

30
years .

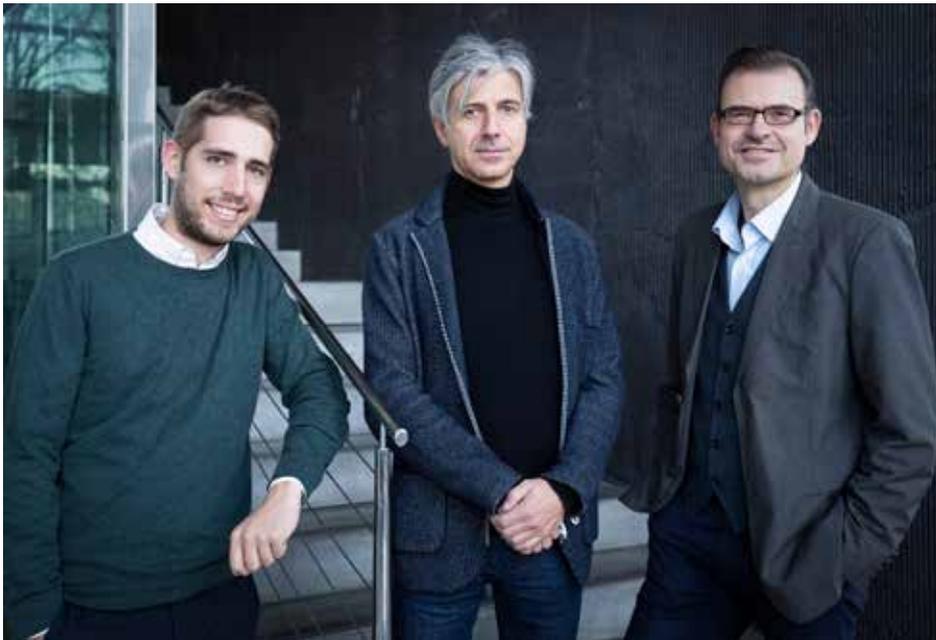
Autonomy,
Minority and
Federalism Studies
at Eurac Research

1992-2022

This booklet takes you on a journey through South Tyrol's research in the areas of minority rights, worldwide autonomies and federalism over the past thirty years. Since 1992, legal scholars, linguists and political scientists have been working at Eurac Research in Bozen/Bolzano making it one of the largest competence centers in its fields in Europe.

30 years.
Autonomy, Minority and Federalism Studies
at Eurac Research, 1992-2022

From left to right: Marc Röggl, Francesco Palermo and Günther Rautz



Dear reader,

2022 marks the 50-year jubilee of the Second
Autonomy Statute.

2022 also marks the 30th anniversary of Eurac
Research and 30 years of research on autonomy,
minorities and federalism in South Tyrol.

This booklet takes you on an informative journey
through South Tyrol's eventful past and the
special features of its autonomy model.

Dealing with the history of science at Eurac
Research and with the disciplines dedicated to
the study of the above mentioned issues, this
booklet also presents the work of the Institute for
Minority Rights and the Institute for Comparative
Federalism over the last 30 years, while also
demonstrating some of the initiatives launched
in South Tyrol such as the new Center for
Autonomy Experience.

Happy reading!

Marc Röggl,
Center for Autonomy
Experience

Francesco Palermo,
Institute for Comparative
Federalism

Günther Rautz,
Institute for Minority
Rights

1.

South Tyrol – the History of a Minority Region

The history of the German- and Ladin-speaking minorities in South Tyrol begins in 1918.

Since the Middle Ages, the region between Brenner/Brennero and Salurn/Salorno was part of the Crown Land of Tyrol and belonged to the multi-ethnic Habsburg empire of Austria-Hungary.

After the First World War, borders were redrawn throughout Europe and South Tyrol became part of Italy. When Mussolini's fascist party came to power in 1922, a period of oppression and marginalisation of the German- and Ladin-speaking minority began: German was replaced by Italian in the public sphere, the German language was banned from public life and schools.

