The International Engagement of Sub-State Governments

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Remit
This is a study of the international engagement of sub-state governments. It draws on the author’s work in the field over many years and on the academic literature. More specifically, it is based on case studies of Quebec, Flanders, Bavaria, Catalonia and the Basque Country, drawing on documentary sources and on telephone interviews with officials in all five regions, conducted in September 2010.

Summary
There has been a substantial expansion of the external activities of non-sovereign governments.

- The reasons, are functional, political and ethical.
- The main fields are:
  - economic development
  - technology
  - education
  - environment
  - culture
  - institution-building
  - migration
  - human rights
  - environment
  - security
- All governments have reviewed their policy with a view to improving:
  - internal coherence
  - geographical and sectoral priorities
  - relationships with central governments.
- All governments have offices abroad. There is a tendency to differentiate between offices for general economic and political representation, and specialized offices for economic or cultural matters. All governments have reviewed and rationalized their representation abroad.
- All governments have signed accords with states and regions. The status of these varies from formal treaties to memoranda of understanding.
- Lacking formal membership in international organizations (IOs) some non-state governments have sought informal links. They have also sought representation in their host state’s team in international negotiations.
- The constitutional provisions for sub-state activity vary, being most extensive and generous in Belgium.
- All governments have sought to strengthen the role of foreign affairs departments (sometimes under the equivalent of First Minister), over the line departments.
- Flanders and Quebec have an extensive foreign policy, with full external extension of their internal competences, a large staff of officials and representatives abroad.
• Relations with central governments have become normalized as the latter accept that they do not have a monopoly of external affairs. They are affected by party politics at the two levels.

Main Report

1. Why external engagement?

1.1 Devolved and federated governments are increasingly involved in international activities as a result of globalization, which

• exposes regions and small nations to global market forces
• breaks down the distinction between domestic and foreign policy as many of the competences of devolved and federated governments are shared with European and other transnational bodies
• raises the question of universal human civil, political, social and economic rights.

1.2 The motives for external action can be summarized as:

• functional, that is the external extension of domestic competences, notably in economic development and cultural matters;
• political, which includes striving for recognition as nations, and a search for alliances and influences among other devolved and federated territories;
• ethical, including promotion of human rights, environmentalism and help for developing countries;
• policy learning and exchange; this can include learning about institutions and strategies as well as policies.

The balance among these motives varies from one case to another.

1.3 This gives way to a wide range of activities sometimes called ‘paradiplomacy’. It should also be seen as part of a wider process in which traditional diplomacy, monopolized by foreign ministries and focused on the ‘national interest’ has given way to a complex network of international exchanges in which other, functional, departments and non-governmental organizations are also engaged, in matters from economic development, to cultural exchange, to the promotion of human rights.

1.4 There has been a trend to representing devolved governments abroad as part of a coherent strategy in place of the more diffused efforts of the 1980s and 1990s. There is a stronger vertical and horizontal control by specialized departments of foreign affairs.

2. Main fields of activity
External activities can be summed up under eight headings.

2.1 Economic Development
This is the main driver of external activity.

2.1.1 Devolved governments seek to promote inward investment, although the emphasis on this changes over time.
2.1.2 They also seek markets, which is especially important for small and medium enterprises, which do not have their own international networks. Such enterprises are predominant in Bavaria and in Catalonia and important in the other cases. Flanders is particularly keen on free trade and removing trade barriers in general.

2.1.3 Technology and cooperation in research and development are important as governments seek a place in the world of high technology production. This is particularly marked in Bavaria, with its strong automotive industry.

2.2 Education

Education is both imported and exported.

2.1.1 There is a wide network of student exchanges, with governments promoting inward and outward movement of students to increase their internationalization. There are programmes of cooperation in research and doctoral studies.

2.1.2 Some governments (such as Bavaria) seek to export their own educational model and expertise.

2.1.3 Quebec and Catalonia have funded university programmes and chairs for the study of their language, culture and society abroad.

2.3 Environment

All the governments surveyed are committed to sustainable development, environmental protection and emissions reductions, and seek to export their own practices and learn from others.

2.4 Politics and Institution-Building

Governments seek to consolidate their own institutions by gaining international recognition and access to global networks.

2.4.1 They learn from each other how to operate as non-state actors.

2.4.2 In the case of Quebec, Catalonia and the Basque Country, there is an emphasis on gaining recognition as nations rather than mere regions, while Flanders also seeks to project itself as a kind of state.

2.4.3 Where nationalist parties are in office, recognition is particularly important, sometimes extending to what has been called ‘protodiplomacy’, preparing for eventual recognition as independent states. The difference between the policies of nationalist and non-nationalist parties is particularly marked in Quebec and the Basque Country. In Catalonia, the nationalist component of the present coalition emphasizes matters of recognition.

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1 In Quebec, the Parti Québécois (nationalist) has alternated in power with the Liberal Party. In the Basque Country, the nationalist coalition, which had ruled since 1980, was replaced by a minority Socialist government.

