TERRITORIAL CHOICE: THE POLITICS OF BOUNDARIES AND BORDERS

Introductory Chapter

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This is a draft for the introductory chapter of a report from a comparative project on territorial reforms in eleven European countries.
Chapter 1. The research challenge

Introduction
Few if any questions seem to attract as much attention within the theory and practice of public administration as “what is an appropriate organization of sub-national government?” (see for example King and Ma 2000, Newton 1982, XXXXXXX among others). The question seems to have an inherent phoenix-like character to it; as soon as an answer is provided in one time and place, the question arises anew in another time or place. That this should be so is not entirely surprising. Although the question may appear simple and quite straightforward on the surface, below the surface lurk a highly complex and convoluted set of issues. These issues relate to such matters as what powers and responsibilities are to be assigned to different units of sub-national government, how the activities of these units are to be financed, and how many and how large (or small) the units of sub-national government should be. Further complicating the question is what set of principles and rules should be adopted for how decisions are to be made and carried out at the sub-national level.

That there is no simple or universally accepted answer to the question of sub-national institutional design is readily evident as soon as one casts a glance across national boundaries, if not before. One quite simple illustration of this fact is found in Table 1.1 which contains indicators regarding the demographic size of municipalities in selected countries and the relative size of municipal expenditures measured as a percentage of a respective country’s gross national product.

With regard to demographic size, the countries fall into three main groups. One group consists of those countries with relatively small municipalities in which the average size is less than 10,000 inhabitants and a preponderant majority of the municipalities are (by

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1 In writing this chapter the authors have benefited from discusses with contributors to the book and have drawn on some of their work. As such, this chapter and the entire book is a genuinely collaborative effort.
comparative measure) very small: in this group of countries over half of the municipalities have less than 5,000 inhabitants. France – in which 19 out of 20 municipalities (95%) have less than 5,000 inhabitants – is the most extreme example in this group, but both Switzerland and Spain follow close on the heels of France. At the other end of the continuum the United Kingdom and Ireland stand out as one group. These countries have very large municipalities – more than 100,000 inhabitants on average. The third group of countries consists of those having what by comparative standards are medium sized municipalities, the average size being between 20,000 and 30,000 inhabitants, and relatively few municipalities under 5,000 inhabitants. Denmark, The Netherlands, Portugal and Sweden are examples of countries found in this group.

Demographic size alone, however, tells only part of the story. Also important is just what local authorities do – both what they are expected to do and what they in addition may do on a voluntary basis. Compared with Danish municipalities, for example, French municipalities have not traditionally been expected to do very much. That there are significant differences in the activities of local government authorities even in cases where municipalities are of roughly the same size, and similarly similarities in levels of activity even when there are differences in demographic size is evident from Figure 1.1.

In this figure demographic size and a measure of relative importance of local government activity are plotted along the two axes. On the horizontal axis we have the average municipal size of each country, and on the vertical axis the aggregate local government expenditures as a percentage of the gross domestic product, which can be interpreted as an indicator of the importance of local governments. With regard to countries with small municipalities, the figure suggests that there tends to be a connection between average size and relative importance. The smaller the municipalities (and the more who have under 5,000 inhabitants), the fewer the tasks that are commonly assigned to the municipalities and, as a consequence, the smaller are local expenditures as a percentage of gross domestic product. Yet increased size is no guarantee for increased activity. Even in a country such as Portugal, where the average size of municipalities is over 30,000 inhabitants, local government activities are relatively limited, accounting for less than five percent of national GDP. By comparison, in the Netherlands and Sweden, both of which were countries with municipalities of roughly
similar average demographic size as that found in Portugal, expenditures by local authorities constituted 14 and 22% respectively in 1995.

The evidence presented in Table 1.1 and Figure 1.1, evidence which illustrates the fact that there is no universally accepted answer to the question of what may constitute an appropriate organization of sub-national government, is both striking and convincing. The evidence, however, is still only part of a larger picture; it is static, referring to conditions existing at only one point in time. Equally if not more striking is the dynamic evidence relating to changes that have occurred with respect to the organization and activity of sub-national government over time. One facet of this dynamic picture is captured by the evidence shown in Figure 1.2.

