

# **Political Participation of National Minorities in the Danish-German Border Region**

A series of studies on two hard-to-identify  
populations in a role-model-region

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## **Dissertation**

zur Erlangung des Grades

Doctor philosophiae (Dr. phil.)

an der Fakultät Wirtschafts- und Sozialwissenschaften,  
Fachbereich Sozialwissenschaften der Universität Hamburg

vorgelegt von

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Hamburg, den 06.06.2016

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**Tag der Disputation:** 26.09.2016

“Always the hard way. Nothing was ever handed to me.

Always the hard way.

You taught me truth, you gave me strength.

I learned everything the hard way”

(Nicholas Jett and Scott C. Vogel)



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## Abbreviations

<b>BDN</b>	Bund Deutscher Nordschleswiger
<b>BRD-Commissioner</b>	Beauftragter der Bundesregierung für Aussiedlerfragen und Nationale Minderheiten
<b>Committee at BMI</b>	Beratender Ausschuss für Fragen der dänischen Minderheit beim Bundesministerium des Innern
<b>Committee at Folketing (KU)</b>	Kontaktudvalget for der tyske mindretal
<b>Committee at Folketing (SU)</b>	Sydslesvigudvalg
<b>Committee at Landtag</b>	Gremium für Fragen der deutschen Minderheit in Nordschleswig beim Schleswig-Holsteinischen Landtag
<b>DGBR</b>	Danish-German border region
<b>DNSAP</b>	Dänische Nationalsozialistische Arbeiterpartei
<b>ECMI</b>	European Center for Minority Issues
<b>ECRML</b>	European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages
<b>EDAP</b>	European Autonomy and Diversity Papers
<b>ESS</b>	European Social Survey
<b>EYMI</b>	European Yearbook of Minority Issues

## Abbreviations

<b>FA</b>	Formative Assessment
<b>FCNM</b>	Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities
<b>FUEN</b>	Federal Union of European Nationalities
<b>GTM</b>	Grounded Theory Methodology
<b>HCNM</b>	High Commissioner on National Minorities
<b>JEMIE</b>	Journal on Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe
<b>NSDAP</b>	Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei
<b>OHCHR</b>	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
<b>OSCE</b>	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe's
<b>RDS</b>	Respondent Driven Sampling
<b>SH-Commissioner</b>	Beauftragte für Minderheiten und Kultur des Landes Schleswig-Holstein
<b>SP</b>	Slesvigsk Parti
<b>SSF</b>	Südschleswigscher Verein
<b>SSW</b>	Südschleswigscher Wählerverband
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization



## Acknowledgements

As is common practice I will thank some of the people that have supported and influenced me in the past and thus are directly or indirectly responsible for the existence of my dissertation.

Much and great thanks goes to Prof. Dr. Kai-Uwe Schnapp and Prof. Dr. Stefan Oeter for supervising my dissertation. Thanks to Prof. Dr. Kai-Uwe Schnapp and Prof. Dr. Tove Hansen Malloy for evaluating my dissertation. Thanks to the *Faculty of Business, Economics and Social Sciences* of the *Universität Hamburg* and the faculty's *Graduate School* for co-funding my dissertation project. Thanks to Olaf Bock, Ralf Wengerodt and the faculty's *Forschungslabor* for support and counseling. Thanks to Christoph van Dülmen for administering the RDS-finalization and its termination.

Thanks to my academic family, first and foremost the *Chair of Political Science, especially Methods* who taught me „to talk the (science) talk and to walk the (science) walk“. Thanks to Olga, for the ridiculous amount of coffee (also on clothing, furniture and walls). Thanks to Roland for the qualitative appreciation of science and to Steffen for the quantitative appreciation of it. Thanks to Brian for reading, changing and merging. Thanks to Michael S. for comments, editing and your firm opinion on literally any topic. Thanks to Stephanie (in the beginning) and Saskia (in the end) for holding everything together, organizing all our academic lives. Thanks to Kamil for sharing your view on the world. Thanks to Sara, for quitting a certain job, almost becoming my partner in crime and being a dear friend. Thanks to Katrin for making every project, course, semester, workshop, lunch and conference better and more fun. Thanks to Marion for giving me temporary shelter at the *Chair of Political Science, especially German Politics*.

Thanks to Brian D. V., Michael D. & Sutton & Tijmen, Rosie, Yoko, Nina, Andrew, Andrea, Sam and Alberto for teaching my mind all those cultural differences and similarities and of course thanks for the intense celebrations of such profanities. Thanks to Fresen, Jens and Gerrit for all the runs. Jens and Gerrit, thanks for being the best roommates (Yes, it's a tie). Thanks to Olli, Thorben, Basti, Chris, Thore, Jette, Sash and Phil-J for your friendships. Thanks

## Acknowledgements

to Jella, Ilka, Neele, Jasmin, Christiane, Mareike and Fie for the time in the “Loch” and forcing me to pursue this.

Thanks to Arne for looking out for me and showing me everything. I do recognize that is what you did. Thanks to my Winkels: to Holger, Stefan, Kerstin, Klaus, Susanne, Hannah and Till for always being in my thoughts and for letting me laugh and cry with you. Thanks to Lars & Rebecca for time and again chaining me to my couch and for giving the word “comfort zone” a new meaning. It is great to spend time with you.

Thanks to Norm, Tö and Martin for accompanying me thus far. “This is what I know about sacrifice: So meet me at the crossroads. Let's go”.

Thanks to Aike for being my big sister - I love you. Thanks to Bernd for being content with your own company as I believe that it is for genetic reasons that I can be content with my own company. Thanks for always coming to the soccer games and for having kept on playing even in the dark. Thank you for the wisdom you share with me, for the curiosity you still pique in me and for being a good friend to this day.

Thanks to Jess, for having the courage to be with me and for being afraid to be without me. I love you and I can tell you will always be danger.

Finally, to Angelika: Dear mum, our family moved after I was in first grade. The children in the new school could write the alphabet but I had only learned half of it in the old school. The teacher was angry and repeatedly threw his keys at “the dumb new kid” that could neither read nor write adequately. He refused to help me but rather put me down. You taught me afternoons and evenings to make up for my disadvantage and brought me up to a level playing field with the others. At the end of the term, we had compensated the shortcomings, that and more. Despite being one of the smartest people I know you never visited the enjoyed any kind of secondary education or visited a university and you did not pursue a professional career. You always put other people first, especially your children. I know today that you empowered me. I love you. I consider this as much your dissertation as mine.

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**Part I.    Introductory part**

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## 1. Introduction

Recent developments in Europe and the *European Union* (EU) have alienated states' representatives and state citizens alike. Problems, some even speak of a European crisis or a crisis of the European idea, such as the handling of an international financial crisis or the attempts to deal with the human catastrophe commonly labeled as *the refugee crisis*, lead many people to question the European project that is the EU. A union whose values have held Europe's countries together for the last 60 years. Even though it is legitimate to question the ways and means European leaders and the EU's institutions have dealt with some of the problems' impacts on the continent it seems wrong to question the European idea all together and thereby ignore the achievements European states and the EU have accomplished for persons and many groups within its boundaries, and to a certain extent also beyond its borders.

An achievement connected to one of the EU's core values is the fostering of culture in Europe and beyond and the preservation and protection of cultural diversity in Europe (EU 2016). By way of emphasizing the immense cultural differences within European societies and acknowledging the benefits and chances that come with supporting and utilizing such differences, the EU has strengthened cultural, ethnic and linguistic groups. Also, the *European Union* raised these groups' self-confidence and encouraged dominating groups to collaborate with persons who are different. Allowing others to be different and motivating individuals to be their true self is a crucial and immense step on the way to a unified Europe. Or put into other words: Equal opportunities to access human rights can only be achieved by fostering and embracing cultural diversity.

On this account, Europe's cultural diversity, precisely the cultural diversity introduced by Europe's national minorities, is the focal point of this PhD dissertation. Europe is home to many linguistic, religious, ethnic and/or national minorities. To name but a few: the Catalans in Spain, the Alsatians in France, the Danes in Germany, the Germans in Denmark and the Sami in Scandinavia's

north. The European census in the early 2000s registered 337 national and ethnic minorities with approximately 103.5 million members (Pan 2008, 16). Many European democratic leaders acknowledge the minorities' cultural value and understand they are an integral part of Europe's cultural diversity. This diversity again is key for Europe's fertile development in the present and in the future. "The many different cultures, traditions and languages in Europe are [...] positive asset[s] for the continent" (EU 2015).

In getting back to the problems Europe is currently facing, I believe it is possible to learn something from challenges that have been overcome and that are connected to cultural diversity and the successes Europe experienced with its national minorities in the past decades. It is possible to understand how European countries changed how they treated national minorities and how this new treatment stabilized societies and defused conflicts. To use this knowledge for future tasks is vital for Europe and it is crucial to understand that the way European states treat national minorities today is often better than in the past. In continuing on this path one might derive how European states should treat other minorities in the future.

Scientifically my dissertation focuses on national minority rights protection by means of political participation of national minorities and in particular on the Danish national minority's and the German national minority's political participation in the Danish-German border region (DGBR). To avoid confusion I would like to explain that in the remainder of my dissertation I will refer to either "national minority political participation", "national minority rights protection" or the "national minority rights situation" in the DRBG when I talk about my research's objectives. This is a conscious decision as I understand the concepts as being interrelated and not because I have problems telling them apart. National minority political participation is but one part of national minority rights protection and the national minority rights situation in the DGBR refers to how the national minority rights protection is organized in the DGBR.

The focus on the DGBR is owed to two reasons. The first reason is a practical one and goes back to my studies of Scandinavian Science and Political Science and me speaking both Danish and German. The second and more important reason is that I am sincerely interested in the region as it is referred to and seen as a kind of role model region for national minority protection (Kühl 1998; Teebken/Christiansen 2001; Kühl 2004; Klatt 2005a; Klatt 2006). Additionally, governmental actors describe the Danish-German border region as an exemplary region for minority protection where scientifically interested and politically responsible persons visit from far away to study the rich experiences the region has in this context (Koschyk 2015, 3 Steinmeier 2015).

The aspect of describing the DGBR as a role model has triggered my interest for several reasons. As already stated above, I find it only consequential to learn something from a region where a situation seems to be somewhat special. Seawright and Gerring (2008, 301) label this case selection the selection of an “extreme case” where the value of the dependent variable (national minority rights protection) is somewhat far away (better) from the mean of a given distribution (national minority rights protection in European regions). At the same time, studies that investigate a certain case “in an attempt to elucidate a single outcome occurring within that unit is referred to as *single-outcome studies*” (Gerring 2006, 710). In such a study, one examines possible effects on the dependent variable of interest in the extreme case (Seawright/Gerring 2008, 302). Therefore, if one accepts that the DGBR is a role model, it is possible to learn something from the situation in the DGBR. More precisely, it is possible to learn something for other regions in the world, where the situation of national minorities is not as good as in the DGBR and maybe even for majority-minorities relations in general.

But, as I have already pointed out, it is necessary to first learn more about the DGBR and to determine out what constitutes the role model character of the DGBR. Learning about the extreme or special case of the DGBR in this dissertation happens by way of describing, explaining and understanding how I

tackle different research objectives. I would like to append a comment to the descriptive part of the dissertation, as I have come to see that many social scientists have difficulties understanding the scientific value that description in political science carries. My research is a case where descriptive analysis shows its “fundamental role in empirical research” (Caramani 2010, 43). Knowledge about what exactly makes a role model a role model is scarce. Even advocates of the DGBR’s role model character have difficulties to describe what makes the role model a role model. It has not yet been shown that the perception of the DGBR as a role model is not exactly that, a mere perception.

A descriptive analysis of the national minority rights protection in the DGBR allows us to transform perceptions of what the world looks like into empirically informed observations (Caramani 2010, 43). The minority situation in the DGBR is very complex and it is important to understand why the Danish and German minority are seen to be as well off as they are and how the institutions in place support the perception of the region being a role model. Hence, the fundamental research question which runs through all my dissertations papers like a common thread is:

**“Why can the Danish-German border region be labeled as a role model for national minority protection and participation?”**

For the remainder of the introduction to my dissertation I will elaborate on the research on national minority protection, how the literature on it can be ordered and where I see my dissertation fits in (Chapter 1.2). After having laid this foundation, I will then point to the existing research gap in the field of national minority rights protection (especially in the DGBR) and explain how my dissertation can contribute to closing this gap (Chapter 1.3). In the next step I will then summarize the papers’ scientific objectives and the corresponding methodological approaches used here in Chapter 2 to clarify the dissertations’ logic in its entirety. On the onset, however, Chapter 1.1, is dedicated to a



personal positioning and reflexivity on my experiences, cultural context and my own views on reality and the world. This is necessary for the reader to be able to understand the perspective from which I see my research and from which I analyze my research material.

### **1.1. Positioning and reflexivity**

I believe that research is somewhat subjective in its nature. This statement is more so directed at qualitative research than at quantitative research, but nevertheless I think scholars of both branches benefit from being aware of a researcher's experiences, cultural impressions and views of reality when reading their scientific material. I am convinced that:

**“The birds-eye perspective is an ideal that embodied subjects cannot ever take; there is no Archimedean point outside the world. Perception and therefore knowledge are always tied to some position, which inherently gives the epistemic subject a particular rather than a general perspective” (Breuer/Roth 2003).**

Hence, this chapter about positioning and reflexivity is my way to prove insight into my epistemological beliefs as a researcher and explain through what lens my analysis is filtered and can only be filtered (Shoba, Stanley 2016). I do not claim anything I say in this chapter as universal truth or that my convictions are somehow more correct than others'. This is just what I believe and for that I have no proof as no one has for anything they *believe*, else they would *know* it.

I do not believe all people start with the same chances to live a fulfilling and satisfying life. A person's life is influenced on how they are born, where they are born, into what group of people they are born and how their greater societal context is constituted. Having said this, I am very well aware of my life's privileged starting position. I am a white Caucasian male and on this earth a life's starting conditions with regards to ethnicity and gender could not be more

## Introductory part

fortunate. Additionally, I was born into one of the world's richest countries where my parents belong to the educated higher middle class.

Considering these reference points, life should be relatively easy for me, especially when comparing it to the billions of people that do not start their life from an equally privileged starting point. Nevertheless, I there are times when I struggle. Without other people that share my life and support me, such as friends, family, and colleagues, my life would be less "successful".

For as long as I can think clearly, I have reflected on my privileged life situation. Growing up in a parsonage, experiencing my father's charitable work as a Lutheran priest and visiting my mother's children's services has probably contributed to this awareness and may have planted some "Christian values" in my character. At home I grew up with my big sister, who is black, and saw that life was harder for the non-white female than for her little white brother. Even though I did not notice that as a child, I know today that this affected me.

People are not only influenced by their families but also by their friends and the communities they live in and what they experience there. All my youth I was socialized by groups of friends and communities that more or less strongly identified themselves with American and Scandinavian punk- and hardcore music. To this day I see the subculture of punk- and hardcore as fundamental for my identity construction and cherish the values these subcultures uphold. In these subcultures the social and societal underdog plays a major role. The loser's destiny and the fate of those that do not fit the norm and are somewhat different from the majority are recurring themes. Stories of the struggles of all those people (and groups) whose starting point was bad or whose lives had turned bad have accompanied me since I was able to read song texts and poems of said subcultures as a teenager and all the more after I began understanding them as a young adult. Questions of equality are important to me as an individual and not just as a scientist.

In the course of my up growing, being aware of my privileges and realizing I still need other's help to prosper further fueled my interest in disadvantaged

person's and groups. As a young man I worked in several institutions for mentally and physically handicapped people in Germany and Denmark. I know that reasons to be disadvantaged are manifold and not limited to ethnical characteristics or physical and mental abilities.

The national minorities in the DGBR are but two further examples of groups that were forced to take the hard way of demanding (at least) equal opportunities. Their path led them from an oppressing societal situation at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to today's harmonious collaboration between minority and majority. The reason why I focus my research on the DGBR is because in this field I can combine the knowledge I have gained as a political scientist with the abilities I have acquired as a scholar of Scandinavian studies. This leads directly to the second reason why I chose to focus on the DGBR: I speak both German and Danish. My first language is German. My Danish skills are the result of majoring in Scandinavian Studies, more precisely in Danish language and culture, and having lived and studied in Denmark for almost two years. I do believe that studies of cross-cultural nature, as in the border region, are best conducted when the researcher is familiar with the cultural and linguistic varieties in the region.

Making this positioning and reflexivity transparent for me and the readership I believe it is possible for me to distance myself from influences discussed above and to professionally conduct my research in a more objective and unprejudiced manner. Still, the reader should be advised: Everything I write will always stem from my point of view and is analyzed by me.

## **1.2. Relevant literature**

The literature on minority protection (in Europe) can be subdivided in many ways and is, sometimes immensely, diverse in substance. In this chapter I summarize which traits in the literature have influenced my research and thus deserve mentioning.

The literature branch in this area that seems to be the biggest in quantitative measures is the literature on European international law. Especially due to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe's (OSCE) establishment of an office of the *High Commissioner on National Minorities* (HCNM) in 1992 and the Commissioner's latter commitment to minority rights in Europe, the creation of the Council of Europe's *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* (ECRML) in 1992 and finally the Council of Europe's *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities* (FCNM) in 1995, new international standards and mechanisms concerning minority issues have emerged and also improved the opportunities national minorities have for political participation in their resident states. The literature on European international law deals with these European developments.

Malloy (2014) introduces the European international law literature by pointing to the useful classification of three different aspects. She distinguishes between justification literature, interpretation literature and application literature. The justification literature deals with questions of legitimacy of special rights for disadvantaged minorities. The interpretation literature discusses minority rights as a "sub regime" (Malloy 2014, 13) of human rights and is concerned with how these minority rights can be operationalized. The application literature is concerned with the technical implementation of minority rights. I find that both literature sets often complement each other and overlap and thus are hard to distinguish. Both aspects discuss existing international law and human rights instruments concerning the protection of minority rights (Fottrell/Bowring 1999; Verstichel 2005; Malloy 2005; Weller 2008) or ways in which EU law engages with minority rights protection (Pentasugglia 2001; Toggenburg 2003 ; Ahmed 2011). The review of and comments on implementing minority standards for minority rights (Weller 2005; Opitz 2006; Henrard 2010) fit into this category. Both the interpretation- and the application literature influence my research and my understanding of the nature of national minorities' rights in Europe.

Literature with regards to political participation of national minorities is often indirectly linked to article 15 of the FCNM:

**“The Parties shall create the conditions necessary for the effective participation of persons belonging to national minorities in cultural, social and economic life and in public affairs, in particular those affecting them” (FCNM 1995, Article 15).**

When authors refer to political participation and rely on the FCNM’s notion of political participation stated in article 15, they refer to the minorities’ right to participate and the institutional aspects that enable minorities to participate in a democracy (Frohwein/Bank 2001; Sobotka 2001; Lattimer 2005; Weller 2010; Bačlija/Haček 2012). Without commenting too much on what democracy is or should be, two notions seem to be pertinent: Firstly, the belief that minorities have a right to participate stems from the democratic understanding of a political system in which those affected by a decision have a proper chance to take part in making this decision<sup>1</sup> (Dahl 1998; Blokland 2011, ) and secondly, a specific answer to the questions if and how permanently disadvantaged groups should be compensated for being in a lasting minority position (Brems 1995; Henrard 2005; Jackson Preece 2005; Jovanovic 2012).

The theoretical discussion about if and how permanently disadvantaged groups should be compensated is ongoing and in a particular branch of literature, which I find especially interesting, the discussion centers around the term *multiculturalism* (Taylor 1994; Kymlicka 1996; Arasaratman 2013; Malloy 2013). The questions are on whether it is an appropriate term to describe the political accommodation of all minority groups in a society by a dominant group (Banting/Kymlicka 2006; Meer/Modood 2012; Kymlicka 2012; Koopmans 2013) or if it does not fulfill this task (Joppke 2004; Parvin 2009). Even though

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<sup>1</sup> The distinct last clause of article 15 of the FCNM makes this pretty clear.

this branch of literature has not directly found its way into this dissertation, the authors and their discussions have been a source of inspiration to myself and other writers I rely on.

Many scholars who comment on minority protection and -political participation focus on one particular region or one national minority and its respective situation. I do not know about and cannot comment on all the literature regarding the 337 ethnic and national minorities in Europe I mentioned earlier in Chapter 1 but advise all scholars of national minorities in Europe to read up on Europe's national minorities (Pan/Pfeil 2000; Pan/Pfeil 2006a; Pan/Pfeil 2006b) and study the *European Center for Minority Issues'* (ECMI) publications, especially their *Journal on Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe* (JEMIE) and their *European Yearbook of Minority Issues* as well as publications from the *Institute for Minority Rights* at the *European Academy in Bolzano*, especially their *European Yearbook of Minority Issues* (EYMI) and their *European Autonomy and Diversity Papers* (EDAP). Other journals also provide further understanding of minority groups (also outside of Europe). The *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights* and the *Europäisches Journal für Minderheitenfragen* are but two of those journals.

Turning to the region of my scientific interest, the DGBR, let me mention some of the literature that introduces to the region and inspired this dissertation. The historic development of the minority situation in the border region since 1864 has been described in depth (Fink 1958; Hansen 1976; Frandsen 1994; Strange-Pedersen 2002; Henningsen 2009a; Henningsen 2009b). The newer history, after 1945, and the developments in the border region (Nonnenbroich 1972; Borzikowsky 1985; Fischer/Schulz 1998; Henningsen et al. 1998; Teebken/Christiansen 2001; Kühl 2003; Kühl/Bohn 2005; Klatt 2006) as well as the development of the German minority (Kardel 1971; Lubowitz 2005) and the Danish minority (Klatt 2005b; Kühl 2005c) have been documented.

The research area my dissertation is targeting is well researched and still there are blank spots in the literature. I will present the literature's shortcomings in the following chapter.

### **1.3. The research gap**

Even though a plethora of literature exists that can be tied to the field of research I am interested in, the research on political participation of national minorities in the DGBR has its shortcomings. I would like to point out some of these shortcomings with regards to my research, but not without first saying that the knowledge about national minorities in general is still rather scarce and that people that do not deal with national minorities often have a wrong picture of what national minorities are and which people are members of national minorities and what this says about them. I think it is crucial for our living side-by-side in Europe and for our learning from each other that the wider public is going to be better informed about national minorities.

When turning to international law literature on human rights there definitely is a shortage concerning the protection of minority rights. This is especially true when it comes to the concrete implementation of human rights instruments such as for example the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights' (OHCHR) *Plan of Action: Protection and Empowerment* by European states. Also, research on how the European Union or European minority standards are connected to other initiatives of minority rights protection sometimes remains at a very general level. More studies are needed where legal instruments and general standards are checked for particular situations and regions to evaluate whether applied procedures lead to the pursued results or not.

A shortcoming can also be detected with regards to the minorities' right to participate and the institutional aspects that enable minorities to participate, which are established in article 15 of the FCNM. An evaluation such as this has not yet been done for the DGBR. Of course there are the state's reports praising

their own efforts to implement the FCNM and the ECRML and the respective Advisory Committees' reports and recommendations but this can merely be seen as a first step or bottom limit of what is needed to actually analyze and understand which mechanisms for minority rights protection work and which ones do not. This situation is as true for the DGBR and the Danish and German minority there as it is for other regions.

I have pointed out that literature on the border region is versatile when it comes to history and newer developments in the DGBR. Also, general descriptions of minority organizations and minority community structure exist. It is unclear though if the organizations and institutions that claim to represent the minorities are seen as representative by the minority members. The complete lack of surveys amongst national minority members in the DGBR is the reason why such information is missing. Additionally, connections between the different actors in the DGBR that claim to or are appointed to foster and protect the minorities' rights are not researched at all. The role model character that the region allegedly carries remains a black box, as it is not known in which fields different actors are active, where they leave the work to other actors and with which actors they cooperate with and how they are coordinated. The effect and the proceedings of special governmental actors for minority rights protection are also mostly unknown. The mere descriptive information about such actors in the DGBR does not allow an understanding of whether these actors work with each other or with minority actors and if they actually have an impact on the minority rights situation in the DGBR.

Furthermore, what is lacking is information about the individuals that constitute the minorities. There is no knowledge about whether people with certain kinds of characteristics (educational, monetary, etc.) are more likely to be members of a national minority or not. It is not clear if the minority status is historically grounded or whether people consciously choose the minority status because they appreciate the cultural plurality that comes with it. There is simply not much secured knowledge about the individuals that European standards,



and other human rights instruments, claim to protect. In this way the national minorities remain an opaque group.

After having shown what is lacking in the research of national minorities in the DGBR I will now introduce my dissertation's scientific objectives.







## 2. The papers' scientific objectives

My dissertation's scientific objectives can be divided into four parts. First, I will lay out how European international standards for minority protection (using the example of the OHCHR's *Plan of Action: Protection and Empowerment*) are embedded in existing structures for minority rights protection in the DGBR. Second, I will describe how minority politics in the DGBR work. Third, I will show what national minority members believe it means to belong to either of the national minorities. Lastly, I will find out what national minority members think about the actors that are to ensure their political participation.

### 2.1. Applying a theoretical framework to the DGBR

The first scientific objective I am pursuing with this dissertation is to apply a theoretical framework for minority rights protection to the DGBR. The aim is to show how minority protection mechanisms such as the FCNM or the OHCHR's policies are embedded in existing structures for minority rights protection in the DGBR. I do this by testing the OHCHR's *Plan of Action: Protection and Empowerment* (hereinafter "OHCHR plan" or "plan") on the border region (Chapter 3).

The OHCHR plan defines the concepts of *protection* and *empowerment* as crucial for the implementation and protection of human rights. The two concepts remain rather fuzzy in the OHCHR plan and thus need to be clarified, as an empirical study needs clearly defined concepts and terms to describe the object of investigation adequately (Schnell/Hill/Esser 2008, 11). I will complete this clarification by interpreting the concepts of *protection* and *empowerment* for the DGBR by turning to Sadan's empowerment theory (Sadan 2004), which was introduced to the minority rights literature by Malloy (2014). Sadan develops her theory of empowerment on the grounds of five theories of power, namely Gaventa (1980), Mann (1980), Foucault (1980), Giddens (1984) and Clegg (1989). Her theoretical construction of empowerment is especially well suited to

the situation of minority protection as it is directed at individuals *and* groups. In Chapter 1.2 I mentioned the literature on *multiculturalism* and it is precisely a lack of attention to the individual that I see as the major insufficiency of this literature. Sadan on the contrary draws on feminist theory (Perloff, 1987; Lengermann & Niebrugge-Brentley 1988; Morgen/Bookman 1988; Ackelsberg, 1988) and constructs the personal and the political as inseparable. People as individuals are capable to change politics or to produce a change in their group or community. People try to realize personal goals and interact with others while trying to realize these goals and

**“empowerment promotes involvement in politics because it broadens a person’s social understanding and connects her with others in the same situation; empowerment broadens a person’s horizons, imbues him with faith in social change, and accords him the ability to change” (Sadan 2004, 81).**

Further, Sadan believes that when an individual in a group is empowered this also affects other group members. This can be seen as a kind of spread of empowerment. Empowerment is contagious. Then again, an empowered group also influences the individual by providing emotional and social support, concrete help, new skills and ability for the future. Sadan comes to this conclusion referring to literature on self-help groups (Kahn/Bender 1985; Dodd/Gutierrez 1990; Chesler/Chesney 1995; Rappaport/Seidmann 2000). Chapter 3.3 of this dissertation provides further insight into empowerment theory and how the protection aspect is connected to it.

By way of making the concepts *protection* and *empowerment* applicable to the situation in the DGBR, I am able to show whether mechanisms for minority rights protection in the DGBR are either protective or empowering. This again leads me to evaluate whether the OHCHR plan’s mechanism serve their purposes. Simultaneously, the application of the theory offers the possibility of

a wider evaluation of the mechanisms in general and not just in the concrete situation in the DGBR.

## **2.2. Mapping national minority political participation mechanisms in the DGBR**

The second scientific objective I am pursuing with this dissertation is to understand and describe how minority politics in the DGBR work. Besides the theoretical classification of actors for minority protection and empowerment (Chapter 3) I will provide a detailed, actor-based, interior view of minority politics in the DGBR (Chapter 4).

Minority rights protection as a sub-regime of human rights is a topic that does not only relate to the OHCHR plan. Also, the implementation of protection- and empowerment mechanisms contributes to the European Commission's demands concerning minority rights protection towards European states, established in article 15 of the FCNM. The Commission's emphasis lies on two things. First, the emphasis is on the support which governments in Denmark and Germany bestow on the minorities in terms of maintaining and developing their culture, and to preserve their identities' essential elements. I will investigate how this is realized in the DGBR in Chapter 3 (and partly in Chapter 4). Additionally, the emphasis is on the possibilities governments create for the effective participation of persons belonging to national minorities in cultural, social and economic life and in public affairs, in particular those affecting them. Again, Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 ask how this is implemented by way of political participation.

The most significant contribution to this scientific objective is carried out in my analysis of a series of expert interviews with decision makers from several minority organizations and from governmental organizations and institutions (Chapter 4). I use these expert interviews to systematize and structuralize the expert's knowledge concerning minority politics in the DGBR. The interviewees I talked to are all individuals who are either key decision makers in their

institution or organization, have influence on policies or at least witness decision making in minority politics in the Danish-German border region first hand.<sup>2</sup> The expert's function in my research is to educate me comprehensively and analytically in my understanding of the research field (Bogner/Littig/Menz 2014, 24). The experts' advice here is mostly of technical manner and directed at knowledge about processes.

Despite the fact I have studied the literature in the field intensely (Chapter 1.2), I still lack the inside knowledge about how processes between actors for political participation are conducted, which actors work closely with one another and what sub-fields of national minority politics in the DGBR are handled by which actors and where different actors try to refrain from. The experts in this sense are not the object of my research but serve as a connection between me and the research object, i.e. the expert's knowledge about national minority politics in the DGBR and all information related to it. They are witnesses of the processes I am interested in and which I cannot witness myself (Gläser/Laudel 2009, 12). There is no other possibility to obtain this knowledge other than to speak to the experts (Kaiser 2014, 42). This is due to the fact that their position is unique in the sense that only they have experienced the situations they report about. Neither I nor anybody else can re-experience the situation or process as the experts can, but with the experts' help I can try to reconstruct it. The experts can provide their views on how certain problems have come on the political agenda, which problem solutions have been discussed, how he or she and other actors have evaluated the given problem solving alternatives and why finally a certain alternative was chosen.

By way of interviewing several involved persons I am able to construct my own understanding of the situation or process (Gläser/Laudel 2009; Przyborski/Wohlrab-Sahr 2010; Mayring 2010; Helfferich 2011; Kruse 2014;

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<sup>2</sup> A distinction whether I refer to the interviewees as experts (when I am mostly concerned with the exclusive knowledge they possess) or elites (when I am mostly concerned with the exclusive position they hold) is given in Chapter 4.3. For the remainder of this chapter I continue to speak of experts.



Bogner/Littig/Menz 2014; Kaiser 2014), alas my reconstruction is inferior as it will never fully reconstruct an interviewees experience and it will be superior as it combines multiply perceptions of the same situation or process.

To analyze the interviews appropriately I will apply Mayring's *Qualitative Content Analysis*, which combines qualitative and quantitative research aspects (Mayring 2008, 9). The method generates categories for analysis and the process of such category building is of qualitative nature. Later though, the decision how important these categories are, is evaluated by frequency of occurrence which definitely is a quantitative procedure. In the social sciences the method is used as a tool to reconstruct social reality and thus fits perfectly for my research purpose (Merten/Großmann 1996). How I use Mayring's *Qualitative Content Analysis* is explained in detail in Chapter 4.4.

The situations and processes, which I intend to reconstruct are the minorities' self-organization, meaning how both minorities internally organize their political participation and their representation towards the majority in their host country. Both minorities have strong organizational structures (Kühl/Bohn 2005). It is unclear though how especially the minority parties and the respective main cultural organizations distribute the work of political participation or if they do at all. Furthermore, I am interested in how Denmark and Germany supportively create possibilities for the effective participation of persons belonging to national minorities and the minority groups in terms of participating in public affairs. On both sides of the border special institutions for national minority participation have been installed for this purpose and not much is known about how they work, with whom they work and how exactly they foster the minorities' participation.

All these actors form a network of national minority politics in the DGBR, which is crucial for the role model character that is ascribed to the DGBR. Chapter 4 shows the network of national minority politics in the DGBR and how it works.

### **2.3. Understanding what national minority members believe “minority” means**

The third scientific objective I am pursuing with this dissertation is to understand what national minority members in the DGBR believe it means to belong to either of the national minorities and thus what national minority identity is made of. This objective is dealt with exclusively in Chapter 5.

As mentioned earlier, knowledge about national minorities is scarce. This true as much for the minorities as groups as it is for the individuals that constitute the minorities. It is extremely interesting why people choose to belong to a national minority. Minority status is not something that must be automatically inherited, like certain citizenships or genetic diseases and at least in the DGBR it is not ascribed by others, as members of the Danish or German minority do not differ visually from the majority populations in any way. Being a minority member is always a free decision in Germany and Denmark (Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1955; Dansk Udenrigsministeriet 1955). The objective is thus to learn what national minority members see as influencing aspects that make them feel Danish even though they live in Germany or that make them feel German even though they live in Denmark. This is of importance because the main criterion of differentiation from the majority population is the affiliation with a nation, which is not the dominant nation in the country of residence. This nation does not equal a state and neither the population of a given state. For the DGBR this means that the Danish minority in Germany refers to a certain kind of Danishness and the German minority in Denmark refers to a certain kind of Germanness. In Chapter 5 I will unravel what this Germanness or Danishness is made of and what national minority identity means in the DGBR.

This task is a very difficult task, as is any engagement with the complexity of people’s identity, but it is a worthy task none the less as “it seems impossible to understand the complexity of human behavior without reference to the

human capacity to think about oneself' (Leary/Price Tangney, 4). With that I mean that it necessary to understand what a national minority identity is, before the actions of the minorities (minority members) become understandable and plausible. Social structures and the actions of any group in the end emerge from individual actions and decisions of the group's members. Simultaneously the group member's actions and decisions are also shaped by the social contexts in which the individuals exist (Stets/Burke 2003, 129). Of special interest is, that some authors believe race or ethnicity or nationality do not appear as a dominant trait of a person's identity until it competes with other national, ethnical or racial groups (Smith-Lovin 2001, 170). This is clearly the case in the DGBR and expecting the aforementioned Germanness or Danishness to be relevant for the Danish and German minority members seems appropriate.

The first basis for my analysis of national minority identity is a literature review of texts that comment on national minority identity in the DGBR. Here I will study not only scientific texts but also official documents concerned with the minorities and minority protection. I will collect what has been written about national minority identity and present an overview on how it has been described so far. This serves as a first reference point for the following field work.

The second source for my research of national minority identity is again selected expert interviews with practitioners of national minority politics in the DGBR. The selection was based on whether the interviewee is minority member him- or herself and asked what it means for them to belong to a national minority and what they have heard from other minority members concerning this question.

To analyze the material gathered from the interviews I decided to use *Grounded Theory Methodology* (GTM), which was first introduced by Glaser and Strauss (1967) in their *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* and later further developed by Strauss (1998) and Strauss and Corbin (1996), which is the form in which I will use it. GTM is not a precise method for data analysis but rather a research program and hence the analysis procedures can vary greatly between different

GTM users. There is not one right way to use GTM. Analysis procedures vary and can be applied selectively throughout the research process (Oertzen 2006, 146) and should be adapted to the research interest and the study's environment (Mey/Mruck 200, 139). The concrete GTM analysis strategy I use follows Meuser and Nagel (2005) and does neither exclude theory or literature from the research process (as other versions of GTM do) nor does it expect the researcher to erase all previous knowledge concerning the research of his or her mind.

GTM is suited for this analysis as my research interest requires “an unbiased and open but at the same time systematic and rule-based approach to data analysis, which is best provided for by GTM” (Peters 2015, 75). Also, when researching a complex concept such as *identity*, it is essential that the analysis method penetrate each interviewee's social reality as it detects and understands hidden concepts and meaning behind the individual's sheer words. Simultaneously, the method must detect the concepts that are located above the individual level and are shared by all interviewees (*überindividuell-gemeinsam*) (Meuser/Nagel 2005, 80). The individual does not interest me due to his or her uniqueness but for the thematic passages I can also find in other interviews and which enable me to compare underlying concepts and meanings and raise them to a more abstract level. In this sense GTM is truly inductive as it develops generalizable statements about the data on the grounds of individual testimonies (Bogner/Littig/Menz, 77). This is why GTM is suited to help me understand what national minority members in the DGBR understand as national minority identity. How I conduct my analysis with *Grounded Theory Methodology* is explained in Chapter 5.3.2.1.

Lastly, I use data from a telephone administered survey to test whether I find my general statements, distilled from the expert interviews among the general minority population, about national minority identity in the DGBR confirmed. My sample consists of 549 respondents, of which 278 say they belong to the Danish minority in Germany and 271 say they are affiliated with the German minority in Denmark. The respondents were interviewed using a so-

called Respondent Driven Sampling (RDS) technique. RDS can be categorized as a chain referral- or link-tracing method to sample hard-to-reach populations (Broadhead/Heckathorn 1994; Heckathorn 1997; Heckathorn 2002; Heckathorn et al. 2002).

Chain referral samplings are non-probability samplings in which the respondents are asked to initiate contact with other individuals from the target population they belong to. The new contacts are asked to do the same and the sampling continues in this manner until the final sample size is attained (Salganik 2006, 99). The method is based on the assumption that members of a certain sub-population know each other and can actually refer to other members of the sub-population. Chain referral samplings are non-probability samples because certain groups can be over- or underrepresented in the sample, depending on the size of their personal social network. With a special sampling technique and advanced analysis procedures, RDS aims to mitigate the shortcomings usual chain referral methods exhibit, while simultaneously retaining the advantages of such. For example chain referrals are relatively fast and inexpensive.

In using the RDS technique I come close to obtaining a random probability sample to test how the minority populations think about my general statements concerning national minority identity in the DGBR that I also distilled from the expert interviews. How I use the RDS is explained in Chapter 6.4.

Combining the information from the literature review, the qualitative interviews and the quantitative survey I will present a comprehensive picture of what national minority members believe it means to belong to either of the national minorities.

## **2.4. Finding out what the minorities think about their political participation**

The fourth scientific objective I am pursuing with this dissertation is to find out what national minority members think about the actors that are to ensure their political participation (Chapter 6).

After I show how minority politics in the DGBR work (Chapter 4), I am interested in finding out what the national minority members think about the actors that currently are to ensure their political participation and thus protect their minority rights. To do this I use data from the RDS survey already mentioned in Chapter 2.3. But before I can make statements about what the minority members think about their political interest representation I use the RDS data to describe the sampling populations from Denmark and Germany I sampled. This is important as thus far it is not clear which population I discuss when talking about the national minority populations in the DGBR. Information about this can be derived from my RDS data. In Chapter 2.3 I already mentioned that RDS uses a special sampling technique and advanced analysis procedures. The sampling procedure is explained in detail in Chapter 6.4.1, the analysis is explained in Chapter 6.4.2 and is conducted with special statistical RDS software packages<sup>3</sup>.

RDS has shown to be an effective data collection method (Frost et al. 2006; Malekinejad et al. 2008; McCreesh et al. 2012) and can produce largely representative samples (Gile 2011, 2; McCreesh et al. 2012, 45). I must add to this statement though, that the primary goal of all RDS software is to compute the population proportions as “RDS methodology at present has not developed weights for multivariate analyses” (Schonlau/Liebau 2012, 73). What I do with my data is to estimate population proportions and conduct simple bivariate analysis and hypothesis testing. To put the sampling populations’ composition

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<sup>3</sup> I used the “rds - Respondent-driven sampling” command by Matthias Schonlau for Stata.

concerning gender, age, income and education in perspective, I compare them with equivalent data from the seventh round of the European Social Survey (ESS) from 2014 to show how and if the sampling populations differ from the general population of the host country.

After describing the minority populations I will test expectations concerning what the minority members think about the actors that are to ensure their political participation. These tests will help to answer the question, what the national minority members in the DGBR think about their political participation. The expectations I will present are derived inductively from past research projects (Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp 2014a; Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp 2014b; Chapter 4 of this dissertation) and reported experiences in national minority participation I have gathered through earlier research. In addition, I am interested in finding out if the internal organization of minority political participation differs between the two minorities. I want to show which actors are the most relevant actors for the respective minority members. And finally I seek to determine how the special governmental actors and special institutions for minority political participation are perceived by the minority members.









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## **Part II. Individual Papers**

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### **3. Minority Politics in Practice. Protection and Empowerment in the DGBR**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

The question of how European nation states, the European Union (EU), the United Nations (UN), or the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) deal with minorities and how they institutionalize minority rights and minority protection has increasingly become a topic of public debate and scientific discussion over the last decade (Malloy 2005; Pan and Pfeil 2006; Opel 2007; Bowring 2008). This trend was stimulated by the adoption of the Council of Europe's *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* and *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities* (Council of Europe 1992; Council of Europe 1995). At the same time the meaning of "minority protection" has changed (Malloy 2010). Minority protection today is mainly about states' efforts to preserve and develop minority cultures rather than protection from discrimination or persecution. In this discussion, means for societal and political participation concerning decisions that affect minorities' lives receive considerable attention (Verstichel 2005, 25). A more general point in the field of minority protection is the demand to provide the same basic human rights for members of national minorities to all citizens. The 2005 Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights' (OHCHR) *Plan of Action: Protection and Empowerment* (hereinafter "OHCHR plan" or "plan") claims that theoretically human rights are universally accepted but at the same time in practice there is an implementation gap. The OHCHR plan further makes two statements: that human rights are best protected when people are empowered to assert and claim their rights; and that, as a result, human rights holders must be empowered to do so.

This paper addresses both these statements specifically with reference to national minorities: the first (protection through empowerment) through the analysis of the notions of protection and empowerment, and the second

(empowerment of rights holders) by outlining how the members of national minorities in the Danish-German border region are empowered. As will be shown later in the paper, empowerment works on an individual level as well as on a community or group level. For the first point, concerning the usage of the terms protection and empowerment, the focus will be on two dimensions of protection as a desirable outcome and as a continuous process as well as on empowerment as an activity that can change people's mindsets (psychological change) and also their surroundings (political and societal change).

For the second point, a region that is often said to be a role model for minority politics will be examined: the Danish-German border region. Here, the Danish and German national minorities are considered indispensable parts of the societies in both countries; thus measures to promote their cultures implemented by two national governments and the government of the *Bundesland* Schleswig-Holstein (the state and land governments) are met with general approval in the region as a whole (Teebken/Christiansen 2001, 43; Kühl 2004, 575; Frandsen 1994, 1). However, this has not always been the case. The history of the region is characterized by a series of power struggles between the Kingdom of Denmark, Prussia, and Austria and culminated in a border revision after World War I as well as Denmark's occupation by Germany during World War II. Bearing this in mind, the harmonious relation between minority and majority that exists in the region today is all the more impressive. This positive example gives reason to believe that other regions where majority-minority conflicts exist today may be resolved in the future. This paper shows which institutions and mechanisms exist in the border region, how both minorities are protected in the region and how the institutions through which the state and land governments preserve minority cultures are organized and structured. The example thereby illustrates how the theoretical protection and empowerment of national minorities may be transformed into actual minority "protection through empowerment", which is the intention of the OHCHR plan.

The paper is structured in the following way: after a short introduction, the second section outlines the OHCHR plan's content; the third section discusses in greater depth what protection and empowerment mean and in particular how they must be understood in relation to the situation of national minority members. The fourth part deals with the situation of national minorities in the Danish-German border region and the institutions and organizations that are concerned with minority issues. This then leads to the conclusion that minority empowerment is present in the Danish-German border region and that institutions that genuinely empower minorities - instead of protecting them in a paternalistic way - satisfy members of minorities to a greater degree and are more conducive to the preservation of minority cultures.

### **3.2. The OHCHR Plan of Action**

The UN declares 'development, security and human rights for all people' crucial foundations of their work (United Nations Secretary-General 2005). The 2005 OHCHR plan calls for the strengthening of the OHCHR, but mainly aims to strengthen the UN human rights program in general. It points out specific goals of the UN's work, names the main strategies for achieving those goals and suggests various tools to implement those strategies. Before the following section gives a brief summary of the document's relevant content in the context of protection and empowerment of national minorities, I would like to clarify what it means to talk about human rights first. Human rights are

**“civil and political rights, such as the right to life, equality before the law and freedom of expression; economic, social and cultural rights, such as the rights to work, social security and education, or collective rights, such as the rights to development and self-determination. [...] The improvement of one right facilitates advancement of the others. Likewise, the deprivation of one right adversely affects the others” (OHCHR 2016).**

Civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights refer to the rights of single persons and are individual rights in this sense. Rights that must be granted to and can be demanded by each individual, each human being. The latter named collective rights include all the individual rights above and apply to a group of people who see themselves as a community or collective. Granting the individuals of the group the collective rights they have enables a group to develop itself and be self-determined. On the other hand it is plausible that individual rights improve or can be attained only when certain group rights are ensured first. The individual and group rights named above require each other to be realized. When in the next two chapters I present a brief summary of the OHCHR plan's statements about challenges and responses to challenges for human rights, the OHCHR plan always refers to individual and group rights.

### 3.2.1. Challenges for human rights

The key point of the OHCHR plan is that there is an imbalance between the theoretical framework and practical implementation of human rights. Although the OHCHR plan acknowledges, "basic human rights principles enjoy universal agreement" (OHCHR 2005, 7), it argues that the real challenge remains closing the gap between mere gestures of goodwill and actual implementation of human rights. The OHCHR plan defines two sorts of problems that need to be resolved to put human rights into practice. First, it identifies basic "human rights challenges" (OHCHR 2005, 7) which are linked to a specific context and, depending on each case, have a particular character. This category includes problems such as poverty, discrimination, armed conflict, impunity, democratic deficits, and weak institutions (OHCHR 2005, 7-10). It is apparent how these categories pose a threat for human rights and further explanation of what is meant by every category is not necessary. Secondly there are "implementation challenges" (OHCHR 2005, 10) which constitute more concrete barriers to human rights. Here the OHCHR plan lists *knowledge*, *capacity*, *commitment*, and *security* as factors that create such challenges. With regard to *knowledge*, some



governments might not have an understanding of their options to guarantee human rights, and they might lack insight into what can create the necessary political will for action. *Capacity* alludes to the fact that state authorities often simply do not have the resources to implement human rights obligations. For example, governments frequently lack the personnel as well as the financial resources to convert options and ideas into concrete actions. The issue of *commitment* is raised when authorities pursue actions that expressly violate their human rights obligations or even admit to such violations but refrain from changing the situation. *Security* refers to situations where state and non-state groups undertake actions that threaten people's health and even their lives (OHCHR 2005, 10-11).

### 3.2.2. Responses to human rights challenges

After outlining the main obstacles to guaranteeing human rights, direct challenges to human rights, and implementation challenges, the OHCHR plan offers five ways of improving the human rights situation and responding to the problems mentioned above. These five instruments are identified as protection, empowerment, “engaging countries”, “building partnerships”, and “exercising leadership”. The latter three are of minor relevance to this article and thus will be explained only briefly. By contrast, protection and empowerment are given extended attention now as well as in in Chapter 3.3.

National governments play a central role in the implementation of human rights standards and the term “engaging countries” emphasizes the UN's attempt to support the states' leading role in the implementation process but also to motivate them to become more active in responding to human rights challenges. “Building partnerships” also aims to improve co-operation between governments and the UN by working closely with national governments to establish partnerships, providing effective input, and advising and supporting leading actors. This remark in the UNCHR plan seems to refer to the implementation challenges in particular. “Exercising leadership” refers to the

role of the OHCHR. The OHCHR must take the initiative, draw attention to human rights issues, develop responses to existing threats, and mobilize governments to take action. Besides these external tasks, the OHCHR plan also requires greater leadership from within the UN (OHCHR 2005, 13).

As mentioned, earlier these OHCHR plans' three pillars will be of minor relevance for the remainder of the paper. I will shortly comment on the notions the OHCHR plan gives concerning protection and empowerment, before the concepts will be examined in more detail in Chapter 3.3.

The protection of human rights means ensuring “the respect for human rights in concrete ways for individuals” (OHCHR 2005, 12). Individuals who would otherwise be at risk of having their human rights violated are able to exercise them fully through the protection of their rights. It is one of the OHCHR's responsibilities

**“to promote and protect the enjoyment and full realization, by all people, of all rights established in the Charter of the United Nations and in international human rights laws and treaties” (OHCHR 1996).**

The OHCHR plan further states that “protection is not a specific tool or approach, but rather refers to a desired outcome” (OHCHR 2005, 12).

The empowerment of human rights holders is the second central point of the OHCHR plan. It states that human rights are best protected when people are empowered to assert and claim their rights, and therefore human rights holders must be empowered. Another important aspect of the instrument is to equip “those with the responsibility to implement human rights with the means to do so” (OHCHR 2005, 12). The OHCHR plan states that best results for human rights are achieved at the local level, and that international actors must support and strengthen reforms on a national level (OHCHR 2005, 12-13).

### 3.3. The Concepts

The last section provided an outline of the OHCHR's plan of action and introduced the main concepts that build a foundation for further analysis; this section focuses on protection and empowerment. What is written in the OHCHR plan about protection and empowerment is not sufficient to fully understand both concepts, let alone to use them for scientific analysis. The OHCHR plan is not very precise about how the two terms might be translated into practice. This section will clarify how they are used in this paper and how it might be possible to put them into practice<sup>4</sup>.