2 There is a three-party coalition of the Socialists, the Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (who seek independence in the long term) and the post-Communist and Green Party IC/Verds. This replaced the former government of Convergència i Unió (moderate and non-independence-seeking nationalists).
Nation-building also proceeds through the mobilization of the diaspora. This is most marked in the Basque Country, which has a large diaspora, seen as part of the larger Basque nation (see below).

2.4.5 Cross-border cooperation is used to reach co-nationals across state boundaries. Catalonia and (more strongly) the Basque Country promote the idea of their nation as reaching into France. Bavaria focuses on ethnic Germans in neighbouring states.

2.4.6 Public Diplomacy is an effort to promote a favourable image of the territory abroad. This has been a strong theme in the Basque Country, given the continuing political violence. Others have sought to present themselves as dynamic, high-technology places, but with a vibrant culture and strong social cohesion.

2.4.7 There is a constant search for alliances with other actors, whether regions, states or non-governmental bodies, who would enable the government in question to enhance its international reach and influence.

2.4.8 Governments also seek to defend their institutions and practices, which might be under threat from international regulation. Instances include the Basque fiscal system or distinct legal provisions, although none of the cases has as extensive and autonomous legal system as Scotland.

2.5 Culture
Defending and developing a distinct culture is important in all cases

2.5.1 This is especially so where there is a distinct language, as in Quebec, Flanders, Catalonia and the Basque Country. In the former cases, there are important links with France and the Netherlands respectively. Bavaria promotes the German language globally but especially in the neighbouring countries.

2.5.2 Culture may be promoted in its own right or linked to nation-building and identity politics.

2.5.3 It may also be linked to economic development. The link might be direct in the form of the cultural industries, or indirect, as culture is used for place-marketing, public diplomacy and image-making or as a theme for collective mobilization. Some governments have sought to promote a vision of their own region/nation as having specific economic virtues. Catalonia and the Basque Country emphasize their industrial, entrepreneurial, commercial and outward-looking traditions. Flanders stresses its commercial past and for some years sponsored a Foundation Europe of the Cultures, seeking to promote a link between culture and enterprise. Since the 1970s Quebec governments have sought to present an image of a dynamic, commercial society, to break with the traditionalist past. Indeed, while seeking to present distinct images, they often end up promoting very similar modernizing visions, geared to competition in the global economy.
2.5.4 In all cases, governments have sought to promote cultural pluralism and secure cultural exemptions where appropriate in transnational trade and other agreements.

2.5.5 Culture is often a contentious field. There are arguments about whether it should be promoted in its own right or subordinated to commercial considerations. There are also arguments over the content of culture and its role in constituting a distinct nation. Governments have sought to build on traditional culture and symbols while at the same time avoiding stereotypical representations and promoting a modern, high-technology image. Bavaria at one time sought to reconcile the two with the slogan laptop und lederhosen. The dilemma is, of course, familiar in Scotland.

2.6 Migration
Migration has become a key issue everywhere, although immigration policy itself is nowhere devolved. Quebec has negotiated an agreement with Canada allowing it to select its own immigrants within the Canadian quota, so as to give priority to French-speakers. No such provision exists elsewhere. Quebec also offers immigration certificates to foreign students graduating there in an effort to retain talent. In Catalonia, the devolved government has sought a role in the integration of immigrants so as to encourage them to assimilate to the Catalan language and identity. Bavaria for a long time encouraged the migration of ethnic Germans from countries to the east.

2.7 Ethical Fields
Devolved governments in some cases have sought to exploit what is known in international relations as ‘soft power’ in the form of example, persuasion and the promotion of progressive norms in world affairs.

2.7.1 There is a strong emphasis in Flanders, the Basque Country and Catalonia on human rights and the promotion of peace. Flanders has used its competence over foreign trade to impose new regulations on arms sales (this follows some earlier scandals in Belgium). These governments also place a strong emphasis on environmental issues.

2.7.2 Flanders and the two Spanish cases have extensive programmes for overseas development. The most generous is that of the Basque Country, which boasts of having met the UN target of 0.7 per of GDP for overseas aid, once its share of Spanish and European programmes is added in; Flanders has also set this objective. Quebec has a limited fund for overseas development, funded from a share of casino profits, which is distributed competitively through nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

2.8 Security
The new security agenda has eroded the old distinction between internal and external security as devolved governments are drawn into issues of terrorism, drugs and people-trafficking. These links are particularly important where governments have police and security powers, as is the case in Quebec, Bavaria, Catalonia and the Basque Country. Security is especially important in Quebec’s relationship with the United States.
3. Geographical Scope
Early forays into international affairs were often quite random, depending on chance encounters, visits and opportunities.

3.1. In all cases, there is now a commitment to developing a clearer geographical focus, based on sectoral concerns, political alliances and promixity. European affairs (in our European cases) is seen as distinct, a matter of domestic as much as foreign policy given the deep implication of Europe across the policy field and the provision for regional participation in EU matters. The distinction is particularly pronounced in Catalonia. In Quebec, relations with the United States and the North American Free Trade Area are also somewhat distinct.

