

# Territorial Autonomy as a Tool for Diversity Management: Lessons from the Åland Example

**Online course, 5 ECTS**

**Responsible teacher:** Associate Professor of International Law, JD Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark

**Participants:** Max 20

**Charge:** Tuition fee 90 €

**Application by:** 25.09.2020

**Duration:** 19.10.2020 – 08.01.2021

**Format:** The course will be taught online on a digital e-learning platform through a rich selection of resources including course literature, audio and video material and a discussion forum. All participants will receive further instructions upon admission to the course. The course presupposes an interactive use of the digital course platform by the students. The language of instruction is English. The course is offered in a cooperation between the Åland Islands Peace Institute and the Open University/Åland University of Applied Sciences.

**Prerequisites:** The course approaches territorial autonomy from an interdisciplinary perspective, focusing on law and political science but with insights from many other angles. A bachelor's degree in the humanities (political science, peace and conflict studies, international law, public administration or other relevant disciplines) or equivalent experience and a proficient command of English are recommended prerequisites for successful participation. Each module includes obligatory tasks that need to be fulfilled in order to proceed to the next module.

**Learning objectives:** The course is an introduction to territorial autonomy, in theory and practice, and the so-called "Åland Example". The aim of the course is to provide participants with a broad academic framework for discussing territorial autonomy from different perspectives, among others against the background of concepts such as self-determination, power-sharing, regional integration and minority rights. After completion of the course the student should:

- have a solid knowledge about territorial autonomy based on a broad academic framework of different perspectives
- have a solid knowledge about the Åland islands solution and the concept of the "Åland Example"
- be able to relate the concept of autonomy to adjacent concepts such as power-sharing, self-determination, federalism and minority rights
- be acquainted with the characteristics of the Åland Island's special status of demilitarisation, neutralisation and cultural and linguistic safeguards





- have knowledge about the relational processes between autonomous regions and the state
- be able to critically analyse and use mechanisms of territorial autonomy to different international situations, and
- be able to formulate, analyse and discuss central theoretical concepts of territorial conflict management.

**Contents:** The course encompasses 5 modules, as well as introductory reading materials and a final essay of 4000 words.

- Political power-sharing and institutional solutions for autonomy
- Linguistic safeguards, the ‘right of domicile’ and diversity issues
- Security perspectives: Demilitarisation, neutralisation, collective security
- The challenge of multi-level governance and regional integration
- Tools for Conflict Resolution and case studies

**Approach:** The Åland Example is used as a main case study. We will discuss the demilitarisation and neutralisation, the autonomy regime as well the cultural and linguistic safeguards involved. A focus will be on the development of the regime over time, including more recent developments and comparative elements. The course will also discuss the relevance of territorial autonomy as a possible tool for conflict resolution. Students shall be encouraged to critically reflect upon the relevance of autonomy as a potential solution to ethno-political conflicts.

Successful participants will be awarded 5 credit points based on the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). The workload thus corresponds to approximately 132 hours of work, i.e. an average of 10 hrs/week. Student work includes compulsory reading, audio and video material, regular participation in forum discussions and short essays to be completed within every module. A final essay (4000 words) is due at the end of the course.

**Examination:** A final grade on grading scale A-E (where A is the highest possible grade) will be awarded for the final essay upon completion of the course and its compulsory tasks. Regular and substantive participation, oral and written, within deadlines *across all modules* is a prerequisite for being allowed to submit the final essay. A certificate is issued by the Open University/Åland University of Applied Sciences for those that have successfully completed all parts of the course.

**Readings:** All compulsory course material will be provided on the e-platform. Prior to the start of Module I, participants will be required to read two introductory texts (ca 40 pages).





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The Åland Islands Peace Institute

### Contact and registration:

Register by sending an e-mail to [open@ha.ax](mailto:open@ha.ax), with the following information:

1. the course name, 2. your full name, 3. birth date, 4. address, 5. E-mail-address, 6. highest/latest university degree/qualification.

### Deadline 25/9/2020

Please contact main course teacher Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark ([sia\[at\]peace.ax](mailto:sia[at]peace.ax)) if you have questions about the content of the course, or Mirjam Lukola ([mirjam\[at\]peace.ax](mailto:mirjam[at]peace.ax)), course administrative assistant on all other matters.

The homepage of the Åland Islands Peace Institute can be accessed through [www.peace.ax](http://www.peace.ax)