#### 3.3.1. Protection

Protection has at least two dimensions and is an action directed in one way only. The OHCHR plan states that protection is not a specific tool or approach, but refers rather to a desired outcome. Nevertheless, this does not mean that protection must only be seen as the result of an action, but rather as some kind of activity itself. The OHCHR plan recognizes this and refers to activities such as 'ensuring respect' and to 'effective enjoyment' of rights (OHCHR 2005, 12). The problem presented in the OHCHR's plan is that while human rights today may be universally accepted at a theoretical level, their implementation is still wanting in many regions of the world. This can be the case for example, if a region has experienced civil war or a natural disaster and the regional or state government does not have the resources to ensure the people's human rights by supplying medical treatment to them, offering education for the children, or providing jurisdiction.

However, a more compelling conclusion than human rights are universally accepted, but implementation is lacking, would be that human rights are *not* universally accepted and hence the protection of human rights is not something

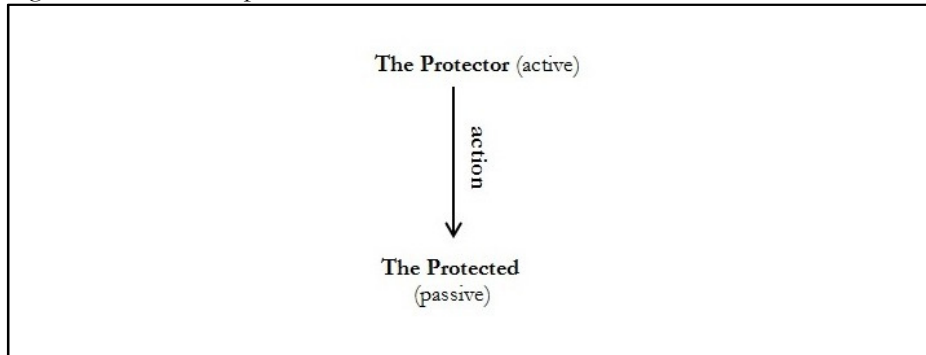
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<sup>4</sup> Concerning this see Malloy 2014.

that just happens spontaneously. For example, many individuals or groups do not care whether other people's human rights are safeguarded when they pursue any personal interests they may have. A majority group in a society may think it is positive for themselves when a minority group in the same society does not enjoy equal human rights. This majority (or just their leaders) may believe their own status would be threatened or weakened if the minority's rights were safeguarded.

The protection of human rights is not a static outcome but rather a constant process and effort. The desired outcome that the OHCHR plan mentions is only one aspect of the term protection, but to simply reduce the concept of protection to this aspect (a desired outcome) does not acknowledge its complexity. Protection must also be understood as *action*. The OHCHR plan does this by referring to an act to protect someone (a rights holder) or something (the rights of the rights holder). Someone active is doing something for someone passive, who is either unable or for some reason unwilling to carry out the action for him/herself (see Figure 1). Reasons why persons are not able to protect themselves can be manifold. People can suffer from forces of nature and live in a state of emergency, which is so devastating that they cannot rebuild their lives themselves. It is also possible that people live in war or post-war situations where rivaling groups fight (have fought) for governmental power and as long as the conflict is not solved and governmental order restored, infrastructure and institutional structures that people need to secure their human rights cannot be utilized or not even present. In addition, the repressed minority group from the example above may not be strong enough to attain or even claim their human rights as long as the repressing majority (or their leaders) is convinced the minority's human rights realization does not pose a threat to them. All these scenarios would imply that either a person, an organization, or an institution must act on behalf of a person or group.

Figure 1: The act of protection



The act of protection is a top-down process that comes from the protector and is directed towards the protected. This produces an imbalance of power that denotes a built-in dominance to the concept. Thus, while protection is carried out in manifold ways, it always retains its one-way (top-down) character. For example, the protected may be saved from prosecution, guarded from psychological or physical harm, relieved from injustice, or safeguarded against danger. Even if civil liberties and human rights are protected, the fact remains that the receiver of protection is passive and thus remains an object of protection.

### 3.3.2. Empowerment

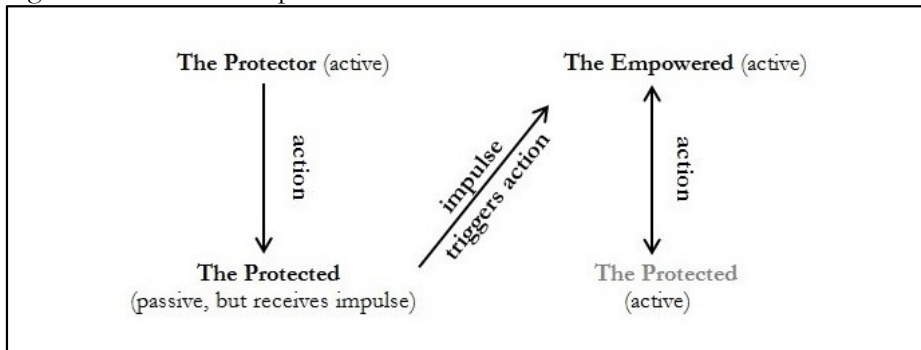
The two main arguments in this section are that empowerment (1.) is a process and an activity and (2.) that it begins where the act of protection ends. Empowerment is a much more complex concept than protection. It is in relation to this component of the OHCHR plan that conceptual problems arise. The empowerment of people (human rights holders) is central to the OHCHR plan, and it focuses on two points: first, that human rights holders must assert and claim their rights; and second, that those with the responsibility for guaranteeing human rights must be equipped with the means to do so. Here, the means to do so refer to all kinds of resources one may need and can be either material or immaterial. Material resources are for example monetary funds, tools for digging

a well, or an office at a parliament to lobby on behalf of your group. Immaterial are, for example, the introduction into a powerful network, the right to dig a well, or the exemption of a minority party from a threshold at elections.

The difference between protection and empowerment is not that empowered people benefit more from the action of empowerment than protected people benefit from the action of protection. This is possible and often the case, but it is *not* necessarily an advantage empowerment has over protection. The main difference between protection and empowerment is purely the active nature of empowerment. Whatever stabilizes or improves the people's situation, with empowerment they are the ones who do it themselves.

The OHCHR plan states that rights holders are to assert and claim their rights (in other words: become active), while actors with the responsibility for upholding human rights must be willing to do so (OHCHR 2005, 12). Empowerment may be a form of protection but, as this section will show, there is a point where empowerment becomes more than the mere action of protection can ever be. Hence, the desired outcome of protection may be realized enduringly only through empowerment. Empowerment still has to be triggered by someone or something, and in that sense there still is a passive receiver at the moment the impulse (of empowerment) is given; this is equal or similar to what happens when someone is protected (Chapter 3.3.1). However, after a first impulse the receiver of empowerment (the protected) becomes active, s/he is empowered and takes action to help him/herself (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: The act of empowerment



At the point where the protected becomes active, protection transforms into empowerment. Therefore, the focus will now shift to the active component of the concept and follow Elisheva Sadan's empowerment theory. Sadan writes:

**“The process of empowerment is an active process. Its form is determined by the circumstances and the events, but its essence is human activity in the direction of change from a passive state to an active one” (2004, 75-76).**

Sadan further describes the change as a process that happens internally and externally. By referring to internal change she means a psychological change, and by referring to external change she describes something social or political. The internal and external changes are displayed in Figure 2 through the “impulse triggers action” arrow. Sadan argues that the change at the individual level has the potential to affect the political and social spheres that surround individuals, thereby affecting other individuals as well and becoming social or political (Malloy 2014, 19).

At this point an empowerment of the individual automatically also effects the group(s) they belong to. With this process, Sadan means a sort of community- or collective- or group empowerment if one assumes that individuals do not act in isolation (Petit 2003; List/Petit 2006; Pelenc et al. 2013). The group then becomes a sort of collective agent, but not of the sorts of an independent agent that is “capable of acting independently of [its] members [... and does] not overtake the psychologies of the individual persons” (Mākālā 2007, 457). The relation between the empowerment of individuals and the empowerment of groups is similar to the relation between human rights for individuals and human rights for groups. The advancement of the one (individual or group) facilitates the advancement of the other (group or individual). Likewise, the deprivation (or absence) of one adversely affects the other. Following Sadan, “a group is the perfect environment for consciousness-raising, for mutual help, for developing social skills, for exercising problem-

solving, and for exercising inter-personal influence” (Sadan 2004, 81). It also strengthens individuals’ capability to change. Hence, if empowerment changes peoples’ minds and their lives positively, collective empowerment is all the more possible and suited to enriching people’s minds and endowing them greater control over their lives.

This means that despite the fact that empowerment, in the sense used by the OHCHR plan, starts out as a top-down mechanism and transforms into a bottom-up process. The active component of the concept is the truly relevant part here. Empowerment is an active process through which the empowered person, community, or group is able and willing to positively change their own situation. This can mean that they improve their situation or are now able protect their status quo themselves. It can be a change of mind or a change of life circumstances. In order to speak of empowerment as a means of protection, the change must be intended by the beneficiaries and they must be the ones who transform themselves from passive to active agents.

This section showed the substantial difference between protection and empowerment, namely that empowerment goes beyond protection and activates the protected individuals or groups to become engaged in their own protection and to further empower themselves and others. “Going beyond protection” here does not mean empowerment always follows protection, empowerment in the most cases happens instead of mere protection and is something where the protected is more involved. The following section will transfer the theoretical concept of protection and empowerment into a practical context. It will examine a region where the UN’s fundamental values of development, security, and human rights for all people are already upheld: the Danish-German border region. There, minority structures are as developed as majority structures, and minority members enjoy the same human rights as members of the majority population. In addition, several institutions and mechanisms exist that may constitute forms of protection or empowerment. That this can be found against the backdrop of a history unlikely to be conducive to minority protection and



empowerment is all the more remarkable. The examination of the Danish-German border region will therefore begin with a brief outline of its history, before taking a closer look at the arrangements currently in place, emphasizing that there is much to be learnt about minority protection and empowerment from the Danish-German border region.

### 3.4. Protection and Empowerment in the DGBR

The Danish-German border includes the southern part of Denmark (*nordslesvig*) and the northern part of Germany (*Südschleswig*). Geographically the area stretches from the city of *Ribe* and the *Lillebælt*<sup>5</sup> in the north to the sea reach and the middle reaches of the *Eider* to the bay of Kiel (*Kieler Bucht*). Both margins are about 50 kilometers away from the Danish-German border. The Danes and the Germans in the region share a long history (Fink, 1958). Some sources date the beginning of a conscious cultural exchange back to the Protestant Reformation in the early sixteenth century (Frandsen 1994, 15). To explain how the current manifestation of minority life developed in the region, it is sufficient to mention some key points from the eighteenth century onwards. From 1773 to 1864 the region of Schleswig was governmentally independent, but aligned to the Danish Kingdom as the Danish king<sup>6</sup> was also the duke of Schleswig and Holstein. During the course of the nineteenth century, re-occurring attempts to separate Schleswig from the Danish Kingdom on the one side, and attempts to fully integrate the duchy of Schleswig into the Danish Kingdom on the other, led to heavy confrontations in the region (Frandsen 1994, 67-69). These started out as cultural confrontations but quickly turned into political battles charged with nationalistic ideologies (Strange-Petersen 2002, 245). The situation escalated into the First Schleswig War (1848–1851) and then the Second Schleswig War (1864). Following the Danish defeat of 1864, the duchy of Schleswig was annexed by

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<sup>5</sup> The *Lillebælt* (small belt) is the sea gate between the peninsula *Jylland* and the isle of *Fyn*.

<sup>6</sup> From 1773 to 1808, *Friedrich VI* from 1808 to 1839, *Christian VIII* from 1839 to 1848, *Friedrich VII* from 1848 to 1863, and *Christian IX* from 1863 to 1864.

Prussia while the adjoining duchy of Holstein was annexed by Austria (Fink 1958, 157). It was only after another war, the Austro-Prussian War of 1866, that both duchies were united as the province of Schleswig-Holstein under Prussian rule in 1866.<sup>7</sup> Fifty years later, after World War I, two plebiscites were held in Schleswig (the northern part of the Prussian province of Schleswig-Holstein) to revise the Danish-German border after the German defeat (Christiansen 1990, 282). On the 5th of July 1920 the border was moved 70 kilometers south. Hence 1920 is often referred to as the “birth year” of the German minority (Toft 2005, 157).<sup>8</sup>

Since the border revision of 1920, both Denmark and Germany have repeatedly acknowledged the respective minority as an official national minority. Both states defined the national minorities’ status through the Bonn-Copenhagen Declarations of 1955 (Klatt 2005a). Since then, Denmark and Germany have developed consultative and compensatory bodies to protect members of minorities and minority culture in the region.<sup>9</sup> The next section will give an overview of the institutions and organizations that are relevant for the two national minorities in the region. Special attention will be directed towards the question of whether the respective bodies further provide a sort of empowerment for the national minorities.

There are around 60,000 members of the Danish minority and 20,000 members of the German minority in the border region who consider themselves members of one of the two minorities.<sup>10</sup> Both minorities run networks of various organizations and associations, and receive most of their financial support from the German and Danish governments. The literature on minority protection

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<sup>7</sup> For further historical background to the region, *see* Hvid 1990.

<sup>8</sup> For an overview of events relating to the border revision of 1920, *see* Rheinheimer 2006.

<sup>9</sup> For co-operation in the region between Denmark and Germany, *see* Klatt 2006.

<sup>10</sup> These numbers are based on membership numbers of minority organizations and electoral results of minority parties. According to the Bonn-Copenhagen Declarations, there is no formal, ethnic, or similar criterion that defines who belongs to a minority and who does not. Rather, every person can define for him/herself whether s/he feels an affiliation with the folklore and culture of the respective minority and thus belongs to that minority. This “self-identification” may not be questioned or tested by officials.

sometimes refers to the situation in the Danish-German border area as being a possible role model for other minority regions where national minorities do not thrive to the same extent (Teebken/Christiansen 2001, 43; Kühl 2004, 575; Frandsen 1994, 1). The next section examines two kinds of bodies relevant to minorities: first, the organizations that are run entirely by national minorities themselves; and, second, the political bodies that are established by national governments and the *Bundesland* Schleswig-Holstein to foster and support minority members and their culture.<sup>11</sup>

### 3.4.1. Minority organizations

Both minorities run associations, which promote the preservation of the minority cultures and languages from pre-school and early school levels. The Danish school association for South Schleswig (*Danske Skoleforeningen for Sydslesvig*) and the German school and language association for North Schleswig (*Deutscher Schul- und Sprachverein für Nordschleswig*) are autonomous minority associations that oversee the minorities' buildings and manage the teaching staff and technical personnel for nurseries and schools. Minority schools in Denmark and Germany have the same legal status as private schools and grant diplomas equivalent to state schools. Due to their private status, these schools may vary the content of their education to a certain degree. However, their curriculums still have to meet the requirements of the general curriculum stipulated by the responsible authorities. Most of the the educational minority institution funding is granted by Germany, Denmark, and the land of Schleswig-Holstein.<sup>12</sup> The schools cooperate with the youth organizations South Schleswig youth associations (*Sydslesvigs danske Ungdomsforeninger*) and the German youth association for North

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<sup>11</sup> An overview on the institutions in this section was already published in Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp 2014a. Due to constraints of space, the information has been shortened and summarized. For more detailed information on the Danish-German border region see the respective article, especially Chapters 3 and 4.

<sup>12</sup> For Denmark: about 70% from the Danish state, about 30% from the German state or Schleswig-Holstein; additional funding (if needed) is private. For Germany: about 50% from the Danish state, about 43% from the German state, about 3% from municipalities and about 4% private funding. See Undervisningsministeriet 2014; Region Sønderjylland-Schleswig 2016a; FUEN 2013.

Schleswig (*Deutscher Jugendverband für Nordschleswig*), and foster the development of minority identification among young people.

Outside the educational sector there are various organizations that deal with a plethora of activities of relevance to minority communities in both countries. There are library associations, minority newspapers, social services, linguistic groups, music associations, sports clubs, and student organizations which are to a greater or lesser extent connected to a cultural umbrella organization: in Germany this is the South Schleswig association (*Südschleswigsche Verein*, SSF); in Denmark the League of German People of North Schleswig (*Bund Deutscher Nordschleswiger*, BDN). The SSF not only acts as a cultural and social organization, but is also very active in representing and advocating minority political interests in Germany. The BDN is responsible for all matters concerning the German minority in Denmark. The organization is the minority's main cultural organization but it is also active in many other fields, such as minority politics or social and economic problems (Lubowitz 2005, 379). The Schleswig party (*Slesvigske Parti*, SP) in the southern part of Denmark and the South Schleswig voters' organization (*Südschleswigsche Wählerverband*, SSW) in the northern part of Schleswig-Holstein represent the interests of the respective minority within the party system of each country. The SSW has been representing not only the Danish, but also the Frisian minority in Schleswig-Holstein since 1948 (Nonnenbroich 1972, 111). The party's status in German politics is quite special on account of the condition that the SSW is exempt from the 5 percent threshold in federal state and national elections. The party has not participated in national elections since 1961, but since 2012 it has formed, for the first time, part of the land government of Schleswig-Holstein (*Landesregierung*) as a third component in a social democratic and green coalition government (Landesregierung Schleswig-Holstein, 2015).

The southern Danish SP party is a regional party. It calls for equal treatment of the German minority, its members and its institutions in cultural, social, and economic matters and is of the opinion that 'sometimes equality can

only be achieved through special rights' (Schleswigsche Partei 2010, 1). Contrary to the SSW, which is an autonomous organization, the SP is only a sub-organization of the BDN and the party candidates and leaders are elected by the BDN's general assembly. In addition to the associations that are run by minorities, there are several special political bodies that have been established by the Danish and German national governments as well as the regional government of Schleswig-Holstein. These bodies exist to help "protect" minorities from marginalization by the majority culture, but they may also empower the minorities as to improve their own situation. These bodies will be discussed in the following section.

### 3.4.2. Special institutions for minority protection

The German minority is compensated for its non-representation in the Danish national parliament (*Folketing*) by being granted their own bureau to represent their interests in Copenhagen. The German Minority's Secretariat in Copenhagen (*Det Tyske Mindretals Sekretariat i København*, hereinafter "German Secretariat") was established in 1983. The head of the German Secretariat, who is always a member of the minority and is elected by the BDN's board, monitors the parliament's work and represents the minority's political views to the parliament and the public. Furthermore, it establishes and maintains contact on behalf of the minority and keeps the BDN informed about minority-relevant processes in Copenhagen (*Tyske Mindretals Sekretariat i København*, 2016). The head of the German Secretariat is always a member of the Contact Committee for the German Minority (*Kontaktudvalget for Det Tyske Mindretal*). The committee negotiates on issues of relevance to the minority. The other members of the committee are: the Minister of Children, Education and Equalization (*Minister for Børn, Undervisning og Ligestilling*), the Minister of the Economy and the Interior (*Økonomi- og indenrigsminister*), a member from each party in the *Folketing* and three members from minority organizations. All are formally selected by the Minister of the Economy and the Interior, but are in effect chosen by their

respective organizations (Ministeriet for Børn, Undervisning og Ligestilling, 2015b). A similar committee can be found in the state of Schleswig-Holstein: the Committee for Questions Concerning the German Minority at the *Landtag* of Schleswig-Holstein (*Gremium für Fragen der deutschen Minderheit beim Schleswig-Holsteinischen Landtag*). This committee deals with all questions regarding the German minority in Southern Denmark. Members of the committee are the Minister-President of Schleswig-Holstein (*Ministerpräsident*) and delegates of all parliamentary parties, all members of the German parliament (*Bundestag*) from Schleswig-Holstein, representatives of the BDN, the Commissioner for Minorities and Culture of Schleswig-Holstein (*Beauftragte für Minderheiten und Kultur des Landes Schleswig-Holstein*) and the head of the German Secretariat in Copenhagen. Germany's Assistant Ambassador (*Stellvertreter des Botschafters*) in Denmark simultaneously acts as Commissioner for Questions Regarding the German Minority and the Border Region (*Beauftragter für Fragen der deutschen Minderheit und Kontakte im Grenzland*) and is responsible for establishing direct contact between the German minority in Denmark and the German government in Berlin (Deutsche Botschaft Kopenhagen, 2016).

The central institution for minority political participation of the Danish minority in Schleswig-Holstein is the Commissioner for Minorities and Culture of Schleswig-Holstein (*Beauftragte für Minderheiten und Kultur des Landes Schleswig-Holstein*; hereinafter "SH-Commissioner"). The SH-Commissioner is appointed by the Minister-President of Schleswig-Holstein and is thus a state employee. The SH-Commissioner's main task is to develop and maintain contacts between the government and minorities. The SH-Commissioner also upholds contact between the Danish minority and the Minister-President as well as with the parliament of the *Bundesland*. The SH-Commissioner's work is independent of the presence of the Danish minority in the *Landtag* of Schleswig-Holstein, and even now that the SSW is a regular member of the governing coalition, with a seat in the cabinet, the SH-Commissioner's work continues. As for the Danish government, the German government addresses the problems and special needs

of national minorities in the country. This is translated into practice through the Commissioner for Emigrant and Minority Issues of the German government (*Beauftragter der Bundesregierung für Aussiedlerfragen und Nationale Minderheiten*).

Together with the Minister of the Interior and one of his employees, two members of the factions of the *Bundestag*, three minority members and the Commissioner for Minorities and Culture of Schleswig-Holstein, the German government's minority SH-Commissioner sits on the Advisory Committee for Questions Regarding the Danish Minority in the Ministry of the Interior (*Beratender Ausschuss für Fragen der dänischen Minderheit beim Bundesministerium des Innern*). The advisory committee discusses all government decisions of relevance to the Danish minority and ensures contact between the minority and the German government and the *Bundestag*. Finally, the Danish Consulate General (*det danske generalkonsulat*) ensures contact between the Danish minority and the Danish government. At the same time the Committee Concerning Danish Cultural Activities in South Schleswig (*Udvalget vedrørende danske kulturelle anliggender i Sydslesvig*) reports back to the parliament on all issues regarding the Danish minority. The large number of bodies that are concerned with minorities demonstrates the importance the Danish and German governments ascribe to the protection of national minorities in the region. How some of the actors from 3.4.1 and actors from 3.4.2 work together is described in detail in Schaefer-Rolffs 2016a.

### 3.4.3. Evaluation of protection and empowerment in the DGBR

This section assesses the organizations and institutions in the border region in relation to protection and empowerment. The minority youth and school organizations, the cultural umbrella organizations and the political parties are all minority bodies that empower minorities. They do this by providing opportunities and means through which minority members can promote minority affiliation. While the government funds many activities and guarantees the basic rights to run the organizations, the government does not directly

engage in these activities. The government only provides the first impulse (here: legislation and funding) through which the receivers of empowerment (the minorities) are enabled to act to improve their situation. In youth and school organizations, members of minorities have the opportunity to form a minority identity early on and to become conscious of their rights as minority members. The cultural and political organizations continue to foster awareness of minority identity and to provide structures to advance minority rights. By doing so these organizations foster change that is predestined to affect the individual's surroundings and hence may trigger what Sadan calls "collective empowerment" or "group empowerment" (Sadan 2004, 81).

All those institutions where minority members are not themselves represented merely *protect* the minorities. This can be said for six out of the ten bodies listed in section 4.2, namely: the German Embassy in Copenhagen, the Commissioner for Questions Regarding the German Minority and the Border Region (SH-Commissioner), the Commissioner for Minorities and Culture of Schleswig-Holstein, the Commissioner for Emigrant and Minority Issues of the German Government, the Danish Consulate General, and the Committee Concerning Danish Cultural Activities in South Schleswig. Three out of the ten minority protection bodies are committees where the minorities themselves are represented. For all three committees - the Contact Committee for the German Minority, the Committee for Questions Concerning the German Minority in the parliament of Schleswig-Holstein, and the Advisory Committee for Questions Regarding the Danish Minority in the Ministry of Interior - the extent of the impact of minority representatives on committee decisions is unclear and their participation may be merely symbolic. It is also not clear what impact the committees themselves have. The only special institution that clearly *empowers* a minority in the region is the German Secretariat in Copenhagen, as the Head of the Secretariat is a minority member and is thus directly involved in changing the situation of the minority. For a summary of all special institutions see Table 1.



Table 1 : Institutions concerning national minorities

	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Affiliated to</b>	<b>Empowerment</b>
<b>Denmark</b>	German Secretariat in Copenhagen	Danish parliament	Yes
	Contact Committee for the German Minority	Danish parliament	Unclear
	Committee for Questions Concerning the German Minority in the parliament of Schleswig-Holstein	German federal parliament	Unclear
	The German Embassy in Copenhagen	German government	No
	Commissioner for Questions Regarding the German Minority and the Border Region	German government	No
<b>Germany</b>	Commissioner for Minorities and Culture of Schleswig-Holstein	German federal government	No
	Commissioner for Emigrant and Minority Issues of the German Government	German government	No
	Advisory Committee for Questions Regarding the Danish Minority in the Ministry of Interior	German government	Unclear
	The Danish Consulate General	Danish government	No
	Committee Concerning Danish Cultural Activities in South Schleswig	Danish parliament	No

The relevance of the German Secretariat in Copenhagen has been explained by Schaefer-Rolffs and Schnapp (2014a), who show that the SH-Commissioner for Minorities and Culture of Schleswig-Holstein and the German Secretariat in Copenhagen are of special importance. The two institutions were established by their governments to support minority interests. The special role of these two bodies is further underscored by the fact that both the head of the German Secretariat in Copenhagen as well as the SH-Commissioner in Kiel are official members of most of the other organs established to ensure minority political participation. Despite these similarities, there are major differences in the structures of these two institutions, which show why the SH-Commissioner merely *protects* the Danish minority whilst the German Secretariat *empowers* the

German minority as stated above. Three of the main differences between the two institutions are outlined here:

**“The head of the German minority’s Secretariat in Copenhagen has no affiliation with a party of the *Folketing* or the government, whereas the Commissioner for Minorities and Culture of Schleswig-Holstein is always a member of a governing party in Schleswig-Holstein. The head of the Secretariat in Copenhagen is personally a member of the German minority, whereas the Commissioner for Minorities and Culture has no affiliation to the minority whatsoever. The head of the Secretariat in Copenhagen is elected every three years by the BDN’s board of directors, whose members are themselves elected by the minority population for a four-year term of office. By contrast, the Commissioner in Kiel is not an electoral office, but the office is given to a suitable person from the governing party by the Minister-President of Schleswig-Holstein for each legislative period of five years” (Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp 2014a, 69-70).**

An overview of the differences between the two institutions is provided in Table 2.

Table 2: Comparison of SH-Commissioner and German Secretariat

	<b>SH-Commissioner (BRD)</b>	<b>German Secretariat (DK)</b>
Governmental institution	Yes	No
Direct connection to minority party	No	Yes
Minority member in charge	No	Yes

The German Secretariat is directly connected to the minority and it seems to be an institution that genuinely empowers the minority. Again the government only provides the structures for the special body and then empowers the minority by letting it choose its own representative to lead the German Secretariat. It is

interesting to note that the German Secretariat is also more positively received by members of the minorities than the SH-Commissioner, as shown by Schaefer-Rolffs and Schnapp (2014a) through a study conducted in 2010, and as can be seen in Table 3.<sup>13</sup> Of the respondents (minority members) in Denmark, 79% considered the German Secretariat to be an appropriate representative, whereas only 46% of the respondents from the Danish minority in Germany had a similar opinion about the SH-Commissioner in Kiel.

Table 3: Appropriateness of the special institution (country)<sup>14</sup>

	SH-Commissioner (BRD)	German Secretariat (DK)	Total
Eligible	46%	79%	59%
Ineligible	54%	21%	41%
N=	108	72	180

This difference in perception seems to be mainly attributable to the fact that the SH-Commissioner is not part of the minority but addresses minority issues in a paternalistic way, as shown by respondents' answers to the question of why they did not find the respective institution eligible. One fifth (20%) of all respondents stated that they did not find the respective institution eligible to represent their political interests, and expressed the opinion that the Minority SH-Commissioner was more of a representative of the interests of the state than of the minority. Nearly one fifth (18%) of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the acting SH-Commissioner at the time of the survey (Caroline Schwarz), mostly on the grounds of her lack of presence and lack of connection to the minority. The same frequency of answers indicated the perception that the SH-Commissioner spent more time fulfilling various other duties than politically representing the Danish minority. A further 16% cited lack of necessary

<sup>13</sup> The authors' study is based on a survey of 206 minority members, of which 126 live in Germany and 80 in Denmark. They asked respondents about several aspects of minority participation in the Danish-German border region. For a description of the general characteristics of the study see Schaefer-Rolffs and Schnapp (2014a), Chapter 5.1.

<sup>14</sup> Table taken from Schaefer-Rolffs and Schnapp (2014a, 68): "Do you find the institution, eligible or ineligible to represent your political interest?"

influence as a reason for their dissatisfaction while 14% were of the opinion that the SH-Commissioner usually had little interest in or knowledge of the minority (Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp 2014a, 68).

Minority empowerment implies that minorities are directly involved in the work that is done for them. The relatively bad impression that the SH-Commissioner left with the minority is partly due to the fact that the office has a paternalistic structure that stands *for* the minority. It is a protective body with a top-down approach, and the receivers of protection (minority members) are passive, remaining an object of protection. In this way the institution is neither well-suited to represent the interests of the minority, nor is it well-positioned to gain full support from and acceptance among the minority population because of its paternalistic character (Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp 2014a, 71). In Denmark, on the other hand, with the German Secretariat we find a very participation-oriented structure with extensive direct minority involvement. The German Secretariat is evaluated much more favorably in its work by minority members than the SH-Commissioner in Kiel, as can be seen in Table 4. In Denmark, 63% of minority members had positive experiences with the German Secretariat and 35% had neutral experiences, while in Germany only 10% had positive experiences with the SH-Commissioner, 55% reported neutral experiences and 35% negative experiences. These figures support the central argument of this paper, that the SH-Commissioner only *protects* the minority while the German Secretariat *empowers*.

Table 4: Experience with the special institution (by country)<sup>15</sup>

	<b>SH-Commissioner (BRD)</b>	<b>German Secretariat (DK)</b>	<b>Total</b>
Positive	10%	63%	38%
Neutral	55%	38%	46%
Negative	35%	0	16%
N=	<b>49</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>105</b>

<sup>15</sup> Table taken from Schaefer-Rolffs and Schnapp (2014a, 67): “If you ever had contact with the Special Institution, how was your experience?”.

The situation of minority political participation in the northernmost part of Germany is still very positive because the SSW, the minority political party, is a very visible political actor in Schleswig-Holstein and a constant member of the land parliament. The reason for its constant representation in the *Landtag* is its exemption from the 5 percent electoral threshold. This threshold is in place for all other parties running for parliamentary office. It is well-known that this exemption is meant to facilitate minority participation. This again must be seen as a mechanism that *empowers* and does not just *protect* minority members. Schaefer-Rolffs and Schnapp (2014b) have argued that the representation of minority interests and political participation in Germany mainly happen through the SSW and that the special institution (the SH-Commissioner) is only of minor relevance for the minority members. Across the border, in Denmark, the German Secretariat is of great relevance whereas the political party, the SP, does not reach the same degree of influence as the SSW. See also Table 5.

Table 5: Best interest representation<sup>16</sup>

	<b>Danish Minority (BRD)</b>	<b>German Minority (DK)</b>	<b>Total</b>
Minority party	96%	70%	85%
Cultural organization	3%	11%	6%
Special institution	2%	6%	3%
All three together <sup>17</sup>	0	14%	6%
N=	<b>112</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>183</b>

There is considerable trust in the SSW within the Danish minority which is not reached by the SP, and which is rooted in the structural conditions created to favor the minority party (SSW) in Germany.<sup>18</sup> The release from the 5 percent threshold at regional and federal land elections makes it possible for the SSW to

<sup>16</sup> Table (in German) taken from Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp (2014b).

<sup>17</sup> The answer “something else” was chosen by 14% of the German minority in Denmark. Asked why they chose that answer, all of them answered something along the lines of: “all three together”, “a combination of the three” or “the three are equally important”. No one from the Danish minority chose the answer “something else”.

<sup>18</sup> For results of the survey that was conducted among the minority members concerning the general status of political participation of minorities, see Schaefer-Rolffs and Schnapp (2014b), sections 4 and 5.

gain greater political influence than the SP could achieve. The threshold exception is a very simple form of empowerment and an extraordinary example of empowerment in general. In this case, the government has become active by implementing the exception as compensation for the minority's not-representation in parliament. This impulse enables the minority party to be represented on the parliamentary level. Simultaneously, it provides the minority with the necessary (material and immaterial) resources to support and promote their own rights. These resources are, for example, public funding for the representatives, offices and the like, public recognition, and lifted self-esteem of the group as such. All these benefits decouple the minority from the initial governmental impulse and enable them to take their own lives into their own hands.

After having evaluated protection and empowerment in the DGBR, I will now summarize my findings.

### **3.5. Conclusion**

This paper started out by emphasizing the importance of the 2005 *OHCHR Plan of Action: Protection and Empowerment* and how it ascribes the concepts of protection and empowerment. In studying the usage of both terms in the OHCHR plan and by explaining how they can be understood, section two and three - following Elisheva Sadan's empowerment theory - presented the two central concepts of the paper.

Protection has at the least two dimensions. It is a desired outcome and an action. It is furthermore an action that is one-sided. The receivers of protection are not themselves active in being protected. The action is a classical top-down process. Empowerment starts out as a top-down process, but transforms into a bottom-up process. It is an active process in which the empowered person, community, or group are able and willing to change their own situation or to preserve their status quo like in the DGBR. Empowerment triggers change that can either be a change of mind or a change of life circumstances or, in the best

case, both. To speak of empowerment as a means of protection, the action must be intended by the beneficiaries of change and they must be the initiators of the progress.

The preservation and development of national minority culture in the Danish-German border region is something that the land and national governments in the region take very seriously, and a plethora of minority organizations and special political bodies exist for the purpose of minority protection. The OHCHR plan states that the most effective protection of human rights (and thus also of minority rights) is achieved through empowerment. In the border region, many organizations are run by minorities, such as school and youth organizations, library associations, minority newspapers, social services, linguistic groups, music associations, sports clubs, and student organizations. These are financially supported by the two governments and provide for empowerment as described in Chapter 3.3.2. All the organizations mentioned in Chapter 3.4.1 activate their minority members, foster minority identity, and create awareness of minority rights, thereby empowering them. This can also be viewed from another perspective: by funding the many minority organizations, while at the same time letting them run their own affairs, the land and national governments practice a politics of empowerment. This sort of empowerment is directed at the minorities' identity and support of internal minority structures.

Additionally, some mechanisms are designed to improve the minorities' political influence by way of protection and empowerment. Many special institutions exist in the border region to enhance minorities' chances of political participation and thus provide minority protection (Henrard 2005, 135). Most of these special institutions follow a "classical" protection-oriented approach, whereby government personnel watch over the minority, monitor their problems, and/or provide contacts for the members to articulate specific problems. Whatever the particularities of the respective bodies, the process is always top-down.

However, one of the special institutions in the border region—the German Minority’s Secretariat in Copenhagen—stands out. The German Secretariat is the only one of the special institutions that is entirely run by a national minority. Although it is funded by the Danish government, it reports to the German minorities’ main cultural organization, the BDN. The German Secretariat monitors the parliament’s work in Copenhagen and represents the minority’s political views to the parliamentarians and the public. Furthermore, it is active on behalf of the minority and does so to the satisfaction of the members of minorities it represents. In this sense the German Secretariat is a classic example for empowerment. The government gives an impulse by establishing the German Secretariat, providing the funds and location for the operation of the German Secretariat and then lets the minority run the German Secretariat on their own and thus enable them to care for their political influence by themselves.

In Germany, the release from the 5 percent threshold at regional and federal land elections makes it possible for the SSW to gain greater political influence for the Danish minority. The threshold exception is a very simple form of empowerment and an extraordinary example of empowerment in general. In this case, the government has become active by implementing the exception as compensation for the minority’s not-representation in parliament. This impulse enables the minority party to be represented on the parliamentary level.

If one accepts that the most effective protection of human rights (and thus also minority rights) is indeed achieved through empowerment, and given that the Danish-German border region provides a minority situation where minority rights are upheld, the following recommendations seem appropriate. Governments should provide funding to such institutions and organizations that stimulate minority social life, foster minority identity among minority members, and enable self-representation because this in turn leads to empowerment. They should further acknowledge that the work of protective institutions is limited to monitoring and strengthening relations between minorities and governments.



Moreover, special institutions that seek to empower minorities ought to be independent of government bodies and run by minority members themselves because “visible political leadership by members of a minority group [...] enhance[s] trust in government, efficacy, group pride, and participation” (Banducci et al. 2004, 538). It seems to be the case that institutions with a strong focus on preferential treatment are more successful than paternalistic ones. The SSW, which is empowered through its preferential treatment at the ballot box as well as the German Secretariat in Copenhagen, which is empowered through its access to the parliamentary arena, are cases in point.







## **4. Mapping national minority politics. Expert interviews concerning national minority participation in the DGBR**

### **4.1. Introduction**

In March 2015 the Danish-German border region (DGBR) became the center of international attention when the festivities for the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Bonn-Copenhagen Declarations took place in Berlin, Germany. The unilateral declarations that Denmark and Germany signed in 1955 and which continue to ensure the safety and existence of the national minorities in the region are seen as a milestone in European minority politics. At the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary festivities the German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier said:

**... Minorities enrich the majority. They provide new perspectives for everyone involved. [...] Agents of the German and the Danish minority have created something impressive in the north: They have integrated themselves and simultaneously kept their own linguistic and cultural identity. [...] For me this is crucial for domestic and foreign politics. For domestic politics, because only a nation that preserves all identities and integrates them into society, can enduringly succeed in this world. And for foreign politics, because only nations that protect the plurality inside their borders, can peacefully coexist with other nations.<sup>19</sup>**  
**(Steinmeier 2015)**

As positive as the Foreign Minister's speech at the festivity may be, he remains very general and mostly vague. There is no statement in regards to what is so impressive about the minority situation and why minority politics in the region

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<sup>19</sup> My own direct translation.

should continue to be successful in the future. The minister is not alone in this. There is also a severe research gap here.<sup>20</sup> Though part of this research gap has been closed recently, many open questions remain. A particularly important yet open question concerns the role of political elites in the field of minority politics.

The material presented in this paper offers a detailed, actor-based interior view of minority politics in the Danish-German border region and shines light on the role of the aforementioned elites and answers the main research question: How do minority politics in the Danish-German border region work? In the course of answering this main question I will also answer a subordinate research question: “What do representatives of minority politics think about the national minorities’ current situation in the DGBR?” Additionally, experiences from my field research provide some very interesting insights on the interviewed elites. Although this last point does not touch upon the paper’s main narrative, I do not want to withhold these results altogether and will include them in the findings presented here.

By finding answers to the two aforementioned questions, the text contributes to the field of European Minority politics and the institutional aspect of minority protection. More precisely, I focus on the aspect of minority participation in minority protection and disregard other important aspects of minority protection such as conflict management, regionalism and emancipation. The literature on the participation aspect of minority protection is mainly concerned with the right to participation as formulated in Article 15 of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM)

**“The Parties shall create the conditions necessary for the effective participation of persons belonging to national minorities in cultural, social and economic life and in public affairs, in particular those affecting them.”**

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<sup>20</sup> See Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp 2014a; Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp 2014b.

and discuss the rights aspect as well as the institutional requirements (Weller 2010; Rechel 2010).

I present a detailed analysis of a series of expert/elite interviews with decision makers from several minority organizations and from governmental organizations and institutions. This data was collected in February and March 2015 by way of eleven in-depth, face-to-face interviews with leading representatives of the minority parties, namely: the South Schleswig voters' organization (*Südschleswigscher Wählerverein*, SSW), the Schleswig Party (*Slesvigske Parti*, SP) as well as with the minority culture organizations South Schleswig association (*Südschleswigscher Verein*, SSF) and the League of German People of North Schleswig (*Bund Deutscher Nordschleswiger*, BDN), the German Secretariat in Copenhagen (*Det Tyske Mindretals Sekretariat i København*, hereinafter "German Secretariat"), the Minority Commissioner of Schleswig-Holstein, hereinafter "SH-Commissioner" in Kiel and the German government's Minority Commissioner in Berlin, hereinafter "BRD-Commissioner", the Danish members of parliament from the Contact Committee for the Danish minority (*Sydslesvigudvalg*, hereinafter "Committee at Folketing (SU)"), the Chief Advisor from the Danish Ministry of Education's Minority Secretariat and with the Commissioner for Questions Regarding the German Minority and the Border Region from the German embassy in Copenhagen. The selection of interviewees includes representatives of the most important governmental and non-governmental actors engaged in the minority politics of the region.

The article is organized as follows: First, I provide necessary information on the DGBR and the two biggest national minorities in the region as an introduction to the field (Chapter 4.2). Further, I discuss the terms *elite* and *expert*, which seems necessary to sufficiently describe my interview partners. I also explain the value of expert interviewing for the social sciences and for my research interest in particular and discuss several aspects of data collection in this special field of interviewing (Chapter 4.3). In Chapter 4.4, I explain how I analyzed the data based on Mayring's qualitative content analysis, before I

present my findings in Chapter 4.5. The final Chapter is a summary of my findings and a conclusion (Chapter 4.6). I will begin with an introduction to the field of research.

## **4.2. Actors for minority participation in the DGBR**

Europe is inhabited by a plurality of cultural, linguistic, religious, and ethnic minorities. These minorities can be found everywhere in Europe, regardless if one thinks of the Catalans in Spain, the Lorrainers in France, the Danes in Germany, the Germans in Denmark, or the Sami in northern Scandinavia and Russia, just to name a few. The European populous census at the turn of the century counted 337 national and ethnic minorities with 103.5 million members (Pan 2008, 16). A big part of Europe's cultural diversity is rooted in this fact.

The recent past is characterized by a growing scientific interest in this cultural diversity and an increased societal awareness for minorities. This interest and awareness often goes hand in hand with attempts to protect the distinct cultural, linguistic, ethnic, or religious features where they are present and to revitalize them where they seem extinct. For example by teaching them to a new minority generation in minority schools. The attempts to do this are mostly of two kinds and they either fall in the category of protection or empowerment. Here protection is defined in a sense where "the receiver of protection is passive and thus remains an object of protection" and empowerment refers to an action that

**"goes beyond protection and activates the protected individuals or groups to become engaged in their own protection and to further empower themselves and others"**  
(Schaefer-Rolffs 2014, 87-88).

An example where protective and empowering attempts are highly successful can be found in the Danish-German border region with the German minority in *Sonderjylland* (South Denmark) and the Danish minority in *Schleswig-Holstein*



(North Germany). When I now discuss the DGBR I sometimes use the term *actor* to describe either minority organizations, government institutions, or decision makers that are relevant for minority political participation.

The Danes and the Germans in the Danish-German border region share a long history. That history testifies for a tremendous cultural exchange and fruitful coexistence but also for reciprocal misunderstandings and even war. This is not surprising, since the Schleswig territory has been ruled alternately by Danish, German, Prussian and Swedish sovereigns, reaching as far back as the early 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>21</sup> After a border revision in 1920 following the First World War, Denmark and Germany have officially acknowledged the other respective minority's existence for the first time and have since codified their status through the Bonn-Copenhagen Declarations in 1955. Since then, both countries have established consultative and compensatory bodies that protect the minorities' cultural heritage and the individuals that consider themselves part of either national minority. Most estimations count approximately 50.000 Germans and 20.000 Danes who consider themselves members of one or the other of the two minorities.<sup>22</sup>

Both groups are well organized and offer their members a complex network of associations. Both the German and the Danish governments financially support these minority organizations and associations.

Both minority groups, for example, have minority schools and kindergartens that are run by minority associations, namely the The Danish school association for South Schleswig (*Dansk Skoleforeningen for Sydslesvig*) in Germany and the German school and language association for North Schleswig (*Deutscher Schul- und Sprachverein für Nordschleswig*) in Denmark. The minority schools in Denmark and Germany usually hold the legal status of private schools and grant diplomas equivalent to those of public, that is, state-run schools.

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<sup>21</sup> For a detailed historic description of the border region *see* Fink 1958.

<sup>22</sup> In a recent working paper Schnapp and Schaefer-Rolffs question at least the estimates for the German side and have good reason to count around 100.000 Danish minority members. For further reading *see* Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp 2015.

Other highly relevant minority youth organizations in the region are the German Youth Association for North Schleswig (*Deutscher Jugendverband für Nordschleswig*) in Denmark and the South Schleswig Youth Associations (*Sydslesvigs danske Ungdomsforeninger*) in Germany. Aside from these youth organizations there are many actors that organize various social activities in Denmark as well as in Germany. These are, for example, library associations, minority newspapers, social services, linguistic groups, music associations, sports clubs and student organizations. Besides these more culturally and socially oriented organizations there are also institutions and organizations that deal with or are part of the political participation of both minorities. In the following Chapter I will briefly introduce only the most important politically active organizations. These are the *actors* I mentioned in the beginning of this chapter.

### 4.2.1. In Denmark

The BDN is responsible for all matters concerning the German minority in Denmark. It is the minority's main cultural organization but is also active in many other fields, such as minority politics and concerns related to social and economic issues (Lubowitz 2005, 379). The BDN is also responsible for reviewing legal proposals that could be of relevance for the minority in the Danish parliament (*Folketing*), and it is also the BDN's obligation to represent the minority's view on minority-related issues vis-à-vis politicians, political parties and governments.

The SP, is a regional party in southern Denmark and is a sub-organization of the BDN that forms the political representation of the German minority in Denmark. From 1953 to 1964, the SP was represented in the Folketing but has not won a seat in Parliament since then. The party last participated in national elections in 1971 and today is only active in regional and community politics. All party candidates and its leader are elected by the BDN's general assembly. The party's organizational structure consists of a board of directors as well as an executive board and four municipal boards, which run the party's daily affairs.

A special institution for the German minority in Denmark is the German Minority's Secretariat in Copenhagen (*Det Tyske Mindretals Sekretariat i København*, hereinafter "German Secretariat"). It was established in 1983 to compensate the minority for no longer being represented in the Danish national Parliament (*Folketing*). Its tasks are to monitor the Parliament's work by attending the plenary meetings and reviewing the parliamentary protocols and legislative proposals. The German Secretariat is officially entitled to represent the minority's political views towards the Parliament in general and towards committees in the Folketing in particular. In addition, the German Secretariat establishes and maintains contact with delegates from all parliamentary parties, the government and the ministerial departments. It informs the BDN of all issues and processes in Copenhagen concerning the German minority (*Det Tyske Mindretals Sekretariat i København* 2015). The head of the German Secretariat must always be a member of the minority and is elected by the BDN's board of directors for a period of three years. He or she is always a member of the most relevant advisory body for the German minority, namely the Contact Committee for the German Minority (*Kontaktudvalget for Det Tyske Mindretal*, hereinafter "Committee at Folketing (KU)"), which is affiliated with the Ministry of Culture.

The Committee at Folketing (SU) functions as a link between the Danish minority and the Danish parliament and was established in 1921. There are five members of parliament in the Committee at Folketing (SU), who come from the five biggest parties in parliament. The parliamentarians visit southern Schleswig and are expected to take part in some of the minority's activities and the committee may advise the ministers with regards to matters concerning the Danish minority in Germany (Ministeriet for Børn, Undervisning og Ligestilling 2015a).

The Contact Committee for the German Minority (*Kontaktudvalget for Det Tyske Mindretal*) was established in 1965 to negotiate and discuss political and cultural concerns of relevance with the minority. In addition to the

aforementioned head of the German Secretariat, the Committee today consists of the Minister of Children and Education, the Minister of Economy and Interior, a member from each party in the Folketing and three members from the minority's organizations. These latter three members are formally selected by the Minister of the Interior and Health, but are in effect chosen by their respective organizations (Ministeriet for Børn, Undervisning og Ligestilling 2015b).

The working processes between the Danish governmental administration and the Committee at Folketing (SU) which is responsible for issues of the Danish minority in Germany and the Committee at Folketing (KU) which is responsible for issues of the German minority in Denmark, receive administrative support from staff members of the ministry of Education. There is also a Chief Advisor at the Ministry of Education<sup>23</sup> (*Chefkonsulent*) for minority issues who is formally employed at the Ministry of Education although for issues regarding the Danish minority he or she reports to the Committee at Folketing (SU). Apart from the Chief Advisor there is also a head of Section employed at the Ministry of Education who solely deals with minority issues. Sometimes the staff is referred to as the "Minority Secretariat" at the ministry.

And finally the Commissioner for Questions Regarding the German Minority and the Border Region (*Beauftragter für Fragen der deutschen Minderheit und Kontakte im Grenzland*) is to be mentioned. He or she typically is Germany's assistant ambassador to Denmark. Among other things it is part of the assignment to establish direct contact between the German minority in Denmark and the German government in Berlin mainly by providing communication channels through the embassy in Copenhagen. A summary of the presented actors in Denmark is given in Table 6.

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<sup>23</sup> I did not know this position was of greater importance before I conducted the interviews but only found this out as more and more interviewees referred to his importance. In this way the Chief Advisor differs from all other actors presented here.

Table 6: Actors in Denmark

Institution	Abbreviation	Run by
Bund Deutscher Nordschleswiger	BDN	German Minority
Slesvigske Parti	SP	German Minority
German Minority's Secretariat in Copenhagen	German Secretariat	German Minority
Contact Committee for the Danish Minority	Committee at Folketing (SU)	Danish Parliament
Contact Committee for the German Minority	Committee at Folketing (KU)	Danish Parliament
Chief Advisor at the Danish Ministry of Education	Chief Advisor	Danish Government
Commissioner for Questions Regarding the German Minority and the Border Region	-	German Government

#### 4.2.2. In Germany

The *Südschleswigsche Verein*, or SSF, is the Danish minority's main cultural organization. It developed as such when the minority's membership number increased rapidly after the Second World War. The SSF's main board consists of five members. Two of the representatives come from SSF's regional organization (of which there are eight in total) and three representatives come from other connected clubs and organizations. The organization's administrative center is the General Secretariat in Flensburg. Today, the SSF not only acts as a cultural umbrella organization for about 25 smaller organizations and as a social point of reference for the minority members but it is also very active in representing and advocating minority political interests (Kühl 2005b, 483-484).