3.2 Neighbouring countries and cross-border links are an important priority in all cases.

3.3 Historical links are important. Bavaria has strong ties to central Europe (Mitteleuropa), extending into the Balkans. Latin America is a priority for Catalonia and the Basque Country. Flanders has interests in southern Africa.

3.4 Cultural affinity and common linguistic interests explains the close links between Flanders and the Netherlands and between Quebec and France.

3.5 Bavaria and Flanders were particularly active in the transition countries of central and eastern Europe, seeing opportunities here to expand their influence. They contributed assistance and know-how during the move to democracy and EU membership.

3.6 Some bilateral links have expanded simply because they have proved to work, such as the Quebec-Bavaria one.

3.7 All the cases are now focusing on the emerging economies including the BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India and China) for the economic opportunities.

3.8 These criteria do not always coincide. In all cases, governments have been revising their plans and programmes so as to focus their efforts and concentrate resources and to link sectoral with geographical priorities.

The geographical priorities are summarized in Appendix 3.

4. Means and Channels
As sub-state governments are not recognized as international actors, they need to seek out ways of their own to gain access to the international arena. They do this in a number of ways.

4.1 Accords and treaties
There is a large number of agreements of various sorts with states, regions, international bodies and other agencies.
4.1.1 Some of these are sectoral and some are general-purpose partnerships within which detailed programmes can be developed. There have been criticisms that too many agreements have been signed without always having a strategic logic. There has been a tendency as a result to move to framework partnerships and to seek greater coherence within them. The status of these agreements varies. The Belgian regions and communities\(^3\) have treaty-making power in areas of their competence, within the broad limits of Belgian foreign policy\(^4\) while Bavaria has some treaty making powers under the German constitution. There was for a number of years a tendency to move away from formal treaties and towards memoranda of understanding but recently Flanders has taken a decision to revive the instrument, largely for political reasons (to demonstrate that it has the power to do so).

4.1.2 In the 1980s and 1990s there was a proliferation of agreements and partnerships, often with little strategic rationale and not followed through effectively. All governments are now more selective in their partnerships, willing to turn down approaches if they do not promise a return, are too expensive, or not aligned with geographical and sectoral priorities.

4.1.3 Accords are signed with regions and federated units as well as with independent states. The choice between states and regions depends on functional responsibilities and political factors. Flanders, which has exclusive external competences in a number of fields, signs many agreements with states. Nationalist governments are also inclined to seek agreements with states, to emphasise their national status. States vary in their willingness to sign agreements with devolved and federated governments. Federal states are often more understanding. France, as a strong, centralized and unitary state, has proved reluctant to give such recognition to non-sovereign governments, except in the case of Quebec (with which it has intimate ties\(^5\)). Bavaria has a number of long-standing agreements with former Soviet and Yugoslav republics, dating from the time when these were just regions.

4.1.4 Some accords and treaties are a matter of practical necessity. For example, Quebec’s separate pension plan means that it has to

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\(^3\) The Belgian federal system devolves powers to three regions (Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels) and three language communities (Dutch, French and German). The Flemish region is unilingually Dutch-speaking. Wallonia is unilingually French apart from the small German territory. Brussels is bilingual. The parliament and government of Flanders and the Dutch-speaking community have merged, so in this paper we can write of Flanders as a single unit (apart from some complications with regard to Brussels which do not concern us here).

\(^4\) They cannot sign treaties with countries not recognized by Belgium or which violate the principles of Belgian foreign policy. There is a mechanism for resolving disputes over the interpretation of this.

\(^5\) This has caused problems for functional and cross-border collaboration among regions since it is often the French state that has the relevant competence on one side, but the region on the other. So all levels have to become involved.
have its own agreements on social security and mobility, albeit negotiated alongside the relevant Canadian accords. Quebec has also signed its own educational accords. Flanders similarly has numerous technical accords in areas of its exclusive competence.

4.2 Associations
There is a large number of multilateral associations of regions. Some of these are sectoral in their focus, based on common economic interests or technology. Some are geographical, covering the whole of Europe, or parts of it. Some are political in focus, with common aims for improving their political standing and powers. These are discussed in Appendix 1.

4.3 Offices Abroad
All the governments concerned have representative offices abroad.

4.3.1 These vary in their constitution and status. There is a distinction, becoming more pronounced, between offices for general, including political, representation and sectoral offices with a specific economic or cultural remit. Quebec, Catalonia, Flanders and the Basque Country have such general offices, with a political as well as an economic and a cultural remit; for Bavaria, this is true only of the office in Montreal, since Quebec itself encourages such representation. Quebec has a hierarchy of four levels of office, depending on the importance of the place and the range of functions. Some of these, for practical reasons (to do with security, health and the local political climate) are accommodated within Canadian embassies; examples are in India, China and Russia. In Flanders and Catalonia, the economic development and tourism agencies have their own network of offices separate from the general offices, although coordinated by the same ministries at home. Bavaria’s offices, focusing on economic representation, are run in association with the Chamber of Commerce. Appendix 2 gives more details on offices abroad.

