

CONFERENCE

NEWS

Ethnic Inequalities and Public Sector Governance

*Report of the International Conference organized
by UNRISD, UNDP Latvia and the Latvian
Ministry of Integration
25–27 March 2004, Riga*

Contents

Introduction	1
Unipolar Ethnic Settings: Botswana and Lithuania	3
Bipolar Ethnic Settings: Fiji, Trinidad and Tobago, Latvia, and Belgium	5
Tripolar Ethnic Settings: Bosnia, Switzerland, Nigeria and Malaysia	9
Concentrated Multipolar Ethnic Settings: Ghana, Kenya and India	13
Ethnically Fragmented Settings: United Republic of Tanzania and Papua New Guinea	15
Group Inequality and Development	17
Ethnicity in the Central and Eastern European Context	18
Agenda	20
Panellists, Chairpersons and Organizers	23
Papers Presented	23

Introduction

There is increasing recognition by scholars and policy makers that inequalities between groups constitute a more potent source for violent conflict than inequalities among individuals. When inequalities in incomes, wealth, and access to social services or political power coincide with group differences, ethnicity may assume importance in shaping choices and mobilizing individuals for collective action. Yet little is known about ethnic inequalities especially as they affect the public sector, which plays a central role in resource allocation and identity formation. The stability, legitimacy and effectiveness of the public sector may be undermined if it fails to develop mechanisms to regulate difference, inequality and competition.

The United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) initiated a project in 2002 to examine the complex ways ethnic diversity affects the constitution and management of the public sectors of multiethnic societies under formal democratic rule. Researchers analysed the structure of ethnic cleavages, including variations within each group; collected empirical data on four public institutions—civil service, cabinet, parliament and party system; examined the rules that determine selection to these institutions; analysed whether the distribution of offices is ethnically balanced

or uneven; and studied voter preferences in constituting these institutions. They also looked at the effectiveness of institutions and policy reforms for managing diversity and inequality. The research employed a typology that classifies countries according to their levels of ethnic polarization: those in which one ethnicity is overwhelmingly dominant; those with two or three main groups; and those in which the ethnic structure is fragmented. The last classification is further divided into two categories: cases of high levels of fragmentation and cases in which fragmentation offers a few large groups the potential to organize selective coalitions to influence access to the public sector. Fifteen countries were studied: Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Botswana, Ghana, Fiji, India, Kenya, Latvia, Lithuania, Malaysia, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Switzerland, Trinidad and Tobago, and the United Republic of Tanzania.

The findings of this research were discussed in an international conference organized in Riga, Latvia, from 25 to 27 March 2005 by UNRISD, the office of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Latvia and the Latvian Ministry for Social Integration. The conference attracted about 80 participants, drawn from international organizations, governments, the diplomatic community in Latvia, the media, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and academic institutions.



In their opening statements, the Latvian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Rihard Pīks (whose statement was read by the UNDP Resident Representative, Gabriele Köhler) and the Minister for Integration, Nils Muiznieks, stressed the importance of the conference for sharing experiences on social integration, especially in light of Latvia's efforts at nation building and adoption of European Union (EU) laws on anti-discrimination and equality. In her own statement as UNDP's Resident Representative, Gabriele Köhler underlined the value of comparing a large number of countries to shed new light on ethnicity, integration, participation and representation in public institutions; and hoped the conference would not only improve policy makers' understanding of these issues, but that it would provide an opportunity to develop an international network on ethnicity and governance rooted in Latvia but reaching out to different parts of the world. UNRISD's Director, Thandika Mkandawire, stressed the importance of understanding ethnic inequalities when dealing with public sector reforms, which have tended to focus on managerial and fiscal issues. The research coordinator, Yusuf Bangura, discussed the main findings of the research.

Research overview

The research highlights four main issues. First, it challenges a popular view that links ethnic diversity to pathological outcomes such as violent conflicts and undemocratic government. Although some recent quantitative studies do not find a strong correlation between ethnic diversity and conflict, or ethnic diversity and lack of democracy, UNRISD research suggests that the relevant issue is not the existence of diversity per se, but types of diversity, which can constrain or facilitate particular outcomes. Ethnic cleavages are configured differently in different social structures and are less conflictual in some countries than in others. The difficult cases are countries with bipolar and tripolar ethnic structures or cases where groups have formed selective ethnic coalitions, limiting the scope for bargaining and the promotion of multiple loyalties. Countries with these types of ethnic structures that are relatively stable have introduced ethnicity-sensitive institutions and policies to influence the composition of the public sector.