In the 1930s, industrial plants and hydroelectric power stations were built to create jobs for the Italian workers who had moved to South Tyrol from the south. In 1939, the Hitler-Mussolini Agreement forced the German- and Ladin-speaking South Tyroleans to make a decision: in the so called "Option", they had to choose between staying in their homeland, but giving up their cultures and languages, or emigrating to the "German Reich". After a fierce propaganda campaign, about 86 percent of South Tyroleans decided to leave. About 75,000 people out of 213,000 emigrated, the migration was then interrupted at the onset of the Second World War.

After the Second World War, South Tyrol remained part of Italy against the will of the majority of its population. In return, it was granted autonomy "to safeguard the ethnic character and the cultural and economic development of the German-speaking element", as the Gruber-Degasperi Agreement from 1946 between Italy and Austria states.

The German- and Ladin-speaking minorities were soon dissatisfied with the implementation of autonomy. Their province was united with that of Trentino to form an autonomous region. The Italian language group was thus in the majority and able to overrule the political motions of the German- and Ladin-speaking inhabitants.

In around 1960, as a result of this frustration, separatists planned and carried out bomb attacks on electricity pylons, eventually causing fatalities.

During this time, Austria brought the South Tyrolean issue to the UN General Assembly. As a result, South Tyrol, with the support of Austria, negotiated a better Autonomy Statute with Rome, which came into force in 1972 and the implementation of which was officially considered complete in 1992.

It brought significant improvements in terms of political, financial, cultural and economic self-governance to the territory and the minorities settled there.

Today, South Tyrol is considered internationally as a successful example to pacify ethnic conflicts. About two thirds of the South Tyrolean population is German-speaking, one third is Italian-speaking and 4 percent belong to the Rhaeto-Romanic minority of the Ladins. There is also a growing number of "others", e.g. people who have migrated to South Tyrol in the last years and belong partly to other language groups.



(1) Today South Tyrol lies between the Italian- and the German-speaking world. Until 1918, it was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

(2) With the Treaty of Saint Germain, it was annexed to Italy together with the predominantly Italian-speaking Trentino (3) and separated from the rest of the Austrian Crown Land of Tyrol, today's federal state of Tyrol.



This QR code takes you to our e-learning course on the history of South Tyrol in the 20th century.



The Paris Treaty of 1946 concluded between the Austrian Foreign Minister, Karl Gruber (left), and the Italian Prime Minister and at the same time Foreign Minister, Alcide De Gasperi (right), forms the basis for today's autonomy.



The leader of the South Tyrolean People's Party (SVP), Silvius Magnago, and later "father of South Tyrol's autonomy" at a mass rally in 1957 at Sigmundskron Castle near Bozen/Bolzano. At this rally, he demanded a separate autonomy for South Tyrol, independent of Trentino ("Away from Trento").



In June 1961, attacks startled the Italian public. A separatist underground movement, the South Tyrol Liberation Committee (BAS), blew up about 40 electricity pylons in South Tyrol. A worker from Trentino died.

2.

The Autonomy of South Tyrol

The Second Autonomy Statute, in force since 1972, offers far-reaching protection to the German- and Ladin-speaking minorities in South Tyrol.

The system of autonomy is based on the conflict resolution model of power-sharing: at the political level, representatives of the respective language groups work closely together. The population, on the other hand, lives ethnically separated in part: for example, there are schools in Italian and German in addition to Ladin, and cultural offices of the province are also separated according to language groups.

Every ten years, a survey is conducted to determine the size of the language groups. These results form the basis for the so called ethnic quota system: this determines the allocation of public service jobs or financial resources according to the concentration of the language groups.

The Autonomy Statute also includes several measures for language protection. German and Italian are co-official languages. In order to work in the civil service – a large and important employer – proof of competence in both official languages is required. A German-speaking South Tyrolean thus, for example, has the right to use their own mother tongue in court as well as in hospital or for public services. Finally, South Tyrol's autonomy provides for extensive self-government. For example, the South Tyrolean Parliament has the power to enact its own laws, be it in the areas of tourism, agriculture, transport, culture and education or industry. These and other sectors are mainly financed by South Tyrol and not by the central state. For this reason, the autonomous province retains almost 90 percent of the taxes collected on its territory, only 10 percent are directed to Rome. South Tyrol's competences are constantly being extended and expanded.



