

Insular Regions and European Integration: Corsica and the Åland Islands Compared

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John Loughlin and Farimah Daftary

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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The “Corsican Question” is one whose particular features set it apart from most other examples of “minority issues” in Europe. The presence of these features entails one major consequence, namely, that analysts of the Corsican question, as well as citizens involved in the political debate, often find it hard to escape the fetters of a fixed set of references. This report, which reflects discussions held during a seminar co-organised by the European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI) and the Åland Islands Peace Institute in Mariehamn (Åland) in August 1998, represents an attempt to break loose from some of these apparently unavoidable elements. To this end, the organisers invited a group of Corsicans (whether members of elected bodies, political activists, scholars or representatives of NGOs) to visit the Åland Islands, observe their unique autonomy arrangement and political system, and share their reactions to it, well away from the controversies going on in Corsica proper. Keynote speeches by internationally recognised specialists of complementary (legal, political, economic) dimensions of minority issues provided the analytical backdrop for these discussions.

Why then was this initiative, in our opinion, such a necessary one?

First, Corsica is not a simple, “textbook” case of conflictual relations between a majority and a minority over a well-identified set of issues such as educational rights, political representation or economic development. Of course these and other issues are often invoked in the Corsican case, but they do not suffice to capture the complexity of the situation. More precisely, it is fair to observe that the quest for solutions is made more difficult by the interlocking of needs, aspirations and interests of different groups of actors. These conflicting interests are instrumental in perpetuating the violence which has plagued the everyday life of Corsicans for decades. For this reason, it was important to step back and reposition the Corsican question into a broader analytical framework.

This broader framework stresses the European dimension, as well as the specific problems shared by all insular regions. This makes it possible to address a whole range of questions, such as: does European Integration constitute a threat to island communities or, on the contrary, can it offer new opportunities? How can they make the most out of these opportunities? How can forms of multi-level governance, including local self-government, prove useful in this context?

Second, it is striking that (contrary to many cases that can be categorised as examples of “ethnic conflict”), the Corsican case is one that is hardly ever addressed outside of the French context. Whereas it has become quite normal to discuss the situation of other regions and minorities in a European perspective, it

often seems as if Corsica were locked in a universe all of its own, precluding any consideration of Corsican issues in a broader setting. Along the same lines, it is surprising how seldom international scholarly journals on minority languages, ethnic issues and the like carry articles about Corsica. We therefore deemed it important, if progress were to be made and new insights gained, to break what amounts to a geo-cultural shell, and to compare Corsica with the Åland Islands. These islands in the middle of the Baltic sea are profoundly different from Corsica, yet they share the challenges common to insular regions across Europe. In this sense, Åland provided just the right mix of similarity and difference that makes comparisons possible and fruitful.

Third, the fact that Corsica is hardly ever discussed outside of France implies that it is almost always French citizens who, in some perspective or other, write about Corsica. This is not always an advantage, because it can make it more difficult to escape the intellectual and cultural strictures mentioned earlier; yet, at the same time, familiarity with the French political system and a set of shared intellectual and cultural references is required for relevant analysis. However, in-depth understanding of these dimensions is, outside of the French-speaking world, not very common. Therefore, we are fortunate that Professor John Loughlin, who despite his Irish birth, Welsh residence and English mother tongue, is a genuine connoisseur of French politics, has been involved in this project and has been the chief contributor to this report.

The objectives of the organisers of the seminar were therefore to propose a deliberately unusual approach to the Corsican question. Whether this endeavour will prove useful, only time will tell; however, very positive reactions to the recent publication of the seminar proceedings in French¹, and frequently made references, in Corsica itself, to a “change of climate”, suggest that the effort has been worthwhile; ECMI is therefore particularly proud to have initiated this venture.

Although it would be impossible to name all those who have contributed to making this seminar an enjoyable and stimulating event, we would like to express our thanks to the Prime Minister of the Åland government (*Ålands landskapsstyrelse*), Mr. Roger Jansson, and to the Åland Legislative Assembly (*Ålands lagting*) for their hospitality and generous support. We also express our gratitude to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, in particular H.E. Secretary of State Mr. Jukka Valtasaari as well as H.E. Holger Rotkirch, Director General of Legal Affairs, for their friendly welcome in Helsinki. Last

¹ Centre Européen des Questions de Minorités (ECMI), avec la participation de l’ Institut pour la Paix des îles Åland : *Autonomies insulaires. Vers une politique de la différence pour la Corse?* (Insular Autonomies - Towards Politics of Identity/Politics of Diversity for Corsica?) (Ajaccio: Albiana, 1999) (ISBN 2-905124-47-4).

but not least, Mr. Robert Jansson and Ms. Carina Aaltonen from the Åland Islands Peace Institute (*Ålands fredsinstitut*) have made an invaluable contribution to the success of this event through their warm hospitality and perfect organisation. We have also greatly benefited from the experience of Mr. Pierre Joxe, former French Minister of the Interior, who kindly agreed to make a detour during his Scandinavian holiday to attend the seminar. We are also greatly indebted to the scientific as well as political expertise of Claude Olivesi, Senior Lecturer in Political Science at the University of Corsica (and, since March 1998, General Councillor of North Corsica) who guided us in our understanding of Corsica and Corsicans as well as facilitated access to key Corsican personalities during a Preparatory Mission to Corsica in April 1998 by John Loughlin and ECMI Research Associate Farimah Daftary. In addition to all those named, we also wish to thank all seminar participants for their ideas and involvement. Finally, special thanks are due to ECMI Research Associate Farimah Daftary, whose dedication and hard work were essential in the organisation of the seminar as well as in the production of this report.

We hope that this booklet, the fifth in the “Reports” series of the European Centre for Minority Issues, may serve to the renewal of the political debate in Corsica and make a contribution, modest as it may be, to civil peace on the appropriately named *île de beauté*.

Dr. François Grin
ECMI Acting Director
Flensburg, 17 September 1999

INTRODUCTION

The origins of this seminar lay in a discussion held in October 1997 between John Loughlin, Professor of European Politics at Cardiff University, Wales, Stefan Troebst, then Director of the European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI), and ECMI Research Associate Farimah Daftary. The work of ECMI had hitherto been focused on minority issues in Central and Eastern Europe and it was felt that it would be important to examine a case in Western Europe where violence was being used to achieve the political demands of a cultural or linguistic minority. The three major cases where this was still happening (or had happened in the recent past) in the West were Northern Ireland, the Basque Country and Corsica. The first two cases were struggling toward peaceful settlements while Corsica was still lurching from one crisis to another with no let-up in the use of violence. Indeed, in February 1998, shortly after ECMI decided to address the Corsican case, a hitherto unknown clandestine group assassinated the Prefect for the Island, Claude Erignac. A solution seemed further away than ever.

Clearly, however, one cannot arrive in Corsica with ready-made solutions to its problems. It was felt that a more sensitive approach would be to situate the “Corsican Question” within the wider context of European integration in order to reflect upon the changing external environment within which the Island finds itself and the new challenges and opportunities which are associated with these changes. Indeed, insular regions, like other regions within the European Union (EU), today face special challenges in a Europe which is undergoing massive geo-political, economic and social changes. One need only think of the arrival of the single currency and the prospects of EU enlargement to realise what these challenges represent for small island regions such as Corsica.

It was also felt that Corsica might usefully be compared with another island region, but one characterised by peace, prosperity and self-confidence resulting from a well-functioning autonomy arrangement adapted to its specific needs. To compare Corsica with the case of the Åland Islands—an archipelago between Finland and Sweden, which belong to Finland but where 95% of the inhabitants speak Swedish—seemed very appropriate. This decision was further prompted by the eagerness of a local partner in the form of the Åland Islands Peace Institute. The project then began to take shape under the guidance of John Loughlin, Professor of European Politics at the School of European Studies, Cardiff University of Wales, and Claude Olivesi, Senior Lecturer at the University of Corsica at Corte. In April 1998, Farimah Daftary and John Loughlin, on a visit to Corsica facilitated by Claude Olivesi, spent a week meeting key figures from all shades of the political spectrum as well as

journalists and civil groups. The idea of the seminar on the Åland Islands to discuss the Corsican Question aroused a great deal of interest and enthusiasm.

In the end, over thirty people took part in the seminar. From the Corsican side most shades of political opinion on the Island were represented. These ranged from those who advocated complete separation to those who were the strongest defenders of Corsica's place in the French Republic. Most were regional councillors, members of the Corsican Assembly (*Assemblée de Corse*), or general councillors from the two departmental councils (*Haute-Corse* and *Corse du Sud*). These included Paul Giacobbi, President of the *Conseil Général de Haute-Corse*. There were also representatives of groups from Corsican civil society as well as several journalists from the French media. The seminar organisers as well as the participants were also delighted and privileged with the presence throughout the seminar of Pierre Joxe (currently President of the French Court of Audit / *Cour des comptes*). Mr. Joxe, while serving as French Interior Minister had been responsible for revising Corsica's statute in 1991 (*statut particulier*). Mr. Joxe, who was vacationing at the time in Scandinavia, was present at the seminar in a personal capacity and not as a representative of the French Government. However, the press attaché of the French Embassy in Helsinki did attend in an official capacity. The other participants were politicians and administrators from mainland Finland and from the Åland Islands (see Appendix 1). These included the Prime Minister of Åland, Roger Jansson, and Gunnar Jansson, a member of the Finnish delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

The presentations made by the participants are summarised here with name attributions as ECMI also received written contributions. However, the remarks made during the discussions are reported without named attributions as this report has not been reviewed by the participants. Participants from Corsica are referred to as Corsican participants, while participants from the rest of France are referred to as French participants—a Corsican participant being also, of course, a French participant. Councillors at the Corsican Assembly are referred to as regional councillors, while those from the departmental councils are referred to as general councillors. Participants from Åland are referred to as Åland participants.

**GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION
OF CORSICA AND THE ÅLAND ISLANDS**



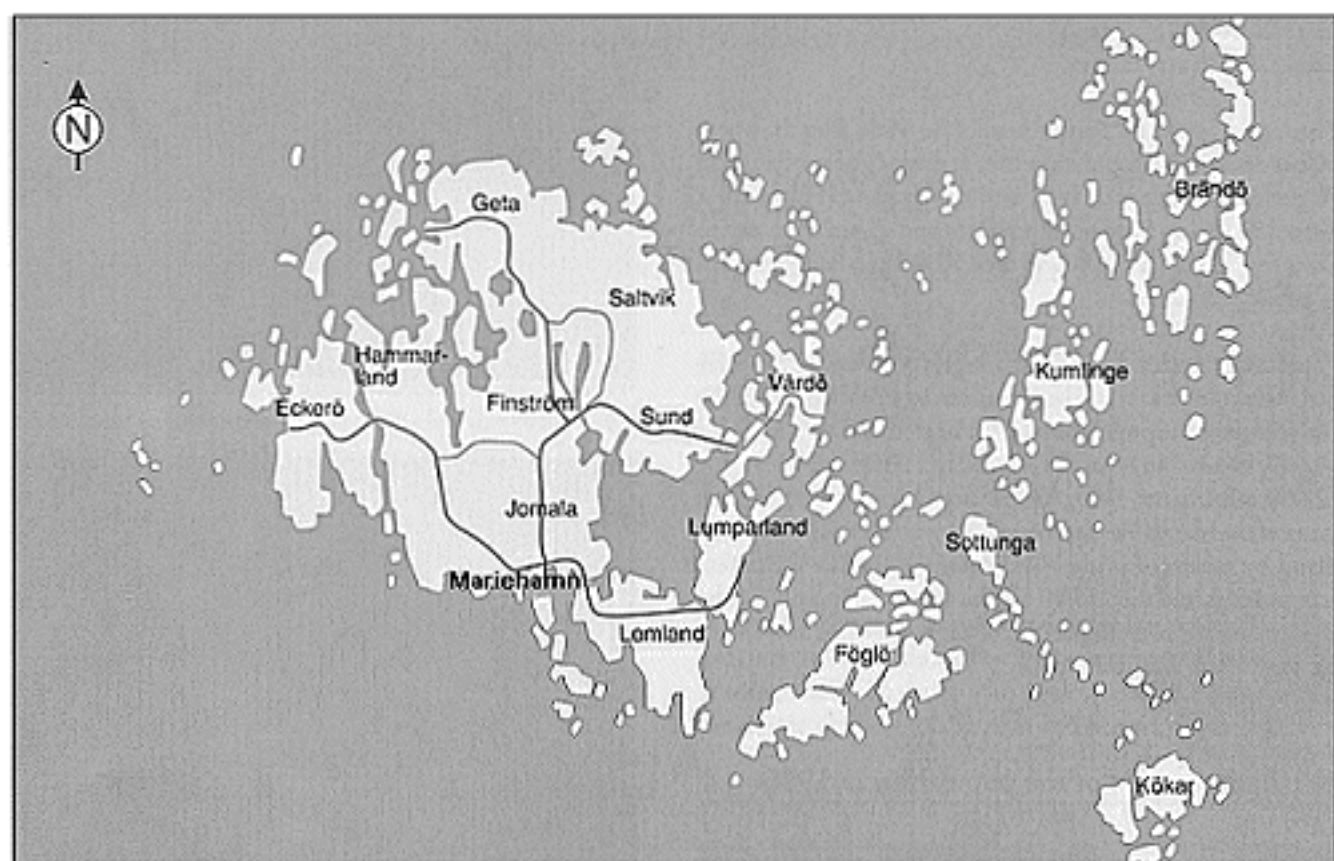
CORSICA: GEOPOLITICAL LOCATION



CORSICA: GEOPOLITICAL LOCATION



BASIC FACTS ABOUT THE ÅLAND ISLANDS



Total area	6,784 km ²
land area	1,527 km ²
Main Island	1,010 km ²
Highest point above sea level	128 m
Mean temperature for 24-hour period	July +16°C
	February -4°C
Population	about 25,000
Marichamn	about 10,500
Main Island apart from Marichamn	about 12,000
Outer island districts	about 2,500

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO CORSICA AND TO THE ÅLAND ISLANDS

Corsica

Corsica is an island in the Western Mediterranean, the third largest in surface area (8,722 km² and 183 km in length and 84.5 in width) of all the Mediterranean islands (after Sicily and Sardinia) with a population of about 260,000. The character of the island is captured by the striking description of the 19th century German geographer Ratzel who called it “a mountain in the sea” with five peaks above 2,500m and the highest, Monte Cinto, standing at 2,710m. The topographical features of Corsica are summed up by saying that it is possible to ski in the mountains in the morning and go swimming in the afternoon! Corsica has been aptly described as the *île de beauté*.

Corsica’s history, however, is rather less benign than its climate. There is evidence of early human settlements near the coast (at Filitosa) and of an indigenous Corsican population living inland in the mountain fastnesses. However, the Island’s strategic position in the Western Mediterranean made it a coveted prize to be won by the maritime powers that succeeded each other in this region. Phocian Greeks founded the town of Alalia in 565 BC, later called Aléria by the Romans who conquered the Island and made it the capital of the

<p><i>Corsica’s history is less benign than its climate</i></p>

Province of Corsica-Sardinia. However, the indigenous population, called the *Corsi*, seems to have survived in the interior. Roman Corsica lasted for a period of 900 years but ended with the collapse of the Roman Empire.

Vandals, Goths and Lombards occupied it in the 5th and 6th centuries before it came under the protection of the Papacy in the later 6th and 7th centuries. Between the 8th and 10th centuries, Corsica suffered from the Saracen attacks on Christian sites of the Mediterranean that happened during this period. It then passed to the Pisans before finally becoming a colony of Genoa between the 16th and 18th centuries.

