

Noralv Veggeland
Neo-Regionalism: Planning for Devolution, Democracy and Development
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Summary

In a general sense there are two types of regionalism. The first is traditional and has older roots than the national state. Its origin can be traced to the many small political systems in Europe in the Middle Ages, and was already in the 1700s seen as a small scale alternative to the national state. It was not just a case of the political advantages of scale – the region represented a starting point for resistance to the process of industrialisation and modernity as such. In modified form the criticism of civilisation is found in today’s traditional regionalism. The region is seen as a defence against large-scale society, a possibility for “grass-root” democracy, self-determination and the expansion of the civil society.

The second type of regionalism, the neo-regionalism, takes modernity as its starting point, and envisages the region as an instrument for democracy and bottom-up participation, development planning and decision-making in European and global political and economic networks. The region develops as a functional aspect of borderless, urban and high-tech society accompanying the integration of Europe. Emphasis is placed upon the possibilities of new information and communication technology to overcome distance as a barrier to devolution and to regionalisation of the nation-state.

In this study I elaborate the concept of neo-regionalism in terms of the European integration and planning, and as a political doctrine for modernisation of the nation-state. Traditional theory link parliamentary democracy to the necessity of the foundation of a unified people and a communicative community i.e. none “demos” means none “demos-cracy”. The political EU is suffering from institutional deficit of democracy and the lack of cultural preconditions for political unity and cohesion i.e. the failure of “demos” (political community) and “ethnos” (ethnic community). Therefore the crucial question: Is a democratic form of government feasible in an integrated Europe? In line with the German social scientist Jürgen Habermas, I argue that a democratic and a prosperous economic development in the European Area might be possible to achieve by a constitutional system of superior Legal Rights. In this context Habermas has suggested that the European Union should develop a philosophy and an identity based not upon some form of emotional and cultural unity but upon what he calls “constitutional patriotism”.

In terms of international Human Rights, equality and downward devolution, there are arguments to be found in the academic debate on democracy theory to state the reason for such an approach. The EU institutional order should be based on a *multi-level-system* of governance in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity linked with democratic procedures for decision-making and representation. The EU legislation should further guarantee nationalities, minorities and ethnic groups political and human rights, and regional economic and social cohesion should become an overarching legal objective. To achieve these basic institutional preconditions for democracy and a prosperous development, the neo-regional strategy is to link the upward devolution and European integration with the laying down of a negotiated downward devolution as well, followed by a regionalisation of the nation-state. Accordingly, important elements in such an integrated development are the principles of shared sovereignty, pooled sovereignty, partnership and cross-border regionalisation. Inherent in the political doctrine of neo-regionalism as it occurs in the European academic debate is the triad of claims: devolution and “grass root” democracy (politics), balanced competitiveness and cohesion (economics), and acknowledge of equality and historical, cultural and ethnic identities (rights).

Key words:

Neo-regionalism, democracy, pooled sovereignty, European integration, development planning.

About the author:

Noralv Veggeland is employed as associate professor at Lillehammer University College. Former director of the Eastern Norway Research Institute, and from 1989-94 research and managing director of The Nordic Institute of Regional Research in Copenhagen. His main areas of research activities are planning theory, regionalisation and planning processes in the public domain, and European integration.

Telephone: + 47 61 28 83 51. Fax: + 47 61 28 81 70

E-mail: noralv.veggeland@hil.no

Preface

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Introduction

*"Globalization makes the traditional state level of governance particularly inadequate for a number of important issue areas, including - and this is troublesome - some policy issues traditionally defined as core prerogatives of statehood or the stuff of high politics".
(Helene Wallace 1998: 16)*

The "return of history" thesis draws attention to the extensive processes of regionalisation taking place in Europe today. It highlights in particular events in countries with strong regional movements who are making demands for recognition and self-government. This is not in the least apparent in the once Communist eastern Europe, the earlier Fascist southern Europe and in the Balkans. On raising the lid, the regions have asserted their individual identities with renewed strength. Since the transitional regimes are often weaker than their totalitarian predecessors, the regions have a greater opportunity of achieving success. Support for such a thesis is supplied by Spain after Franco, the Balkans after Tito and the earlier U.S.S.R. after Gorbatsjov. The same is also the case with the division of the earlier Czechoslovakia into two states, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. The political scientist Harald Baldersheim (1998:247) has made the claim that European integration, especially membership of the European Union (EU), might have a similar effect as the national state is weakened with the advent of supra-nationality in Europe. Regions aspiring to increased independence will be able to develop strategies of relative autonomy in central areas of society, such as culture, fiscal policy, law-making and the multi-level of governance. He mentions the federalisation of Belgium, with the political independence of Flanders and Vallonia as examples of such processes. Other examples are the movements of autonomy in Scotland and Wales, Catalonia and the Basque region, the demands of Lega North, with Lombardia as the leading region in the drive towards a federal Italy.

The regionalisation thesis seems correct: regionalisation and regionalism as a political doctrine are topical issues in the European integration process (Anderson 1994, Keating 1996, Veggeland 2000). But what kind of theory can count for the reinvention of the region? The discussion deals with how a multi-level system of governance with divided and pooled sovereignty can be organised and institutionalised in a modern Europe under the banner of the EU.

Such a form of organisation would mean that the EU constituted one level of decision making, while the nation-state and regions occupied a second and third level respectively, each with one or other form of parliamentary government. The idea is a system based upon different areas and tasks in society, where each level has its own responsibility, role and competence to make independent decisions (Sharpe (ed) 1993, Scharpf 1994, Marks 1993, Le Galés and Lequesne (eds) 1998). The division of decision-making competence is based upon the subsidiarity principle – or the proximity principle – introduced with the Maastricht Treaty Article 3B in 1991. In somewhat formal terms it is stated:

“The-European Community shall operate within the limits of the powers and intentions accorded it by the Treaty....In those areas out of its jurisdiction, the Community may act according to the principle of subsidiarity only if and when a projected action, in consideration of its nature and consequences, cannot be satisfactorily accomplished by member states, and would therefore be undertaken more effectively at Community level. The Community shall only operate to the extent which is necessary to achieve the goals set by the Treaty.”

(Maastricht Treaty 1991)

The subsidiarity principle describes how competence is to be given to the lowest possible level, but at the same time it is to be a level high enough to ensure that the concrete tasks and issues are addressed in an effective and democratic manner. The Treaty stands above national and regional interests. Up until now the subsidiarity principle has been most used by the national states vis-à-vis the EU in pursuit of their own sovereignty, and as the citation above indicates, it is the member countries which are explicitly mentioned. A proposal was therefore quickly made by the European Parliament and the predecessor to the existing Consultative Council of Regional and Local Authorities to reformulate Article 3B:

In the proposal it states: “The subsidiarity principles, defined in Article 3B as the exercise of powers shared between the Community and the Member States, should be reformulated and amplified in such a way as to make explicit references to regional and local authorities. The principle of subsidiarity, thus reformulated, should be accompanied by an effective legal guarantee permitting legal supervision by the Court of Justice of the European Communities; in this context, explicit provision should be made for regional and local authorities to bring an action before the court. The principle of local self-government should be explicitly recognised as a general principle of law”

(The European Parliament 1994).