In addition to (1) legally guaranteed multilingualism and (2) the state-guaranteed finance model, there is another essential pillar of South Tyrol's autonomy: (3) the so called "Commission of Six" is a joint commission in which representatives of the State and the Autonomous Province of Bozen/Bolzano are represented in equal numbers in order to foster trust and dialogue. The commission negotiates and draws up enactment decrees for the Autonomy Statute. This institution, together with the ethnic quota system, may be a transferrable instrument for other realities.



This QR code takes you to our e-learning course on the Autonomy of South Tyrol.

3.

The Foundation of Eurac Research and the Origins of Autonomy and Minority Studies in Bozen/Bolzano

Today, South Tyrol's autonomy is studied and perceived internationally as a model for resolving ethnic conflicts successfully.

However, this was not always the case.

In the 1970s and 1980s, South Tyrol's autonomy was implemented and expanded, but it received little international attention, apart from the important studies by the Irish historian Antony E. Alcock. In 1989, the Iron Curtain fell and new states of Central and Eastern Europe emerged with notable minority populations from the disintegrated communist block. The re-emergence of the so called national minority question, for example on the Balkans, in Georgia, Moldova and the newly reconstituted Russian Federation, made autonomy solutions interesting as an antidote to separatist efforts. At the same time, significant developments took place at the level of the European Union: With the Maastricht Treaty of 1992, European integration received significant stimulation. The Copenhagen Criteria of 1993 and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of 1995 respectively set new standards for the protection of minorities in the EU. All this led to a growing interest in well-functioning autonomy mechanisms like those in place in South Tyrol.

Alongside this global shift, significant intellectual developments also took place in South Tyrol: With the founding of Eurac Research in 1992 – at the time called European Academy – the autonomous province received its first institution dedicated solely to applied research. Before that, there were hardly any research institutions in the province: South Tyroleans went abroad to study, to write their PhD theses and to teach and work at universities or in the private sector.

“The 1990s were a decade of optimism, of great confidence and dynamism, the most exciting and productive period in minority studies in Europe.”

Gabriel von Toggenburg, former Senior Researcher at the Institute for Minority Rights

The establishment of Eurac Research was intended to stem this brain drain, by creating a research environment and the ground for higher education, later followed by the foundation of today's Free University of Bozen/Bolzano.

Since its beginnings, one of the central pillars of Eurac Research have been the research and documentation of South Tyrol's autonomy and minority protection.

A young team of Italian, Austrian and German scholars set out to study the legal institutions of the autonomy framework.

From the beginning, the focus has been on the comparison of South Tyrol's case with other minorities, but also on the study of minority rights and international law at the EU level and finally on the research of linguistic issues in the context of minorities.

Today, around 50 researchers investigate research topics related to autonomy, minority rights, comparative federalism and linguistic aspects.



Eurac Research's headquarter in Bozen/Bolzano.

“That was also the time when in South Tyrol many political problems were solved by the 1992 ‘Dispute Settlement’* and people started to look outwards to let in, as I used to call it, fresh air and enter into communication with each other.”

Werner Stuflesser, Founding President of Eurac Research

* in 1992, Italy and Austria officially ended their dispute over South Tyrol before the UN.

4.

The Study of South Tyrol's Autonomy as a Model for Minority Protection and Conflict Resolution

The Institute for Minority Rights and the Institute for Comparative Federalism, both established in 2004, sprouted from the previous Ethnic Minorities and Regional Autonomies Department to investigate issues concerning minorities and autonomies since the establishment of Eurac Research. The researchers publish in journals and books, participate in conferences and projects, host students in Bozen/Bolzano for Summer and Winter Schools; the institutes are a consistent point of reference for the local administration.