Second, contrary to liberal assumptions that privilege individual choices and capabilities in constituting public institutions, the research shows that it is difficult to achieve ethnic proportionality or inclusiveness in the

public sector if policies do not address this issue. Multiethnic societies that adopt ethnicity-blind policies tend to have highly unequal public sectors because of the unequal starting points of groups. This may be a product of history, market dynamics, resource endowments or past discriminatory public policies. Data on the composition of the civil service, cabinet and parliament suggest that relative balance has been achieved in countries that are highly fragmented (Papua New Guinea and the United Republic of Tanzania) or those with ethnicity-sensitive policies that are oriented toward proportionality (Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Botswana and Switzerland). In Papua New Guinea and the United Republic of Tanzania, it is very rare for an ethnic group to have more than one member in the cabinet or top layer of the civil administration. Ghana, India, Malaysia and Nigeria have achieved some proportionality in some institutions because of ethnicity-sensitive policies. The remaining cases display varying levels of inequality and weak or non-existent policies on proportionality.

Third, the research challenges the recent focus on institutional engineering that underplays background conditions in shaping the choices of political actors. Politicians and citizens face different types of constraints in constituting the public sector. However well crafted they may be, institutions may have different levels of significance in different social settings. In this regard, the research questions two frameworks that have been held up as solutions to the governance problems of ethnically divided societies. These are majoritarian institutions that reward moderation in party behaviour and vote pooling while also encouraging adversarial politics; and consensus-based or power-sharing arrangements that seek to accommodate the ethnic segments. The research suggests that although the pulls of majoritarian rule and power sharing are very strong, they do not always pull in opposite directions. Formal consociational arrangements may not be relevant in unipolar ethnic settings or fragmented multiethnic societies, where governments may be ethnically inclusive under democratic conditions. They seem unavoidable in bipolar and tripolar formations or in multipolar settings with strong ethnic or regional clusters. Consociational arrangements have been practised largely in bipolar and tripolar settings: Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Malaysia and Switzerland.

Fourth, contrary to conventional ideas on ethnicity, fragmentation stands out as a powerful factor in

intergroup cooperation. An important policy implication is the need to weaken or manage polarity. Policy makers cannot turn all ethnically plural countries into homogeneous societies, short of creating 8,000 or more mini-states. Even such a policy of ethnic state creation may not be viable in a world of increasing migration and intermarriage. The research suggests that the best option for intergroup cooperation in divided societies may be to promote more fragmentation. Electoral rules and other incentives, including support for multiethnic associations, can be used to open up cleavages in groups that appear homogenous. The importance this study attaches to fragmentation comes close to respecting a major finding in political science that democracies are more likely to be stable in situations where resources, power and allegiances are widely dispersed.

Unipolar Ethnic Settings: Botswana and Lithuania

The first substantive session considered presentations on public sector inequalities in unipolar ethnic settings. In such societies, it was hypothesized, the dominant group might feel less threatened by minorities. This might encourage fragmentation of group preferences and cross-ethnic cooperation. Even when minorities organize separately, the fragmentation of the dominant ethnicity might improve the influence of minorities in the public sphere, especially in situations where minority groups are regarded as indigenous.

Natalija Kasatkina and Vida Beresneviciute made the presentation on Lithuania, and Onalenna Selolwane presented the findings on Botswana. The Lithuanian ethnicity constitutes 83 per cent of the population in the country, and the Tswana in Botswana 70 per cent. The second and third largest groups in Lithuania (Poles and Russians) are only 7 per cent each. The second largest group in Botswana, the Kalanga, is 11 per cent and the third largest (the San or Khosa) is 3 per cent. The rest are very small groups. Even though both Lithuania and Botswana are unipolar societies, there are differences between them in terms of the way ethnic groups are perceived in the construction of the state system. Indigeneity, which is a strong element in Lithuania, is absent in Botswana. However, there is little ethnic polarization in the two countries. Feeling less threatened by minorities, Lithuania avoided the initial citizenship laws that, in the other Baltic states of Latvia and Estonia, discriminated against Soviet-era immigrants.

