

Summer School on Human Rights, Minorities and Diversity Management

The Revival of Self-determination: opportunities, concerns and challenges

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Bozen/Bolzano – Italy

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The Revival of Self-determination: opportunities, concerns and challenges

In the last few years, claims for self-determination, secession and independence have entered a new phase. In Western Europe, the borders of states seemed settled yet independence movements re-gained importance in Scotland, Catalonia and Flanders. In other parts of the world, claims to form an individual state are long-standing issues and have proven to be very durable. For instance, Tibet has been claiming for its self-determination from virtually 100 years, since the Chinese occupation. Other territories such as Palestine, Abkhazia and many more also have been fighting for their right to self-determination since several decades.

The International Summer School “Human Rights, Minorities and Diversity Management: The Revival of Self-determination: opportunities, concerns and challenges” takes up these new and old trends and analyzes them from a variety of different perspectives. The prominent role of international law in the debate of secession and self-determination will be further complemented by perspectives of political science and sociology. On the one hand, sub-national political parties as well as social movements have always been important drivers of self-determination claims. On the other hand, international players such as the United Nations, the European Union and others, maneuvered by their members, play a significant role in hindering or facilitating the right to self-determination. The emergence of new states through unilateral declarations of independence, such as in the case of Kosovo, are confronted with bilateral agreements, such as in the case of Slovakia and Czech Republic.

In particular, the Summer School aims to discuss the following topics:

- external self-determination vs. various forms and degrees of self-government
- the role of regionalist and nationalist parties
- the role of violence in independence movements
- minority rights protection
- economic and financial implications of secession and independence

Methodology

Presenters and students at this year's Institute for Minority Rights' Summer School will be challenged with core questions regarding self-determination. The legal perspective will be focused on the theoretical aspects and on the implementation of legal standards in specific case studies. This will lay the groundwork for further discussion about the social and political implications of these new and old trends vis-à-vis self-determination, secession and independence.

Students will not only get an overall introduction to diversity management, human rights and minority rights in particular but also a focus on the dimensions of self-determination. They will have the opportunity to learn from and discuss with international leading academics, lawyers and practitioners from international organizations on how claims and policies may be successfully accommodated and implemented. The teaching approach of the Summer School will provide for interactive thought-provoking academic lectures, as well as with the opportunity to engage in hypothetical case studies and work group exercises.

The program is tailored to:

- Post-graduate students wishing to acquire greater competitive personal competence beneficial for a future career in academia or in practice-oriented professions;
- Lawyers, economists, political and social scientists and others working in non-governmental organizations;
- Civil servants from local, regional or national administrations who primarily deal with minority and diversity related issues and therefore require both theoretical and practical training in this year's topics; and
- Journalists and teachers interested in recent developments, current theories and advanced training in related fields.

Location & Institutions

Scholars and practitioners as well as students will elaborate on the topics of the Summer School in the city of Bolzano/Bozen – Italy, which itself is populated by a majority population of Italian speakers, although it is a capital of a province dominated by the German-speaking minority. In addition, the city is home to migrants constituting 13% of the city's population and a tiny Ladin minority.

This year's Summer School is offered by the Institute for Minority Rights of the European Academy Bozen/Bolzano (EURAC) in co-operation with Middlesex University School of Law, London.

The European Academy of Bozen/Bolzano (EURAC) is located in the autonomous region of Trentino-Alto Adige/South Tyrol in northern Italy. The case of South Tyrol is often referred to as a model case of self-governance as well as a model solution for minority protection and of the accommodation of diversity. Hence EURAC is able to provide exceptional theoretical and practical knowledge in the examination and application of issues related to minority protection and regionalism, as well as in relation to immigration in regions with strong cultural identities.

Middlesex University School of Law offers a distinctive global perspective and environment for students and researchers. As well as established undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in law, there are a number of minority rights academics who form part of the staff, researching in areas including minority rights in Asia-Pacific, Africa and the Middle East, international criminal law and indigenous peoples' rights. The recent addition of the European Human Rights Advocacy Centre to the School of Law, which assists non-governmental organisations and lawyers in Russia and the South Caucasus in taking cases to the European Court of Human Rights, has added expertise in human rights litigation. The annual Minority Rights Summer School has been hosted by staff from the School of Law, in conjunction with the Irish Centre for Human Rights, for over a decade.

Organizational Aspects

Tuition fee: 350€ (including lunch)

Accommodation, travel costs and other expenses are not covered by the tuition fee.

Convenient accommodation for participants can be arranged by the organizers.

For further information, including detailed programme and application procedure, please visit: www.eurac.edu/summerschool

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