The autonomy of South Tyrol has become increasingly recognised thanks to these lively research and consulting activities and through close cooperation with international institutions such as the Council of Europe, the EU, the European Court of Human Rights and the OSCE.

The reception of international delegations interested in the autonomy model of South Tyrol has been one of the central tasks of the respective departments at Eurac Research since the 1990s.

In this context, the legal competences of South Tyrol's autonomy cannot be transferred thus and simply as a conflict resolution model to other minority situations due to the fact that historical and political conditions in these minority regions are too different compared to the province of Bozen/Bolzano. The exemplary nature of South Tyrol lies rather in the long political process during which the essential details of autonomy were negotiated and in the relatively lengthy practical application of the autonomy model and its detailed regulation. Both had the effect of promoting trust between Rome and South Tyrol as well as between the language groups.

South Tyrol also has general validity in another respect: autonomies never fulfil the maximum demands of neither the nation state nor the minority. They are always compromise solutions, which are often met with initial reluctance.

In South Tyrol's case, it is on the one hand the abandonment of external self-determination on the part of the minority, and on the other, the respect by the nation state for the cultural and linguistic autonomy of the minority.

Negotiation is key.



Tolerance through law, published in 2008 by Martinus Nijhoff Publishers (Brill) in Leiden, deals with the characteristics and the individual legal institutions of the Constitution of South Tyrol's Autonomy. A handbook in Italian (2001) and one in German (2004) were published earlier. All three handbooks represent the extensive state of research on topics such as minorities, autonomy and federalism that was compiled at Eurac Research in the decades before. The title reflects the lengthy process of trust-building, based on extremely detailed legal arrangements, which was intrinsic in creating tolerance between the Italian state and its minorities and the key to the eventual success of South Tyrol's Autonomy.



This QR code takes you to our digital exhibition about Eurac Research's history of science in minority and autonomy studies in the past 30 years (in German and Italian language).

MINORITY AND AUTONOMY STUDIES

BOZEN/BOLZANO

1992

PROJECTS

1999 – ongoing
Summer & Winter
Schools

PROJECT

2001 - ongoing
Observatory on South
Tyrol's Autonomy

2008

Hot off the press!
Tolerance through Law: Self Governance
and Group Rights in South Tyrol

- Macedonia
- Croatia
- Serbia
- Kosovo
- Bosnia and Herzegovina

PROJECT

2006 - 2008
MIRICO
Human and Minority
Rights in the Life Cycle
of Ethnic Conflicts

PROJECT

Council of Europe



European Union

2008

Once upon a time in the East
European Integration and its Effects on
Minority Protection in South Eastern Europe

- Georgia
- Ukraine
- Russia



Organization for Security
and Cooperation in Europe

PROJECT

2008 - 2010

EURASIA NET
Europe - South Asia Exchange on
Supranational (Regional) Policies
and Instruments for the Promotion
of Human Rights and the
Management of Minority Issues

- Nepal
- India
- Pakistan
- Bangladesh

2009

An eye opener!
Solving Ethnic Conflict through Self-Government:
A Short Guide to Autonomy
in South Asia and Europe

- Canada (Quebec)
- United Kingdom (Scotland)
- Spain (Catalonia)

PROJECT

2008 - 2010
MIMI
Best Practices of Minority
Protection in Central Europe

- Romania
- Slovakia
- Hungary

PROJECT

2016 - ongoing
CUTE Autonomy
Cultural and Territorial
Autonomy
www.world-autonomies.info

- Bolivia
- Chile

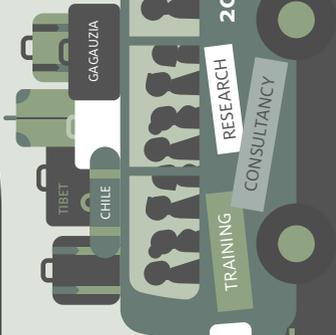
- Cyprus
- Myanmar
- Moldova (Gagauzia)

2021

**E-Learning-Courses
at Eurac Research!**
Several courses on various topics
such as Autonomy and History
in South Tyrol are available online

TRAINING
RESEARCH
CONSULTANCY

2022



30 YEARS
OF MINORITY, FEDERALISM
AND AUTONOMY RESEARCH

5.