The reformulation has still not been accepted because of resistance from the Council of Ministers. Nevertheless, it seems likely that the subsidiarity principle will have implications for future policy in the EU, and also with respect to the question of “multi-level governance”.

Here, I claim to follow an academic tradition (Veggeland 1998) where *governance* is seen in relation to *government*, and this represents the classical form of state government based upon an institutional hierarchy and policy of rules and regulations. *Governance is a form of government where groups or individuals from different institutions, organisations, organs, enterprises and levels work in networks, and make decisions on the basis of dialogue, negotiations and co-operation.* As Bob Jessop (2000: 123) defines governance:

“In other words the complex art of governing a manifold of organs, institutions and systems which are both operationally autonomous in relation to each other and structurally connected through different forms of mutual dependence.“ Governance” means therefore “interactive decision-making” (Jessop 2000: 11). This is the meaning I give to this concept in this article.

To which policy-making system does multi-level-governance refer? In his article, “Government without statehood”, William Wallace de-mystifies the concept of multi-level-governance by seeing it in connection with well-known forms of state federal government: “Most of those who have written of European policy-making in terms of multi-level-governance have avoided using the language of federalism. Since, however, the sharing of functions and rules is the essence of federal government, the difference between explicit and implicit federal analogies is unimportant – at least to the academic” (Wallace 1998: 459)

According to Wallace multi-level-governance has a federal analogy, with which it is not identical, and this results in the introduction of a form of government where power is more independent, but also more limited to the different levels and networks. In principle it is both self-government and shared decision-making based upon a division of roles. This is in contrast to the unitary national state, which demands a monopoly on self-government and sovereignty, both in relation to other states and in relation to domestic regional authorities. A United States of Europe organised according to the principle of the national state, in contrast

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with a federal organisation, will mean the formation of a European state with full sovereignty in the traditional sense, and will lead to the degradation of the national states to regions without political influence. Such a view of the European Community as a unified state, was discussed by the social scientist, Johan Galtung, already at the beginning of the 1970s. In a highly critical book he argued that EU was in the process of developing into a super state with superpower ambitions, a state which would suppress and impose one-dimensionality on the European local and regional manifold (Galtung 1972). This pattern would repeat the nation building of previous centuries, with the suppression of cultural variety and the demand for subordination under a national identity – a European nationalism (Rokkan 1995).

The principle of multi-level governance is therefore important for those who fear a centralisation and concentration of power with European integration. But to regard the “return of history” thesis as the origin of a principle of political organisation is a mistake. Or to put it differently, it ignores the importance of the development and organisation of global networks in economic and regional concentrations and “clusters”, which determine and give legitimacy to both the up-ward and down-ward devolution of sovereignty in modern Europe (Porter 1990). Multi-level-governance and sovereignty and their autonomy thus rest upon an economic base on each of the levels. There seems to be a growing political need for spatially differentiated planning policies and market regulations. The debate on “multi-level-governance” therefore requires a more thorough analysis of the historical changes which have taken place over the last decades with respect to important political doctrines such as regionalism, nationalism, supra-nationality and sovereignty (Veggeland 2000).

Neo-Regionalism

In a general sense there are two types of regionalism (Mittelman 1996). The first one is traditional and has older roots than the nation-state. Its origin can be traced to the many small political systems in Europe in the Middle Ages, and was already in the 1700s seen as a small-scale alternative to the nation-state. It was not just a case of the political advantages of scale – the region represented a starting point for resistance to the process of industrialisation and modernity as such. In modified form the criticism of civilisation is found in today’s traditional regionalism. The region is seen as a defence against large-scale society, a possibility for “grass-root” democracy, self-determination and the expansion of the civil society. The perspective continues to be a persuasive alternative to the perpetual transgression of limits found in modernity (Harvie 1994).

The second type of regionalism takes modernity as its starting point, and envisages the region as an instrument for participation in European and global political and economic networks. The region develops as a functional aspect of borderless, urban and high-tech society accompanying the integration of Europe (Støhr (ed) 1990, Dunford and Kafkalas (eds) 1992). Emphasis is placed upon the possibilities of new information and communication technology overcoming distance as a barrier (Castells 1989). It is this conception which is contained in the term “neo-regionalism” as a planning perspective and a developmental aspect of European integration (Gidlund 1993: 92-93). Neo-regionalism, as a political doctrine, takes as its starting point both the traditional, ethnic-cultural region’s boundaries and the functional region’s boundaries determined mainly by the economic system. The functional region is joined together in a network through inequalities combined with mutual dependence. Inequality can for example be that the region is joined together by a centre and a hinterland or several centres. It can be a region of production (industrial, agriculture, fishing), an employment region, a knowledge region, a communication region, a health region and so on. These regions comprise thus an intra-regional network. The rise of neo-regionalism doesn’t mean that traditional regionalism necessarily disappears, but it presupposes and actualises a new approach to economic development and European integration. This is supported by J.H. Mittelman (1996:190) who writes that “regionalism from the 1990s can not be regarded as a political movement based upon a territorially delimited culture and subsistence as was the case regionalism in the 1930s. It represents rather a concentration of political and economic competition in the global economy with a manifold of inter- and intra-regional currents”.

Neo-regionalism is mirrored in local innovative activity. Five areas for such activity can be listed (Jessop 2000:105-106):

* Introduction of *new forms of organisation* of regional towns and municipalities with respect to social life, work, production, services, consumption patterns and the like. Examples can be multi-cultural towns, towns organised around integrated transport systems, town co-operation, co-operation across regional boundaries and sustainable growth.

* *New areas of development* based upon the creation of place specific competitive advantages with respect to commodities, services and information, and through the improvement of the town's quality of life for residents. Examples can be the development of new social and system infrastructures which encourage the development of inter-active communication, knowledge centres, education and competitive regulation regimes i.e. simplifying planning regulations and thereby enhancing the localisation of activities.

* Opening for *new markets*. This can mean marketing certain towns or areas of nature, or improving the quality of a place for its inhabitants, immigrants, commuters and tourists.

* Developing *new resources to strengthen the competitiveness* of the region. This can involve political institutions with decision-making competence, knowledge-based institutions, public and service sectors, multi-cultural institutions, access to financial institutions or the re-training of the labour force.

* The *reforming or re-definition of the region's hierarchy of towns* to achieve a horizontal pattern of co-operation. Examples can be the development of European city functions as local, regional capitals, trans-national border regions or "virtual" regions which base themselves on the development of areas which don't share common borders with each other.