The *Südschleswigsche Wählerverband*, or SSW, has represented the Danish and the Frisian minority in Schleswig- Holstein since 1948 (Nonnenbroich 1972, 111). The party's main political and societal ideas have a Scandinavian social-democratic background and the party has a special interest in participatory public decision-making processes (SSW 2016). The party's status in German politics is quite special on account of the condition that the SSW is freed from the five percent threshold in federal and state elections. Despite this fact, the party has not taken part in national elections since 1961 and their turnout in regional and

federal elections have been volatile since then. Today the party is not only a minority party but also a regional party that deals with minority as well as regional issues (Henningesen et al. 1998, 431). After the regional elections in 2012, the SSW became part of a government coalition for the first time, winning a majority in parliament together with the social democrats and the green party.

The office of the Commissioner for Minorities and Culture of Schleswig-Holstein (*Beauftragte für Minderheiten und Kultur des Landes Schleswig-Holstein*, hereinafter “SH-Commissioner”) originated from an honorary office for border, regional and minority issues in 1988. He or she is appointed by the Minister-President of Schleswig-Holstein and is usually a member of its (major) governing party. In addition to the Danish minority, the SH-Commissioner is also responsible for the Frisian minority, the Sinti & Roma in Germany and cultural issues in the border region in general. The SH-Commissioner’s main task is to develop and uphold contact between the government and the minorities, but not to lobby directly for any minority’s political interests. Furthermore, he or she is the Minister-President’s main contact to the minorities in Schleswig-Holstein. The person in office is obliged to advise and inform the parliament of the *Bundesland* on all minority issues and also to maintain contact with the German minority in Denmark. The SH-Commissioner’s work is independent of the Danish minority presence in the Schleswig-Holstein parliament and the SH-Commissioner’s work continues even now that the SSW is a member of the governmental coalition including a seat at the cabinet table.

The Commissioner for Emigrant and Minority Issues of the German government (*Beauftragter der Bundesregierung für Aussiedlerfragen und Nationale Minderheiten*, hereinafter “BRD-Commissioner”) is concerned with the problems and special needs of the national minorities living in Germany and German minorities abroad. Together with the Minister of the Interior and one of his or her employees, two members of the factions of the Bundestag, three minority members and the SH-Commissioner, the BRD-Commissioner sits on the Advisory Committee for Questions Regarding the Danish Minority in the

Ministry of the Interior (*Beratender Ausschuss für Fragen der dänischen Minderheit beim Bundesministerium des Innern*). The duty of this special Committee is to discuss all government decisions that could affect the Danish minority and to ensure the minority's contact with the German government and the Bundestag.

The Danish Consulate General (*Dansk Generalkonsulat*) is responsible to ensure contact between the Danish minority and the Danish government in Copenhagen. In this task the consulate receives support from the Committee at Folketing (SU).

A summary of the presented actors in Germany is given in Table 7. After having established a general understanding of the institutional and organizational set-up we now turn to the fieldwork; that is a series of expert interviews with representatives and decision makers from the circle of actors described above.

Table 7: Actors in Germany

Institution	Abbreviation	Run by
<i>Schleswigscher Verein</i>	SSF	Danish Minority
<i>Südschleswigscher Wählerverband</i>	SSW	Danish Minority
Office of the Commissioner for Minorities and Culture of Schleswig-Holstein	SH-Commissioner	Schleswig-Holstein Government
Commissioner for Emigrant- and Minority Issues of the German Government	BRD-Commissioner	German Government
Advisory Committee for Questions Regarding the Danish Minority in the Ministry of the Interior	Committee at BMI	German Government
Danish Consulate General	Danish Consulate	Danish Government
Committee for questions concerning the German minority in the parliament of Schleswig-Holstein	Committee for the German minority	Schleswig-Holstein Parliament

### 4.3. Experts, elites and what they know

Having established a general understanding of the national minorities' situation in the Danish-German border region in the previous chapter, I will now provide information on the paper's data basis. The explanations in this chapter are subdivided into three parts.

In the first part I present theoretical considerations of relevance to my sampling. The special group of people that I chose to interview are classified as elites, or political elites to be more precise.

The second part of this chapter focuses on the cognitive interest that underlies my choice of interviewees. In this part I reflect on the knowledge that can be expected from my interviewees theoretically and what information I actually hope to receive. I call this expert knowledge.

The third part of this chapter is concerned with more practical research matters. In particular how contact was made with the interviewees and how the interviews were conducted will be discussed. Additionally, specific features of data collection amongst minority elites will be highlighted since to a degree they differ from field reports in the standard literature on -elite and expert interviewing.

### 4.3.1. Choosing interviewees due to their position

In this study I am interested in gaining information about processes of and interactions between actors in the field of the political participation of national minorities. Previous research in the border region has highlighted the importance of several institutional and organizational actors in the field as presented in Chapter 4.2.<sup>24</sup> To now gain further insight into processes of and interactions between actors, which go beyond studying information material and public statements, it was necessary to speak to people inside the organizations. All interviewees are either key decision makers in their institution or organization, have influence on policies, or are at least immediate witnesses to decision making processes in minority politics in the Danish-German border region. These persons are often referred to as *elites*. I use the word *elite* to describe my interviewees, although I am well aware of the fact that the term elite “can mean many things in different contexts” (Plesner 2011, 473) and “is as difficult

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<sup>24</sup> Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp 2014a ;Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp 2014b.



to define as democracy” (Best/Higley 2009, 332). Or as Harvey (2011, 432) puts it:

**“There is no clear-cut definition of the term ‘elite’ and given its broad understanding across the social sciences, scholars have tended to adopt different approaches”.**

Despite these assessments, many definitions of elites seem to lean in a certain direction. Scholars tend to use the term elite in a relational sense, defining elites with regard to their position or status compared to the researcher or the average person (Harvey 2011, 432). A focus on status and position of course also implies that people can gain and lose elite status over time. “Status and seniority [can] turn up as short-lived elements” (Plesner 2011, 473). Another scholar decided that he researches elites “the people I studied personally made or greatly influenced decisions, which have affected the life and wellbeing of the whole population” (Mikecz 2012, 485). Following this aspect of Mikecz’s definition, all persons I interviewed are people,

**“who are able, by virtue of their strategic positions in powerful organizations and movements, regularly and seriously to affect political outcomes and the workings of political institutions” (Best/Higley 2009, 329)**

and they have the “organized capacity to make real and continuing political trouble” (Higley/Burton 2006, 7).

I interviewed at least one leading official from every minority politics actor described above and they all hold a certain position within an organization or institution that has helped them acquire information and knowledge about minority politics which in turn is necessary to fulfil their often very complex duties or helps them fulfil such duties better. In my efforts to obtain interview partners I focused on managing directors, secretary-generals, chairmen, appointed commissioners and other top management - as opposed to middle

management - to make sure I communicated with actors with sufficient influence to get to the heart of policy matters.<sup>25</sup> By doing this I wanted to make sure that the people I talked to "have the power that the majority of people [...] lack, and [that] they make systematic use of their power" (Pakulski 2012, 10). This was crucial since

**“what distinguishes elites from non-elites is not job titles and powerful positions but the ability to exert influence through social networks, social capital and strategic position within social structures” (Harvey 2011, 433).**

Although I am interested in obtaining factual knowledge, I am aware and appreciate that the information I received is influenced by the interviewees' experience.<sup>26</sup> My interest is in hearing their own account of their involvement in the political participation of national minorities in the DGBR so that I can attain my own understanding from numerous perspectives.

Bearing in mind this aspect of different perspectives I completed eleven interviews with representatives of the SSW, SSF, BDN, SP, Committee at Folketing (SU), the German Secretariat, the Chief Advisor, the German embassy in Copenhagen, the SH-Commissioner in Kiel and the BRD-Commissioner in Berlin. I expect that the interviewed persons encompass a

**“political elite [and] interact through complex formal and informal networks that are most dense within functionally differentiated sectors where elite persons engage in the same kind of activity and share similar skills and information” (Best/Higley 2009, 330).**

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<sup>25</sup> Most people in relevant positions in any of the institutions and organizations happen to be men. For this reason, I have mainly talked to men. Out of the twelve people I conducted interviews with only two were female. My impression is that the male to female ratio in leadership positions is significantly more skewed in the field of internal minority politics than in Germany and Denmark in general.

<sup>26</sup> On the quality of expert knowledge *see*: Droussen, Han; Lenz, Hartmut; Blavoukos, Spyros (2005): “Assessing the Reliability and Validity of Expert Interviews”. In: *European Union Politics* 6 (3), 315-337.

On the basis of my research that will be discussed below, I define an expert interviewee in the DGBR as a person who holds a position of functional responsibility in the area of minority politics, has considerable practical experience and lengthy and consistent tenure within at least one minority area, possess a broad network of personal relationships within (at least one) minority area and has considerable expert knowledge concerning political participation of national minorities in the DGBR.

#### 4.3.2. Choosing interviewees due to their knowledge

The elites I described above have more things in common than a superior position or status; they have obtained knowledge about issues (minority politics) that other people have not (Gläser/Laudel 2010, 11). Bogner, Littig and Menz (2014, 12) classify such people as experts. They say that experts deal with certain expertise that is communicatively and reflexively available for them at all times. Later, the authors limit the group of people that they count as experts to those whose knowledge is not just present within them, but also becomes relevant for the actions of others because these rely on the experts' evaluation and their experience (Bogner/Littig/Menz 2014, 13). This means that the persons' knowledge must be practically relevant and not just theoretically existent for the person to become an expert.

To better understand how this special group of people is set apart from the masses, I want to explain how someone becomes an expert and start by pointing out the fact that there are numerous different reasons why people become experts and that they differ from case to case. Four examples highlighting the vast array of distinct ways to become an expert are presented here: (1) People may become experts in specific areas of their work when they deal with the same problem over and over again and acquire knowledge on how to better deal with the problem. (2) People may become experts with regards to their hobbies or other interests they pursue in their free time, because they are particularly interested in gathering information about the hobby or area of

interest. (3) People may become experts as a result of negative life experiences, be it crises or sicknesses, which they or their loved ones experience and as a consequence they increase their knowledge of the topic by reading up about it or by talking to other experts, such as doctors. (4) People become experts because they hold a certain position within an organization or institution and acquire information and knowledge that is necessary to fulfil their often very complex duties or that helps them to better fulfil such duties. In the first three examples mentioned it is not the sheer experience that renders those people experts, but the fact that they consciously obtain information and knowledge about their specific field of experience. The latter example portrays the case of the elites described above and will continue to stand at the center of interest here.

It is important to keep these distinctions in mind when identifying people as *experts or elites*. This does not imply that someone can only be one or the other. It is important to bear in mind though that while the term expert in its inherent meaning focuses on points like knowledge and experience as described above, the elite's reference points are often position and status. This becomes evident in the way elites and experts are reproduced. While the experts become experts by cognitive means, the reproduction of elites is often a social process where heritage and social status are the main factors (Bogner/Littig/Menz 2014, 13). And of course there are cases where experts are installed in certain positions of power, as is the case in my study. The criterion I followed when choosing my interview partners was that they are *elites* that have “disproportionate [overproportionate] societal power and influence” (Higley 2010, 163) and my interest lies in their *expert*-knowledge regarding the political participation of national minorities in the DGBR.

After having established the definition of experts for this paper, I will elaborate on why talking to them is of great relevance for the social sciences and my research interest in particular. Expert knowledge is relevant because social scientists examine contexts that they do not belong to and that they cannot fully

understand on their own. Social scientists further try to reconstruct those situations to the best of their knowledge by talking to different people (here: experts) and thus become experts on the topic themselves. Social scientists “attempt to understand the world from the subjects’ [experts’] points of view and unfold the meaning of their lived world [field of expertise]” (Kvale 2006, 481). I am interested in hearing the experts’ own account of their involvement in the political participation of national minorities in the DGBR to generate my own understanding from several perspectives.

It is highly beneficial for my research question to hear about the expert’s “beliefs, attitudes, and motives, in other words, the kind of information, which would be very hard, if not impossible, to obtain through surveys.” (Kvale 2006, 481). I do realize that to do this I have to adjust my interview style and always be aware that “studies on elite interviewing are unanimous that the power balance is likely to favour the informant over the researcher” (Welch et al. 2002, 615). I accept this because I am willing, not to say eager, to allow the interviewee to grant me insights into the situation. A research interview with an expert is not, as sometimes described, an “informal exchange of ideas, nor a dialogue in the philosophical sense of a reciprocal search for true knowledge by egalitarian partners” (Kvale 2006, 486). It is an artificial situation in which the research sets out to gain knowledge that will be analyzed employing certain analytical methods. This means that it is appropriate to intentionally let the interviewee be dominant. An expert interview is not a search for true knowledge between equal partners, as the expert mostly has no interest in the researcher’s knowledge. Thus, it is not a conversation based on the exchange of ideas but instead it is the researcher wishing to hear the interviewees’ opinions and not the other way around.

#### 4.3.3. Elite interviewing

Many researchers from different fields write that interviewing experts and elites is different from interviewing other people (Welch et al. 2002, 614). I will

comment on two topics that are repeatedly brought up in this connection and give an account of my experiences regarding the two points. These points are (1) contacting the experts and gaining access to them and (2) conducting the actual interview. I was expecting both to be very difficult, as the literature warns that “gaining access to elites [experts in my case] is hard enough; gaining their trust and building rapport with them is even more difficult” (Mikecz 2012, 482). My experiences were somewhat different.

#### *4.3.3.1. Contacting the interviewees*

Experts usually only have a limited amount of time for new appointments, which makes it necessary for the researcher asking for an interview to be flexible and willing to meet at any place suggested by the interviewees or gatekeepers. Gatekeepers are often the first people you talk to when contacting experts. They serve the experts by filtering contact attempts and thus regulate access to them. Gatekeepers are one of the main reasons some authors conclude that experts are hard to reach (Laurilla 1997; Mikecz 2012, 486).

I began contacting the experts I was looking to interview two months before my scheduled interview period a time frame that turned out to be sufficient for the experts to arrange for an interview appointment. In fact, some interviewees were able to offer appointments even sooner and I was able to conduct the first interview a month after the initial contact.

From the eleven experts I contacted via email only one did not reply. A second and third email to the non-respondent as well as a fourth contact attempt, with the help of one of the expert’s colleagues, did not lead to a response. All other contacted persons replied within a few days, occasionally within a few hours. Due to time restraints one interviewee requested a telephone interview instead of a face-to-face meeting. Referring to methodological necessities and the fact that “all other experts” were willing to do face-to-face interviews, I managed to convince the person to agree to a face-to-face situation nonetheless. One initial contact attempt made through a gatekeeper did not grant me access

to the two interviewees I initially planned to talk to but instead provided me with access to two equally interesting interviewees. One of the eleven conducted interviews was arranged by one of the interviewees.

As interviewees were spread out over cities and regions, travel and access had to be organized in advance but appointments also needed to be reconfirmed shortly before the interview. One interview was cancelled a day before a trip to the border region and a new appointment was scheduled for the day after. From the start, I never scheduled more than two interviews per day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon in order to have ample time for each interviewee and to be prepared for delays or other interruptions.

All in all contacting the elites was not as troublesome as the literature suggested. My experience in the field of research and the fact that I know the Danish and German society and culture probably affected the project positively. Understanding the respective national conventions and knowing the Danish and German society well helps to understand, to some extent, the expert's routines and ways of thinking.

Despite a busy schedule and my relatively low status (as a research associate) all participants were very friendly and helpful and most said they were happy to help with the study and to support the research project. This is interesting in so far as Welch et al. (2002, 625) consider the position of the "informed outsider", which describes a neutral outsider with an inside view, as very important. My experience is in accord with Welch's findings and I felt the experts mostly enjoyed the experience of having an informed discussion with me. Sabot (1999, 330) further writes that local elites [experts in my case] respond differently to researchers from their area as opposed to researchers from outside. Her findings show that foreign researchers are trusted more, as they are not perceived to pose a threat to the interviewees' status. This places outsiders at an advantage when obtaining information, as it is easier for them to obtain access. I also felt that being both a non-resident and working outside the border region improved my chances of access to my contacts.

I conclude that approaching the elite interviewees in my case was easier than the literature suggested. Gatekeepers did not pose a problem, neither were the elites' schedules nor matters of social status. The position of an informed outsider positively affected the project. I will now provide some insight on how the interviews were conducted.

#### *4.3.3.2. Conducting the interviews*

The conducted interviews can be categorized as semi-structured, in-depth, face-to-face interviews. This means that for each interview I had prepared interview cards carrying six open questions, i.e. semi-structured. The questions asked were very similar in all interviews, but always adapted to the interviewee's professional background and working position. I am well aware that the wording in which questions are phrased can alter how the question is interpreted and thus impact the interviewee's response. The decision to alter the questions nevertheless was made, as

**“what may be suicidal or impractical for one interviewer or in one situation may be feasible or even the best way to proceed for another interviewer or in another situation”  
(Dexter 2006, 32).**

However, the content of each question remained the same during each interview. The six questions concerned the interviewee's job position, his or her understanding of the institution or organization they are affiliated with, their main contact partners, other actors they found relevant and important and the general national minority situation in the border region. Similar to Mikecz (2012, 485) it helped me to have a set of questions at my disposal to cover all topics of interest but also to leave enough room for the interviewees to express their own thoughts, i.e. in-depth. Healey and Rawlinson (1993, 350) suggest that the researcher start the interview with an open question so that the content does not influence the response. This also provides the interviewer with more time to



build up trust and confidence. As all my questions were open, I chose to start with an introductory question that did not directly point at my research interest, instead asking the interviewees what knowledge they had about the internal structures of the minorities before they started working in the field professionally. This question worked very well in terms of getting the conversation started.

Besides the well-known fact that face-to face interviews produce better data, I also chose personal meetings with the experts because I was not sure how good my performance in the Danish national context would be and I believed I would handle the interview situation more appropriately in person as “cultural differences are more difficult to identify over the telephone” (Harvey 2011, 435). Even whilst preparing for the interviews but also while conducting them I attempted to be sensitive to cross-cultural differences in verbal and nonverbal communication, etiquette, beliefs and norms, as such differences “can easily lead to misunderstandings” (Mikecz 2012, 482). For example, Danish people are accustomed to calling others by their first name and address one another in the first person singular and not in formal plural using last names as is the custom in Germany. To not follow this custom is seen as immensely disturbing and uncomfortable in both Denmark and Germany.

Additionally to being sensitive to cultural differences and able to adapt to them, of further importance for the positive outcome of the interviews was my ability to communicate effectively in German, Danish and English. This proved to be crucial throughout the whole interview process and immensely increased my status with the interviewees as most experts were not expecting me to be multilingual, even though I had pointed this fact out during the contact phase. All interviews in Germany were conducted in German while one of the interviews in Denmark was held in Danish, one was conducted in English and the others were done in German. During *all* interviews though, the interviewees switched between German and Danish and sometimes English.

Healy and Rawlinson (1993) additionally emphasize the importance of social skills in interview situations and I feel that my social competence helped me to further improve the situation with the interviewees. I took Ezzy's advice to heart that "good interviews are not dominated by either the voice of the interviewer or the agendas of the interviewee" (Ezzy 2010, 164) and succeeded in creating a comfortable conversation environment for the interviewees. Still, I was always aware that a research interview is

**"not an open and dominance free dialogue between egalitarian partners, but a specific hierarchical and instrumental form of conversation, where the interviewer sets the stage and scripts in accord with his or her research interests" (Kvale 2006, 485).**

Even though I already knew much about the work context of most interviewees from my previous research I prepared for each interview by way of reading up on the interviewees, their position, their institution or organization and also scanned the local media (newspaper and internet) for their current involvement in public affairs. This proved to be very useful as it allowed me to ask further questions if I received information from an interviewee that contradicted my previously attained research knowledge and also it helped to build my self-confidence and interview tact. I fully agree with Laurila's (1997) and Mikecz's (2012) findings that in-depth knowledge improves the relations with the interviewees. You have to be an expert to interview experts.

All interviews were originally scheduled for an hour but took between 45 minutes and two hours. None of the interviewees objected to my request to record the interview and most did not even want to see the transcript of my recordings and said that they "trusted me", "had nothing to hide" and "would not say anything they would not say in public". Nevertheless in some rare incidents interviewees made limitations like "I ask you to not quote my next comment" or "I would appreciate it if the last comment is not published in your

work”. In all these cases though the interviewees’ statements were of a private matter. I conducted eleven interviews with twelve people in five cities in Germany and Denmark. The interviews in Denmark took place in Copenhagen and Aabenraa; the interviews in Germany took place in Berlin, Flensburg and Kiel.

As far as conducting the interviews themselves, my experiences are in accordance with most points of the literature. Cultural and social competences create a good interview atmosphere, to be able to communicate effectively in the interviewees preferred language raises the status of the interviewer, as does specific knowledge about the interviewee and their work.

#### **4.4. Analysis**

My data originate from eleven interviews with twelve persons accounting for a total of roughly ten hours and 45 minutes of audiotape and was professionally transcribed on 212 pages for analytic purposes (Appendix 1). The audios were transcribed in an easily readable form, meaning that dialects were transformed into standard language. Non-verbal content like “laugh” and “exclamation” were noted as well as long pauses and speaker changes. These transcriptions form the basis of my analysis.

The analysis was carried out with MAXQDA 11<sup>27</sup> following Mayring’s Qualitative Content Analysis (Mayring 2010<sup>28</sup>). This method of systematic interpretation aims to produce revisable results by means of specified analysis steps and analysis rules (Mayring 2010, 48). It is “applying a systematic, theory-guided approach to text analysis using a category system” (Kohlbacher 2006, 12). I did not follow every single step Mayring describes, as the method “is actually a package of techniques from which the analyst can chose and then adapt to his research question” (Kohlbacher 2006, 17). Further details of Mayring’s method

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<sup>27</sup> MAXQDA 11 is a software program developed and distributed by VERBI Software – Consult – Sozialforschung GmbH, Berlin.

<sup>28</sup> First published in 2000, I rely on the book’s 11th edition from 2010.

can be reviewed elsewhere<sup>29</sup>, here I will only describe the steps of systematic analysis that I have taken from Mayring's method.

Following Mayring, the analyzed material must always be interpreted through the lens of a model of communication, meaning it must be determined whether the communicator, the interview situation (situation of the text production), the socio-cultural background of the text itself or the message of the text are subject to analysis (Mayring 2010, 56). As I have pointed out earlier, the experts' knowledge, their experiences and assessments are of interest for the analysis; hence I am mostly interested in the text's actual content. In Mayring's terms I find the term "text message" to be the most fitting label for my research interest, though I am not fully content with it and prefer "text content", as I find the term message centers too much on the interviewee's agenda.

The interviews mainly dealing with the German minority were primarily conducted in Denmark (I call them "the Danish interviews") and the ones dealing with the Danish minority mainly took place in Germany (I call them "the German interviews"). This does not mean though, that an interview conducted for example in Copenhagen, could not also contain content regarding the Danish minority in Germany. The terminology "German" or "Danish" interview is a mere simplification for reasons of readability. Since it is relevant whether the interviewee primarily works with or for the Danish or the German minority, I organized the interviews accordingly into two groups and analyzed them separately.

Another decision I made before analyzing the data was with regards to the size of my analytical units. This could for example be words, sentences or whole paragraphs according to the research purpose. Analogous to Mayring (2010, 49), I kept the decision for the size of my analytical units quite open. In the end the analytical units ended up being mostly sentences but in some cases were larger units if the relevant content would otherwise not be understandable.

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<sup>29</sup> See: Mayring, Philipp; Gläser-Zikuda, Michaela (2005): "Die Praxis der Qualitativen Inhaltsanalyse". Weinheim and Basel: Beltz. See also: Mayring Philipp (2010).

The next systematic step was to define and develop a category system for my analysis. As the categories and the category system constitute the central instrument of qualitative content analysis and the construction of and reasoning for the chosen categories are of utmost importance (Mayring 2010, 49), I will explain the decisions I made in detail.

I had certain expectations regarding what I would find in the material. My research interest to collect information about how minority politics in the Danish-German border region function undoubtedly inserted unconscious expectations and hopes as to what I might discover. Since I have been researching the national minorities in the border region for five years now and have met several representative figures in earlier contexts I was expecting to hear mentions on certain topics. This also contributed to the fact that while conducting the interviews I noticed certain pieces of information that I thought surely would be of interest for my analysis. Despite these considerations I did not have prefabricated analysis categories in mind nor was I following a specific theoretical framework as I see my research interest as being somewhat explorative. Taking all this information into account, I find my method of category building to be of a kind Mayring would label *inductive* (Kohlbacher 2006, 19). Accordingly, the decisions for a category or code and the labelling of the like was solely made on the basis of the structure of the text and the analysis unit's content.

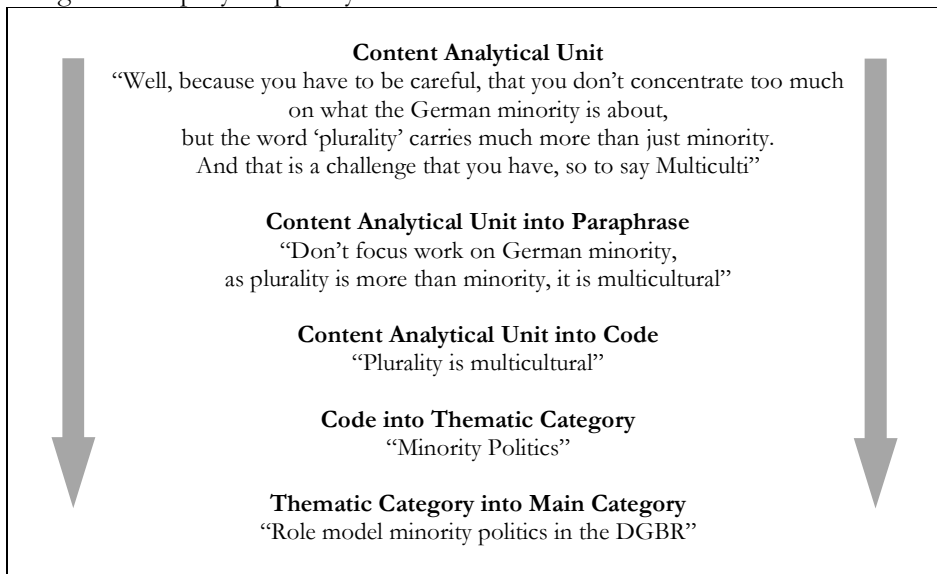
In order to determine an initial set of categories and to converge on category definitions (Kohlbacher 2006, 19), I began working on two interviews, one being from Denmark and one from Germany. I did this by tentatively attaching codes to all content analytical units I deemed possibly relevant for my research interest. The units of analysis were simultaneously paraphrased in a way where I tried to be as minimalistic as possible and as precise as necessary. After coding the two interviews, I took a closer look at my codes, revised and adjusted some of them, edited the labelling and paraphrasing and deleted a couple.

I then began analyzing the remaining nine interviews, starting with the ones that mainly dealt with the German minority; the interview I had analyzed initially was analyzed again as the last in this series. While analyzing the interviews, I altered some codes and developed new codes, which originally had not been decided on. The Danish interviews were processed in the same manner; new codes emerged that had not occurred in the German interviews or the Danish test coding.

After all interviews were coded, I reviewed the codes and paraphrases once more and re-checked all codes that emerged during the coding process and after the initial code check at the start of the process. This proved to be a very time consuming and difficult task as I was dealing with over 500 coded analytical units. I am nevertheless convinced that it was a necessary step that tremendously enriched the quality of my analysis.

When I was satisfied with the coding, labelling and paraphrasing of all analytical units, I started grouping the codes into thematic categories to gain a better overview of the information I had gathered and to increase the “level of abstraction” (Kohlbacher 2006, 19). The aforementioned thematic categories were again grouped into sets of larger categories adding another level of abstraction to the material. An example of the analytical process is shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Step-by-step analysis



After a thorough revision I defined four main categories to further analyze the material. They can be described as follows:

1. **“Role model minority politics in the DGBR”** contains statements about the general minority situation in the Danish-German border region, minority politics in general and views on the area as a role model.
2. **“Citizen contact”** summarizes all information concerning the question whether the interviewed experts or the leadership of their institution or organization is in contact (regularly or not) with minority members on either side of the border or not.
3. **“Working relations”** provides insight to the network of work relations for every actor in the analysis. This is by far the biggest part of the analysis as it contains not only information on who every respective actor works with, but also how this actor works and when and why they come in touch with other actors.
4. **“Important actors”** summarizes which actors are seen as most important for the political participation for the Danish and German national minorities in the

Danish-German border region. This analysis focuses on identifying actors that several other actors ascribe great importance to.

The analysis' coding scheme is enclosed in this dissertation (Appendix 4).

#### **4.5. Findings on minority politics in the DGBR**

The following chapter presents my findings concerning each of the four main categories and provides examples from the material to further justify my categorization and clarify the partitioning of my analysis. I present my findings in an order that provides the most comprehensive access to the situation in the border region and not in order of importance for my research interest. I use quotes to exemplify my argumentation and provide the reader with the ability to retrace my evaluation. Most interviews were conducted in Danish or German and not in English but I will present all quotes in English as a direct translation of what the interviewees have said. While using direct translations I retain grammatical faults and pauses to allow for the picture to be as authentic as possible.

##### **4.5.1. Role model minority politics in the DGBR**

Five different interviewees in Denmark and Germany referred, sometimes repeatedly, to the exemplary situation of minority-majority relations in the region. One interviewee from the SSF described it as “a success story titled: The cooperation and the participation between national minorities and majority population” (I 03, 7, 27-28) and was specifically referring to the minorities' cooperation with regional and national governments. Although all representatives for the most part shared this view, one interviewee explicitly pointed out what others only implicitly incorporated in their statements. He said: “and that we are always a model, I think that is wrong, because you will never be able to copy it one to one” (I 04, 1, 6-8). A BDN representative did not generally deny seeing the arrangements in the region as exemplary but he, as others did as well, was referring to the fact that the model developed historically



and was therefore a “very unique model” (I 04, 11, 2). Interviewees from both minorities and from governments also mentioned the importance of the Bonn-Copenhagen Declarations for the positive national minority situation in the DGBR (I 10, 1, 30). A summary of what might be transferable from the Danish-German set-up is that the Bonn-Copenhagen Declarations represent the willingness and the effort of Denmark and Germany to implement “a model of negotiation, that is, even if this sounds a bit funny, is based on trust” (I 04, 11, 3-5), but is secured by “check and \*laughs\* balances between Denmark and Germany” (I 04, 5, 23). All in all, the situation in the border region seems to be at a very high standard. The interviewees did not articulate anything pointing to a majority-minority cleavage.<sup>30</sup> For example, in Germany I learned that compared to the problems other minorities have, the Danish minority “has their own platform and is fairly treated, things are looking pretty good” (I 03, 7, 6-9), and they receive so to say “benevolence from all sides” (I 01, 8, 35-36).

Nevertheless, it still is, and probably may be for a long time, necessary “that somebody has to keep an eye on it, so that there are no distortions or frictions in whatever sense” (I 11, 13, 15-16).

### **Role model region**

The historically developed cooperation between the German and Danish minority and especially the developments in recent years has fostered the prosperity of both minority cultures and is commonly praised. Apart from helping themselves by working together, the minorities also feel that the Danish and German governments acknowledge the positive effect the two minorities have as bridge-builders between the two countries and as a means of promoting their own culture in the other country. An often used metaphor is what I would translate as *front-garden metaphor*, “forhave” (Slumstrup 2006) in Danish. In the

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<sup>30</sup> “Cleavage” in the sense of societal conflict lines as Lipset and Rokkan describe them. *See*: Lipset, Seymour Martin; Rokkan, Stein (1967): “Party Systems and Voter Alignments. Cross-National Perspectives”. New York: Free Press.

metaphor from Denmark's point of view you would see Schleswig-Holstein as the Danish front-garden and

**“everyone that has a house knows that you arrange the front-garden especially beautiful, so that everyone outside can see, even if there aren't the best flowers, it has to be something very beautiful everywhere...” (I 04, 30, 18-20).**

This thinking also works the other way around for Germany.

Owed to the present minority situation and surrounding conditions that were established following the Bonn-Copenhagen Declarations, minority politics are effective in the border region (I 02, 2, 2-7; I 10, 9, 30-32). Ways to successful minority politics described in the interviews are twofold. The first being lobbying which opens the possibility to informally and repeatedly meet government officials, parliamentarians or administrative personnel in key positions. This is seen as a very effective instrument to introduce the minorities' political agenda to the political elites in Kiel, Copenhagen or Berlin and to persuade politicians to act in the minorities' best interest (I 02, 13, 14-15; I 04, 18, 9-13). An equally important option for minority politics is for the minorities to be directly represented in relevant committees and on advisory boards, to discuss and decide *together* with politicians and bureaucrats from within the majority population and to be responsible for decisions that directly affect the minorities (I 10, 9, 21-23). But in this context the minority officials also acknowledge their *relatively* limited size (and hence assess their problems' *relatively* limited significance for the politics of their host state): “[Y]ou have to turn a bigger wheel there. It is easier, when you are actually sitting at the table, so much is clear” (I 01, 08, 22-23).

### **Minority Politics**

I stated earlier, concerning the field of minority politics, that it is an interesting field of politics and society and that interest in it has grown in the recent past.

Minority officials feel minorities can use this fact to further their own concerns and make minority politics an issue between resident and kin-state<sup>31</sup>, if all other measures fail (I 11, 16, 18-19). Involving the kin-state as an agent for the minority often adds additional political pressure on the host state to deal with the respective problem. But it is not just public interest or the state's sense of responsibility that has changed, also the minority as actor has changed over the last decades (I 04, 1, 20-21). Different questions have arisen and different problems have become relevant. All in all, the minority situation has improved, but at the same time it has also become more complex. Minority representatives have h Only when the SSW is part of the regular political game ad to educate themselves in new fields of politics and how to shift their modes of operation in changing environments (I 03, 1, 35-36; I 01, 1, 32-33). Interviewees had problems stating these changes more precisely but it seemed that they were referring to the

**“interaction between the committees they are part of, but also [to] this dialogical participatory process, being in direct contact with governments and parliaments, which is important” (I 10, 9, 25-27).**

The changing significance of minority politics in public perception and the growing requirements towards minorities to educate themselves in regards to policy areas have led to a growing professionalization of minority politics and minority representation. Several minority officials pointed out that a big part of their daily business is to organize and professionalize minority politics in their organizations and to make even better use of instruments for political participation (I 01; I 02; I 03).

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<sup>31</sup> The state to which a group refers and that is not the state of residence is often called “kin-state” (Kühl 2005a, 15).

### **On Denmark in particular**

Concerning the situation for the German minority in Denmark, representatives of the BDN and SP said that it is a great advantage for the minority that they can preserve their neutrality on issues that occur at the national level. Interviewees emphasized that this political neutrality enables the minority to form alliances and coalitions for relevant policy issues. To give an example:

**“you get a coalition done between communists and *Venstre* [the conservative party] who then stand together for the interests of our schools and force the social democrats to come around” (I 04, 12, 30-32).**

Also the minority party’s neutrality is important because the minority itself is “a political mirror of the Danish society” (I 04, 13, 15-16) and consists of voters from the whole party spectrum. The German minority does not see itself as a segregated societal group but as an integrated part of it or as one SP official put it: “[We do not have] an integration problem, we are right in the middle” (I 02, 5, 27). The different minority representatives from SP and BDN mentioned that minority politics in Denmark is often unanimous and, to a large extent, not very polarizing. From a German point of view on Denmark this reads

**“because of the minority-friendly political climate of opinion, the German minority does well understand, even though they don’t have their own representative in parliament, to win support for their concerns across party lines” (I 10, 9, 4-7).**

### **On Germany in particular**

What stands out when analyzing the situation in Germany are comments concerning the plethora of minority organizations that seem to be active in the political (often monetary) dealings of the Danish minority. It is mentioned that in Denmark the BDN represents the minority towards the outside and is the

contact for all government officials, while the situation in Germany is quite different, as a Danish ministry representative highlights when commenting on Germany. “[T]here’s eleven different organizations and they hardly have any cooperation to speak of, it’s eleven small isolated kingdoms” (I 05, 2, 18-19). It is pointed out that the Danish minority is organized in a flexible manner and that all relevant Danish minority organizations (accounts vary between eleven and thirteen) very pronounced when it comes to their independence. These organizations seem to take extra care to be visible outside the minority and to represent the minority towards the outside. The organizational setup within the Danish minority is somewhat tinted by rivalry amongst the actors. This being said, everybody involved in the interviews highlighted the excellent cooperation between all Danish minority organizations and German officials and positively pointed out the linearity and non-hierarchical construction of Danish minority organizations in Germany (I 11, 14, 24-25).

#### 4.5.2. Citizen contact

In the course of all interviews I had the opportunity to ask the experts if they ever come in contact with minority members or if they, for example, remembered a recent episode where this happened during the course of their work. The answers to those questions vary and this chapter presents an overview on the different responses. The question in point here is the experts themselves, i.e. those in leadership positions, have immediate contact or are approached during their work and not whether the actors (organizations, institutions) as a whole are in contact with minority members.

#### **In Germany**

From the SSW I learned that this happens more often than not. Minority members directly contact their leadership often when they have questions concerning the German government’s policies affecting the minority. Most people contact the party leadership via email or telephone. One interviewee

remembered two or three specific incidents in the last year, but while thinking about it, he said; “it happens less often. Because there are not so many things any more, where you have problems” (I 01, 12, 17-18).

The SSF leadership regularly takes part in regional meetings and events. They are also available via phone and email, and members of the SSF regularly make use of these possibilities. One interviewee could not recall a recent case though.

The Office of the SH-Commissioner is frequently contacted by minority members, who commute between Germany and Denmark and have questions regarding commuting or by minority members who have school related issues. Here the office often refers them to the *Danske Skoleforeningen for Sydslesvig* (Danish school association) but sometimes gets involved itself and for example “explains the head of a school that there is a national minority \*laughs\* and \*laughs\* where the minority’s rights and demands are” (I 11, 19, 14-15). Also the SH-Commissioner meets minority members during her free time and when she attends official events.

The BRD-Commissioner also meets minority members when he is at events in the border region but otherwise he mostly deals with officials. His office is a public office though and sometimes people reach out to him via email. Although this is rather uncommon.

### **In Denmark**

At SP contact with the base minority is delegated to regional and sub-groups that assure communication with the leadership in meetings and assemblies. While of course they meet other minority members during their free time, during their daily political work this contact is limited.

The BDN refers to local clubs that the interviewees frequently visit if possible and also that they are always reachable via telephone and email. “[I]t has always been my principle that I am not further away than the next telephone” (I 09, 19, 2-3).

The German Secretariat in Copenhagen gets contacted a lot by pupils, students or commuters asking for advice regarding cross-border issues and often cross-border family matters end up being discussed in the secretariat's office. Owing to the fact that the German secretariat is in Copenhagen and not in the border region, most contact is made via telephone or email though.

I would like to report one issue that describes pretty well how novel requests for help can be. I was told the story of a Dane (a member of the German minority) who wanted to play in the orchestra of the German military. Following the orchestra's regulations only German citizens may play in the orchestra but the Dane felt, as he is a member of the German minority, he should be allowed to join as well. The German Secretariat took up his issue and contacted the German Ministry of Defence and caused a major uproar. Finally after some time and several attempts they were able to have the ministry issue an exception. In the end, the Dane had a change of heart and decided against joining the orchestra. The German Secretariat was still satisfied with the case, knowing they could have had their way (I 04, 28, 26-37).

From time to time the Chief Advisor at the Ministry of Education in Copenhagen, who is responsible for the Committee at Folketing (SU) and the Committee at Folketing (KU) is contacted by members of the German and Danish minority. In most cases, however, it is about sorting out which minority organization is best suited to take up the problem and then remit the issue. But sometimes he is contacted because minority members encounter some kind of problem with a minority organization or institution and hope to receive help from the ministry. In those cases where

**“they encounter some kind of problem where they don't feel that their organizations are listening to them or because hey, we have a problem here because even though our children are supposed to receive education in Danish, there's too much German spoken in the classroom or those kinds of problems”**  
(I 05, 10 9-12)

the German secretariat has to decline the request as they do not interfere with such minority internal problems.

#### 4.5.3. Working relations

This chapter provides an overview over the working relations between actors involved in the political participation of national minorities in the DGBR as I reconstruct them from my data. This is a vital part with regards to the research question “How do minority politics in the Danish-German border region work?”, and with the insights the results render it will be possible to reconstruct the involvement of all.

This chapter is constructed as follows: first, I will lay out what the interviewees said about the respective actor they are working for. I also summarize what working relations with other actors the interviewee’s actor has. I refer to relations with regards to the political participation of the Danish and German minority. The first results presented will be those for the actors in Denmark, followed by the ones for the actors in Germany. In each chapter I first report on the actors from inside the national minority. After that I report on the governmental actors.

##### 4.5.3.1. *National minority participation in Denmark*

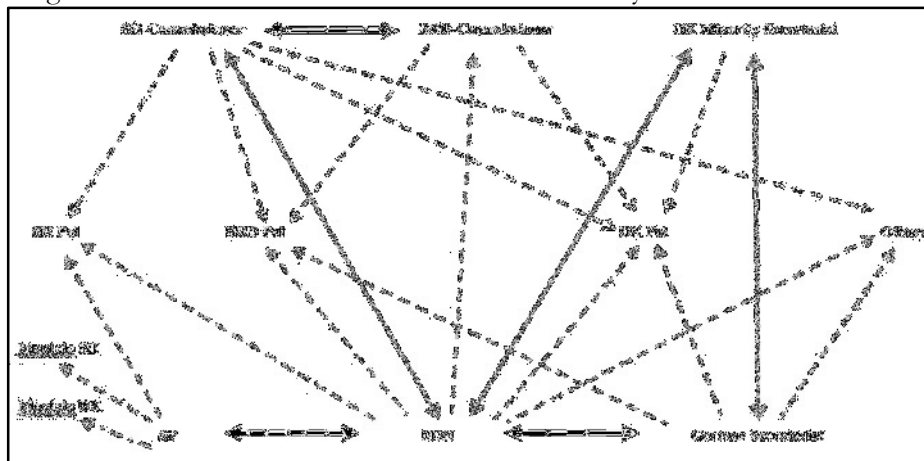
In Denmark the political participation of the German minority is ensured through the minorities’ cultural umbrella association *Bund Deutscher Nordschleswiger* (BDN), their party *Slesvigske Parti* (SP) and their interest representation in Copenhagen *German Secretariat in Copenhagen*. While SP is only active in the border region and the German Secretariat only in Copenhagen, the BDN is active in both areas. Other actors included in the interview series are the *Chief Advisor at the Danish Ministry of Education* (Chief Advisor) who is in charge of the Danish states minority politics on an administrative level and the Committee at Folketing (SU) and the Committee at Folketing (KU) of the



Danish parliament. Both bodies are contact committees for either Danish Minority in Germany (SU) or the German minority in Denmark (KU).

In Figure 4 I have mapped the network for the German minority. As a complete network figure would be too hard to read I condensed some actors into groups. *SH Pol* for example stands for politicians from Schleswig-Holstein and includes members of parliament, the government, commissions as well as councils from Schleswig-Holstein. The same procedure was applied on the national level summarizing Danish politicians into *DK Pol* and German politicians in *BRD Pol*. *Municip SH* and *Municip DK* stand for the municipalities in the border region. The actor *Others* includes all actors mentioned in the text but not assigned to one of the summarized categories or represented in a separate category.

Figure 4: Relations network for the German Minority



---> One-way interaction    <==> Two-way interaction    <==> Intense two-way relation  
 Pale color indicates involvement of minority actor. Dense color indicates interaction of non-minority actors.

**Responses concerning Bund Deutscher Nordschleswiger (BDN)**

The BDN is the umbrella organization of the German minority and is strongly involved in fostering the minority’s cultural work. The BDN for example provides accounting and further administrative assistance for many minority organizations. Beside cultural related tasks in the border region, the BDN is also

active in Copenhagen, Kiel and Berlin (I 08, 3, 31). It represents the German minority towards the outside (non-minority actors) and is the first contact point for all actors from outside looking to contact the minority. Seeing that the SP is, in principle, a committee of the BDN, both organizations closely work together. Another one of the BDN's activities is to acquire funding in Copenhagen and Berlin, keep the Danish society informed about the German minority and lobby on behalf of the minority (I 08, 3, 34-1). To do this effectively the BDN is well connected with politicians and all political parties in Denmark and Germany, in particular with those in Schleswig-Holstein. The BdN also maintains good relations with the governments in Copenhagen, Kiel and Berlin. Another relevant aspect of the BDN's political work is their collaboration with the *Nordschleswig-Gremium* (Committee for the German minority) at the parliament in Kiel, the Contact Committee for the German minority in Berlin, The Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN), SSF, several border associations and the Minority Commissioner in Kiel and Berlin.

### **Responses concerning Slesvigsk Parti (SP)**

The political party representatives of the German minority see the SP as a relevant and effective actor in the border region because they know the two political systems of Germany and Denmark well. As already mentioned the SP is formally a committee of the BDDN, hence there is no separate party membership. The SP and BDN agree on how to divide the workload for advocating the minority's interests (I 02, 10, 23-25). Due to this agreement the SP is not, to a large extent, active in Berlin or Copenhagen but it is mainly active on the region level. In the region though, the SP is a very important actor but remains neutral when it comes to Danish party politics. However, in matters of the region and in matters of plurality the SP takes a distinct stand. A spokesman of the SP even voiced the opinion that the SP could take part in national elections and would possibly even win a seat in the parliament due to the party's good reputation in the border region. But the SP is a minority party and a

regional party and as such wants to limit its work to the border region (I 02, 5, 36-37; I 04, 25, 3-20; I 09, 13, 14-17). In their political efforts the SP creates policies that sit in the middle of the party spectrum and can tackle regional problems especially well because it can do so without having to concern itself with the opinions of a national party (I 02, 5, 3). Owing to their status the SP works very closely with the BDN as well as with other actors in the border region. The SP works particularly with municipalities in Denmark and all other parties in their region. But the SP also works in cross-border issues with municipalities in Germany (near the border) and with the *Euro Region Sønderjylland-Schleswig*.

### **Responses concerning the German Secretariat in Copenhagen**

Similar to statements from the BDN and SP, the Secretariat's representative also mentioned the importance of its neutrality in national politics. As the Secretariat works with all parties, their work is not affected by who is in government. A self-critical notion concerning the Secretariat's work was made in the direction that the Secretariat is faced with a legitimacy problem, because they are a lobbying office albeit with a non-elected staff (I 04, 11, 21-25). Nevertheless, this lack of legitimacy is acceptable to the minority as the Secretariat is viewed as being of greater effectiveness for the concerns of the minority than having a seat in parliament (I 08, 9, 32-33; I 04, 11, 26-28). Concerning specific tasks it was made clear that the Secretariat has one assignment and that is to foster the interests of the German minority. To do this, it maintains a network with politicians and makes new contacts with parliamentarians. The German Secretariat also helps to establish contacts between Danish and German politicians and evaluates Danish politics for politicians in Schleswig-Holstein. Furthermore, the staff of the German Secretariat gives talks and keeps actors informed about the German minority in general. Apart from that, the German Secretariat is the official contact for everyone from the outside that wishes to contact the minority in Copenhagen. With its location in Copenhagen the German Secretariat works

with the German Embassy in Copenhagen as well as with Danish politicians and parliamentarians from the *Folketing*. In their efforts to foster minority interests the German Secretariat works with SSF representatives in Copenhagen. The German Secretariat also works with the Contact Committee for the German minority in Berlin.

### **Responses concerning the Chief Advisor at the Danish Ministry of Education**

The working processes between the Danish governmental administration and the Danish parliament, i.e. the Committee at Folketing (SU) which is responsible for issues of the Danish minority in Germany and the Committee at Folketing (KU) which is responsible for issues of the German minority in Denmark, are arranged in a way that needs to be further explained. Both committees receive administrative support from the Ministry of Education's staff and they have a Chief Advisor for minority issues (*Chefkonsulent*) who is formally employed at the Ministry of Education but reports to the Committee at Folketing (SU) on issues regarding the Danish minority (I 05, 1, 19-20). Apart from the Chief Advisor a head of Section is also employed at the Ministry of Education and he or she solely deals with minority issues for both minorities. When people in the administration refer to the staff's work for the Danish minority, the term "Minority Secretariat" is used but when dealing with the German minority, the staff of the "Minority Secretariat" are just "normal" civil servants employed by the ministry and answerable to the minister. The term "Minority Secretariat" is not used even if they do the same secretarial work for the Committee at Folketing (KU) as they do for the Committee at Folketing (SU). All formalities aside, it is important to be aware that there is no further institutionalized knowledge of the two minorities in the Ministry of Education or in the *Folketing* apart from the Chief Advisor (I 05, 8, 33-34) and the administrative structure described above. When I refer to the Minority Secretariat at the Ministry of Education I primarily refer to the Chief Advisor and staff of the Ministry of

Education that deal with minority issues. It is the Minority Secretariat of the Ministry of Education that prepares the sessions for both Commissions and the respective decision making papers. The Chief Advisor works closely with the German Secretariat concerning issues of the German minority and handles the daily business of the Committee at Folketing (SU) (I 04, 14, 16). The Chief Advisor is in standing contact with the German Secretariat, the SSF.

