CALL FOR PAPERS

Topic: Novel Methods to Compare the Condition of Minorities and Inter-Group Relations across Countries

Type: Journal article (*Frontiers in Political Science*)

Deadline: December 7, 2024

My co-editor and I would love to have you contributing to an endeavor that aims to fill in the gaps of existing measurements and improve the methods of assessing the state of communal groups worldwide. We believe that good data are necessary for good governance, and opened a Research Topic with the online, open access journal *Frontiers in Political Science* to elicit and showcase new work in this (sub)field. You may find details about the topic at <https://www.frontiersin.org/research-topics/65170>, but I copy it below for your convenience.

*Frontiers in Political Science* was established in 2021, it is included in DOAJ, and has a Scopus CiteScore of 1.6 for 2022 and 2.9 for 2023; it will get its very first impact factor at the end of June 2024. Its APC is $1,285, and offers some waivers to researchers from developing countries.

The topic website has a “Guidelines” link, and we will gladly provide any further information you need. Please email agnes@agneskkoos.net or akoos@unr.edu.

Comparative politics’ task to work out models and standards of good governance has never been easy. Countries differ dramatically along scores of features, including demographic ones, such as age structure and communal heterogeneity. An area that seems to have fallen behind in producing comprehensive measures for worldwide comparisons is the relative empowerment of the communal groups in their societies. Thus far, the field of heterogeneity research may boast several fractionalization and polarization indexes, and lists of communal groups. The Minorities at Risk project (http://www.mar.umd.edu/) and its AMAR extension counted 1,202 minority groups and comprehensively described the condition of 284 + 74 groups for 2004-2006. The Ethnic Power Relations (EPR) project, which evolved into the GROW-UP data platform (https://growup.ethz.ch/) included more than 800 politically active communal groups and worked out indicators to portray their power-sharing positions, such as powerless, partner, and dominant. These indicators rely on the groups’ representation in national governments and measure their ability to co-determine social evolution. The other aspect of the communal groups’ political strength, self-determination (or self-government), was only partially addressed by quantitative work. We have three authoritative lists of territorial autonomies with worldwide coverage, in EPR, the Database of Political Institutions, and ERAD (Panov and Semenov). Yet the work on non-territorial autonomies mostly remained at a qualitative level.

This Research Topic aims to address the need for measures of communal self-determination, but fine-tuning the co-determination measures is also welcomed (e.g., addressing the complexity of descriptive versus substantive representation, or representation in special functions, such as military and fiscal leadership). New datasets and inventive work with the existing ones are both encouraged. We have in mind possibilities such as working out typologies and quantitative measures of non-territorial (functional, personal) autonomies; and using opinion surveys to assess the groups’ satisfaction with their condition in a country. This latter may be the easiest way to measure the peacefulness of inter-group relations, yet some more objective features, like comparative life expectancies, or social mobility and equality, also give good insight into the sustainability of the diversity governance in place. Minority representation in regional and local governments may be conceived of either as a co-determination measure, or as a self-determination measure, where administrative subdivisions are drawn along ethnic settlement patterns, and sub-national governments have effective power. A third type of power relation that may make a difference for domestic communal groups is their external support. Kinstate support comes first to mind, but religious groups may also benefit from out-of-state moral, material, and military support.

The reward for working out comprehensive inventories and measures of all these features cannot be overstated. This brand-new dataset is formulated on country level, like the Varieties of Democracy (https://v-dem.net/data/the-v-dem-dataset/) dataset, which contains measures of communal group exclusion and horizontal inequality.

This Research Topic is open to both country-level and group-level measurements of inter-group relations and diversity managing policies.