Most Lithuanian minorities are citizens. In Botswana, the internal fragmentation of the dominant Tswana group into five relatively equal groups raises questions about the existence of a Tswana identity and provides opportunities for active minority participation in the public sector. A multiethnic pact at independence granted the Tswana language official status (along with English). Today about 90 per cent of the population identify Tswana as their main language. However, this concession to the Tswana was made in exchange for equal distribution of resources among all groups. Only the small pastoral San or Khosan group feels excluded.

The dominant ethnicity is politically fragmented in the two countries, providing scope for intergroup cooperation. There are, however, differences between the two countries. In Lithuania, even though many minorities vote for the dominant ethnic parties, they have also organized separately in determining the composition of the public sector. However, most of the minority parliamentarians tend to be elected on the platform of the Lithuanian-led, Left-leaning parties; and minority parties sometimes participate in coalition governments even though individuals of minority backgrounds are rarely offered cabinet posts. In Botswana, on the other hand, minorities do not organize separately, and governments reflect the ethnic composition of the society. The ethnic profiles of both opposition and ruling parties in parliament are similar. Candidates from the three dominant Tswana subgroups and the second-largest group, the Kalanga, have occupied 69 per cent of the cumulative parliamentary seats of the main parties since 1965.

The state in unipolar societies may assume the features of a nation-state, affecting the composition of the public sector. This is the case in Lithuania where issues of indigeneity have affected access to the bureaucracy, parliament and cabinet. Even though minorities constitute 17 per cent of the population, they accounted for only 10 per cent of the parliamentarians in 2000. In 1985, before the country attained independence, minorities enjoyed a 21 per cent share; this declined sharply to 7 per cent in the first post-independence parliament of 1992. The situation is worse in governmental bodies, such as the cabinet and the upper reaches of the civil service. In the 12 governments formed since independence, only two individuals of minority background have served as ministers, and two as heads of civil service ministries. Kasatkina and Beresneviciute suggested a system of quotas as a

provisional means to encourage participation of minorities in elective bodies.

In Botswana, however, it is the dominant Tswana group that is underrepresented in key public institutions. Its share of senior civil service posts experienced a consistent decline from 60 per cent in 1965 to about 50 per cent in 2003; and its share of cabinet posts went up from 62 per cent in 1966 to 69 per cent in 1985 but declined to 61 per cent in 2000. A similar trend is observed for the parliament, where the Tswana share declined from 65 per cent in 1966 to 61 per cent in 1985 and 2000. The second largest group has consistently enjoyed high levels of representation in government. It accounted for the entire minority share of 40 per cent of the civil service posts in 1965 as well as 31 per cent and 24 per cent respectively of the national shares in 1975 and 2003. The merit-based policy of recruitment into the civil service in the early period of independence advantaged the Kalanga, who had a head start in education over all groups. It is only the highly marginalized San group that has not gained access to the parliament and cabinet.

Discussion

The discussant, Ralph Premdas, pointed out that the problems of minorities are more clear-cut in unipolar societies than in other ethnic settings. He observed that the received wisdom in the past was that the majority should rule; but in the two countries, there is some effort to accommodate the interests of minorities. He further stated that the Lithuania case is one of decolonization in which ethnic relations have been affected by the former imperial power and by European Union regulations on minority rights. He stressed the point that the positive role of third parties or external agencies in setting standards of good behaviour and restraining states should be recognized in conflict management.