During these historical periods, one notes the presence of two distinct groups on the island: a native Corsican population living in the mountainous interior and the outsider groups (Romans, Pisans, and Genoese) settled on the coast. Relations between the Corsicans and the Genoese were always difficult but degenerated seriously throughout the early years of the 18th century. Between 1730 and 1769, the Island was in a state of revolt against the colonisers. For the second half of this period (1755-1769), Pascal Paoli, regarded by many present-day Corsicans as the Father of the Nation (*U Babbu di a Patria*), led an embryonic Republic which was set up with a Constitution written or influenced by Jean-Jacques Rousseau. This Republic lasted until 1769 when Genoa, which

had already requested help from France to quell the revolt, ceded control of the Island to the French Monarchy. Paoli went into exile in England for twenty years. Although the Paolian Republic may be regarded as part of the founding myth of contemporary Corsican regionalism and nationalism, it must be remarked that joining France found favour with many of the Corsican notables who had no wish to return to Genoa. In fact, at the time of the French Revolution, in 1789, the first of the Corsican demands in their *cahiers de doléances* to the National Assembly was to become fully French (*français à part entière*).

For the next two hundred years, relations between Corsica and the French State were marked by profound ambiguity. On the one hand, most Corsicans identified strongly with France and thought that being part of a great power was preferable to remaining an Italian island such as Sardinia or Sicily. On the other hand, *culturally* Corsica retains many of the features of this Italianate sphere: its language, social customs, forms of family relationships, and even the prevalence of violence and banditry, etc., have more in common with certain parts of Italy

Relations between Corsica and the French State were marked by ambiguity

than with mainland France. In other words, Corsican *identity* is complex: an Italian linguistic and societal culture overlaid with identification with France. This ambiguity also applies to the level of political institutions. On the surface, Corsica has had the same institutions as France during its successive regimes. However, the actual functioning of these institutions has been marked by “clanism” and patronage. The representatives of the French State tended to turn a blind eye to the practices of the clan leaders who, in turn, ensured the loyalty to the State on the part of their clientele.

This loyalty to France manifested itself during the First World War when Corsica, like other French rural regions, gave a great number of its young men to the War. Many were killed or wounded and, while this cemented further the link between the Island and the French State, it also accelerated an economic decline that had begun in the 1890s. Already, at the end of the 19th century, some regionalists, never more than a small minority of intellectuals, rejected the position of Corsica in the French Republic. After the First World War, their hostility to France hardened and some openly identified with Mussolini’s fascist state in Italy. During the Second World War, the Italian army occupied Corsica and some of these regionalists collaborated with them. On the other hand, Corsica’s identification with France was completed by the fact that the region was the first to liberate itself in the uprising of 9 September 1943 and the only one to do so by force of arms.

The collaboration of some regionalists with the occupants weakened the regionalist cause after the War but the movement developed again soon afterwards. However, the loyalty of the majority of Corsicans during the liberation sparked off a set of demands based on the notion of a “just return” for services rendered. In the 1950s, it was evident that Corsica’s economic situation was catastrophic. This sparked off a new regionalist mobilisation, partly led by the Corsican section of the French Communist Party, whose goals were economic regeneration rather than political change. This time the regionalist movement gathered much more support than hitherto. The new Corsican regionalism branched off into several distinct but related groups making

*The new
Corsican
regionalism*

different kinds of demands: economic, cultural, but also demands for political autonomy, that is, a restructuring of the relations between Corsica and France. There is some overlap in the membership of these different tendencies but it is possible to distinguish three basic positions. *Jacobin regionalism* which does not question the adherence of the region to the Republic but, on the contrary, uses this to make a number of demands based on the notion of equality of citizenship: Corsicans have proved their loyalty to the French State and therefore have a right to expect the State to respond to their economic problems. *Autonomist regionalism* seeks a statute of autonomy within the French Republic. This is based on the notion that Corsicans constitute a distinct people, ethnic group or even nation. This specificity should be recognised through the granting of special institutions of self-government (or autonomy). Within this tendency, represented by the *Unione di u Populu Corsu* (UPC), some would accept the model of a regionalised unitary state as in Italy while others advocate a federal system either in France or at the European level (a “Europe of the Regions”). Finally, there is the *separatism* of those who seek a separate Corsican state outside of France. This is based on the notion of the right of nations to self-determination. This is the position of the *Fronte di Liberazione Naziunale di a Corsica* (FLNC) (Corsican National Liberation Front) and the various political movements that have gravitated around it such as *A Cuncolta Naziunalista* (see Appendix 3). The autonomist and separatist positions share a number of common positions not least in that they consider Corsica to be a “nation” or “people” distinct from the rest of France. Sometimes, both autonomists and separatists are referred to as the “nationalist movement”. However, there are important differences in the methods of achieving these goals. The autonomists resorted to a kind of symbolic violence in the early 1970s but soon after declared themselves opposed to violence of any kind. The separatists, on the other hand, have systematically used violence from about the same period. However, although Corsicans sympathised with many of the demands of the nationalists, most wished to use peaceful methods within the framework of Republican legality and were completely opposed to the armed struggle.

During the Fourth Republic, in 1957, the French government responded to some of these demands with a *Plan d'action Régional* (PAR). This aimed to develop first tourism and then agriculture on the Island. This Plan was suspended when De Gaulle came to power in 1958 and the Fifth Republic was promulgated. With Algerian independence in 1962, however, it was reactivated when it became necessary to reintegrate into France the million French settlers (*pieds noirs*) displaced by the war. The government decided that Corsica would be an ideal site to locate some of them, especially as many were of Corsican origin and most Corsicans were, at that time, staunch supporters of French Algeria. Furthermore, the Corsican climate and landscape was similar to North Africa. As a result, about 17,000 *pieds noirs* arrived on the Island. Most were welcomed and integrated without difficulty. However, about 500 families were given land on the Island's only extensive plain on the eastern side (*Plaine orientale*), which had been earmarked for settlement by local Corsican farmers under the PAR. This caused deep resentment among Corsicans and led to the formation of the first clandestine groups using violence in the form of bomb attacks against both *piéd noir* property and against the offices of the agencies responsible for tourism and agricultural development. In 1975, a group of autonomists, led by the Simeoni brothers, staged an armed occupation of the wine cellar of a *piéd noir* winegrower at Aléria on the *Plaine orientale* who had been accused of trafficking a low-quality wine. This incident ended with the death of two *gendarmes* and serious rioting in Bastia. Thus, at this time, two forms of violence began: systematic campaigns by clandestine groups which had well-defined targets; and the more symbolic violence of the autonomists (symbolic in the sense of making a symbolic statement rather than as part of a prolonged campaign). The autonomists eventually abandoned this form of violence but the clandestine groups regrouped in 1976 to form the FLNC, deliberately choosing their name to imitate the Algerian FLN—in other words, choosing the path of “national liberation” of colonised peoples through armed struggle. They thus drew on an older Corsican tradition of the violence of the “noble” bandit who sought refuge in the *maquis* (romanticised by authors such as Flaubert, Hugo and Mérimée) as well as the *maquisards* (resistants) of the Second World War. This meant a break from the more right wing and reactionary tradition of Corsican regionalism and the development of a specifically *nationalist* movement.

The birth of
Corsican
nationalism

Corsican history from this point onward is a story of violence and counter-violence. The French Government responded to the *problème corse* with a mixture of repression and political concessions (usually too little, too late) none of which seemed to provide a solution. However, the first steps of a solution came with the election of President Mitterand and the Socialist reforms of 1981/2 that

The 1982 Special
Statute

accorded Corsica a special statute (*statut particulier*) in the context of a programme of decentralisation and regionalisation in France as a whole.² The Corsican Statute did recognise some of Corsica's special features and problems. This was symbolised by the name of its elected body which was called a regional assembly (*Assemblée de Corse*) rather than simply a regional council as in the other French regions. There was also some recognition of its cultural, geographical and economic specificity. It possessed two consultative committees (*offices*) dealing with culture and education, and economic development and social affairs respectively—the two most contentious parts of the Corsican dossier. The Corsican Assembly had no legislative powers, only limited competencies in fields of special concern: culture, transport, energy, planning and education. The Assembly, however, had the right to consult the government or be consulted by it on all matters concerning Corsica. One of the main effects of this reform, however, was to divide the nationalist and autonomist movements. The autonomists and some nationalists participated in elections to the new Assembly and took their seats when elected. Other nationalists chose to continue the armed struggle. This, in fact, led to intensification both in the number of attacks perpetrated and in the kind of violence being used with political killings becoming more common. However, even among those autonomists and nationalists participating in the new institutions there was dissatisfaction that the Statute made no reference to the existence of a distinct *peuple corse*³. The Assembly was beset with instability (four elections between 1982 and 1991!) partly because of the low threshold. This made it difficult to form stable executives. There were also serious irregularities in the electoral lists (a notorious feature of Corsican politics). In the end, the Corsican Assembly failed to function as it was meant to and political figures from all shades of the political spectrum agreed that the government should introduce a reform of its Statute.

In 1991, the then Minister of the Interior Pierre Joxe overhauled the Statute, modelling its replacement to some extent on the statute of the overseas territories (*Territoires d'Outremer - TOM*) and separating the Assembly and the executive. Thus, Corsica became a true *Collectivité territoriale* with a statute different from that of the other French metropolitan regions. The

<p>The "Joxe Statute" of 1991</p>

² Law of 2 March 1982 (*loi n° 82-214 du 2 mars 1982 "Statut de la Collectivité territoriale de Corse"*, *Journal officiel de la République française*, 3 March 1982, pp. 748-752). Cf. Helen Hintjens, John Loughlin and Claude Olivési, "The Status of Maritime and Insular France: The DOM-TOM and Corsica," In: John Loughlin and Sonia Mazey, (eds.), *The End of the French Unitary State? Ten Years of Regionalization in France (1982-1992)* (London: Frank Cass, 1995).

³ This was one of the key demands of the nationalist movement. François Mitterrand did at first seem to respond positively to this demand but all reference to the *peuple corse* was eliminated in the legislative texts underpinning the Assembly.

Corsican Assembly is elected for six years with a two-round proportional election. A 5% threshold was set for reaching the second round and a special bonus of seats given to the electoral list with the most votes. This new electoral system was designed to produce a clear majority within the Assembly. It may be consulted by the French Prime Minister on draft laws or decrees which directly affect the Island; however, it must respond within a short delay (15 days to one month). However, unlike the overseas territories, it is not mandatory that the Assembly be consulted. A separate “executive branch” (*Conseil exécutif*) is composed of seven “Ministers” selected from the Assembly (and who must surrender their position of regional councillor) and headed by the “President”. The law which led to the new Statute also recognised the *peuple corse, composante du peuple français*.⁴ However, this was struck down as unconstitutional by the French Constitutional Court (*Conseil constitutionnel*). The 1991 Statute also led to the fusion of the two specialised consultative committees into one—the CESC (*Conseil économique, social et culturel*). Corsica sets its own medium-term objectives for economic, social and cultural development as well as the means needed to reach these objectives (*Plan de développement de la Corse*). One of these means is the arrangements between the State and the Region (*Contrat de Plan-Etat Collectivité territoriale*).

Despite these attempts at reordering of Corsica’s constitutional relationship with the French State, violence has continued with the FLNC splitting into several factions and other secret armed groups appearing. Ominously, these factions began, in recent years, to turn their violence against each other. Finally, a further step in the radicalisation of the violence happened with the assassination of the French Prefect in Corsica, Claude Erignac, by an unknown clandestine group. Meanwhile, the political climate on the Island has deteriorated further with the publication of the Glavany Report⁵ whose findings

The continuation of nationalist violence

⁴ Article 1 of the Law of 13 May 1991 on the Special Statute of Corsica reads: « *La République française garantit à la communauté historique et culturelle que constitue le peuple corse, composante du peuple français, les droits à la préservation de son identité culturelle et à la défense de ses intérêts économiques et sociaux spécifiques. Ces droits liés à l’insularité s’exercent dans le respect de l’unité nationale, dans le cadre de la Constitution, des lois de la République et du présent statut.* » (Author’s translation : “The French Republic guarantees to the historic and cultural community constituted by the Corsican people, component of the French people, the right to preserve its cultural identity and to defend its specific economic and social interests. These rights related to insularity are to be exercised with respect for national unity, in the framework of the Constitution, of the laws of the Republic, and of this present statute.”) (“loi no 91-428 du 13 mai 1991 Statut de la Collectivité territoriale de Corse,” *Journal officiel de la République française*, 14 May 1993, pp. 6318-6329).

⁵ The 600 page report entitled “*Rapport de la commission d’enquête parlementaire sur l’utilisation des fonds publics en Corse*” (Report of the Parliamentary Enquiry Commission

pointed to the joint responsibility of the State and local actors in the misuse of state funds.

The Åland Islands

Åland shares with Corsica the geographical status of insularity (it is an archipelago of 6,500 islands and skerries, 65 of which are inhabited). Of the ca. 25,000 inhabitants, a little over 40% live in the only town, Mariehamn. Its inhabitants are also part of a linguistic and cultural minority in a unitary state (at

Åland – a demilitarised unilingually Swedish region belonging to Finland

independence in 1917, Finland chose the French state model) with historical and cultural links to a neighbouring state, Sweden. Indeed, Åland is a unilingually Swedish region belonging to

Finland, 95% of whose inhabitants speak Swedish. However, its history is much less violent and dramatic than Corsica’s. It was part of the Kingdom of Sweden until the latter’s defeat by Russia in the war of 1808-9 when Finland became a Grand Duchy of Russia. Åland was also ceded to Russia and became part of the Grand Duchy of Finland. At first, Russia heavily fortified the Islands which became its westernmost outpost. But at the end of the Crimean War in 1856, due to their strategic location in the Gulf of Bothnia between Sweden and Finland, the Islands were demilitarised under an international agreement signed by the powers involved in that conflict. Thus, for the first time, they became a subject of international law. When the Russian Empire collapsed in 1917, Finland

The autonomy of Åland: a solution which satisfied all three parties to the conflict

became an independent state. This caused some consternation on Swedish-speaking Åland as the islanders feared for the future status of their language and culture in a state dominated by

Finnish-speakers. The Ålanders therefore attempted to rejoin “motherland” Sweden which gave them support. Finland opposed the plan but hastily offered some legislative devolution in an Autonomy Act for Åland passed by the Finnish Parliament in May 1920. When this was rejected by the Ålanders who invoked the principle of self-determination as the basis of their claim to rejoin Sweden, the two Åland leaders behind the revolt were imprisoned. Because of Åland’s international status, the case was referred to the League of Nations, whose Council decided, in June 1921, that the Islands did not have the right to self-determination but must remain under the sovereignty of Finland. However, Finland was forced to accept two restrictions to its sovereignty: first, the Ålanders received guarantees for the protection of the Swedish language, culture and local customs; second, the Islands were to be demilitarised and neutralised by means of another international agreement. There would be self-government

on the Use of Public Funds in Corsica) was submitted by the president of this commission, Socialist deputy Jean Glavany, to Prime Minister Lionel Jospin on 9 September 1998.

through the Åland Parliament (the *Ålands landsting*, now *lagting*). This solution satisfied all three parties to the conflict: Sweden, Finland and Åland.