### **Responses concerning the Sydslesvigudvalg (SU)**

Each party nominates a delegate for the Committee at Folketing SU and delegates are then appointed by the Minister of Education. Members of the SU come from all parties but the SU's work is described as cross-party. Decisions are mostly unanimous and the SU is, most of the time, on the side of the minority (I 06, 05, 9-11). Being a member of the SU "is something you can scale up and down. You don't have to get very involved and you can get very involved" (I 05, 6, 14-15) as the SU is the link between the *Folketing* and the Danish minority. The SU informs the Danish society about the Danish minority, advises the government on questions regarding the Danish minority and decides on funding for the minority as such. But the SU also acts on behalf of both minorities when they feel this is necessary. They have, e.g. been

**“putting pressure on the government and the ministries even though they are actually representing the same political parties. So my chairman has been very vocal, a very vocal fighter for the German, for the Danish minority even though he represents the same political party as the Minister of Education.” (I 05, 7, 6-9).**

Apart from that, the SU works with the Danish border association *Grænseforeningen*, the school association *Skoleforeningen* in Schleswig Holstein the SH-Commissioner in Kiel and with the Danish Consulate General.

### **Responses concerning the Kontaktudvalg (KU)**

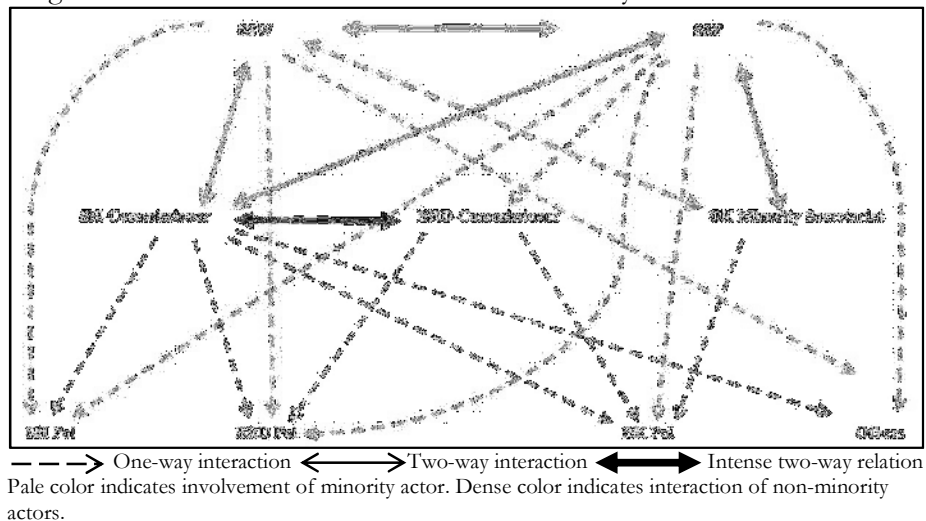
The Committee at Folketing (KU) consists of five or six minority members and one member from each party in the Danish parliament. The KU finds solutions when there is a problem that cannot be dealt with on an administrative level, e.g. issues the German Secretariat and the Minority Chief Advisor cannot solve on a day-to-day basis. The KU is to be understood as a forum or a platform where the minority can bring up issues that demand political initiative. The committee does not work with other actors on a regular basis as most of its business is handled by the Chief Advisor.

#### *4.5.3.2. National minority participation in Germany*

In Germany, the political participation of the Danish minority is ensured by the minorities' main cultural organization *Südschleswigscher Verein* (SSF) and their political party *Südschleswigscher Wählerverband* (SSW). While SSF is the most prominent minority actor in Berlin and Copenhagen, SSW leads the minority work in Schleswig-Holstein. Further actors that were included in the interview series are the Office of the *Commissioner for Minorities and Culture of Schleswig-Holstein* and the *Commissioner for Emigrant and Minority Issues of the German Government*. Both offices work as a kind of contact liaison between the minority and their respective government.

In Figure 5 I have mapped the relations network for the Danish minority. As a complete network figure would be too hard to read I again condensed some actors into groups. *SH Pol* for example stands for politicians from Schleswig-Holstein and includes members of parliament, the government, commissions and councils from Schleswig-Holstein. The same procedure was applied on the national level, summarizing Danish politicians into *DK Pol* and German politicians in *BRD Pol*. The actor *Others* includes all actors mentioned in the text but not assigned to one of the summarized categories or represented in a separate category.

Figure 5: Relations network for the Danish Minority



### Responses concerning Südschleswigscher Verein (SSF)

Given that “culture is the platform that the minority stands on” (I 03, 2, 37-1) and because the SSF is the cultural umbrella organization of the Danish minority, it tries to provide a framework for the minority in the same sense “a church [does] for a community” (I 04, 3, 18-19). That being said, the SSF defines culture as having two main branches.

**“For one it's culture, theatre, concerts and this is done and we have another worry that is the caring for the interest concerned minority and that is of course minority politics” (I 03, 3,23-25).**

Repeatedly an SSF representative stated that who calls themselves an “active” minority member must be a member of the SSF. The work SSF does in cultural and political branches is described as very professional but in the political branch it has to act even more professional. This is owed to the fact that the SSF is the “main instrument for participation between minority and majority” (I 04, 4, 4) and that the SSF is the minority's “main actor in foreign political regards” (I 04, 4, 9-10) as they do lobbying and information work for the minority. For example, the SSF informs new members of the Danish parliament of the existence of the

Danish minority and explains what the Danish minority in Germany is. The SSF then fosters relations with politicians and maintains its networks, especially with members of parliament, the Danish government and with the Committee at Folketing (SU) in Copenhagen. In doing all this, the SSF works very closely with the SSW, especially in Berlin, i.e. the German parliament and government. Last but not least the SSF also works with the SH-Commissioner, is involved in FUEN and participates in the Minority Council's work in Berlin.

### **Responses concerning Südschleswigscher Wählerverband (SSW)**

The SSW understands itself as a minority party, also for the Frisians, and estimates that over 90% of SSW members are also members of other minority clubs (I 01, 3, 21-23). The party is also attractive for majority population voters since as a regional party they attempt to position themselves clearly within the party spectrum. In order to be able to compete on a level political playing field with the other parties, the SSW representatives emphasize they need to be freed from the five percent threshold. A competition at eye level would not be possible without the exemption. Only when the SSW is part of the regular political game (is represented in parliament) they can articulate their politics, which are relevant for both the minority as well as the majority population, in a satisfying way. The SSW has recently become even more politically involved since it now is part of Schleswig-Holstein's government, a goal they have been striving for. An important strategy they have always followed was trying to find a majority for their minority politics in order to be part of the decision making process (I 01, 5, 37-38). The SSW works very closely with the SSF and tries to coordinate work concerning all minority issues. In Schleswig-Holstein the SSW works together with all parties and nowadays especially with the governmental parties as they are part of the government now. Another working partner for the party is the SH-Commissioner in Kiel. A member of the SSW also mentioned his involvement in the Minority Council and the Contact Committee for the Danish minority in Berlin. Contacts to Denmark seem a bit scarce even if the party



works with the SP in the border region and with the Committee at Folketing (SU) in Copenhagen. During the course of the interviews co-operations with the SSW, the European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI) and the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) were mentioned.

### **Responses concerning the Office of the Commissioner for Minorities and Culture of Schleswig-Holstein (SH-Commissioner)**

The SH-Commissioner is an honorary office. This fact is of great importance since the SH-Commissioner must be independent, autonomous and passionate to be able to do her job and can only be independent if the office is honorary (I 11, 4, 3-6; I 11, 11, 3-6). During one legislature the office was a public office and led to obvious problems, as shown in Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp (2015) and was explicitly expressed during the interviews:

**“And that was the point at that time when Ms. Schwarz [former Commissioner] was full-time, meaning she was paid. And that was in line with party discipline and she was told what to say and what not and what she could sign and what not and that is normal in such an employment. And that was at that point a critical weakness of this construction that she could not say 'Well, not like that'.” (I 11, 12, 15-20).**

Despite highlighting the importance of the Commissioner’s independence it must be said that the SH-Commissioner nevertheless has a very close relationship with the Minister-President of Schleswig-Holstein. As the SH-Commissioner often works in the background and uses a personal network and “silent diplomacy” (I 11, 10, 15) to do her work, it is also important to point out that the SH-Commissioner decides how much she invests in the honorary office. Hence the impact of the office depends much on the person in charge and is not per status an influential institution. I learned that the SH-Commissioner makes use of a network of European contacts and that she works with the

Danish Consulate General, the German embassy and with many politicians from all parties in Schleswig-Holstein. When it comes to contacts with the minorities her most frequent partners are *Skoleforeningen*, the SSW, the SSF in Germany and the BDN in Denmark. While fostering and building this network it seems important that the SH-Commissioner is always supported by a *Minderheitenreferent* (minority consultant) that prepares her meetings and talks and functions as the commissioner's mouthpiece. Together, the SH-Commissioner and the minority consultant also monitor the government concerning the implementation of the *European Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities* and the *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* and also compiles a minority report for Schleswig-Holstein's government every legislative term.

**Responses concerning the Office of Commissioner for Emigrant and Minority Issues of the German Government (BRD-Commissioner)**

The Ministry of the Interior is responsible for national minorities in Germany, hence the National BRD-Commissioner in Berlin supports the Minority Secretariat at the Ministry of the Interior<sup>32</sup> and the Advisory Committee for Questions Regarding the Danish Minority in the Ministry of the Interior (*Beratender Ausschuss für Fragen der dänischen Minderheit beim Bundesministerium des Innern*). The advisory committee discusses all issues related to the Danish minority and stays in contact with the Danish minority on behalf of the government and parliament in Berlin (I 10, 3, 35-7). In the German border region the BRD-Commissioner works closely with all organizations of the Danish and German minority (he stated that he could not point out any actor in particular) and with the SH-Commissioner in Kiel (I 10, 8, 8). In Berlin, however, the BRD-Commissioner mostly works with the SSF.

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<sup>32</sup> The Minority Secretariat at the Ministry of Interior was established in 2005 and fosters the information exchange between government, parliament and all of Germany's national minorities.

#### 4.5.4. Important actors

In this chapter I discuss which actors the interviewees deemed particularly important when it comes to the minorities' political participation. As most experts distinguish between important actors for the Danish or German minority this chapter will also follow the same pattern. I will start by summarizing the comments on the Danish minority in Germany and afterwards turn to the German minority in Denmark.

##### 4.5.4.1. *Concerning the Danish minority in Germany*

Governments, parliaments and politicians were, for the most part, named as being of particular importance for the Danish minority. Here, I use these three terms interchangeably as the interviewees often named politicians in governments and parliaments in the same breath. "For us the parliaments are important, because there, decisions are made. But of course we also need governments that support this. That's clear." (I 01, 10, 4-6). Also it was often mentioned that "parliament and government and minority are in dialogue" (I 11, 9, 11-12) with each other. Furthermore it was pointed out that politicians from Schleswig-Holstein act on the minority's behalf in Berlin and that the parties in Berlin and the German government react in favour of the minority despite the fact that "natural [the Danish minority's problems] are not their most important agenda" (I 01, 8, 16-17). The situation of the Danish minority is not only impacted by the German governments and parliaments as the office of the BRD-Commissioner pointed out: "naturally the Danish parliament and the Danish government [are] also an important contact" (I 10, 8, 28-29).

The representatives of minority organizations themselves named SSW and SSF as important actors, although repeatedly in conjunction with the school association (I 03, I 05, I 06). When the interviewees were focused on Schleswig-Holstein they mostly named the SSW as being of special relevance as "the political actor" (I 05, 9, 22-23) and when they were more focused on relations with Denmark, the SSF clearly became the main actor in terms that "they are the

most conscious. That's the most conscious organization. They are most aware of the need to nourish the relationships with the official Denmark" (I 05, 9, 10-12).

Both the SH-Commissioner and the BRD-Commissioner were mentioned as important actors, but never without highlighting the importance of the persons in office. Minority representatives stated that the SH-Commissioner is a very good institution that is important for the development in the border region, especially "how Ms. Schnack is fulfilling her role, she can be cross-party active and can move things outside of a political competition" (I 01, 11, 19-20). The BRD-Commissioner received an equally positive echo from the minority officials who also highlight the relevance and importance of the institution but often add that

**"that has also to do with, that Mr. Koschyk is new BRD-Commissioner. He does a lot for our work, not just for our work, but for minorities in general. And that has helped a lot" (I 08, 7, 1-3).**

Lastly, I would like to mention that government officials dealing with the Danish minority from both Denmark and Schleswig-Holstein named the border association (*Grænseforeningen*) as an important actor (I 06, I 11).

#### *4.5.4.2. Concerning the German minority in Denmark*

For the German minority the German and Danish government, the Danish parliament and national politicians in general are of great relevance. "[T]here certainly are many politicians from the *Folketing* that are active and who have their electoral district in the region or have other ties towards Germany" (I 07, 6, 14-16). But also the politicians from the Committee at Folketing (KU) are important as well as the contact to the Ministry of Education even if this contact is not called on a daily basis, "because they interest ... it is clear that the Minister of Education has other questions to work with than the German minority" (I

04, 26, 15-17). As is the case for the Danish minority, the German minority also has close ties to the politicians of their kin-state. Even more so since the new BRD-Commissioner in Berlin has taken up office and has sensitized many politicians in Berlin for issues concerning the German minority in Denmark (I 09, 8, 26-27).

The importance of the Chief Advisor at the Ministry of Education was also highlighted repeatedly. The German minority's representation in Copenhagen, the German Secretariat, stated that in their opinion the Chief Advisor at the Ministry of Education is the most relevant actor. The administration has great interest to deal with problems before they become a political issue. It is understood as being key to the successful working relations between the minority and the government even up to the point that the contact to the administration (to the Chief Advisor) is of greater importance than to the politicians. "[Chief Advisor] is more important to me than the Minister" (I 04, 14, 16).

The minority representatives themselves clearly see the BDN as the dominant actor particularly since the organization represents the minority towards the outside and in most committees. Many interviewees highlighted the BDN's internal and external importance as the minority's umbrella organization (I 04, I 07, I 08). Although the interviewees often referred to the German Secretariat more concretely, pointing out that the German Secretariat is an outstanding institution for the minority, which enables them to stay neutral in national politics and forge alliances with all parties (I 09, 16, 12-23). Also the German Secretariat is often contacted by the Danish or German government and of course especially by the Danish administration:

**“[B]ecause he [the head of the German Secretariat] is here in Copenhagen. It's easy to go and drink a cup of coffee but that's ... I mean that's more just like I wouldn't say we're friends but it's close. I like to come over and we can discuss issues that ... so I know in advance what issues are on the table, what can I**

**expect that you would put forward at the next meeting.”**  
**(I 05, 18, 8-11).**

The German Secretariat too highlights the good contact to the administration, a fact that was stressed when the interviewee referred to the Secretariat's title: "The German Minority's Secretariat at government and parliament, it should also have *administration* in the title." (I 04, 19, 8-10). The German Secretariat is seen as very important from all sides, which is even more interesting when one is aware that "[t]he German minority did not want that. It is today the best thing we have ever done, it is *very* good." (I 08, 7, 35-1). The SP's role seems to be limited to regional politics as no one mentioned a special importance in terms of contacts in Berlin, Kiel and Copenhagen.

#### **4.6. Conclusion**

This paper was driven by the research question "How do minority politics in the Danish-German border region work?" Since the Danish-German border region (DGBR) is often referred to as a role model I was also interested in gaining a better understanding of the experts' general views on what influence minority politics have on the status quo of minority politics in the region. A third research interest is of methodological nature. It regards questions of conducting expert interviews in a cross-cultural and multi-lingual research area.

When scholars refer to the DGBR as a role model for minority "protection and empowerment" (Schaefer-Rolffs 2014), they often refer to the general living situation of the minorities, meaning that minority members do not suffer great disadvantages compared to members of the majority population. Furthermore, the possibilities for political participation, which Germany and Denmark facilitate for the minorities in the political sphere of their country, play a major role. The conclusions that can be drawn from the analysis in Chapter 4.5 all in all gives reason to believe that the national minority rights situation in the border region is indeed on a very high standard, compared to other regions where national minorities live. The interviewees described that the so-called

model for minority participation in the region developed historically and hence they believe it most likely cannot serve as a blueprint for other regions. It seems plausible to believe that an institutional set-up as complex as the one for political participation of national minorities in the DGBR cannot be copied one to one. Nevertheless, if one would attempt to “paint a role-model picture” so to say, key points of the system for the national minorities’ political participation in the DGBR can be identified. The key points’ general character can be explained and thus may serve as an inspiration for other regions. I will attempt to paint such a role-model picture with six strokes and explain each in turn.

**1. Good will** - Interviewees from both minorities and government or parliamentary representatives repeatedly mentioned the importance of the Bonn-Copenhagen Declarations for the DGBR. This must be mentioned when speaking about a model character of some sort, bearing in mind that the agreement repeatedly inspired other European initiatives for the protection of national minorities during the last sixty years.<sup>33</sup> The Bonn-Copenhagen Declarations represent the willingness and the effort of Denmark and Germany to implement “a model of negotiation that [...] is based on trust and checks and balances” (I 04, 11, 3-5). This willingness is the root and foundation for protecting and empowering minorities and other marginalized groups. The nation states must be willing to integrate national minorities in their societies and realize the chances, which it facilitates for the plurality and culture of their society.

Additionally, the cooperation between the German and Danish minorities has fostered the cultural prosperity of both groups. Both minorities feel their governments acknowledge the positive effect the groups have as bridge builder between Denmark and Germany.

Summary: Governments must genuinely show the willingness and undertake serious efforts to protect and empower their national minorities.

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<sup>33</sup> For example, the European Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

**2. Interlocking Directorates** – In Germany, the task of connecting the minority to the German government lies within the responsibility of two Minority Commissioners. Firstly, the SH-Commissioner lobbies and educates on behalf of the minority, while simultaneously fostering relations with the minority on behalf of the Government of Schleswig-Holstein and especially the Minister-President. Secondly, a similar job description is attached to the BRD-Commissioner. Both commissioners are members of numerous committees and round tables and are often able to directly connect the minorities to governments, parliaments and politicians. In Denmark, a similar role yet on a more bureaucratic level, is exercised by the Chief Advisor at the Danish Ministry of Education. Also the head of the German Secretariat in Copenhagen fits this type of interlocking actor.

Summary: Staff from minority and non-minority actors (organizations and institutions) must function as bridge builders and contact makers to establish a network of minority protection and -empowering.

**3. Passionate Personnel** - The SH-Commissioner for Minorities and Culture of Schleswig-Holstein and the BRD-Commissioner seem to be very well staffed. This is not only meant in terms of quantitative measures but rather qualitatively. During the interviews, the minorities' representatives (in Germany and Denmark) highlighted it is not only the sheer existence of both commissioners that improves the minorities' situation but rather the fact that they are both highly qualified and particularly dedicated to their tasks. Both commissioners improve the minorities' situation or at least are committed to uphold the high standards in place. Government staff, which is dedicated and committed to making the minorities' voice heard, is of utmost importance for and to the minorities. I argue that this "commissioner-model" only works if the personnel in such positions are truly and wholeheartedly committed their tasks. In Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp 2014, the SH-Commissioner in Kiel is referred to as being a "paternalistic institutional structure" (Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp 2014a, 69). It seems to be especially pertinent to choose commissioners that



belong to the minority themselves and that are integrated into the political process. “Rather, ... [the SH-Commissioner] is a paternalistic structure that stands for the minority.” (Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp 2014a, 70). I still want to refrain from advocating paternalistic institutions. With regards to the institution at hand I want to qualify that the position of the SH-Commissioner in Kiel (or the BRD-Commissioner in Berlin for that matter) does not have to be paternalistic as such. A commissioner and a minority can very well be working on equal footing, however, this requires that those involved accept and internalize the cooperative nature of their positions. Government officials installing such offices must be aware of this and should choose personnel accordingly.

Summary: Government personnel must believe in their work of protecting and empowering minorities and not *just* fulfil their formal duties.

**4. Organized minorities** - Minority organization leaders have not lost their connection to the minority themselves and seem to be involved in the minorities’ daily life to the extent that their workload allows. Furthermore, I think it is quite interesting that the vast majority of representatives say they always operate on an open-door policy for everybody, meaning minority members can contact them without having to pass any gate keepers first. My positive experiences with organizing the interviews give reason to believe this. The subdivision of participatory activities is clearly present within the German minority. The BDN represents the German minority on a national level and at the governments and parliaments in Berlin, Kiel and Copenhagen. The SP is only active directly in the border region where they work closely with municipalities on both sides of the border and with all regional parties. The German Secretariat in Copenhagen lobbying on behalf of the minority, is well connected with the government and parliament in Copenhagen and has special connections to the administrative sector. The importance that government officials ascribe to the Secretariat supports the assumption that the Secretariat is of great relevance for the national minority rights protection in Denmark.

Activities in the realm of fostering the minority's political participation are not as clearly distributed amongst minority actors in Germany. Government officials point to the plurality of organizations from within the Danish minority they deal with. They praise the flat hierarchies amongst organizations but also emphasize this sometimes makes working with the minority more difficult. In this sense, an organizational structure like in Denmark where the BDN has superiority over all other organizations may be more efficient. Nonetheless there is a certain sharing of responsibilities amongst at least the SSW and SSF. The SSW sets the tone within the minority in Schleswig-Holstein. Now, more than ever, they do so with their involvement in the federal government. On the other hand, the SSF predominantly represents the minority in Copenhagen and Berlin. Both minorities have adapted to the political system of their host-country and found a way to organize their interest representation in a way, which suits their special character. The Danes in Germany have set up a system with relatively flat hierarchies amongst the many minority organizations and have adopted a somehow "Scandinavian" approach, while the Germans in Denmark have a steep hierarchical organizational structure with the BDN towering above all other organizations.

Summary: Minorities must be organized in a way that fits their character and that conforms to the host state's political system.

**5. Decision-making table** - The representatives of both minorities made the point that governments and parliaments are the most important actors concerning their political participation. The ways of influencing the decision making process in those bodies are different. More precisely, ways to implement successful minority politics are twofold. For one, it is important for minority politics that the minorities are directly represented in relevant committees, councils, advisory boards, parliaments and governments and that they can discuss and decide matters concerning them with politicians and bureaucrats from the majority population. The minorities must be included in decisions that directly affect them. Not only is this important because they should be able to

have a saying in their own affairs, but it is additionally empowering the whole minority community to know this happens (Sadan 2004). This can be assured by special arrangements as is shown in Schleswig-Holstein where the SSW maintains the position that a minority has to be part of the decision-making process to have meaningful impact. The SSW highlights the importance that the minority party<sup>34</sup> in Schleswig-Holstein is freed from the five percent threshold in order to be able to do this. Many actors acknowledge the importance of direct minority representation in committees and on boards.

Summary: Minorities must be included in the decision-making of decisions affecting their member's lives.

**6. The back room** - The second way to successfully implement minority politics is by way of lobbying, seen as the informal meeting between government officials, parliamentarians or administrative personnel in decision-making positions. This is an effective instrument to introduce the minorities' political agenda to the political elites in Kiel, Copenhagen or Berlin and to persuade politicians to act in the minorities' best interest. Especially in the case of the German minority in Denmark this means of influence was stressed. In fact all representatives from the German minority I spoke to were of the opinion that it is best for the minority *not* to be represented in the parliament in Copenhagen and that such representation would never secure them as much influence as the German Secretariat does. The German Secretariat seems to be a more than sufficient compensation for not being represented in the national parliament.

Summary: Minorities must be enabled to lobby their interests in the back rooms of the political arena of the host- and kin states.

To conclude my analysis: If one wanted to paint a picture of a role model of national minority political participation, such a composition could well be

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<sup>34</sup> It must be said, not the SSW is freed from the five percent threshold but the party of the Danish minority. This is a big difference, which sometimes is confused. Recently it happened that after SSW became part of the government, the *Junge Union*, the Christ Democrats' (CDU) youth organization, demanded to withdraw "the SSW's" voting privileges. But, it is not the SSW's voting privilege but would be any national minority party's privilege. This is a difference.

based on including some or all of the six categories above. I have developed the categories after speaking to twelve people in elite positions, which shared their expert knowledge on national minority political participation in the DGBR with me. After having presented the results of the study I conclude the paper by commenting on the interviews I conducted.

My conclusion concerning expert interviews in the field of minority politics leads to three findings. Firstly, it was not as difficult to get in contact with the experts as I had expected from reading the literature. I was neither blocked by gatekeepers nor were busy schedules or my relatively low status (as a research associate) a hindrance for conducting the research. On the contrary, all participants were very helpful, friendly and glad to host an exchange with an informed outsider.

Secondly, I want to emphasize that my experience in and knowledge of the Danish and German societies and cultures was of great importance for the whole process. Being aware of and sensitive to cross-cultural differences in verbal and nonverbal communication, in etiquette, beliefs and norms provided for a comfortable conversation environment for the interviewees and enhanced the quality of the talks.

Thirdly, the supplementary preparation for each interview by way of reading up on the interviewees contributed to the success of the research. As I mentioned before you have to be an expert to interview experts.

## **5. My chancellor is in Berlin and my Queen in Copenhagen. National minority identity in the DGBR**

### **5.1. Introduction**

The Council of Europe's *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities* (FCNM) is one of the most important and influential documents concerning national minorities in Europe. The document aims to protect the rights of national minority members and to preserve the minorities' cultures as such. The FCNM states that it should be possible for persons belonging to national minorities "to maintain and develop their culture, and to preserve the essential elements of their identity, namely their religion, language, traditions and cultural heritage" (Council of Europe 1995, 4). But, the FCNM is just one attempt at the European level to foster the relation of majority and minority and to improve the living conditions of people belonging to national minorities. Other initiatives are for example, both in 1992, the Council of Europe's *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* (ECRML) and the *Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe's* (OSCE) decision to appoint a *High Commissioner on National Minorities* (HCNM). Also, the European motto *United in Diversity* emphasizes Europe's cultural plurality as its greatest good and calls

**“for the working together for peace and prosperity, and that the many different cultures, traditions and languages in Europe are a positive asset for the continent” (EU 2015).**

The atmosphere has not always been so positive for the national minorities, in fact one can even say these instruments mark a shift in the relation of majority and minority in Europe. This shift has as a starting point, a situation where nation states saw national minorities as a threat for their integrity and hence they designed minority politics mostly to hold the minorities down while simultaneously removing tension when the majority-minority relations became

too tense. This negative view on minorities as a threat to nationality, nowadays has shifted towards a situation where politicians and Europe's democratic leaders acknowledge the minorities' cultural value and understand they are an integral part of Europe's cultural diversity which again is key for Europe's fertile development in the present and future.

Scientific interest in this development often focuses on questions of legal matters concerning the national or regional implementation of European norms, guidelines and laws, or questions of resource management and acquisition to execute and oversee the implementation and the practical realization of minority politics. Sometimes, what gets lost in the debate is whom the instruments mean to protect and empower, or who minority members are and why they belong to a national minority.

The FCNM quote above states that the identity of national minority members consists of religion, language, traditions and culture heritage. However, this statement does not reveal much about why people are members of national minorities and what they think about their minority existence. While researching the national minorities I have also learned that many people, not familiar with the national minority topic, tend to have difficulties to understand what a national minority is and what it means to be a national minority member. Also, in my career as a researcher of national minorities in the Danish-German border region (DGBR) I have often come to a point where it was not even clear to me what it includes when people refer to themselves as belonging to a national minority. Additionally, whenever I had the possibility to talk to minority members in greater depth about this question I realized repeatedly that belonging to a national minority in the DGBR is a very complex topic and that belonging to a national minority is an individual and subjective decision. In the literature a clearly defined set of reasons for belonging to the national minorities so far is missing. Through my research, however, I am able to identify certain reoccurring elements or reasons that matter for minority members' affiliation with the minority and which help someone on the group's outside to understand

the complex reality of belonging to a national minority. Hence, in this article my objective is to produce such a set of elements and thus to answer the question: “What do national minority members in the Danish-German border region (DGBR) understand as national minority identity?”

The article is structured the following way: In Chapter 5.2 I explain the terms *identity*, *minority* and *nationality* separately and how I use them in this paper. This is important as I use the term *national minority identity* to describe the identity of people belonging to national minorities. The third chapter represents the empirical part of the article. It is divided in a section where I present a literature review on minority identity in the Danish-German border region (Chapter 5.3.1), a section, which describes a series of expert interviews on minority identity from a qualitative (Chapter 5.3.2) point of view and a more quantitative (Chapter 5.3.3) standpoint, where I present results from a telephone survey. The findings of these three sections are merged in Chapter 5.4 where I assemble the minority identity puzzle.

That national minority identity really is a puzzling and complex topic and that belonging to a national minority is an individual and subjective decision, was described to me during an expert interview I conducted in 2015:

**“...a Danish minority family not far away from the boarder and he [the father] was asked about this, if he felt Danish or German. He said well, my chancellor is in Berlin and my Queen is in Copenhagen \*laughs\*. And I think that’s quite a good picture...” (I 05, 13, 7-12).**

## **5.2. Identity of minorities whose reference point is a nation**

The article circles around a very demanding term. This term is *identity*. It is demanding because its inherent meaning is not easy to access to begin with and the aim to study a specific kind of *identity*, namely *national minority identity*,

complicates the matter even further. To preclude misunderstandings in the remainder of this article I will explain how I use *identity* and how this is important for the term *national minority* and my understanding of *national minority identity*. I will begin by talking about *identity*.

### 5.2.1. Identity

I understand identity as the relation a human being has with him or herself and also how a person thinks about him or herself. Or simply said, identity is “what we find significant, when we look at ourselves” (Stets/Burke 2003, 130). This means, identity is the result of an identification process. This identification is at first “the human capacity for reflexive thinking – the ability to take oneself as the object of one’s attention and thought” (Leary/Price Tangney, 8-9). In this sense identification means to look at oneself and think about what one has in common with others, i.e. other individuals, but simultaneously it means to look for differences between oneself and others. Thus, this identification process is constructed through difference. It is asking oneself the questions *who am I*, *who am I not*, *what am I like* and *what am I not like?* This ambivalence is not to be understood in a sense where the other is completely different from the self or that people are necessarily looking to differentiate themselves from others. Even though this can be the case.

Thinking about one’s self and one’s identity, I assume that there is a reciprocal relationship between the self and others which surround the self, e.g. a community or society (Stets/Burke 2003, 128). In the process of thinking about oneself, individuals can only identify themselves when they reflect on how others see them and when they are aware that they can only see the other from where they position themselves between them as an individual (Hall 1994b, 72-73). This process is mostly described as an activity:



**“The responses of the self as an object to itself come from the point of view of others with whom one interacts. By taking the role of the other and seeing ourselves from others’ perspectives, our responses come to be like others’ responses, and the meaning of the self becomes a shared meaning” (Stets/Burke 2003, 130).**

The individual puts him or herself in perspective to others, which are similar or different from them. By doing this, they try to find their place in a group, community or society and at the same time creating it. As one does not perform this self-identification process reclusively other members of the group, community or society are necessary entities, i.e. “persons are always embedded in the very social structure that is, at the same time, being created by those persons” (Stets/Burke 2003, 130).

Situations in which humans can compare themselves with others on the outside, are manifold. Pfetsch (1998, 5) for example names philosophical, geographical, cultural and historic-political aspects. Smith-Lovin is convinced that relations between the self and others shift from community to society as the relational systems become larger: “In larger systems, we interact with those who are functionally interrelated but different from us; in smaller systems, we interact with those who are similar” (Smith-Lovin 2001, 170).

Understanding the concept of identity as the relation between yourself and others adds “strategic and positional” (Hall 1996, 3) facets to it. It is strategic, because individuals may (consciously or unconsciously) underline certain parts of their identity at different times and in different places or situations. In a sense the relation a person has of him or herself can change depending on whom or what the person is surrounded by and where they are currently located. To be clear: identity is not something which is formed outside ourselves and which we later tell stories about. Identity is what is narrated in our own selves (Hall 1994b, 74). What a person thinks about him or herself is “constructed through, not outside, difference” (Hall 1996, 4) and similarity. The two-sidedness of the

process is important though. Its importance lies in the necessity of the other's existence for the construction of the self (Hall 1994b, 73).

The degree of how important the other is for the construction of the self is up for debate. Hall for example distinguishes three conceptions of identity and three levels of importance of the others (other individuals) when thinking about self-identification (Hall 1992, 597-598). For other authors it is clear that, if

**“we identify ourselves partly in terms of kinship and other interpersonal relations and group memberships, other people *must* [ASR] form a substantial part of our self-concept” (Kihlstrom et al. 2003, 80).**

Following Hall<sup>35</sup>, Pfetsch (1998) also refers to a spatial dimension inherent in the concept. He emphasizes that different reference units and spheres of loyalty are often touched upon and can be of varying relevance for the individual. Similarly, Smith-Lovin (2001, 169) uses the term identity in a sense where it includes (1) role-identities associated with positions in the social structure (e. g. politician, party leader, father, artist, music lover), (2) social-identities associated with membership in groups and organizations (e. g. minority member, party member), and (3) identities from individually differentiating characteristics, traits or attributes (e. g. Dane, believer, responsible person). Tesser makes Smith Lovins' third point even clearer as he describes it as “a collection of abilities, temperament, goals, values, and preferences that distinguish one individual from another” (Tesser 2002, 185). The referral to different aspects of a person's identity illustrates one thing clearly: there are many traits to a person's identity. Thus, situations are often perceived and processed from the point of view of multiple aspects of one's identity (Smith-Lovin 2001, 175). These multiple aspects affect each other and thus change each other as they develop in the same process of one's self-identification (Weinreich 2003, 32).

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<sup>35</sup> “Identity is spatially oriented” (Hall 1994b, 67).

Identity is neither transparent nor unproblematic (Hall 1994a, 26), on the contrary it seems to me that a conclusive and overall satisfactory definition of the term identity cannot be given. The concept of identity is too complex and its bearings too versatile. Nevertheless, in this paper I understand identity as the relation which a person has with him or herself and which is constructed within a person by means of placing him or herself in relation to the outside world and the others in this world. For the identity of the people I talk about in this article, members of national minorities in the DGBR, the (numerical) relation between them, their group and the others are even more important. In the following chapters when speaking about *minority* and *nationality* I will explain why this is the case.

### 5.2.2. Minority

In a political-sociological context the term *minority* refers to a commonly and readily understandable concept. Minority is understood as the relation of different parts of a whole, meaning the relationship between many and few (Schubert/Klein 1997, 181). The minority here is of course the few while the majority marks the many. It is worth mentioning that, following this definition, a minority depends on the existence of a majority. A minority always exists in relation to a bigger part, a majority. Additionally, the usage of the word minority often implies a negative connotation in the sense that what is not of the majority must automatically be of inferior quality. Thinking about this for a moment it is clear that while this correlation is possible it is not very logic. Elites for example, simply understood as persons of higher position or status, when compared to the many average persons are also few (Harvey 2011, 432). Yet, by definition their inferior quantity is exactly *not* equivalent with inferior quality, but with superior traits<sup>36</sup>. As another example, famous people or so called *stars* are often

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<sup>36</sup> One can argue whether elites really are superior and what that means, but for the sake of showing that dissenting from the norm is not always equivalent with inferior quality, let us just assume it this the case. For further reading on elites see Schaefer-Rolffs 2016a.

in an accentuated social position because they are special, somehow different from the majority of people or have a talent or ability that only few people share.

The notion makes sense though, that it is possible to define people using different criteria to group them into more or less heterogeneous categories. This can happen without rating or ranking the value of the different groups or even without adding value to the groups at all. The grouping criterion, which people must possess to belong to such a group can be manifold. Ethnicity, skin color, ideology, belief, language and others are possible. Remembering the aforementioned identity, grouping people in categories in the realm of cultural identity, classifications to “distinctive ethnic, racial, linguistic, and above all, national cultures” (Hall 1992, 596) is possible. Enninger (1991, 135) further qualifies that the criteria are only valid if group members are different from other individuals in this dimension and, all the more important, believe they are different. Only in our minds, randomly selective phenomena become signals of social significant difference. This points to a subjective categorization, which is not based on objective criteria. In a political sphere these objective criteria can be constructed relatively easily by way of thinking about the minorities in the sphere of the democratic majority rule. Minority in this sense means those that lose a vote and thus are excluded from exercising political power or from influencing those actually ruling. The term *national minority*, which often excludes racial, religious and other minorities, means more though. The term denotes situations in which a part of a state’s population is permanently and crucially hindered in taking part in the political process and from practicing their civil rights intensely (Francis 1965, 51). It is notable that Francis mentions permanent hindering (*Dauerhaftigkeit*). To clarify, the hindering national minorities suffer constitutes a permanent state which essentially hinders them to practice their civil rights. Kühl (2005a, 24) defines a (national) minority more generally. For him a national minority usually is a numeric minority, meaning it represents at most 50 percent minus one person of a given population, and that they are never dominant in a society. Even if a group constitutes a numerical majority, it can

still be a minority if it is not dominant in a society. What Kühl means when he speaks of dominance remains uncertain.

To sum up: A minority is a group that is less than half of a population which subjectively (and sometimes objectively) differs from the rest of the population with regards to variable criteria. The following section will deal more closely with nationality as a reference point for minority groups.

### 5.2.3. Nationality

Kühl does continue, however, by pointing out that a national minority is usually, but not under all circumstances, characterized by objective criteria bound to the group (Kühl 2005a, 24). Namely these objective criteria can be language, tradition, culture, religion, own symbols and history. These may subjectively be present as imaginations or ideals but do not necessarily have to be objectively present. The minorities' members always relate themselves to the nationality of the group. These subjective criteria are essential for Kühl. Nevertheless, a group whose legitimation as minority is solely based on subjective affiliation in the long run will have problems to be accepted and recognized as a minority. Hence, this group as a whole will refer to imagined or objective criteria, which can serve as symbolic identification markers. Eder (2000, 22) defines national identity as the derivative social form of a collective "us-community", a concept rooted in modernity. Originally, the community's function was to emphasize the common in a society, without producing a coercible binding and thus keeping a society of autonomous individuals together. It is worth to accentuate Eder's term "coercible binding" (*Zwangsbindung*), as it may explain that a state's citizens feel they belong to a different nation as the one dominant within their state of residence. Eder refers to a kind of subjective social affiliation as a nation, which is stronger than the legal binding to a state. Nation does not equal state and neither is nation equivalent to the population of a state. This means a nation cannot be equated with the population that lives within a state's territory, because a nation can exist without its own territory as well as there are states not

referring to a single nation<sup>37</sup> (Wieland 2000, 47). Wieland further asserts that a general definition of the term nation is not possible and thus proposes to evaluate the belonging to a nation on the ground of “what somebody feels” (Wieland 2000, 51). The expression “what somebody feels” brings us back to identities and to what a person thinks about him or herself.

Before turning to this paper’s empirical part, let me summarize the chapter on national minority identity. I understand *identity* as the relation a person has with him or herself by means of setting him or herself into relation to the outside world and the others in this world. For the identity of national minority members in the DGBR, it is important that they belong to a group that is less than half of the population and that subjectively differs from the rest of the population. The main criterion of differentiation is the affiliation with a nation, which is not the dominant nation in the country of residence. This nation does not equal a state and neither the population of a given state. For the DGBR this means that the Danish minority in Germany refers to a certain kind of Danishness and the German minority refers to a certain kind of Germanness. In the following chapters I will unravel what this German- or Danishness is made of.

### **5.3. Identities of national minorities in DGBR**

Identities change and transform. This makes the research’s aim to define or determine core components for national minority members’ identity in the DGBR all the more difficult. To find out what relation persons belonging to national minorities in the DGBR have of themselves in contrast to the majority population of their resident country, I will follow Simon (2012), who investigates ethnic groups. Ethnicity, in short, is “the fact or state of belonging to a social group that has a common national or cultural tradition” (Oxford Dictionaries 2016). This definition clarifies that ethnic minority is not equivalent to a national minority but Simon’s basic view with regards to finding out what a group is, is

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<sup>37</sup> The Swiss Confederation and the Kingdom of Belgium are two European examples.

applicable nevertheless. He constructs an *internal* and *external* view on ethnic identity, meaning that questions of ethnic identity can be “investigated from within a group or from outside of it” (Simon 2012, 55). *Internalists*, the ones looking at a group from inside the group, emphasize the enriching benefits of ethnicity and regard it as a positive factor. They believe an individual’s community is constitutive of that individual’s self. People are born into a group and make this affiliation an integral part of their identity. *Externalists*, the ones looking at a group from outside the group, in contrast look at aspects that harm groups and individuals. They neither regard ethnic identity as good or bad but rather “focus on external forces that cause harm to individuals who are perceived to be members of a group by those intent on harming the group” (Simon 2012, 56).

In the next step I compile some main points on minority identity from an *externalist* perspective (Chapter 5.3.1). *Externalist* perspectives are usually presented by people from outside the group, in this paper these are governments or scientists that refer to the minorities or speak about minority members.<sup>38</sup> In the remainder of this section I keep the *externalists* view in mind when I construct *internalist* perspectives on minority identity by way of speaking to minority members about their personal- and group identity<sup>39</sup>. For this purpose I analyze a series of qualitative interviews (Chapter 5.3.2) and a quantitative telephone survey (Chapter 5.3.3).

### 5.3.1. Literature review on national minority identity in the DGBR

Much has been written about the national minorities in the DGBR and some of it contains information concerning national minority identity. I present some

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<sup>38</sup> In theory, an externalist perspective can also be taken by group members, for example in cases of “group hatred” (Simon 2012, 58) when group members for some reason show discontent with their peer group’s behaviour or appearance.

<sup>39</sup> I am aware, that it is possible to regard anything I write as *externalist* perspective, as I do not belong to the group. As the comments about identity I analyze stem from minority members, I decide to call it an *internal* perspective none the less.

documents and literature that shed some light on the complex identity matter. The texts are not all in accordance with each other and thus present diverse perspectives.

I begin, by examining the Bonn-Copenhagen Declarations from 1955. They are the first documents for organizing the protection of the national minorities in the DGBR between Denmark and Germany and thus make a suitable starting point for my analysis. They are unilateral declarations<sup>40</sup>, which were drafted by Germany and Denmark and were supposed to protect the respective national minority and the persons belonging to the German or Danish minority. In the Declarations it is not said what defines belonging to a national minority other than belonging to the respective folklore and culture is unfettered and may not be contested or questioned by authorities (Dansk Udenrigsministeriet 1955, Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1955). Even though the governments were trying not to take part in defining the minorities or making assumptions about the minority member's identity the mentioning of folklore and culture is a first trace.

Forty years later the Council of Europe commented on national minorities in general when they formulated their Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities in 1995:

**“Considering that a pluralist and genuinely democratic society should not only respect the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of each person belonging to a national minority, but also create appropriate conditions enabling them to express, preserve and develop this identity”  
(Council of Europe 1995, 2).**

The convention further refers to the identity of persons belonging to national minorities in later paragraphs. For example it identified “religion, language,

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<sup>40</sup> Even though the Declarations are unilateral they are equivalent in wording and intention and hence can be understood as being “between” the two countries.



traditions and cultural heritage” (Article 5, Paragraph 1) as part of a national minority’s identity. The Council of Europe additionally appeals to the “understanding and co-operation among all persons living on their [the state’s] territory, irrespective of those persons’ ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious identity, in particular in the fields of education, culture and the media” (Article 6, Paragraph 1). Finally members of national minorities must be enabled to contact others “with whom they share an ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious identity, or a common cultural heritage” (Article 17, Paragraph 1).

Germany accepts people that fulfil those five specific criteria as persons with a national minority identity. Namely, they (1) must be German citizens, (2) differ from the majority population by language, culture, history – meaning their own identity, (3) want to keep this identity, (4) are traditionally resident in Germany and (5) live in their ancestral settlement area (BMI 2002, 7). This applies to four minorities in Germany: the Danes, the Frisians, the Roma (Sinti & Roma in Germany) and the Sorbs. The Danish government clarifies that the Framework Convention in Denmark applies only to the German minority in South Jutland, sadly without elaborating further on the minority or its identity (Indenrigsministeriet 1999, 7).

Several scholars have tried to capture the essence of a minority identity in the DGBR apart from governmental statements on the national minorities. Kühl (2005a, 25) for example writes the Danish minority members identify themselves with Denmark, which also identifies the Danish group south of the border as *their* minority and a part of Danish culture. The German minority members identify with Germany, which accordingly recognizes the German group north of the border as *their* minority and part of the German culture. He continues that the historical processes with linguistic and cultural influences and border revisions have created the minorities. In a different publication he is a bit more precise:

**“For some, Danish culture is expressed through Danish shoes, butter, and the flag. For others, their personal Danish identity**

**is related to cultural traditions, authors, philosophers, and language. For a third group of people, to be Danish simply means to sympathize with the Danish mentality and way of living. In the German case, for some people to be German includes a special bonding with the landscape, literature, and history. For others, to be German is to keep yourself, your surroundings and your family tidy, and to uphold the German values. And finally, for a third group of people, Germanness is an ideal concept.” (Kühl 1998, 43)**

A more technical approach is taken by Teebken and Christiansen who, for a start, determine both national minorities by two things. Firstly, it is the fact that they are recognized by Denmark and Germany. Here both countries have established that citizenship is an objective criterion to belong to one of the groups. Secondly, and in contrast to the first principle, the minorities define “themselves by self-identification without any discrimination on grounds of citizenship” (Teebken/Christiansen 2001, 12).

Concerning the Germans in Denmark they further identify a certain corporate feeling, the awareness as bridge builders between Denmark and Germany and the German language as crucial for the German minority identity (Teebken/Christiansen 2001, 94). This being said, the authors point out that being Danish still plays a key role in the identities of the German minority members. Each member’s identity is unique and the attachment to the Germanness can be stronger and weaker, depending “on what is on offer locally” (Teebken/Christiansen 2001, 96). This hints to the minority’s institutions and the minority activities and to the importance they have for the shaping of the minority members’ identities. Taking part in minority activities, having membership in a minority organization or subscribing to the minority newspaper may not determine whether a person belongs to the minority or not, since the minority’s activities are open to anyone, but it might be an indicator that a person is affiliated with the minority if he or she takes part in multiple

activities. The minority's activities also enrich the region's cultural life in the sense that the minority refers to the "historical and cultural duality of the former Duchy of Schleswig"<sup>41</sup> (Teebken/Christiansen 2001, 96). The same can be said about the Danish minority in Germany whose members are very aware of their Danishness but also are in contact with the German society and culture that surrounds them every day. Further, the Danishness in Germany has many origins and roots, for example "historical roots, Danish national character and an appreciation of Danish language" (Teebken/Christiansen 2001, 102). In all those branches, minority organizations play a significant role in fostering and preserving minority identity. Many members of the minority also have family ties within the minority that go back to 1945 and the years after the war. Special importance is ascribed to the Danish kindergartens and schools as an introduction to the

**“Danish-Nordic pedagogy and ways of behavior, fascination for bilingualism ... and the image of different and maybe more democratic traditions in Danish-Scandinavian culture”  
(Teebken/Christiansen 2001, 102-103)**

that seem to attract people to the Danish minority.

Connotations of national minority identity in academic literature and official texts differ and a shared sense of what constitutes national minority identity in the DGBR does not seem to exist in the literature. An understanding of minority identity does mostly seem to revolve around culture, language, history, family, ethnicity and organizational structure though. These elements mostly are neither explained nor is their importance justified. In the following two chapters I compile two empirical studies on national minority identity in the DGBR by way of interviewing minority elites (Chapter 5.3.2) and by surveying

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<sup>41</sup> The Danes and the Germans in the region share a long history of cultural exchange and amalgamation, since over the last centuries the Schleswig territory was alternately ruled by Danish, German, Prussian and Swedish sovereigns. The first intensive cultural exchange is said to have happened during the Protestant Reformation in the early 16th century (Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp 2014a, 54).

minority members on the telephone (Chapter 5.3.3) using respondent driven sampling (RDS). By doing this I am able to define a set of reoccurring elements of national minority identity in the DGBR, which help someone on the group's outside to better understand the complex reality of belonging to a national minority.

### 5.3.2. Interviewing elite national minority members (qualitative)

For a recent study concerning the national minorities' political participation I conducted a series of expert interviews with representatives of minority organizations and government actors. I also used this special opportunity to speak with the minority representatives about their personal minority identity and why they think other people affiliate with the group and German or Danish minority identity in general. Before I explain whom I talked to and what type of knowledge (meaning: expert knowledge) they provided, I will provide some information on the two national minorities in the DGBR.

The Danes and the Germans in the Danish-German border region share a long history. That history testifies for tremendous cultural exchange and fruitful coexistence but also for reciprocal misunderstandings and even war. After a border revision in 1920 following the First World War, Denmark and Germany officially acknowledged the other respective minority and in 1955 codified their status through the Bonn-Copenhagen Declarations<sup>42</sup>. Since then, both countries have established consultative and compensatory bodies that protect the minorities' cultural heritage and the individuals that consider themselves part of either national minority. Most estimations count

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<sup>42</sup> During 1933 and 1945 the Danish minority members were oppressed but not directly pursued. *See*: Tågil, Sven (1970): "Deutschland und die deutsche Minderheit in Nordschleswig, eine Studie zur deutschen Grenzlandpolitik 1933-39". At the same time the German minority members in Denmark were supported by Germany and later by the occupying German power and the Danish branch of the Nazi party NSDAP (*Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*) the DNSAP (Dänische Nationalsozialistische Arbeiterpartei) was also influencing the German minority. *See*: Noack, Johan Peter (1989): "Det danske mindretal i Sydslesvig 1920-1945, I-II". Apenrade: Institut for grænseregionsforskning.

approximately 50.000 Germans and 20.000 Danes who consider themselves members of one or the other of the two minorities.<sup>43</sup>

The two groups are well organized and offer their members a complex network of associations. Both the German and the Danish governments financially support these minority organizations and associations. The minority groups, for example, have minority schools and kindergartens that are run by minority associations, namely the Danish school association for South Schleswig (*Dansk Skoleforeningen for Sydslesvig*) in Germany and the German School and Language Association for North Schleswig (*Deutscher Schul- und Sprachverein für Nordschleswig*) in Denmark. The minority schools in Denmark and Germany usually have the legal status of private schools and grant diplomas equivalent to those of public, that is state-run, schools. The other most relevant minority youth organizations in the region are the German Youth Association for North Schleswig (*Deutscher Jugendverband für Nordschleswig*) in Denmark and the youth organization South Schleswig Youth Associations (*Sydslesvigs danske Ungdomsforeninger*) in Germany. Next to youth organizations there are many organizations, which offer various social activities in both Denmark and Germany. These are, for example, library associations, minority newspapers, social services, linguistic groups, music associations, sports clubs and student organizations. Aside from these more culturally and socially oriented organizations there are also institutions and organizations that are involved with and contribute to the political participation of both minorities.