The discussion that followed addressed three main issues. One set of comments highlighted the fluidity of ethnic categories and the need for distinctions to be made between ethnic and sub-ethnic groups. One participant argued that, despite the fragmentation of the Tswana identity into several subcategories, it might still be possible to talk about a broader Tswana ethnicity, even though this is something that developed over the past 100 years. Questions were also raised about the role of economic growth in Botswana's stable ethnic relations and the marginalization of the San or Khosan group. Selolwane

replied that ethnic identification in Botswana has overlapping dimensions. The Tswana identity may be important for the ethnic subcategories when the issue is the perceived dominance of the second-largest group, the Kalanga, in the public sector and business. Sub-Tswana identities assume importance when the issue of Kalanga dominance is not central. Young people underplay the sub-Tswana identities, because they do not want to be reminded of their ethnic origins. The Khosa, she explained, are physically different and engage in economic activities that are also different from what the majority of Botswanans do for a living. All non-Khosan groups are Bantu and agropastoralists, whereas the Khosa are historically hunter-gatherers. The former also had centralized states whereas the Khosa did not. The development strategy pursued by the modern Botswana state is to introduce Bantu modes of activities to the Khosa: creation of chiefs, farming, agribusiness and large settlements for the provision of social amenities, a strategy resisted by the Khosa. She said that the Khosa are now a source of cheap labour and have lost most of their valuable land to ranchers and so-called developers.

A second set of comments addressed the importance of non-ethnic cleavages in unipolar societies. It was argued that in such societies, the main cleavage may not be ethnicity but one based on ideology or urban-rural differences, as the Botswana case demonstrates. The point was also made that most nation-states in the world are unipolar societies, with similar problems as those analysed for Lithuania and Botswana. The ethnic cleavage may become important when minorities are weakly integrated in the public sector, or when there is a major status reversal between the majority group and a minority group that was formerly dominant, as in Lithuania. Power sharing or co-decision making may not be relevant in such societies. The focus instead should be on the terms of inclusion of minorities in the political process. Participants addressed the tendency for minorities to drift to the private sector when faced with fewer opportunities for employment in the public sector. This may affect ethnic relations when governments privatize state-owned properties: the majority ethnic group may discover that minorities are already well entrenched in the private sector and are better placed to exploit the opportunities of privatization.

A third set of issues relates to the role of migration in ethnic relations in Lithuania, the viability of quotas to improve unequal distribution of minorities in elective

bodies and influence mono-ethnic political participation, as well as the specific demands of minorities. Kasatkina replied that there is a problem with the population census, so migration figures may not be accurate. However, Russians in Lithuania are typically a migratory group whereas Poles are permanent longstanding minorities. At independence, many Russians opted to go back to Russia even though citizenship was offered to everyone regardless of duration of residence. She observed that Poles want to be Lithuanians of Polish origin, whereas Russians want to be Russians in Lithuania. The problem of status reversal is a problem for Russians, who are not used to being minorities. The quota system recommended in the paper will not be popular in Lithuania and has never been debated, but she insisted that it is something worth pursuing if minorities are to be fully integrated in the public sector and more generally, in society.

Bipolar Ethnic Settings: Fiji, Trinidad and Tobago, Latvia, and Belgium

In bipolar societies, when ethnicity is politicized, the division may run through the system, making it difficult to construct cross-ethnic alliances. Groups face each other directly and politics may be zero-sum. Fragmentation, if it occurs, may not be enough to promote accommodation or cohesion. Ethnicity-sensitive institutions may be needed to avoid conflict. Two sessions were devoted to the bipolar cases of Fiji, Trinidad and Tobago, Latvia and Belgium.

Jon Fraenkel presented the Fiji findings. Indo-Fijians were descended from Indian indentured labourers recruited by the British to work in the sugar-cane industries between 1879 and 1916. Their population grew rapidly in the twentieth century, attaining parity with ethnic Fijians around 1945. Indians owned more property in the towns than Fijians. Employment of ethnic Fijians in the sugar plantations was restricted; they were largely confined to their villages, producing other types of crops, and governed by a separate Fijian administration. Eighty-four per cent of the land is governed by customary tenure, which means that Indians who are non-indigenous cannot own land. However, a large portion of the fertile land is leased to Indian sugar-cane farmers. Because of the communal nature of Fiji's electoral system, its parliament has tended to reflect the relative population shares of the two groups.

Inequalities are sharp at the level of the cabinet and civil service. Between 1987 and 1990, the cabinet was on average 83 per cent Fijian and only 6 per cent Indian. Between 1990 and 1996, there were no Indians in the cabinet. Even when an Indian became prime minister in 1999, two-thirds of the cabinet members were Fijians. In 2001, Indians constituted only 5 per cent of the cabinet. There was relative parity in the civil service during the early independence period. However, after the coup of 1987, the Fijian share rose sharply. More than 60 per cent of civil servants are now ethnic Fijians, compared to 30 per cent Indian. Fijians constitute over 99 per cent of the armed forces and more than 85 per cent of the top civil service posts.

