

Grant Number: ES/P003036/1

Sponsor: ESRC

Project title: Exclusion amid Inclusion: Power-Sharing and Non-Dominant Minorities

Principle Investigator:

Dr Timofey Agarin <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-5880-3445>

Co-investigator:

Allison McCulloch <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-8670-9496>

Postdoctoral Research Assistants:

Cera Murtagh <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0250-3651>

Aleksandra Zdeb <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3410-7554>

Drew Mikhael <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8567-2196>

Project Abstract:

Power-sharing, which entails the representation and participation of major societal (ethnic) actors in the process of governing, has been adopted in places as diverse as Burundi, Lebanon, Kosovo, Macedonia, Northern Ireland, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Iraq and has facilitated a war-to-peace transition in some of the world's most deeply divided places. However, while power-sharing is often heralded as a democratic and inclusive approach to managing ethnic difference, it faces a significant trade-off. For power-sharing to create stability and pacify the divided groups, it must marginalise those actors who were not directly involved in conflict, who we refer to as non-dominant groups. As part of this project, we identify three kinds of non-dominant groups who were neglected in the original design of power-sharing institutions and remain on the side-lines of postconflict politics: non-ethnic minorities, re-aligned minorities, and micro-minorities.

We refer to this institutional bias in favour of large groups as the "exclusion amid inclusion" (EAI) dilemma. We seek to answer the following research question: How can power-sharing arrangements best be implemented to account for the EAI problem? This research project is designed to confront the EAI dilemma and offer feasible and viable recommendations for its resolution.

We seek to answer the following research question: How can power-sharing arrangements best be implemented to account for the EAI problem? We answer this question through a threefold methodological approach. We shall conduct 1) a macro-political analysis of power-sharing institutions to assess their ability to redress the EAI dilemma, 2) four comparative case studies (Northern Ireland, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Lebanon and Macedonia) investigating the relationship between the inclusion of dominant groups and the exclusion of non-dominant groups, and 3) semi-structured interviews with politicians from parties that participate in power-sharing and from parties that struggle for legislative representation, community activists from the three kinds of non-dominant groups identified, and representatives of international organisations engaged in democracy promotion and conflict resolution.

Overall, we assess the experiences of states engaged in power-sharing in order to develop a series of policy proposals for modifying the institutional framework to accommodate identity groups that have either been marginalised under the initial institutional design, or who have emerged during the period of peace. This is of timely relevance: our conceptual framework can be extended to societies beyond our comparative cases where peace is marred by

episodic violence, frozen conflict, and/or active violent conflict between the dominant groups, but also affecting the non-dominant groups.

Key publications

Agarin, Timofey. 2020. 'The Limits of Inclusion: Representation of Minority and Non-Dominant Communities in Consociational and Liberal Democracies'. *International Political Science Review* 41 (1): 15–29. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0192512119881801>.

Agarin, Timofey. 2021. 'Nonelectoral Participation in Deeply Divided Societies: Transforming Consociations from the Ground Up?' *Nationalities Papers* 49 (2): 344–60. <https://doi.org/10.1017/nps.2020.1>.

Agarin, Timofey, and Henry Jarrett. 2021. 'Cross-Segmental Parties in Consociational Systems: Downplaying Prowess to Access Power in Northern Ireland'. *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*.

Agarin, Timofey, and Allison McCulloch. 2020. 'How Power-Sharing Includes and Excludes Non-Dominant Communities: Introduction to the Special Issue'. *International Political Science Review* 41 (1): 3–14. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0192512119873075>.

Agarin, Timofey, Allison McCulloch, and Cera Murtagh. 2018. 'Others in Deeply Divided Societies: A Research Agenda'. *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 24 (3): 299–310. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13537113.2018.1489488>.

McCulloch, Allison. 2020. 'Power-Sharing: A Gender Intervention'. *International Political Science Review* 41 (1): 44–57.

McCulloch, Allison, and Aleksandra Zdeb. 2020. 'Veto Rights and Vital Interests: Formal and Informal Veto Rules for Minority Representation in Deeply Divided Societies'. *Representation*, 1–16.

Mikhael, Drew. 2021. 'New "Others" in Post-Conflict Consociations: A Continuum of Exclusion?' *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 27 (1): 79–98.

Murtagh, Cera. 2021. 'Toward Inclusive Power-Sharing in Northern Ireland: Two Steps Forward, One Step Back'. In *Power-Sharing in Europe: Past Practice, Current Cases and Future Directions*, edited by Allison McCulloch and Soeren Keil, 141–69. Palgrave.

Murtagh, Cera, and Allison McCulloch. 2021. 'Beyond the Core: Do Ethnic Parties "Reach out" in Power-Sharing Systems?' *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1369148120973139>.