and economic efficacy

# The Cultural and Linguistic Safeguards – Heidi Öst

## Four areas of regulation

1

Language used by public authorities

2

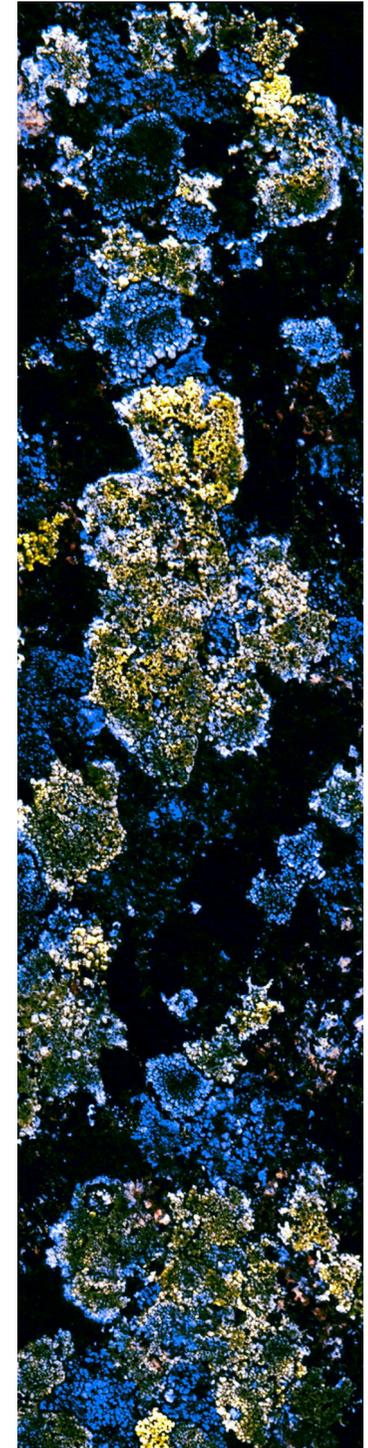
The right to vote and stand in elections

3

Language used and taught in public schools

4

Access to land and resources



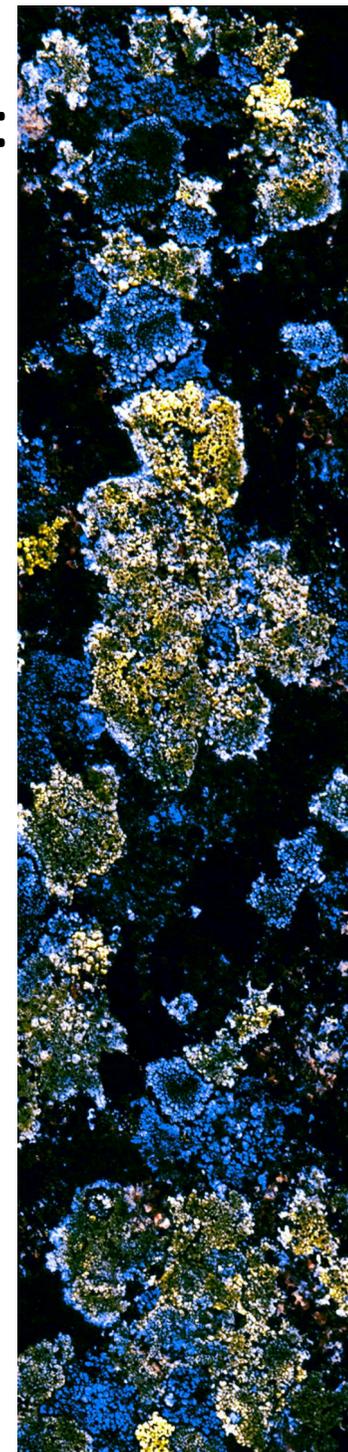
# The Cultural and Linguistic Safeguards: **Continuity and Change**

Adaptation of safeguards to national and international developments:

e.g.

- Evolution of the land regime from a "right of redemption" to a system of prior permission required for land acquisitions and for business establishments ( 1951)
- Teaching of foreign languages in public schools (1951 & 1991)
- Extension of right to vote in municipal elections to foreign residents (1995 & 2006)

But basically stable regulations of the language used by public authorities.

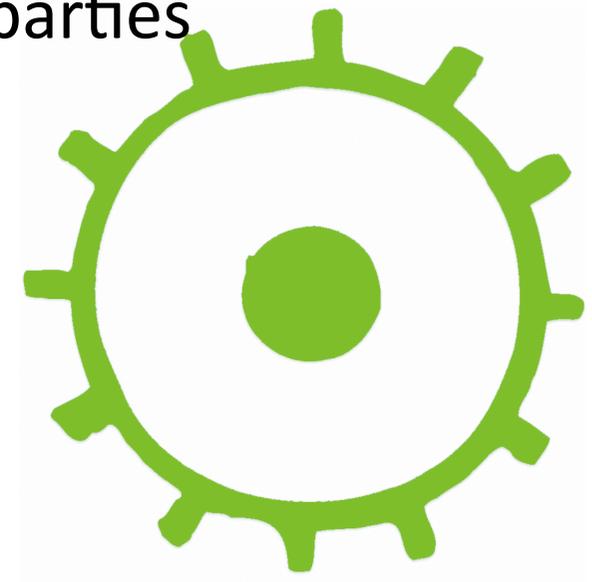




# Summary of Conclusions

Theoretical framework concerning the robustness and longevity of autonomy solutions

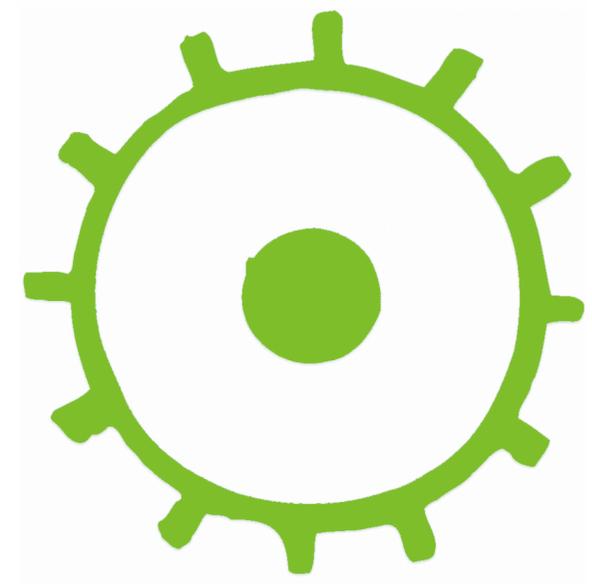
- 1) Timing
- 2) Nature of the dispute
- 3) Democratic requirement
- 4) The role of external actors, including most importantly parties to disputes and kin-states
- 5) Institutional design





# The use of the Åland Example in practice

- Upon demand, rather than promoted
- As temporary or as permanent solution
- Usage at three levels:
  - As a set of principles (will to compromise and minority accommodation)
  - As an example of evolving institutional design
  - As a physical and a symbolic meeting space





# Reconceptualising autonomy and the Åland Example

**The regime on Åland can be looked at as a network of multi-level contacts rather than as a tool of isolation**

**Issues of security and territorial control are often kept essentially outside discussions concerning conflict resolution and autonomy solutions. On Åland they were solved beforehand.**