South Tyrol's Autonomy and Its International Sphere of Influence

Since the founding of the then called Ethnic Minorities and Regional Autonomies Department at Eurac Research, international delegations have regularly visited South Tyrol to study various elements of the local autonomy model, such as the school models, the ethnic quota system, the right to use one's own mother tongue in public administration, the financial relations, the division of powers, the integration of new minorities and much more. There is also a strong interest in economic aspects, such as dual vocational training or the agriculture and industrial sector.

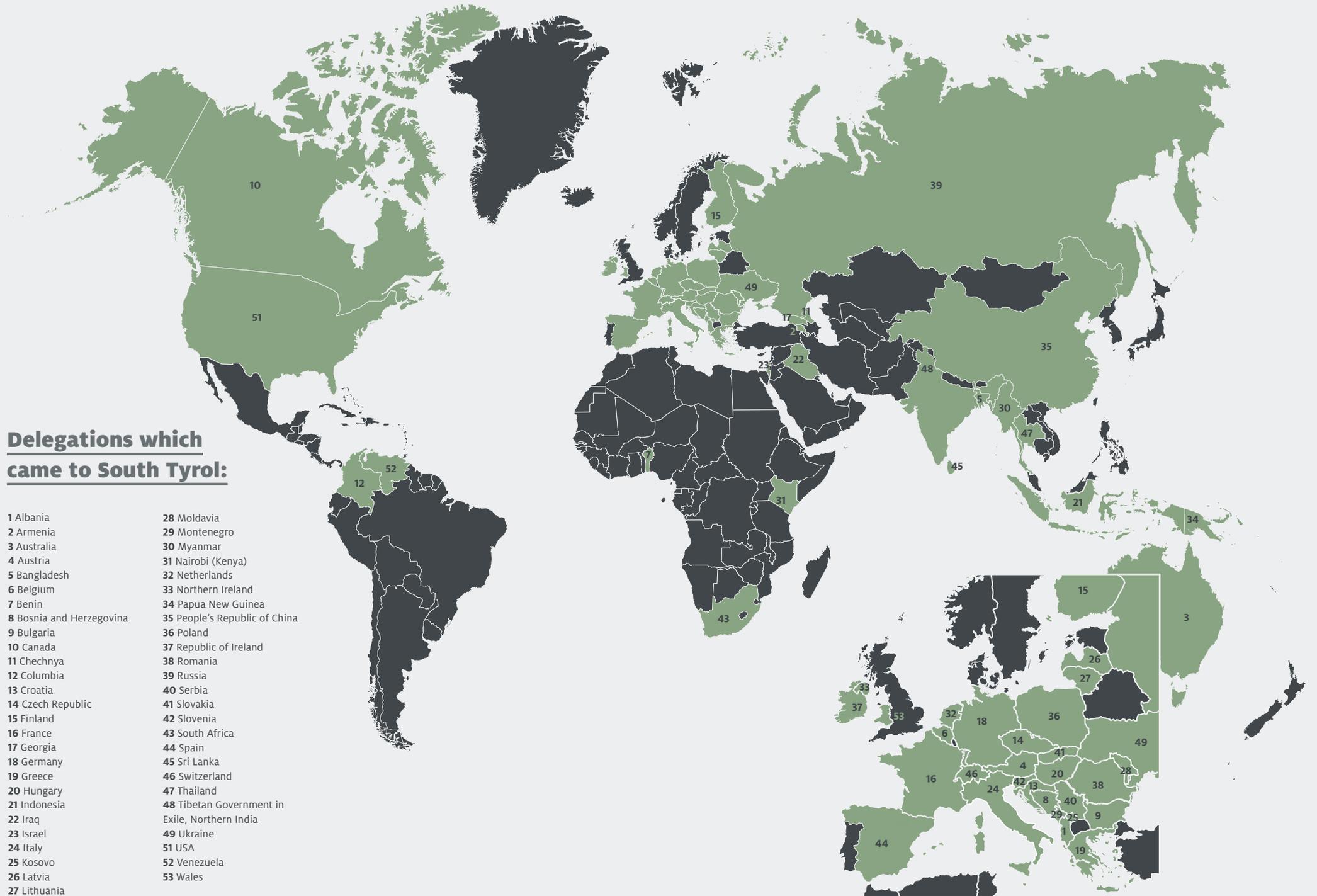
One of the highlights is Eurac Research's cooperation with the Tibetan Government in Exile in Dharamsala/India, which started in the late 1990s. Until today, the Dalai Lama has visited Bozen/Bolzano a total of four times. During his visits, the spiritual leader of the Tibetans learnt more about South Tyrol's multilingualism and self-government as well as the urban and rural life. There were also several return visits to North India by local politicians and researchers. Legal representatives of Tibet, together with experts on autonomy and minority rights from Eurac Research, worked out an autonomy statute for Tibet. South Tyrol's autonomy and comparatively, other models such as the Autonomy Statute of the Åland Islands or Hong Kong's Basic Law served as a theoretical legal basis. In addition to the visit from Tibet, numerous other delegations of ethnic and religious minorities from all over the world have travelled to South Tyrol. Delegations came from Europe, the Middle East and Asia, the Americas, South Africa and Australia.