4.3.2 There have also been some closures of offices, for financial and political reasons. In the late 1990s, Quebec following the narrowly-defeated independence referendum in the 1990s and facing financial stringency, closed offices. After 2008, the Socialist Basque government closed down some of the offices opened by its nationalist predecessor.

4.3.3 Flemish representatives abroad have Belgian diplomatic status. This also applies to Quebec representatives in UNESCO. In some missions, for example in China and India, Quebec representatives have been given Canadian diplomatic status for security and practical reasons. Diplomatic status is not granted in the other cases, although Catalonia has unsuccessfully sought it.

4.4 International Agencies
Usually only sovereign states have full membership of international agencies (IOs).

4.4.1 Exceptions are the Francophonie, where Quebec has been given a formal role, and the Benelux Council. These might be considered similar to
the arrangements in the Nordic Council or the British-Irish Council. Flanders is a member of the World Tourism Organization after Belgium withdrew, no longer having competences in the field.

4.4.2 Quebec, Catalonia and Flanders have sought to act through IOs, including the United Nations and its agencies, in various other ways.

4.4.3 UNESCO is of particular interest. In Belgium, provision is made for the regions and language communities to speak for Belgium in UNESCO when devolved issues are at stake (this is similar to the provision they have in the EU). Bavaria participates through the German federal provision whereby the Länder are consulted via the Bundesrat, also parallel to the EU arrangements, although the issue is not as sensitive as in our other cases. A 2006 agreement provides for a Quebec presence in the Canadian delegation to UNESCO, with provisions for consultation on the line to be taken. Catalonia has demanded a similar provision but the Spanish government insists that any arrangement must involve all seventeen autonomous communities and no progress has been made.

4.4.4 Other agencies are the FAO (food and agriculture), WHO (health), UNICEF (children), UNIFEM (women’s issues), UNEP (environment), ILO (labour) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

4.4.5 In the absence of membership, non-state governments have sought other means of access. They can act as donors, which gives them a recognized status. They work in technical working groups and sign technical accords for the implementation of programmes. They agree on memoranda of understanding and engage in parallel action. Catalonia, Quebec and Flanders all seek to expand this and to have more formal links. Quebec tends to work through the Canadian delegation, seeking an input before meetings and representation within the Canadian delegation.

4.4.6 Flanders, Catalonia, Quebec and the Basque Country have also sought a role in international negotiations on matters within their competence. A prominent issue here has been climate change. Quebec is able to participate according to provisions allowing provinces in general to form part of the Canadian delegation; they have been particularly active in making use of this provision but they are not the only ones to do so. Spanish autonomous communities have been less successful in gaining a presence at international talks. Where international negotiations are taking place on their territory, devolved and federated governments have sought a symbolic presence and recognition as hosts.

4.5 Diaspora
The diaspora is of particular importance in the Basque Country. There is a large network of Basque centres in Latin America and the United States. These engage in cultural activities. The diaspora is also seen as a vital economic resource for the Basque Government. Catalonia has a smaller programme of support for Catalans abroad; there is nothing similar in the other cases.
4.6 Internationalization at home
There is a strong emphasis in all cases on promoting international penetration of the homeland.

4.6.1 Language education is encouraged, with Catalonia and the Basque Country aiming for general fluency in at least three languages (the local one, Spanish and English). Student exchanges and foreign student recruitment are encouraged. There are some exchanges among public servants.

4.6.2 The presence of foreign consulates is important in Catalonia (Barcelona), Quebec (Montreal) and Bavaria (Munich). These consulates tend to have more of a political role than in other cities.

4.6.3 Quebec, Catalonia, Flanders and the Basque Country have invested in international centres, university programmes and think tanks aimed at internationalization. Flanders has invested heavily in programmes on the international links of regions.

4.6.4 All governments have sought to attract the seats of international organizations. Quebec has emphasized civil aviation, in which it has a strong presence.

4.7 Public Diplomacy
Public diplomacy refers to the efforts of governments to promote a favourable image. This involves publicity, cultural events, presence wherever possible and efforts to educate world opinion about the distinct reality of their nations/regions. This includes place-marketing, to portray themselves as a favourable location for investment, living and tourism. It also involves promoting the idea that they are a self-governing entity with a role to play in world affairs.

4.8 Networking
In all cases, informal networking is important. Governments need to have people in the right places to find out what is happening, whom to contact and where to exercise influence. They can use their compatriots in international bodies as sources of information seek allies in lobbying. Some of this depends on personal networks or simply knowing one’s way around the international system.

Foreign affairs are traditionally the constitutional prerogative of the central government.