This figure depicts the percent change in the number of municipalities which occurred in 19 different European countries between 1950 and 1992. As this figure makes abundantly clear, this was a period in which countries followed substantially different policy alternatives in dealing with the question of how sub-national government should be organized. In some countries such as Italy, Portugal and Greece, there was little if any change. During the same period, however, other countries pursued a different approach, reducing the number of local authorities substantially, indeed in some countries quite dramatically. In the United Kingdom, for example, three out of every four local authorities were eliminated through processes of amalgamation. In Belgium, Denmark, Sweden and Bulgaria the reduction was even greater; nearly nine out of every ten municipalities were eliminated during the period. In yet a third group of countries, change was more moderate, but still quite significant. In this group the reduction of municipalities was anywhere from 36 percent (the Netherlands) to 44 percent (the Czech Republic). Moreover, that there was no close relationship between the number of municipalities at the outset of the period and the subsequent path chosen is quite clear from Figure 1.3. Major reductions in the number of municipalities were pushed through even in countries where there were at least from a comparative perspective relatively few local authorities at the outset. A similar lack of any clear tendencies with respect to the paths chosen and the extant characteristics of sub-national government is found when other measures are sued – for example population density, territorial size, and so forth.
What is territorial choice? The issue to be studied

It is against this background that this book is written. It is apparent that there is no universal recipe, no “golden egg” (Columbus egg) that provides a solution to the question “what is an appropriate organization of sub-national government”. In some respects this situation is surprising. Certainly it cannot be attributed to a lack of interest in the question, either practical or theoretical. To the contrary, the issue is, as Dente and Kjellberg noted in their book *The Dynamics of Institutional Change* published in 1988, of ubiquitous and on-going relevance. At present the structure of local government is once again on the political agenda in many countries. The division of functions and the organization of inter-governmental relations are closely related issues in this connection. These issues are brought to the fore by among other things complaints over an alleged misfit between territorial jurisdictions and the functions and responsibilities of local government. The inability to cope with “wicked problems” – degraded environments, traffic congestion, urban sprawl, inadequate water supply, decaying inner cities, etc. – is often attributed to territorial and administrative fragmentation to which alternative solutions are sought.

Neither can the absence of a more definitive response to the question of an appropriate organization of sub-national government be attributed to the lack of empirical inquiry. The academic literature relating to issues of how sub-national government may be organized and what consequences alternatives may have is extensive – indeed almost overwhelmingly so. In a review article attempting to summarize the literature relating to determinants of public service performance, for example, Boyne (2003) examined 65 different empirical studies undertaken in various countries, and these studies could only be considered the tip of an iceberg. In a similar vein, Dowding and his associates (1994) endeavored to review and assess the empirical literature regarding the ‘Tiebout hypothesis’ – i.e., the idea that individuals, when deciding where to live, “vote with their feet” in selecting a community whose local government best satisfies their personal preferences. The article had roughly 190 references which were by no means exhaustive.

The lack of a universal solution to the fundamental question under these conditions should not be taken to mean that the organization of sub-national government is merely a random outcome from the toss of some unseen dice. The perspective upon which this book is built is
rather that the organization of sub-national government can, to use the terminology of Almond and Genco (1997), more reasonably be associated with the working of a clock, not a cloud – that is, it is the outcome of partly predictable movements and mechanisms, not a matter of diffuse, drifting forces. In particular the point of departure for this book is that the organization of sub-national government is primarily an outcome of political processes – i.e. patterns of policy making, debate and conflict – mainly at the national level.