The “father of South Tyrol's autonomy” and former governor Silvius Magnago is greeting the Dalai Lama during his first visit in South Tyrol in September 1997.

Delegations which came to South Tyrol:

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| 1 Albania | 28 Moldavia |
| 2 Armenia | 29 Montenegro |
| 3 Australia | 30 Myanmar |
| 4 Austria | 31 Nairobi (Kenya) |
| 5 Bangladesh | 32 Netherlands |
| 6 Belgium | 33 Northern Ireland |
| 7 Benin | 34 Papua New Guinea |
| 8 Bosnia and Herzegovina | 35 People's Republic of China |
| 9 Bulgaria | 36 Poland |
| 10 Canada | 37 Republic of Ireland |
| 11 Chechnya | 38 Romania |
| 12 Columbia | 39 Russia |
| 13 Croatia | 40 Serbia |
| 14 Czech Republic | 41 Slovakia |
| 15 Finland | 42 Slovenia |
| 16 France | 43 South Africa |
| 17 Georgia | 44 Spain |
| 18 Germany | 45 Sri Lanka |
| 19 Greece | 46 Switzerland |
| 20 Hungary | 47 Thailand |
| 21 Indonesia | 48 Tibetan Government in Exile, Northern India |
| 22 Iraq | 49 Ukraine |
| 23 Israel | 51 USA |
| 24 Italy | 52 Venezuela |
| 25 Kosovo | 53 Wales |
| 26 Latvia | |
| 27 Lithuania | |



6.

Summer and Winter Schools

Eurac Research is an institution mainly dedicated to research and not, like the Free University of Bozen/Bolzano, to the training and teaching of students. Nevertheless, numerous events, workshops, academies, and further education courses are offered at Eurac Research: On the one hand, they are designed for local and non-academic audiences from young to old and on the other, for international researchers, consultants, stakeholders and young professionals.

These events also include a Summer School on Human Rights, Minorities and Diversity Governance, which has been offered since 1999 by the then Ethnic Minorities and Regional Autonomies Department.

The annual Winter School on Federalism and Governance has been organised by the Institute for Comparative Federalism since 2010. During the last years, interesting topics such as “Migration and Minorities”, “Local Government in Federal and Regional Systems”, and “Linguistic and Religious Diversity” have been covered.

SUMMER SCHOOL ON HUMAN RIGHTS, MINORITIES AND DIVERSITY GOVERNANCE (since 1999)

WINTER SCHOOL ON FEDERALISM AND GOVERNANCE (since 2010 in collaboration with the Leopold-Franzens-Universität Innsbruck)



7.

Initiatives and Projects

In the last thirty years, several Europe-wide initiatives were launched. The aim of these initiatives is to promote minority protection throughout Europe.