The 1997 constitution introduced radical reforms that combined the majoritarian preference voting system with power sharing. The goal of preference voting was to get political parties and voters to behave moderately; and that of power sharing was to ensure that parties with significant voter support (at least 10 per cent of parliamentary seats) get proportional seats in cabinet. The reforms did not produce the expected outcomes. The flow of the preference votes in the 1999 and 2001 elections was toward extremist, not moderate, parties, and the new Fijian party that won the 2001 elections refused to grant the Indian party its share of the seats in cabinet. According to Fraenkel, Fiji's experience questions the overemphasis in recent years on electoral engineering, which assumes that political problems can be solved simply by changing institutions. Even though some form of power sharing is required in Fiji, he argued, this should be based on informal pacts between elites of the two communities, taking their core interests into account. Fraenkel concluded that although it is important to get institutions right, it should not be at the expense of politics.

Ralph Premdas presented the findings on Trinidad and Tobago. There are two main ethnic groups: Afro-Creoles, who make up about 38 per cent of the population and arrived either as slaves or liberated Africans in the eighteenth century and first half of the nineteenth century; and Indians, who make up about 39 per cent of the population and arrived as indentured labourers largely in the second half of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century to work on the sugar plantations abandoned by Afro-Creoles after the abolition of slavery. Unlike in Fiji, Latvia or Belgium, there is a sizeable third group, a "mixed group population" (18 per cent), which holds the balance in

Trinidad and Tobago. There is an ethnic division of labour, with Afro-Creoles found mainly in the bureaucracy, professions and oil industries, and Indians in the sugar sector and business. Creole is the lingua franca, and about half of the Indians and most Afro-Creoles are Christians. There is a high level of fluidity and intergroup interaction in the public arena, with all groups sharing a common cultural bond. However, ethnic self-selectivity tends to inform settlement patterns, and groups tend to retain some residues of their original ethnic identities, which are perceived to be larger than they are in reality.

Because of the long rule of the Afro-Creole-led party, Afro-Creoles are overrepresented in the public service (42 per cent Afro-Creole: 34 per cent Indians), especially at the senior levels where, in conjunction with the mixed group, they account for more than 70 per cent of the positions. Seventy-two per cent of the defence force and 74 per cent of the police force are Afro-Creoles. The 10 parliaments between 1961 and 2002 comprised 56 per cent Afro-Creoles and 36 per cent Indians. Only one out of five prime ministers has been Indian. Between 1961 and 1991, in cabinets ranging from 17 to 22 members, there were between two and five Indians. In 1972, Indians accounted for only 11 per cent of the cabinet. The situation was reversed when an Indian became prime minister in 1995: Indians occupied 72 per cent of government posts, and only six ministers were Afro-Creoles. When an Afro-Creole regained power in 2001, Indian representation was reduced to two, and the Afro-Creole share jumped to 63 per cent.

The next session on bipolarity paired Latvia and Belgium. In Latvia, ethnic Latvians are 58 per cent of the population and Russians 29 per cent. Minorities, who mostly speak Russian, constitute 42 per cent of the population. As Artis Pabriks recounted in his presentation, during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Latvia had a unipolar ethnic structure despite the pressures it faced from its more powerful German and Russian neighbours. Seventy-six per cent of the population was ethnic Latvian in 1920. Because of this unipolarity, it was relatively easy to govern Latvia as a nation-state, following its independence in 1918. This unipolar ethnic structure was transformed into a bipolar one under Soviet rule, as many Slavs migrated into Latvia. By 1989, the population share of ethnic Latvians had dropped to 52 per cent, and that of the Russian population had risen to about 35 per cent. The Russian