The 1920 Autonomy Act was modified in 1951 and a new Act promulgated in 1993. The provisions of these Acts together constitute a form of “regional citizenship” which lies at the heart of Åland’s autonomy. Regional citizenship,

*The concept of
“Regional Citizenship”
on Åland*

known formally as “right of domicile,” is necessary in order to vote in local and regional elections or to stand for election in Åland. In 1975, legislation was passed which restricted ownership of land to those who possess this Åland citizenship. This was an important provision given the pressure on land for holiday and weekend homes from those living in Sweden and Finland. There are certain limitations concerning trade: only family-run businesses may be operated by persons who do not possess right of domicile in Åland. To obtain this Åland citizenship at birth, one must have a mother or father who already possesses it. Finnish citizens moving to Åland may also obtain it after five years residence and provided they have a satisfactory knowledge of Swedish. Interestingly, regional citizenship can also be lost, when a person has been living outside of Åland for longer than five years. Finally, the Autonomy Act of 1993 confirmed the place of the Swedish language by ruling that it must be the language of education in schools maintained by public funds. English is also compulsory but Finnish is optional. Being a unilingually Swedish region, Swedish is used in all official contacts and Finnish authorities must correspond with those in Åland in Swedish.

The autonomy of the Åland Islands is strongly entrenched. First, as pointed out above, it is recognised in international law. Second, it can be altered or repealed only with the agreement of both the Finnish and Åland Parliaments, with the latter requiring a two-thirds majority. The Act gives the Åland Parliament powers of primary legislation in a wide range of areas⁶ thus giving them a high degree of control over their own affairs. In other areas, such as customs, monetary services and justice, Finnish laws apply. Åland has had its own flag

*Åland enjoys a
high degree of
control over its
own affairs*

since 1954 and its own postage stamp since 1984. The President of Finland has a right of veto over Åland legislation in cases where he believes the *Lagting* has exceeded its powers. The Åland Delegation is a body of experts appointed by the Islands and by the Finnish Government to help decide on such cases. The Åland *Landskapsstyrelse* (government) is composed of 5 to 7 members and is headed by the Prime Minister (*Lantråd*). It drafts and gives effect to matters in the spheres which, under the Autonomy Act, devolve upon

⁶ The most important are: education and culture; police; local government; health services; social affairs; the postal service; industrial development; internal communications; tenancy; broadcasting and television.

the Åland authorities. Finally, the Islands send one representative to the Finnish Parliament to ensure their voice is heard on nation-wide questions.

Although foreign affairs and international contacts are within the jurisdiction of the Finnish State, Åland enjoys a certain degree of representation and consultation on the international level: it has been represented since 1970 in the Nordic Council⁷ as well as a representative at the permanent representation of Finland to the EU. Furthermore, the *Lagting* must give its consent to international treaties contracted by Finland in areas coming under the competence of Åland for the treaty to apply to Åland too. Åland's special status was also recognised when Finland acceded to the EU by a special derogation from EU law in certain matters such as duty-free (a major source of the Islands' prosperity) (see Appendix 5).

The *Lagting* also has limited budgetary powers. Taxes are collected by the Finnish authorities but Åland receives a form of tax refund from the State to finance its affairs. This is not, however, a state subvention. The so-called "equalisation sum" which is annually transferred to Åland corresponds to 0.45% of the Finnish State's final income but may be modified. For example, if the economic development in Åland is more favourable than in the country as a whole, then Åland is to benefit from that.

This leads us to the final feature of Åland which stands in such stark contrast to Corsica: its economic prosperity, although this has been won only by turning what might have been serious disadvantages—insularity and a small internal

The key to Åland's economic prosperity: turning disadvantages into advantages

market—into advantages. In effect, its staple industries are shipping, agriculture and fishing, with a growing tourist industry. Services, including tourism, account for over 30% of employment among Ålanders, with communications, including shipping, coming second

at just under 20%. Although Åland's GDP is about 40% higher than the Finnish average thanks to the capital-intensive shipping industry, the average income is similar to that of Finland as a whole.⁸ These economic features are important in giving the Ålanders a sense of self-confidence and are an important part of the reasons why their autonomy functions so well.

⁷ The other members of the Nordic Council are: Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden, Iceland as well as Greenland (Denmark) and the Faroe Islands (Denmark).

⁸ The most recent figures (1996) from the Department of Statistics and Economic Research in Åland indicate a GDP per capita of 35,000 USD in Åland against 25,000 USD in Finland as a whole.

THE SEMINAR

Pierre Joxe, President of the National Court of Accounting and former Minister of the Interior, welcomed the participants with a speech that was optimistic with regard to the possibility of a future Corsica that was prosperous, peaceful and democratic. He recognised, of course, that it would be easy to be pessimistic given the political violence that had claimed the life of the Prefect Erignac but also the lives of policemen, gendarmes and simple citizens. He insisted, nevertheless, that a region as beautiful, well-endowed and alive as Corsica, with its almost privileged place at the heart of Europe and its cultural traditions, could eventually become prosperous and, indeed, envied by others. It was useful to

“If the Northern Irish can find a solution, why can’t the Corsicans?”

compare with other situations. He had, when Minister of the Interior, organised a conference in Ajaccio on the statutes of European island regions both in the Mediterranean and in the North. Almost all of these islands possessed a special legal status which recognised their specificity. Comparison also helps one to understand the problem of violence. Tension and violence exist in many places in Europe from the Baltic region to the Balkans and Northern Ireland. However, if the Northern Irish, after a century of violence, can find the beginning of a solution to their problem, why can’t the Corsicans? Finally, European integration is not simply about economics but also about democracy and culture. It represents an opportunity for regions such as Corsica to leave behind under-development, cultural negation, and excessive centralisation to become a prosperous European region.

Helsinki Preamble to the Seminar: the Situation of Linguistic Minorities in Finland

It was the Åland Islands, an example of a prosperous and peaceful insular region, therefore, which were chosen as an excellent location to host a seminar to discuss the Corsican problem. But, first, the participants spent one day in Helsinki where they were introduced to the general situation of minorities in Finland and the status of its two official languages: Finnish and Swedish.

On their first evening in Helsinki, the participants were addressed by **Henrik Lax**, President of the Swedish Assembly of Finland and MP in the Finnish Parliament, and **Christian Brandt**, Secretary General of the Swedish Assembly and Vice-President of the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages. They spoke positively of the treatment of linguistic minorities in bilingual Finland and described the work of the Swedish Assembly. This is a semi-official body, founded in the early years of Finnish independence, which represents and acts as

a pressure group for the Swedish-speaking population of Finland. It is also a forum for the discussion of issues of concern to them.

On the following day, **Jukka Valtasaari**, Secretary of State, welcomed the participants at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland where the situation of its linguistic minorities was outlined by speakers from the Finnish civil service. These included **Holger Rotkirch**, Director-General for Legal Affairs; **Sten Palmgren**, legislative advisor in the Justice Department; and **Johanna Suurpää**, legal officer in the Human Rights section of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

The speakers stressed that Swedish-speakers in Finland, who are descended from fishermen and farmers who settled along the western and southern coasts of Finland, constitute not an ethnic but a linguistic minority. The inhabitants of

Swedish-speakers in Finland: not an ethnic but a linguistic minority

Åland are 95% Swedish-speaking but their situation is rather different from the Swedish-speaking population on the mainland because of the constitutional status of the Islands. During the long period of 650 years when Finland formed part of the Swedish monarchy, Swedish was the language of administration and it was not until 1863 that Finnish was recognised as an official language in Finland. The 1919 Finnish Constitution declares that Finnish and Swedish are the official languages of the Republic even though Swedish-speakers are a small minority of the total population (today they number 5.9%). However, despite this small number, Swedish has legally the same status as Finnish. The application of this principle was spelled out in the Language Act of 1922. Basically, municipalities are either monolingual or bilingual. Bilingual municipalities are those where the minority language is the language of at least 8% of the population or where the minority is over 3,000 people even if this is less than 8%. Basically, those living in bilingual municipalities have the right to receive all services – public administration, education, culture – in their own language. There is also a flourishing Swedish-language media and press as well as many theatres. The new Finnish Constitution of 1995 reinforced these minority rights and also provided for strong local self-governments. In Finland there are no intermediate levels of administration such as the departments or regions in France, only communes (about 400). Finally, the participants were informed of the general situation with regard to other minority communities in Sweden, each of which, even the smallest, is accorded certain rights. **Mr. Rotkirch** mentioned in his allocution that there are around 20,000 Russian-speakers, 6,400 Sami (Lapps), 6,000 Roma/Gypsies, and two religious minorities: Jews (1,300) and Tatars (1,000), all of whose rights are respected. The Sami have their own parliament which drafted a law on the status of the Sami language. Finland has ratified both instruments of the Council of Europe dealing with national minorities and

minority languages: the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

Introductory Session: General Considerations on the Question of Autonomy

The first session of the seminar, which took place in the Åland Parliament building in Mariehamn, was devoted to general presentations of the problems of the changing nature of the state and of the nature of autonomy. **John Loughlin**, Professor of European Politics at Cardiff University, Wales, outlined the changing context of the new forms of the state and of European integration within which regions now have to operate. The central message of his talk was that nation-states are not disappearing but that their nature, role and functions are changing under the impact of different factors. These include globalisation and Europeanisation; the transformation of the state from within because of new forms of public management; and the increasing salience of subnational authorities such as regions and local authorities. These developments in the new Europe represent challenges, but also opportunities, for island regions such as Corsica and Åland. However, regional leaders must learn how to seize these opportunities in an appropriate manner. It was therefore useful for different island communities to learn from each other how they responded to the challenges and opportunities of the new Europe. This was the main rationale of this initiative: to begin a process of mutual learning between Corsicans and Ålanders, between Corsicans and mainland French, and among Corsicans themselves.

The problems of the changing nature of the state and European integration

The Director of the Åland Islands Peace Institute, **Robert Jansson**, spoke about this young institute founded in 1992 in Mariehamn with both practical and theoretical activities: it carries out research, arranges seminars and conferences, and provides education in conflict management. Focus areas include security policy, autonomy and minorities, and issues concerning the Baltic Sea region. The Institute also supports a wide range of youth activities.

After this short introduction, the complexity of the concept of autonomy was analysed in a detailed paper by Ruth Lapidoth, Professor of law at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and author of a work on this question.⁹ Autonomy is a means for diffusion of powers in order to preserve the unity of the state while respecting the diversity of its population. Professor Lapidoth distinguished

Three types of autonomy: territorial political, administrative, and personal (or cultural)

⁹ Ruth Lapidoth, *Autonomy: Flexible Solutions to Ethnic Conflicts* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997).

between three principal types of autonomy: (a) territorial political; (b) administrative; and (c) personal (or cultural). *Territorial political autonomy* is an arrangement used in cases where a group differing from the majority is concentrated in a specific region of the state. Powers are divided between the central authorities and the autonomous entity which enjoys a degree of self-government in certain areas such as culture, economics and social affairs. *Administrative autonomy* resembles decentralisation, meaning that administrative questions are devolved to the region (one example was the system of administrative devolution to the Scottish and Welsh Offices in the United Kingdom before the current political devolution programme inaugurated by the government of Tony Blair). *Personal (or cultural) autonomy* applies to all members of a certain linguistic or cultural community which are, however, not resident within a particular territory (for example the Roma/Gypsies in Finland). The members of these communities may have linguistic, cultural or

“Autonomy is not a panacea but only a framework for compromise”

other rights, guaranteed by institutions established by the community itself, but not necessarily through an elected assembly based on a particular territory. A regime of autonomy may be established by various means such as an international treaty, a constitution, a statute or by a combination of these means. Typically, autonomy arrangements are not rigid but rather flexible, allowing the introduction of changes. In some cases even, autonomy is deliberately designed to be established by a gradual process. Professor Lapidoth then cited well-known cases of autonomy and issues to be considered when establishing a regime of autonomy, while taking into account the relevant circumstances such as geographical proximity or remoteness of the centre of the state, the demographic situation as well as the relative economic situation. Finally, she tried to pinpoint factors which might enhance the chances of success. Key factors included: consent of the population intended to benefit from it; a clear definition of the division of powers; establishment of modes and mechanisms for consultation and for settling disputes between the central government and the local authorities; government based on a democratic regime and respect of human rights, including the principle of equality and non-discrimination; a similar stage of economic development and standard of living in the autonomous region and in the state as a whole. However, Professor Lapidoth concluded that the most important condition for a successful autonomy is a prevailing atmosphere of good will, for autonomy is not a panacea but only a framework that can constitute an adequate compromise if the parties are looking for one. **John Loughlin** pointed out that there is also *individual autonomy* which is an aspect of our modern liberal democratic societies and which refers to the right of individuals to dispose of their lives as they wish provided this does not interfere with the rights and freedoms of others. The great difficulty for societies with distinct ethnic and linguistic minorities is to reconcile individual autonomy, which implies freedom

in many moral and ethical fields, with the communitarian rights of political territorial and personal autonomy, which may contradict some of these “freedoms” (an example might be conflicting positions on abortion held by a religious minority and the mainstream of society). In the Åland Islands, for example, one might, as a Finnish citizen, claim that one should have access to educational and other services in the Finnish language. This, however, is impossible given the autonomy provisions which make Åland a unilingual region where no services are provided in Finnish. On the whole, however, the Finns and the Ålanders seem to have accommodated the individualist and personal/political forms of autonomy quite successfully.

In a historic outline of the development of Åland’s statute, **Barbro Sundback**, Chair of the Board of the Åland Islands Peace Institute and a member of the Åland Parliament, saw the Åland Islands as a model for the resolution of ethnic and linguistic conflict. According to her, the basis of this model lies in the specific nature of its statute of autonomy and the concept of regional citizenship which underlies it. However, Ms. Sundback did mention that there was some debate on Åland with regard to the possibility of independence although only 17% of the population are in favour of this. She asked the question whether autonomy leads necessarily to independence.

In the light of these general considerations the seminar wished to analyse the question of island regions in the new Europe under four different angles:

- Models of Regional Socio-Economic Development Appropriate for Island Regions.
- The European Dimension: Island Representation and Inter-Regional Cooperation.
- Language, Culture and Identity.
- Regional Institutions for the 21st Century - Reconciling Political Culture and Political Structures.

Session One: Models of Regional Socio-Economic Development Appropriate for Island Regions

The successful institutional accommodation of culture and identity is possible only on the basis of sound economic development. However, economic development should be based on and promote the culture and identity of a community rather than seriously endanger them. In this respect, there is a stark contrast in the economic profiles of the Åland Islands and Corsica.

Susanne Eriksson, Secretary of the Åland Parliament, outlined the economic and social situation of these Islands and gave some of the reasons for their

success. Basically, the Ålanders have been able to transform what might have been an obstacle – the sea – into an advantage by exploiting to their own benefit the very considerable maritime traffic between the Scandinavian countries. This has resulted in a strong economy and a high level of prosperity with a GDP per capita 40% higher than the Finnish average. Corsica, as we have seen, has lurched from crisis to crisis. The question arises, then, as to why Åland has experienced its economic success and whether there exists a specific model for the economic development of island regions. This was explored in this section of the seminar.

Michel Castellani, Senior Lecturer in Economic Geography at the University of Corsica at Corte, in his keynote introduction to this session, outlined the main features of Corsica’s economic problems. Corsica is among the regions of the European Union with the lowest GDP (78% of the EU average) alongside the Canaries (78%), Sardinia (77%) and Sicily (71%). Basically, many of these islands are characterised either by a high percentage of the workforce engaged in agriculture (although this is not the case with Corsica where the figure is 2.7%) or in the services sector – in Corsica this accounts for 75.5% of the workforce with public administration accounting for about a quarter of these. Mr.