More specifically the focus of this book is on the politics of territorial reform as this illustrated by recent developments in a number of European countries. A number of books on local government reform have appeared in recent years (e.g. Kersting & Vetter 2003, Reynaert et al. 2005), but this is an angle that has been largely neglected so far. The intent here is to look more closely at how the political-administrative map of different countries may be redrawn – or, alternatively, attempts to redraw the map may be defeated. The point of departure is that such reforms tend to be controversial and difficult to carry through, often mobilizing a variety of interests that create conflicts which cut across more traditional partisan cleavages and party constellations. Yet despite such conflicts, some reforms are nonetheless adopted and enacted, whereas in other cases they are “stopped in their tracks” or put on the shelf for reconsideration at a later point in time. Denmark exemplifies a country where radical reform was recently and rather unexpectedly pushed through. By comparison, Norway represents a contrasting case, where territorial reform has been on the agenda for the last 15 years but so far not much has changed so far. Finland may follow the Danish trajectory, while France is pursuing a course of reform that has much in common with the Nordic free commune experiments of the 1980s.

These are but a few examples of how issues of territorial choice have been handled in different countries in recent years. Overall, from a broader systemic point of view, four general trends regarding territorial structures can be distinguished: aggregation or the emergence of large, unitary local authorities (UK, Denmark, possibly Finland), regionalization (strong, overarching regions: Spain, Italy, partly Sweden, partly UK, possibly France), fragmentation (Greece, Czech Republic) and stability (Norway, Iceland, etc.).

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2 An exception in this regard is the volume edited by Meligrana (2004).
The research questions more precisely defined

In undertaking a closer investigation of selected empirical cases within the European setting, two sets of interrelated research questions are analyzed. First, what are the characteristic features of the territorial reform processes observed in various countries? In some countries the approach to territorial reform seems to be changing, from instrumental-analytical approaches to more politically driven formats. Are these more universal trends that are likely to be found across all countries with the passage of time? Second, how can variations in reform strategies and outcomes across countries be accounted for? For example, why has small-scale local government persisted for so long in France, the homeland of Jacobin rationalism, while governments in the United Kingdom, a country often seen as steeped in tradition, have been able to drive reforms through with ease, ending up with the largest local authorities in Europe?

Several approaches found in the literature offer help in identifying a number of possible explanatory strands. Historical institutionalism represents one such approach. In this perspective institutions, which are conceived of as a set of formal and informal norms and rules, are seen as path-dependent and rigid (cf. Thelen 1999, Peters 2005). Once they are established, they set limits to the future choices that are available. Actors are captured by these institutions, develop vested interests and will tend to defend them if they are under threat. When facing new challenges, actors apply a logic of appropriateness as this is defined by existing institutions, rather than considering alternatives in a more open and rational manner. Institutions become embedded with others, perhaps at different levels, which hinders radical change since any chance might also alter the balance vis-à-vis these other institutions.

But changes do occur, also in the historical institutional understanding of societal development. Some authors emphasize gradual change, such as punctuated evolutions (Hay 2002) or “slow-moving causal processes” (Pierson 2004). Others claim that changes can be more radical, and take the form of critical junctures (Collier & Collier 1991), formative moments (Rothstein 1996), punctuated equilibriums (Krasner 1984) or policy windows (Kingdon 1995). Some of these transformations are seen as mainly externally generated, for example through the influence of globalization, environmental problems or fundamental value changes. Others emphasize internal imbalances within the institutions themselves as causes to change. Transformations may be the result of conscious and rational decisions,
involving actors who pursue specific goals but can also be related to structural processes or be the result of more accidental events, perhaps an unintended by-product when small change through a sequence of events triggers large consequences (Pierson 2004).

Template for the analysis of individual countries (research question 1)
In order to undertake a more systematic empirical inquiry into territorial reform efforts found in various countries, country chapter authors have been asked to highlight four aspects of the reform processes: (a) the framing of reforms, (b) the choice of reform strategies, (c) the ensuing patterns of conflict, and (d) the outcome of reforms.