minority became hegemonic in an ethnically bipolar setting. A process of intense Russification took place, which affected the Latvian language and the structure of power and access in the public sector. At independence in 1991, the new Latvian leaders sought to convert the state to its prewar unipolar status through citizenship laws that required Soviet-era residents to apply for citizenship and pass Latvian language tests. By 2003, Latvians were 75 per cent of the citizens and Russians 17.9 per cent. Even though Latvia is moving in a unipolar direction as far as governance of its public sector is concerned, the ethnic structure itself is still bipolar. Pabriks rejected the idea of building a state on the principles of two communities because of the asymmetrical relations between Russians and Latvians. His preference is for a Latvian state that is grounded on a single community of liberal individual and democratic rights. He observed that there are no explicitly ethnic parties, even though that is the way citizens tend to vote; and the NGO sector is fairly mixed. Ethnic Latvians currently dominate Latvia's public sector. Even though minorities constitute 42 per cent of the population, they account for only 20 per cent of parliamentarians and are unrepresented in the cabinet, since minority parties have not been part of the governing coalitions. Ninety-two per cent of employees in the institutions surveyed are ethnic Latvians. However, minorities are better represented in the security ministries.

Kris Deschouwer presented the findings on Belgium. The Flemish majority was disadvantaged in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when French was the official language of communication. With a small majority of the population speaking only Flemish (Dutch), language gradually became a major political issue. Despite the fact that this conflict never became violent, it has been at the centre of many fierce debates and governmental instability. The country is divided into four linguistic territories: the Flemish-speaking region, or Flanders; the francophone region of Wallonia, which has a small German-speaking population in the east (recognized as a German-speaking territory); and Brussels, which was originally Flemish, but is now predominantly French and administered as a bilingual region. Today Flanders is the richer and more dynamic of the two regions. Consociational democracy has been used to contain conflict between the two communities. A large degree of autonomy is granted the contending groups, and issues of common interest are decided by consensus. Since 1978, national Belgian political parties

have ceased to exist as all parties are now regional. Belgium has made concerted efforts to create a public sector that strictly reflects the ethnic character of its population. Use of a proportional representation system has ensured that the parliament reflects the population shares of the two groups. However, both groups have the same number of ministers at the cabinet level despite the higher population of the Flemish, who are only compensated at the junior minister level where they enjoy a few extra positions. Decisions are always arrived at by consensus rather than voting. In the civil service, strict parity is enforced at the level of director and above. Below the post of director, the distribution reflects the relative population shares of the two groups.

Discussion

One set of comments in the session on Fiji and Trinidad addressed issues of indigeneity, migration and the development of an ethnic division of labour. It was suggested that struggles based on indigeneity always have citizenship undertones. For example, even though ethnic Fijians do not articulate their grievances in terms of citizenship, the fact that they control the land and lay claims to leadership means that Indians have a secondary status as citizens. One participant describes it as a “settler-native” problem of the type that has affected ethnic relations in Southern Africa. In the South African context, however, it was argued that whites and Indians have been able to establish their legitimacy and rights to full citizenship, including access to land, by participating in the anti-apartheid struggles. The question was thus raised about the claims Indians are able to make in Fiji to counter the culture of indigeneity and enjoy full citizenship rights. The point was also made that public sector inequalities in both countries are relatively small when compared with other countries, and yet they have generated large political problems. It was stated that privileged minority groups sometimes have alternative ways of influencing the public sector even when they are not directly represented; and that many of the inequalities in the public sector can only be understood if the private sector is also brought into the picture. Inequalities may be a result of pre-established patterns of professional specialization. In addition, the discussant, Khoo Boo Teik, stated that consideration of the concept of governance should go beyond the issue of who is included in the public sector or the economy, and address the way different regimes of governance affect development policies. Questions were raised about why Fiji has avoided large-scale ethnic violence even when there are no cross-cutting issues

that bind the two communities together. It was postulated that the strategy of outmigration by Indians, many of whom have not stayed to fight discrimination, may account for the less violent outcome.

A second set of comments focused on electoral systems for promoting moderation. The view that electoral engineering cannot be used to stabilize divided societies was challenged. One participant argued that if the situation is intractable, it may very well be that electoral rules of any type may not be effective, but insisted that there is a need to recognize that first-past-the-post (FPTP) rules may reinforce divisions. Another contributor stated that the alternative vote did lead to moderation in campaigning in Fiji by encouraging parties to enter into forms of pre-election collaboration. This led to talk about coalitions and moderation, even if it was not always enough to defeat extremist parties. The point was stressed that under FPTP rules, if two communities confront each other, each sees in victory the total control of the government.