*Failure of the
“top-down”
model in Corsica*

Castellani highlighted the social consequences of these bare economic statistics. They mean dependency on the outside world, low quality employment as well as high levels of unemployment. On all of these islands, secondary activities (for example, industry or building) are extremely weak, in Corsica accounting for only 21.8% of the workforce. The Island, according to this speaker, has suffered a great deal from a model of development that originated outside the Island and was imposed on it by Parisian technocrats. He was speaking of the *Plan d’action Régional*, mentioned above, which was responsible for the *tout-tourisme*¹⁰ of the SETCO (*Société pour l’équipement touristique de la Corse*) and for the development of the Oriental Plain by the SOMIVAC (*Société de la mise en valeur agricole de la Corse*) in the 1960s. This “top-down” development model failed because of its unbalanced character and because it was a source of extreme tension within the island community. Mr. Castellani contrasted this “top-down” model with a new model of regional development that emphasises a “bottom-up” or “endogenous” approach that is balanced and sustainable and controlled by the dynamic elements of Corsican society itself. This model is not fundamentally different from that which is applied in regions on the continent but it needs to be adapted to island regions to take into account the problems of insularity. It must involve the entire island community. It also gives priority to the human potential of this community

¹⁰ *Tout-tourisme* refers to the kind of tourism developed on the Balearic Islands and other parts of Spain in the 1960s where all other forms of economic activity were dominated by tourism.

through appropriate mastery of skills particularly in the area of new technologies. However, the model should not neglect the importance of infrastructure development: roads, energy, water supplies, and transport. Finally, island regions need to improve their relation with their environment both within the island and with the outside world. Proper transport links are fundamental in this regard.

Jean-Félix Acquaviva, spokesperson for the nationalist group *Corsica Viva*, and a doctoral student in economics at the University of Corte, further developed this theme. Mr. Acquaviva situated the origins of Corsica's economic problems in its relationship with the French State and what he regarded as the *non-développement* pursued by the latter, assisted by the Corsican clans. This had led to a political culture of irresponsibility and dependence (*assistanat*). This speaker claimed that there was also a serious democratic deficit in Corsica. He emphasised a model of development that was sustainable, based on regional identity and culture, and that was human and participatory. The concept of sustainable development has given rise to several conflicting interpretations. However, it may be understood as involving several dimensions. There is a social dimension that is concerned with reducing the gap between rich and poor.

A model of sustainable development based on regional identity and culture

The economic dimension involves more effective management of resources. The ecological refers both to management of the physical environment as well as human lifestyles. The spatial attempts to achieve a greater balance between town and country and the correct use of physical planning. Finally, the cultural dimension emphasises incorporating regional languages, culture and customs. The notion of *économie identitaire*¹¹ developed by Dominique Taddei¹² is very relevant to the bottom-up model developed by these two speakers. This new model, which has been extremely successful in large and important regions such as Catalonia but also in smaller ones such as Åland, recognises the importance of safeguarding and developing regional languages and cultures and of integrating them into the development project. Furthermore, in an *économie identitaire*, the existence of a minority language and culture is not necessarily an obstacle to economic development, as has been thought in recent economic paradigms, but may be an asset.

¹¹ It is difficult to translate this phrase into English except through a paraphrase: “an economy built on the existence of a distinct regional identity”. An example of this would be the successful marketing of “Ireland” as a tourist destination by Bórd Fáilte, the Irish Tourist Board, or Irish products such as music, dancing, and beer.

¹² Dominique Taddei and Florence Antomarchi, *Ecunomia Identitaria* (Ajaccio: Albiana, 1997).

The final speaker in this session was **Paul-Antoine Luciani**, a regional councillor and president of the group “*Communiste et Démocrate de Progrès*” at the Corsican Assembly. Mr. Luciani differed to some extent from the previous speakers in his firm attachment to the French State and in his affirmation that democracy does exist in Corsica, at least in a formal sense. However, his analysis of the economic situation of Corsica was remarkably similar. This rested on three basic ideas. First, economic development is determined by geography. Thus, Corsica’s mountainous character made it different from other island regions such as Åland and Sardinia. Second, politics and economics are intimately connected. Corsica is a small island community with a strong identity and this affects economic activities. Thirdly, it is impossible to speak of Corsican development without referring to the wider context of public policies developed by the Corsican Assembly, by the French State and by the European Union. These policies need to take into account Corsican specificity including its distinct language and culture. To deal with Corsica’s economic problems,

The need for a strengthening of democracy in Corsica

there needs to be an emphasis on the development of human potential rather than simply on physical infrastructure whereas in the development plan (*contrat de plan*) signed by the Region and the State, the reverse is the case. There needs to be a strengthening of democracy and citizenship in Corsica although the concept of citizenship invoked here is very much within the French Jacobin tradition rather than a concept of regional citizenship such as that found in Åland.

This session led to a short discussion on whether there could be a model of sustainable development for Corsica and whether the existing institutions allowed this. It was important to realise that insularity did not lead fatally to underdevelopment as the concept of distance was now changing.

Session Two: The European Dimension: Island Representation and Inter-Regional Co-operation

An underlying rationale for this seminar was the conviction that the geo-strategic context within which island regions must now operate is a European Union that is rapidly transforming itself. Fifteen years ago, regions were firmly embedded within their own nation-states. Today, decisions that affect them in many different ways are made not in their national capitals but in Brussels.

A “Europe of the Regions”

Furthermore, the EU has become an important source of funding for regions through the Structural Funds and the various Community Initiatives. “Europe” has also become a locus for both representation and lobbying on the part of regions. Regions are now represented through the Committee of the Regions (CoR) but also in different ways in the activities of the European Commission and through the

committees of the European Parliament. Regional lobbying has become a key feature of contemporary Europe. Individual regions or groups of regions have been setting up offices in Brussels with a view to gathering information and to lobbying the European institutions. Regions have also been collaborating through interregional associations such as the Assembly of European Regions (AER). This seeks to promote the notion of a “Europe of the Regions”. Another is the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) which promotes the interests of regions sharing particular geographical features (peripherality and closeness to the sea). Within the latter organisation there exists an Islands

Economic and Monetary Union and enlargement present serious challenges to island regions

Commission which represents the interests of islands of all kinds. The EU has been developing rapidly in the last ten years or so with the Single European Act (1987) and the revisions of the EEC Treaties at Maastricht (1993) and Amsterdam (1997). These have led to the near completion of the single market, to economic and monetary union and a single currency, the Euro. Furthermore, with the collapse of the Soviet Empire, there is now the prospect of enlargement towards Central and Eastern Europe and a Union of 20 and even 25 states. These developments – economic and monetary union and enlargement – present serious challenges to island regions. To some extent, the Treaty of Amsterdam took this into account by including a special chapter on island regions. This dimension was thought to be so important that the seminar devoted an entire session to its discussion.

The keynote address was given by **Pauliina Haijanen**, a Finnish member of the Committee of the Regions representing the Regional Council of Southwest

The Committee of the Regions

Finland. Ms. Haijanen informed the participants of an Opinion of the CoR of which she was the Rapporteur in 1996, on the integrated planning of coastal regions within the EU. This Opinion, which was accepted unanimously by the Committee, asserted that there should be no new legislation on coastal regions but that an experimental programme should be adopted. It emphasised the differences among coastal regions but also stated that especially useful results are achieved through the exchange of experiences. To date, this has resulted in 35 experimental ventures financed from different EU funds. The approach adopted in these ventures corresponds closely to the model outlined in the first session: equal weight is given to economic, ecological and social dimensions and emphasises that they attempt to involve local inhabitants and authorities. The speaker pointed out that difficulties arose from the fragmentation of decision-making because of different authorities and administration and through sectorisation (policies devoted to one particular sector – e.g. tourism – in isolation from others – e.g. the environment). Ms. Haijanen also referred to another Opinion, based on the Amsterdam Treaty chapter on island regions,

given by the CoR in July 1998, on the future of remote and insular regions (peripheral areas). This paid particular attention to transport conditions and asserted that strong cultural identities should be preserved. This was particularly important with the development of tourism. It also recommended the use of telematics as a way of connecting these regions to the EU and to world markets. Telematics could also be exploited in tourism, education and health care. A special arrangement for tax regimes in remote and insular regions was necessary in the face of tax harmonisation in Europe. Finally, the speaker referred to the European Parliament which has also devoted some attention to island regions.

This presentation was useful for setting the context and recalling the importance of the European dimension and the possibilities for collaboration that exist through bodies such as the Committee of the Regions and the European Parliament. It was followed by presentations on the relations between the Åland Islands and Europe and between Corsica and Europe.

Janina Groop, who represents the Åland Islands within the Finnish permanent representation to the EU, explained the importance of having an Åland voice at this level. When the Finnish government negotiates foreign treaties that affect

The importance of having an Åland voice in Brussels

the Islands, the Ålanders must be involved as when Finland was engaged in negotiations to accede to the EU. This led to a number of derogations to which Åland was entitled in particular with regard to its tax-free status which it may keep and to its system of regional autonomy which goes against the principle of the free movement of people embodied in the Treaty of Rome. Today, the Åland Parliament is associated with the Finnish Parliament in the treatment of European legislation. The question was raised, however, as to whether Åland interests are better represented by the Finnish government or by Åland developing its own international activities in an autonomous manner.

The latter course was advocated by **Gunnar Jansson**, the Åland member of the Finnish Parliament and a member of the Finnish delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. Having delivered the greetings of Leni Fischer, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, he

The international personality of the Åland Islands

sketched the defining elements of the “international personality” of the Åland Islands which include: one seat out of 200 reserved at the Finnish parliament (occupied by Mr. Jansson himself since 1983), membership in the Nordic Council since 1970; membership in the EU (as part of the Finnish permanent representation) since 1995; formal connections with the international community via Helsinki but also via direct informal contacts. Mr. Jansson also dealt with other features of this “state within the state”. He evoked the origins of Åland’s autonomy which was the decision to solve the Åland issue by peaceful

means by offering something to each of the parties concerned. It was clearly stated that the purpose of the autonomy was to guarantee the Swedish language and culture of the population of the Islands through legal discrimination in the economic, political and cultural spheres. Åland's autonomy fits into the communitarian / territorial category. Its legal grounding is provided by a Basic Law—the Autonomy Act, as well as a constitutional position defined since 1994 when it was incorporated in the Finnish Constitution. There is currently a debate in Finland on how to incorporate Åland's autonomy in the new Constitution to be adopted in 2000. Finally, looking towards the future, he evoked the hope that the principle of subsidiarity would further develop within the EU and that the autonomy enjoyed by Åland would be extended, especially in the economic sphere.

The situation of Corsica is very different as was explained by **Dr. Edmond Simeoni**, founding member and former leader of the autonomist movement

<p><i>Corsica's future lies within the French State</i></p>

Unione di u Populu Corsu (UPC). Dr. Simeoni shared the view of Corsica outlined by previous speakers as an “abandoned island” undergoing a serious crisis of economic underdevelopment and lacking in democracy.

Nevertheless, he insisted that Corsica is also French and saw its future as lying within the French State, albeit one that should be transformed to take into account the needs of its regions. He also insisted that both France and Corsica are now part of the EU and that this has provided a new dimension to the situation of the Island. Europe had been little more than an abstraction for most Corsicans until the 1980s as European integration seemed to concern only states until then. Today, this has profoundly changed. Corsica has benefited financially from the EU but there has also been a change of mentality. Furthermore, Europe, combined with decentralisation in France from the 1980s, has made possible new forms of cross-border co-operation such the IMEDOC (*Iles de la Méditerranée occidentale*), a co-operative arrangement with Sardinia and the Balearic Islands. Dr. Simeoni, nevertheless, was critical of the low level of Corsican involvement in either the conception or the implementation of these initiatives. He then offered his own vision of the future of Corsica in the new Europe. This would be built on the construction of Corsica's democratic civil society, on the reinforcement of its linguistic and cultural identity, and on the rationalisation and reform of its politico-administrative system (notably the suppression of the two general councils). Corsica's vocation as a region is to be French but also a European region in the Mediterranean. It also has a special role to play in relations with North Africa.

Lucien Felli, a lawyer practising in Paris and Ajaccio and President of the “*Organisation européenne des Droits de l'Homme et de ses Libertés Fondamentales*” based in Strasbourg, asserted that, fundamentally, this seminar

was about defining new forms of political institutions and management for the 21st century. He contended that these new institutions will be created only within the context of the new Europe that was emerging before our eyes. We have witnessed the collapse of vast political complexes such as the Soviet Union, the emergence of new states, as well as the reappearance of ancient European nations. Regions that seemed firmly entrenched in nation-states have been liberated and there has been the creation of completely new political entities. Mr. Felli pointed to the variety of institutions found in what he termed “Insular Europe” most of which recognised the specificity of the island region and also possessed a number of special fiscal and economic regimes. Corsica figures as something of an exception in this ensemble of European island regions. Mr. Felli went as far as to claim that the “Corsican question” was the symptom of a crisis of civilisation. The speaker was especially concerned with what he considered the lack of recognition of human rights in Corsica and called for the return to the Rule of Law (*Etat de droit*) without however the excesses recently exhibited by State representatives in Corsica who seem to believe that the State is always right (*droit de l’Etat*).¹³

Corsica figures as something of an exception in the ensemble of European island regions

Session Three: Language, Culture and Identity

One of the striking features of island regions, already noted in the Opinion of the Committee of the Regions cited above, is that they preserve their traditional language, culture and identity for much longer than mainland regions. Obviously, the distance implied in insularity protects these. Both Corsica and Åland have preserved a strong identity and culture until the present. However, in the past, regional cultures were often derided and devalued by metropolitan élites. These cultures were very much minority cultures and, at least in the Corsican case, seemed at times doomed to disappear. Furthermore, in recent models of regional economic development, the existence of a regional language and culture were often thought to be obstacles that should be removed. Irish- and Welsh-speakers should switch to English, Corsican-speakers should speak only French. Catalonia has led the way in debunking this idea and has demonstrated that a region or small nation can have its own distinctive language and culture and yet be economically successful and “modern”. France has traditionally been less than generous towards its minority languages. The teaching of Corsican is tolerated as long as it does not interfere with the main curriculum. Unlike

Island regions preserve their traditional features much longer than mainland regions

¹³ French allows for a word play with *Etat de droit* (Rule of Law) and *droit de l’Etat* (Right of the State).

Breton, which is taught in special *Diwan* schools, the Corsican language is taught in state schools only for a limited number of hours per week during lunch-break.

In order to help the participants from the Åland Islands better understand the specific concerns raised by the Corsican participants, **Philippe Peretti**, a regional councillor, presented an overview of the statute of Corsica and its complex institutions. He emphasised that, after President Mitterand was re-elected in 1988 and the left was again in power, the decision was made to extend the self-administration of Corsica. In his opinion, the statute of Corsica might have been an acceptable political solution at the end of the 1980s but must now evolve towards genuine autonomy. There is the pressing need to simplify the institutional arrangements and the mode of representation of the Åland Islands in Brussels might well serve as a model to enable Corsica to take part in an international dialogue. Mr. Peretti also stressed the responsibilities of the elected politicians and urged them to make better use of what competencies they already had.