**Framing** are statements presenting reasons why reform is needed. What are the dominant reasons invoked for and against territorial reforms? Are the same reasons given (and accepted) in all countries? Such reasons may include references to:
- Efficiency, e.g. larger municipalities may be need to ensure more efficiency or quality in service provision, including the requirements of new types of services or responsibilities
- Welfare, e.g. the need for more or better w.
- Demography, e.g. more elderly people or declining population in the periphery
- Democracy, e.g. how it is suffering in small or large municipalities
- Community, e.g. how important it is to consider or foster community feelings
- Globalization, e.g. the threat from g. necessitates larger municipalities (or regions)
- Europeanization, e.g. open borders drive competition, which requires larger municipalities (or regions).

Choice of **reform strategies** may include
- Comprehensive (considerations of the whole country, all municipalities in one go)
- Piecemeal (a few areas, selected municipalities)
- Incremental (stepwise, some initiatives from time to time)
- Voluntary (reform only if municipalities concerned agree)
- Top-down (imposed by national governments, ministers)
- Bottom-up (the process allows for initiatives from concerned municipalities)
- Roving (committees travelling around the country looking into one area at a time)
- Experimental (trying out different territorial patterns in order to find a “best” territorial division)
- Incentives (are there any incentives for municipalities that agree to amalgamate?)

**Patterns of conflict** are an especially important topic of analysis. Patterns of conflict may reveal long-standing cleavage systems that may account for particular reform trajectories and outcomes. Persistent cleavage systems may block particular reforms as well as enable other reforms. What are the interests and opposing forces mobilised in particular countries? Patterns of conflict may include opposition between
- Left-right
- Urban-rural
- Centre-periphery
- Economic interests, e.g. labour vs. employers
- Positional interests, e.g. regional authorities vs. municipalities

**Outcomes** of reform initiatives may be described in various ways. Above, the following categories were suggested:
- Aggregation
- Regionalization
- Fragmentation
- Stability

These (possible) variations of outcomes may again perhaps be placed on a continuum from radical change to stalemate and thus form our core *dependent variable* and the subject of cross-country, comparative analysis.

**Cross-country, comparative analysis: Explaining variations – some hypotheses**

* (*research question 2*)

The aim of our comparative analysis is to identify factors and forces that may account for reform trajectories and outcomes in various countries and thus aid our understanding of the (sometimes?) bewildering pattern of territorial structures and reforms that can be observed across Europe. Comparative explanations may also help in understanding why some reform approaches work in some cases and settings and not in others.

Some forces of change as well as factors making for stability or equilibrium are briefly mentioned above. In this section, in order to understand cross-country variations in territorial
choices, we seek to combine a process- and actor-centered approach with contextual approaches that take institutional and historical factors into account. As our point of departure we assume that reform initiatives (whether successful or not) start with actors who pursue certain agendas and may, at the same time, encounter other actors with other agendas. These encounters influence the extent and outcome of territorial reforms. How these encounters (may) unfold is captured by the descriptive line of analysis indicated above with the terms framing-strategy-conflict-outcome. In other words, territorial choice is analyzed as the outcome of the interaction of national contexts and process management.

Historically, in many European countries the establishment of municipal boundaries followed those of centuries-old parishes. By way of framing reformers have often argued that industrialization, urbanization and concomitant demands for efficiency in service delivery made these boundaries outdated. In most countries territorial reform has entailed enlargement of local government units – either the enlargement of municipalities through amalgamation or the introduction of large(r) regions to supplement the capacities of (small-scale) municipalities. Territorial reforms were presented as part of a package of modernization necessitated by the need to undertake new public functions or perform existing functions more effectively. The need for modernization has often been justified by reference to broad social change (urbanization, suburbanization, demographic developments, new technology, etc.), which are frequently linked to larger forces such as internationalization or globalization of the economy.

Both Table 1.1 and Figure 1.2 above, however, indicate that while the modernization cum enlargement argument has had a strong impact in a limited number of countries, a good number of nations have proven resistant to this line of reasoning. Pressures of modernization are, of course, felt in all European countries, but perhaps not to the same degree everywhere. It may also be that traditional measures of modernization, such as industrialization and urbanization, may not be good indicators of socio-economic change anymore. Industrial and urban society has been with us in most of Europe for more than a century now, without necessarily engendering major change in territorial governmental structures, or at least not unidirectional change. Of greater relevance in understanding pressures impinging upon governmental institutions today may be the emergent information society (Castelles 1996/2000). Running large-scale local authorities in online society may be feasible even in sparsely populated areas. New information and communication technologies (ICTs) may
reduce transaction costs and help overcome the friction of distance. An indicator tapping the penetration of the “new” modernity could be the proportion of households with broadband connections (which varies from around 70 percent in the Nordic countries to around 20 percent in Greece).