The interviewees I talked to in February and March of 2015 are all individuals who are either key decision makers in their political institution or organization, have influence on policies and witness decision making in minority politics in the Danish-German border region on a regular basis. These persons are often referred to as *elites*. I use the word *elite*, even though I am well aware of

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<sup>43</sup> In a recent working paper Schnapp and Schaefer-Rolffs question the estimates for the German side and have good reason to count around 100.000 Danish minority members. For further explanation see: Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp, 2015.

the fact that the term elite “can mean many things in different contexts” (Plesner 2011, 473). Scholars tend to use the term elite in a relational sense, defining elites with regard to their position or status compared to the researcher or the average person (Harvey 2011, 432). In the case at hand, all persons I interviewed are people,

**“who are able, by virtue of their strategic positions in powerful organizations and movements, regularly and seriously to affect political outcomes and the workings of political institutions” (Best/Higley 2009, 329)**

and they have the “organized capacity to make real and continuing political trouble” (Higley/Burton 2006, 7). The ability to cause political trouble separates them from the average person, hence I refer to them as elite<sup>44</sup>.

In **Denmark** I spoke with representatives from the League of German People of North Schleswig (*Bund Deutscher Nordschleswiger*, BDN), the Schleswig party (*Slesvigske Parti*, SP) and the German Minority’s Secretariat in Copenhagen (*Tyske Mindretals Sekretariat i København*, hereinafter “German Secretariat”). The BDN is responsible for all matters concerning the German minority in Denmark. It is the minority’s main cultural organization but is also active in many other fields, such as minority politics and social and economic problems (Lubowitz 2005, 379). The SP is a regional party in southern Denmark and is the political representation of the German minority in Denmark. The German Secretariat is a special institution for the German minority in Denmark, which was established in 1983 to compensate the minority for not being represented in the Danish national parliament (*Folketing*). Its tasks are to monitor the parliament’s work by attending plenary meetings and reviewing parliamentary protocols and legislative proposals.

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<sup>44</sup> Further information on my usage of the term can be found in Schaefer-Rolffs 2016a.

In **Germany** I spoke with representatives from the South Schleswig Association (*Südschleswigsche Verein*, SSF) and the South Schleswig Voters' Organization (*Südschleswigsche Wählerverband*, SSW). The SSF is the Danish minority's main cultural organization and is the cultural umbrella organization for about 25 smaller minority organizations and it also acts as a social point of reference for the minority members and is very active in representing and advocating minority political interests (Kühl 2005b, 483-484). The SSW has represented the Danish and the Frisian minority in Schleswig- Holstein since 1948 (Nonnenbroich 1972, 111). The party's main political and societal ideas have a Scandinavian social-democratic background and the party has a special interest in participatory public decision-making processes (SSW 2016). The party's status in German politics is rather unique on account of the condition that the SSW is freed from the five percent threshold in federal and state elections.

After having established whom I have spoken to, I want to explain why I believe talking to those people is of great relevance for the social sciences and my research interest in particular. It is mostly because each interview partner combined two types of experts in their person. Firstly, it was already mentioned that I primarily chose the interviewees due to their elite position, which makes them experts on national minority political participation. At the same time, I was aware that they would possibly provide me with information on minority identity since they are minority members themselves and thus can talk about their own minority identity. I will explain this duality in more detail in the following paragraphs.

Being an expert on something generally means to have obtained knowledge about something that other people have not (Gläser/Laudel 2010, 11). Bogner, Littig and Menz (2014, 12) also declare those people experts who possess special knowledge. They say that experts deal with an expertise that is communicatively and reflexively available for them at all times.

In case of the expert knowledge on political participation the interviewees have obtained this exclusive knowledge due to their positions and because of the fact that they are present in decision making situations when ordinary people are not and also participate in making these decisions. Or in other words, they are experts

**“who are able, by virtue of their strategic positions in powerful organizations and movements, regularly and seriously to affect political outcomes and the workings of political institutions” (Best/Higley 2009, 329)**

and they have the “organized capacity to make real and continuing political trouble” (Higley/Burton 2006, 7). All interview partners hold a position within an organization or institution that has helped them acquire information and knowledge about minority politics and that in turn is necessary to fulfil their complex duties or helps them to better fulfil such duties. This first kind of expert knowledge is one reason I was interested in talking to them.

The second, and for this paper most relevant, reason I wanted to talk to them is because they all belong to either the Danish or German minority and thus carry a minority identity. Or as Helfferich (2009, 163) puts it, they are experts on their own life. Here, I follow Helfferich in her evaluation that it can make sense to interview an ordinary person as expert, as someone who has exclusive information on their own life and which to them is available at all times. At the same time, the information on one’s life may be exclusive in the sense that no one else can give a similar testimony about a person’s uniqueness. Bröckling (2007) further argues that life choices and careers are less and less determined by habits and traditions and people must therefore all the more be their own life’s architects and hence become excessively knowledgeable about their life. Or in other words, experts are now people who have a special knowledge about (their) social circumstances (Gläser/Laudel 2004, 10). I find this approach reasonable and comprehensible and thus I consider my



interviewees experts on their own life and hence on minority identity as such. Further supporting my decision are approaches discussed in the methods literature on expert interviewing which emphasize that to a certain degree experts are merely constructed by the researcher and his or her research interest.<sup>45</sup> This means that being an expert is not a personal characteristic but an ascription (Bogner/Littig/Menz 2014, 12).

To sum up: My interview partners are two kinds of experts at once. Firstly, they are experts on national minority political participation and secondly, on their own life. Both roles of expertise are important for my research but for this paper the knowledge about one's own life is crucial as here I can gain a deeper understanding about minority identity.

I will further use my interviewee's knowledge to examine a context which I do not belong to myself and that I cannot fully understand on my own or by the means described in Chapter 5.35.3.1. As a social scientist I will try to reconstruct this non-accessible context (national minority identity) to the best of my knowledge by talking to the experts and thus hope to become an expert on the topic myself. Social scientists "attempt to understand the world from the subjects' [experts'] points of view and unfold the meaning of their lived world [field of expertise]" (Kvale 2006, 481). This is what I am aiming for as well. I am interested in hearing the experts' own account of their national minority identity and to put together my own understanding from several perspectives. I want to hear about the experts' "beliefs, attitudes, and motives, in other words, the kind of information, which would be very hard, if not impossible, to obtain [only] through surveys" (Kvale 2006, 481). In the following two sections I will present my analysis method and the results I have produced with it.

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<sup>45</sup> *See*: Meuser, Michael; Nagel, Ulrike (1994): "Expertenwissen und Experteninterview". In R. Hitzler and A. Honer and C. Maeder (Ed.): *Expertenwissen – Die institutionalisierte Kompetenz zur Konstruktion von Wirklichkeit*. Opladen: Westdeutscher, 180-192. *See*: Pfadenhauer, Michaela (2009): "Auf gleicher Augenhöhe – Das Experteninterview – ein Gespräch zwischen Experte und Quasi-Experte". In: A. Bogner and B. Littig and W. Menz (Ed.): *Experteninterviews – Theorien, Methoden, Anwendungsfelder* 3. grundlegend überarbeitete Auflage. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 99–116.

5.3.2.1. *Analysing expert interviews on minority identity*

My data stems from a series of eleven expert interviews of which only six are relevant for this analysis as only six of my interviewees are national minority members. All these interviewees are male and at least forty years old. The six interviews account for seven hours audio material and have been professionally transcribed to 140 pages of text (Appendix 1). The audios were transcribed in an easily readable form, meaning that dialects were transformed into standard language. Non-verbal content like “laugh” and “exclamation” were noted as well as long pauses and speaker changes. These transcriptions form the basis of my analysis.

Since the main topic of the talks was the expert’s involvement in minority politics only those parts of each interview were relevant that concerned the question of minority identity. To convey an understanding of the topic’s weighting it helps to know that the conducted interviews can be categorized as semi-structured, in-depth, face-to-face interviews. This means that for each interview I had prepared interview cards carrying six open questions (semi-structured). Two of those six main questions were directed at producing answers with regards to minority identity. This does not mean though that one third of each interview was dedicated to minority identity as the questions were designed to get the interviewees talking about different topics. The degree to which this worked out, varied from interviewee to interviewee and from question to question.

Similar to Mikecz (2012, 485) I found it very helpful to have a set of questions at my disposal to cover all topics of interest but also to leave enough room for the interviewees to express their own thoughts (in-depth). Healey and Rawlinson (1993, 350) suggest that the researcher starts the interview with an open question so that the content does not influence the response. This also provides the interviewer with more time to build up trust and confidence. As all my questions were open, I chose to start with an introductory question, which I thought all interviewees would like to answer. Hence I chose to ask them what

knowledge they had about the internal structures of their minority before they started working in the field of minority politics professionally. This question worked very well in terms of getting the conversation started. All interviewees “took the bait” and went back a long time in their personal biography. Often they immediately started to talk about their family history, their childhood and their growing up in the minority community. I will go into further detail about this in the next section (5.3.2.2). After this introductory question I changed the topic to the experts’ work. During the following conversation the interviewee’s identity was repeatedly but mostly without an incentive from my side. The last question I had prepared was again directed at minority identity: “What do you think, why do people feel they belong to the Danish (or German) minority?”.

The analysis of the material is founded on an analysis strategy by Meuser and Nagel (2005), who rely on Grounded Theory Methodology (GTM) principles. Grounded Theory was first introduced by Glaser and Strauss (1967) in their book *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*.<sup>46</sup>

GTM was not designed as a method in the sense that it offers a complete tool to analyze larger amounts of data but rather as a research program emphasizing openness and impartiality (Kruse 2014, 97). One of the major pillars of Glaser and Strauss’ research paradigm was to ignore previous knowledge for the most part when working on a new research project (Glaser/Strauss 1967, 37). Disagreement concerning this point later caused the two researchers to split ways and develop two separate versions of GTM.<sup>47</sup> The analysis method designed by Meuser and Nagel leans towards Strauss’ (1998) or Strauss and Corbin’s (1996) understanding of GTM which does not exclude theory or literature from the research process and does not expect the researcher

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<sup>46</sup> For further reading on Grounded Theory, see: Charmaz, Kathy; Belgrave, Linda Liska (2012): “Qualitative interviewing and grounded theory analysis”. In: J. F. Gubrium and J. A. Holstein and A. B. Marvasti and K. D. McKinney. (Ed.): *The SAGE handbook of interview research. The complexity of the craft*. 2. Edition. Thousand Oaks: Sage, 347-365.

<sup>47</sup> For a detailed account of the controversy between Glaser and Strauss see: Kelle, Udo (2011): “Emergence’ oder ‘Forcing’? Einige methodologische Überlegungen zu einem zentralen Problem der Grounded-Theory”. In: G. Mey and K. Mruck (Ed.): *Grounded Theory Reader*. 2nd edition. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 235–260.

to erase all previous knowledge concerning the research from his or her mind. Rather, the authors advise caution against being captured or trapped by the theory or literature and encourage the researcher to keep an open mind. The most important point is that the researchers' previous knowledge may not predetermine the result of the analysis (Strauss/Corbin 1996, 38). Based on this paradigm Meuser and Nagel (2005) propose an analysis strategy in six steps. They take a perspective where the data is not analyzed top-down, following prefabricated categories, but where they develop appropriate and meaningful categories bottom-up from the text (Bogner/Littig/Menz 2014, 76). They label their steps: (1) *Transcription*, (2) *Paraphrase*, (3) *Headlines*, (4) *Thematic comparison*, (5) *Sociological conceptualization* and (6) *Theoretical generalization* (Meuser/Nagel 2005, 83-91).

The phase (1) *Transcription* has already been described above. The phases (2) *Paraphrase* and (3) *Headlines* were carried out simultaneously in a process, which I refer to as *Coding*, following Bogner, Littig and Menz (2014, 78) in their interpretation of the method. Breuer (2009, 69) also uses the term coding and identifies this step as the heart of GTM. He says, coding is a relatively structured and also teachable procedure, which builds the researcher's foundation for extracting and distilling concepts and theoretical structures from the data. What practically happens is the paraphrasing or coding of small relevant segments (words, parts of sentences, few sentences) while the researcher simultaneously assigns headlines to certain text passages (sentences, paragraphs). For this research project each individual interview was coded and all in all I had produced 180 codes (Appendix 5).

In the next step (4) *Thematic comparison*, I looked for similarities in the codes of all interviews and identified a plethora of paraphrases and headlines that showed up in many interviews. While I tried to constantly review and if necessary revise my decision to group similar codes from different texts together I started to assign new codes to all grouped items so that all items in a group shared the same code (Meuser/Nagel 2005, 87-88). I refer to this phase as *Comparison*.

The label (5) *Sociological conceptualization* is a bit misleading as this does not necessarily include the ascription of *sociological* concepts. It is instead a search for similar relevance, typologization, generalization and general interpretation in the codes. This systematization results in new categories and concepts of the interviewees' beliefs and values, which lift the content from the interviewee's level of self-perception to the researcher's perception of others (Bogner/Littig/Menz 2014, 79; Meuser/Nagel 2005, 88-89). I refer to this phase as *Conceptualization*.

The analysis concludes with the sixth step (6) *Theoretical generalization*. Here the researcher tries to interpret and systemize the previously established concepts from phase (5) into theories which are comprehensible in the research community and can be adapted by fellow researchers (Bogner/Littig/Menz 2014, 80; Meuser/Nagel 2005, 89-91). I refer to this phase as *Generalization*. For a better understanding of my method and for transparency reasons, Figure 6 depicts my procedure.

Figure 6: Exemplary Analysis

<b>Transcription</b> (English translation for better understanding)	<p>“Yes, well I stem from a family, which can trace their roots back until 1840, basically, and those are Danish roots. Of course, in the border region, that is a mixture. Well, I have German ancestors, of course, but the [FAMILYNAME], that’s a Danish name, it is a name from southern Jutland, and they have, well the majority of the [FAMILYNAME] has always seen themselves as being Danish minded members of the society, the last 200 years, as far as we can trace it back.” (I01, 2, 12-17)</p>	
<b>Coding</b>	<p>“Yes, well I stem from a family, which can trace their roots back until 1840, basically, and those are Danish roots.”</p>	<p><i>Paraphrase:</i> Danish family roots back to 1840</p>
<i>Headline:</i> Minority in Family for Generations	<p>“Of course, in the border region, that is a mixture. Well, I have German ancestors, of course,”</p>	<p><i>Paraphrase:</i> Family in DGBR is mix of Danish and German</p>
	<p>“but the [FAMILYNAME], that’s a Danish name, it is name from southern Jutland,”</p>	<p><i>Paraphrase:</i> Referral to Danish Family name</p>
	<p>“and they have, well the majority of the [FAMILYNAME] has always seen themselves as being Danish minded members of the society, the last 200 years, as far as we can trace it back.”</p>	<p><i>Paraphrase:</i> Family majority was Danish last 200 years</p>
<b>Comparison</b>	<p>Similar exemplary <i>Paraphrase</i> from other interviews:</p>	<p>Has a minority family background (i2, 1, 9) At home German over generations (i9, 1, 14-15) Minority in family (i3, 1, 9-14)</p>
	<p>Similar exemplary <i>Headlines</i> from other interviews:</p>	<p>Minority family history (i4, 32, 1-4)</p>
<b>Conceptualization</b>	<p>“<i>Family History as Minority Marker</i>” Family history and roots naturally determine that people focus on being German/Danish (minority) when thinking about themselves. If the family was Danish/German (minority), the interviewee naturally feels as minority as well.</p>	
<b>Generalization</b>	<p>“<i>Family History as Minority Marker</i>” in combination with “<i>Being Born into the Minority</i>” make for “<i>National Family Origin</i>” as one important element for national minority identity in the DGBR.</p>	

The analysis showcased in Figure 6 requires an explanation to be able to follow my analysis’ logic. The paragraph displayed in the top section (**Transcription**) of the figure is divided into four paraphrases and labelled with a headline in the **Coding** section. The paraphrases from the **Coding** phase are compared with similar paraphrases from other interviews in the **Comparison** section and the headline from the **Coding** section is compared with the headlines from all interviews. What I derived from the displayed codes, displayed in **Comparison**,

is that all those statements referred to minority family history, minority family tradition or minority family roots as a quasi-determining mechanism, which automatically makes the interviewees minority themselves. I express this with the group label “*Family history as minority marker*” in **Conceptualization**. This category does not sound very scientific and to a degree it is influenced by the interviewees’ self-perception. I tried to systemize this category in a way that others, who have not been through the analysis process I have been through, would be able to follow my argument. This is what is done in **Generalization** where I generalized the category together with the category “*being born into the minority*”<sup>48</sup> as “*National Family Origin*”. I had originally planned to distinguish between the interviews with the German and Danish minority, but during the analysis it became evident that I would not find anything specifically Danish or German so the analysis was done for both national minorities in the same way.

I will elaborate more on the general elements of national minority identity in the DGBR in the following section, but for now I have clarified the logic of my analysis of interviews with elite minority members.

#### 5.3.2.2. *Elements of minority identity elites in the DGBR*

After explaining the analysis of the expert interviews’ material, this section summarizes the general elements of national minority identity I found in the material. The elements are divided in two groups.

The first group contains elements, which tell us something about the experts’ self-perception. This means that I group statements, which the experts have made about their own minority identity. They said that they personally feel an affiliation to the minority owed to particular reasons. I grouped the information from all expert interviews into four elements that account for the expert’s minority identity. These individual elements are combined in four groups and labelled *Me 1* to *Me 4*.

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<sup>48</sup> This category contains codes which basically describes being minority as a predetermined fact and not as a choice. More about this and the other generalizations can be found in chapter 5.3.2.2.

The second group of elements contains my interpretations of the interviewees' statements concerning other minority members' identity. These are statements the elites made about why they think many or some feel affiliated with the minority or statements about what they have learned in personal conversations with other minority members about their affiliation. All those comments the experts made concerning the minority identity of other minority members are collected in this group. There are again four elements which I labelled *Group 1* to *Group 4*.

### **Me 1 - National Family Origin**

This general element contains the two categories from the example above. The first is "*Family history as minority marker*". Family history and family roots naturally determine that people focus on being German/Danish (minority) when thinking about themselves. It seems obvious to the interviewees that they are minority because their family has been Danish/German (minority) for such a long time. One member of the German minority elite in Denmark puts it as follows:

**"I am a Danish citizen, my parents where Danish citizens, my grandparents where Danish citizens, before that, they all where Germans, that means, I am, I want to see the one that says I am no Dane, but I am a German speaking Dane"**  
(i4, 32, 1-4)<sup>49</sup>.

The second category "*being born into the minority*" refers to the idea that one has no choice to be minority or not. The logic behind this thinking is not that minority is only who is born to minority members, but that if one is the child of two minority members, of course he/she is a minority member as well. Sometimes the interviewees where aware of how strong a statement this is<sup>50</sup> "Well I am born in the minority, did I almost just say" (i9, 1, 13) and sometimes

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<sup>49</sup> The reference (i4, 32, 1-4) indicates the quote is from the fourth interview I conducted, on the 32rd page in line one to four. A list of the conducted interviews is attached to the dissertation (Appendix 1).

<sup>50</sup> The politically correct statement in the border region is "minority is who wants to be minority" and not "you are born into the minority".



they weren't: "Yes, well, I'm a member of the minority because I was born into the minority" (i1, 14, 35-36). One interviewee added the following statement by explaining that "in this sense I have southern Schleswig, or the minority, in the sense, under my nails" (i3, 1, 14). All of those statements show the family's national heritage is something the interviewees want to uphold and preserve and it is something they rely on when thinking about themselves. They do not question the relationship between their ancestor's national orientation and their own identity. They all take this element as a given.

### **Me 2 - Socialization**

The socialization element is composed of influences from the family on the one side and influences from the minority community on the other side. Concerning "*family programming*" language was repeatedly mentioned: "Where both my parents minority, and at home we only have German, sometimes Sønderjysk [southern Danish accent], but basically only German" (i8, 20, 20-21). One interviewee also emphasized how this influence at home separates him from others:

**"Minority is difficult to explain. Because you always come back to things, what was the main language at home, where do we..., in the most minority families, that is no secret the language at home is Sønderjysk, yes the Danish dialect, in my family it is interesting, the language at home when I was little, was German." (i4, 6, 9-13).**

But not just the language spoken at home is relevant but also the environment the interviewees' parents live and work in. It seems only plausible that the minority status plays a big role in a child's life, if both its parents work in the minority or are politically active therein. Accordingly this was brought up by the interviewees: "And my father was a journalist and very integrated in the leadership of SSF and SSW in the minority, was one of the young and promising, so to say, and as well my mother, she was very active" (i3, 1, 18-20). It seems

that if one can say, “I was raised within the minority” (i2, 1, 9) this becomes such a big part of the person’s life that it constitutes an important element of their identity.

Apart from family, many interviewees spoke about the influence the minority community and “*community programming*” in their childhood and youth had on them. (i1; i8; i9) As mentioned in Chapter 5.3.2, both minorities run organizations that already introduce the children and young people to the minority community, such as schools and kindergartens: “I am fully integrated, you can say, in all the minority’s levels since my youth or basically since my childhood.” (i1, 2, 6-8). The fact that minority members automatically were labelled ‘minority’ by outsiders also had a strong influence on a person and it manifested in the people’s identity by way of being different from the outside and the majority. This is exemplified when an interviewee reflects on his youth. “It [being a minority member] led also to trouble when I was younger, sometimes, with name calling like ‘nazi pig’ and so on. But that is in the past.” (i9, 1, 23-25) Being minority, living inside the minority and visiting its institutions and organizations separated the minority members from other young people. Not always had the interviewees completely come to terms with this.

**“Yes, this is, as a young person very different, to grow up in the minority as to if you don’t. [...] I don’t want to say it was negative but you want to do something different at some point.” (i8, 1, 31-33).**

In this sense it is interesting that identity building does not only function in the way that minority members not only differentiate themselves from other outside groups (the majority in this case) but also from other units within their own group (here this unit are the established cycles).

### **Me 3 - Self-Fulfillment**

This element references two points. The first one is “*minority work*” and the second is “*activism*”. Many statements and sentences could well end up in both

categories and overall they are pretty closely connected. The fact that the interviewees speak about their jobs within the minority is not surprising. It seems plausible they did not start their minority work at the *top of the pyramid*<sup>51</sup> but have worked their way up from the bottom, as it is custom in most civil society organizations. Both categories touch upon the previously mentioned point of “doing some things different” or differing from the others. For one interviewee this was the major reason to become politically active and work within the minority: “Yes, well I was a founder of the minority party’s youth organization that was my political awakening as a young minority representative who was unsatisfied with our [old] crusted youth organization or... not even political was our criticism” (i4, 6, 27-29). For others the minority provided possibilities to firstly enter working life, an important step in an individual’s biography. “Therefore has the minority done a lot for my, professionally, because I was project manager of a de-central EXPO2000 project. And that was labelled ‘cultural and linguistic minorities’” (i8, 2, 14-16). The most representatives I spoke to emphasized that holding an office or accepting an office within the minority structures was important to them (i1, i2, i4, i8, i9). Hence one can say that working within the minority structures is an integral part of their self-perception. So is the fact that they are active and productive individuals. The category I labelled “*activism*” contains notions like “That means, in my adult life, I was always active within the minority” (i1, 1, 31-32) and “I have started to be interested in the minority very early. I was in the political youth forum” (i9, 1, 25-26). Not just holding office but being active and engaged in general is part of their identity. This understanding is joined by the belief that the minority community as such can only survive if people are active and “breathe life” (i1, 16, 14) into the minority.

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<sup>51</sup> I chose to speak with the interviewees due to their outstanding positions within the minority organizations, hence all of them were in leading positions in the minorities’ organizations and thus at the top of the pyramid so to speak.

#### **Me 4 - Status**

Last but not least, the fact of being minority was put in a framework that emphasized being minority was something positive. A Danish minority member stated: “It was way easier when I was a boy. Danish was positive, German was shit. That is how it was back then, beginning of those years, the 50<sup>th</sup>, beginning of the 60<sup>th</sup>” (I3, 16, 28-29). The interviewees feel they are lucky to belong to either of the minorities and did not conceal the practical positive effects this brings: “because learning the bilingualism, the two languages, the two cultures, I can support that. I see it as an individual advantage.” (i2, 16, 25-26). This statement does not mean the interviewee chose to be minority because of the practical benefits, but that he believes belonging to the minority is a real advantage over those belonging to the majority population. And this benefit is not something artificial but it “is natural for me. Due to that I have never been in doubt. So basically never. I am in a good situation \*laughs\*” (I1, 14, 37-38).

As elements that are constituent for the interviewees’ self-perception I identified *Me 1 - National Family Origins*, *Me 2 - Socialization*, *Me 3 - Self-Fulfillment* and *Me 4- Status*. I now want to present the four *Group elements* I constructed that provide information on what the interviewees said about other minority members’ identity.

#### **Group 1 - Family**

Foremost, the family was mentioned as determining whether one belongs to the minority or not. Similar to the point made with regards to element *Me 1 – National Family Origin*, when referring to others the interviewees see this as the main reason why people belong to the minority. Two exemplary statements show this pretty well.

**“But I am still of the opinion, the main reason, the biggest group, who send their kids into Danish schools and who can identify with the Danish minority, they do it because of family reasons, because they have experienced it themselves or it is tradition in their family.” (i1, 14, 8-11).**

**“And then there are people who, I think, still do it due to respect for their family. Like, my father did it like that, my grandfather did it like that. It is just right we do it.” (i4, 29, 32-34).**

### **Group 2 – Community**

Many representatives said *solidarity and companionship* were quite important for a lot of people (i1, i4, i8, i9). They emphasized those were important aspects of the minority community and also made the minority attractive.

**“And then of course there are those, it is limited, but there are Danes that say, we like the atmosphere in the minority, the cultural offers, the school, the companionship in the minority, this familiarity, - I almost said everybody knows everybody, which is not true but almost – that is what we like. And they come into the minority, they slowly grow into the minority.” (9, 21, 28-33).**

The specialness of the community is in parts explained by the pressure to assimilate, a pressure the group constantly feels and against which the minority members defend themselves by getting even closer together. “Everybody knows, that a group that is under assimilative pressure or pressure from the outside, sticks closer together than a group that is, so to say, embraced” (i4, 1, 31-33).

Another category I compiled from the data is one I labelled “*good experiences*”. It contains statements that go in the same direction but are less focused on the attraction that the community emanates towards the outside but focuses on what keeps people in the minority. One person describes it the following way: “There is one [a certain type of minority member] like me, who is born into the minority, got stuck in the minority and then had some great experiences.” (i9, 21, 17-18). Another one says, for some it started as a tradition and then change over time. “On the one hand it is tradition for some, grown up

in the minority, have been in school themselves, had good experiences.” (i8, 19, 5-6).

### **Group 3 - School**

All interviewees mentioned that *School* was as a reason for people to belong to the minority. They emphasized that choosing a minority school serves as a strong indicator. “One of the main criteria is the choice of a school. If you have made that decision, you somehow are a part of it.” (i2, 3, 11-12) It was mentioned though, that the relation towards this has dramatically (positively) changed in society over the past years. An interviewee remembers:

**“And I know, my father for example has not told that we were on a German school at his work place. Today this wouldn’t be a problem and it would be normal to tell it. It probably would even be a plus factor” (i2, 4, 11-14).**

Within the group of people sending their children to minority schools and also identifying themselves with the minority there seem to be two types. First, those who “were in [minority] schools themselves” (i8, 19, 6) and secondly those from the majority population who for some reason chose the school for their children and then slowly become affiliated with the minority over time, because “the Danish language in the meanwhile is very central in the lives of those people and they say ‘Okay, we are not there [!] anymore, now we are Danish.” (i3, 15, 23-24).

### **Group 4 - Culture**

Lastly the cultural aspect is to be mentioned. In many of the other elements this aspect of minority identity is somehow present but was also explicitly or implicitly pointed out in a manner that I assigned the statements to an own element. I did this to avoid the danger of not emphasizing this enough, as “the basic prerequisite for the Danish minority is, that one has a fondness of Danish language and Danish culture” (i3, 16, 32-34). The inclination not just towards the dominant majority culture *or* the minority culture but explicitly to both also

plays a role. Similar to *Group 3 – School* is that this may have practical implications which are not seen as being condemnable: “And the possibility, to use two cultures. That, I think, that is a crucial argument. That has helped many people, to have this double affiliation” (i2, 16, 18-20).

What is included in this understanding of culture is hard to say and not the least a very subjective experience. The German minority for example clarified that even if they promote the German culture, they always only promote a part of German culture that they live themselves and the principles they have internalized (i4, 29). An interesting little anecdote from south of the border may clarify how complex this can be, as one representative recounted that there is quite a notable offer of jazz music in the Danish minority community.

**“I have a neighbor there where I live, they are not part of SSF, because they have strong [not understandable] against the Danish and they just want to use some of our cultural offerings [the Jazz concerts]” (i3, 16, 4-7).**

I want to conclude this chapter by pointing out that all interviewees equally were of the opinion that there are many possible reasons why one belongs to either minority. None of the minorities’ spokespersons could identify a single deterrent for minority affiliation and several expressed the opinion that mostly it is a plurality of reasons for a single person (i2, 3; i3, 15; i4, 29; i8, 21). They also emphasized the question is a very difficult one and can hardly be answered at all, because

**“that is not a thing which is answerable in one exhaustive answer. It is different from person to person. I would give a completely different answer to that question as my brother would” (i4, 29, 14-16).**

Some individuals tried to describe a plurality of conditions, which could point to the fact that persons see themselves as being minority. They also said that one

person might fulfil many of these conditions while another person did not but that both would be considered minority members (i2; i3; i9).

I grouped elements the interviewees considered to be constituent for other minority members' identity into *Group 1 – Family*, *Group 2 – Community*, *Group 3 – School* and *Group 4 – Culture*. All elements, both from the *Me*- and *Group* elements are displayed in Table 8.

Table 8: Identity elements from the expert interviews

Elites on themselves ( <i>Me</i> elements)	Elites on others ( <i>Group</i> elements)	All identity elements
<i>Me 1 - National Family Origins</i> <i>Me 2 - Socialization</i> <i>Me 3 - Self-Fulfillment</i> <i>Me 4 - Status</i>	<i>Group 1 – Family</i>  <i>Group 2 – Community</i> <i>Group 3 – School</i> <i>Group 4 – Culture</i>	<i>Family</i> <i>Socialization</i> <i>Self-Fulfillment</i> <i>Status</i> <i>Community</i> <i>School</i> <i>Culture</i>

### 5.3.3. Telephone survey amongst national minority members (quantitative)

The attempt to understand what minority identity is and how it is constructed does not end with interviewing minority elites. To examine the topic from another point of view I conducted a telephone survey amongst people that regard themselves as belonging to one of the two minorities from June to October 2015.<sup>52</sup> 549 members of the Danish and German minority answered a questionnaire about national minorities' political participation and also responded to the final question of the questionnaire concerning their identity as a minority member<sup>53</sup>. We asked people: Why do you feel you belong to the

<sup>52</sup> The telephone-survey was conducted using a sampling technique known as Respondent Driven Sampling (RDS). RDS is a non-probability chain referral or link tracing method, which is commonly used to sample groups of people that are known to be hard-to-reach or hard-to-identify and mostly referred to as hard-to-reach populations. For further information on RDS see Heckathorn 1997; Heckathorn 2002; Schonlau/Liebau 2012. *Equilibrium* and *Homophily* are not a problem for any of the variables used for analysis. All tests about influencing factors on identity variables were applied using the population weights for the respective Identity-variable. Further information on the RDS procedure of the survey at hand, see Schaefer-Rolffs 2016c.

<sup>53</sup> For the RDS questionnaire see **Error! Reference source not found.**



Danish/German minority? 271 Danish minority members in Germany and 278 German minority members in Denmark provided answers to the question.

The possible question response was structured as follows: After having asked the question my interview team read a couple of exemplary answers, which the interviewees could choose from, but also emphasized they could freely answer whatever they wanted and did not have to fit their answer in our categories. Also, respondents could give as many answers as they wanted, provided they would keep the answers relatively short. The categories we provided were: *Family*, *History*, *Sympathy for Germany/Denmark*, *Sympathy for Scandinavian/German Culture* and *Other-Reason*.

210 of the 549 participants chose the “Other-Reason” option, however, many then went on to reformulate the provided answers, and again others just used their own terms to describe their feelings on the matter. I later generated further categories (elements) from the input of the *Other-Reason* category. The question’s evaluation is in so far difficult as the exemplary answer categories naturally show more entries than any of the categories I subsequently distilled from the 210 free answers. On the following pages I will nevertheless provide a somewhat quantitative analysis. It needs to be kept in mind that category building is always a subjective and qualitative process and in the case the elements deriving from the expert interviews’ results presented in Chapter 5.3.2.1 strongly influenced category building here. That notwithstanding, I believe the analysis I present is fruitful, informative and useful for understanding national minority identity in the DGBR. I will shortly present the elements I have developed for analysis before presenting some results.

The elements *Family*, *Socialization*, *Self-Fulfillment*, *Status*, *Community*, *School* and *Culture* roughly fit the elements of the expert interview’s qualitative analysis. The element *Family* though seems to be closely related to the *History* element I have used in the survey for many respondents. I remember from the telephone interviews I personally conducted that many respondents replied that family and

history could not be separated as family always has a history and thus they would choose both. I received similar feedback from other interviewers.

In the expert interviews the element *Self-Fulfillment* is strongly related to activism and peoples' work and life choices but the RDS-sample additionally includes answers such as "This is just who I am" or "I came to Germany for love". Answers such as "Because of work and my daughter was born into the minority", are coded into the elements *Family* and *Self-Fulfillment*. New (as not derived from the expert interviews) are the three elements *Sympathy for the Other Country*, *Contact* and *Institutions*. The *Sympathy for the Other Country* element results from the fact that this answer was one of the predetermined answer categories. This element is very general and its use for the analysis is limited. *Contact* includes a couple of answers where the respondents distinctly emphasized that their affiliation with the minority only developed because they had special personal relations to the other country in the past, for example: "Was often on a Danish farm as a child", "Close relations to Denmark for 50 years" or "Contacts in Germany". The *Institutions* element is different from the *School* element since the comments do not point towards language and education but to "the minority institutions" as unique features: "German institutions", "Institutions and the farming institution", "free time activities within the minority". All participants' responses are summarized in Table 9.

Table 9 shows that *Family* (82.2 percent) is by far the element named most often, followed by *Sympathy* (38.8 percent), *Culture* (36.4 percent) and *History* (33.7 percent) – all predetermined elements. I have already commented on the relation between *Family* and *History* and on *Sympathy for the Other Country*. From all other elements, *Socialization* (11.8 percent) is the one named the most. *School* (6.4 percent), *Community* (5.6 percent) and *Status* (4.7 percent) follow in the table. *Self-Fulfillment* (3.5 percent) received the fewest mentions from those elements deriving from the qualitative interviews. The two items with the last mentions are *Institutions* (3.1 percent) and *Contact* (1.8 percent).

Table 9: Reasons for belonging to the minority (DK and BRD together)<sup>54</sup>

Elites on themselves	Elites on others	Exemplary items in RDS	All Items in RDS	Count	Percentage of respondents
<i>Family</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>Family</i>	451	82.2 %
		<i>Sympathy</i>	<i>Sympathy</i>	213	38.8 %
		<i>Culture</i>	<i>Culture</i>	200	36.4 %
		<i>History</i>	<i>History</i>	185	33.7 %
<i>Socialization</i>	<i>School</i>		<i>Socialization</i>	65	11.8 %
			<i>School</i>	35	6.4 %
			<i>Community</i>	31	5.6 %
<i>Status</i>	<i>Community</i>		<i>Status</i>	26	4.7 %
<i>Self-Fulfillment</i>			<i>Self-Fulfillment</i>	19	3.5 %
			<i>Institutions</i>	17	3.1 %
			<i>Contact</i>	7	1.8 %
Total respondents <sup>55</sup>					<b>549</b>

Contrary to the elite interviews, where the answers of the Danish- and German minority members did not differ from each other, the survey results show some differences and I will elaborate on them shortly. The differences are also displayed in Table 10, in which the results from both country surveys are compared. Concerning the four predetermined categories it is apparent that far more people in Germany chose the *Sympathy for the Other Country* option (54.3 percent) than people did in Denmark (22.9 percent). On the contrary, the other three elements were chosen more often in DK. The *Family* element shows quite large differences (74.1 percent in BRD to 90.4 percent in DK), as is true for the *Culture* element (30.6 percent in BRD to 42.4 percent in DK). Not so strong but still visible is the difference in the *History* element (31.3 percent in BRD to 36.2 percent in DK).

The elements not predefined like *Socialization*, *Community* and *Contact* are named more often within the Danish minority in Germany, whereas in Denmark *Status* and *Self-Fulfillment* were mentioned more often.

<sup>54</sup> Data is weighted with applying RDS-weights from the respective sample and then added up.

<sup>55</sup> This row does not equal number of total **Counts** as every respondent could name several items.

Table 10: Reasons for belonging to the minority (DK and BRD separated)<sup>56 57</sup>

	German minority (in DK)		Danish minority (in BRD)	
	Count	Percentage of respondents	Count	Percentage of respondents
<i>Family</i>	245	90.4 %	206	74.1 %
<i>Sympathy</i>	62	22.9 %	151	54.3 %
<i>Culture</i>	115	42.4 %	85	30.6 %
<i>History</i>	98	36.2 %	87	31.3 %
<i>Socialization</i>	26	9.6 %	39	14.0 %
<i>School</i>	17	6.3 %	18	6.5 %
<i>Community</i>	9	3.3 %	22	7.9 %
<i>Status</i>	17	6.3 %	9	3.3 %
<i>Self-Fulfillment</i>	13	4.8 %	6	2.2 %
<i>Institutions</i>	13	4.8 %	4	1.5 %
<i>Contact</i>	1	0.4 %	6	2.2 %
Total respondents <sup>58</sup>		<b>271</b>		<b>278</b>

#### 5.4. Assembling the minority identity puzzle

To answer the question “What do national minority members in the Danish-German border region understand as national minority identity?” I defined the terms *identity*, *minority* and *nationality* separately and also how I use them as national minority identity in this paper. Based on those definitions, the third chapter presented empirical material on national minority identity in the DGBR, i.e. a literature review, information derived from a series of expert interviews and results from a telephone survey on national minority identity. I will bring the findings of those three approaches together and conclude what elements are important for national minority identity in the DGBR. An overview of my results is presented in Table 11.

<sup>56</sup> Data is weighted with applying RDS-weights.

<sup>57</sup> All identity elements were checked for influences by typical socio-economic factors such as gender, age, education and income and additionally I controlled for how many generations participants said their family belonged to the minority. None of the tests showed results that point to any correlation worth mentioning.

<sup>58</sup> This row does not equal the number of total **Counts** since every respondent could name several items.

Table 11: Elements of minority identity in the DGBR<sup>59</sup>

Literature review	Minority elites on them selves	Minority elites on average population	Respondents in the telephone survey	
			Exemplary items	Free answers
<i>Family</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>Family</i>	-
<i>History</i>	-	-	<i>History</i>	-
-	<i>Socialization</i>	-	-	<i>Socialization</i>
<i>Culture</i>	-	<i>Culture</i>	<i>Culture</i>	-
-	<i>Self-Fulfillment</i>	-	-	<i>Self-Fulfillment</i>
-	<i>Status</i>	-	-	<i>Status</i>
-	-	<i>Community</i>	-	<i>Community</i>
-	-	<i>School</i>	-	<i>School</i>
<i>Organizations</i>	-	-	-	<i>Institutions</i>
-	-	-	<i>Sympathy</i>	-
-	-	-	-	<i>Contact</i>
<i>Ethnicity</i>	-	-	-	-
<i>Language</i>	-	-	-	-

When starting to unravel minority identity by looking at official documents and scientific literature I found that *Family*, *History*, *Culture*, *Organizational Structure*, *Ethnicity* and *Language* where commonly seen as elements important for national minority identities in the DGBR. Mostly these terms where merely mentioned but never explained or justified.

The series of expert interviews on minority identity with minority representatives in Denmark and Germany I conducted, offered a more detailed investigation of the matter. Findings from the expert interviews were later included in a RDS-telephone survey and 549 minority members from Denmark and Germany answered the question why they feel they belong to either of the minorities. I summarized the elements I found decisive for national minority identity in the DGBR and explained why I did that. I began with four elements, which were of notable relevance in the expert interviews and the RDs-survey.

*Family* came up as the most important element for minority identity in the DGBR. The interviewees all stated this is a very important aspect for their personal development and for finding their way into the minority community.

<sup>59</sup> The dotted line indicates the separation between major and minor elements, which I later undertake in the text.

They also stated that they have come to know that this is also of great relevance for other members of their respective minority communities. *Family* as a reason for minority membership came up as the most popular answer amongst respondents in the RDS surveys in both Denmark and Germany. I already mentioned that the *History* element is not distinguishable from family history and thus I will not discuss it separately. Minority history or heritage, meaning that parents or grandparents were also minority members, was generally seen as major component of this element. The minority members want to continue in the footsteps of their ancestors and hold up their minority legacy. Also, people did not seem to think that belonging to the minority is a choice as it was repeatedly mentioned that being born into a minority family determines the minority status.

*Socialization* is an element that is closely connected with the *Family* element. The minority representatives explained that socialization in families with a minority background was important for them, but especially growing up in a minority community and being socialized in the minority environment formed their minority identity. When thinking about themselves and identifying what separates them from others, minority members seem to find that they have a lot in common with other minority members and rather keep themselves separate from the majority population. They start to build their identity among their family members but later also among their friends. Only being among minority members makes this membership very important for them. Of all non-default items, *Socialization* was the element that showed up most frequently in the RDS-samples, stressing exactly that point.

*Culture* is the term which best describes the next element of minority identity. What is included in this understanding of culture is hard to say and a very subjective experience. Still, the basic prerequisite for belonging to either minority is that one has a fondness of the other culture and language. In many of the other elements this cultural aspect of minority identity and also the language in particular is somehow indirectly present and hence hard to grasp,

but nevertheless culture, more than language was explicitly pointed out repeatedly. Something that is of additional interest is the possibility to *use* two cultures. This is seen as the ability to move around in both societies, in Germany and in Denmark. Again, of course, language may play a significant role here. Also, officials proclaimed that many people are simply attracted to the minorities for the comprehensive amount of cultural activities and events both minorities provide. In the telephone survey it was immanent that the liking of the German culture was stronger developed in the German minority than a liking of the Danish or even Scandinavian culture in the Danish minority.

*Self-Fulfillment* turned out to be an important point in the expert interviews but less distinct in the RDS-samples. Many interviewees revealed that they found some sort of self-fulfillment in the midst of the minorities not least because of their careers in minority institutions. This is definitely a trait that is special to minority elites, respectively to people in general who work in minority institutions of some sort. It is interesting though, that those who mentioned some sort of *Self-Fulfillment* in the open RDS answers often related this to putting their personal roots down or starting a family with other minority members or offering their children the minority experience they had experienced themselves. This argument is similar to the “keeping the family tradition alive” argument from the *Family* element, except that here it is directed towards the future and not related to the past.

Of minor importance but relevant nonetheless, were the elements *Social Status*, *Community*, *Schools (Institutions)* and *Contact*. The positive *Social Status* that comes with belonging to either of the minorities was mentioned as a reason to feel affiliated with the minority. In contrast to experiences typical in the past, it is very positive to learn that it is no longer negatively connoted to belong to any of the two minorities and speaking both languages or moving freely in both cultures but that it is seen as an advantage for minority members and their children and is highly respected also among the majority population. This aspect was emphasized slightly more often in the German minority in Denmark,

whereas the quality of the *Minority Community* was stronger highlighted within the Danish minority in Germany (but it was also mentioned in Denmark). Minority members feel a sense of community feeling and solidarity among one and other which they appreciate very much and which ties them even more closely to their different minority circles. Of further importance are of course the minority *Schools* where children learn the language (and culture) of the kin-state. Minority officials identify their kindergarten and school systems as probably the most important element to keep national minority identity alive over generations and the RDS-survey showed that also other cultural minority *Organizations* or *Institutions* foster minority identity among people. Lastly, *Contact* indicates that people have personal ties to the kin-state, which are not family related, but instead they have had friends there for many years.

The findings of my study are thus that minority identity indeed is very complex and multilayered. Member of the Danish and German national minority in the DGBR understand elements I call *Family*, *Culture*, *Socialization* and *Self-Fulfillment* as major properties of their national minority identity. Of minor importance for them are the elements *Social Status*, *Community*, *Schools (Institutions)* and *Contact*. The explanations I derived especially from the interview series are helpful for those trying to better understand what it means to belong to a national minority. Also, for the research of other minorities my findings are helpful as they provide a foundation for identifying constituent parts of national minority identity.



## **6. I can't talk to you right now, it's harvest time. RDS-survey amongst national minorities in the DGBR**

### **6.1. Introduction**

On both sides of the border in the Danish-German border region (DGBR) live national minorities differ from the majority population. They regard themselves as independent cultural communities and are eager to preserve their cultural heritage and their group identity (Schaefer-Rolffs 2016b). Nevertheless, they also regard themselves as part of the whole societal community and of the nation state's population.

This research paper focuses on the two national minorities of the Danes in the Federal Republic of Germany and the Germans in the Kingdom of Denmark. They are the two largest national minority groups in the region and they are the only national minorities that when constructing their identity, refer to an existing nation state that is neither their state of residence or "host-state". The state to which such a referral is made and that is not the state of residence is usually called "kin-state" (Kühl 2005a, 15). For the Germans in Denmark this kin-state is, of course, Germany and for the Danes in Germany it is, naturally, Denmark.

Publications concerning the two national minorities sometimes refer to members of the German minority as 'Danes that *feel* like Germans' or to members of the Danish minority in Germany as 'Germans that are Danish-*minded*'. These descriptions appear more appropriate than a reader without previous knowledge on the topic would think. Belonging to any of the two minorities is, following the Bonn-Copenhagen Declarations of 1955 and several other uni- and bilateral agreements, only founded on the individual's decision to belong to either the Danish or the German minority. Objective criteria for belonging to one of the minorities like ethnicity or skin color or ideology or language skills do not exist. There are only two things that are decisive, the first

one being that that person lives in the state which is not his or her kin-state and second (and most importantly) that that person has the feeling, the attitude or the wish to be German (minority) or Danish (minority). For historical reasons, Germany and Denmark have decided that whether a person does or does not wish to belong to either minority may not be questioned or surveyed by government officials.<sup>60</sup>

This is one of the reasons that for the last few decades estimations on the size of both minorities have stably been revolving around twenty thousand German minority members in Denmark and fifty to sixty thousand Danish minority members in Germany. In Chapter 6.2 I will comment on those estimations and will state that there is reason to believe that these estimations may not be as adequate as scholars and the minorities themselves have so far believed. I mention this because it illustrates that there is relatively scarce reliable empirical information on both national minorities. There are plenty of historical publications on the border region and the minorities that live there, there are a few publications on minority structures and the minorities' cultural and societal organizations and over the last years some texts about the minorities' political participation have been published as well. But, the investigative reader finds hardly any empirical data on the minority populations. There are only two projects, which shed some light on this matter. In Chapter 6.2 (Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp 2015) and in Chapter 6.3 (Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp 2014a and b) I will elaborate on both projects.

Reasons for the imperfect data situation are manifold. Firstly, the governments' commitments not to investigate or question the minority status have led to a complete lack of official information on the minority populations. Secondly, the minorities themselves seem to be content with the information

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<sup>60</sup> Information on the special historical circumstances in Germany and the experiences made during the Nazi-regime need to be taken into account and can be found in Bundesministerium des Innern (2002): "Stellungnahme der Bundesrepublik Deutschland zu der Stellungnahme des Beratenden Ausschusses zu dem Bericht über die Umsetzung des Rahmenübereinkommens zum Schutz nationaler Minderheiten in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland".

each separate minority organization has (or believes to have) on their members. Thirdly, the question of who the minority members are seems neither to produce enough interest for other societal actors nor does it lead to a financial engagement that would allow more severe research in this area. The third point carries a certain pivotal quality as it directly links to the fourth reason, which is the one most relevant for this paper: researching national minorities with quantitative methods (surveys, polls) is both difficult and costly.

The difficulty of conducting surveys amongst the national minorities in the border region stems from a fact I stated earlier. Belonging to either of the minorities is an individual decision. There is no way to find out whether a person is a national minority member but to ask the person. There is no sampling frame one could apply to draw national minority samples from. Reaching a sufficient number of minority members with usual random probability sampling methods (Random Digit Dialing or Random Walk) thus is a costly and lengthy undertaking.