The regionalism presupposes giving significant political and economic autonomy to the regions. We will now look more closely at the neo-regionalism's political doctrine.

"Sovereign states have become increasingly formidable institutions... Change the nature of states and virtually everything else in the human society would also have to be changed" (Krasner 1988:76). Actually, an extensive literature demonstrates that a change in the nature of the national state already has taken place with globalisation and integration processes (Soros 1999, Wallace & Wallace, Østerud 1999, Habermas 1998, Porter 1990, Sabel 1994). Therefore, I raise the question of "multi-level-governance" and pooled sovereignty i.e. how the nation-I state through devolution processes has lost its historical and citizen supported monopoly of sovereignty? A number of issues must be discussed: What characterises the concept of sovereignty? How can sovereignty itself be pooled? What does pooled sovereignty mean for European integration and regionalisation? What are the institutional consequences of such a principle? Can the principle be implemented in policy or does it remain a purely academic concept? Can a region be recognised as sovereign?

Before we look at these questions more closely, let me draw attention to an example. That pooled sovereignty in federal states is a reality that comes to expression in European integration, is seen in the case of Germany. The following occurred: according to the Maastricht Treaty Article 177, the European Court of Justice is superior to the national Courts. But, in connection with the signing of the same Treaty in 1993, the German Court (Bundesverfassungsgericht) refused the European Community Court's exclusive relationship to and recognition of the federal courts. Reference to the German constitution was made, where the courts in the Federal States have sovereign competence in certain specified areas. In these areas, the Federal State's task was surveillance of the boundaries of the EU's judicial authority.

The Courts of Justice therefore marked judicial sovereignty on several levels, including the regional, in the formation of the new Europe. In acknowledgement of the challenge represented by the German Courts of Justice, Joseph H. H. Weiler wrote: "Formally, the decision constitutes a flagrant act of defiance vis-à-vis the European Court of Justice, in direct contradiction with its jurisprudence on the power of national courts to declare Community law invalid. It flies in the face, inter alia, of the third paragraph of Article 177" (Weiler 1995:37).

Let us consider the concept of sovereignty in more detail

History

The theory of national sovereignty builds upon an idea from the Middle Ages about how political structures of power should and can be connected with territorial divisions to ensure the security of the area's inhabitants. For centuries this view has influenced political science, and played a leading role in the formation of policy. According to this theory the sovereign national states are the most important actors on the global stage, politically, economically and culturally.

With "sovereignty" it is meant the independence of a state and total control over its own territory, also in relation to the other states. Marek St. Korowicz (1959: 29) writes for example the following with reference to

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inner and outer sovereignty: "Sovereignty of a state is the supreme power over its territory and inhabitants, as well as its independence of any external authority". Sovereignty has provided the opportunity to organise the world into a fixed pattern of national states in an otherwise turbulent and fragmented reality. But sovereignty is no natural law, only a theory of political power or the imperative that politics ought to be practice in such a manner. For those who regard the sovereignty of nation-states as a natural law, globalisation, regionalisation and European integration are threatening processes to democracy, identity, law and order. This explains why William Wallace writes: "For those who assume that the nation-state is the natural and permanent framework for political life, the weakening of both its capability and its symbolic solidarity is a threat to political order and a charge to be laid against the EU" (Wallace 1998: 456).

The national state arose in Western Europe in the 16th and 17th century and it later spread as an idea over the whole world in different waves of state and nation building. The reason was the demand for sovereignty, which was first formulated in the 1500s in the conflict between the Catholic church and secular powers. Sovereignty's break through led to a social change from Feudalism to Absolutism; a shift in the balance of power from the church to the secular principalities. The theory of sovereignty gained its most prominent spokesmen in Jean Bodin's (1530-96) thoughts on the secular state and in Thomas Hobbes's (1530-1679) view of the natural right and an erected social contract between a communicative people. The social contract means that individuals surrender their natural right to independence to a political authority e.g. the prince, who has total power over land and people. The French Revolution gave sovereignty a democratic dimension, since the political power was to have its foundation in the "people" – "demos", rather than with the Prince or the Grace of God, as was the case earlier. This resulted in a representative democracy within the borders of the national state. Through this political innovation, which representative democracy represents, it was possible to create democracy in large political systems (Gidlund 1993:30). This was in contrast with the Greek concept of democracy, where demos was built upon the direct representation of citizens and only viable in small political units i.e. the city states that existed at that time. John Stuart Mill (1806-73) went so far as to assert that the ideal form of democratic government was representative democracy, because the elite could lead on behalf of the people and at the same time administer society's sovereignty. He also believed that democracy would develop into a tyranny of the majority as long as the rights of the minority weren't ensured through representation. He therefore fought for women's emancipation and their right to participate in politics.

The discourse on "demos", "ethnos" and democracy

Let us take as the starting point the historical tradition dating to the French Revolution that a functioning democracy has a demos as a necessary – but in now way adequate – condition, and that political sovereignty is thus only the concern of an undifferentiated "people" (Germ. Volk) living in a certain territory. The reference to the "people" can indeed be no more a term of ceremonial significance, as for example in Stalin's constitutional law of 1936, or in the so-called former democracies in Eastern Europe during the Cold War. Or as in Norway after the democratic Constitutional Law of 1814, where only a small percentage of the population were entitled to vote. But in the modern theory of democracy a central issue is the relationship between the *sovereignty* and authority to the people, its elected representatives and the leaders of the established political order. In a more pragmatic, concrete sense the discussion involves the development of institutions and procedures capable of securing a realistic democratic order and rights to the minorities.

But who are the citizens, the people, with authority? Are they only found within the national state?

The historian Paul Knutsen (1999) has addressed these questions. He has identified a democratic paradox: Before the people can make decisions, somebody must decide who are the "people". Therefore, who is to territorially delimit the population in the national state? And further, is democracy only possible within the framework of the national state? And who has the power of definition when it comes to the rights of minority groups within the bounds of the national collective, or when it comes to the conditions to be fulfilled in order to have the right to vote? Must a region have a uniform ethnic or cultural identity if it is to have democratic authority?