Corsica must now evolve towards genuine autonomy

The keynote speaker in this session was **François Grin**, senior lecturer in economics at the University of Geneva (and Acting Director of ECMI since October 1998). Dr. Grin's aim was to elaborate a method, drawing on several social science disciplines, but particularly on economic science, for making public policy choices with regard to linguistic and cultural minorities. This method he describes as an *economic analysis of language policy*. Dr. Grin claimed that this analytical method would enable public policy-makers to

The economic analysis of language policy: a method to determine the optimal point between uniformity and absolute multiculturalism

evaluate two types of discourse that are frequently heard. On the one hand, there is the discourse which seeks *uniformity* on the grounds that, while cultural and linguistic diversity might be a good thing, nevertheless, it has too many disadvantages to make it feasible. On the other hand, there is the discourse based on *absolute multiculturalism* which claims that, while disadvantages do exist, the advantages of multiculturalism far outweigh them. Dr. Grin's analysis rested on four key ideas. First, economic analysis should not be confined simply to material or financial matters. It should also concern itself with wider questions of ends and objectives and how these may be achieved in situations of scarce resources. Second, economic analysis works satisfactorily only if it is carried out in conjunction with other social science disciplines such as anthropology or sociology. This is because the discipline of economics, by itself, is unable to analyse satisfactorily aspects of human society such as identity and attitudes. Third, languages and cultures should not be analysed simply as discrete phenomena but in their

relations with other languages and cultures. This is particularly important for minority languages, which exist, almost by definition, in close relation to the majority language(s). The fourth key idea is that public policy choices regarding minority languages and cultures are choices made by policy-makers in situations of scarcity and that the optimum solution in a particular situation will most likely be found somewhere between the minimalist and maximalist positions outlined above (uniformity vs. absolute multiculturalism). The economic analysis method is a method which allows one to decide through a rigorous analysis where this optimum lies.

François Grin’s thought-provoking presentation was followed by presentations on the linguistic and cultural situations on Åland and Corsica. **Barbro Sundback** presented the linguistic conditions in Finland and Åland which have already been outlined above. It was generally agreed that these have been very successful in the Finnish and Åland cases. Ms. Sundback also addressed the

The protection of an “Ålandic identity”

notion of regional citizenship developed by Åland to preserve its linguistic and cultural specificity. She also commented that, in the past 10 years, one has begun to speak about the protection of an “Ålandic identity” rather than the protection of the Swedish language, tradition and culture. She then illustrated the complexity of identities present on Åland. The idea of an Ålandic nation is based on the principle of *ius sanguinis* and common descent. Those not born in Åland were regarded as “other”. The law regulating the right of domicile in the Åland Islands, uncommon in international law, institutionalises a form of regional citizenship alongside the national, Finnish citizenship. Finnish passports issued in Åland bear the mention “Åland” on the front. Ålandic citizenship confers four categories of rights: rights as a member of the EU; rights as a Finnish citizen; specific rights as an Ålander; and, finally, municipal rights. Ålanders can therefore be said to enjoy more rights than a mainland Finn! However, with the possibility to acquire regional citizenship and given the large number of immigrants to the Åland Islands during the past 30 years and their integration into society, the concept of Ålandic nationality has come to encompass all those living in Åland who possess the right of domicile and thereby full civic rights. She concluded by expressing her conviction that, as in Great Britain, regions must be given greater powers and that Corsica would eventually obtain more autonomy.

The first of the two presentations on Corsica was by **Jean-Guy Talamoni**, a

The Corsican language is threatened almost to the point of irreversibility

lawyer and regional councillor and President of the nationalist group *Corsica Nazione* in the Corsican Assembly. Mr. Talamoni declared that his organisation stood in political solidarity with the militants of the clandestine organisation, the FLNC. *Corsica Nazione*, according

to this speaker, is engaged in a struggle for the sovereignty of Corsica in the context of its right to national self-determination. It is this context which determines their analysis of language, culture and identity. The struggle for identity is a profoundly humanistic struggle. Culture is something that is very broad – a Corsican in Paris can recognise another Corsican by the way he walks into a café ! Language is the “sanctuary of identity” (*le sanctuaire de l’identité*) but the Corsican language is threatened almost to the point of irreversibility. In order to preserve it, Mr. Talamoni’s group insists that Corsican must be taught obligatorily in schools. But language, culture and identity are also linked to the question of the economy. Mr. Talamoni spoke of *tourisme identitaire* as a form of economic development which might help preserve culture and identity. The nationalist perspective on these questions places the blame for Corsica’s problems firmly on its attachment to the French State. Their solution rests on four demands: recognition of the Corsican people; cultural development and defence of the language; sustainable economic development respectful of Corsican identity especially by means of a specific fiscal statute and an “investment code” (*code des investissements*) limiting foreign investment; and, finally, institutional reform on the basis of an open dialogue. According to Mr. Talamoni, the nationalist movement was ready for this dialogue and wished to see a peace process begin. Finally, he raised the question of Corsican political prisoners as one element that needed to be taken into account in this peace process.

Pauline Sallembien, Professor of Italian at the University of Corte and a member of the women’s group, *51 femmes pour une Corse de l’an 2000* (which presented a list in the 1998 regional elections in Corsica without succeeding in having any of its members elected), analysed the Corsican question from the point of view of Corsican women. She recalled the lack of recognition of women during the main moments of Corsican history from the time of the Genoese to modern times. Even Pascal Paoli, the Father of the Nation, was little concerned with

The lack of recognition of women during the main moments of Corsican history

women’s rights. In Corsican history there are just a few images of women such as the romantic figure of Colomba in Mérimée’s novel or Danielle Casanova, who died in a German concentration camp for being a resistant to Nazi tyranny. In recent times, women have become more active in politics although this is still dominated by men. Professor Sallembien outlined three types of behaviour by women with regard to politics: those who showed some interest in political debate; a hostility and withdrawal from politics by women (such as former syndicalists and activists in groups such as *Donne Corse*—a nationalist women’s group active in the early 1980s) disappointed by their previous involvement in politics; an indifference towards politics. As a result, women are generally absent from the political scene. There are many reasons for this but one must

point to the clan system for one of the main reasons. The clan system ensures that votes go to the right people. Women have always been involved in this process behind the scenes. This is an aspect of Corsican identity and culture that needs to be emphasised. To change this, therefore, by encouraging a different role for women is to challenge this aspect of culture and identity. This is the challenge that the group *51 femmes pour une Corse de l'an 2000* poses to Corsican politics and culture today. The change will occur only in the context of the new Europe and new values.

In the **discussion**, a French participant agreed with Dr. Grin's comment that one is a minority only in relation to another, and praised both the Finnish and the Swiss models of linguistic diversity. In this context, he regretted that EU documents were no longer translated into all the official languages. He claimed that Corsican was the only regional language in France (out of the four languages which have a genuine identity—the other three being Breton, Alsatian and Basque) to enjoy a special status. This privileged position is a result of the 1991 Special Statute which states that the Corsican Assembly has the competencies to adopt a plan for the development of the Corsican language and culture. He also stated that, contrary to common belief, the French legal system has allowed for regional variation for a long time already, as for example, in Alsace. A Corsican participant disagreed that the Corsican language enjoyed a special status in France for teaching of Corsican is optional only.

A main difference cited between the Åland and Corsican cases was that in Åland it is a question of a linguistic minority, in Corsica it is clearly a problem of cultural identity. The ideological barriers which exist in France were also

<p><i>The need to condemn the use of violence</i></p>

mentioned, for one cannot speak about the *peuple corse* nor can one consider ratifying the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. An international expert noted that Finland's Constitution had been modelled on the French one but that it had been interpreted and implemented in a very different manner. The status of Finnish-speakers on Åland was another topic discussed. A heated debate on the weakness of democracy in Corsica and the need to clearly condemn the use of violence closed this very lively session.

Session Four: Regional Institutions for the 21st Century: Reconciling Political Culture and Political Structures

The previous sessions examined the economic and cultural dimensions of regional development in the context of the wider Europe in which they occur. However, it is necessary to put political and institutional flesh onto these bones. Contemporary liberal democratic political institutions developed in close relationship with the spread of the notion of the nation-state, that is, the idea,

born during the French Revolution, that nations ought to have states and that states ought to be coterminous with nations. This simple idea has been, in some senses, the bearer of the “progressive” ideas of the Revolution: liberty, equality and fraternity. However, the nation-state system has also been the cause of serious denials of the rights of small nations and regions in many centralised states, including France. As John Loughlin pointed out in the first session, the nation-state is, today, undergoing a profound process of transformation thanks to

The challenges posed by the changing nature of the nation-state to institutional design

the forces of globalisation, intensified European integration and societal changes from below. The nation-state is not disappearing but is changing and this poses challenges both to the nature of liberal democracy and to institutional design. We

need to rethink the meaning of liberal democracy by including a more satisfactory recognition of the rights of communities as well as individuals and thereby reconciling individual autonomy with personal and communitarian autonomy referred to by Professor Lapidoth in her opening paper on this topic. This session was a reflection on these issues and an examination of what has been achieved in this regard in Åland and what might be achieved in Corsica.

The keynote address was given by **Francesc Morata**, Professor of Political Science at the Autonomous University of Barcelona. Professor Morata recognised that the 18th century Westphalian State, with its high degree of

“Government” is giving way to “governance”

cohesion and centralisation, was today undergoing a serious crisis. However, although this is a crisis of structures and traditional forms of democratic participation, paradoxically it is favouring the

emergence of new political actors, such as cities and regions. The crisis is one of the legitimacy of the state which is challenged by four overlapping processes: economic globalisation; the arrival of new technologies which favour decentralisation; a crisis in the social functions of the state; and problems which arise from the highly centralised nature of the management of public policies which must deal with territorial fragmentation. In this situation, we see emerging a new form of governance: this is built on the power of interest groups compared to that of ordinary citizens; the key role of “experts”; and the changing nature of the “rules of the game” which bypass the traditional rules of parliamentary representation. The frontier between the “public” and the “private” is now more fluid and “government” is giving way to “governance” which refers to a new political strategy which involves “steering” different policy networks rather than controlling them from above. These developments are relevant for regions that may now find new openings for political activity hitherto denied them. This often involves working with other regions but also working with central states to achieve policy goals. Professor Morata calls this *regional co-operative governance*.

This excellent presentation provided a useful context for examining the governance of Åland and Corsica. **Roger Jansson**, Prime Minister of Åland, outlined the development of the law on autonomy but also spoke of the current situation. Although the Åland system seemed very advanced to the visitors from Corsica, Mr. Jansson highlighted some of its problems and imperfections. These became evident in the long and tough negotiations that led up to Finland's accession to the EU in 1995. Åland had to ensure that its interests were preserved. However, according to Mr. Jansson, Åland is still not adequately represented in the decision-making organs of the EU. Mr. Jansson even raised the question of an independent Åland, already mentioned earlier by Ms. Sundback, but hoped that this could be avoided. What is interesting for the practical application of autonomy is the trend toward the accumulation of greater powers by the autonomous body. This may, sometimes, lead to independence.

Lars-Ingmar Johansson, Secretary General of the Åland Parliament, also described Åland institutions and how they functioned. The institutions consist of the Legislative Assembly or *Lagting* (parliament), the Executive Council *Landskapsstyrelse* (government), the President of Finland, and the Åland

*Åland's institutions:
the Lagting, the
Landskapsstyrelse,
and the Åland
Delegation*

Delegation. There are 30 members of parliament elected by a system of proportional representation for four years. The Islands form a single constituency. The parliament can legislate, decide on its budget, control other public bodies, and form a government. There are five parliamentary committees dealing with specific subjects¹⁴. A Grand Committee examines legislation if requested to do so by the parliament. In recent years, a party system had developed with five groups in the parliament. For a long time, the Åland government was made up of part-time members. This has changed in recent years and the government is now formed from a parliamentary majority as happens in other parliamentary systems. The Finnish president also has a role in the Åland governmental system and may veto any law passed by the parliament which either goes beyond its competencies or endangers national security. The President also appoints a prefect after consultation with the government and parliament of the Islands. Finally, there is the Åland Delegation, presided by the prefect and consisting of two members nominated by the Finnish Government and two by the Åland parliament. It has three principal functions: to advise the president on legislation emanating from the Åland parliament; to take decisions regarding the Åland economy and fiscal relations with Finland; to be a consultative group advising

¹⁴ Permanent committee on legislation; permanent committee on economic issues; permanent committee on culture; permanent committee on social and environmental issues; permanent committee on financial issues.

on different aspects of Åland's relationship with government departments and on the functioning of the statute of autonomy.

The biggest surprise of the seminar came with the next speaker, **Paul Giaccobi**, President of the *Conseil Général de Haute-Corse* as well as regional councillor. Mr. Giaccobi is a member of the “*Parti radical de gauche et apparenté*” (Left

“In Corsica there are too many administrators, too many politicians...”

Radicals) group at the Assembly. This political family has traditionally been marked by a strong Jacobinism and opposition to any compromise with nationalism in Corsica. However, Mr. Giacobbi, who spoke in fluent English, advanced a number of theses that were very close to those of the regionalist critics of contemporary France. He argued that the existence of linguistic minorities was a feature of almost all European states, including France and, in fact, this is a good thing. On this basis, he argued for an effective autonomy for Corsica as a “French island in Europe”. His approach would be to use pragmatism as the British had done in Northern Ireland in order to promote institutional development in a France whose political system is too rigid. In Corsica there are too many administrators, too many politicians, and there is also a lack of effectiveness in public administration. He recommended, therefore, a number of political and administrative reforms:

- only one regional assembly above the communes (i.e. abolition of the departments);
- only one state administration for the Island instead of two;
- a clear division of powers between the Region and the State on the basis of the principle of subsidiarity;
- a form of “regional citizenship” adapted to Corsica, based on *ius soli*;
- obligatory teaching of Corsican;
- openness to Europe and to the Mediterranean.

He concluded, in reference to Ms. Sundback's presentation, by presenting the many aspects of his identity: European, French, Corsican, and a citizen of Venaco (the village of which he is mayor), and called for a form of autonomy for Corsica which rejects racism and intolerance.

These remarks, reported in the French and Corsican press, had the effect of a bombshell coming, as they did, from someone who was the successor to one of the two big Corsican “clans”.¹⁵ They provoked a lively debate among the participants in the seminar.

¹⁵ Paul Giacobbi's father was François Giaccobi, leader of the *Radicaux de Gauche* tendency, and of one of the two big clans on the island—the other headed by the recently deceased Jean-Paul de Rocca Serra, RPR, who has also been succeeded by his son.

Claude Olivesi, senior lecturer at the University of Corte and general councillor, presented an analysis of the French government's general policy stance towards Corsica as expressed in speech by Prime Minister Lionel Jospin to the French Parliament (*Assemblée nationale*) on 19 June 1997. Already, under

*Corsica has
always been an
"affaire d'Etat"*

his predecessor Alain Juppé, Corsica had moved to the top of the governmental agenda and a policy of "*dialogue dans la fermeté*" (firm dialogue) had been adopted. However, this was undermined by a bomb attack by Corsican nationalists against the city hall of Bordeaux that had become a matter of highest importance for the State (*affaire d'Etat*). This notion that Corsica was an *affaire d'Etat* was reinforced by the publication of a highly critical report (the Glavany Report) by a parliamentary commission of enquiry into the use of public funds in Corsica (see above). Mr. Olivesi underlined the fact that Corsica has always been an "*affaire d'Etat*" throughout its history as part of France. Nevertheless, the declaration by Lionel Jospin, while showing continuity with the past, was also probably an attempt to reconcile two opposing positions with

*The necessary
reform of Corsica's
institutions*

regard to the Corsican question within the *gauche plurielle* (that is, a Left that contains both Communists, Socialists and Left Radicals as well as Jacobin and regionalist ideologies). One position put forward by the Socialist Dominique Voynet during the presidential elections of 1995 was to give Corsica the statute of an overseas territory—a position adopted by the main nationalist movement *A Cuncolta*, political mouthpiece of the *FLNC-canal historique*. The other position was that of Interior Minister Jean-Pierre Chevènement, defender of the "one and indivisible Republic" and resolute opponent of any recognition of regional specificity. Despite this ambiguity, the declaration by Lionel Jospin contained three key ideas with regard to a general policy stance toward Corsica: first, respect of legality (*Etat de droit*); second, overcoming the lack of development caused by insularity; third, affirmation of cultural identity as expressed principally by the Corsican language. Mr. Olivesi added a fourth element he deemed to be necessary: the reform of Corsica's politico-administrative institutions. A solution to the Corsican problem can only be found in adopting all four of these dimensions. The first three dimensions were treated in the previous sessions of this seminar and Mr. Olivesi's remarks coincided more or less with the previous speakers. Of particular interest to this session were his remarks on the institutional question. He recalled the circumstances in which the 1991 statute was drawn up by Pierre Joxe and the heated debate it provoked by proposing that it should be defined in a manner that was legally different from the other regional institutions in France (« *en dehors du droit commun des régions [françaises]* »). The legislation to bring this about, as mentioned above, spoke of « *le peuple corse, composante du peuple français* ». However, this ran into problems in the French Constitutional Court. The Court ruled this phrase to be contrary to the French Constitution

which only recognises the French people and the French language as the language of the Republic. Nevertheless, the new institutions created by the Joxe Statute (the creation of an Assembly and an Executive each with its own president) have been positive and a certain consensus has emerged in this regard by most groups on the Island. But further development is needed with regard to the other political institutions: the communes and departments. Mr. Olivesi's analysis was basically similar to that of Mr. Giacobbi: simplify these by abolishing the departments and reducing the number of communes (there are 360 communes of which 80% have a very low number of inhabitants).