The Package for Europe of 1998 advocated the improvement of minority rights at the EU level. However, the Package did not call for the introduction of group rights at the level of the European Union. Rather, this initiative stated that it would be more effective to use the special instruments of EU law for minorities without establishing a separate minority protection system at the supranational level. Since 2001, the European Association of Daily Newspapers in Minority and Regional Languages (MIDAS) has been headquartered at Eurac Research. The organisation campaigns for minority daily press in Europe. Its aim is to promote cooperation in the fields of printing, marketing and information exchange of daily newspapers. It organises study visits and exchange programmes for journalists. MIDAS also campaigns for minority newspapers at state and EU level. In 2004, the so called Bolzano/Bozen Declaration was issued, which was addressed to all EU heads of state and government. It showed how the European Union could become more involved in the protection of minorities in the ongoing enlargement process. The Bolzano/Bozen recommendations of 2008 are a set of recommendations on national minorities in inter-State relations issued by the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities. Based on the expertise of scholars at Eurac Research and others, they seek to provide guidance to OSCE participating states on how best to manage their relations with neighboring states when they concern the issue of national minorities.

From 2017 to 2019, Eurac Research was involved in the so called Autonomy Convention, a participatory process in which South Tyrol's population was involved in the adaption of the Second Autonomy Statute. The Convention can be described as one of the most prominent examples of participatory democracy on the sub-national level in Europe.

The Minority Safepack Initiative was a European civil rights initiative and signature campaign launched in 2017 by experts at Eurac Research and the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN). It advocated for making legal, financial and civil society measures for the protection of national minorities mandatory in all EU member states.



MIDAS promotes the diversity of daily newspaper in minority languages. It is based at Eurac Research in Bozen/Bolzano.

8.

Science Diplomacy and the Center for Autonomy Experience

Science diplomacy is not a very new concept, although the term is becoming more and more relevant in a globalised world. Both the climate crisis and the Covid-19 pandemic have made significantly clear, that global questions can only be tackled with a common strategy, mass intelligence and scientific collaborations between states and subsequently research institutions. South Tyrol's autonomy is one of the most successful autonomy arrangements in Europe and the province today is a striking example of successful conflict regulation and cohabitation between language groups. While traditional diplomacy has been a playing field for states, science diplomacy may become increasingly relevant on a sub-national level. Building on the research carried out at Eurac Research over the last 30 years, the Center for Autonomy Experience was founded in 2020 in close cooperation with the Autonomous Province of Bozen/Bolzano. The Center plays a key role in all the activities of divulgation aimed to an international audience, especially in the exchange with other minority representatives from all around the world. It acts as a contact point for requests on legal institutions and the functioning of South Tyrol's autonomy. Together with the Autonomous Province of Bozen/Bolzano and the institutes at Eurac Research it organises delegation visits, conferences and meetings, it establishes contacts with politicians, academics and other stakeholders from South Tyrol. There is a whole series of e-learning courses on autonomy and the history of South Tyrol (both for pupils and adults), as well as podcasts – for example on the South Tyrolean Option of 1939 – and webinars, short documentary films and a distinctive information campaign on the Center's various social media channels.



IMPRESSUM

30 years.

Autonomy, Minority and Federalism Studies at
Eurac Research, 1992-2022

Center for Autonomy Experience
Drususallee/Viale Druso 1
39100 Bozen/Bolzano (Italy)
T +39 0471 055 771
info@autonomyexperience.org
www.autonomyexperience.org

Texts: Josef Prackwieser, Marc Röggl
Editorial Coordination: Sara Senoner
Proofreading: Rachel Wolffe
Graphics: Elisabeth Aster
Illustrations: Oscar Diodoro
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Faganello, Amt für Film und Medien, Autonome Provinz
Bozen-Südtirol

P. 11, below: 36/00002 Franz Berger, Bestand Franz Berger,
Amt für Film und Medien, Autonome Provinz Bozen-Südtirol

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Autonomy Experience

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