In this paper I apply an alternative sampling method, called Respondent Driven Sampling (RDS) for both minority populations. The method is a sort of chain referral method, which comes close to a random probability sample by means of special sampling techniques and result weighting. It is important that I emphasize that although RDS is *not* a random probability sample it may be the closest one can get to a random probability sample without using the usual sampling methods mentioned above.

By conducting the RDS I will be able to deliver a detailed descriptive picture of the two minority populations described above. As already mentioned, knowledge in this field is scarce and this explorative project will contribute to the field of national minority research in two ways. Firstly, by applying the methodological innovative RDS-approach the article contributes to national minority literature. Since researching national minorities using the RDS method has not been done yet, showing that this technique, which can be done by phone, produces reliable findings for this kind of population can be seen as a major

methodological contribution to this field of research. Secondly, I use the RDS samples obtained in Denmark and Germany to present descriptive information on the socio economic structure of the Danish and German minority so far unobtainable and I estimate the political participation of the minority populations from both samples by asking: “What do national minority members in the Danish-German border region (DGBR) think about their political participation?”.

To do all this, the article is structured in the following way: In Chapter 6.2 I lay out the status quo of national minorities in the DGBR and explain why the two populations can be considered hard-to-reach populations. In Chapter 6.3 I will discuss some previous research of mine and expectations and hypothesis from those earlier research results. In Chapter 6.4 I will present essential information on implementing and analyzing an RDS sample in order to better facilitate the presentation of the results in Chapter 6.5. A summary and an outlook in Chapter 6.6 will conclude the paper.

## **6.2. National minorities in the DGBR**

In this section I introduce the reader to the two largest national minorities<sup>61</sup> in the Danish-German border region. Mentioning this restriction is important since the border region is not only a settlement area of the Danish and German minorities, but also of the Roma (Sinti & Roma in German) and of the Frisians on the west coast of the DGBR. Both minorities (Roma and Frisians) make for an integral part of the border regions cultural diversity and fortitude, however, they are not subject to this paper’s research interest. This paper focuses instead on the minorities that reside in countries right across the border from their kin-state and those are the German and Danish minorities.

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<sup>61</sup> Since a border revision in 1920 both minorities have repeatedly been recognized as such in their host-country. A detailed description of the term national minority is given in Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp 2014a; Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp 2014b; Schaefer-Rolffs 2016b.

The following two chapters are thus structured in a way to establish a basic understanding of the situation in the DGBR (Chapter 6.2.1) and about a major problem related to the special kind of population both minorities of interest constitute, namely hard-to-reach populations (Chapter 6.2.2).

### 6.2.1. Contouring the status quo in the DGBR

The Council of Europe's *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities* (FCNM) from 1995 is one of the most important documents for European minorities in the last 20 years. It describes that a group of people has to fulfill five criteria to be considered a national minority within a country:

1. The members of the group are state residents and live within the territory of the country.
2. The members have long, permanent and solid connections to the host-country.
3. The members have special ethnical, cultural, religious or linguistic characteristics.
4. The members desire to preserve the characteristics necessary for their identity, especially their culture, their religion and/or their language.
5. The members' number is significant, although it is still smaller than the majority population of the country or the country's region.

(Council of Europe 1995)

Both, Denmark and Germany recognize the other countries minority as a national minority in accordance with the FCNM. But, it was already forty years earlier that Germany and Denmark *formally* recognized the special situation of the two minorities in the Danish-German border region. The Bonn-Copenhagen Declarations of 29 March 1955 are unilateral notifications that set the status and rights of the Danish national minority in the northern part of Schleswig-Holstein and the German national minority in the southern part of Jutland. The declarations constituted a turning point in minority protection

between the two states and also within Europe (Klatt 2005a<sup>62</sup>). Regardless of the Danish-German pioneering spirit concerning minority recognition and minority protection in the 1950s, the European instruments for minority protection in the new millennium offer a suitable framework to present some information on the minorities. Thus I explain why both minorities comply with all five of the FCNM's criteria necessary in order to be recognized as national minorities:

**The members of the group are state residents and live within the territory of the host-country.**

Both minorities are mostly composed of the host state's residents. They also mostly possess the legal national citizenship of the state they live in, but are affiliated with the nation or nationality of the state on the other side of the border. Many minority members also express that they do not only affiliate with the neighboring country but also with the state whose citizens they are<sup>63</sup>. All the same, there are people amongst the minorities that are not state residents. These people live in their kin-state but still see their lives' center in the other country and within the community of national minority members to whom they, after official definition, do not belong to. These people constitute a small group but it is worth mentioning them, as they are fully accepted as minority members by the groups themselves.

**The members have long, permanent and solid connection to the host-country.**

This point is difficult, as it is not clear what "long", "solid" and "connection" are supposed to mean. Many minority members have family ties to the kin-state which go back a couple of generations, others have developed the affiliation with the kin-state due to some biographical ties which lie not that far in the past. And,

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<sup>62</sup> I recommend reading Klatt's complete article on the Bonn-Copenhagen Declarations.

<sup>63</sup> In a series of expert interviews I conducted in 2015 this was repeatedly mentioned by minority officials.

others have just taken a liking to the kin-state's culture and/or language and often it is difficult to say when this liking started to thrive. I understand the formulation "long, permanent and solid connection to the country" in a somewhat historical sense and hence want to point to some historical facts that are relevant for many minority members on both sides of the border.

The Danish-German border region's history is closely connected to those of the national minorities. Until 1864 the former duchy of Schleswig belonged to the Kingdom of Denmark<sup>64</sup>. Later, following two regional wars between the Kingdom of Denmark and the Kingdom of Austria and the state of Prussia in 1864 and between the Kingdom of Austria and the state of Prussia in 1866, the duchy of Schleswig fell to the state of Prussia. It was later incorporated into the new German Empire in 1871 as the Province of Schleswig-Holstein (Region Sønderjylland-Schleswig 2016b). The territorial framework as it exists today was established in 1920, subsequent to the German loss in World War I. In a plebiscite the border region's citizens were to decide whether they want their residential area to belong to Germany or Denmark (Christiansen 1990, 282). In July of 1920 the border was moved approximately 70 kilometres south and the Danish-German border as we know it today was defined (Nonnenbroich 1972, 130). Many minority members are very aware of the border region's complicated history and believe the border region is neither Danish *nor* German, but both.

**The members have special ethnical, cultural, religious or linguistic characteristics. The members desire to preserve the characteristics necessary for their identity, especially their culture, their religion and/or their language.**

Even though the region had experienced cultural exchanges of Danish and German influences for a long time, for many people the year 1920 still marks

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<sup>64</sup> There were interruptions of Swedish and German reign, but I will not go into further detail concerning this aspect here. For further reading *see* Rheinheimer 2006; Scharff, Alexander (1982): "Schleswig-Holsteinische Geschichte. Ein Überblick. 4. Aktualisierte Auflage". Freiburg: Verlag Ploetz.

the birth year of the Danish and German national minorities (Teebken/Christiansen 2001, 16). It was not before after World War II though that minority structures north and south of the border unfolded in a way which prepared the situation in the border region to become the role-model region it is today (Teebken/Christiansen 2001, 43; Kühl 2004, 575; Schaefer-Rolffs 2016a). Both minorities have established an organizational structure, which has been fostering the minorities' survival for almost 100 years now. North and south of the border a plethora of organizations has established a massive network of minority activities and minority social life. The minorities' efforts to establish a social environment for all minority families start already for the families' children. The Danish school association for South Schleswig (*Danske Skoleforeningen for Sydlesvig*) and the German school and language association for North Schleswig (*Deutscher Schul- und Sprachverein für Nordschleswig*) are primarily concerned with the minorities' kindergartens and schools. The schools also cooperate with the youth organizations South Schleswig youth associations (*Sydlesvigs danske Ungdomsforeninger*) and the German youth association for North Schleswig (*Deutscher Jugendverband für Nordschleswig*), which further support the development of identification with the minority amongst young people. Minority structures that are provided for young adults are also very well developed. Additionally, there are organizations that provide for various key activities in both countries, such as library associations, minority newspapers, social services, linguistic groups, music associations, sports clubs and student organizations. All in all it is obvious that the minority members are very eager to preserve their unique ethnical, cultural and linguistic character.

**The members' number is significant, although it is still smaller than the majority population of the country or the country's region.**

There are no official records on the number of national minority members. Already in the Bonn-Copenhagen Declarations in 1955 the two countries agreed that the decision to belong to either of the minorities is free and may not be



challenged. Hence, an inquiry relating to this question has never been made by officials.

Most estimations on the number of national minority members stem from the minorities themselves and are better characterized as good guesses instead of serious estimations. On both sides of the border minority officials and minority organizations assume the number of minority members based on the numbers of their political party members and those of their largest cultural organizations; they count how many votes their parties win at elections and they base their estimates on the number of pupils in their minority schools. The numbers resulting from these considerations lead to an estimate of 15.000 to 20.000 German minority members in Denmark and 50.000 to 60.000 Danish minority members in Germany.

The approach just mentioned poses a number of questions regarding its validity. For one it remains unclear, in how far all guesses take the fact into consideration that both parties claim to not only be minority parties but to also be parties that represent the interests of the regions as such. Consequently this could very well be a reason to believe that the minorities are actually smaller than they proclaim. What is also uncertain is the question whether the estimates account for the overlap between membership in cultural organizations and party voting. Moreover, no account is given for those people that are neither members of the parties' nor cultural organizations. This could be a reason to believe that the minorities are actually bigger than they proclaim. Additionally, the conclusion that the parents of all children in the minority schools consider themselves minority members can be challenged. Again, this can be another reason to believe that the minorities are actually smaller than they proclaim. Schaefer-Rolffs and Schnapp (2015) tried a different approach to estimate the size of the minority population by asking people in a representative telephone survey in North Germany whether they felt as a member of the Danish minority. The projections from this survey put the Danish minority at around 100.000 people (Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp 2015, 5). The point in question here is that

even if it can not be known for certain how big both minorities actually are I believe it is safe to say that although they constitute a significant number they clearly constitute a minority in comparison with the majority population in their regions.

The explanation, why both minorities fulfil the FCNM's five requirements helps to understand the situation in the border region better. The following section now explains why the minorities can be seen as hard-to-reach populations.

### 6.2.2. Hard-to-reach populations in the DGBR

Members of minority populations can be hard-to-reach for different reasons. Commonly five of those reasons are mentioned when populations are discussed:

1. Members of hard-to-reach populations cannot be identified by external factors.
2. The populations lack a sampling frame.
3. Members of the target population constitute a minority in the general population.
4. Members behave in a way, which is stigmatized or branded.
5. Members might just not want to be identified as belonging to a certain population of interest. (WHO 2013)

In the next step I will assess if those five reasons apply to the national minorities discussed in this paper.

Firstly, **members of hard-to-reach populations cannot be identified by external factors**. This means one cannot detect easily what they have in common, for example by just looking at them. They bare no mark or stigma and their connecting characteristics are often also not recorded. Groups to which these characteristics apply are sometimes also called hard-to-identify (Marpsata/Razafindratsimab 2010, 4). Obviously this is the case for the minorities in the DGBR. What connects them is the affiliation with another

nation and a sense of community and not a feature that is detectible from the outside (Schaefer-Rolffs 2016b).

Secondly, **the populations lack a sampling frame** (WHO 2013, 17). This means, that there are no lists of the elements (members) of the target population. There is no database or membership record the researcher could use. Or if there is such a record, it is very incomplete or yields a strong bias (Marpsata/Razafindratsimab 2010, 4). This applies to the minorities in the DGBR. As discussed in the previous chapter, there are no official records on how many national minority members exist or who they are.

Thirdly, **members of the target population constitute a minority in the general population** (WHO 2013, 17). Their relatively low numbers make an investigation throughout the general population very expensive (Marpsata/Razafindratsimab 2010, 4). Again, it was discussed in the previous chapter that it not sure how big both minorities actually are, but that I believe it is safe to say that they each are a minority in comparison with the majority population in their regions.

Fourthly, **the target population's members behave in a way, which is stigmatized or branded**. Sometimes it can even be illegal to be a minority member (WHO 2013, 17). This would lead the population to not disclose their behaviour and hence make it difficult to research them. The situation is similar if the populations behaviour is simply not known, which makes it difficult to approach them altogether (Marpsata/Razafindratsimab 2010, 4). This is not the case for the minorities in the DGBR. It can even be positive to identify oneself as a minority member (Schaefer-Rolffs 2016b).

Fifthly, **the members of a population might just not want to be identified as belonging to a certain population of interest** (WHO 2013, 18). They either do not want to disclose they are members of the population because this would be illegal, and/or it would have negative social effects on them, "because they have no desire to revisit a painful past, or because they refuse to allow any meddling in their affairs" (Marpsata/Razafindratsimab 2010, 4). This

is not the case for the minorities in the DGBR. Members of both the minorities on the contrary openly disclosed themselves to me in the past as soon as they were made aware that I have a scientific interest in the minorities. I have been contacted at official events or via email and telephone.

To summarize, the Danish and German minorities in the DGBR can be classified as hard-to-reach populations because they fulfill three of the five criteria stated above. Those criteria are:

1. They cannot be identified by external factors.
2. No sampling frame for their populations is existent.
3. They constitute a minority in the general population.

Therefore, the RDS-method of sampling will be applied and the method will be introduced in detail in Chapter 6.4. In the next section I will present some of my past research on national minorities and derive expectations from it for the project at hand.

### **6.3. Past research and derived expectations**

In the past I have studied national minorities in the DGBR with different methods. As will further be discussed in Chapter 6.4.1.1, I have studied the literature on both minorities intensively. The first quantitative empirical source of information I produced is an online survey which was conducted in 2010 and which serves as a foundation for two articles which deal with the special politics for minority political participation in the Danish-German border region (Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp 2014a) and minority protection by means of political participation in the DGBR (Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp 2014b). Ensuing from this foundation (the literature review and the online-survey) I conducted a series of expert interviews to gain more knowledge about both minorities and to apply the RDS. Through the interviews I gathered information about the status quo of minority politics in the region. Results can be found in Schaefer-Rolffs 2016a. Besides results concerning the general character of national minority politics (in

the DGBR) I also use the interviews' information to formulate some expectations and hypothesis concerning the RDS-results.

As mentioned in Chapter 6.1, apart from the methodological achievement in applying the RDS method to the national minorities, this paper further aims to achieve two things in particular. Firstly, to give an account on who the German and Danish minority members are. I will describe the samples I collected and present population estimations about socio economic variables of interest such as gender, age, education, income, how many generations of minority affiliation the respondents have in their family, whether the children of the respondents visit minority schools and if the minority members also are members of political parties and cultural organizations. Apart from those descriptions about the two minority groups I have some expectations concerning what the minority members think about the actors that are to ensure their political participation. These will help to answer the question, what the national minority members in the DGBR think about their political participation. The expectations I present in the rest of this chapter are all derived inductively from my past research projects and the experiences in national minority participation I have made thus far.

Hypotheses usually derive from a theory and are statements about whether certain data concur with certain expectations (predictions) about the study population (Agresti/Finlay 2014, 143). In this paper I only use the term hypothesis for a prediction when this prediction points towards a causal relation. When looking at my samples' results and the population estimates descriptively, I speak of expectations instead of hypotheses. The two terms have in common that they both stem from theory, which I inductively derive from my past research. I will present and explain my expectations and hypothesis in the following paragraphs.

### **Best interest representation of the Danish minority in Germany**

The **first expectation** I have concerns the best political interest representation of the Danish minority in Germany. In the interviews I conducted I directly asked the interviewees about their opinion on which actor is the most important for the respective national minority. Representatives of the Danish minority and German and Danish government mentioned the minority's cultural umbrella organization the South Schleswig Association (*Südschleswiger Verein*, SSF) and also to the Danish minority's party the South Schleswig voters' organization (*Südschleswische Wählerverband*, SSW) as being of special importance. When the interviewees were focused on the minority's residential area, Schleswig-Holstein, they mostly named the SSW as being "the political actor" (Schaefer-Rolffs 2016a, 25) for the minority. The SSF is very active, lobbying on the minority's behalf at governments in Berlin and Copenhagen and they agree with the SSW on a model of division of labor where the SSW is more present in the border region. In accordance with these findings I expect the minority members to express that the SSW is the actor which is most important for their political interest representation, and that the SSW is a very visible actor in the border region; concerning the SSF, however, I did not expect many people to know about their lobbying activities. This is not to say that the SSF is not visible in the border region. Indeed I do not expect much difference in the knowledge of and contact with SSW and SSF, but I assume people do not know about the SSF's political work and hence find the SSW is more important when it comes to their political interests. In Chapter 6.5.2.1 I will take a closer look at this expectation and the interest representation of the Danish minority in Germany in general.

### **Best interest representation of the German minority in Denmark**

The **second expectation** pertains to the best political interest representation of the German minority in Denmark. Interviewees from the German minority described the situation in Denmark as somewhat different in comparison to what I just wrote about Germany. In Denmark, the minority's cultural umbrella

organization the League of German People of North Schleswig (*Bund Deutscher Nordschleswiger*, BDN) seems to be the main actor and is also the organizational bearer of the minority party The Schleswig Party (*Slesvigske Parti*, SP) (BDN 2015, §2). For the minority representatives, the BDN is clearly the dominant actor. Many interviewees highlighted the internal and external importance of the BDN as the minority's umbrella organization, whereas "(t)he SP's role seems to be limited to regional politics" (Schaefer-Rolffs 2016a, 26). Following the argumentation from the previous section, a limitation to regional politics does not necessarily make the SP seem less important to the people in the region. The difference here though is, that the BDN representatives openly and very visibly portrait the BDN as the main (also political) actor for the German minority. Hence I assume that the RDS-participants in Denmark ascribe an important role to the BDN and see the organization as most important for their interest representation. In Chapter 6.5.2.2 I will take a closer look at this expectation and the interest representation of the German minority in Denmark in general.

### **Special Institutions in the DGBR**

The **third and fourth expectations** are about special political bodies for minority political participation in the DGBR. I will shortly explain what I mean by that. In addition to the political groups and social associations established by the minorities themselves, there are special political bodies that were established by the Danish and German national governments as well as the regional government of Schleswig-Holstein. These bodies exist to help the minorities to make themselves heard in processes of political decision-making. The most relevant special institution for the German minority in Denmark is the German Minority's Secretariat in Copenhagen (*Det Tyske Mindretals Sekretariat i København*, hereinafter "German Secretariat"). Its tasks are to monitor the parliament's work by attending plenary meetings and reviewing the parliamentary protocols and legislative proposals. It was established to compensate the minority for not being represented in the Danish national Parliament (*Folketing*).

For the Danish minority in Germany the Commissioner for Minorities and Culture of Schleswig-Holstein (*Beauftragte für Minderheiten und Kultur des Landes Schleswig-Holstein*, hereinafter “SH-Commissioner”) is of special importance and originated from an honorary office for border regional and minority issues. The person in office is a state employee and is usually a member of the (major) governing party. In addition to the Danish minority, the Commissioner is also responsible for the Frisian minority, the Roma and the Schleswig-Holsteinian culture in general. The Commissioner’s main task is to develop and uphold contact between the government and the minorities, but not to lobby directly for any minority’s political interests. Furthermore, he or she is the Minister-President’s main contact with the minorities in Schleswig- Holstein.<sup>65</sup>

In my interview series, other than emphasizing the BDN’s role the minority representatives in Denmark mention the German Secretariat as an actor of special importance.

**“Interviewees often referred to the German Secretariat more concretely, pointing out that the Secretariat is an outstanding institution for the minority which enables them to stay neutral in national politics and forge alliances with all parties” (Schaefer-Rolffs 2016a, 26).**

South of the border, in Germany, minority representatives praised the SH-Commissioner as an important actor, “but never without highlighting the importance of the persons in office” (Schaefer-Rolffs 2016a, 25). These, somewhat different, perceptions of the respective special institutions were previously shown in the results of the online-survey from 2010. Satisfaction with the special institution in Denmark (German Secretariat) was greater than satisfaction with the special institution in Germany (SH-Commissioner) (Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp 2014a, 69-71). Due to these results and the fact that

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<sup>65</sup> A detailed description and analysis of the two actors can be found in Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp 2014a.



the SH-Commissioner is responsible for several minorities I expect the German Secretariat to be mentioned more often as best interest representation than the SH-Commissioner. I also expect the German minority to be more satisfied with the German Secretariat's work than the Danish minority with the SH-Commissioner's work. I will comment on these two expectations in Chapter 6.5.2.3.

### **Concerning the German Secretariat in Copenhagen**

My **first hypothesis** relates to the satisfaction with the interest representation by the German Secretariat. I already mentioned that the German Secretariat was praised for their work with minority members during my field work in Denmark. From the German Secretariat itself I learned that they are

**“contacted a lot by pupils, students or commuters asking for advice regarding cross-border issues and often cross-border family matters end up being discussed in the rooms of the Secretariat” (Schaefer-Rolffs 2016a, 19).**

This leads me to assume that the Secretariat is viewed as a positive institution also because they succeed in staying in contact with minority members, despite their geographical distance from the border region.

I need to emphasize the distinction between geographical and communicative distance. The German Secretariat is relatively far away from the border region<sup>66</sup> and thus one could expect this would hinder contact between minority members and the Secretariat (Bimber 1999, 412). Due to modern communication technology (phones, e-mail, internet) though, this distance does not really matter for the minority members since it is easy for them to contact the German Secretariat. Today, new information technology (IT) plays, among others, an important role when it comes to public management (Greve 2015,

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<sup>66</sup> Approximately 300 kilometers.

52). This is all the more true as administrative bodies incrementally have established forms of e-Government to improve services for citizens and citizen contact (Wirtz/Kurtz 2016). This leads me to the assumption that even though the geographical distance between the minority and the German Secretariat might be large, the communicative distance is not and hence contact between the minority and the German Secretariat is likely. Even though the Secretariat convincingly states they are generally available, they also have to respond in a satisfying way. Contact making by citizens per se does not have to be positive for a political actor. Southern and Purdam (2016, 113) found that “not responding to the electorate is likely to have negative consequence” for politicians and being available has positive effects for them. So being in contact with the officials can have a positive effect (if the contact experience was positive) or a negative effect (if the contact experience was negative). Thus I hypothesize: Having contact with the German Secretariat influences the satisfaction with the interest representation by the German Secretariat<sup>67</sup>. I will test this hypothesis in Chapter 6.5.2.4.

### **Concerning the Commissioners in Kiel and Berlin**

The **second** and **third hypotheses** concern the SH-Commissioner and the Commissioner for Emigrant and Minority Issues of the German government (*Beauftragter der Bundesregierung für Aussiedlerfragen und Nationale Minderheiten*, hereinafter “BRD-Commissioner”) in Germany. In my interview series in Germany “both actors were mentioned as important actors, but never without highlighting the importance of the persons in office” (Schaefer-Rolffs 2016a, 25). This points to a positive influence the person in office might have on the perception of the actor in general. On the other hand, the survey from 2010 also showed that people who expressed their dissatisfaction with the SH-

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<sup>67</sup> I am aware that the argument could be spun the other way around, meaning that thinking the German Secretariat is not an appropriate actor when it comes to representing ones interest can lead to just not contacting them, but I believe that the argument I make for the influence the other way is a strong one.

Commissioner often referred to the person in office as “neither [having] enough knowledge about the minority nor a sufficient interest in gaining such knowledge” (Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp 2014a, 68) or were just dissatisfied with the Commissioner who was acting at the time of the survey without giving any further reasons. This leads one to believe the person in office might have a negative influence on the overall perception of the actor. The arguments go both ways but have in common that they assume a connection between the opinion on the person in office or the Commissioners as actors at the present time and between the opinions on the Commissioners as actors in general. Hence I hypothesize: Satisfaction with the SH-Commissioner now and satisfaction with the SH-Commissioner in general are related. I also hypothesize that satisfaction with the BRD-Commissioner now and satisfaction with the BRD-Commissioner in general are related. I will test these hypotheses in Chapter 6.5.2.5.

After having introduced the expectations and hypotheses concerning the research results from the RDS, the following chapter will lay out essential information about implementing and analyzing an RDS sample.

#### **6.4. Respondent Driven Sampling (RDS)**

Respondent Driven Sampling can be categorized as a chain referral- or link-tracing method to sample hard-to reach populations (WHO 2013, 18; Heckathorn 1997, 176, Gile 2010, 2). It was first developed in an AIDS prevention project to sample active drug users for interviews, HIV testing and AIDS prevention education by Broadhead and Heckathorn in the mid-1990s (Broadhead/Heckathorn 1994; Heckathorn/Broadhead 1996).

Chain referral samplings are non-probability methods in which the respondents, after having participated in the survey, are asked to initiate contact with other individuals from the target population. The new contacts are asked to do the same after they participated and the sampling continues in this manner until the final sample size is attained (Salganik 2006, 99). The method is based

on the assumption that members of a certain sub-population<sup>68</sup> know each other, “allowing a series of referrals to be made within a circle of acquaintance” (Akinson/Flint 2001, 33). Chain referral methods have obvious strengths as firstly, they are relatively inexpensive as the research participants do the sampling for the researcher and secondly, the procedure identifies participants relatively fast. Weaknesses on the other hand mostly arise from the non-probability nature of the method and the fact that certain groups can be over- or under-represented in the sample, depending on the size of their personal social network and hence the possibility to be contacted by another person they know (Erickson 1979, 284; Johnston/Sabin 2010, 38).

With a special sampling technique and advanced analysis procedure RDS aims to mitigate the shortcomings usual chain referral methods exhibit, while simultaneously retaining the advantages emphasized above. RDS still uses an initial group of participants (*seeds*) to initiate peer recruitment, has peers refer their peers to the researcher and often leads to relatively easy and rapid recruitment. In the two following sub-chapters I will explain the sampling procedure (6.4.1) and the challenges for data analysis (6.4.2).

### 6.4.1. Implementing Respondent Driven Sampling

To overcome the shortcomings of classical link-tracing procedures, RDS operates with a set of tools to improve the data quality which later favors the capability to make assumptions about population proportions of the population of interest, in this case the national minorities in the DGBR. The basis of RDS is that respondents are selected not from a sampling frame but from the personal network of people, which have already participated in the survey (Salganik/Heckathorn 2004, 196). This means, unlike in traditional probability

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<sup>68</sup> In more general terms it can be said that “referrals [are] made among people who share or know of others who possess some characteristics that are of research interest” (Biernacki/Waldorf 1981, 141). This being said it is clear that participants in this method do not necessarily have to originate from a sub-population but often it is the case that the characteristics of research interest are certain traits that members of a sub-population or a hidden group share. In case of this research, the relevant characteristic is being member of the Danish or German national minority.

sampling, RDS does not directly estimate from the sample to the population. Instead the sample is used to make estimates about the social network from which the sample is derived and only then information about the social network is used to make assumptions about population proportions (Salganik/Heckathorn 2004, 200-201).

As the success of RDS depends on the assumption that members of the target population are connected via a social network, pre-existing knowledge about this network is crucial for the researcher. Within the framework of RDS, information about the network(s) of interested individuals is obtained during the first research phase, called Formative Assessment (FA). It is described more thoroughly in Chapter 6.4.1.1.

Besides gaining information on the network, Formative Assessment is also important for selecting the sampling's initial participants (*seeds*) through whom the whole sampling procedure is initiated. Gile (2011, 3) argues this does not lead to uncontrollable bias as the key innovation of RDS is that through many waves of sampling, the dependence of the final sample on the initial participants is reduced, allowing researchers more confidence in their probability statements about the corresponding population. This being the case, it is nevertheless important to dedicate particular care to the selection of *seeds*. The quality of such an adaptive-sampling design is to a high degree "affected by the realized network" (Salganik/Heckathorn 2004, 200) in the sampling population, which again depends on the quality of Seed Selection. The Seed Selection is further described in Chapter 6.4.1.2.

Chapter 6.4.1.3 describes the Network Sampling Procedure that is applied after the sampling has been initiated by contacting the *seeds*. This is also of utmost importance for the success of RDS and the quality of all data obtained (McCreesh et al. 2012, 138). Each researcher applying RDS must be aware of their sampling process and how the recruiting of new participants functions, for else RDS will not unfold its complete power which Gile, Johnston and Salganik (2014, 25) describe as follows:

**“RDS is designed to enact a near statistical miracle: beginning with a convenience sample, selecting subsequent samples dependent on previous samples, then treating the final sample as a probability sample with known (or estimable) inclusion probabilities.”**

The upcoming sections describe the Formative Assessment (FA), Seed Selection and Network Sampling Procedure in more detail, starting with FA.

#### *6.4.1.1. Formative Assessment*

It is an integral part of RDS to have an understanding of the research population that is as well-grounded and broad as possible. The way to achieve such knowledge is called Formative Assessment. Many papers on RDS note that although it is of great importance, sadly though, more often than not no information is given on how the FA was conducted in the cases at hand (Semaan 2010, 64). In illustrating my FA process I primarily rely on the World Health Organizations guide on Formative Assessment (WHO 2013, 29-42).

The information gathering process can be done in several ways. Researchers can screen already existing research material concerning the population or talk to other researchers. Depending on the specifics of the population it can also be of help to map the population’s areas of residence or just observe the target population at locations where it is known they are present. Lastly in-depth interviews with members of the target population provide the deepest insight into the group. For the case at hand I was able to draw on information gathered during earlier research and was already familiar with research on minorities and had screened plenty material concerning the national minorities in DGBR. Also, the mapping of the national minorities in the DGBR had already been done for another ongoing research project<sup>69</sup>. Observing the national minorities in this case is not really feasible as the minorities’ residential

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<sup>69</sup> For further details about the mapping *see*: Hoops/Schnapp/Schaefer-Rolffs 2013.

areas are spread 100 kilometers north and south of the Danish-German border. An immensely helpful source of information was a series of interviews that I conducted with representatives of several minority organizations four months before the RDS started. I had interviewed persons connected to minority organizational structures, political participation of national minorities in the DGBR and minority identity. Additionally during all interviews I took the opportunity to explain my research project to the interviewees, acquainting them with RDS and assessed whether they would be suited *seeds* or produce information about other suitable *seeds*. To recruit *seeds* or gather information about other possible *seeds* are but two benefits of the Formative Assessments. They are all described in Chapter 6.4.1.2.

Furthermore FA helps to determine whether RDS is at all the right sampling method for the population being studied. This means that FA helps to find out if the survey population is socially networked to a degree that makes RDS possible. If the target population is split into subpopulations, FA can help to identify individuals that link these populations to each other. Moreover, the interviews produced some of this project's research questions and thus determined parts of the survey questionnaire (WHO 2013, 30).

In general one would also need to gather information about a possible interview location but in this case this was not necessary as the interviews were to be conducted via telephone. Additionally, appropriate incentives for the interviewees<sup>70</sup> would have to be selected but in this case this was not necessary either as I strongly expected the national minority member to be very cooperative and willing to participate in the research. Past projects had shown that most minority members were very happy if researchers are interested in their case and thus eager to help any project. Lastly, RDS may provide information about decisions on coupons (and coupon design) which an

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<sup>70</sup> Usually incentives for recruiter and the recruited are a very important factor in RDS sampling as it is mostly used on populations whose members do not want to be identified or may even take huge risks when participating in a survey, as described in Chapter 6.2.2. For further information on incentives see: Heckathorn 1997, 177-178.

interviewee would receive to recruit new participants (Johnston/Sabin 2010, 41) but again for the case at hand this was not necessary as interviewees would directly contact new recruits and share their contact details with the research team as Chapter 6.4.1.3 illustrates.

#### 6.4.1.2. *Seed Selection*

“Seeds play an extremely important role in conducting an RDS survey” (WHO 2013, 70). The choosing of *seeds* is the part of the RDS sampling where participants are non-randomly selected from the target population. The seeds then recruit other members of the target population from their personal social network. This process of existing participants recruiting future participants goes on until the desired sample size is reached (Salganik/Heckathorn 1997, 196; Weijnert/Heckathorn 2008, 106).

The selection of *seeds* for this study already began before planning the FA expert interviews. Because already before planning the interviews I needed to decide how many *seeds* to pursue and how many interviewees to contact. Too few *seeds* or ineffective *seeds* may cause the recruitment chains to die too fast so that new *seeds* would have to be initiated during the sampling process. Too many *seeds* on the other hand may produce too short recruitment chains and the possibility that equilibrium<sup>71</sup> is not attained (WHO 2013, 70). I decided on three *seeds* in each of the two minorities as I was confident that the recruitment would go well and I would reach the desired sample size within a sufficient number of recruiting waves.<sup>72</sup> When deciding on which minority officials to interview I kept the selection of potential *seeds* in mind. Knowing the minorities’ organizational structures quite well, I knew that it would be important to talk to representatives of both the minority parties and the minorities’ cultural umbrella organizations.

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<sup>71</sup> Equilibrium is discussed in chapter 6.4.2.2.

<sup>72</sup> With three *seeds* and two recommendations by every participant the RDS would produce 361 participants per minority in six waves if all participants would always refer two new participants. I was aiming for 250 to 300 participants in each minority and believed to reach this number with no more than 18 waves even if recruitment went really bad which, as I said, was not to be expected (and did not occur).



As this was in accordance with other research interests related to the interviews, I planned the interviews accordingly. Due to the fact that both minorities believe most of their members are at least member of one of the two organizations it was safe to assume that placing a *seed* in each organization would provide a huge network, which in each case would lead into different directions. Because, as mentioned earlier, I am somewhat skeptical of the assumption concerning party and cultural organization membership I later also included officials from both minority newspapers as *seeds* to broaden the network diversity.

Another aspect of Seed Selection is, *seeds* are supposed to be “social stars” (Schonlau/Liebau 2012, 73) or “high-energy” (Semaan 2010, 64) members of the target population. They should ideally have a huge social network, be well-known and well-respected within the target population and enthusiastic about the research (WHO 2013, 75). I was quite sure that these requirements would be fulfilled by most of my interviewees as I already knew they were popular and well-liked in their respective minority circles. I was able to use the interviews to explain my next research project to the interviewees, acquaint them with RDS and spark their interest to help me with the realization of the project and become an integral part of it. All six minority representatives were very enthusiastic about my project and it was repeatedly mentioned how important it is for them to gather more information concerning their groups. In the end I decided to pick four of the six persons as *seeds*. The input I got from the interviews assured me that it would be good to additionally contact the two minority newspapers and plant the remaining *seed* for every minority amongst the leading members of the respective newspaper. This would access another group of minority members that might not be politically active. In choosing this path it became evident that Johnston and Sabin (2010, 41) were right when they proclaimed that “formative assessment [...] will identify potential cleavages and assist in the selection of effective seeds”.

After the selection of the final *seeds* was completed the demographics of all *seeds* were men and 40 years and older. In general it is advised that the *seeds*

differ in parameters such as gender, age or profession (WHO 2013, 75). For my target population, however, it seemed most important that the research project became known within the minorities and that it would be supported by the minority institutions and organizations, which is why I decided to neglect the advice in favor of the *seeds*' social status. There is research to support this procedure, as

**“all people in the sample are indirectly recruited by the seeds, researchers believed that any small bias in selecting the seeds would be compounded in unknown ways as the sampling process continued” (Salganik/Heckathorn 2004, 197).**

The authors even claim they “can show that our estimates are asymptotically unbiased no matter how the seeds are chosen” (Salganik/Heckathorn 2004, 222). The FA process for this research was concluded by choosing the aforementioned six *seeds* as my first interview partners. The three *seeds* from the Danish minority in Germany produced nine, twelve and thirteen recruitment waves, the three *seeds* from the German minority in Denmark produced eight, twelve and fourteen recruitment chains. How the sampling procedure proceeded is explained in the following chapter.

#### *6.4.1.3. Network Sampling Procedure*

“Like other chain-referral methods, RDS assumes that those best able to access members of hidden populations are their own peers” (Heckathorn 1997, 178). As already explained in Chapter 6.3, my experiences with researching national minorities in the DGBR confirmed this assumption. There are a number of reasons why it is difficult to access the minority populations when attempting to draw random samples from them. By applying the RDS method, I was able to circumvent those problems and thus decided to rely on the participants of the survey to establish contact with new potential participants.

Normally, in RDS recruiting participants is done by handing out unique coupons to the respondents which they are supposed to hand to other people in the target population who in turn can choose to bring the coupon back to the interview site and participate in the survey (Gile 2011, 2). Both, the person that handed out the coupon (the *root*) and the recruit who brought back the coupon (the *leaf*) is rewarded in a typical RDS. In the case at hand the procedure was different because the interviews were conducted over the telephone. Instead of handing out coupons, after finishing the survey, participants (*roots*) were asked whether they would be willing to recommend two other minority members (*leafs*) to the research team. The *roots* did not have to answer that question immediately but could think about it until another appointment that was arranged with the interviewer. The *leafs* could be family, friends, colleagues, fellow club members or other acquaintances and they, the *leafs*, should differ with regards to the nature of the relationship they have to the recruiter (their tie), their age, their gender, their profession, their social status and their place of residency in the best case.

**“For recruitment to function, respondents must know one another as members of the target population. ‘Knowing’ someone involves general recognition allowing both acquaintances (weaker ties) and friends (stronger ties) to be recruited.” (Johnston/Sabin 2010, 41)**

The *roots* were asked to contact potential *leafs* and in case they were willing to participate, the *roots* asked the *leafs* for permission to pass on their (the *leaf*’s) name and telephone number to the research team. The interviewer collected the contact information in the aforementioned follow-up call. In case the *root* could not provide any or only one *leaf* at the time of the follow-up call, another appointment was made. This process proved to work rather well, even if in several cases a plethora of follow-up calls needed to be made to collect two *leafs*. As soon as the *roots* signaled they would not want to try to find further *leafs*, the process was stopped and the sample continued with whatever contacts were

given. Collecting the full name and the telephone number prevented people from participating repeatedly in the survey. What did happen repeatedly, however, was that *leafs* were asked to participate by different *roots*. In those cases the interviewers told the *leaf* he or she had already participated in the survey and a new *leaf* was collected from the *root*.

The often-discussed incentives<sup>73</sup> to participate in the study, respectively for recruiting new *leafs* were not used in this RDS. As mentioned earlier I was confident the minority populations' enthusiasm about the research would be stimulus enough to promote recruitment. Additionally, the interviewers had been trained to explain the research's purpose, emphasize its importance, to mention the support by the minorities' organizations and point to the fact that the group could potentially benefit from more information collected about it. This approach proved to work out rather well. The problems that did occur were not tied to the recruiting procedure as such but to the sampling's timing. We started calling minority members during the summer and did not consider that the interviews would be conducted during harvest time. This led a few respondents to say: "I can't talk to you right now, its harvest time. Call me back in a couple of weeks". As this would have slowed down the recruitment chain, we asked the respective *roots* to provide additional new seeds<sup>74</sup>.

The described recruiting procedure with *root* and *leaf* produces a sample which expands, "theoretically exponentially, from wave to wave to form a recruitment chain. This process continues until the final sample is obtained" (Johnston/Sabin 2010, 41). It cannot be stated often enough that of course this does not correspond to a random probability sample where all people have the same probability to participate in the research. Since people recruit their peers, those with large social networks are more likely to be included in the sample than minority members who are socially isolated (Salganik/Heckathorn 2004,

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<sup>73</sup> See for example: Wejnert/Heckathorn 2008; Gile/Johnston 2014; Johnston/Sabin 2010.

<sup>74</sup> I do not believe that this has biased the sample much in a way that agriculturalists are heavily underrepresented in the survey as there were quite a few farmers that did participate despite it being harvest time.

197). How RDS deals with problems stemming from this fact is explained in Chapter 6.4.2. After having discussed the logical necessity that *root* and *leaf* know each other, statistically for RDS it is also important to assume that the referral could also have gone the other way (known as reciprocal ties). This means that RDS assumes any *root* would have been willing to function as *leaf* for any of its *leafs* given that they would have been contacted earlier (Johnston/Sabin 2010, 41). This was assured by asking each participant how they would describe their relationship to their *root*, how well they think they know the *root* and how long they know the *root*. The answers to this question show the recruitment proceeded satisfactory. 99.6 percent of the participants in Denmark and 97.6 percent of the participants in Germany said they know the person that recruited them for at least over a year. In Germany 93.4 percent said that they knew their recruiter “very well” or “kind of well”, in Denmark this number was even higher (96.0 percent). No one said that they did not know their recruiter at all, which would have been an indicator that something had gone wrong during recruitment. The question concerning the relation between recruiter and recruited (Table 12) shows that the German minority in Denmark recruited more family members and friends than the Danish minority in Germany, while the Danish minority in Germany recruited more colleagues and acquaintances than the German minority in Denmark.

Table 12: Relation between recruiter and recruited

	Danish minority (BRD)	German minority (DK)
Family	22.5%	31.9%
Friend	43.0%	55.0%
Colleague	19.0%	8.6%
Acquaintance	15.5%	4.5%
Total	278	270

#### 6.4.2. Analyzing Respondent Driven Sampling

Having established an understanding of the most crucial sampling techniques behind RDS, this section deals with the procedures that ensure “something like valid statistical inference, in a sampling setting where the target population

cannot be effectively reached using a traditional sampling frame” (Gile 2011, 4). RDS does provide for such a setting by not directly estimating from the sample to the population but instead estimating the social network from which the sample is derived and only then making assumptions about population proportions and using information about the network (Salganik/Heckathorn 2004, 200-201). An innovation that makes RDS superior to other chain-referral methods is limiting the *leaves* per *root* as it produces more sampling waves and thus decreases the dependence of the final sample on the initial *seeds* (Gile/Handcock 2015, 1). The following three chapters deal with problems that RDS nevertheless is prone to<sup>75</sup>. These problems are calculation of personal network size (Chapter 6.4.2.1), convergence and equilibrium (Chapter 6.4.2.2) and homophily (Chapter 6.4.2.3). An issue I only want to mention briefly is the question of non-response. Usually, non-response rates are looked at in traditional samplings, but in RDS it is not possible to estimate non-response rates because the researchers do not know how many people a *root* contacted, before he or she found someone willing to participate in the survey (Schonlau/Liebau 2012, 78).

#### 6.4.2.1. *Personal network size*

Chain-referral or link-tracing methods proceed in such a way that they estimate the respondents’ probability to be included in the sample on the grounds of the participants’ social network size (Erickson 1979, 277; Veiel/Herrle 1991, 238). Information about the size of participants’ social network can only come from the participants themselves though. This is insofar problematic because it is questionable whether they can correctly self-report their personal network size (Wejnert/Heckathorn 2008, 119). On the other hand, Wejnert (2009) describes over- or underestimation of personal network size does not matter since their estimations are uniformly off and despite of the different ways they assess their network size the results they lead to are similar. That notwithstanding and in

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<sup>75</sup> For further and a more detailed discussion on problems of RDS see Gile/Handcock 2015; Schonlau/Liebau 2012; Gile 2011; Johnston/Sabin 2010.

order to “improve accuracy in responses to social network sizes it is useful to break the question into several parts” (Johnston/Sabin 2010, 44). In the study at hand this was achieved by dividing the question into two parts. The first question was:

**“How many members of the (Danish/German) minority population do you know personally? ‘To know’ here means that you would recognize and greet them on the street and that you think they would also recognize and greet you.”**

It was followed up by the second question regarding the respondents’ network size:

**“When thinking about the last four weeks, how many (Danish/German) minority members did you personally meet?”**

The second question was added because “[s]urveys on the accuracy of participants’ reporting of social network sizes have found high reliability for recall over short time periods” (WHO 2013, 142). Since the analysis of both variables showed that they correlate<sup>76</sup>, I am confident to rely on the answer to the first question alone. The average network size of respondents was 426 persons in Germany<sup>77</sup> and 335 in Denmark<sup>78</sup>. Despite this result, I decided to logarithmize the values for network size as it is plausible that the possibility to participate in the survey does not increase linear to the personal network size. For example, if a person knows 1,000 minority members their chances to be invited to participate in the survey do not change much when you add one friend

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<sup>76</sup> For the Danish survey, the coefficient of contingency is exactly 0.500 and for the German survey it is even higher, namely 0.895.

<sup>77</sup> In the calculation of the average network size I excluded the lowest and highest percentage of the answers to account for extreme outliers. Without this procedure the mean is 511 persons, due to a single respondent who claimed to know 20,000 people.

<sup>78</sup> Again I excluded the lowest and highest percentage of the answers to account for extreme outliers. Without this procedure the mean is 359 people.

to their already existing minority network of 1,000 people. But, on the other hand, if a person only knows one other minority member, their network and hence their chance to participate in the study doubles when adding an additional friend to their minority network of one. Veiel and Herrle (1991) proceed similarly in their study on gender structures in social support networks. With this adjustment to the data I am comfortable to be able to correctly account for the participants' network size in all following calculations.

#### 6.4.2.2. *Convergence and Equilibrium*

The Network Sampling Procedure is dependent on the social networks of participants and that the recruitment process continues until the desired sample size is attained. An essential assumption of RDS states that at some point the characteristics of the sample are independent of those from the initial *seeds*, thus equilibrium is reached (Heckathorn 1997, 183).<sup>79</sup>

Theoretically, it has been shown that convergence to equilibrium is reached relatively fast (Heckathorn 2002, 18). This can be tested, as the convergence to equilibrium can be simulated by way of measuring how many recruitment waves are necessary for the sample to reach equilibrium. Convergence is reached as soon as two successive simulated recruitment waves do not differ by more than a predefined convergence tolerance for any group. The convergence tolerance is often 2% within the equilibrium distribution (Heckathorn 1997, 187; Heckathorn 2002, 18; Heckathorn et al. 2002, 67). I was not able to find out where the convergence tolerance in the STATA application I use is set, but assume it is in the range of Heckathorn's recommendation.

In the following process, it has to be tested if convergence is reached for each variable. "However, in practice, variables with the same number of categories tend to reach convergence at about the same number of iterations"

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<sup>79</sup> "Recruitment is modeled as a Markov process (MP), where the state of the MP is the last individual recruited. [...] We assume that the MP is irreducible and that each state has a finite return time. Therefore, a unique equilibrium to the MP exists and recruitment rapidly converges to this equilibrium" (Volz/Heckathorn 2008, 82).



(Schonlau/Liebau 2012, 76). The implication is that after several steps, the sample is no longer biased by the *seeds* (Volz/Heckathorn 2008, 82). Salganik and Heckathorn (2004) show that once a sample reaches equilibrium all members of the target population have equal probability of being recruited. Therefore, it can be said that since equilibrium is reached the sample is representative as the “sample characteristics reach a stable composition (equilibrium) with respect to the traits upon which the research focuses” (Johnston/Sabin 2010, 40).

The question how to use the information about equilibrium is mostly answered in one of two ways (WHO 2013, 250). Firstly, equilibrium is understood as providing information that the sample is sufficiently large to justify analysis. Secondly, it is understood that only the waves after reaching equilibrium are unbiased and thus suitable for analysis. Tests with simulated data have found though, that analyzing only data collected after reaching equilibrium is not worth the loss of cases the analysis suffers when relinquishing all waves before equilibrium (Wejnert/Heckathorn 2008, 118; Gile/Handcock 2010, 308-310). I follow this argument and interpret equilibrium in the way that when a variable reaches convergence the variable is fit for analysis.

I tested each variable in the analysis for equilibrium and convergence. For most variables equilibrium was reached during the fourth, fifth or sixth wave. I would report should the equilibrium values for a variable indicate problems with the data. The tests showed that neither equilibrium nor convergence was a problem for data quality with any of the variables.

#### 6.4.2.3. *Homophily*

RDS is seen to be an effective method of sampling hard-to-reach or hard-to-identify populations because it utilizes the network connections between the target population’s members. Often it is the case though that network ties exist between people with similar features or attributes and not between people which are different from each other (Gile/Handcock, 2015, 2; Heckathorn 2002, 13).

This phenomenon is commonly referred to as “homophily” (Heckathorn et al. 2002, 57). The value of homophily measures “to what extent respondents prefer to recruit from their own group rather than at random” (Schonlau/Liebau 2012, 77). The features or attributes I refer to here can be of varying kinds. Depending on which variable is of interest for the analysis, homophily can be present in all sample variables.

Values of homophily range between -1 and +1. The value -1 characterizes a situation where *roots* never recruit their *leafs* from their own group, meaning that recruiting is heterophilous, the value 0 corresponds to random recruitment and the value +1 indicates that *roots* always recruit their *leafs* from their own group and thus recruitment is homophilous (Schonlau/Liebau 2012, 77; Johnston/Sabin 2010, 45).

Homophily is a potential bias in RDS samples if the recruitment reflects affiliation patterns. This is especially a problem, when a high degree of homophily is detected in a variable that is characteristic for the research interest (Gile/Handcock 2010, 303; Heckathorn et al. 2002, 57). At the same time homophily provides the possibility to detect possible bias and therefore adds information to determining the representativeness of the sample. Johnston and Sabin (2010, 45) formulate the following guideline for a weak homophily effect:

**“The fact that category differences in homophily and network sizes in [a sample] for [a] variable are fairly minimal and that the population (adjusted) estimates approximate the sample (crude) estimates [...] indicates that the sample without adjustment is fairly robust.” (Johnston/Sabin 2010, 45)**

In cases in which homophily is very strong, this could indicate that “the entire sample, and consequently most replicates, could drastically over-represent the [respondents] most similar to the *seeds*, resulting in poor coverage rates of the resulting confidence interval” (Gile/Handcock 2010, 300). I tested every variable of interest for homophily. “Moderate homophily is not problematic. If

homophily is very large (for example, 0.9) however, [...] [this] may be a sign that the groups are not networked” (Schonlau/Liebau 2012, 77). I would report all homophily over or close to 0.9. Homophily though is not considered a problem in any of the variables examined here.

After having demonstrating the sampling procedure and the challenges for data analysis in RDS the following chapter constitutes a discussion of results.

## 6.5. Analysis

The analysis in this article is divided into two parts. First I will describe the sample population before looking at the respondents’ opinions concerning interest representation through minority actors<sup>80</sup>.

