



Territorial Autonomy as a Resource for Diversity & Conflict Resolution - Lessons with the Åland Example as one point of departure

Online course, 5 ECTS

Participants: Max 20

Charge: Tuition fee 100 €

Application by: 08.09.2023

Duration: 02.10.2023 – 29.12.2023

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. Digital seminars with local and international experts from academia and various institutions.

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 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 are, however, regular digital seminars (ca two seminars / 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, multilevel governance, 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.

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 autonomy
- Linguistic safeguards, diversity issues, and local citizenship elements such as the 'right of domicile'
- Security perspectives, local and interstate security tools, incl. policing and demilitarisation, neutralisation
- The challenges of multi-level governance and regional integration processes
- Tools for conflict resolution and case studies

Approach: The Åland Example which has just had its centenary anniversary is used as a main case study. We will discuss the autonomy regime and its challenges, demilitarisation and neutralisation at a time of global militarisation and polarisation, as well the identity perspectives and the cultural and linguistic safeguards involved. A focus will be on the development of regimes 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** (incl. digital seminar). 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 (to be submitted by 29.12.2023).

Examination:

A grade on grading scale A-E (where A is the highest possible grade) will be awarded for the final essay and 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





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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).

Registration and Contact:

Apply for registration 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

Deadline for application 08.09.2023

Please contact course coordinator Petra Granholm ([petra\[@\]peace.ax](mailto:petra[@]peace.ax)), or course responsible teacher associate professor/director/Dr Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark ([sia\[at\]peace.ax](mailto:sia[at]peace.ax)) if you have questions.

The homepage of the Åland Islands Peace Institute can be accessed through www.peace.ax