Final Session: Corsica and the Åland Islands Compared

John Loughlin and Claude Olivesi closed the seminar by synthesising the presentations and discussions of the previous sessions. **Professor Loughlin** recalled the usefulness of the comparative approach adopted here. This was not so much a strictly scientific comparative method as a process of learning. By travelling to another, very different situation, we can learn a great deal about our own. It is true that Corsica and Åland do have a number of similar features: both are islands; both are in unitary states; both have strong cultural identities; both are island regions within the European Union. But there are also many differences: Åland has a strong autonomy while Corsica's is weak; Åland's language, culture and identity is very protected, while Corsica's are more fragile; the Åland economy is booming and Åland is prosperous, while Corsica is a region with grave economic problems; Åland is peaceful, while Corsica suffers from political violence. What the seminar, showed, however, was that in the new Europe of today with the changing role and nature of nation-states, regions such as Corsica might well succeed provided a number of conditions were met. One of these conditions was the end of violence and the building of a stronger democratic life. There was also a need to reflect on the appropriate institutions for an island region. The Åland model could not simply be transported to Corsica—the conditions were too different for a simple transplant to succeed. Nevertheless, the Åland example provided a good point of reference for Corsica and the concept of regional citizenship might be interesting to explore in the Corsican context. What was remarkable about this seminar was the unanimity expressed by the Corsican participants who agreed on the vast majority of the questions raised. Of course, there was still disagreement on a number of important issues but a willingness to open a dialogue which was one of the most positive outcomes of the seminar.

The usefulness of the comparative approach

In his final remarks, **Claude Olivesi** reiterated a comment which was made frequently throughout the seminar: "*Comparaison ne vaut raison*" (i.e. that to adopt a comparative methodology does not necessarily mean that one's

conclusions are correct). Still, he too saw clear benefits from adopting a comparative approach to the Corsican question due to the common features concerning history and geopolitical location. The Finnish model illustrates the two main theories of autonomy: personal autonomy and territorial autonomy. In his opinion, autonomy was possible in a unitary state. If one were to compare various West European countries according to the degree of autonomy which they allowed, Italy and France would be at one extreme (least autonomy) while Germany and Spain would be at the other. This analysis is based on four indicators: statute; institutions; competencies; and political indicators. He also raised important questions which may affect the success of autonomy: Who are the political actors? Is the civil society capable of taking on and carrying autonomy? He concluded by expressing the wish to learn more about the political system of the Åland Islands which he deemed to be a crucial element.

“*Comparaison
ne vaut raison*”

It was clear from the **final discussion** that Åland’s form of regional citizenship had caught the interest of the majority of the participants who commented that this might be a solution to the lingering problem of electoral fraud in Corsica where the number of persons registered to vote tends to exceed the true number of voters. This is undermining the very basis of democracy in Corsica—universal suffrage. Here again, a form of regional citizenship clearly based on the *ius soli* principle was advocated. Any linkage between territory and racial origin would be extremely dangerous.

Another important “lesson” learned from the experience of Åland was the success of the step-by-step gradual approach to developing autonomy. Other Corsican participants supported the proposal made earlier by Paul Giacobbi to eliminate the two departments but also cautioned against centralising all powers in Corsica and called instead for harmonising the administrative structures with the natural geography of Corsica.

However, one Corsican participant recalled the major differences between the Corsican and Åland situations: unemployment is much higher in Corsica (ca. 13.6%) while GNP per capita is much lower. Furthermore, there are no major cities in the Åland Islands, whereas Corsica is moving towards an increasingly urban society with problems of social integration. It is also lagging in economic development. He therefore warned against discussing purely institutional solutions since, in his opinion, priority should be given to economic and social development. This can be achieved without independence from France, especially since the majority of Corsicans wish to remain a part of France.

The issue of responsibility and the necessity for autonomous communities to take responsibility for their own development was also mentioned by the

Corsican participants. This was related to the concern about the weakness of democracy in Corsica manifested through malfunctioning of universal suffrage in Corsica as well as the use of violence. Democracy must be applied by all levels of society; Corsica cannot expect to obtain more competencies until a true commitment to democracy is shown. Finally, the desire to see an orderly, non-violent society for his children was expressed by one of the Corsican participants. Violence is a political choice, said another participant, and we should not censure the debate. It is encouraging that many Corsican militants have decided to leave the clandestine movements. Violence is not permanent, another participant noted; one only has to look at peaceful Switzerland with its history of political violence.

The issue of responsibility

It was also observed that this seminar had been based mostly on an academic as well as a political approach which was useful. However, it is essential to resituate the debate in Corsica to find out what society as a whole wants. No decision can be taken without consulting the opinion of the majority. Another participant was less critical of the “academic approach” and said that this seminar and the proposals made by certain Corsican politicians had given him hope. He suggested that the dialogue initiated here be continued in the form of a permanent roundtable. This is an urgent matter, he concluded.

In conclusion, a Corsican participant expressed his hope that the positive comments made by political actors in the context of this seminar would herald a new era of dialogue between Paris and Corsica and regretted that some political tendencies were not represented at the seminar. Another Corsican participant agreed that efforts need to be made by the entire Corsican political class. Autonomy should not be considered as a deviation from the traditional political culture nor from the existing administrative structures and is not to be feared as a leap in the void. Furthermore, the Corsican problem should not be seen as a unique case.

As to the Åland participants, the comments made by one of them were illustrative of their impressions in general: the feeling that the Corsicans and Ålanders were speaking the same language. The Åland participant pointed to a major factor which sharply differentiated the two situations, namely violence, but pointed out that the Scandinavian region had not always been peaceful either. What she believes was important in overcoming violence was industrialisation and the labour movement and newly-created institutions had a further stabilising effect. She emphasised the importance of involving all sectors of the population in the long process of creation of democracy. She also expressed her sympathy for efforts to maintain the Corsican language but in a democratic fashion. On a final note, the Åland participant expressed her hope

that the common values shared by various ethnic groups throughout Europe would contribute to the preservation of diversity in Europe and hoped that this seminar had given the Corsican participants the courage to pursue their efforts.

CONCLUSIONS

Perhaps the most remarkable feature of this seminar was the high degree of consensus that existed on many fundamental questions with regard to the “Corsican Question” (*problème corse*) despite the highly disparate political backgrounds of the participants. All agreed that Corsica was in sore need of a new approach to development that was balanced and harmonious; that this new approach involved both the French State and the European Union as well as involving partnership with other island regions; that the preservation of the Corsican language and culture were essential elements of this developmental model. There was also agreement that democracy and civil society needed to be strengthened in Corsica and that political violence should come to an end (this was also the position of the nationalists). There was clearly some disagreement

A high degree of consensus with regard to the “Corsican Question”

on the historical causes of Corsican economic backwardness with nationalists blaming the French State and those of a more Jacobin orientation pointing the finger at the violence carried out by some nationalists. However, the success of the Åland Islands in creating a peaceful and prosperous region struck the participants and there was a great interest in learning how this had come about. There was also a great interest in the Northern Ireland peace process. John Loughlin a native of Belfast, gave a final talk on how this had come about and in particular in the method used. The participants agreed that while the details of the Northern Ireland situation were very different from Corsica’s, the *method* was of relevance. In any case, the example of Northern Ireland was an inspiration in that if this situation, immensely more violent and difficult than Corsica, could embark on the way of peace so could Corsica. Indeed, the Basque people had already embarked on their own peace process. It was finally agreed that the seminar had been a great success in so far as it had opened up a dialogue among the Corsicans as well as with the Ålanders and that this should continue. It was suggested that there should be a follow-up event in Corsica to do so.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS*

AALTONEN, Carina	Project Manager, Åland Islands Peace Institute (<i>Ålands fredsinstitut</i>), Mariehamn.
ACQUAVIVA, Jean-Félix	Spokesperson for <i>Corsica Viva</i> , Bastia.
ANTOMARCHI, Florence	Journalist, Pigna (Corsica).
BENHAMOU, Guy	Journalist at the French daily <i>Libération</i> , Paris.
CASTELLANI, Michel	Senior Lecturer in Economic Geography at the University of Corsica at Corte.
DAFTARY, Farimah	Research Associate, European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI), Flensburg.
ERIKSSON, Suzanne	Secretary of the Åland Legislative Assembly (<i>Ålands lagting</i>), Mariehamn.
FELLI, Lucien	President of the European Organisation for Human Rights (<i>Organisation européenne des droits de l'homme et de ses libertés fondamentales</i>); Lawyer, Paris and Ajaccio.
GANNAC, Antoine	Correspondent at R.C.F.M. (<i>Radio Corsa Frequenza Mora</i>), Ajaccio.
GIACOBBI, Paul	President of the General Council of North Corsica (<i>Conseil Général de Haute-Corse</i>), Bastia; Councillor, Corsican Assembly (<i>Assemblée de Corse</i>) (Assembly group <i>Parti radical de gauche et apparenté</i>), Ajaccio.
GRIN, François	Senior Lecturer at the Department of Political Economy, University of Geneva.

* Titles and functions of the participants as of August 1998.

GROOP, Janina	Councillor representing the interests of the Åland Islands, Permanent Representation of Finland to the European Union, Brussels.
HAIJANEN, Pauliina	Member of the Committee of the Regions, Brussels; Member of the Board and the Regional Council of Southwest Finland; Member of the Board of the City of Laitila.
HEMMING, Erik	Interpreter, Mariehamn.
HORN, Frank	Director of the Northern Institute for Environmental and Minority Law University of Lapland, Rovaniemi.
JANSSON, Gunnar	Member of the Finnish Parliament, Helsinki; Member of the Finnish delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Strasbourg.
JANSSON, Robert	Director, Åland Islands Peace Institute (<i>Ålands fredsinstitut</i>), Mariehamn.
JANSSON, Roger	Prime Minister (<i>Lantråd</i>) of the Åland Government (<i>Ålands landskapsstyrelse</i>), Mariehamn.
JOHANSSON, Lars-Ingmar	Secretary General of the Åland Legislative Assembly (<i>Ålands lagting</i>), Mariehamn.
JOXE, Pierre	Former Minister of the Interior; President of the National Court of Accounting (<i>Cour des Comptes</i>), Paris.
LABOURG, Frédérick	Interpreter, Paris.
LANTIERI, Jean-Baptiste	Mayor of Bonifacio; Vice-President of the General Council of South Corsica (<i>Conseil Général de la Corse du Sud</i>), Ajaccio; Councillor, Corsican Assembly (<i>Assemblée de Corse</i>) (Assembly group <i>Démocratie Corse</i>), Ajaccio.

LAPIDOTH, Ruth	Professor of International Law, Hebrew University of Jerusalem.
LOUGHLIN, John	Professor of European Politics, School of European Studies, Cardiff University of Wales; Member of a study group on Regional and Local Democracy, Committee of the Regions, Brussels.
LUCIANI, Paul-Antoine	Councillor, Corsican Assembly (<i>Assemblée de Corse</i>) (President of the Assembly group <i>Communiste et démocrate de progrès</i>), Ajaccio.
MORATA, Francesc	Professor of Political Science, Autonomous University of Barcelona.
OLIVESI, Claude	Councillor, General Council of North Corsica (<i>Conseil Général de Haute-Corse</i>), Bastia; Senior Lecturer in Political Science, University of Corsica at Corte.
PARANT, Paul	Press Attaché, French Embassy in Finland, Helsinki.
PERETTI, Philippe	Councillor, Corsican Assembly (<i>Assemblée de Corse</i>) (Vice-President of the Assembly group <i>Mouvement pour la Corse</i>), Ajaccio.
REVERIER, Jean-Loup	Assistant Editor-in-Chief at the French weekly <i>Le Point</i> , Paris.
RIECKEN, Silke	Intern, European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI), Flensburg.
SALLEMBIEN, Pauline	Professor of Italian, University of Corsica; Member of the Women's movement <i>51 Femmes pour une Corse de l'an 2000</i> , Bastia.
SIMEONI, Edmondu	Autonomist militant, Bastia.
SÖDERHOLM, Ray	Deputy Speaker, Åland Legislative Assembly (<i>Ålands lagting</i>), Mariehamn.
STOOS, Anders	Intern, Åland Islands Peace Institute

(*Ålands fredsinstitut*), Mariehamn.

SUNDBACK, Barbro

Chair of the Board, Åland Islands Peace Institute (*Ålands fredsinstitut*); Member of the Åland Legislative Assembly (*Ålands lagting*), Mariehamn.

TALAMONI, Jean-Guy

Councillor, Corsican Assembly (*Assemblée de Corse*) (President of the Assembly group *Corsica Nazione*), Ajaccio.

TROEBST, Stefan

Director, European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI), Flensburg.

In Helsinki:

BRANDT, Christian

Secretary General of the Swedish Assembly of Finland (*Svenska Finlands folkting*), Helsinki; Vice-President of the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages (EBLUL).

GRAN, Nina

Director, *Nylands Svenska landskapsförbund*, Helsinki.

HYVÄRINEN, Nina

Junior Adviser, Political Department, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Helsinki.

LAX, Henrik

Chairman of the Swedish Assembly of Finland (*Svenska Finlands folkting*); Member of the Finnish Parliament, Helsinki.

PALMGREN, Sten

Legislative Counsellor, Ministry of Justice, Helsinki.

ROTKIRCH, Holger

Director General for Legal Affairs, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Helsinki.

SUURPÄÄ, Johanna

Legal Officer, Human Rights Affairs, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Helsinki.

VALTASAARI, Jukka

Secretary of State, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Helsinki.

APPENDIX 2

POLITICAL GROUPS IN CORSICA AT THE 1998 AND 1999 REGIONAL ELECTIONS

The Corsican Assembly is composed of 51 seats. It is elected in a two-round proportional elections for a period of 6 years. The elections to the Corsican Assembly are organised at the same time as in the other regions of France. A minimum of 5% of votes is needed to make it to the second round. The list which obtains the most votes gets a “bonus” of 3 seats.

The results of the 1998 regional elections were cancelled in December 1998 and new elections were called following a complaint filed by Dr. Edmondu Simeoni who believed that the number of irregular votes was significant enough (and which, according to him, might have enabled his list, UPC, to make the 5% minimum). Dr. Simeoni did not run under the UPC list in the 1999 elections.