Let us take as a starting point the Greek concepts of *demos* and *ethnos*. Both concepts refer to the word "folk", but *demos* considers folk in terms of participation in political processes (democracy = majority government by the citizens), while *ethnos* refers to the characteristics of the people, their cultural identity and value-based sense of community (democracy = government by homogeneous citizens). Therefore, I note, drawing upon the Harvard-jurist J.H.H. Weiler (1995), that an old-fashioned, nationalist way of thinking connects democracy not just with *demos*, but also with *ethnos* i.e. that the fundamental, indeed, the only basis for democratic authority lies in an ethnic and culturally homogeneous collection of citizens (people =

folk) in a certain territory. This is nationalism's – and the traditional, separatist regionalism's – political doctrine (Østerud 1994, Habermas 1998, Veggeland 2000). Accordingly, demos like ethnos, is characterised by a common, shared language, history, cultural mores, ethnic origin and religion. The process which goes under the name of nation building has therefore been marked by the power of the state to oppress cultural diversity, in the attempt to bring about cultural standards for national unity and identity (Rokkan 1995, Veggeland 1994: 26-27). But cultural diversity has refused to disappear; its historical roots are too strong. This explains why we find regional movements in Europe which attempt to escape the national collective, and establish separate democratic, sovereign states in agreement with regionalism's political doctrine. Again, the reasoning behind their struggle is the necessity of an undifferentiated and uniform demos and ethnos.

The traditional conception of the relationship between democracy, ethnos and sovereignty also comes to expression in a certain view of European integration, and the devolution of power from the national states to EU organs. The question is, can an supra-national EU at some point in time become a democratic institution? This leads to a second question: Does there exist a European demos and ethnos? If the answer is negative, "The no demos thesis", writes Knutsen (1999:13), "then the first consequence is that democracy or some form of improvement in the deficit of democracy on the European level is per definition impossible: Without demos, no "demos-cracy". The EU cannot be a democratic unit, because in Europe as a whole there doesn't exist an undifferentiated and uniform ethnos (folk), but an abundance of national, ethnic, linguistic, cultural and religious groups. For example, there exist 67 different languages, while the number of national states is just over 30. A logical consequence of this drawn by some is that the transfer of more power to the EU's directly elected parliament will only increase the deficit of democracy in the EU because of the non-existence of an undifferentiated "folk" in Europe. They want instead the delegation of more power to the Council of Ministers and the European Council, which can represent the elongated arm of the national state's democratic representative structure. As the German political expert Fritz Scharpf (1999:187) writes, there is no reason to revise a sceptical attitude towards democratic legitimacy on the European level, and continues: "None of the arguments that could be advanced in its support are able to overcome the triple deficits of the lack of a pre-existing sense of collective identity, the lack of Europe-wide policy discourses, and the lack of a Europe-wide institutional infrastructure that could assure the political accountability of office holders to a European constituency".

This issue has been part of a large intellectual European debate with opposite standpoints (Østerud 1999a). As mentioned, Weiler has made himself the spokesman for an alternative line of thought which makes a distinction between demos and ethnos and asks the question: "Can we define membership of a polity in civic, non-organic terms?" The answer is in the affirmative, and he argues that such a project has to be based on "legal rights" which is in agreement with "the foundational purposes of European integration" (Weiler 1995: 167). The German social and political theorist who has been most prominent participant in this discussion is Jürgen Habermas. Against Scharpf and in support of Weiler, he has provided an alternative answer to the fundamental question of democracy's pre-conditions in Europe (Habermas 1996, 1998). Habermas is a supporter of supra-nationality, and argues for multi-level governance as part of a political program to rein in the market and to overlap to a greater degree with the power contained in its economic networks. As a consequence of globalisation he is cosmopolitan, but in practice he supports European integration to "resist the voter's weakened buying power", and moves democracy to a supra-national level. He asserts that a traditional national form of government, in the style of social democracy, is ineffective and impotent. Besides he fears a global new market liberalism without political control, leading to uneven development, inequalities and disruptions which will cause social disorder, violent conflicts and political disintegration. He wants a democratically governed globalism and regionalism, with a politically integrated Europe as one of its components.

But he will anchor democracy in a Community of Legal Rights organised around "universal values" and "constitutional patriotism", not within a cultural and ethnic community (Volk) based on ethnos democracy which has characterised the traditional national or regional conceptions. Like Weiler he makes a distinction between national and local cultures with their varying expression in language, religion, historical traditions and collective myths, which belong and give an impetus to the private sphere of life, and the political culture anchored in laws, treaties, directives, institutions, dialogue and negotiations, and which belong to the public domain. His intention is to anchor democracy in EU as a multi-level system of governance, with a liberal political and Rights community of citizens raised above national and cultural differences. This assumes that political power gains its legitimacy from a constitutional order where equal rights, responsibility and tolerance are the overarching universal principles. According to Habermas this is the European democratic option, despite the failure of demos and ethnos.

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Øyvind Østerud (1999a) argues that Habermas’s distinction between national and political culture has its special background in the German Republic. It is expressed in the idea of a “constitutional patriotism” (Habermas 1996) as the new foundation of German identity after the war. The idea was that German self-identity was to be anchored in the constitution and its liberal-democratic principles, and thus removed from its basis in a historical, cultural identity based upon language, race, “volk”, which symbolised the tragedy of 20th century Germany and Europe. In a similar manner a strong central power was to be denied through federalisation and divided sovereignty, so that a repetition of the National Socialist model of society would not be possible. Habermas’s post-national thinking involves moving the constitutionally based patriotism from its foundation in the national state to the European level, but with pooled sovereignty on several levels to prevent the concentration of power. In such a manner post-national democracy and institutions in Europe can be anchored in an engaged and discursive political opinion, which has at the same time internalised respect for minority groups, fellow citizens and Rights.

Habermas, like the jurist Weiler, is therefore concerned with a constitutional solution to government capable of meeting the post-national challenge. He is also interested in how this can be based upon a change in the systematic way power and decision-making competence are distributed across several levels. Government must constitute the formal framework for a pooled sovereignty, based upon discourse, negotiation and the commitment of citizens. Besides, legitimacy to the political system will be connected with its ability to produce democratic participation, social security, employment, welfare and sustainable development. According to Habermas the system’s output is to create a “constitutional patriotism”, rather than a patriotism reliant upon cultural identity, nationalism and regionalism. The latter is an important impetus in daily life but a private matter, hence not a precondition for collective identity, democratic institutions and decision-making in a unified Europe.

Towards pooled sovereignty

The question as to if the concept of sovereignty can be changed to fit a modern time with globalisation, supra-nationality, states and regions, is not just something of historical interest? After public debate in Europe, and despite the intellectual discourse, it appears that with the arrival of a new millennium, it is still possible to talk of sovereignty, more or less as it has been the case for hundreds of years. The democratic deficit of European integration is unavoidable because the concept of sovereignty belongs to the nation-state. But in agreement with Jürgen Habermas, I will argue that the reality has changed its character. Globalisation, regionalisation and new technology have weakened the national state’s control over its own territory, both politically, economically, and with respect to culture (Soros 1998, Sabel 1994, Harvey 1994, Porter 1990, Wallace 1998) i.e. what Jessop (1994:264) describes as “the hollowing out of the national state”. The traditional sovereignty has a formal side (*de jure*), at the same time as it has a real side (*de facto*). Even though the state is a formal sovereign, sovereignty can only be realised by taking structural changes into consideration.