### 6.5.1. Socio demographics of RDS-populations in Germany and Denmark

The Respondent Driven Sample consists of 549 persons, of which 278 say they belong to the Danish minority in Germany and 271 say they are affiliated with the German minority in Denmark. In the following paragraphs I will describe the sampling populations from Denmark and Germany<sup>81</sup>. In order to put the sampling populations’ composition concerning gender, age, income and education in perspective, I will compare it with equivalent data from the seventh round of the European Social Survey (ESS) from 2014. For the purpose of comparing the national minority populations it does not matter that the general population in the ESS data is from the whole country (Germany or Denmark) and not just from the region the minority is resident to. The comparison is undertaken for solely descriptive reasons and to show how and if the sampling populations differ from the general population of the host country.

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<sup>80</sup> Concerning the data files of all analyses in this chapter *see* **Error! Reference source not found.**

<sup>81</sup> Concerning the RDS questionnaire *see* **Error! Reference source not found.**

The composition of my sampling populations and the respective ESS results are shown in the following tables (Table 13 to Table 19). The header of the table always refers to the variable of interest and the respective characteristics are displayed in the left column. The first two columns show the results from the Danish minority’s RDS in Germany and the respective results of the German ESS, the last two columns contain the values of the German minority’s RDS in Denmark and the respective ESS values from Denmark. In each column I present percentages of the total amount of respondents for each variable. The total number of respondents can be found in the bottom row of each column.

In the German sample population woman are the largest share of the sample with 60.7 percent of all participants being female. The Danish sample population consists only of 44.5 percent females (Table 13). The comparison with the ESS data shows that the share of women in the German RDS sample is almost 10.0 percent higher than the share of women in the German general population survey. It is striking that the share of women in the Danish minority seems particularly high. Schaefer-Rolffs and Schnapp (2015) report similar results for a representative telephone survey where the share of female respondents even is 75.3 percent<sup>82</sup>. The differences between the population in the Danish RDS sample and the Danish general population survey do not differ as much although the percentage of men in the RDS sample is about seven points higher than it is in the ESS survey.

Table 13: Gender<sup>83 84</sup>

	<b>Danish minority (BRD)</b>	<b>ESS 2014 (BRD)</b>	<b>German minority (DK)</b>	<b>ESS 2014 (DK)</b>
Woman	60.7% (54.9% – 66.3%)	50.8%	44.5% (38.6% – 50.5%)	51.7%
Man	39.3% (33.7% – 45.1%)	49.2%	55.5% (49.5% – 61.4%)	48.3%
Total	<b>278</b>	<b>2938</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>1435</b>

<sup>82</sup> On the contrary the online survey reported in Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp 2014a and 2014b for reported 61.0 percent men and 39.0 percent women (N=129). However, due to the sampling techniques used this questions the quality of the data from the online survey more than the representative telephone sample and the RDS design sample.

<sup>83</sup> RDS-data is weighted with applicable RDS-weights and ESS-data is weighted with the applicable ESS-weights.

<sup>84</sup> Numbers in cursive brackets represent the 95% confidence intervals.

In both the German and Danish RDS most respondents belong either to the youngest or to the oldest age cohort. But while in Germany the youngest constitute the largest group with 31.2 percent (21.5% DK) of all respondents, in Denmark the oldest cohort includes the most individuals (27.9% against 26.0% in BRD). In both RDS the age groups of the 30 to 39 year old (13.5% BRD and 13.8% DK), the 40 to 49 year old (16.4% BRD and 18.0% DK) and the 50 to 59 year old (12.9% BRD and 18.8% DK) are of relatively similar sizes.

Compared to the German ESS the respondents' age in the German RDS show that people between 18 and 29 are over-represented by around 16.0 percentage points. 31.2 percent of the German RDS sample fall into this category while only 15.4 percent of the German ESS do. Correspondingly the oldest age categories in the German RDS show lower percentages. People between 50 and 59 years account for 12.9 percent of the German RDS against 20.9 percent of the ESS in Germany and persons 60 or elder constitute 26.0 percent of the RDS and 33.1 percent of the ESS.

In Denmark the picture is in so far different as the discrepancies found there are not of sizes found in Germany. Again though, the youngest age cohort in the Danish RDS is larger than in the Danish ESS, but with 2.2 percentage points the difference is rather small (19.6% in RDS against 17.4% in ESS). In the Danish RDS, the oldest category is also a bit smaller than the respective category in the Danish ESS. Respondents 60 or older account for 25.8 percent of the Danish RDS population and for 31.5 percent of the Danish ESS population. To sum up one can say that the respondents from both RDS on average are younger than the respondents that participated in the respective ESS. The average age of the Danish minority members that participated in the RDS in Germany is 45.0 years whereas the participants of the German ESS average 50.6 years. In Denmark, the German minority members that took part in the RDS on average are 46.5 years while the Danish population that participated in the ESS averages 49.6 years.

Table 14: Age<sup>85 86</sup>

	Danish minority (BRD)		ESS 2014 (BRD)	German minority (DK)		ESS 2014 (DK)
18-29	31.2%	(25.2% – 37.9%)	15.4%	19.6%	(15.4% – 24.6%)	17.4%
30-39	13.5%	(10.0% – 18.0%)	13.0%	18.4%	(13.7% – 24.2%)	14.7%
40-49	16.4%	(12.7% – 20.9%)	17.5%	18.6%	(14.3% – 23.8%)	18.3%
50-59	12.9%	(9.7% – 17.0%)	20.9%	17.7%	(13.7% – 22.7%)	18.0%
60+	26.0%	(21.3% – 31.3%)	33.1%	25.8%	(21.0% – 31.2%)	31.5%
Total	<b>278</b>		<b>2938</b>	<b>271</b>		<b>1435</b>
Mean	45.0		50.6	46.5		49.6

The questionnaire results concerning the respondent's education were edited following the United Nations' *International Standard Classification of Education* (ISCED). Since the ESS also used ISCED, I was able to compare the RDS results with those of the Danish and German general population. The higher the ISCED level the higher the respondent's education. That being said, Table 15 shows that both RDS populations are fairly well educated as most individuals in both samples reach ISCED 5. This level represents tertiary programs having an educational content more advanced than those offered at the level of full-time compulsory education (UNESCO 2006, 34). These can be for example university studies or advanced job training. 48.2 percent of the RDS population in Germany fit in this category and 52.0 percent of the Danish RDS population. The second largest cohort in both RDS samples is the ISCED 3 cohort with 36.6 percent in Germany and 38.0 percent in Denmark.

<sup>85</sup> RDS-data is weighted with applying RDS-weights and ESS-data is weighted with the applying ESS-weights.

<sup>86</sup> Numbers in cursive brackets are the 95% confidence intervals.

**“This level of education typically begins at the end of full-time compulsory education for those countries that have a system of compulsory education. [...] The educational programmes [*sic!*] included at this level typically require the completion of some 9 years of full-time education (since the beginning of level 1) for admission or a combination of education and vocational or technical experience” (UNESCO 2006, 28).**

In comparison to the country data from the ESS, in both minority samples the highly educated in the group ISCED 5 are overrepresented. In the German RDS the difference is 14.7 percentage points (48.2% RDS to 34.5% ESS) and in Denmark it is 8.1 percent (52.0% RDS to 43.9% ESS). Further differences are in Germany that the ISCED 3 cohort in the German RDS with 36.6 percent is 10.0 percentage points smaller than the same category in the German ESS with 46.6 percent. In Denmark the two lowest ISCEDs are smaller in the RDS than in the ESS. The ISCED 1 in the Danish RDS accounts for 2.7 percent and in the Danish ESS for 6.2 percent, the ISCED 2 in the Danish RDS totals 5.4 percent while the Danish ESS shows 13.8 percent in this category. Looking at this data one can say that the minority members that participated in the RDS are higher educated than the respondents from the general population that participated in the ESS in Germany and Denmark.

Table 15: Education<sup>87 88 89</sup>

	Danish minority (BRD)		ESS 2014 (BRD)	German minority (DK)		ESS 2014 (DK)
ISCED 1	1.3%	(0.4% – 4.1%)	0.9%	2.7%	(0.1% – 5.6%)	6.2%
ISCED 2	9.4%	(6.2% – 13.9%)	7.4%	5.4%	(3.2% – 9.0%)	13.8%
ISCED 3	36.6%	(31.1% – 42.4%)	46.6%	38.0%	(32.4% – 44.0%)	35.2%
ISCED 4	3.5%	(0.2% – 6.4%)	8.76%	0.0%		0.0%
ISCED 5	48.2%	(42.3% – 54.1%)	34.5%	52.0%	(46.0% – 57.9%)	43.9%
ISCED 6	1.1%	(0.3% – 3.2%)	1.9%	1.8%	(0.8% – 4.4%)	0.8%
Total	278		2932	270		1431

After the participants' general education their income is the next variable I would like to take a closer look at. Similar to the categories for the education variable I chose to present the results in accordance with the ESS data and labeled the categories INCOME 1 to INCOME 5 with INCOME 1 being the lowest income category and INCOME 5 the highest.

Table 16 shows that the majority of both RDS populations are classified in the higher income categories (Income 4, 5 and 6). In both the German and Danish RDS the income group that includes the most respondents is INCOME 5 with 22.9 percent in Germany and 25.4 percent in Denmark. The second most respondents can be found in INCOME 6 in Germany (21.5 percent) and in INCOME 4 (23.3 percent) in Denmark.

In comparison to the ESS data both RDS populations show higher percentages in INCOME 5 and INCOME 6, but with different characteristics. In the German RDS INCOME 5 is the same as in the GERMAN ESS (22.9 percent), while INCOME 6 is 8.5 percentage points stronger in RDS (22.7 percent) than in ESS (14.2 percent) in Germany. In Denmark, the percentage of INCOME 6 is slightly higher in RDS (17.5 percent) than in ESS

<sup>87</sup> ISCED Level 1: Primary education. ISCED Level 2: Lower secondary education. ISCED Level 3: Upper secondary education. ISCED Level 4: Post-secondary education. ISCED Level 5: First stage of tertiary. ISCED Level 6: Second stage of tertiary. For further information on the ISCED 97 see United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2014): "ISCED: International Standard Classification of Education". <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Pages/international-standard-classification-of-education.aspx>.

<sup>88</sup> RDS-data is weighted with applying RDS-weights and ESS-data is weighted with the applying ESS-weights.

<sup>89</sup> Numbers in cursive brackets are the 95% confidence intervals.



(15.2 percent) but INCOME 5 shows 9.7 percentage points more responses in RDS (25.4 percent) than in ESS (15.7 percent). The lower income categories INCOME 1 and INCOME 2 are underrepresented in both RDS. In Germany both categories show slightly smaller numbers in ESS than in RDS (INCOME 1 = 3.6 percent RDS to 5.9 percent ESS and INCOME 2 = 14.5 percent RDS to 17.1 percent ESS). In Denmark INCOME 1 is only slightly lower (8.4 percent RDS to 9.0 percent ESS), while the difference in INCOME 2 with 8.4 percent (RDS) to 16.7 percent (ESS) is much more obvious. Corresponding to the results found for education, when looking at the income data one can say that the minority members that participated in the RDS on average earn more than the respondents from the general population that participated in the ESS in Germany and Denmark.

Table 16: Income<sup>90 91</sup>

	Danish minority (BRD)		ESS (BRD)	German minority (DK)		ESS (DK)
INCOME 1 <sup>92</sup>	3.6%	(1.8% – 7.0%)	5.9%	8.4%	(5.5% – 12.6%)	9.0%
INCOME 2 <sup>93</sup>	14.5%	(10.5% – 19.7%)	17.1%	8.4%	(5.5% – 12.6%)	16.7%
INCOME 3 <sup>94</sup>	16.5%	(12.3% – 21.8%)	18.6%	17.6%	(13.2% – 22.69%)	20.5%
INCOME 4 <sup>95</sup>	19.8%	(15.4% – 25.1%)	21.2%	22.7%	(17.8% – 28.5 %)	22.9%
INCOME 5 <sup>96</sup>	22.9%	(18.4% – 28.1%)	22.9%	25.4%	(20.2% – 31.4%)	15.7%
INCOME 6 <sup>97</sup>	22.7%	(18.3% – 27.6%)	14.2%	17.5%	(13.2% – 22.8%)	15.2%
Total			<b>275</b>			<b>1300</b>

In the following I would like to present the results on more variables which are specific to the minorities and which cannot be found in the general population, namely how far back can minority members trace an affiliation with the minority in their family, do their school-aged children visit a minority school, are the respondents members of minority parties and/or cultural organizations, and did

<sup>90</sup> RDS-data is weighted with applying RDS-weights and ESS-data is weighted with the applying ESS-weights.

<sup>91</sup> Numbers in cursive brackets are the 95% confidence intervals.

<sup>92</sup> In Germany: 0-1000€. In Denmark: 0-11.000 DKr.

<sup>93</sup> In Germany: 1001-1700€. In Denmark: 11.001-18.082 DKr.

<sup>94</sup> In Germany: 1701-2400€. In Denmark: 18.083-27.082 DKr.

<sup>95</sup> In Germany: 2401-3280€. In Denmark: 27.083-38.500 DKr.

<sup>96</sup> In Germany: 3281-4960€. In Denmark: 38.501-52.500 DKr.

<sup>97</sup> In Germany: 4961+€. In Denmark: 52.000+ DKr.

they vote for the respective minority party during the last elections. In Table 17 you see the results for the question “If you think about your family, for how many generations does your family belong to the minority?” The table shows that 37.6 percent of the Danish minority in Germany refers to themselves of being first generation minority members, meaning that to the best of their knowledge none of their parents or grandparents belonged to the minority. 35.7 percent said that their family has been part of the minority for three or more generations. People that saying that they represent the second minority generation in their family make up for 26.6 percent. The high number of the first generation minority members surprised me as I would not have expected the minority would produce so many new minority members without family relations to the minority. The picture the German minority in Denmark is somewhat different. Here the overwhelming majority of 75.6 percent said that their family has been affiliated with the minority for three or more generations. Only 12.7 percent said that they are second generation minority and 11.6 percent that they are first generation minority.

Table 17: Generations of minority affiliation in family<sup>98 99</sup>

	<b>Danish minority (BRD)</b>	<b>German minority (DK)</b>
First generation	37.6% (31.9 – 43.7)	11.6% (8.2 – 16.1)
Second generation	26.6% (21.7 – 32.1)	12.7% (9.0 – 17.6)
Third generation or longer	35.7% (30.4 – 41.5)	75.6% (69.9 – 80.5)
Total	<b>278</b>	<b>270</b>

Table 18 deals with the younger minority members. The table shows that a large number of people in the samples do not have school-aged children. Those in this group account for 67.9 percent in the Danish minority in Germany and for 73.1 percent in the German minority in Denmark. 29.8 percent in Germany and 22.7 percent in Denmark have at least one child attending a minority school. The group of people with school-aged children not attending a minority school total

<sup>98</sup> Data is weighted with applying RDS-weights.

<sup>99</sup> Numbers in cursive brackets are the 95% confidence intervals.

2.8 percent in Germany and 4.2 percent in Denmark. If we only look at those people that have school-aged children, 92.0 percent of those in Germany and 84.3 percent of those in Denmark attend a minority school.

Table 18: Attendance of minority schools<sup>100 101</sup>

	<b>Danish minority (BRD)</b>		<b>German minority (DK)</b>	
No pupils in household	67.9%	<i>(62.1 – 73.1)</i>	73.1%	<i>(67.4 – 78.0)</i>
At least one in minority school	29.8%	<i>(24.7 – 35.5)</i>	22.7%	<i>(18.1 – 28.0)</i>
No one in minority school	2.8%	<i>(1.0 – 5.0)</i>	4.2%	<i>(2.4 – 7.5)</i>
Total		<b>278</b>		<b>271</b>

Lastly, the membership and voting behavior of both minorities are displayed in Table 19. Asked about their membership in the minority's cultural organization (SSF in Germany and BDN in Denmark) 77.7 percent in Germany and 70.3 percent in Denmark answered they are either active or passive organization members (Table 19). I consider both values to be very high. The question regarding party membership is an interesting one. In Germany 66.2 percent replied that they were minority party members, in Denmark 49.2 percent gave a positive response. The interesting twist here is, that there is no such thing as a party membership for the SP in Denmark. Members of the German minority can be member of BDN, a separat party membership does not exist. We asked the question, just to see how people would react. It is unclear now whether the people that said they were party members simply ascribe their membership in the BDN to the party or what other reason lead to their response. The minority parties are somewhat differently trusted by voters from within the minority. While the SSW in Germany can gather 79.3 percent of votes from the survey respondents, the SP in Denmark can only collect 62.4 percent of the respondents' votes, which is still quite high.

<sup>100</sup> Data is weighted with applying RDS-weights.

<sup>101</sup> Numbers in cursive brackets are the 95% confidence intervals.

Investigating the overlap between party membership, cultural membership and voting behavior we see that 7.3 percent of the respondents in Germany and 17.0 percent of respondents in Denmark hold no minority membership at all.

Table 19: Memberships and voting<sup>102 103</sup>

	<b>Danish minority (BRD)<sup>104</sup></b>		<b>German minority (DK)<sup>105</sup></b>	
Member of culture organization	77.7%	<i>(71.6 – 82.8)</i>	70.3%	<i>(64.0 – 75.9)</i>
Member of minority party	66.2%	<i>(60.3 – 71.7)</i>	49.2%	<i>(43.2 – 55.2)</i>
Voted minority party (last election)	79.3%	<i>(73.5 – 84.1)</i>	62.4%	<i>(56.1 – 68.3)</i>
Neither member nor voter	7.3%	<i>(4.6 – 11.3)</i>	17.0%	<i>(12.5 – 22.6)</i>

After having established a general understanding of the sampling populations that were produced by the RDS, I will now turn to the expectations and hypothesis I laid out earlier in this paper (Chapter 6.3).

### 6.5.2. Political interest representation in the DGBR

The expectations and hypothesis I presented earlier in this paper are all related to the actors that I deem most responsible for ensuring the political participation of the German and Danish national minority. The RDS respondents were asked a couple of questions concerning these actors, e.g. which actor they believe best represents their interest, how satisfied they are with the current interest representation through certain actors and how well in general they believe the different actors are suited to stand in for their political interests. Based thereon I formulated the following four expectations:

- The SSW is seen as the best interest representation by the Danish minority in Germany.
- The BDN is seen as the best interest representation by the German minority in Denmark.

<sup>102</sup> Data is weighted with applying RDS-weights.

<sup>103</sup> Numbers in cursive brackets are the 95% confidence intervals.

<sup>104</sup> N=278 for party variables and N=270 for culture variable.

<sup>105</sup> N=269 for party variables and N=264 for culture variable.

- The German Secretariat is more often seen as best interest representation than the SH-Commissioner is.
- The German minority is more satisfied with the German Secretariat's work than the Danish minority is with the SH-Commissioner's work.

Also, I formulated three hypotheses:

- Having contact with the German Secretariat influences satisfaction with the interest representation by the German Secretariat.
- Testimony on satisfaction with the SH-Commissioner in office and satisfaction with the SH-Commissioner in general are connected.
- Testimony on satisfaction with the BRD-Commissioner now and the satisfaction with the BRD-Commissioner in general are related.

I will deal with each of the expectations and hypothesis in the following sections while simultaneously taking a closer look at the data related to the expectations or hypothesis in question. I will start with the best interest representation of the Danish minority in Germany.

#### 6.5.2.1. *Best interest representation of the Danish minority in Germany*

The following figures and tables show information on the political interest representation of the Danish minority in Germany. The survey respondents answered a couple of question concerning six actors, which, as previous research has shown, are important for ensuring the political participation of the Danish minority. I will introduce the actors in question and the corresponding abbreviations briefly. The first actor I would like to mention is the minority party South Schleswig Voters' Organization (*Südschleswigscher Wählerverband*, SSW). The minority's largest cultural organization, the South Schleswig Association (*Südschleswigscher Verein*, SSF) is the second actor of interest. Additionally, there are two minority commissioners in Germany, one being the office of the

Commissioner for Minorities and Culture of Schleswig-Holstein (*Beauftragte für Minderheiten und Kultur des Landes Schleswig-Holstein*, “SH-Commissioner”) and the other the Commissioner for Emigrant and Minority Issues of the German government (*Beauftragter der Bundesregierung für Aussiedlerfragen und Nationale Minderheiten*, “BRD-Commissioner”). They both are to ensure the contact between the government and the minority and to serve as liaison between minority and majority actors. Next to the BRD-Commissioner the Advisory Committee for Questions Regarding the Danish Minority in the Ministry of the Interior (*Beratender Ausschuss für Fragen der dänischen Minderheit beim Bundesministerium des Innern*, hereinafter “Committee at BMI”) in Berlin is concerned with the problems and special needs of all national minorities in Germany. Last but not least in Denmark, the minority’s kin-state, the Contact Committee for the Danish Minority (*Sydslesvigudvalg*, hereinafter “Committee at Folketing (SU)”) functions as a link between the Danish minority and the Danish parliament. Table 20 offers an overview of the actors discussed in this chapter and whether they are directly tied to the minority or to a government, through who they are represented and whom they are responsible for.

Table 20: Interest representation of the Danish minority in Germany

Institution / Organization	Tied to	Represented through	Responsible for
<i>Südschleswigscher Wählerverband</i> (SSW)	Danish minority	Danish minority	Danish minority
<i>Südschleswigscher Verein</i> (SSF)	Danish minority	Danish minority	Danish minority
<i>Beauftragte für Minderheiten und Kultur des Landes Schleswig-Holstein</i> (SH-Commissioner)	German federal government	Governmental Chairman	Several minorities
<i>Beauftragter der Bundesregierung für Aussiedlerfragen und Nationale Minderheiten</i> (BRD-Commissioner)	German government	Governmental Chairman	Several minorities
<i>Beratender Ausschuss für Fragen der dänischen Minderheit beim Bundesministerium des Innern</i> (Committee at BMI)	German government	Governmental Chairmen	Danish minority
<i>Sydlesvigudvalg</i> (Committee at Folketing (SU))	Danish parliament	Danish parliamentarians	Danish minority

(In accordance with Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp 2014a, 60)

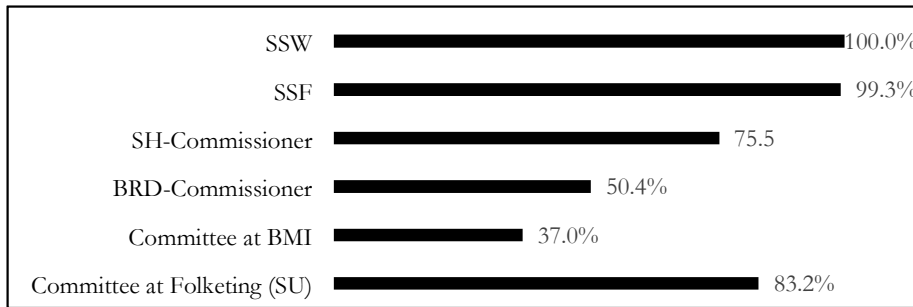
A first indicator on the popularity of the actors and whether they interact with the minority community or if they mostly deal with political elites and primarily in “the back room” (Schaefer-Rolffs 2016a, 29) can be taken from Figure 7 and whether the respondents know about the existence of the respective actors. Almost everybody in the sample knew the political party and the cultural organization (100.0 percent and 99.3 percent).<sup>106</sup> The third best-known actor is not, as I would have expected and as former research predicted, the SH-Commissioner (75.5 percent), but instead the Committee at Folketing (SU) with 83.3 percent.<sup>107</sup> This result is surprising for two reasons: Firstly, because more people know the Committee at Folketing (SU) (which is 400 kilometers away in Copenhagen) than the SH-Commissioner (which is located in Flensburg in the

<sup>106</sup> The party is literally known by everybody in the sample.

<sup>107</sup> Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp (2014b, 133) show that 86.0% said that they knew the SH-Commissioner in 2010. Data on the Committee at Folketing (SU) had not been collected.

heart of the border region) and secondly, because the 83.2 percent know about the Committee at Folketing (SU) is a very high number. The Committee at Folketing (SU) is a popular actor, as they for example grant the funds for the Danish minority by the Danish parliament and hence also are present in the border region’s media. Furthermore, members of the Committee at Folketing (SU) travel to the border region to get to know the minority and present themselves as the minorities representatives in Copenhagen. Nevertheless, I am surprised by this high number. The two actors in Berlin (BRD-Commissioner and Committee at BMI) serve as a comparison of some sorts and both show much lower recognition rates (50.4 and 37.0) than the Committee at Folketing (SU).

Figure 7: Danish minority’s knowledge of political actors (N = 278)<sup>108 109</sup>



After the recognition rate of actors, respondents were asked whether they had ever been in any kind of contact with the actors in the past. Information on what was meant by “contact” was not given unless the participants asked for it. In this case the interviewees were instructed to say that contact means any kind of contact, from contacting them by mail, email or phone, to meeting them in person or to just hear them speaking at a public event. The results in Figure 8 show that most people have been in contact with the SSW (92.3 percent) and the SSF (91.8 percent). The high recognition rate for the Committee at Folketing

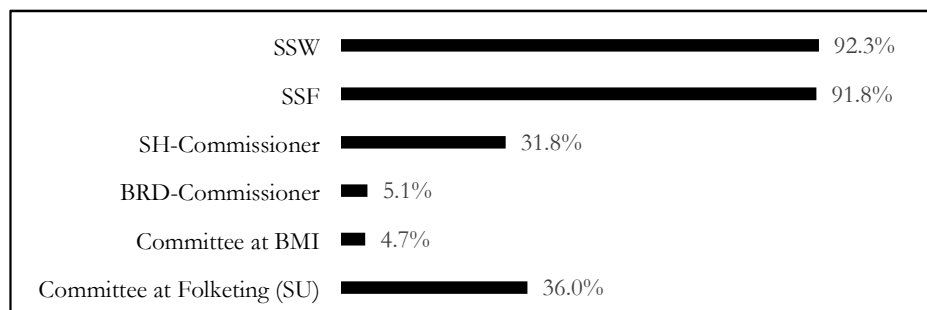
<sup>108</sup> “Please tell me, whether you know the following actor or not.” (Positive answers in percentage).

<sup>109</sup> Data is weighted with applying RDS-weights.



(SU) and the SH-Commissioner on the other hand is not reflected in the contact rates. 36.0 percent of the Danish minority reported having had contact with the Committee at Folketing (SU) and 31.8 percent with the SH-Commissioner. The low recognition rate for the actors in Berlin produces even lower contact results, 5.1 percent for the BRD-Commissioner and 4.7 percent for the Committee at BMI.

Figure 8: Danish minority's contact with political actors (N = 278)<sup>110 111</sup>



Focusing more on the expectation that SSW is seen as the best interest representation by the Danish minority in Germany, Table 21 shows the results to the question “Please tell me, which of the named actors represents your political interests the best?” The BRD-Commissioner is not represented in the table as this actor was not mentioned at all.

While SSW and SSF are equally well known and contacted, SSW is clearly the actor which members of the Danish minority believe represents their political interests the best (73.1 percent). The SSF is named as the best interest representation by 17.5 percent of respondents. The Committee at Folketing (SU) was named by 5.9 percent, 1.7 percent are of the opinion that none of the actors represent their interests at all and 1.5 percent named the SH-Commissioner.

<sup>110</sup>“Have you personally been in contact with the following actor?” (Positive answers of people who know the actor in percentage).

<sup>111</sup> Data is weighted with applying RDS-weights.

Table 21: Best interest representation in Germany<sup>112 113</sup>

	<b>How often an actor was named in percent</b>	
SSW	73.1%	<i>(67.2% – 78.2%)</i>
SSF	17.5%	<i>(13.2% – 22.8%)</i>
SH-Commissioner	1.5%	<i>(0.1% – 3.6%)</i>
Committee at BMI	0.3%	<i>(0.0% – 2.4%)</i>
Committee at Folketing (SU)	5.9%	<i>(0.4% – 9.3%)</i>
None of the above	1.7%	<i>(0.1% – 5.0%)</i>
Total		<b>263</b>

Taking a look at the satisfaction with the interest representation by the different actors, Table 22 shows the arithmetic means of the answers to the question of how well the respective actors is suited to represent the respondents' political interests in general. A mean of 1 denotes the actor does not represent the peoples' interests at all and a mean of 5 indicates the actor represents the respondents' political interests completely. The results reveal good values for all six actors and that the Danish national minority in Germany does not only think the SSW is most important for their political participation, but also that minority members are most satisfied with the SSW's representation of their political interests. The rating for the SSF is the second highest with 4.01. Like in all the other categories the Committee at Folketing (SU) and the SH-Commissioner are in third and fourth place. This time though it is the SH-Commissioner, who performs slightly better. The SH-Commissioner scores a 3.93 while the Committee at Folketing (SU) scores a 3.92. The BRD-Commissioner and the Committee at BMI in Berlin have arithmetic means of 3.28 and 3.29.

<sup>112</sup> Data is weighted with applying RDS-weights.

<sup>113</sup> Numbers in cursive brackets are the 95% confidence intervals.

Table 22: Suitable political interest representation in Germany<sup>114 115 116</sup>

	Mean	
SSW	4.19	(4.09 – 4.29)
SSF	4.01	(3.90 – 4.12)
SH-Commissioner	3.93	(3.81 – 4.10)
BRD-Commissioner	3.28	(3.10 – 3.46)
Committee at BMI	3.29	(3.10 – 3.48)
Committee at Folketing (SU)	3.92	(3.78 – 4.05)
Total		263

The expectation that the Danish minority sees the SSW as their best interest representation in Germany is met. Not only is the SSW seen as the best interest representation, but the respondents from the Danish minority are most satisfied with the work the SSW does.

#### 6.5.2.2. *Best interest representation of the German minority in Denmark*

Again, the following figures and tables show information on the minority's political interest representation. In this chapter though, it is the German minority in Denmark we are concerned with. Like in Germany, survey respondents answered a couple of question concerning six actors, which, as previous research has shown, are important for ensuring the political participation of the German minority. But first I will also introduce the actors in question and the corresponding abbreviations briefly. The *Slesvigske Parti* is the minority party, which only runs for local elections. The party, however, is only a sub-organization of the German minority's cultural umbrella organization *Bund Deutscher Nordschleswiger*, which also runs for the German Minority's Secretariat in Copenhagen. The German Secretariat is partly funded by the Danish state but works independently in close cooperation with the BDN leadership. In the German capital, the BRD-Commissioner is to ensure the contact between the

<sup>114</sup> "How well do you think is this actor generally suited to represent your political interests?" (Mean on a 1 to 5 scale).

<sup>115</sup> Data is weighted with applying RDS-weights.

<sup>116</sup> Numbers in cursive brackets are the 95% confidence intervals.

government and the minority and to serve as liaison between minority and majority actors concerning issues in Germany. According to the German government, the Danish government is concerned with the wellbeing of the German minority and has established a Contact Committee for the German Minority (*Kontaktudvalget for Det Tyske Mindretal*, hereinafter “Committee at Folketing (KU)”) to negotiate and discuss political and cultural concerns relevant to the minority. A similar committee was established in Germany in the Schleswig-Holsteinian parliament<sup>117</sup>, where delegates discuss finances, culture and political representation of the German minority twice a year in the Committee for Questions Regarding the German Minority (*Gremium für Fragen der deutschen Minderheit in Nordschleswig*, hereinafter “Committee at Landtag”). Table 23 offers an overview of the actors discussed in this chapter and whether they are tied to the minority directly or to a government, through who they are represented and for whom they are responsible for.

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<sup>117</sup> “Landtag” in German.

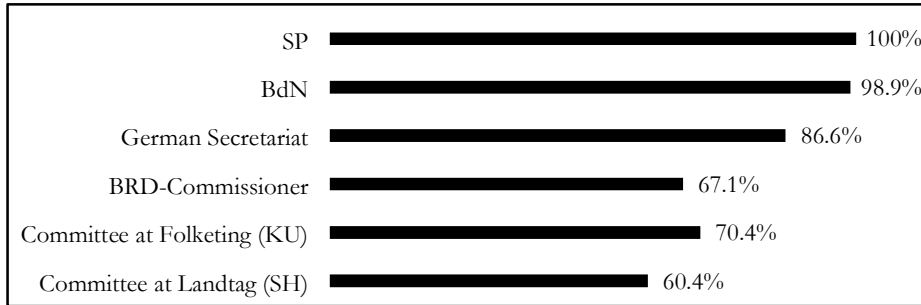
Table 23: Interest representation of the German minority in Denmark

Institution / Organization	Tied to	Represented through	Responsible for
<i>Slesvigske Parti</i> ( <b>SP</b> )	German minority	German minority	German minority
<i>Bund Deutscher nordschleswiger</i> ( <b>BDN</b> )	German minority	German minority	German minority
<i>Det Tyske Mindretals Sekretariat i København</i> ( <b>German Secretariat</b> )	Danish parliament	German minority	German minority
<i>Beauftragter der Bundesregierung für Aussiedlerfragen und Nationale Minderheiten</i> ( <b>BRD-Commissioner</b> )	German government	Governmental Chairman	Several minorities
<i>Kontaktudvalget for Det Tyske Mindretal</i> ( <b>Committee at Folketing (KU)</b> )	Danish government	Governmental Chairmen	German minority
<i>Gremium für Fragen der deutschen Minderheit in Nordschleswig</i> ( <b>Committee at Landtag</b> )	German federal parliament	German federal parliamentarians	Danish minority

(In accordance with Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp 2014a, 60)

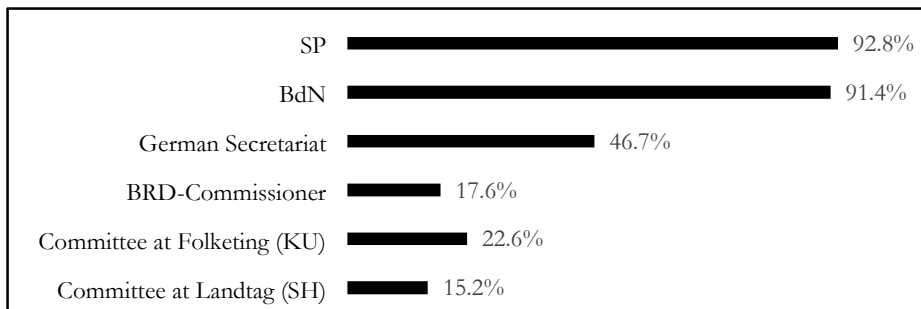
Looking at the question concerning the recognition rate of the different actors it is clear that the committees in Berlin and Copenhagen and the commissioner in Berlin are relatively well known (Figure 9). 60.4 percent know the Committee at Landtag, 67.1 percent have heard of the BRD-Commissioner and another 70.4 percent know the Committee at Folketing (KU). The German Secretariat is known by 56.6 percent and again, the political party and the cultural organization are known best. The BDN is known by 98.9 percent of the respondents and the SP is known by everybody (100.0 percent). The high recognition rates for the actors from Berlin and Copenhagen indicate the German minority is not only focused on the border region, but also well-informed about the capitals of their host- and kin-state, Copenhagen and Berlin.

Figure 9: German minority’s recognition of political actors (N=271)<sup>118 119</sup>



Contact with actors happens a lot. Respondents were asked about whether they had ever been in any kind of contact with the actors in the past. The results in Figure 10 show that contact with actors from Germany, namely the committee at Landtag (15.2 percent) and the BRD-Commissioner (17.6 percent) were the most seldom ones. 22.6 percent of the respondents reported that they have had contact to the Committee at Folketing in Copenhagen in the past. Twice the amount of people (46.7 percent) said that they had been in contact with the German Secretariat, also located in Copenhagen. Like the recognition rates, also the contact rates of party and cultural organization are rather high. 91.4 percent report having had contact with the BDN and 92.8 percent with the SP.

Figure 10: German minority’s contact with political actors (N=271)<sup>120 121</sup>



<sup>118</sup> “Do you know that the following actor exists?” (Positive answers in percentage).

<sup>119</sup> Data is weighted with applying RDS-weights.

<sup>120</sup> “Have you been in contact with the following actor?” (Positive answers of people who know the actor in percentage).

<sup>121</sup> Data is weighted with applying RDS-weights.

Focusing on the question for the best interest representation and following the assumption that the respondents see the BDN as most important for the representation for their political interests, Table 24 offers interesting insights. Contrary to the expert interviews' indications that the BDN is an important and dominant actor, the RDS-respondents clearly find the SP is best suited to represent their political interest. 56.1 percent of participants gave this answer. The BDN was mentioned by 37.9 percent as the most important and best interest representation for the German minority. Another 2.9 percent mentioned the German Secretariat, an actor particularly mentioned during the elite interviews. According to the answers given all other actors hardly gain any attention. The Committee at Folketing (KU) was mentioned by 1.5 percent, the Committee at Landtag by 0.7 percent, 0.3 percent found that “none of the above” were to be mentioned and 0.3 percent named the BRD-Commissioner.

It seems somehow consequential that the party SP is mentioned as the most important political actor, even if it is “only” competing at a local level. Nevertheless nearly two fifths of the respondents see the BDN as the most important actor for their political interest representation and thus agree with the elites from the interview series.

Table 24: Best interest representation in Denmark<sup>122 123</sup>

	How often an actor was named in percent	
SP	56.1%	(50.0% – 62.1%)
BDN	37.9%	(32.1% – 44.0%)
German Secretariat	2.9%	(1.5% – 5.4%)
BRD-Commissioner	0.3%	(0.0% – 2.3%)
Committee at Folketing (KU)	1.5%	(0.1% – 4.0%)
Committee at Landtag (SH)	0.7%	(0.2% – 3.0%)
None of the above	0.5%	(0.1% – 3.8%)
Total		261

Whether the other respondents did not know about the BDN's activities or whether their political interests simply are limited to the local level is not known. We have information though whether respondents maybe just do not value the

<sup>122</sup> Data is weighted with applying RDS-weights.

<sup>123</sup> Numbers in cursive brackets are the 95% confidence intervals.

BDN’s work and its contribution to the minority’s political representation if we look on the arithmetic means of the answers to the question of how well the respective actors represent the respondents’ political interests in general (Table 25). A mean of 1 denotes the actor does not represent the peoples’ interests at all and a mean of 5 indicates the actor represents the respondents’ political interests completely. Here we see that the BDN is seen to do the best job to represent the minority’s political interests, indicated by the mean of 4.00. The SP here only reaches a mean of 3.88, which is only slightly higher than the German Secretariat’s result (3.74). The Committees in Copenhagen (3.52) and Kiel (3.46) score equally and the BRD-Commissioner (3.37) is evaluated as less suited to stand in for the RDS-participants’ political interests.

Table 25: Suitable political interest representation in Denmark<sup>124 125 126</sup>

	Mean	
SP	3.88	(3.76 – 4.00)
BDN	4.00	(3.84 – 4.08)
German Secretariat	3.74	(3.59 – 3.89)
BRD-Commissioner	3.37	(3.20 – 3.53)
Committee at Folketing (KU)	3.52	(3.35 – 3.69)
Committee at Landtag (SH)	3.46	(3.29 – 3.64)
Total		<b>263</b>

The expectation that respondents see BDN as their most important interest representation are not met. Instead SP is identified as the most relevant actor. The BDN is nevertheless an important actor. Also, respondents are most satisfied with the BDN’s work.

### 6.5.2.3. *Special institutions in the DGBR*

In this section I will compare the results of the two special institutions for minority political participation, the German Secretariat and the SH-Commissioner. Table 26 summarizes the results about recognition and contact

<sup>124</sup> “How well do you think is the actor in general suited to represent your political interests?” (Mean on a 1 to 5 scale).

<sup>125</sup> Data is weighted with applying RDS-weights.

<sup>126</sup> Numbers in cursive brackets are the 95% confidence intervals.



with the two actors as well as information about the current and general interest representation through the actors and the question about the best interest representation. For the questions concerning recognition, contact and best interest representation positive answers are displayed in percentage. For the questions concerning the satisfaction with the present and general political interest representation arithmetic means are displayed, like in Table 22 and Table 25. Again, a mean of 1 denotes the actor does not represent the peoples' interests at all and a mean of 5 indicates the actor represents the respondents' political interests completely.

Table 26 shows the German Secretariat is known by more people (86.6 percent) in Denmark than the SH-Commissioner (75.5 percent) is in Germany. Still, both actors can claim to be pretty well known. The results of the question for contact with the actor reveal similar results. Fewer people have had contact with the SH-Commissioner (31.8 percent) than with the German Secretariat (46.7 percent). This is somewhat surprising as the Secretariat is not located in the border region (see Chapter 6.3) but in Copenhagen whereas the SH-Commissioner is located in the border region. This may be due to the fact that *contact* was not limited to physical personal contact but could instead also be via phone, email or the like.

When looking at how satisfied the respondents are with the actors' performance the picture changes a bit. The Danish minority in Germany seems to be a little bit more satisfied with the SH-Commissioner's work than the German minority in Denmark with the German Secretariat's. The satisfaction with the current representation is slightly higher for the SH-Commissioner (3.77 to 3.71) and even more so for the general satisfaction (3.93 to 3.74).

Concerning the question for the best interest representation I could already show that in Germany (Chapter 6.5.2.1) and in Denmark (Chapter 6.5.2.2) the political parties and the cultural organizations are considered as the best interest representations. The fact that the German Secretariat is seen as slightly more important (2.9 percent vote for German Secretariat as best interest

representation) in Denmark than the SH-Commissioner (1.5 percent vote for SH-Commissioner as best interest representation) can in Germany does not offer much insight.

Table 26: Comparison of special minority institutions<sup>127 128</sup>

	SH-Commissioner		German Secretariat	
Recognition of	75.5%	(69.5% – 80.6%)	86.6%	(81.5% – 90.4%)
Contact with	31.8%	(26.8% – 37.3%)	46.7%	(40.8% – 55.5%)
Representation now (Mean)	3.77	(3.62 – 3.91)	3.71	(3.55 – 3.87)
Representation general (Mean)	3.93	(3.80 – 4.05)	3.74	(3.59 – 3.89)
Best interest representation	1.5%	(0.1% – 3.6%)	2.9%	(1.5% – 5.4%)

In concluding this paragraph I will comment on the expectations concerning the special institutions from Chapter 6.3. The previously stated expectation that the German Secretariat would be mentioned more often as best interest representation than the SH-Commissioner is met when looking at the relative numbers, but my interpretation is that they both receive very little overall attention. I also expected that the German minority would be more satisfied with the German Secretariat’s work than the Danish minority with the SH-Commissioner’s work. This expectation did not prove to be true as the SH-Commissioner scores higher than the German Secretariat regarding the questions concerning both the present as well as the general political interest representation.

#### 6.5.2.4. Concerning the German Secretariat in Copenhagen

This chapter is concerned with the German Secretariat. In Chapter 6.3 I hypothesized that having contact with the German Secretariat influences satisfaction with the interest representation through the German Secretariat.

Taking a closer look at the data, Table 27 offers more information on the connection between the two variables. In the group without contact 5.2 percent believe the German Secretariat is not at all able to represent their political

<sup>127</sup> Data is weighted with applying RDS-weights.

<sup>128</sup> Numbers in cursive brackets are the 95% confidence intervals.

interests, in the group with contact to the German Secretariat this view is shared only by 0.9 percent. In both groups (with and without contact) around 10 percent (10.3 and 10.1) find the German Secretariat in general is not really suited to represent their political interests. Undecided about this question are 31.8 percent of those without and 20.8 percent of those with contact. On the positive side of the scale 31.8 percent without contact and 32.0 percent with contact answered the question with “pretty much”. The top category, a complete satisfaction was chosen by 16.4 percent of the contactless group and 36.3 percent of those with contact in the past. This seems to be the most remarkable value. 19.3 percentage points more think the German Secretariat is generally a good actor for representing their political interest if they previously had contact with the Secretariat, compared to those who did not.

Looking at the modes of the two groups we see that the mode of those without contact is 3 while the mode of the ones with contact is 5, meaning that people that have had contact in the past mostly find the German Secretariat in general is able to represent their political interest completely and people without contact mostly do not have a clear tendency regarding the political interest representation by the German Secretariat. The two groups’ arithmetic means show that the average of the group without contact is 3.45 and the average opinion on the general political interest representation of the German Secretariat is 3.97.

Table 27: Contact and Satisfaction with the German Secretariat<sup>129 130</sup>

Satisfaction general <sup>131</sup>	Contact in the past		All
	No	Yes	
1 (Not at all)	5.2%	0.9%	2.9%
2 (not really)	10.3%	10.1%	10.5%
3 (undecided)	31.8%	20.8%	26.4%
4 (pretty much)	30.8%	32.0%	32.2%
5 (Completely)	16.4%	36.3%	28.0%
Total	<b>95</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>214</b>
Mode	3	5	4
Mean	3.45 (3.22 – 3.68)	3.97 (3.75 – 4.11)	3.72

Testing the hypothesis showed that there is indeed a connection between a person having been in contact with the German Secretariat and the general satisfaction with the political interest representation by the German Secretariat. The results are statistically significant at a 95% level (Pearson's chi-squared test (four degrees of freedom) = 13.864, p-value of 0.0134). Pearson's coefficient of contingency is 0.22 and Cramer's V is 0.26.<sup>132</sup> Both measures point to a mild relation, but a relation none the less.

#### 6.5.2.5. *Concerning the Commissioners in Kiel and Berlin*

Having discussed the German Secretariat in the previous chapter, this chapter now deals with the SH-Commissioner and the BRD-Commissioner. I developed similar hypothesis concerning both commissioners, expecting that satisfaction with the respective person in office at the present and satisfaction with the respective Commissioner are related. I start by commenting on the SH-Commissioner and hypothesize that the satisfaction with the current SH-

<sup>129</sup> Data is weighted with applying RDS-weights.

<sup>130</sup> Numbers in cursive brackets are the 95% confidence intervals.

<sup>131</sup> Only the outer categories of the scale are actually labeled. For the sake of readability I interpreted the values 2, 3 and 4 for this paper; a number 2 thus indicates the German Secretariat does not really satisfy a respondent. As the 3 is the middle category of a five-point scale, I interpret that people choosing this category did not want to say anything positive or negative. Choosing the 4 as an answer indicates the German Secretariat pretty much satisfies the respondents.

<sup>132</sup> Cramer's V without weights is 0,249 and with weight it is 0,255 (As Stata does not allow the calculations of Cramer's V with weights in this paper were done by hand).

Commissioner and the satisfaction with the SH-Commissioner in general are related.

A look at the data in Table 28 is especially interesting when looking at the different modes. In all groups, aside from group 2, we see at the answers concerning the present SH-Commissioner that the mode here is equivalent to the respective answers concerning the general suitability of the SH-Commissioner. This means for example that all persons which believe the SH-Commissioner currently represents their political interests to their complete satisfaction also believe that the SH-Commissioner in general is able to completely satisfy what they hope for in their political interest representation. Similarly, the arithmetic mean for the general suitability is higher the higher the value for the recent political interest representation by the SH-Commissioner is evaluated. Again, group 2 in the *Current Satisfaction* variable breaks out of this pattern and the arithmetic mean is slightly higher (3.44) than in group 3 (3.38).

The results are statistically significant at a 99% level (Pearson's chi-squared test (sixteen degrees of freedom) of 210.03, p-value of 0.0000). This finding implies that what people think about the current SH-Commissioner indeed influences what they think about the SH-Commissioner in general. Pearson's coefficient of contingency is 0.64 and Cramer's V is 0.52.<sup>133</sup> Both measures show a medium relation. Lambda is 0.518, meaning the prediction error regarding what somebody thinks about the SH-Commissioner in general can be reduced by 52.0 percent when we know what the person thinks about the current SH-Commissioner.

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<sup>133</sup> Cramer's V without weights is 0,527 and with weights it is 0,524.

Table 28: Current- and general satisfaction (SH-Commissioner)<sup>134 135</sup>

Satisfaction general	Current Satisfaction					All
	1	2	3	4	5	
1(Not at all)	39.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%
2(not really)	19.5%	19.1%	3.7%	0.0%	0.0%	2.9%
3(undecided)	22.9%	44.8%	66.8%	14.6%	6.1%	31.7%
4(pretty much)	18.5%	9.0%	17.4%	67.7%	18.1%	32.5%
5(Completely)	0.0%	27.1%	12.2%	17.7%	75.8%	31.8%
Total	<b>5</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>191</b>
Mode	1	3	3	4	5	4
Mean	2.21 <i>(0.62–3.80)</i>	3.44 <i>(2.63–4.26)</i>	3.38 <i>(3.17–3.59)</i>	4.03 <i>(3.89–4.17)</i>	4.70 <i>(4.55–4.85)</i>	3.88 <i>(3.75–4.00)</i>

Concerning the BRD-Commissioner I also hypothesize that the satisfaction with the current BRD Commissioner and the satisfaction with the BRD-Commissioner in general are related.

Table 29 gathers information about the two relevant variables. It shows that the mode for the general satisfaction is 1 when the present satisfaction is 1, 2 when the current satisfaction is 2, 3 when the current satisfaction is 3, 4 when the current satisfaction is 4 and 5 when the current satisfaction is 5. Also, the arithmetic mean for the general suitability of the BRD-Commissioner increases the larger the value is for *Current Satisfaction*.

Table 29: Current- and general satisfaction (BRD-Commissioner)<sup>136 137</sup>

Satisfaction general	Current Satisfaction					All
	1	2	3	4	5	
1(Not at all)	50.0%	13.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%
2	50.0%	48.6%	6.8%	12.0%	0.0%	15.1%
3	0.0%	31.4%	69.3%	16.9%	30.0%	45.5%
4	0.0%	0.0%	16.0%	63.2%	0.0%	26.8%
5(Completely)	0.0%	6.1%	8.0%	7.9%	70.0%	9.6%
Total	<b>2</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>98</b>
Mode	1, 2	2	3	4	5	3
Mean	1.50 <i>(error)<sup>138</sup></i>	2.36 <i>(1.80–2.92)</i>	3.25 <i>(3.03–3.47)</i>	3.67 <i>(3.40–3.94)</i>	4.40 <i>(error)<sup>44</sup></i>	3.26 <i>(3.0–3.44)</i>

<sup>134</sup> Data is weighted with applying RDS-weights.