5.1 In the past this was interpreted rather narrowly, so as to limit the external activities of devolved and federated units. Now there is rather more latitude given and a recognition that devolved matters have an external dimension. Formal powers vary greatly.

5.2 The most extensive provision is in Belgium. Under the doctrine of in foro interno, in foro externo, the external competences of the regions and communities are the exact extension of their internal competences. This gives
them exclusive external competence in some fields, subject only to broad considerations of Belgian foreign policy. In other fields, competences are mixed. Since international organizations and governments only recognize one Belgium, this means that the country is sometimes represented by its regions, or by mixed central and regional delegations. A similar doctrine, the Gérin-Lajoie doctrine, was long ago proclaimed in Quebec but the Canadian constitution does not embrace this and Quebec has much less scope than Flanders.

5.3 Spanish practice was very restrictive until the 1990s when a series of decisions of the Constitutional Court, notably in 1994, recognized that regions could legitimately pursue their internal competences beyond the borders of the state. The revised Catalan statute of autonomy of 2008 seeks a clarification of Catalonia’s role and the application of the *foro interno, in foro externo* principle, but this is subject to Spanish enabling legislation, which has not been produced. The central government must be informed of agreements with foreign bodies and in some cases its consent is required although this has not been clarified.

5.4 Belgian regions and language communities have formal treaty-making powers. In a more limited way, this also true of Bavaria, under the German constitution. This power does not exist for Quebec, Catalonia or the Basque Country. They seek to get around this restriction by signing accords and memoranda of understanding, with no status in international law.

5.5 In Belgium international treaties covering the competences of regions and communities must be ratified by all six parliaments, which often causes delays. The new Catalan statute of autonomy provides that Catalonia must be consulted on international treaties affecting its competences and can ask to be included in negotiations. Quebec has a legal provision that its parliament must approve any Canadian international treaties affecting its competences.

### 6. Organization
Organizational arrangements vary.

6.1 There has been a trend in all cases towards a more structured organization for external relations, with a stronger central department, more coherence and a greater focus on sectoral and geographical priorities. This is most pronounced in Quebec and in Flanders. In Bavaria, Flanders and the Basque Country, the responsibility comes ministerially under the equivalent of First Minister. In Catalonia it comes under the deputy first minister, currently a member of the junior coalition party.

6.2 These must work with the functional line departments in matrix structures. There have been efforts to ensure that foreign affairs departments are informed of the external activities of other departments, although this does not

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6 The statute itself was caught up for two years in the Constitutional Court, although its eventual ruling in 2010 did not significantly change the provisions for external representation.
always happen. Economic development agencies still often have a high degree of autonomy, with their own structures and networks, often aligned with the business sector.

6.3 Flanders and Catalonia have established inter-ministerial committees at ministerial and civil service level to review progress and ensure coherence among departments.

6.4 There is a strong emphasis in Catalonia on the role of civil society and non-governmental organizations in international activity. Their latest review was preceded by a wide consultation process.

6.5 There have been efforts to involve local government in international activities.

6.6 One measure of the scale of international effort is the number of people working in international affairs at home, although this is difficult to calculate, given the numbers of people in line departments who may have some external responsibilities. David Criekmans has calculated the core numbers as:

Catalonia 26
Flanders 94
Bavaria 20-30
Quebec 360.

These figures show how Quebec's policy, which is of longstanding, has expanded. The relatively high numbers for Flanders reflect the responsibility for the external dimension of internal policies. The figures for Catalonia do not include European matters.

7. Relations with the centre
Relationships with central government vary from confrontation and conflict to close cooperation according to a number of factors. Generally speaking, central governments have become more accommodating over time as paradiplomacy has been normalized but tensions do remain. Devolved governments within asymmetrical systems tend to seek their own international links, being less integrated into federal arrangements.

7.1 Institutions
One factor is the institutional setting. German federalism is based on a tradition of cooperation, with well-developed mechanisms for involving the Länder through multilateral working groups and the Bundesrat (the federal second chamber). Belgium also has formalized working practices, which manage conflict and provide incentives to reach agreement since, without it, Belgium often cannot act. Such institutional mechanisms are less developed in Spain and are developing only slowly between Canada and Quebec.

The same applies to the presence abroad. Bavarian visits are organized by the German diplomatic service, working to common interests. In the other
cases, foreign trips can be a source of tension and confusion, depending on political relationships.

7.2 Bilateralism
One area of conflict is the preference in ‘national’ regions such as Quebec, Catalonia and the Basque Country for bilateral arrangements allowing them a specific role in developing state policy as well as a margin for acting on their own, while their host states have insisted on multilateralism, treating all the federated or devolved units in the same way. In Belgium this is less of an issue, since the centre itself has retreated in the face of strong assertion by the regions. There are numerous provisions for bilateral arrangements in the new Catalan statute of autonomy but in giving these effect the Spanish government has sought to roll them into general multilateral provisions for all the autonomous communities. The same has happened with Quebec.