Since countries at much the same level of modernization have chosen different solutions to territorial governance it is reasonable to think other forces may also have to be invoked in order to account for the existing variation in territorial-institutional patterns. At certain historical junctures such as sudden economic crises or geopolitical shifts such as occurred at the end of the Cold War, actors may bring on reform proposals that would under normal circumstances be rejected. For example, the economic crisis that hit Finland in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union precipitated wide-ranging discussions of existing institutions. Similarly, the prospect of accession to the European Union may have paved the way for territorial reforms in aspirant countries such as Poland or the Czech Republic.

A framing strategy often encountered in opposition to that of modernization cum enlargement is that of identity cum small-scale government. Small-scale local government is presented as better suited to expressing feelings of local identity and nurturing community - social and human anchorage - in a turbulent world. The strength of local identity and community is demonstrated when local populations have a chance to express their views on amalgamations: in many countries a sizeable proportion of voters regularly say “no” to plans of amalgamations (see, for example, Johnsen & Klausen 2006). Interestingly, the intensity of local identities vary considerably across European countries, with Austria, Spain and Italy being at the top end of the scale and the UK and the Netherlands being at the lower end. Is there a systematic relationship between levels of territorial identity and scale of territorial units? Under what conditions may local identity be effectively invoked against enlargement initiatives?

For our purposes local identity may usefully be seen as a dimension of the more general concept of political culture. Political culture is a set of value orientations that guide the behaviour of groups and individuals (Almond 1989, Chabal & Daloz 2006). Western society has been undergoing widespread value change over the last generation or so. Some scholars speak about the emergence of a post-materialist value syndrome emphasizing individual freedom and expressive behavior (Ingelhart 1990, 1997, Flanagan & Lee 2003). Others
speak about the modernization of values, of which secularization is an important long-term component. Local identity or localism may be part of a traditional set of values upholding small-scale local government while reformers may be of more cosmopolitan orientations\(^3\). Where localism is strong, reforms may encounter culturally grounded resistance.

Of course, motives of self-interest may sometimes also lie behind negative attitudes to enlargement. A number of small municipalities may benefit disproportionately from state transfers or represent pockets of very well-to-do taxpayers and, therefore, are able to offer services well beyond what their neighbours enjoy. It is well known that affluent suburbs often resist amalgamation with core cities for this reason. The motives of self-interest highlight the importance of also studying incentive structures in order to understand the fate of territorial reforms. Are there incentive structures that work against territorial reforms? To what extent do the strategy of reformers include particular incentives (or disincentives) aimed at potentially reluctant municipalities?

The impact of local motives on reforms depends among other things on the openings that institutional patterns offer for local actors to influence reform processes. France, for example, has a tradition of cumul des mandates, which means that most members of Parliament and the Senate also hold offices as mayors of regions or cities. This can be expected to give local and regional government a strong voice in national politics, despite the Jacobin traditions of France. In Norway, electoral districts coincide with those of regional authorities, which facilitates an alignment of the views of MPs and those of their regions; at the same time peripheral regions with many small municipalities are over-represented in Parliament. More broadly speaking, institutional patterns can be placed on a continuum from majoritarian to consensus types of polities (cf. Lijphart 1977, 1999). The UK is considered to be the most archetypical of the majoritarian variety and Switzerland the archetypical manifestation of the consensus type. Reforms of territorial structures can be expected to be more easily carried through in the former type of polity where the winner, with an overall majority in Parliament and a strongly partisan tradition of policy-making, has little opposition to implementation of reform policies. In consociational democracies, on the other hand, policy-making is more of a negotiated affair with many stakeholders and veto points, and parliamentary mandates are rarely seen as unfettered power to impose across-the-

\(^3\) The contrasting orientations of “locals” and “cosmopolitans” was first introduced in analyses of local politics by Robert Merton (1949/1967).
board reforms. Only moderate and incremental types of territorial reforms are expected in these cases, which include along with Switzerland, the Netherlands, Austria and Germany.

