



Territorial Autonomy as a Resource for Diversity & for Conflict Resolution

Lessons from the Åland Example 100

Online course, 5 ECTS

Application by: 02.09.2022

Duration: 03.10.2022 – 30.12.2022

Charge: Administration Fee 100 € (Open University)

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 and comparative perspective, with law and political science as starting points. A bachelor's degree in the humanities (political science, peace and conflict studies, international law, public administration or other relevant disciplines) or equivalent experience as well as a proficient command of English are recommended prerequisites for successful participation. Each of the five modules includes obligatory tasks that need to be fulfilled before proceeding to the next module. Study can otherwise be done at students' own pace. There is, however, possibility for regular informal group tutoring for those who so wish.

Contents: The course encompasses 5 modules, as well as introductory reading materials and a final essay of 4000 words. The modules focus on the following main themes:

- Political and institutional solutions for territorial autonomy
- Linguistic safeguards, diversity issues, and local citizenship elements such as the 'right to domicile'
- Security perspectives, local and interstate security tools, incl. demilitarisation and neutralisation and policing
- The challenge of multi-level governance and regional integration
- Tools for Conflict Resolution and Case Studies





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

Teachers: Associate Professor of International Law, Jur. Dr. Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark & Dr. Alexander Osipov

Approach: The Åland Example which in 2021-2022 commemorates its centenary anniversary is used as a main case study. How has it survived the passage of time and periods of crisis? We will discuss the autonomy regime and its challenges, demilitarisation and neutralisation at a time of global polarisation, 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 and experience of territorial autonomy as a possible tool for conflict resolution. Students shall be encouraged to critically reflect upon the relevance of all the above institutions across time and space.

Successful participants will be awarded 5 credit points based on the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). The workload 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 assignments to be completed within every module. A final essay (4000 words) is due at the end of the course (to be submitted by 30.12.2022).



**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 digital platform. Prior to the start of Module I, participants will be required to read introductory texts (ca 40 pages).

Contact and registration:

Register by sending an e-mail to open@ha.ax, with the following information:

1. Course name
2. Your full name
3. Date of birth
4. Address
5. E-mail-address
6. Highest/latest university degree/qualification

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

Registration deadline 02.09.2022