Fraenkel responded that Fijians object to the idea of an Indo-Fijian as prime minister, while Indians see a great deal of inequality, especially as they had attained some measure of parity in many public sector institutions before the 1987 coup. About 80,000 Indo-Fijians—approximately 20 per cent of the Indian population—have left since the coup. He believes this demographic change is likely to impact future politics, by altering the “equi-bipolar” character of the state, especially when coupled with the high birth rates of the Fijian population. The ethnic gap has widened in the civil service and cabinet. In addition, even though Fiji does not have cross-cutting cleavages, politics and everyday life are not always dictated by ethnicity. This may explain the low incidence of ethnic communal violence. He concluded that even though the FPTP electoral rule is a poor instrument for divided societies, it is not responsible for the ethnic divisions in Fiji. The deliberations that led to the adoption of the 1997 constitution attributed too much importance to the electoral system in creating ethnic divisions. The constitutional designers assumed that a change in the electoral system would resolve these problems; when this did not happen, another majoritarian system, the alternative vote was adopted. However, the 10 per cent rule in cabinet formation has ensured that small parties will be punished, and voters will be encouraged to support single homogeneous parties. It has reinforced ethnic polarity by squeezing small parties and weakening

intra-ethnic divisions. The Fiji Labour party got 66 per cent of the Indian vote in 1999; in the 2001 elections it got 75 per cent. The alternative Indian party is now largely defunct.

The discussion in the session on Belgium and Latvia also focused on institutional designs for expressing and managing identities in divided societies. The discussant, Wolf Linder, raised two substantive points in comparing the centralized majoritarian state system of Latvia with the federalist and consociational state of Belgium. He highlighted two contrasting notions of the state and of democracy. The first is the cultural nation, which posits that the identity of the state is based on the identities of people of the same language, culture and history. If minorities want citizenship, they must speak the language and practice the culture of the majority. In contrast, the political nation does not privilege any one language, culture or history. It can sustain multiple languages, cultures and histories. There are also two notions of democracy: majoritarian democracy, which disadvantages minorities; and consociation. By these categories, he believes, Belgium is a political and consociational nation, and Latvia is a cultural nation and majoritarian democracy. Despite the differences in Belgium, he does not believe the two communities would opt for separation because of joint interests in a number of issues, including social security and the problematic status of Brussels. He questioned Pabriks' preference for a unipolar Latvian state because, in the long run, Latvia as a member of the European Union would be more prosperous than Russia, the Russian population in Latvia would clearly prefer Latvia to Russia, and their claims to equal treatment would enjoy more legitimacy than at present.

along group lines. The possibility of changing identities in the context of EU integration was also raised. For instance, it was hypothesized that Latvian Russians may develop different aspirations from Russians in Russia in the long run; that the EU may have offered Belgium and Latvia an opportunity to weaken the rigidity associated with bipolarity; and that communities in both countries now have an additional layer of identity to their ethnic identity.

In his closing remarks, Pabriks responded that culture is important in defining a nation and a state. He argued that the reason it seems less important in Western democracies today is because the cultural issue has been settled with the creation of nation-states. He believes the Latvian state still needs to create its cultural identity. He also stated that the focus on liberal individualism is not the same as assimilation. Russians are not being asked to abandon their Russian identity but to add an additional one—a Latvian identity. He defended the policy of unipolarity as a core value for ethnic Latvians and stated that EU provisions will make it difficult for Latvia to discriminate against minorities, stressing that Latvia may well end up having more collective rights for minorities than the average EU state. He concluded on the need to increase the teaching of Latvian in Russian schools in order to promote more integration and underlined the significance of geopolitical factors in discussing ethnic relations in Latvia.

In his response, Deschouwer stated that culture is still central to the definition of the state in Belgium. Regions, and especially the northern region of Flanders, are cultural nations. The name Flanders refers to the language, which is Flemish. A Francophone Belgian who lives in Flanders will enjoy the same rights but will be

预览已结束，完整报告链接和二维码如下：

https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5_21263