Two aspects are inherited in the term of sovereignty. Sovereignty can be threatened by the expansion of other states. History is full of examples of sovereign states which have functioned as marionettes for superpowers. It hardly needs to be mentioned that state formations have never been historically stable. State borders have been changed through wars, and states have come and gone. Or, sovereignty has been challenged by regionalism and separatist movements based on the principles and values of *demos* and *ethnos*. In some cases the regional conflicts have been so serious that terrorism has shown its face. Terrorism is directed first and foremost against the state power from ethnic, cultural and religious minorities. In Europe, we are familiar with terrorism in Northern Ireland, the Basque area, Caucasus and the Balkans.

But, the sovereignty of national states is also threatened through a *functional* interweaving between the state and its surroundings. The majority of developed industrial and information centres in Western Europe, have become more and more dependent on their surroundings in most sectors of society, but where economic and marked integration plays the main role. Economic integration means in general that smaller units are joined together, either completely or partly, forming larger economic networks. In trade and industry this can mean that a small production company becomes part of a larger concern. Within a country this can mean that local economies are integrated into a regional economy and regional economies into a national economy. In international trade economic integration usually means that national economies are drawn together with other national economies in one form or another. International economic integration means that limitations on trade, capital and factor movement between countries are removed or reduced, in some or all commercial areas. Barriers to trade and factor movements can encompass everything which limits the mobility of commodities, services, labour and capital between countries, whether they are of an economic, judicial, technical, political and spatial character. Economies which are fully integrated with each other don't have national laws and regulations for protection against each other. Neither, do they have any indirect (social, fiscal, monetary) barriers to trade and factor movement between them.

The concepts of globalisation and trans-nationalisation describe this process of interweaving and the building of networks across state boundaries (Keohane and Nye 1977, Soros 1999). The most relevant trans-national actors, besides the states themselves, are a large number of enterprises, regions, towns and organisations. The political consequence of the interweaving is that the effectiveness of the national state's traditional form of government and policy are gradually reduced. Integration creates a pressure upon policy formation (Gidlund 1993).

Robert B. Reich (1991) writes in an analysis of trans-nationalisation that nations are in the process of becoming regions in the global economy. The modern nation state is no longer what it was. What has disappeared is a nationalism founded upon ethnos, and the practical necessity of a closed economy within state boundaries to ensure stability (according to Keynes's understanding of the term) and welfare. Quite the contrary, one is more dependent on agreements and the ability to compete in the trans-national network economy.

Janerik Gidlund (1993: 32-33) supports this thesis, and asserts that national policy cannot control the currents of production, technology and knowledge. The concept national economy loses its meaning, since the economy is no longer nationally integrated. Governments have therefore little influence upon the organisation of enterprises, renewal and the conditions for economic growth: "To belong to a progressive enterprise, a successful group in society or an expansive region and a system conferring rights and benefits becomes in the final analysis more important than belonging to a particular state". This is an important thesis in this article and represents a point of departure for understanding the structural changes, which lie behind neo-regionalism's political strategies.

The modernisation of trade and industry has also resulted in the development of a large network, consisting of links which connect together production nodes in functional regions, both inside and outside state borders. The political control of enterprises has therefore declined, at the same time as the enterprise's loyalty to their own state has decreased (Porter 1990).

The logic of the EU's inner market is that states aren't to support certain enterprises just because they call themselves "German, French or Norwegian" for example. An important aspect of economic integration in Europe is the avoidance of subventions in national economies which can distort competition. Neither is it the case that enterprises should be loyal towards a particular state or discriminate against other political regimes of regulation. An enterprise is to be an instrument for most effectively producing commodities and services demanded by the market. The state's main interests are in where the enterprises invest and produce, where tax returns are made and how production effects the environment. These interests force changes in political organisation. The provision of infra-structure, services and the development of an educated workforce – i.e. the preconditions for trade and industrial activity – are the task of the state (Veggeland 1998). To create attractive environments for enterprises and securing competitive advantages are a political responsibility. Fritz Scharpf (1999: 85-120) highlights the significance of "competitive regimes of regulation" in European integration, and that public authorities on the different levels negotiate agreements of partnership with enterprises and financial institutions in order to increase competitiveness against each other. He notes that competition with respect to regulation doesn't necessarily need to lead to a reduction in public intervention with respect to the flow of capital and economic enterprises i.e. a development away from "minimal regulation" with the greatest possible amount of freedom given to the markets in the neo-liberalism's way.

Public regulation can just as easily lead to improvements in the quality of the infra-structure, labour force, service, commodities and environment, all of which increase attractiveness in the market. In short, “regulatory competition may, under certain conditions, induce a race to the top, rather than a race to the bottom” (Scharpf 1999:96).

Sovereignty by negotiation; pooled sovereignty.

James Rosenau (1988: 328) asserts that the policy of the information society consists of two worlds with overlapping membership; one an interactive, multi-centred world with a manifold of business sector actors and one a state-centred world with public actors as its primary component. The state actors have created through negotiation a number of regions, such as the political-administrative, the global region EU, the many political-administrative cross-border regions (Östhol 1996) and national regions, in a multi-level system of governance, where the question of autonomy and sovereignty between the different levels has yet to be clarified. The opposite pole to the states consists of the many-faceted structures of production, organisation and information network which manifest themselves geographically as functional regions, with cities and urban centres of differing size. Sovereignty is to begin with fragmented. The perspective is that there exists both a Europe of states and a Europe of networks with intricate relations, and which bases its power potential to govern on both “government” (decision-making by elected representatives) and “governance” (decision-making by networking partnerships).

An important difference between the two worlds is that states are “bound by sovereignty”, while the networks are “not bound by sovereignty” in terms of classical constitutional rights (nevertheless protected by law). It can appear to be a mistake to apply the concept of sovereignty to actors who traditionally have an all exclusive territorial power, when they are placed alongside actors in the multi-centric networks. What Rosenau in reality makes use of is a diluted concept of sovereignty which is a long way from the classical ideal. The states seem to be “embedded” in, rather than in a position of dominance over, the complexity of a political and economic universe, which is characterised by an increasing degree of mutual dependence (Gidlund 1993:35). In short, Rosenau defines sovereignty as one of the pre-conditions given to a régime of regulation (including private actors) on different levels so that it can look after its areas of responsibility, complete its assigned tasks and realise the goals defining its *raison d’être*. Giandomenico Majone (1997) has supported this definition in his article “From the Positive to the Regulatory State: Causes and Consequences of Change in the Mode of Governance”. Hence, there is a political need to redefine the classical concept of sovereignty with its roots in the nation-building thinking, and to negotiate a new constitutional order and negotiated treaties.