7.3 Party Politics
Party politics is an important factor. Nationalist parties in government tend to find themselves in more conflicts with the centre, as they seek both influence and recognition abroad. This was the case in the Basque Country until the last elections, as the Basque Government was pursuing its aim of creating a ‘freely associated state’ under the Ibarretxe Plan. The succeeding Socialist Basque government has stressed its commitment to a change of strategy, working closely with the Spanish government at home and abroad. Catalonia under Convergència i Unió, was less confrontational, seeking accommodation with Spanish foreign policy. Although the succeeding coalition government was led by the Socialists, the foreign affairs portfolio was given to their more radical nationalist allies in ERC and there was a more assertive line, at least in symbolic terms. In Quebec, the return of the Liberals after the period of Parti Québécois government led to some realignment of Canadian and Quebec policy, although Quebec has continued to assert its distinct interests whatever party is in power. There are no longer any state-wide parties in Belgium and for a long time the parties made sure that governments at both levels had the same balance of Flemish parties, although there is beginning to be some divergence. In Bavaria, tension has occasionally arisen between the Christian Social Union, aligned with the German Christian Democrats but with a strong regional identity, and Social Democrat governments in Bonn and Berlin, although this cannot be compared with the conflicts in Quebec and the Basque Country.

7.4 Symbolism
As always, conflicts can be intense over symbolic issues like the flying of flags, protocol and precedent, especially in Quebec and the Basque Country. Personalities and personal rivalries also play an important role.

8. Problems
8.1 In the past, there have been too many initiatives without a clear rationale or which were not followed through. Prioritization has been difficult.

8.2 It still happens that functional departments act on their own without informing the relevant coordinating ministry.
8.3 The arrangements for participating in international negotiations and international organizations are not always clear, nor based on shared understandings.

8.4 Sub-state representatives have not always been able to gain diplomatic status.

8.5 There has not always been a linking of governmental efforts to those of civil society.

8.6 Political differences have sometimes adversely affected relationships with the state as a whole.

9. Reviewing Policy
There is a new emphasis on analysis and review.

9.1 All the cases have recently undertaken reviews of their external policies. In the case of the Basque Country and Bavaria these are still in progress and reports will be produced in 2011. The reviews show common themes in the need for coherence, priorities and better machinery within the devolved governments and between them and their respective states.

9.2 Quebec has an action plan every four years, coordinated by the International Relations ministry, with input from the other ministries.

9.3 The Basque Government sponsors an annual report from the Basque Institute of Public Administration, written by academics from the University of the Basque Country.

International Engagement Report – Lessons for Scotland

Scotland’s international engagement follows similar lines to that of other sub-state governments but there are some key lessons that are worth emphasizing.

1. International engagement is now a normal activity for devolved and federated governments, consistent with their constitutional responsibilities and competences. Scotland is in the mainstream here.

2. There nevertheless remain differences between a more functional approach and one that emphasises nation-building and the search for more autonomy or independence. This is a matter of political choice, to be decided through the democratic process.

3. There are also differences in the emphasis on economic, cultural and political objectives. The Scottish Government tends to subsume the field under economic priorities, consistent with the national performance framework but other governments recognize that other objectives are important in their own right. This too is a matter of political judgement.
4. Culture is often a contentious field. In the restricted sense, it refers to the creative arts. No nation or region has a single, homogeneous culture and there is a widespread rejection of archaic or stereotypical depictions of local cultures. Successful regions and nations are able to combine tradition and a respect for history with modernization, dynamism and pluralism.

5. Culture in the broader sense refers to national self-understandings and identity, including history. It can be a vehicle for collective action and a set of references for a project combining economic competitiveness with social solidarity. Again, this does not require a narrow or essentialist idea of national culture.

6. There is a general recognition of a need to prioritize by policy field, sector and geographical focus. Resources and effort should not be spread too thinly. Devolved governments cannot be involved in everything.

7. It is necessary to decide where devolved government might have most impact and to terminate activities that are not delivering a return.

8. It is important to identify who needs government support in external activities and who can manage on their own. Small and medium-sized enterprises are often the ones that can use support most.

9. There is a need for a focus of effort within the Government. External activities cut across functional divisions and many of the activities are delivered by line departments. A matrix organization is therefore needed. This can be more or less ambitious, depending on the objectives of external policy.

10. Relations with central governments are often governed by political factors but even when differing parties are in office there is a lot of shared ground. States are increasingly accommodating of sub-state activity as the practice of diplomacy itself broadens.

11. There need to be understandings between levels of government and good communication. Functional departments as well as foreign ministries need to be aware of the interests of devolved governments in external matters.

12. In symmetrical federal states, there are formalized mechanisms for integrating sub-state concerns into the state’s external policy. In plurinational states, or those where there is asymmetrical devolution, relations with the centre are often bilateral and devolved governments may also have their own international networks.

13. Devolved and federated governments need to establish where there are shared objectives with central government and where they have a distinct interest. This requires a capacity to look ahead at emerging issues and to anticipate problems, for example in international negotiations and treaties.