<sup>135</sup> Numbers in cursive brackets are the 95% confidence intervals.

<sup>136</sup> Data is weighted with applying RDS-weights.

<sup>137</sup> Numbers in cursive brackets are the 95% confidence intervals.

<sup>138</sup> The 95% confidence interval is not usable as the number of cases in the category is too small (95% CI<1 or 95% CI>5).

I performed a Pearson's chi-squared test and came up with  $\chi^2$  (sixteen degrees of freedom) of 85.57 and a p-value of 0.0000. The results are statistically significant at a 99% level. This indicates that what people think about the current BRD-Commissioner indeed influences what they think about the BRD-Commissioner in general. Pearson's coefficient of contingency is 0.55 and Cramer's V is 0.33.<sup>139</sup> Both measures show a medium relation. Lambda is 0.518, meaning the possibility to be wrong predicting what somebody thinks about the BRD-Commissioner in general can be reduced by 52% when we know what the person thinks about the current BRD-Commissioner.

## 6.6. Conclusion

This paper set out to contribute to the literature on national minority political participation by investigating the national minorities of Danes in Germany and Germans in Denmark. To this purpose I designed a Respondent Driven Sampling, which was executed via telephone in the summer of 2015. With the RDS samples I obtained in Denmark and Germany I collect and present so far missing descriptive information on the socio economic structure of the Danish and German minorities and to estimate the minority population from both samples. The data further allowed me to answer the question: "What do the national minority members in the DGBR think about their political participation?"

To answer this question the article was structured in the following way: In Chapter 6.2 I laid out the status quo of national minorities in the DGBR and explained why the two populations can be considered hard-to-reach populations. Previous research of mine was mentioned in Chapter 6.3, where I derived expectations and hypotheses concerning the RDS results from older research results. In Chapter 6.4 I presented essential information about implementing and

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<sup>139</sup> Cramer's V without weights is 0,478 and with weights it is 0,335.

analyzing an RDS sample formed a basis for putting the results I presented in Chapter 6.5 in context. I will now comment on the usability of RDS as a method to research national minorities via phone, the socio economic features of both minority samples and both minorities' political participation. I will start with the methodological part.

Implementing the RDS to gain knowledge about the national minorities in the DGBR has proven to be a suitable way to collect quantitative data in this research area. Researching the national minorities in this manner was known to be a problem in the past, especially since so called hard-to-reach or hard-to-identify populations are difficult to get in contact with. Using the RDS, I was able to obtain samples that can be regarded as quasi-representative. RDS's special implementing techniques such as Formative Assessment, Seed Selection and Network Sampling Procedure and the analysis by way of RDS selection probability weights is a complicated and very labor-intensive undertaking but in the end all these measures improve the data quality to such an extent that the efforts can be considered worthwhile for every minority researcher. It must be said though, that producing good RDS samples requires the researchers to possess extensive knowledge about the population of interest before implementing RDS can begin. The steps Formative Assessment and Seed Selection are especially crucial for the method's success and to generate high data quality not negatively influenced by homophily, convergence or equilibrium.

Examination of the minorities' socio economic features and comparison with the 2014 European Social Survey (ESS) data showed that the minorities do not differ much from the general population in socio economic terms. However, I would like to emphasize that some attributes were remarkable nonetheless. For example, 60.7 percent of the Danish minority are women, which is amounts to approximately 10.0 percent more than in the general population. In the German minority we find a slightly higher percentage of men than in the ESS data. When considering the respondent's age we see that young people between 18 and 29



are over-represented in the Danish minority RDS in Germany. There are no notable differences in the Danish data. In both samples the highly educated and people with high income are clearly over-represented compared to the ESS data.

The Danish minority in Germany provided the information that first-, second- and third generation minority members represent the minority by almost equal shares. The German minority in Denmark indicated that two thirds are at least third generation minority members. Presuming that the minority member numbers are not subject to change, this might indicate that the German minority consists mostly of minority families with recent ties to the minority, while the Danish minority seems to attract new minority members whose family history is not connected to the minority and who affiliate with the minority for other reasons. This is in so far surprising as I show in Schaefer-Rolffs 2016b, that family is by far the most common reason to belong to the minority in either Germany or Denmark. But maybe, people refer to their future family as quasi “history in the making” and not to their past family history as well.

Previously (Schaefer-Rolffs 2016b) I found that one of the reasons for minority affiliation are the minority schools in the area. The present survey showed that 92.0 percent of those who have school-aged children in Germany send their children to a minority school and 84.3 percent in Denmark act accordingly.

Apart from the schools, my data confirms that the connection with the minorities’ other institutions and organizations is also rather strong. Again, this is corresponds with results from Schaefer-Rolffs 2016b. Most persons belonging to the minorities are members in their respective cultural main organization. Affiliation with minority institutions is not equally strong in both minorities though. Only 7.3 percent of the Danish minority in Germany are neither member of the cultural organization, the party or have elected the party during the last elections. I consider this to be a very strong share. For the German minority in Denmark I find 17.0 percent of respondents are neither member of

the cultural organization, member of the party<sup>140</sup> or have elected the party during the last regional elections. When taking into account that most minority members stem from families with long lasting minority ties, the minority institutional support seems to much less of a factor for the survival of the minority than it is in Germany, where family ties seem to be much more recent and where the minorities institutions play a more important role.

More differences can also be found when looking closer at the voting behavior of both groups. During the last elections the SSW was voted for by 79.3 percent in Germany, while 62.4 percent voted for the SP in Denmark during the last elections. Even though the percentage points the SP received are lower, it is still a good result, especially when taking into consideration that German minority members named SP as their most important political actor and in this regard favored the party over the BDN which I expected to be the most relevant actor here. The SSW's 79.3 percent of votes from the minority are in accordance with all findings concerning the importance of the minority party in Schleswig-Holstein (Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp 2014; Schaefer-Rolffs/Schnapp 2014b; Schaefer-Rolffs 2016a) which is rooted in its exemption from the 5%-threshold at regional and federal elections and its presence in the regional media. My expectations concerning the *Südschleswigsche Wählerverband* being seen as the best interest representation by the Danish minority in Germany was fully met. This proved to be true and additionally the respondents from the Danish minority also indicated that of all actors that represent their political interests they are most satisfied with SSW's work.

Of particular importance for the national minorities' political participation are special institutions, which have been installed by the governments to compensate the minorities for a lack of representation in parliament. In Denmark the most important actor is the German Secretariat in Copenhagen. Due to positive testimonials the German Secretariat received during previous

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<sup>140</sup> I already stated that party membership is not possible but still name it here for reasons of completeness.

research (Schaefer-Rolffs 2016a) I assumed it would receive more positive feedback in the RDS than its pendant in Germany, the SH-Commissioner. This expectation did not prove to be true even though the SH-Commissioner received better feedback than the German Secretariat regarding the minorities' political interest representation. Over all, the respondents showed great satisfaction with both actors. Additionally, I could show that if a person has been in contact with the German Secretariat in the past, this has an effect of what is thought about the political interest representation by the German Secretariat in general. The emphasis the German Secretariat puts on being available for and being in contact with minority members despite their relative distance to the border region is the right way to continue their minority work. Lastly, I found that what people think about the current person in office for both the SH-Commissioner and the BRD-Commissioner influences what is thought about the Commissioners in general. In the survey the responses in regards to the current and general performance were over all positive.







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**Part III. Conclusive part**

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## 7. Conclusion

In this conclusive part I will summarize my dissertations different results. For one this chapter sums up the application of different methodological tools to research national minorities in the DGBR (Chapter 7.1). For another, I will present the major findings with regards to the dissertation's four major research objectives (Chapter 7.2). I will then proceed to show who can use my findings (Chapter 7.3) and close the dissertation with a final note (Chapter 7.4).

### 7.1 What I did

In this dissertation I have used a great variety of methods to study national minorities in the DGBR.

I applied a theoretical concept to my research region and by doing so I am able to place the question of minority protection in the DGBR in a wider European context.

I used different techniques to generate my own empirical material to study the national minorities. Firstly, I planned and conducted a series of expert interviews to study the national minority participation network in the DGBR and also minority identity. Secondly, I designed a special sampling technique (Respondent Driven Sampling) to conduct a (quasi) representative telephone survey among members of both the Danish and the German minority to study national minority participation mechanisms, national minority identity and to present socio-demographic descriptions of both minorities. This allowed me to not only introduce a sampling procedure to the field of national minority research, I also designed the sampling in such a way that the sampling could be done by telephone. To my knowledge there are no other studies that have done this before as RDS is usually conducted face-to-face. Finally I organized and administered the cross-country field phase with interviews in Danish and in German.

In order to analyze my empirical data I used both qualitative methods (Mayring's *Qualitative Content Analysis* and *Grounded Theory Methodology*) as well as quantitative methods (descriptive statistics and hypothesis testing procedures).

## 7.2 What I found

Concerning the dissertation's **first research objective** (Chapter 2.1), how European international standards for minority protection (using the example of the OHCHR's *Plan of Action: Protection and Empowerment*) are embedded in existing structures for minority rights protection in the DGBR, my findings are:

Protection is both a desired outcome and an action. It is furthermore an action that is one-sided. The receivers of protection are not themselves active when being protected. The action is a classical top-down process. Empowerment, on the other hand, triggers change that can be either a change of mind, a change of life circumstances or both. In order to be able to speak of empowerment as a means of protection the action must be intended by the beneficiaries of change and they must be the initiators of the progress.

Many minority organizations in the DGBR are financially supported by the two governments and provide for empowerment by way of activating their minority members, fostering minority identity and creating awareness for minority rights.

Additionally, some mechanisms are designed to improve the minorities' political influence by way of protection and empowerment. Many special institutions exist in the border region to enhance the minorities' chances of political participation and thus provide minority protection. But, in both countries I also found good examples for minority empowerment: In Denmark, the German Secretariat is the only special institution that is entirely run by a national minority, although it is funded by the Danish state. In this sense the German Secretariat is a classic example for empowerment. The government gives an impulse by establishing the German Secretariat, providing the funds and location for the operation of the German Secretariat and then lets the minority

run the German Secretariat on their own and thus enables them to care for their political influence by themselves. In Germany, the waiving of the five percent threshold at regional and federal land elections makes it possible for the SSW to gain greater political influence for the Danish minority. The threshold exception is a very simple form of empowerment and an extraordinary example of empowerment in general. In this case, the government became active while implementing the exception as compensation for the minority's non-representation in parliament. This impulse enabled the minority party to now be represented on the parliamentary level.

Concerning the dissertation's **second research objective** (Chapter 2.2), how minority politics work in the DGBR, I identified six key points for the national minorities' political participation in the DGBR:

1. Governments sustainably show the willingness and the effort to protect and empower their national minorities, because they are aware of the chances this facilitates for the plurality and culture of their societies.
2. Staffers from minority and non-minority actors (organizations and institutions) function as bridge builders and contact makers that establish a network of national minority rights protection.
3. Government personnel believes in their work for the protection and empowerment of minorities.
4. Both minorities are organized in a way that fits their character and that is suitable for the host state's political system.
5. Both minorities are included in the decision-making of decisions affecting their member's life.
6. Both minorities are enabled to lobby their interests in the backrooms of the political arena of the host- and kin states.

Concerning the dissertation's **third research objective** (Chapter 2.3), what national minority members believe it means to belong to a national minority and thus what national minority identity is made of, the finding of my study is that minority identity indeed is very complex and multilayered.

## Conclusive part

Members of the Danish and German national minority in the DGBR named a couple of elements as crucial for their minority identity though. Important properties of their national minority identity are: family, culture, socialization and self-fulfillment.

*Family* means that parents or grandparents were also minority members. The minority members generally see this as a major component of this element and want to continue in the footsteps of their ancestors and hold up their minority legacy. Also, people do not think that belonging to the minority is always a choice and being born into a minority family for many determines the minority status.

*Culture* means that one has a fondness of the other culture and language. Sometimes it is of additional interest to *use* two cultures. This is seen as the ability to move around in both societies, in Germany and Denmark. Language can play a significant role here.

*Socialization* means that growing up in a minority community and being socialized in the minority surroundings forms minority identity. When thinking about themselves and identifying what separates them from others, minority members find that they have a lot in common with other minority members and prefer to confine themselves from the majority population.

*Self-Fulfillment* means that people put their personal roots down in their minority, start a family with other minority members and want to offer their children the minority experience they have experienced themselves.

Of minor importance for them are also the following elements: The positive *Social Status* that comes along with belonging to either of the minorities was mentioned as a reason to feel affiliated with the minority. A sense of *Community* that minority members feel and a solidarity amongst each other and which ties them even more closely to their different minority circles also plays a role. Of further importance are the minority *Schools*, where children learn the language (and culture) of the kin-state. Lastly, *Contact* indicates that people have

personal ties to the kin-state, which are not family related but instead based on friendships that have existed for many years.

Concerning the dissertation's **fourth research objective** (Chapter 2.4), what national minority members think about the actors that are to ensure their political participation, I found the following:

Examination of the minorities' socio economic features showed that they do not differ much from the general population in socio economic terms. Some attributes were remarkable nevertheless. For example, 60.7 percent of the Danish minority members in the sample are women, which is around 10.0 percent more than in the general population; in the German minority the percentage is slightly higher for men. Concerning the respondent's age I found that young people between 18 and 29 are over-represented in the Danish minority RDS in Germany.

In the Danish minority one third of the people says they are the first generation of their family that belongs to the minority, one third says their family is in the second generation belonging to the minority and one third of the people says their family has an affiliation with the minority for three or more generations. The situation for the German minority is different as two thirds of them indicated that they are at least third generation minority. This shows that the German minority consists mostly of minority families that have had ties to the minority for a long time, while the Danish minority in Germany seems to constantly attract new minority members whose family history is not connected to the minority and who affiliate with the minority for other reasons. Institutional support for minority organizations is stronger among the Danish minority, where the family connection to the minority is weaker. In Denmark, where family ties are strong, institutional support of minority organizations is weaker.

The RDS survey also showed that 92.0 percent of those who have school-aged children in Germany send their children to a minority school and in Denmark this is the case for 84.3 percent.

Both minority parties are seen as the most important actors for minority political participation. In Denmark though, the BDN also seems to be of great importance, whereas the importance of the SSF in Germany is not valued as much and the SSW is clearly the dominant actor for minority members. These differences in the organizational structure clearly stem from the different minority structures we find in Denmark in Germany. The BDN is prominent as an umbrella organization, which also operates the minority party in Denmark, and in Germany the SSW, which is exempt from the five percent threshold, plays an important role in the region. In lobbying activities the BDN is supported by the SSF in Berlin and in Copenhagen.

Of particular importance for the national minorities' political participation are special institutions, which have been installed by the governments to compensate the minorities for a lack of parliamentary representation. In Denmark the most important actor of sorts is the German Secretariat in Copenhagen and in Germany it is the SH-Commissioner in Kiel and the BRD-Commissioner in Berlin. In the survey the respondents showed great satisfaction with all three actors.

### **7.3 Who can use my results**

After having summarized what I did and what I found out, the question of who can use my results in the future remains. I briefly would like to answer this question and especially suggest two groups of people that may find this dissertation's findings useful for their future work: one would be other researchers of national minority issues, the other would be practitioners in the realm of national minority rights and national minority rights protection.

The academic community researching national minority protection in Europe can benefit from my application of the OHCHR's *Plan of Action: Protection and Empowerment* on the DGBR as it can serve as an example to apply minority standards to specific regions and thus evaluate more systematically how standards are implemented. Also this might help to gain a better understanding

of how different concepts (for example *protection* and *empowerment*) are to be understood and can be implemented.

Further, my mapping of political participation mechanisms in the DGBR and the determination of key points for successful national minority rights protection and national minority political participation in the DGBR can serve as a template for other geographical areas where national minority rights protection is of concern. This being said, I do not think the key points can be transferred to other regions in a one-to-one manner. Rather I show how “the DGBR as a role model” which has been a kind of uncontested black box so far, looks on the inside. By explaining what makes the so-called role model region a role model and I can thus provide specific benchmarks for good national minority rights protection. Also, with my RDS results I can show that the national minority members are satisfied with how the national minority rights protection is organized in the DGBR. Researchers of other regions have the possibility to test for these benchmarks in their respective regions.

Concerning the identity of national minority members in the DGBR I provide a set of traits that seem to be important for the interviewees in my expert interviews and for the respondents of the RDS survey alike. As research about identity is extremely complex and multilayered, this set of traits is useful for other researchers dealing with national minority identity of some sorts.

As for the political participation of national minorities in the DGBR and the perception of actors responsible for this political participation, I show that even though the conditions for the Germans in Denmark and the Danes in Germany seem to be similar, the particular internal minority arrangements of interest representation differ due to differences in the surrounding national contexts. These differences are for example the states’ federal structure, mechanisms for special political participation which are implemented by national and federal governments, different mechanisms for compensation of non-representation in parliaments and minority internal division of labor due to diverging emphases on governmental authorities, different federal levels or

different societal actors of relevance for the respective minority's interest in the host- and kin-states. Again, the DGBR seems to be an example, which is suitable for comparison with other national minority areas.

Lastly, I introduced *Respondent Driven Sampling*, which so far had not been used to study national minorities, to the research area. I show that it is possible to administer and conduct an RDS sample via telephone and that RDS produces largely representative samples. This opens up the possibility for attaining information about national minority groups for whom no sampling frame exists and hence to be better informed about national minority populations.

Practitioners in the realm of national minority rights and national minority rights protection can use my results on the OHCHR's *Plan of Action: Protection and Empowerment* in the DGBR to evaluate whether instruments in their field of work can be measured in equal terms and thus possibly evaluate particular mechanisms of national minority rights protection.

Additionally, the display of the DGBR's role model character provides specific points for good national minority rights protection and thus enables practitioners of other regions to draw inspiration for their work with and for national minorities from my research. As counts for the scientists, also the practitioners have to be careful not to understand my statements about these points as directly transferable blue prints but rather as guidelines for good national minority rights protection, which have to be adjusted to specific circumstances.

Concerning the national minority identity, practitioners in the DGBR and elsewhere benefit from my systematic approach to understand the complex and multilayered topic of national minority identity. I mean this with regards to not only gaining a better understanding of it themselves, but especially by using it to be in a better educated position to talk with majority populations about what it means to belong to a national minority.

With regards to the political participation of national minorities in the DGBR I think that the practitioners in the border region may find my



systematizations and mappings helpful to reflect on their processes of work for the participation of national minority members and national minorities as such and learn from this reflexive examination process, to make their work even more fruitful and satisfying for the minority members.

With regards to the usage of my material I would like to make two last remarks.

Firstly, I am open to and thankful for the contestation of all my finding presented in this dissertation because more intense scientific engagement with and discussion of national minority rights protection can only be beneficial for minority groups, practitioners and the scientific community alike. And, as I laid out at length in Chapter 1.1, all the results I present are affected by the person I am.

Secondly, many of the things I discuss in my dissertation are not only of relevance for the national minorities I focus on but also for other minority-majority relations. Researchers and practitioners dealing with the general living together of majority and minority groups can benefit from observing and recognizing how successful national minority rights protection in an area that has developed immensely over the course of many decades functions and draw inspiration for their work with old *and* new minority groups. I will talk a little more about this in the next and final chapter of my dissertation.

#### **7.4 Final notes (always the hard way)**

National minority rights protection and the effective participation of persons belonging to national minorities in the DGBR is sometimes described as exemplary. I provide answers to the question

**“Why can the Danish-German border region be denominated as a role model for national minority protection and participation?”**

in Chapter 7.2 and Chapter 7.3. Even if this dissertation contributes to a better understanding of what national minority protection and participation in the DGBR are, it is not possible to just transfer the model to another region.

National minorities in the DGBR have come a very long way from systematic oppression in the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, they lived through two terrible wars in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and finally enjoy the transformation from minority protection as a means for protecting the states' national unity to minority protection and empowerment as recognition and appreciation of cultural plurality today. National minorities in the DGBR have come along a very hard way. Nothing was ever just handed to them. They were fortunate to find supporting political contexts in Germany and Denmark beginning in the middle of the last century. They were taught the truth that they have to be smart and strategic to achieve the equal treatment they desired and were given the governmental support to be strong enough as groups and individuals to do so. Still, they learned all this the hard way and it is and always will be this way for national minority groups and other minority groups to achieve standards as high as the ones discussed in this dissertation for the DGBR.

A hard way also lies ahead of the European Union and the European nation states. Old and new minorities on the continent challenge European society (societies) to find new ways to live together, to engage as many societal groups as possible in decision making processes and to handle occurring problems and differences with each other. There is much to learn from the political participation of national minorities in the Danish-German border region about cooperation, sympathy, appreciation, support and dialog between diverging groups and about how the living together of minorities and majorities in Europe in the future can succeed

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## 9. Appendix

### Appendix 1. List of expert interviews and transcripts for Chapter 4 and Chapter 5.

This is a list of the expert interviews I conducted for Chapter 4 and Chapter 5. For the interview's transcripts see the data files in the folder "9.1. Interview transcripts (confidential)" on the disk enclosed in this dissertation. In the letter of consent the interviewees signed before the interview (Appendix 3) I assure the interviewees to treat the interview transcripts with care and I ask every examiner of this dissertation to respect this agreement, to treat the enclosed material with the same care and to not show it to third parties nor to hand it to third parties.

Date	Actor	Main language	Abbreviation used in the dissertation
26.03.2015	SSW	German	I 01
	SP	German	I 02
27.03.2015	SSF	German	I 03
04.04.2015	German Secretariat	German	I 04
05.04.2015	Chief Advisor at the Danish Ministry of Education	English	I 05
05.04.2015	Committee at Folketing (SU)	Danish	I 06
06.04.2015	German Embassy	German	I 07
18.04.2015	BDN	German	I 08
18.04.2015	BDN	German	I 09
20.04.2015	BRD-Commissioner	German	I 10
23.04.2015	SH-Commissioner	German	I 11

## **Appendix 2. Questionnaire for expert interviews of Chapter 4 and Chapter 5.**

This is the questionnaire I used for the expert interviews of Chapter 4 and Chapter 5. For the digital version of the questionnaire see the data files in the folder “9.2. Questionnaire for chapter 4 and 5” on the disk enclosed in this dissertation.



[NAME], Position in [ACTOR]

**Question 1**

What did you know about the [RESPECTIVE MINORITY] in [RESPECTIVE COUNTRY], before you took the position you are currently holding at [ACTOR]?

Content	Perpetuation	Specification
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge about minority</li> <li>• Information through position</li> <li>• Knowledge change</li> <li>• Reflection on own identity</li> </ul>		<p>Has your knowledge about the minorities changed?</p> <p>In which ways has it changed?</p> <p>How many people belong to the German minority?</p> <p>Can you describe where this information comes from?</p>

1

**Question 2**

What is [ACTOR]?

Content	Perpetuation	Specification
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The actor's responsibilities</li> <li>• Description of the actor and internal structures</li> <li>• The person's role within the actor</li> <li>• Specific examples of the actor's involvement in national minority politics</li> </ul>		<p>Does [ACTOR] stand in for the political interests of the Danish minority?</p> <p>What is your personal role when representing those interests?</p> <p>What has [ACTOR] done for the Danish minority in the last 12 months?</p>

2

Question 3		
Which other political actors/organizations/stakeholders/interest groups are you in contact with through your work for [ACTOR]?		
Content	Perpetuation	Specification
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Name Generator</li> <li>Organizational network</li> <li>Connections</li> <li>Co-operations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minority party?</li> <li>Minority cultural O?</li> <li>SH-Commissioner (Ms. Schnack)?</li> <li>BRD-Commissioner (Mr. Koschyk)?</li> <li>German Secretariat?</li> </ul>	<p>Can you describe how the cooperation got started?</p> <p>How would you describe/assess the cooperation with [actors]?</p>

---

3

Question 4		
Which political actors/organizations/stakeholders/interest groups do you think are most important when it comes to the political interests of the [RESPECTIVE MINORITY]?		
Content	Perpetuation	Specification
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Name Generator</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minority party?</li> <li>Minority cultural O?</li> <li>SH-Commissioner (Ms. Schnack)?</li> <li>BRD-Commissioner (Mr. Koschyk)?</li> <li>German Secretariat?</li> </ul>	<p>Can you think of any persons you find particularly important?</p>

---

4

Question 5		
Does [ACTOR] sometimes have contact with members of the [RESPECTIVE MINORITY] who are not official representatives of the [RESPECTIVE MINORITY]?		
Content	Perpetuation	Specification
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact to minority members?</li> <li>Involvement of the elite</li> </ul>	<p>I mean yourself or other leading personnel, not so much [ACTOR] in general.</p> <p>So to say, "ordinary" minority members?</p>	<p><b>Can you describe under which circumstances it came to such a meeting?</b></p> <p><b>Does this happen on a regular basis or repeatedly?</b></p>

---

5

Question 6		
What do you think why people feel they are part of or belong to the Danish minority in Germany?		
Content	Perpetuation	Specification
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interviewees own identity</li> <li>Identity of other minority members</li> <li>Prejudices</li> </ul>	<p>What would you say is true for yourself? Why do you feel you belong to the [RESPECTIVE MINORITY]?</p> <p>What does minority identity mean to you?</p> <p>I know it is difficult to explain, but can you try anyway?</p> <p>I am aware that this is a very individual question but maybe you can give me some examples.</p>	

---

6

EXIT
Is there anything that you want to ask or feel that I should have asked?
Content
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>

---

7



### Appendix 3. Letter of Consent for expert interviews of Chapter 4 and Chapter 5

<b>Einverständniserklärung</b>	
<p><b>Regelung zum Vertrauens- und Datenschutz: <i>Einverständniserklärung</i> Studie „Politische Partizipation nationaler Minderheiten in Dänisch-Deutschen Grenzland“</b></p>	
<p>Ich erkläre mich damit einverstanden, dass das mit mir am [DATE] von Herrn Schaefer-Rolffs geführte Gespräch aufgenommen sowie verschriftet werden und für die Auswertung im Rahmen des Forschungsprojektes „Politische Partizipation nationaler Minderheiten in Dänisch-Deutschen Grenzland“ verwendet werden darf. Das verschriftete Interview darf in diesem Zusammenhang unter Beschränkung auf kleine Ausschnitte auch für die interne Berichtslegung verwendet werden. Mir wurde zugesichert, dass dabei alle persönlichen Daten, die Rückschlüsse auf meine Person zulassen, gelöscht oder anonymisiert werden, und dass die Interviewaufnahme nach Vollendung der Forschungsarbeiten gelöscht wird.</p>	
<p>Ich erkläre mich ebenso damit einverstanden, dass das verschriftete Interview unter Beschränkung auf kleine Ausschnitte auch für Ausbildungs-, Lehr- und Forschungszwecke (Methodenforschung) am Fachbereich „Politikwissenschaft“ der Universität Hamburg verwendet werden darf. Auch hier wird mir zugesichert, dass dabei alle persönlichen Daten, die Rückschlüsse auf meine Person zulassen, gelöscht oder anonymisiert werden. Ich erkläre mich in diesem Zusammenhang ebenso damit einverstanden, dass das verschriftete Interview unter Beschränkung auf kleine Ausschnitte für die Anfertigung von Seminar- und Qualifizierungsarbeiten am Fachbereich „Politikwissenschaft“ der Universität Hamburg verwendet werden darf. Dies beinhaltet auch die eventuelle Publikation von Qualifizierungsarbeiten. Auch hier wird mir zugesichert, dass dabei alle persönlichen Daten, die Rückschlüsse auf meine Person zulassen, gelöscht oder anonymisiert werden.</p>	
<p>Ein Widerruf meiner Einverständniserklärung ist jederzeit möglich.</p>	
_____	_____
Ort, Datum	Unterschrift

## Appendix 4. Coding scheme for Chapter 4

This is a summary of my coding scheme for the “Mapping national minority politics. Expert interviews concerning national minority participation in the DGBR” paper. The coding was done in German. This list does not contain every single coding unit but just the decisive coding categories of the paper’s four main analysis categories. For Further information see the data files in the folder “9.4. Coding scheme for Chapter 4” on the disk enclosed in this dissertation.

### **ROLE MODEL**

---

ROLE MODEL\Vorbildlich

#### ROLE MODEL\über Dänemark

---

ROLE MODEL\über Dänemark\Minderheit mittendrin

---

ROLE MODEL\über Dänemark\Minderheit unparteiisch

---

ROLE MODEL\über Dänemark\Minderheit politisch kraftvoll

---

ROLE MODEL\über Dänemark\Lobbying

---

ROLE MODEL\über Dänemark\Kooperation

---

ROLE MODEL\über Dänemark\Struktur

---

ROLE MODEL\über Dänemark\Minderheit ist schnitt der Bevölkerung

---

ROLE MODEL\über Dänemark\Minderheitenpolitik in Dänemark Konsens

#### ROLE MODEL\über Deutschland

---

ROLE MODEL\über Deutschland\ Minderheit steht gut dar

---

ROLE MODEL\über Deutschland\Wohllollen von allen Seiten

---

ROLE MODEL\über Deutschland\Minderheit ist flexibel

---

ROLE MODEL\über Deutschland\Struktur

#### ROLE MODEL\Minderheitensituation

---

ROLE MODEL\Minderheitensituation\Minderheiten anders strukturiert

---

ROLE MODEL\Minderheitensituation\Minderheiten setzen ihre Anliegen durch

---

ROLE MODEL\Minderheitensituation\Minderheiten arbeiten zusammen

---

ROLE MODEL\Minderheitensituation\Arbeit in Grenzland auf gutem Niveau

---

ROLE MODEL\Minderheitensituation\Weiterhin Obacht geben

---

ROLE MODEL\Minderheitensituation\Dialog auf Augenhöhe

---

ROLE MODEL\Minderheitensituation\Minderheiten als Brückenbauer

---

ROLE MODEL\Minderheitensituation\Starke Vernetzung zu kin-states

#### ROLE MODEL\Minderheitenpolitik

---

ROLE MODEL\Minderheitenpolitik\Vielfalt

---

ROLE MODEL\Minderheitenpolitik\Interessant

---

ROLE MODEL\Minderheitenpolitik\Hat sich entwickelt

---

ROLE MODEL\Minderheitenpolitik\Zusammenspiel von Minder- und Mehrheit

---

ROLE MODEL\Minderheitenpolitik\Erfolg durch Professionalisierung

---

ROLE MODEL\Minderheitenpolitik\Lobbying

---

ROLE MODEL\Minderheitenpolitik\Struktur

---

ROLE MODEL\Minderheitenpolitik\Vertreten sein

---

ROLE MODEL\Minderheitenpolitik\Regierungen&Parlamente

---

ROLE MODEL\Minderheitenpolitik\Politiker unwissend

### **CONTACT**

---

CONTACT\No
CONTACT\Yes
<b>ACTORS WORK WITH</b>
<u>ACTORS WORK WITH\Minority Secretariat Folketing</u>
ACTORS WORK WITH\Minority Secretariat Folketing\Allgemein
ACTORS WORK WITH\Minority Secretariat Folketing\Zusammenarbeit
<u>ACTORS WORK WITH\BDN</u>
ACTORS WORK WITH\BDN\Allgemein
ACTORS WORK WITH\BDN\Arbeit
ACTORS WORK WITH\BDN\Zusammenarbeit
<u>ACTORS WORK WITH\SP</u>
ACTORS WORK WITH\SP\Allgemein
ACTORS WORK WITH\SP\Arbeit
ACTORS WORK WITH\SP\Zusammenarbeit
<u>ACTORS WORK WITH\Sekretariat</u>
ACTORS WORK WITH\Sekretariat\Allgemein
ACTORS WORK WITH\Sekretariat\Arbeit
ACTORS WORK WITH\Sekretariat\Zusammenarbeit
<u>ACTORS WORK WITH\Kontaktudvalg KBH</u>
ACTORS WORK WITH\Kontaktudvalg KBH\Allgemein
ACTORS WORK WITH\Kontaktudvalg KBH\Arbeit
<u>ACTORS WORK WITH\SSW</u>
ACTORS WORK WITH\SSW\Allgemein
ACTORS WORK WITH\SSW\Arbeit
ACTORS WORK WITH\SSW\Zusammenarbeit
<u>ACTORS WORK WITH\SSF</u>
ACTORS WORK WITH\SSF\Allgemein
ACTORS WORK WITH\SSF\Arbeit
ACTORS WORK WITH\SSF\Zusammenarbeit
<u>ACTORS WORK WITH\BRD-Commissioner</u>
ACTORS WORK WITH\BRD-Commissioner\Allgemein
ACTORS WORK WITH\BRD-Commissioner\Arbeit
ACTORS WORK WITH\BRD-Commissioner\Zusammenarbeit
<u>ACTORS WORK WITH\SH-Commissioner</u>
ACTORS WORK WITH\SH-Commissioner\Allgemein
ACTORS WORK WITH\SH-Commissioner\Arbeit
ACTORS WORK WITH\SH-Commissioner\Zusammenarbeit
<u>ACTORS WORK WITH\SH-Commissioner (administration)</u>
ACTORS WORK WITH\SH-Commissioner (administration)\Allgemein
ACTORS WORK WITH\SH-Commissioner (administration)\Arbeit
ACTORS WORK WITH\SH-Commissioner (administration)\Zusammenarbeit
<u>ACTORS WORK WITH\Sydleswigudvalg KBH</u>
ACTORS WORK WITH\Sydleswigudvalg KBH\Allgemein
ACTORS WORK WITH\Sydleswigudvalg KBH\Arbeit
ACTORS WORK WITH\Sydleswigudvalg KBH\Zusammenarbeit
ACTORS WORK WITH\Minderheitenrat BUND
ACTORS WORK WITH\Andere Akteure
ACTORS WORK WITH\Andere Akteure\Beratender Ausschuss BUND
ACTORS WORK WITH\Andere Akteure\Sozialdienst
ACTORS WORK WITH\Andere Akteure\Samrådet
ACTORS WORK WITH\Andere Akteure\ECMI
ACTORS WORK WITH\Andere Akteure\FUEN

## Appendix

ACTORS WORK WITH\Andere Akteure\Botschaft

ACTORS WORK WITH\Andere Akteure\Minderheitensekretariat Bund

ACTORS WORK WITH\Andere Akteure\Dalogforum Norden

### **WICHTIG**

#### WICHTIG\für Minderheit in Deutschland

WICHTIG\für Minderheit in Deutschland\Parlamente&Politiker&Regierungen

WICHTIG\für Minderheit in Deutschland\SSW

WICHTIG\für Minderheit in Deutschland\SSF

WICHTIG\für Minderheit in Deutschland\SSW&SSF&Skoleforeningen

WICHTIG\für Minderheit in Deutschland\BRD-Commissioner

WICHTIG\für Minderheit in Deutschland\SH-Commissioner

WICHTIG\für Minderheit in Deutschland\Grenzverein

WICHTIG\für Minderheit in Deutschland\SONSTIGE

#### WICHTIG\für Minderheit in Dänemark

WICHTIG\für Minderheit in Dänemark\ Parlamente&Politiker&Regierungen

WICHTIG\für Minderheit in Dänemark\Verwaltung

WICHTIG\für Minderheit in Dänemark\BDN

WICHTIG\für Minderheit in Dänemark\Deutsches Sekretariat

WICHTIG\für Minderheit in Dänemark\SP

WICHTIG\für Minderheit in Dänemark\SP& BDN

WICHTIG\für Minderheit in Dänemark\SONSTIGE

## Appendix 5. Coding scheme for Chapter 5

This is a summary of my coding scheme for the “My chancellor is in Berlin and my Queen in Copenhagen. National minority identity in the DGBR” paper. The coding was done in German. This list does not contain every single coding unit but just the coding categories that can be found in the final eight different elements of national minority identity. For Further information see the data files in the folder “9.5. Coding scheme for Chapter 5” on the disk enclosed in this dissertation.

### **ME 1 - National Family Origin**

---

ME 1 - National Family Origin\Eingeheiratet

---

ME 1 - National Family Origin\Reingewachsen

---

ME 1 - National Family Origin\Tradition

---

ME 1 - National Family Origin\Familiärer Respekt

---

ME 1 - National Family Origin\Familiengeschichte

---

ME 1 - National Family Origin\Familientradition

---

ME 1 - National Family Origin\Familienbezug

#### ME 1 - National Family Origin\Familie Generationen

---

ME 1 - National Family Origin\Familie Generationen\Familie seit Jahrhunderten

---

ME 1 - National Family Origin\Familie Generationen\Mehrere Generationen

#### ME 1 - National Family Origin\Aktive Eltern, Großeltern

---

ME 1 - National Family Origin\Aktive Eltern, Großeltern\Großeltern sehr aktiv

---

ME 1 - National Family Origin\Aktive Eltern, Großeltern\Familie sehr aktiv

---

ME 1 - National Family Origin\ In Minderheit geboren

### **ME 2 - Socialization**

#### ME 2 - Socialization\Family

---

ME 2 - Socialization\Family\Reinwachsen

---

ME 2 - Socialization\Family\Aufwachsen

---

ME 2 - Socialization\Family\Durch Familie programmiert

---

ME 2 - Socialization\Family\Die Eltern waren sehr aktiv

---

ME 2 - Socialization\Family\Leben war Minderheit

#### ME 2 - Socialization\Group

---

ME 2 - Socialization\Group\Integriert in Minderheit seit der Kindheit

---

ME 2 - Socialization\Group\Anderssein in der Jugend

---

ME 2 - Socialization\Group\Besuch Institutionen

---

ME 2 - Socialization\Group\Arbeit in Minderheit als Jugendlicher

---

ME 2 - Sozialization\Minderheit sprechen

---

ME 2 - Socialization\Wissen was man tut

---

ME 2 - Sozialization\Verhaltensweisen wählen

### **ME 3 - Self-fulfillment**

#### ME 3 - Self-fulfillment\Work

---

ME 3 - Self-fulfillment\Work\Arbeit für Partei

---

ME 3 - Self-fulfillment\Work\Job durch die Minderheit

---

ME 3 - Self-fulfillment\Work\Parteiamt

## Appendix

ME 3 - Self-fulfillment\Work\Ehrenamt
<u>ME 3 - Self-fulfillment\Aktivity</u>
ME 3 - Self-fulfillment\Aktivity\Aktiv in Jugend
ME 3 - Self-fulfillment\Aktivity\Identifiziert mit Gruppe
ME 3 - Self-fulfillment\Aktivity\Engagement
ME 3 - Self-fulfillment\Aktivity\Politisch aktiv
ME 3 - Self-fulfillment\Aktivity\Minderheit mit Leben füllen
ME 3 - Self-fulfillment\Konsequenzen für Leben
ME 3 - Self-fulfillment\Partner
ME 3 - Self-fulfillment\Umzug aus kin-state, Kinder in Schule
ME 3 - Self-fulfillment\Zwischen zwei Stühlen
ME 3 - Self-fulfillment\Kindern viel Mitgeben
ME 3 - Self-fulfillment\Konsequenzen für die Kinder
<b>ME 4 - Status</b>
ME 4 - Status\Mehrsprachigkeit
ME 4 - Status\Vergangenheit schwer
ME 4 - Status\Schule ist Pluspunkt
ME 4 - Status\Leute gehören wegen der Zweisprachigkeit der Minderheit an
ME 4 - Status\Gemischtehen wählen das Positive
ME 4 - Status\Minderheitenstatus als positiv
ME 4 - Status\Minderheit positiv
ME 4 - Status\Minderheit Vorteil
ME 4 - Status\Zweisprachigkeit Vorteil
ME 4 - Status\Mehrheitshintergrund trotzdem Minderheit
ME 4 - Status\Damals schlecht, heute gut
<b>Group 1 - National Family Origin</b>
Group 1 - National Family Origin\Eingeheiratet
Group 1 - National Family Origin\Eingeboren
Group 1 - National Family Origin\Reingewachsen
Group 1 - National Family Origin\Tradition
Group 1 - National Family Origin\Familiärer Respekt
Group 1 - National Family Origin\Familiengeschichte
Group 1 - National Family Origin\Familientradition
Group 1 - National Family Origin\Familienbezug
<b>Group 2 - Community</b>
Group 2 - Community\Verhalten
Group 2 - Community\Tolle Leute
Group 2 - Community\Gesinnungsminderheit
Group 2 - Community\Gemeinschaftsgefühl
Group 2 - Community\Lebenswert
<u>Group 2 - Socialization\Good experience</u>
Group 2 - Socialization\Good experience\Gutes Erlebnis
Group 2 - Socialization\Good experience\Lebenswert
Group 2 - Socialization\Good experience\Gute Erfahrung
<u>Group 2 - Community\Solidarity&amp;Companionship</u>
Group 2 - Community\Solidarity&Companionship\Zusammenhalt stark
Group 2 - Community\Solidarity&Companionship\Zusammenhalt wichtig
<b>Group 3 - School</b>
Group 3 - School\Ein Elternteil aus Minderheit dann Schule
Group 3 - School\Schulen beeinflusst
Group 3 - School\Schule ist attraktiv
Group 3 - School\Selber in Schule gewesen

Group 3 - School\Sprache in Schule
Group 3 - School\Kinder integrieren sich
Group 3 - School\Schulbesuch
<b>Group 4 - Culture</b>
Group 4 - Culture\Leute kommen nur wegen Jazz
<u>Group 4 - Culture\Culture in general</u>
Group 4 - Culture\Culture in general\Zwei Kulturen nutzen
Group 4 - Culture\Culture in general\Zeitung
Group 4 - Culture\Culture in general\ Kirche
Group 4 - Culture\Culture in general\Minderheitenkultur
Group 4 - Culture\Culture in general\Kultur ist attraktiv
<u>Group 4 - Culture\Special national culture</u>
Group 4 - Culture\Special national culture\Kultur
Group 4 - Culture\Special national culture\Kulturangebote nutzen
Group 4 - Culture\Special national culture\Kultur weitergeben









## 10. Informationen gemäß §6 (5) PromO

### Zusammenfassung der Ergebnisse

#### **Minority Politics in Practice. Protection and Empowerment in the DGBR**

*Protection* has at the least two dimensions. It is furthermore an action that is a classical top-down process. *Empowerment* starts out as a top-down process, but transforms into a bottom-up process. It is an active process in which the empowered person, community, or group are able and willing to change their own situation or to preserve their status quo. In the border region, many organizations are run by minorities. By funding the many minority organizations, while at the same time letting them run their own affairs, the land and national governments practice a politics of *empowerment*. The German Secretariat in Denmark and the SSW's release from the 5 percent threshold are two further examples for *empowerment* in the DGBR.

*Protection* hat mindestens zwei Dimensionen. Es ist außerdem eine Aktion die einen klassischen top-down-Prozess darstellt. Es ist ein aktiver Prozess, in dem die befähigte Person, Gemeinschaft oder Gruppe in der Lage und gewillt sind ihre eigene Situation zu verändern oder ihren Status-Quo zu bewahren. In der Grenzregion werden viele Organisationen von Minderheiten betrieben. Indem sie die vielen Minderheitenorganisationen finanzieren, während sie sie gleichzeitig ihre eigenen Angelegenheiten regeln lassen, betreiben die Landes- und Nationalregierungen eine Politik des *Empowerments*. Das Deutsche Sekretariat in Dänemark und die Befreiung des SSW von der Fünf-Prozent-Hürde sind zwei weitere Beispiele von *Empowerment* im Dänisch-Deutschen Grenzland.

**Mapping national minority politics. Expert interviews concerning national minority participation in the DGBR**

An institutional set-up for national minority rights protection as complex as the one for the national minorities in the DGBR cannot be copied one to one. The role model's general character can be explained and thus may serve as an inspiration for other regions. Key points for the role-model character of the DGBR are: Good Will, Interlocking Directorates, Passionate Personnel, Organized Minorities, Decision-making Table and the Back Room.

Ein institutioneller Aufbau für den Schutz der Rechte nationaler Minderheiten der so komplex ist, wie der für die nationalen Minderheiten im Dänisch-Deutschen Grenzland, kann nicht eins zu eins kopiert werden. Der generelle Charakter der Vorbilds-Region kann erklärt werden und mag so als Inspiration für andere Regionen dienen. Schlüsselpunkte des Vorbildcharakters des Dänisch-Deutschen Grenzlands sind: Guter Wille, Überkreuzverflechtungen, Passioniertes Personal, Organisierte Minderheiten, der Runde Tisch und das Hinterzimmer.

**My chancellor is in Berlin and my Queen in Copenhagen. National minority identity in the DGBR**

Minority identity is indeed very complex and multilayered. Major properties of national minority identity in the DGBR are: Family, Culture, Socialization and Self-Fulfillment. Minor properties are Social Status, Community, Schools and Contact.

Die Identität von Minderheiten ist tatsächlich sehr komplex und vielschichtig. Hauptmerkmale von Minderheitenidentität im Dänisch-Deutschen Grenzland sind: Familie, Kultur, Sozialisation und Selbstverwirklichung. Nebenmerkmale sind: Sozialer Status, Gemeinschaft, Schule und Kontakt.

**I can't talk to you right now, it's harvest time. RDS-survey amongst national minorities in the DGBR**

The minorities' socio economic features do not differ much from the general population in socio economic terms. The German minority consists mostly of minority families that have ties to the minority for a long time, while the Danish minority seems to constantly attract new minority members whose family history is not entangled with the minority and who affiliate with the minority for other reasons.

Both minority parties are seen as the most important actors for minority political participation. In Denmark though, also the BDN seems to be of great importance, where the importance of the SSF in Germany is not valued as much and the SSW is clearly the dominant actor for minority members.

Die sozioökonomischen Eigenschaften der Minderheiten unterscheiden sich nicht stark von denen der allgemeinen Bevölkerung. Die deutsche Minderheit besteht hauptsächlich aus Minderheitenfamilien die seit langer Zeit Verbindungen zur Minderheit haben, während die dänische Minderheit andauernd neue Angehörige anzieht, deren Familiengeschichte nicht mit der Minderheit verwoben ist und die sich aus anderen Gründen der Minderheit zugehörig zu fühlen scheinen.

Beide Minderheitenparteien werden als die wichtigsten Akteure zur politischen Beteiligung der Minderheiten angesehen. In Dänemark jedoch ist auch der BDN von großer Wichtigkeit, während die Bedeutung des SSF in Deutschland nicht so hoch bewertet wird und d er SSW klar der dominante Akteur für die Minderheitenangehörigen ist.

## Liste der Einzelarbeiten und Publikationen

Die Titel der Einzelarbeiten lauten:

- **Minority Politics in Practice. Protection and Empowerment in the DGBR.**
- **Mapping national minority politics. Expert interviews concerning national minority participation in the DGBR.**
- **My chancellor is in Berlin and my Queen in Copenhagen. National minority identity in the DGBR**
- **I can't talk to you right now, it's harvest time. RDS-survey amongst national minorities in the DGBR.**

Bislang ist lediglich der erste Artikel dieser kumulativen Dissertation (Minority Politics in Practice. Protection and Empowerment in the DGBR.) als Kapitel in einem Sammelband veröffentlicht, als:

**Schaefer-Rolffs, Adrian** (2014): "Minority Politics in Practice: Protection and Empowerment in the Danish-German Border Region". In: Federica Prina (Ed.): Journal on Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe. Special Issue - National Minorities between Protection and Empowerment. Flensburg, 80-103.

Ob der Natur der Publikation weicht die veröffentlichte Version minimal von der Version des Artikels in dieser Dissertation ab. Die drei weiteren Artikel sind bislang nicht veröffentlicht. Folgende Texte aus dem weiteren Kontext der Dissertation sind als Zeitschriftenbeiträge oder Working Paper während meiner Promotionsphase veröffentlicht worden:

- **Schaefer-Rolffs, Adrian** (2013): "Regionale Identität. Gemeinsame Kultur oder finanzielles Potential?". In: Grenzfriedenshefte 2013/3, 195-202.
- **Schaefer-Rolffs, Adrian; Schnapp, Kai-Uwe** (2013): "Paternalistic versus participation oriented minority institutions in the Danish-German border region". ECMI Working Paper (67).

- **Hoops**, Christian; **Schnapp**, Kai-Uwe; **Schaefer-Rolffs**, Adrian (2013): “Zur Ziehung von Stichproben in schwer erreichbaren Zielgruppen mit gravitationsanalytischen Methoden”. WiSo Working Paper. Hamburg: Universität Hamburg. Forschungslabor der Fakultät für Wirtschafts- und Sozialwissenschaften.
- **Schaefer-Rolffs**, Adrian; **Schnapp**, Kai-Uwe (2014a): “Special politics for minority political participation in the Danish-German border region”. In: International Journal on Minority and Group Rights 21 (1), 48-71.
- **Schaefer-Rolffs**, Adrian; **Schnapp**, Kai-Uwe (2014b): “Die Umsetzung des Minderheitenschutzes durch politische Partizipation im dänisch-deutschen Grenzland”. In: Europäisches Journal für Minderheitenfragen 2, 115-139.
- **Schaefer-Rolffs**, Adrian; **Schnapp**, Kai-Uwe (2015): “Dänische Minderheit deutlich größer als bisher angenommen. Ergebnisse der ersten repräsentativen Erhebung zur dänischen Minderheit im Norden Deutschlands”. Working Paper. [http://www.wiso.uni-hamburg.de/fileadmin/sowi/politik/methoden/WP\\_DDG\\_SizeDenMin\\_SH\\_20150325a\\_ASR.pdf](http://www.wiso.uni-hamburg.de/fileadmin/sowi/politik/methoden/WP_DDG_SizeDenMin_SH_20150325a_ASR.pdf), visited on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2016.