The problem of autonomy for states is connected with globalisation and the introduction of supra-nationality in European integration. For the regions it is partly an economic problem of resources - to gain an economic platform which allows them a relative independence – and partly a formal question of government inherited from the absolute state’s centralism with its demand for both internal and external sovereignty. For the networks it deals on the other hand, with actors from other business networks and their attempt to maintain internal integration against the attempts at absorption made by other actors.

The state’s answer to decreasing political effectiveness and the development of the world economy is to build up organisations and régimes on the international level, which are in a better position to solve shared problems (Olsen 1992, Veggeland 1996). The EU is such a régime. The question that arises is if state’s in this manner “extend” their own sovereignty into international society and thus increase their power, or, they give away sovereignty in a negative-sum-game? Inter-state agreements with a veto right in all cases could be one way of increasing the sovereignty of states, and such a strategy has therefore gained strong support from individual countries in the debate on integration. But, note should also be made of the opinions which have come to expression in France and the United Kingdom, and their reluctance to accept a federalisation of integration. In the last instance namely, a watering down of sovereignty has taken place. Negotiations have taken place between member nations, agreements have been reached, the result of which have been treaties, laws and directives requiring the subordination of state forms of governance and their régimes of regulation.

This explains why since the Second World War it has become less pertinent to analyse the balance of power in and between the national states according to traditional conceptions of sovereignty (Gidlund, 1993:37). Political subordination, networks of production crossing boundaries and trans-national forms of problems make the traditional de-limitation of sovereignty to national boundaries inappropriate. This process has taken place throughout the course of the history of industrial society, but it is only in the last decades that it has become more marked.

When the state's sovereignty is diluted, the level of negotiation and inter-active governance increases (Jessop 2000). It happens (1) through the development of multi-level-governance, (2) in connection with cross-border regionalisation and the formation of Euro-regions and (3) in relation to non-state actors in the network economy. The negotiation of agreements are not just achieved on a trans-national level, but also to a high degree within the boundaries of national states. Negotiations and co-operation therefore take place in a multi-dimensional space with many actors. Janerik Gidlund (1993: 37-38) argues that a change in sovereignty takes place when states implement a political and economic integration and create a multi-level system of governance with wide-reaching tasks within central areas of society. It is no longer a question of states in practice experiencing reduced sovereignty, but also the fact that constitutional reforms are necessary. The negotiated agreements result in treaties and regulations which must be upheld, but public and private actors also gain through interactive governance rights and the space to act. The formal sovereignty is surrendered and partly replaced by an innovation which can be called "pooled sovereignty" (Føllesdal 1999:276).

The legal base for decision-making in the EU system is often described as pooled sovereignty. This means that states share sovereignty and arrive at decisions on the basis of majority or qualified majority votes after negotiations involving the different parties (Williams 1991: 156). The European Economic Area is also based upon such a conception of sovereignty with supra-national authority, but where countries such as Norway and Iceland only participate in negotiations in sub-committees and not in the final voting procedure (Veggeland 2000). This means that Norway loses its sovereignty in certain areas, but preserves it in others, in relation to the EU's member nations. In general, a country's constitution is adjusted so that the state doesn't just practice sovereignty in a purely formal manner, but can also surrender its sovereignty after negotiations about internal and external relations with other states and their regions. Furthermore, the political-administrative actors negotiate in a multi-level system with network actors. This means that the regions can also be party to a negotiated sovereignty, something which is most evident in the federal states. Cross-border regionalisation and the establishment of Euro-regions as part of the process of European integration, leads to regional entities, which are almost completely based upon pooled sovereignty. The figure below illustrates this:

Sovereignty

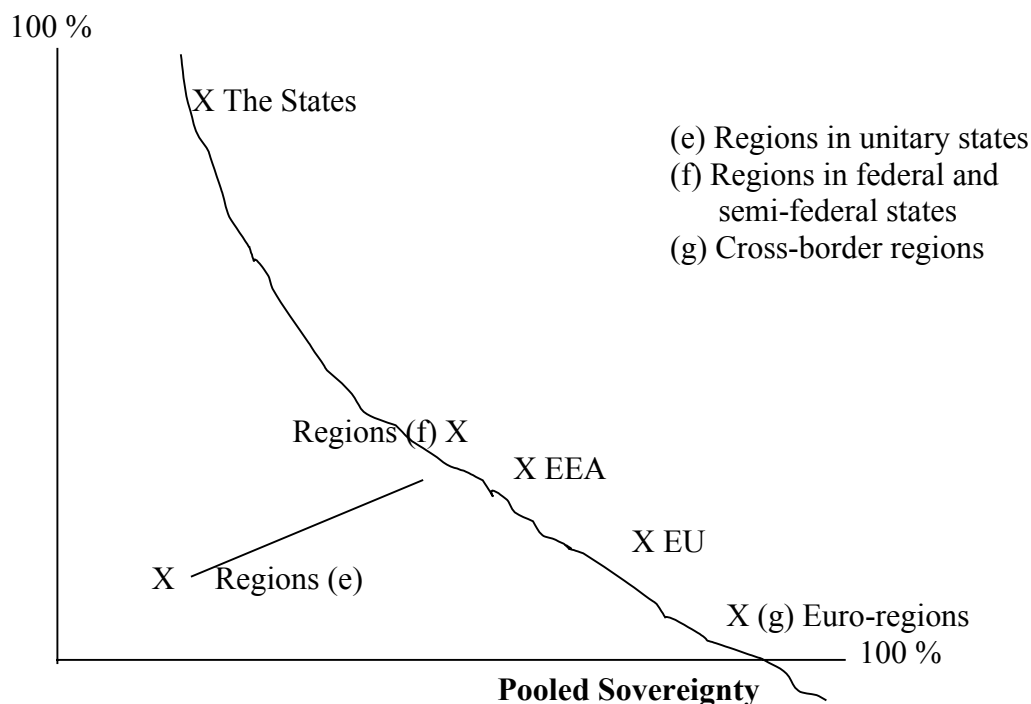


Figure 1.: The composition of sovereignty for states, regions, Euro-regions, EU, European Economic Area (EEA).

As figure 1. shows the states, the regions in the federal states, the Euro-regions, the European Economic Area organisation and EU are placed on the same curve to indicate that there is an interaction between constitutional and pooled sovereignty, with the states and Euro-regions as outer points. The states are to a large extent based upon traditional sovereignty, while the EU is for its own part is based upon negotiated sovereignty, with a constitutional treaty under development. The regions in the unitary national states fall outside the curve, with a low level of sovereignty with respect to both forms of sovereignty. But in practice it is possible to register changes which let the national regions make decision on the basis of pooled sovereignty.

