

Small States Conflict Resolution (CR)

Luxembourg

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Small States & Conflict Resolution - Historical Background

- Historically Luxembourg was faced with conflict over its borders and/or independence until the end of World War II.
- The Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and to some extent France played a role in the conflicts of the 19th and 20th century.
- In the 19th century, the key question was the degree of independence of Luxembourg from the Netherlands, due to the fact that it was the property of the King of the Netherlands (but also formally independent from the Netherlands)
- In the 20th century it was invaded twice by Germany.

Small States & Conflict Resolution - Historical Background

- Issues of scale were at the root of Luxembourg's vulnerability:
 - In the 19th century, its future was effectively determined by the 'Concert of Nations', i.e. the 'Great Powers' of the time. This mechanism decided effectively
 - That Luxembourg was the property of the King of the Netherlands
 - To give a part of Luxembourg's territory to Belgium
 - That it could not be sold to France
 - That it should be neutral...
- In the 20th century Luxembourg was invaded twice by Germany and liberated by other powers (e.g. the invasion during World War II led to a clash of German and French forces, and later the country was liberated by the Allies).
- Both conflicts and conflict resolution were determined by other states.
- Dissatisfaction with neutrality grew, as neutrality had not protected Luxembourg during WWI and WWII.
- Neutrality was abandoned after WWII and Luxembourg rapidly joined a wide range of international organizations (UN, NATO, ECSC, EEC etc.).
- There have been no violent conflicts involving other powers since that time.

Small States & Conflict Resolution: Major current conflict & issues

- There have not been conflicts involving other states since WWII
- Internally, Luxembourg has a relatively homogeneous society (despite high immigration) and a consensual style of policy-making
 - As a result, there are cleavages (left-right, religious-secular,...), but no *conflicts*.
 - There are, for example, no intense protests or strikes (an example is the failed attempt to start a 'gilet jaune' movement in Luxembourg)
- Those cleavages are mediated through elections and the party system:
 - The CSV defends the traditional role of the Catholic Church/faith in Luxembourgish society, for example, whereas the DP is more secular and favors a separation of church and state.
 - The CSV and DP are closer to business than the LSAP or Déi Gréng.

Small States & Conflict Resolution: Major current conflict & issues

- One issue that is not a conflict, but that is also not well-resolved, is the question of how to organize a multi-national society where foreign residents make up almost 50% of the population
 - Democratically: attempts to give foreigners the right to vote in national elections were rejected in a referendum.
 - On the other hand, an overwhelming majority of foreigners does not make use of the political rights they already have (e.g. participation in local elections is very low in this group).
 - Cultural angst: Luxembourgish residents grow increasingly concerned about the status and use of their language.
 - The state has responded by raising the status of Luxembourgish and ensuring that it is spoken in pre-schools to encourage early use.

Small States & Conflict Resolution – institutional mechanisms within your country

1. National armed forces

- Around 1100 military personnel; no navy or airforce; a professional army since 1996.
- Defence budget of roughly 260mio € (in 2016).
- Part of Benelux military cooperation (and especially close cooperation with Belgium)
- Part of NATO
- (Symbolic) Participation in a range of peace-keeping missions, usually with a small number of personnel.

2. The Ombudsman (established 2003)

- Manages complaints concerning the functioning of state and municipal administrations, and other appertaining public bodies

3. Online petitions:

- If a petition receives 4,500 signatures, a public debate will be held in parliament.
- Anyone over the age of 15 who has a Luxembourg registration number ('matricule') may launch or participate in a petition.

Small States & CR – Bilateral & multilateral relations

- Luxembourg is no longer a neutral country and is an active member of a range of international organizations including the EU, NATO, the UN etc.
- In light of the absence of conflict with other states/regions or strong (potentially violent) conflict within the country, there has been no need for conflict mediation.

Small States & CR: Challenges & Learning

- There are currently no intense internal or external conflicts that require resolution.
- With regard to conflicts within or between other states, the role that Luxembourg can play is limited due to its size and limited resources.