The Nordic countries, Italy, France and Greece take up intermediate positions on the majoritarian-consensus continuum (Lijphart 1999: 248).

The system of cleavages predominant in a polity may also influence the chances of territorial reform. Martin Seymore Lipset, Stein Rokkan and others have modeled the process of nation-building as an accretion of cleavage systems (Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Rokkan 1975/87) starting with the establishment of the Westphalian order. The early stages were periods of territorial consolidation and cultural standardization characterized by gradual integration of often culturally and economically quite heterogeneous regions. In some cases regional distinctiveness gave rise to long-lasting centre-periphery tensions that have lasted into our own times. In time secularization which occurred in the wake of industrialization similarly produced conflicts over the role of the church in relation to the state in some countries. Industrialization also created an urban proletariat, with class polarization and the left-right cleavage as predominant political divide.

Party systems often reflect the particularities of such nation-building processes in individual countries and may carry the imprints of the various fault lines of historical development. Some parties have their roots in the centre-periphery cleavage, others in class and left-right conflicts, etc. What are the characteristic cleavages activated by proposals on territorial reform in individual countries? Are there recurrent historical patterns found in conflicts over territorial organization? We expect the centre-periphery cleavage to be the one most immediately related to territorial organization and the conflict system most easily triggered by territorial reform. Consequently, we also expect countries in which the centre-periphery cleavage is prominent to be those most reluctant to embark upon territorial reform or the countries in which such reforms are likely to meet with the strongest resistance. Norway, Belgium, Italy and Spain are examples of countries with politically highly mobilized peripheries (Rokkan & Urwin 1983).

The arguments suggested here are summarized in Figure 1.4. A set of forces that we term “contextual predispositions” may facilitate or block reform at the outset. The sum of these factors constitutes the national context of reform. The processes of reform emanate from and
are shaped by these contexts. The processes may influence the outcome independently, but it is likely that the outcomes are strongly influenced by contextual factors.

Figure 1.4 in about here

The country analyses in the chapters that follow and summary comparative chapter at the end of the book will involve two components [proceed in two steps]. One component deals with outlines of the reform process and seeks to compare choices of framing, strategy and patterns of conflict across countries. The fundamental question to which we shall return in the concluding chapter is whether cross-country contrasts in outcomes may be related to choices of framing, strategy or conflict management.

As for the second component, the figure suggests the following questions:

- Are reform outcomes related to levels of modernization as measured by traditional and new indicators?
- To what extent may reform initiatives be related to certain historical junctures that provided opportunities for reform-oriented coalitions?
- How strong are cultural features of localism and cosmopolitanism respectively? Were certain strategies developed to deal with issues related to local identities?
- Did the pattern of conflicts engendered by reforms reflect more deep-seated cleavage systems? Are center-periphery cleavages more typical of non- or slow-reforming systems?
- Does the country-based material reveal suggest contrasts between majoritarian and consensus systems as to the extent or speed of territorial reforms?

These contextual predispositions are forces that facilitate or restrain territorial reforms. An index of likelihood of reform may be suggested based on the values that these “variables” take on in individual countries. Reform is facilitated if

- there have been recent surges in modernization, especially as measured by indicators related to an information society: low/high levels of broadband connections: No/yes (0/1)
- there have been recent historical junctures (windows of opportunity or unprecedented pressures from crises or disasters): No/yes (0/1)
- there are low levels of local identity: No/yes (0/1)
- there are weak centre/periphery cleavages: No/yes (0/1)
- the polity is of a majoritarian type: No/yes (0/1).