14. International organizations such as UNESCO are important arenas for sub-state governments. Although they cannot become full members they can act within these in various ways.
15. Networking, often of an informal kind, is important. Secondments of officials and encouragement of young people to work in international organizations can help build these networks.

16. There is a lot of experience now of external offices and their role. A distinction is emerging between general-purpose offices, with a broad economic, political and cultural role, and more specialized delegations.

17. Internationalization of the home nation/region may be as important as projection abroad. Language teaching and internationalization of education and business play a role here.

18. Civil society has an important role to play in external projection, both in the design of policy and its implementation. This includes business, trades unions, the voluntary sector and educational institutions.

19. Development cooperation has become a significant aspect of the work of sub-state governments, usually in cooperation with the central government. Sub-state governments are learning where and how they can make the best contribution, given their limited resources and capacity. This often involves partnerships in particular parts of the world, or using skills and resources in which they have a special expertise.

20. There are opportunities for policy learning and innovation, which are not always well exploited. This requires identification of relevant fields and common interests, and sustained comparison and joint working to see what works where, why and how. Too often, policy learning is superficial and selective. Policy learning from elsewhere needs to be diffused within government and not confined to those who have studied overseas examples.

21. Diasporas can be a resource for economic and cultural development but, except in the Basque case, they are not well organized or even easy to identify.

22. Migration is an important issue and Quebec has established a role in identifying suitable migrants. There is not, among the other places studied, a case in which the sub-state government is more favourable to migration than the central government, as is effectively the case in Scotland. Quebec and Catalonia, however, show that integration into the local culture can be combined with citizenship of the wider state.
Appendix 1
Inter-regional associations

There is a large number of inter-regional associations. This is not an exhaustive list but illustrates the sorts of activity undertaken. Associations vary among themselves and over time in their activity and influence. There are phases when one association is very active and sets the agenda, but then gives way to another protagonist.

Pan-European associations
These are bodies of general representation. They represent a variety of sub-state entities and often have difficulty agreeing a common line.
The Committee of the Regions is an official consultative body of the European Union. It has not been a priority for the regions considered here, who feel that their distinct constitutional and historical status is not recognized.
The Assembly of European Regions has had a varied history but is not seen as central by the regions considered here.

Regional Associations
These are associations covering parts of Europe or North America. Quebec has been involved in associations of governors of US states. Our European cases have been involved in the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions, although this has not had a lot of influence recently.

Sectoral Associations
These are groups of regions with special needs or interests. Catalonia was a founder of the Four Motors of Europe, an association of high-tech regions, which gained a lot of prominence in the 1990s. These associations are concerned with economic development and technical cooperation as well as lobbying in Europe for their needs. Bavaria is a leader of the Circle of Power Regions, which includes regions in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Institutional Associations
These are associations for regions pursuing more influence and constitutional standing. A prominent one has been the Regions with Legislative Powers, seeking to distinguish the powerful regions in the Committee of the Regions from the municipal governments. Its main focus was the Convention on the Future of Europe. All the European regions considered here are involved in it.
Appendix 2
Offices abroad

Quebec
The most extensive network of offices is that maintained by Quebec, which was most recently reorganized between 2006 and 2009. The highest level is that of general delegations, with a large diplomatic, political, cultural and economic role. Then there are delegations, offices and antennas. These are continually under review, and offices have been closed and opened as needed. Some offices were closed in the 1990s because of financial stringency. The various Latin American offices were consolidated into one in Sao Paulo. The Paris delegation has virtually the status of an embassy and special recognition from France. There are:
- General Delegations in Brussels; London; Mexico; Munich; New York; Paris; Tokyo
- Delegations in Atlanta; Boston; Chicago; Los Angeles; Rome
- Offices in Barcelona; Beijing; Berlin; Damascus; Hong Kong; Mumbai; Sao Paulo; Shanghai; Vienna; Washington
- Antennas in Milan; Santiago; Seoul; Taipei.

Flanders
Flanders distinguishes between has delegations for providing broad representation and specialized functional offices. It has:
- 79 economic offices in 38 countries, coming under the Ministry of Trade;
- three cultural offices;
- three offices of the Flemish International Cooperation (Development) Agency, in South Africa, Mozambique and Malawi;
- twelve tourist offices

Catalonia
Catalonia also has a dual structures with delegations established under the revised 2008 Statute of Autonomy. There are currently:
- Five delegations, in Germany, the United Kingdom, France, USA and Argentina.
- 40 international trade offices coming under the development agency;
- three inward investment offices, in Madrid, Tokyo and New York;
- three representatives of the Institute Ramon Llull to promote the Catalan language, in Berlin, London, New York and Paris;
- nine offices of the Agency for Development Cooperation in Bolivia, Colombia, Equador, Guatemala, Mozambique, Marocco and Nicaragua;
- twelve tourist offices;
- five offices for the Institute of Catalan Cultural Industries;
- one office of labour recruitment, in Bogotà, Colombia.