The Corsican right is prone to infighting between the traditional “clans”. Unlike the Left, it did not manage to unify in 1998 under one list (there were 4 right-wing lists) in order to gain the bonus of seats attributed to the list with the most votes. In 1999, however, Jean Baggioni and José Rossi united under a joint RPR/UDF-DL list.

There has also traditionally been much infighting and rivalries amongst nationalists and autonomists who have persisted in running separately and thereby suffered the electoral consequences of a multiplicity of lists. Generally, though, the 1999 elections were quite positive for the nationalists, and in particular for *Corsica Nazione* which, in the second round of voting, collected all the nationalist votes to reach almost 17%, despite its ambiguous position regarding the use of violence (since 1998, the *Corsica Nazione* electoral list has been strongly influenced by *A Cuncolta Naziunalista*—the political mouthpiece of the clandestine *FLNC-Canal historique*). Still, the nationalist vote is under the historic 25% they gathered in the 1992 regional elections. It must also be noted that the seemingly high nationalist vote can partly be attributed to the lack of an autonomous green party and the weakness of the National Front (FN) in Corsica which enabled the nationalist parties to capture the discontent of a portion of the electorate.

Even though the left managed to present a unified front in Corsica in the 1998 and 1999 elections, it has not managed to unseat the right in its leading position in the Corsican Assembly and Executive Council.

The new civic movement of Dr. Simon Renucci (a paediatrician from Ajaccio close to Prime Minister Jospin), *Corse Social démocrate*, has captured a significant number of votes amongst those who are eager for change and want to apply the principles of democracy and arrive at new solutions for Corsica. Dr. Renucci also sought to give an opportunity to some of the women candidates from 1998 which he included on his list.

PARTY LISTS

- **Gauche « plurielle »** (pluralist left): unites the Socialist Party (PS-*Parti socialiste*), the French Communist Party (PCF-*Parti communiste français*), the Citizens' Movement (MDC-*Mouvement des Citoyens*, the Jacobin party of Interior Minister Jean-Pierre Chevènement) and the Left Radicals (PRG-*Parti des Radicaux de Gauche* of Minister Emile Zuccarelli). Paul Giacobbi, President of the *Conseil Général de Haute-Corse*, belongs to the PRG like his father, Senator François Giacobbi. In his own words, Paul Giacobbi is a personification of the clan system according—which makes his proposals on abolishing the two departments of North and South Corsica and, along with them, his own job, all the more surprising.
- **DVG:** *divers gauche*, that is, left-wing parties which are not part of the *gauche « plurielle »* government coalition.
 - *Mouvement pour la Corse* is a centre-left party, led by Toussaint Luciani.
 - *Corse Social démocrate* is a citizens' movement, rather than a political party, and is led by the charismatic Ajaccio paediatrician Simon Renucci. Elected to the Corsican Assembly with the *gauche « plurielle »* in 1998, Renucci decides to present his own list in 1999, with good results.
- **REG:** *Régionalistes, autonomistes, indépendantistes*. This category includes the nationalist and autonomist groups (UPC-*Unione di u Populu Corsu*, *Corsica Nazione*, *Corsica Viva*, MPA-*Mouvement pour l'autodétermination*) as well as the ecologists (*I Verdi Corsi*) and women's movements.
 - UPC-*Unione di u Populu Corsu* (Union of Corsican People). Long the leading autonomist party, led by the Simeoni brothers, Edmond and Max,

- it has had difficult periods, such as the forced retirement of Edmond Simeoni in the 1980s due to illness and recent internal divisions.
- *Corsica Nazione* is the leading nationalist electoral list and is basically identical to *A Cuncolta Naziunalista* (CN) since the other two parties which originally belonged to this coalition in the 1992 elections (ANC-*Accolta Naziunale Corsa* and UPC) withdrew.
 - *Corsica Viva* is a young nationalist movement which formally denounces the use of violence and with a strong basis in University circles as well as dissidents from more radical nationalist groups. A splinter group, *Rinnovu Naziunale* (National Renewal), was formed in early 1999 before the elections.
 - *MPA-Muvimentu pà l'Autodeterminazione* (Movement for Self-determination) is a nationalist party generally in favour of the Joxe Statute and the federalism proposed of the Maastricht Treaty.
 - *Manca Naziunale* is the only truly left-oriented nationalist party.
 - The women's list of Pascale Bizzari represented Pauline Sallembien's movement *51 femmes pour une Corse de l'an 2000* (51 Women for a Corsica of the year 2000) which did not succeed in obtaining the minimum 5% to reach the second round. They were however satisfied with the results of this very new movement which was born in the aftermath of Prefect Erignac's assassination in February 1998.
- **RPR:** *Rassemblement pour la République*. The right-wing Gaullist party of President Jacques Chirac and President of the Executive Council of Corsica Jean Baggioni. Paul Natali is also an RPR member but, because of traditional rivalry with Rossi, presented his own electoral list in 1998.
 - **UDF-DL:** *Démocratie libérale*. The right-of-centre coalition party of José Rossi, President of the Corsican Assembly. In the 1999 elections, in a show of unity in the right, Baggioni and Rossi presented a joint list under the title "*Une majorité pour la Corse*".
 - **DVD:** *Divers droite*. Philippe Ceccaldi's party *Corse Nouvelle* is a right wing neo-Bonapartist traditionalist party.
 - **FN:** *Front National*. France's far-right party has always failed to reach the same level of support in Corsica as in the rest of France.

1998 REGIONAL ELECTIONS (15 AND 22 MARCH)

➤ **First Round** (abstention: 31.44%)

Gauche « plurielle »	Emile Zuccarelli	24.81%
DVG (Mouvement pour la Corse)	Toussaint Luciani	5.72%
REG (I Verdi Corsi)	F. Begue-Tramoni	1.15%
REG (Corsica Viva)	Jean-Félix Acquaviva	1.94%
REG (MPA)	Gilbert Casanova	3.40%
REG (UPC)	Edmond Simeoni	4.97%
REG	Marie-Paule Cesari	0.66%
REG (Corsica Nazione)	Jean-Guy Talamoni	5.21%
REG (Women's list)	Pascale Bizzari	3.55%
REG (Women's list)	C. Pellicini-Poncet	0.93%
UDF-DL	José Rossi	11.87%
RPR	Jean Baggioni	14.15%
RPR	Paul Natali	9.01%
DVD (Corse nouvelle)	Philippe Ceccaldi	7.82%
FN	Roger Holeindre	4.80%

➤ **Second Round** (abstention: 29.83%)

			<u>Seats</u>
Gauche « plurielle »	Emile Zuccarelli	33.23%	(16)
DVG (Mouvement pour la Corse)	Toussaint Luciani	9.11 %	(4)
REG (Corsica Nazione)	Jean-Guy Talamoni	9.85%	(5)
RPR/UDF	Jean Baggioni	36.99%	(21)
DVD (Corse nouvelle)	Philippe Ceccaldi	10.82%	(5)

1999 REGIONAL ELECTIONS (7 AND 14 MARCH)

➤ **First Round** (abstention: 42.71%)

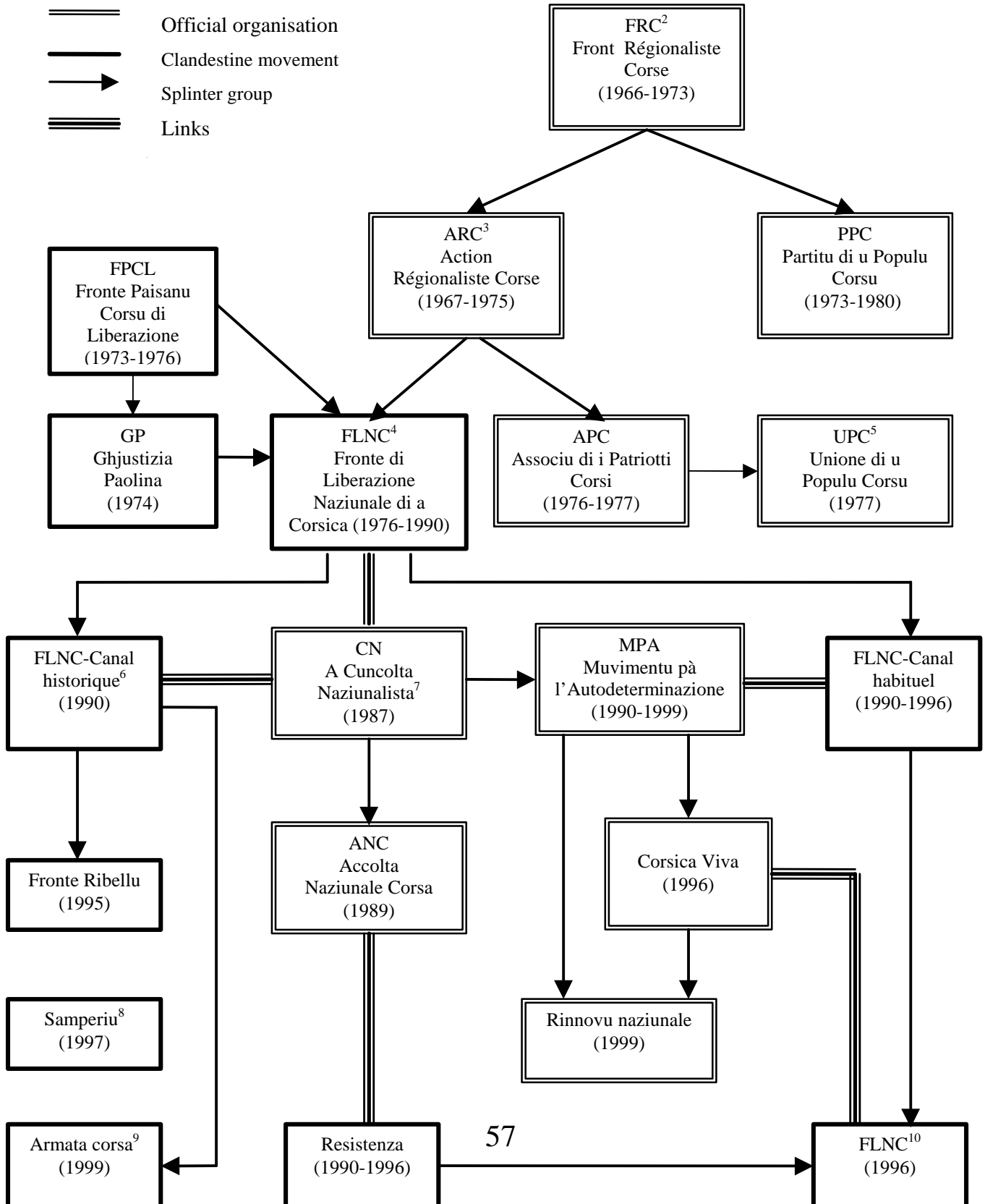
Gauche « plurielle »	Emile Zuccarelli	20.57%
DVG (Mouvement pour la Corse)	Toussaint Luciani	7.11%
DVG (Corse-Social démocrate)	Simon Renucci	6.75%
REG (Corsica Nazione)	Jean-Guy Talamoni	10.41%
REG (Uniti)	Achille Martinetti	3.97%
REG (A Manca Naziunale)	Jean Plasenzotti	0.79%
REG (Rinnovu Naziunale)	Xavier Luciani	4.44%
REG (Unione di u Populu Corsu)	François Alfonsi	3.85%
RPR-DL (Une majorité pour la Corse)	Baggioni-Rossi	24.20%
DVD (Corse nouvelle)	Philippe Ceccaldi	9.10%
DVD (Un autre avenir pour la Corse)	Jean-Louis Albertini	5.91%
FN	Roger Holeindre	2.91%

➤ **Second Round** (abstention: 32.48%)

			<u>Seats</u>
RPR-DL (Une majorité pour la Corse)	Baggioni-Rossi	27.29%	(17)
Gauche « plurielle »	Emile Zuccarelli	22.70%	(11)
REG (Corsica Nazione)	Jean-Guy Talamoni	16.77%	(8)
DVG (Corse-Social démocrate)	Simon Renucci	9.67%	(5)
DVD (Corse nouvelle)	Philippe Ceccaldi	9.42%	(4)
DVG (Mouvement pour la Corse)	Tousaint Luciani	7.71%	(3)
DVD (Un autre avenir pour la Corse)	Jean-Louis Albertini	6.44%	(3)

APPENDIX 3

A GENEALOGY OF CORSICAN NATIONALIST MOVEMENTS AND CLANDESTINE GROUPS ¹



NOTES

1. This diagram does not claim to be exhaustive nor up-to-date and is indicative only of the complex history of regionalist, autonomist and nationalist movements in Corsica. It is mostly based on articles which have appeared in the French press, in particular the daily *Libération* and the weekly *L'Express* as well as a book entitled *Le Nationalisme corse – genèse, succès et échec* by Emmanuel Bernabéu-Casanova (Paris : L'Harmattan, 1997). See also the diagrams in Claude Olivesi, “The Failure of Regionalist Party Formation in Corsica”, In: Lieven de Winter and Huri Türsan (eds.), *Regionalist Parties in Western Europe* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p.181; and in Pierre Poggioli, *Journal de Bord d'un Nationaliste Corse* (Saint-Etienne: L'Aube, 1996), p. 38. Thanks also goes to Dominique Ferrandini for his comments. The full names of the various organisations are given either in French or, when available, in Corsican, for reasons of space. The dates indicate founding and dissolution, where applicable.
2. FRC - *Front Régionaliste Corse*, changed its name in 1973 to *Partitu di u Populu Corsu* (PPC).
3. ARC - *Action Régionaliste Corse*, changed its name in 1973 to *Azzione per a Rinascita Corsa*. It was dissolved by the French Council of Ministers on 28 August 1975.
4. FLNC - *Fronte di Liberazione Naziunale di a Corsica* or, in French, *Front de Libération Nationale de la Corse*. In 1983, when the FLNC was dissolved by the French government, it persisted as a clandestine movement and was referred to as the “ex-FLNC.”
5. APC - *Associu di i Patrioti Corsi* was founded in early 1976 by Max Simeoni with similar objectives to the ARC: autonomy within the French state and the legal recognition of the “*peuple corse*”. The use of violence is rejected outright. In 1977, the APC changed its name to the *Unione di u Populu Corsu* (UPC), led by Max Simeoni and his brother, Edmondu.
6. The actual name of this movement, considered the main clandestine organisation in Corsica, is *FLNC-historique* but it is commonly called

FLNC-Canal historique (historic channel), as a counterpart to the *FLNC-Canal habituel* (usual channel).

7. Two movements which need to be mentioned here, as predecessors to CN, are the *Cunsulta di i Cunitati Naziunalisti* (CCN) (1980-1983); and the *Muvimentu Corsu pà l'Autodeterminazione* (MCA) (1983-1987).
8. It has not been proven whether this mysterious group really exists. This clandestine movement, which claimed responsibility for the assassination of the Prefect, Claude Erignac, in February 1998, was first heard of on 10 October 1997 when it claimed responsibility for a terrorist act against a *gendarmerie* at Pietrosella on 6 September 1997, as well two other terrorist acts. It was later proven that a gun stolen at Pietrosella was used to shoot the Prefect. However, in January 1998 just before the assassination, *Sampieru* had announced its own dissolution.
9. Despite its short period of existence, *Armata Corsa* has already claimed a whole series of terrorist acts, including one murder, which is threatening the fragile nationalist reconciliation (following an initiative by the Fium'Orbu Committee at the beginning of 1999 which gathered 14 nationalist movements and resulted in an agreement on 3 July to put an end to the use of violence between nationalists in Corsica). *Armata Corsa* claims to have 200 members and is very critical of the *FLNC-Canal historique*.
10. Also referred to as the "FLNC of 5 May 1996" to avoid confusion with the *FLNC-Canal historique* and the *FLNC-Canal habituel*.