We have seen examples of pooled sovereignty, also in the unitary states, in connection with cross-border regionalisation in Europe, supported by the EU's Interreg program. The leading actors in this developmental work are the regions with common national borders i.e. border-regions. They negotiate with each other, reach agreements on co-operation, develop strategic plans, form partnerships with actors in the trade and industry sectors, establish political-administrative institutions; they execute foreign policy actions, all independently of state authorities. In the EU system a pooled sovereignty has been devised to give autonomy to such cases. In practice, foreign policy and what is commonly known as high politics, are what have been the province of traditional sovereignty and the responsibility of nation states (Östhol 1996).

An example; in the Euro-Artic Barents region, the northern regions of the Norwegian state have in practice throughout the 90s pursued foreign policy through their co-operation with border-regions in Sweden, Finland and Russia; as seen in decision-making in the representative Barents Regional Council. This has given rise to expressions of surprise amongst many observers. But, it is a general pattern in European integration, as foreign policy penetrates a greater number of trans-national policy areas which were earlier under the domain of the national state.

A state which is a member of the EU or the European Economic Area deals accordingly with fewer issues which are exclusively national. The member states have a different formal sovereignty than the non-member countries (Veggeland, F. 1999). Another example of pooled sovereignty, but of a different character, is found in France (Loughlin and Mazey (eds) 1994, Balme 1998). The region's area of responsibility and decision making competence is fixed on the basis of a process of negotiation between state and regional authorities, and sovereignty takes the form of a contract (contrat de plan) made between the different parties. This

*Norlav Veggeland: Neo-Regionalism: Planning for Devolution, Democracy and Development.
 Lillehammer college: Research report no 52, 2000.*

form of co-operation means that the local and regional levels achieve a more equal negotiating position in relation to the state. At the same time, it is up to the regions to decide to what extent they will accept the increased responsibility and autonomy specified in the terms of the contract. The system is asymmetrical since the different regions achieve different degrees of sovereignty in the contracts, because the political-administrative and economic resources which constitute the foundation for the regions are different (Baldersheim 1998: 254). Such an asymmetrical system of sovereignty also exists in Spain. The Spanish Constitution of 1978 creates the possibility of different degrees of regional authority, partly based upon historical traditions, but also based upon functional strength. For example, Catalonia has achieved a high degree of negotiated sovereignty (Genieys 1998). The regions of Vallonia and Flanders in Belgium have some degree of both types of sovereignty because of the federal character of the country. As Robert D. Putnam says, "devolution is inevitably a bargaining process, not simply a juridical act" (Putnam 1993: 23).

As figure 1. shows, pooled sovereignty exists along a scale from a minimum to a maximum of 100%. Types of sovereignty thus take on many conceivable forms. The European Economic Area, of which Norway is a member, has a lower component of pooled sovereignty than the EU. Political-administrative regions in federal and semi-federal European states have a significant degree of inner, traditional sovereignty, but have also developed considerable sovereignty by negotiation, both in relation to the EU system and the federal national authorities. The political-administrative regions in the completely unitary states fall outside the formal system and stand in a weaker position with respect to both principles of sovereignty. But, as the examples above show, they have managed to achieve some degree of negotiated sovereignty, within the EU system's regional structural policy among other things, which presupposes sub-national actors in partnership with, and in relation to the regional economic networks. The trend in the development of neo-regionalism leads towards these regions gaining greater pooled sovereignty.

On a concrete level, with the establishment of a multi-level system of governance it is important that each level has localised integrated nodes in the network economy as its economic basis i.e. that functional regions are developed. In a global world competitive ability is important on all levels, and it plays a decisive role in their sovereignty. The EU competes on one level, the states on a second level and the regions on a third. The network economy leads therefore in a general sense towards situations of negotiation with the business sector. What is new with sovereignty by negotiation is that it creates a political system with negotiations between a large number of territorial actors: state-state, state-EU, state-region, region-region, region-EU, and between political-administrative actors and network actors. The system is not organised in a vertical manner, instead it consists of a horizontal system with equal partners as its starting point. One of the main objectives in all the regimes is to negotiate agreements of co-operation, treaties and contracts, which obligate the parties.

The problem with pooled sovereignty is that the actors have extremely different negotiating strengths, this is also the case with the Euro-regions, which can create significant redistribution problems in society. Inequality in negotiating strength will also express itself in the negotiations with the actors in the networks. In EU terminology this is called the "cohesion-problem" i.e. the problem of creating a sense of community and a lessening of differences between nations and between regions. To realise cohesion, one of the central goals of the EU's social and economic policy, is no simple task, since the ability to compete is to be maintained on the different levels. The EU talks of "balanced competitive ability" and intends to achieve this by establishing equal infra- and info-structures in EU regions. This will involve investing in cities and urban systems (poly-centralism) to strengthen and develop the many functional regions, and also the following of an active cultural and environmental policy (Commission of European Communities 1997, 1999). Direct economic intervention to set in motion regional programs of development is also a part of the cohesion policy. More than a third of the EU's total budget goes exclusively to regional policy, which in additions draws national funding as a result of the principle of addition, as outlined in the EU program for the period 2000-2006, Agenda 2000.

Regional political regimes and the EU's structural policy

Regimes are multi-lateral constructions of laws, rules, directives, agreements and procedures, which are negotiated by actors in specific fields of policy. This means that regimes are formed when a need arises for mutual co-operation to find a solution to the issue in question (Keohane 1984). It is possible to divide the integration policy in Europe according to three tasks. Firstly, to construct political objectives and procedures; secondly, to build political institutions; and thirdly, to develop the ability to govern and pass measures capable of solving political, economic and socio-cultural problems. Fritz Scharpf (1999: 43-83) draws a distinction between *negative* and *positive* integration. To begin with, political regimes are negotiated which have as their goal the removal of regulations, customs barriers, quotas and technical specifications, which

can interfere with the free flow of commodities, capital, services and labour in a European inner market. Here one is talking of “market-making” processes. The negative integration has developed the farthest, and solid supra-national institutions such as the Commission, the Court of Justice and the Parliament have been developed to implement and supervise these processes.

The national states have surrendered significant sovereignty in this area, and the EU has established pooled sovereignty in the form of supra-nationality. What the states gain are economic advantages in a global economy. This includes among other things, free access for national commodities and production factors into the larger European market with all the growth potential that this entails. This access to the inner market therefore gives states and regions greater competitive ability in the world economy. Furthermore, the EU’s protection of its outer borders through regulations and controls against competition from other global regions in vital areas such as agriculture for example, works against the need for destructive structural changes. This also leads to better control of global capital movements, and the Economic Monetary Union (EMU) is able to resist destructive currency speculation between the states.