The presumption is that answering these questions with a “yes” increases the likelihood of territorial reform. A value of 4 or 5 on the index would suggest a high likelihood of reform while low values would suggest low likelihood of reform. However, the analysis indicated by Figure 1.3 is also open to the possibility that strong leadership and good process management may lead to territorial reform despite “unfavorable” contextual predispositions.

Selection of cases/countries

The cases covered by the book include four of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden), the United Kingdom, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, the Czech Republic and Greece. The cases have been selected with three considerations in mind: first, the countries included should have demonstrated at least some attempts at reforming their territorial structures in the recent past (i.e. over the last 10 years or so); second, the outcomes in terms of existing territorial structure should vary (in this respect, the UK and France represent the starkest contrasts); third, they should represent variation or contrasts regarding the contextual variables: Modernization, historical junctures, levels of local identity, cleavage systems and institutional patterns. Some of these contrasts have been pointed out above. In terms of historical junctures the Czech Republic provides a stark contrast to all the other countries, emerging out of the former Warsaw block and joining Nato and the EU within little more than a decade. To some extent Greece is also a contrast to the long-standing democracies having experienced military dictatorship in its recent past and being a relative newcomer to the EU (since 1988).

In terms of levels of local identity several interesting contrasts may be mentioned: Norway and Finland among the Nordic countries with high levels in Norway and low levels in Finland. As mentioned above the UK and the Netherlands is another contrasting pair in this respect. Norway and Denmark differ with regard to the presence of centre-periphery cleavages and so do France and Italy. The UK and the Netherlands present the most pronounced contrast with regard to institutional patterns (majoritarian versus consociational polities).
Secondary literature provides most of the data needed to locate the selected cases on the contextual dimensions suggested and to calculate the index of likelihood of territorial reform. This is something to which we shall return in the concluding chapter.
References


### Table 1.1 Selected characteristics of local governments in XX European countries as of 2xxx (NB: Check date)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Average municipal size (inhabitants)</th>
<th>Median municipal size (inhabitants)</th>
<th>Municipalities with less than 5,000 inhabitants</th>
<th>Municipal expenses as percentage of GNP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>17,000</td>
<td>11,500</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>17,000</td>
<td>11,500</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>19,200</td>
<td>10,700</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>11,600</td>
<td>5,500</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>1,600</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>5,600</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>137,000</td>
<td>119,500</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>Ireland</td>
<td>109,000</td>
<td>90,800</td>
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<td>Italy</td>
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<td>14,400</td>
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<td>Norway</td>
<td>10,300</td>
<td>4,500</td>
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<td>17</td>
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<td>Poland</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>32,000</td>
<td>15,500</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>4,800</td>
<td>1,400</td>
<td>86</td>
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<td>Sweden</td>
<td>30,800</td>
<td>15,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>2,600</td>
<td>900</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Share of municipalities with less than 5,000 inhabitants have been obtained from colleagues in the various countries via personal communications.

**NB: From Poul Erik – to be updated/supplements as possible**
Figure 1.1 Average Size of Municipalities and Local Government Expenditures as a Percentage of Gross Domestic Product for selected countries, 1995.*


Source: OECD National Accounts (1995 figures). Danish local government expenditures has been reduced by approximately 40 Bill. kroner (old age pensions which are 100 % refunded by central government), equivalent to approximately 8 percent of total public expenditures).
Figure 1.2 Percent change in the number of municipalities in 19 European countries, 1950-1992 *

* Source: Martins (1995)
Figure 1.3 Percent change in the number of municipalities in 19 European countries 1950-1992 in light of the number of municipalities in 1950 *


Source: Material drawn from table 4 in Martins (1995:446)
Figure 1.4: Modeling territorial choice – contextual predispositions and reform processes

Contextual predispositions

Level of modernization
- "old"
- "new"

Historical junctures
- shock
- non-shock

Cultural orientations
- localism
- cosmopolitanism

Cleavage system
- centre/periphery predominant
- not predominant

Institutional pattern
- majoritarian
- consensus

Outcomes
- aggregation
- regionalization
- fragmentation
- stability

Features of the reform process

Framing
Strategy
Conflicts