Basque Country
The Basque Country’s two-tier structure has been more contentious. The government under the leadership of the Basque Nationalist Party had an ambitious external policy and between 2000 and 2009, established delegations in
Madrid (sic), Mexico, Argentina, Chile, Venezuela, the United States (New York) and France and planned more in Germany, Finland, Italy, Quebec and the United Kingdom. The non-nationalist government that came to office in 2008 was pledged to reduce and rationalize the structure, working more closely with Spain. The offices in the Americas were merged into a Mercosur office (Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and Paraguay); a Cafta Office (Colombia, Venezuela and Central America) and NAFTA Office (USA, Canada and Mexico) and an office for Chile and Peru. Representation in European cities was abandoned, with the exception of the delegation in Brussels, which deals with EU matters. It was also announced that relations Madrid would not long be considered ‘external affairs’ and that the delegations should not be referred to as embassies. Basque external affairs would be aligned with those of Spain.

The Etxepare Institute being established in 2010 will be responsible for Basque cultural activities abroad, in coordination with the international affairs secretariat and the Ministry of Culture.

In addition there are economic offices with the task of trade and investment promotion, under the aegis of SPRI (Sociedad para la Promoción y Reconversión Industrial), the development agency under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. There are permanent offices in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Cuba, China, United States, Slovakia, India, Mexico, Poland, the Czech Republic, Russia and Turkey. These are housed in the delegations where these exist. Where there are delegations, the economic offices are incorporated into them.

There are local agents looking after Basque economic interests in Germany, Algeria, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Ivory Coast, Denmark, Egypt, UAE, Slovenia, Finland, Philippines, France, Netherlands, Hungary, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malaysia, Morocco, Montenegro, Norway, Portugal, Qatar, United Kingdom, Rumania, Serbia, Senegal, Singapore, South Africa, Thailand, Tunisia, Ukraine, Venezuela and Vietnam.

Emprebask is an association of business people of Basque origin active in Mexico and Chile and currently being established in the United States.

**Bavaria**

Bavaria is the only German Land with a network of offices abroad. There are 22 offices, in São Paulo (Brazil), Sofia (Bulgaria), Qingdao (China), Bangalore (India), Tel Aviv (Israel), Tokyo (Japan), Montreal (Canada), Zagreb (Croatia), Mexico City (Mexico), Vienna (Austria), Warsaw (Poland), Bucharest (Romania), Moscow (Russia), Johannesburg (South Africa), Prague (Czech Republic), Istanbul (Turkey), Kiev (Ukraine), Budapest (Hungary), New York (USA), San Francisco (USA), Abu Dhabi. These are primarily concerned with investment, trade and technology and are run in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce and the Ministry of Economic Affairs. The office in Montreal is run directly by the Bavarian Government (Department of the First Minister) and has a special status, accredited with the Government of Quebec and a wider role in the promotion of cooperation between Quebec and Bavaria. This is the only one comparable to the general delegations in the other cases.
Appendix 3
Geographical Priorities

Many of the early external initiatives happened by chance or without a particular rationale. Others are explained by historic linkages. In recent years, governments have sought a greater geographical focus, justified by sectoral concerns and priorities, whether these be economic, political or cultural.

Quebec
Quebec has traditionally prioritized the United States for economic matters and France for cultural and political matters. There is also a long-standing interest in the United Kingdom.
There is a strong link with Bavaria, with which there is no particular cultural affinity (except perhaps a Catholic tradition) but which has grown upon its success.
In recent years, Latin America and Asia (China and Japan) have become important target areas, largely for economic reasons.
There is a wider interest in Francophone countries, for cultural reasons and because these are seen as potential sources for French-speaking immigrants.

Flanders
Flanders has close links with the Netherlands, for obvious cultural reasons. It also promotes cooperation with its immediate neighbours.
Flanders moved early on to establish links with the transition countries of central and eastern Europe and these remain important.
There are important interests in southern Africa. This may be for historic reasons, to do with the linguistic affinity and the migration of Flemish people to South Africa. There are also missionary traditions.
There is interest in emerging markets, notably the BRIC countries.

Catalonia
Catalonia emphasizes its neighbours in France. It is active in the Mediterranean region, hosting the EU’s ‘Barcelona process’ of engagement with the other side of the Mediterranean.
It is active in Latin America, for historic reasons and because of the existence of a Catalan diaspora.

The Basque Country
Basque governments have emphasized cross-border linkages to the French Basque Country. They have been very active in Latin America, for economic and cultural reasons, working often the diaspora.
There has recently been more attention on the BRIC countries.

Bavaria
Bavaria has historically focused on the countries of central and eastern Europe, part of its economic hinterland, even before the fall of the Berlin Wall. It has been very active since the transition to democracy.
Bavaria is a leader of the group of Power Regions, which are drawn from Europe, Africa, Asia and Latin America.
There has been a recent emphasis on the BRIC countries.
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