APPENDIX 4 THE STATUTE OF ÅLAND

IN FINNISH CONSTITUTIONAL LAW¹⁶

In accordance with Chapter IV a, Section 52 a (The Autonomy of Åland) of the current Finnish Constitution (17 July 1919/94), the statute of Åland is defined by a separate act.¹⁷ No other special reference is made to the special provisions for Åland. However, in the new constitution, which will enter into force on 1 March 2000, there are several specific references to Åland:

➤ Chapter 3 (The Parliament and the Representatives), Section 25 (General election):

(2) For a general election, the country shall be divided, on the basis of population figures, to at least twelve and at most eighteen constituencies. In addition, the Åland Islands shall form their own constituency for the election of one Representative.

➤ Chapter 6 (Legislation), Section 75 (Special legislation for Åland):

(1) The legislative procedure for the Act on the Autonomy of Åland and the Act on the Right to Acquire Real Estate in Åland shall be governed by the specific provisions in those Acts.

(2) The right of the Åland Legislative Assembly to submit proposals and the enactment of Acts of Åland shall be governed by the provisions in the Act on the Autonomy of Åland.

➤ Chapter 11 (Administration and autonomy), Section 122 (Autonomy of Åland):

The Åland Islands shall be autonomous, as provided in greater detail in the Act on the Autonomy of Åland.

¹⁶ The texts of the current Finnish constitution as well as the new constitution are available in English on the website of the Finnish Council of State at: <http://www.vn.fi/vn/english/index.htm>. Note that the English translation of the new Constitution is an unofficial one.

THE ACT ON THE AUTONOMY OF ÅLAND (16 AUGUST 1991/1144)¹⁸

The *Act on the Autonomy of Åland (16 August 1991/1144)* is the third autonomy act of the Åland Islands and entered into force on 1 January 1993. It replaced the 1951 Autonomy Act (28 December 1951/760) (which itself had repealed the first act of 1920) as well as the *Act on the Application of the Administrative Appeals Act in The Åland Islands (16 February 1979/182)*.

In the following section, main extracts from the Autonomy Act concerning Right of Domicile (Chapter 2), Language Provisions (Chapter 6), as well as International Treaties (Chapter 9) and Matters relating to the European Union (Chapter 9a) are reproduced.

CHAPTER 2: RIGHT OF DOMICILE IN ÅLAND

Section 6: Right of domicile by virtue of law

The right of domicile in Åland shall belong to

- 1) a person who at the time of the entry into force of this Act had the right of domicile under the Autonomy Act for Åland (28 December 1951/670); and
- 2) a child under 18 years of age who is a citizen of Finland and a resident of Åland, provided that his father or mother has the right of domicile.

Section 7: Right of domicile on application

The power to grant the right of domicile is vested in the Government of Åland. Unless there are persuasive reasons for not granting the right of domicile, it shall be granted on application to a citizen of Finland

- 1) who has taken up residence in Åland;
- 2) who has without interruption been habitually resident in Åland for at least five years; and
- 3) who is satisfactorily proficient in the Swedish language.

For a special reason the right of domicile may also be granted to a person who does not fulfil the requirements of paragraph 2, subparagraphs 2 and 3, subject to the provisions of an Act of Åland.

¹⁷ This paragraph reads: “The Province of Åland shall be autonomous in the manner separately prescribed.”

¹⁸ The full text of the Act may be found in English on the website of the Åland Legislative Assembly at: <http://www.lagtinget.aland.fi>. It is also included in Hurst Hannum (ed.), *Documents on Autonomy and Minority Rights* (Dordrecht/Boston/London: Martinus Nijhoff, 1993).

Section 8: Forfeiture of the right of domicile

A person who forfeits the citizenship of Finland shall likewise forfeit the right of domicile.

The forfeiture of the right of domicile of a person who moves his permanent residence from Åland shall be as provided by an Act of Åland.

Section 9: Participation in elections and eligibility for office

Only a person with the right of domicile may participate in the elections of the Legislative Assembly, the municipal councils and the other positions of trust in the Åland and municipal administration. Only a person with the right of domicile shall be eligible for such positions of trust.

The right to vote and the eligibility for office in certain cases shall be governed by the provisions of section 67.

Section 10: Right to acquire real property

The limitations on the right to acquire real property or property of a similar nature in Åland with full legal title or with the right to enjoy are as provided by the Act on the Acquisition of Real Property in Åland (3 January 1975/3). The limitations shall not apply to a person with the right of domicile.

Section 11: Right of trade

The right of a person without the right of domicile to exercise a trade or profession in Åland for personal gain may be limited by an Act of Åland. However, such an Act of Åland may not be used to limit the right of trade of a person residing in Åland, if no person other than a spouse and minor children is employed in the trade and if the trade is not practiced in business premises, an office or any other special place of business.

Section 12: Service of conscription

A person with the right of domicile may in place of conscription for military service serve in a corresponding manner in the pilotage or lighthouse services or in other civilian administration.

Service in the pilotage and lighthouse services shall be as provided by a State Act after the Legislative Assembly has been reserved an opportunity to submit an opinion on the matter. Service in other civilian administration shall be provided by a State Act with the consent of the Legislative Assembly. Until such service has been organised, the residents of Åland referred to in paragraph 1 shall be exempt from conscription for military service.

Paragraph 1 shall not apply to a person who has taken up residence in Åland after having reached the age of twelve years.

CHAPTER 6: LANGUAGE PROVISIONS

Section 36: Official language

The official language of Åland shall be Swedish. The language used by the State and Åland officials and in the municipal administration shall be Swedish. The official language of the Åland Delegation shall be Swedish. The opinions and decisions of the Supreme Court referred to in this Act shall be written in Swedish.

The provisions of this Act on the language used in State administration shall also apply, where appropriate, to the officials of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, unless otherwise provided by the Church Code.

Section 37: Right to use Finnish

In a matter concerning himself a citizen of Finland shall have the right to use Finnish before a court and with other State officials in Åland.

Section 38: Language of correspondence

Letters and other documents between Åland officials and the State officials in Åland shall be written in Swedish. The same provision shall apply also to correspondence between the said authorities and the Åland Delegation, on one hand, as well as the Council of State, the officials in the central government of Finland and the superior courts and other State officials to whose jurisdiction Åland or a part thereof belongs, on the other hand.

However, a treaty referred to in section 59 that is submitted for approval of the Legislative Assembly may be sent to Åland in the original language, if the treaty by law is not to be published in Swedish. A document referred to in section 59 a that is notified to Åland may be sent to Åland in the original language, if it has not yet been translated into Swedish. (31 December 1994/1556)

The provisions of paragraph 1 on Åland officials shall also apply to municipal officials in Åland.

Section 39: Translations

On the request of a party, the courts and the County Government of Åland shall enclose a Finnish translation in their documents.

If a document submitted to a court or another State official is written in Finnish, the official shall see to its translation into Swedish, if necessary.

A private party in Åland shall have the right to receive an enclosed Swedish translation with his copy of the document in matters that are considered by a State official in the State, referred to in section 38, paragraph 1, and on which the document shall according to general language legislation be written in Finnish.

Section 40: Language of education

The language of education in schools maintained by public funds or subsidised from the said funds shall be Swedish, unless otherwise provided by an Act of Åland.

Section 41: Proficiency in Finnish

A graduate of an educational institution in Åland may, as further provided by Decree, be admitted to a State-maintained or State-subsidised Swedish or bilingual educational institution and be graduated therefrom, even if he does not have the proficiency in Finnish required for admittance and graduation.

Section 42: Linguistic proficiency of State officials

Provisions on the linguistic proficiency of a State official in Åland shall be issued by Decree with the consent of the Government of Åland.

The State shall organise training in Swedish for the persons in its service in Åland.

Section 43: Information and regulations issued in Swedish

The Council of State shall take measures to have the necessary product and service information distributed to the consumers in Åland in Swedish, where possible.

The Council of State shall also see to the availability in Swedish of the regulations to be followed in Åland.

CHAPTER 9: INTERNATIONAL TREATIES

Section 58: Negotiations on international treaties

The Government of Åland may propose negotiations on a treaty with a foreign State to the appropriate State officials.

The Government of Åland shall be informed of negotiations on a treaty with a foreign State if the matter is subject to the competence of Åland. If the negotiations on a treaty with a foreign State otherwise relate to matters of special importance to Åland, the Government of Åland shall be informed of the negotiations, if appropriate. For a special reason the Government of Åland shall be reserved the opportunity to participate in the negotiations.

Section 59: Entry into force of international treaties

If a treaty that Finland has concluded with a foreign State contains a provision contrary to this Act, the provision shall enter into force in Åland only if so provided by an Act enacted in accordance with sections 67 and 69 of the Parliament of Finland Act and section 69 of this Act.

If the treaty contains a provision that according to this Act is subject to the authority of Åland, the Legislative Assembly must consent to the statute

implementing the treaty in order to have the provision enter into force in Åland.

The Legislative Assembly may authorise the Government of Åland to give the consent referred to in paragraph 2.

CHAPTER 9 A (31 DECEMBER 1994/1556): MATTERS RELATING TO THE EUROPEAN UNION

Section 59 a (31 December 1994/1556): Preparation of EU matters

The Government of Åland shall be notified of matters under preparation in the institutions of the European Union, if the matters are within the legislative power of Åland or may for other reasons be especially important to Åland.

The Government of Åland shall have the right to participate in the preparation of the matters referred to in paragraph 1 within the Council of State.

Section 59 b (31 December 1994/1556): Application of a Common Policy of the European Community

In so far as the matter belongs to the legislative power of Åland, the Government of Åland shall formulate the national position of Finland relating to the application of a Common Policy of the European Community in Åland.

Section 59 c (31 December 1994/1556): The Committee of the Regions of the European Community

A candidate designated by the Government of Åland shall be nominated as one of the representatives of Finland in the Committee of the Regions of the European Community.

APPENDIX 5

ÅLAND AND THE EU¹⁹

Åland's autonomy made it possible for the Ålanders to make their own decision about joining the European Union or not after Finland had decided to join. The Legislative Assembly of Åland resolved that Åland should also join the EU, since it was given special legal exemptions which safeguard its autonomy and the population's livelihood.

ÅLAND AND INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS

According to the Autonomy Act, foreign policy falls within the authority of the Republic of Finland. Åland has therefore no authority to enter into international agreements on its own.

But Åland is not totally without influence in international affairs. If an international treaty entered into by Finland contains a provision which is in conflict with the Autonomy Act or if the treaty contains a provision which falls within the authority of Åland, the Legislative Assembly must approve such a provision for it to be valid in Åland.

The President has to seek the consent of the Legislative Assembly to international agreements. There are about ten such cases every year. So far agreements have contained regulations for the avoidance of double taxation or regulations relating to social security. The Assembly has given its consent more or less as a matter of routine.

The Autonomy Act also contains provisions which enable the Government of Åland to approach authorities of the Republic of Finland and propose negotiations about new treaties.

¹⁹ Reproduced with the permission of the Legislative Assembly of Åland. Also available at: <http://www.lagtinget.aland.fi>.

ÅLAND IN THE EU

When Finland was preparing its application for membership of the EU, Åland put forward certain desiderata that it saw as important for the safeguarding of Åland's autonomy and the future development of its economy. The negotiations between Finland and the European union resulted in a treaty of accession which, from the point of view of Åland, must be regarded as successful. In other words, Åland was given a sympathetic ear by the EU.

Åland's relation to the European Union's legal system is regulated by a special protocol, known as the **Åland Protocol**. The protocol is included in Finland's treaty of accession and is thus part of the EU's primary laws. This means that the provisions of the protocol cannot be altered by EU regulations, directives or resolutions, but that an amendment must be approved by all the membership states jointly. The Åland Protocol has thus a very strong formal position within the EU's legal system.

According to the Åland Protocol, membership of the EU does not prevent Åland from retaining its domicile status requirement for the purchase of land, for the right of establishment and for the right to provide services in Åland.

Furthermore, Åland is to be classified as a so-called third territory, which remains outside the application of the EU's harmonisation directive for indirect taxation.

This exemption makes tax-free sales possible between Sweden and Åland even after the abolition of such sales in the EU in 1999. It further makes tax-free sales between Åland and Finland possible. The aim of this exemption is to maintain the future viability of the Åland economy.

The taxation provision contains two so-called safety clauses which enable the EU to take measures to annul the exemption if it no longer appears justifiable. The safety clauses in combination with the regulations requiring the right of domicile for the purchase of land and the establishment of a business make it difficult for Åland to develop into a tax haven. There is, of course, no political will in Åland to create such a situation.

The introduction to the Åland Protocol refers to Åland's position in international law as an autonomous, demilitarised, and neutral territory.

In addition to the Åland Protocol, the member states of the EU have committed themselves in a special **declaration** to respecting the regulations governing franchise and eligibility in local council elections in Åland. Furthermore, in a **unilateral declaration** the Government of Finland has confirmed Åland's special status in international law. Thus Åland's autonomy, its demilitarised status, and its neutrality have been confirmed both in the Åland Protocol and in a declaration by the Government of Finland.

ÅLAND'S INFLUENCE IN THE EU

The question of ensuring that Åland has sufficient influence in EU matters is regarded by the EU as an internal Finnish issue.

On joining the EU, Åland, like Finland, surrendered some of its legislative power. The view in Åland is that Åland, like Finland, should have been compensated for this loss of authority by being given representation in the European Parliament. However, the Finnish Parliament resolved not to allocate any of its sixteen seats in the European Parliament to Åland, a decision which Åland opinion has labelled as unacceptable.

On the other hand, Åland's participation in the national decision-making process relating to the EU is satisfactorily provided for. New rules have been introduced into the Autonomy Act which give the Government of Åland the right of access to information about business which is in preparation in the EU's institutions, if such business is of special importance to Åland. The Government also has the right to participate when such business is being prepared in the Finnish Council of State. Furthermore, the Autonomy Act empowers the Government of Åland to formulate Finland's response in so far as it concerns the application of common EU policy in Åland. The Autonomy Act also gives the Government of Åland the right to choose a representative for the EU's regional committee.

To enable Åland to participate in the Finnish Parliament's discussions of issues of European integration, the legislation on parliamentary procedure has been amended to allow Åland's member always to be present at the meetings of the Grand Committee. Each ministry also has a civil servant with special responsibility for EU parliamentary business which concerns Åland. Finally, the Government of Åland has its own special adviser at Finland's permanent representation in Brussels.

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ÅLAND PROTOCOL

The question of how the exemption from the harmonization of taxation contained in the Åland Protocol is to be implemented is still open. According to the present autonomy legislation, it falls to the Republic of Finland to legislate on both direct and indirect state taxation. The Finnish parliament has not as yet resolved to use the opportunity to introduce the special legislation on taxation that the Åland Protocol allows for.

The technical solution chosen to enable tax-free sales to continue has brought with it certain disadvantages for Åland. Because Åland as a third territory is outside the taxation union, a tax border with the EU came into being which threatened to put Åland producers at a competitive disadvantage. However, a special law passed by the Finnish Parliament removed for the time being the border formalities for the trade between Åland and Finland, but in the trade with the rest of the EU the tax border involves formalities which are at variance with the trade formalities within the rest of the EU and which put producers in Åland to some extent at a competitive disadvantage.

THE EU DECISION

The decision by the Legislative Assembly to seek EU membership was preceded by an advisory referendum. In the referendum 74 % voted for membership on the conditions laid down in the Åland Protocol. After that the Legislative Assembly resolved with 26 votes to 4 to follow Finland's example and seek membership of the European Union.

APPENDIX 6

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