Positive integration occurs when in addition a number of common policies are developed on planning, controls, the fixing of priorities and consequences for re-distribution i.e. inner “market correcting” processes in the terminology of Scharff. This means that arriving at agreements on common goals and measures for positive development, makes resources available to establish political regimes for distribution and the building of Europe. The intention is to solve political, economic and socio-cultural problems where the starting point is different national interests, traditions and ideologies and how they play a far more concrete role than negative integration (Streeck 1995). The positive integration process in EU is based upon negotiations between political and economic actors, and upon the distribution of sovereignty by negotiation between the levels. The central institutions in this process are the national state authorities and their representatives in the European Council and different committees, but with participation from the regional authorities (Committee of Regions) and from a number of public and private interest organisations in politics, trade and industry and the labour market. Besides, a comprehensive system of consultation has been developed, as well as a system of information offices. Positive integration is therefore much more complicated than its negative counterpart since it involves distribution of resources, and it has made less progress in its development.

Along with a number of other policy areas such as energy, transport, social policy, the environment, foreign policy and security and so on, region policy has been an object for positive integration. Regional policy has come to occupy an increasingly central position in EU’s work, something which is mirrored in EU’s budget. Agenda 2000 shows that more than a third of the total budget has been set aside for structure goals i.e. to realise the goal of economic and social cohesion between the European regions. In 1975, the share was less than five percent. The funds are allocated through the so-called Structural Funds (which since 1988 has been an amalgamation of the European Regional Fund, ERDF, the European Social Fund, ESF, and the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund, EAGGF), and competition for funding is hard. Both national and regional interests are involved, and not in the least enterprises with commercial interests are central actors. Regional imbalance, both within the Union and within the individual member nations, has the whole time been seen as a hindrance to what the Treaty of Rome calls “harmonious development”, and which since 1988 with the introduction of the Single European Act (SEA) has been known as “economic and social cohesion” problems. The increasing involvement of the EU in regional policy must be seen in the context of three factors: (1) The introduction of the Single European Act (SEA) from 1988, with its completion in 1993. The emphasis on competition and the free flow of factors of production meant that regional inequalities with respect to the conditions of competition had to be lessened, otherwise the foundation for the principle of competition wouldn’t become a reality. “Balanced competition” became a goal for structural policy. (2) The Common Agricultural Policy’s largest allocation of funds went to grants to the richest and most central areas in the Union. This was because funding was connected to the amount produced and other quantitative measures. “Structural-fund” expenditure has risen in direct correlation with the decline in agricultural expenditure as a percentage of the EU budget” (Allen 1998: 229. This has occurred because countries on the periphery have made demands for compensation for agricultural support in the form of economic re-distribution through regional policy initiatives. (3) Functional regionalisation is a part of economic globalisation, so that the regions become more interesting as driving forces in the economic development of the EU and as territorial units with growth potential.

Conclusion

Regional policy has traditionally been the concern of the national state and the regions under their management, with certain exceptions for federal states. The national states have therefore been central

actors in negotiations around European integration in this area. What is clear is that the negotiations have led to substantial budget increases for regional policy and the development of regional political regimes. But, the question is if they have conceded their sovereignty through negotiation to other levels and strengthened a system of multi-level-governance, or if they have retained their position of political dominance? "The debate is over whether this increase (in budget) has promoted a new pattern of multi-level-governance, or reflects side payments to facilitate package deals" (Allen 1998: 209). David Allen is clear in his conclusion when it comes to the regions: "However, there is even more evidence to suggest that member states have used their role in the intergovernmental bargaining stage to strengthen their position vis-à-vis their sub-national authorities" (Allen 1998: 229-230).

Multi-level-governance represents a new perspective on the interaction between political entities and socio-economic network systems.

The most important thing with this perspective is not first and foremost a clear distribution of functions between levels in a hierarchical model, but a definition and *division of roles* in the process of self-governance in a horizontal model. This means that each level is allocated a role on the basis of pooled sovereignty. The subsidiarity principle introduced in the Maastricht-Treaty is central in such a view of governance. When it comes to responsibility for functions, then delegation is a fundamental principle with supra-ordinate power remaining in each case with those who delegate the tasks. In unitary states, it is the state authorities who have this position of power. The division of roles however, involves on the other hand possessing authority over processes of regulation, finance and planning policies, and thereby having the authority to make agreements of partnership with other political and market actors. In federal states the division of roles between levels has been systematically introduced as a constitutional principle, but also unitary European states have in recent decades introduced political solutions in the direction of greater regionalisation and the division of roles. In this connection Spain, Italy and France can be mentioned (Baldersheim 1998: 254-255). A step in the same direction is seen as regions have gained the right to negotiate and make partnerships with other regions in the same country and abroad (cross-border regionalisation), as well as with enterprises and financial institutions. In a European perspective multi-level-governance and partnership also means that EU institutions can be actors in the division of roles with respect to issues of regulation and finance, exerting a direct influence on how states, regions and other administrative entities are to function. When it comes to rules on the purchase of commodities and services and ensuring competition, regions note in a direct manner that they are now part of a European regime of regulation. They can no longer go to selected local entrepreneurs and firms and ask for a project estimate; free marked competition is a supra-ordinate principle.

There appears to be a distinction between the division of functions and the division of roles, something which David Allen (1998) doesn't make in his conclusion on the consequences of state negotiations on the formation of European regional policy. If emphasis is placed on the division of functions between levels with a starting point in traditional sovereignty and not pooled sovereignty, then it can appear as if the nation states have increased their share of sovereignty vis-à-vis the regions. If one however places an emphasis on the division of roles between levels and pooled sovereignty, with the right to establish partnership and find financial solutions in the policy area, on their de facto role in high politics as central actors in cross-border regionalisation processes, then the picture is completely different. This explains therefore why it has been argued that the implementation of the Structural Funds and Interreg programs has led to 'a mobilization of sub-national actors (both public and private) which is significant, even if it does not represent a major challenge to central governments, because it has led to an enhancement of the governing capacity of the system as a whole' (Hooghe and Keating 1994).

I will close by quoting what David Allen (1998: 228) writes about the EU's structural policy: "the structural funds policy has led to a great deal of regional mobilisation, although this varies considerably throughout the Union, depending on the governmental structure of individual member states. Thus in Belgium regions like Flanders, or in Germany the Länder, are fully involved in the preparation, financing, monitoring, and assessment of programmes". What he draws attention to is the fact that the federal and semi-federal states in Europe, in relation to the traditional unitary states with their all encompassing sovereignty rooted in the state apparatus, have a political and organisational advantage in the further development of a new regionalism based upon multi-level-governance. For the traditional unitary states in Europe there appear to be a number of barriers which must be overcome before the principle of a division of functions between levels and management by the state authorities is renounced in favour of the division of roles, pooled sovereignty and multi-level-governance. But, in the ongoing European integration, with a decision-making system based on democratic Rights rather than ethnos i.e. in the opposition to traditional nationalism and regionalism, the lines of a political and structural development are being laid in the direction of a thoroughgoing re-organisation of all the nation states.

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